



THE CIVILIAN CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE OPERATIONS: ASSESSING PROGRESS AND ADDRESSING GAPS

CO-ORGANIZED BY SIPRI, ISIS MALAYSIA AND APCMCOE

SESSION 1: SIPRI PROJECT OVERVIEW*

The workshop opened with an introduction of the SIPRI project 'Civilian Contribution to Peace Operations: Assessing Progress and Addressing Gaps' and an overview of the main themes of the workshop. One of the core aims of the project is to broaden the dialogue on the role of civilians in peace operations beyond Europe and North America to the Global South, and to harness the potential of partners in Africa, Asia and South America, including the African Union (AU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Brazil, Egypt, India and Japan, among others. There are important lessons to be learned from the Asia-Pacific region with regards to the civilian contribution to peace operations. Asia, through the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, was home to one of the first UN multidimensional peace operations. Furthermore, roughly 20 per cent of the civilian personnel deployed to UN peace operations are from Asia.

The SIPRI project aims to provide conceptual clarity on the nature of the civilian contribution to peace operations, to take stock of the current state of the global civilian architecture and to set a baseline to measure progress in the civilian domain. Some of the key issues that will be explored by the project include (a) the specific trends, gaps and issues that affect each region; (b) how far the UN and regional and bilateral actors have come with respect to the civilian dimension of peace operations; (c) the current state of cooperation and coordination between the UN, regional organizations, national governments and other actors; (d) how well integrated civilian components and actors are during the planning and implementation phases of peace operations; (e) the various mechanisms for flexible and rapid recruitment of skilled and appropriate personnel that exist; and (f) future peace operations' requirements and how the international community can best prepare to meet them.

The project's working definition of civilians is non-uniformed personnel working for a peace operation led by the UN or a regional organization under a UN mandate. The scope of the project excludes civilian police and humanitarian actors.

* This report attempts to summarize the contents of each workshop session, including both presentations and discussion. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of SIPRI or of the majority of the participants.

● WORKSHOP SUMMARY

The workshop 'Civilian Contribution to Peace Operations: Assessing Progress and Addressing Gaps', held on 27 September 2010 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, was organized by SIPRI, the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia and the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence (APCMCOE). It brought together 25 experts from around the region to discuss Asia Pacific perspectives of and experience in the civilian component of peace operations.

The main objectives of the workshop were to (a) conduct a regional inventory of what countries are doing and/or developing; (b) observe 'lessons learned' about civilian deployment; (c) discuss challenges confronting Asia-Pacific countries; and (d) develop a regional civil-military network to further the discussion.

The workshop is one in a series of four regional workshops—covering Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and South America—conducted as part of the SIPRI project 'Civilian Contribution to Peace Operations: Assessing Progress and Addressing Gaps'. The project's objective is to take stock of the international civilian architecture and to map what has been done and by whom.

The project has been generously funded by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) and United States Institute of Peace.

**Opening Remarks**

The organizers opened the workshop and introduced the background of the project, the aims and main themes of the workshop.

Speakers

Dato' Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin, Chief Executive, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia
Dr Jim Rolfe, Deputy Director, The Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence, Australia
Dr Stephanie Blair, Associate Senior Research Fellow, SIPRI

Session 1. SIPRI Project Overview

This session provided an overview of the SIPRI project and introduced its methodology and preliminary findings.

Speakers

Ms Sharon Wiharta, Senior Researcher, SIPRI
Dr Stephanie Blair, Associate Senior Research Fellow, SIPRI

Session 2. Perspectives from the Field: Drawing Lessons from Nepal and Cambodia

This session reflected on past bilateral and multilateral experiences of the civilian contribution to peace operations and the recurring challenges related to it.

Moderator

Dr Jim Rolfe, Deputy Director, The Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence, Australia

Speakers

HE Amb Ek Sereywath, Former Secretary of State, Ministry of National Defence, Cambodia
Lt. Gen. Bala Sharma, UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN)

Session 3. National and Regional Efforts to Enhance Civilian Capacity

This session provided an overview of some of the developments in the Asia-Pacific region and identifying possible niche civilian capacities available and possible.

Moderator

Dr Tang Siew Mun, Director (Foreign Policy and International Security), ISIS Malaysia

Speakers

Dr. Koji Demizu, Programme Officer, Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center
Ms. Maria Carmina B. Acuna, Director, Policy Studies Office, National Security Council, The Philippines
Mr Adrian Cutler, Director, Development Planning, Australian Civilian Corps

The findings of the project so far indicate that although various models of stand-alone governmental structures dealing with civilian contributions to peace missions are taking shape in Europe and North America, they are still evolving, and in most cases have not yet been fully operationalized. In contrast, Africa has more of a bottom-up approach through its training centres, although the African Standby Force (ASF) is focusing increasing attention on the subject. Asian countries are engaging in the debate on the role of civilians in peace operations, but still have reservations regarding the interventionist model that peacekeeping and peacebuilding implies. A number of initiatives have emerged from South America, notably the Argentinean White Helmets Commission.

Thus, progress has been slow and uneven. Much effort and resources have been expended, and many, in particular national governments, which have invested, are now looking for results. Past results have often relied on pragmatic approaches underpinned by strong civil society commitment.

The upward trend in the deployment of civilian personnel to peace operations has paralleled the shift in the focus of peace operations to peacebuilding and statebuilding tasks. This has necessitated more civilian expertise and propelled the role of civilian actors to the core of peace operations. A survey of UN mandates reveals a broad range of characteristically civilian tasks—such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), finance, human rights protection, monitoring and promotion—and the corresponding range of expertise needed. However, there are several obstacles to delivering civilian capabilities in the field, including a lack of rapidly deployable trained civilians and a significant lack of funding. This is in part due to the highly political nature of the work. Furthermore, while integrated mission mandates list civilian tasks, they are often duplicative and suggest a lack of clear thinking on how civilian elements will fit into the missions. The problem is compounded by the fact that there is no standing institutional capacity at the various intergovernmental organization headquarters, specifically in high-end civilian planning.

Discussion

It was noted that the issue of civilian component of the peace operations is still at a very early stage in the region. The need for civilian capacity in peace operations was taken as a given by all participants. Discus-



sions focused on how to develop skills and utilize them within a system that is still primarily controlled by the military, which is sometimes sceptical of civilian contributions. More discussion is needed within the region about the types of civilian capacities the region can and should contribute and the degree to which there needs to be a regional architecture as opposed to a range of national capabilities. It was considered an open question whether capacity should be held within the governmental or the non-governmental sphere; participants were keen to learn about existing models and best practices (see session 4).

Several participants noted that in the past, the failure to deploy sufficient civilian experts from the outset of an operation had led to difficult transitions in the later phases of operations. More importantly, they said, greater emphasis is needed on developing a culture of integration in multidimensional operations to foster a shared understanding between the military and civilian actors of their respective cultures and priorities. A shift in mindsets is required among both military and non-military actors to understand that these operations have a civilian component. One forum where increased interaction between the two sets of actors could be encouraged is the UN's annual meeting of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), which is currently attended mostly by military advisers. One of the challenges of deploying civilian experts is related to current financing mechanisms. Funding in the humanitarian sector is disbursed relatively quickly, while the cycle is considerably longer for development, but there is a gap in the middle for most peacebuilding activities. Also important is the historical context and an understanding of why the civilian gap exists.

With regard to the fact that Asia lags behind other regions in contributing civilian personnel to UN peace operations, several participants pointed out that it is not always clear what type of civilian expertise is needed by specific missions. Furthermore, in contrast to the military and police components, established channels to request and provide personnel do not exist for the civilian component. This prevents countries that may be willing to contribute more civilian experts from doing that. There was a call to establish a civilian contributing countries (CCCs) list to complement the lists of troop contributing countries (TCCs) and police contributing countries (PCCs). Participants argued that a more systematized request channel would enable governments to ensure that the relevant ministries and

Session 4. Forward thinking and Future Requirements

This session focused on developing potential recommendations on the future of the civilian component of peace operations.

Moderator

Ms Sharon Wiharta, Senior Researcher, SIPRI

Closing Remarks



departments are aware of the civilian capacities being sought. A number of participants also said that the apparent lack of Asian contributions in the multilateral framework is to some extent owing to Asian governments often deploying civilian experts within the bilateral development and technical assistance frameworks. Also, Asian contributions tend to be in the post-stabilization phase, where security is normally better. This raises a broader question of which phase of the peacebuilding process has seen the most critical deficits.

Several participants raised the question of how to mainstream and operationalize the issue of enhancing civilian contributions in order to build on the current momentum within the ASEAN for addressing peace and security issues. They also noted the region's sensitivities towards active participation in peace operations. Although there is an increasing openness in the region to discussing issues relating to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, there is a sense that the region is overwhelmed with new concepts and norms. Thus, there is a need for greater 'socialization' of the concept, not least because of the uneven levels of understanding within the region. A parallel was drawn with civilian protection, which was first discussed within the framework of the Responsibility to Protect. Participants suggested that a 'track two' framework (in which discussions would take place among non-officials rather than officials from the different countries) was the most suitable way to take forward the issue of civilian contributions in the region and called for more non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to be involved in future discussions. A related point is the need for further clarification of related terminology as an aid to mutual understanding.

SESSION 2: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD: DRAWING LESSONS FROM NEPAL AND CAMBODIA

Discussants outlined lessons learned from several UN missions regarding the need for civilian expertise and the recurring challenges related to it. Difficulties included the clash of cultures between military and civilian approaches to missions, lack of clarity as to the proper roles of civilians within missions and the complexities of missions leading to a lack of people with suitable skills being available when and where they are needed.

The presentations asserted that even traditional interposition missions require some back-end civilian functions to ensure their smooth running. One example offered was the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights. Owing to a disproportionate ratio between headquarters personnel and field mission personnel, UNDOF lacked a chief administrative officer and a legal officer. UNDOF's structure reflected the broader problem of uneven distribution of headquarters support to field missions, and the perennial challenge of UN Headquarters being severely understaffed. The UNDOF experience also illustrated the fact that senior leadership positions in missions often require a range of skills that one individual may not have in totality. For instance, a force commander may not be the ideal candidate for writing political reports.

A brief overview of the peace process in Nepal was provided, with a focus on the DDR process and the role played by the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). UNMIN's mandate was extended several times owing to the stalling of the



DDR process. The presentation illustrated how mandates are critical to how missions are shaped and staffed.

The case of the UN Transitional Administration in Cambodia (UNTAC) was also presented. UNTAC, which was in operation between February 1992 and September 1993, was one of the earliest multidimensional peace operations. The mission is largely regarded as a success for having conducted elections, enabling the return of over 300 000 refugees and providing a framework for post-conflict peacebuilding to begin. UNTAC enjoyed sound cooperation between the civilian and military components. This was due in large part to the leadership of the civilian head of the mission, Yasushi Akashi, and the head of the military component, John Sanderson. Relative success in Cambodia was ascribed to a range of external factors (such as the collapse of the Soviet Union) and internal factors (royal and political leadership, a widespread desire for peace) that would not necessarily be replicated elsewhere. Nonetheless, civilian skills (some 6000 were deployed in Cambodia) were essential.

Discussion

The panel addressed specific questions relating to the post-conflict peacebuilding processes in Cambodia and Nepal. The appropriateness of having civilians monitor ceasefires between armed parties was questioned. It was determined that each post-conflict situation is unique, and there are many occasions where the deployment of civilian monitors is possible, even preferable. In the case of Nepal, a ceasefire was unilaterally declared by the Maoist insurgents and was then reciprocated by the government. The security situation lent itself to the deployment of 'civilian' monitors. (The monitors used by UNMIN were in fact unarmed current or former military personnel.)

Discussion in this session ranged over a number of historical examples of both success and failure. Necessary if not sufficient conditions for success include sufficient civilians with the right capabilities, coordination between all actors (including non-governmental actors) both civil and military, local knowledge and understanding, and sufficient resources. Ultimately, in the words of one participant, no matter how good the civilian (and military) contributions 'the stars have to be in alignment' for success to be achieved.

One of the key lessons drawn from the presentations was that good mission management, which often relies on a good working relationship between the civilian head (the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, SRSG) and the military commander, is central to a mission's success. However, just because an SRSG has a good relationship with the force commander in one mission does not necessarily mean that the same SRSG will have a good relationship with a different force commander in a different mission. The participants discussed how to replicate good leadership: does it come down to factors such as personalities and luck, or can leadership skills be honed?

Participants recognized that the issue of civilian contributions to peace operations cannot be addressed in isolation and that the wider context of a mission's mandate and peacebuilding priorities also needs to be taken into account. The ability of the civilian component to effectively perform its tasks hinges on how well the mission mandate is crafted and how well resourced the mission is, in both human and financial capital. However, it was noted



that deploying civilians in large numbers does not guarantee an effective mission. The aim should therefore be to deploy the ‘right’ civilians.

Participants also raised the issue of assessing and evaluating the performance of international civilian personnel to date. They questioned the assumption that deploying international civilian personnel is always the solution. Participants stressed that the civilian component of peace operations has a longer-term impact on the host country than the military component, and the ability of the civilian component to make meaningful and effective contributions requires civilian experts with deep local knowledge. Several of the participants suggested tapping into local capacity.

The issue of coordination among external actors was also raised. In many of the areas where a mission is deployed, there are a variety of other actors engaged, often with competing agendas. This brought the discussion to the issue of training. Participants noted that there is a lot of training available for the military and police components, but less so for the civilian component. Does this mean that civilians do not need training, and if they do, what type of training should be provided? To what extent can training be harmonized or coordinated across the different actors?

SESSION 3: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EFFORTS TO ENHANCE CIVILIAN CAPACITY

Presentations from Japan, Philippines and Australia highlighted the different areas in which countries are working.

Japan is, through the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre’s (HPC) Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding, developing a cadre of professional peacebuilders who will have initial training and continual career development. The programme draws its participants from the region and aims to ‘increase the Asian presence’ in the field, build a network of civilian experts in the region and identify an Asian approach to peacebuilding. Japan aims to increase its civilian contributions to peace operations and to diversify its contribution beyond UN operations and to varying peacebuilding contexts. An example is its team of development experts, which is deployed as part of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) within the International Security Force in Afghanistan.

The Philippines has traditionally been a contributor of police personnel (individuals and formed units) and, to a lesser extent, troops; but in recent years, it has concentrated on developing deployable medical capabilities. In 2002 the Philippine Government drew up a policy and legal framework (Executive Order 97, EO97) that sets out guidelines for Filipino participation in UN peace operations. It identified several areas which the Philippines could provide expertise: engineering, social development, governance, telecommunications, health, education and transportation. EO97 also calls closer collaboration with other ASEAN countries and possible joint contributions to UN peace operations. The establishment of EO97 has, arguably, contributed to a smoother decision-making process regarding the deployment of personnel to peace operations as it is the basis for several relevant department plans and budgets. Another related development is the Philippine White Helmets (a national volunteer corps). In 2006 the initiative, modelled on the Argentinian White Helmet Commission, was agreed to



by the ministries of foreign affairs, defence and interior, and with involvement from non-governmental organizations. It was noted, however, that too often requests for additional capacity in peace operations continue to come through military and police channels and focus on requests for military and police capacity.

The Australian Civilian Corps (ACC)—its development and plans—were outlined. The ACC was established in 2009 but was only signed into law in 2011. Its mandate is to deploy civilians quickly in conflict and disaster-affected countries and to provide development planning advice. The aim of creating the ACC is to make Australia's contribution to peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations more efficient. The ACC is expected to improve the civilian capacity to plan and draw up a strategy for engagement in a post-conflict country. Another area of ACC focus is the ability to conduct in-country analysis soon after deployment. Like its sister institutions, the ACC reflects the whole-of-government approach and has several ministries steering its strategic guidance. Ultimately, the ACC aims to comprise a database of 500 pre-screened and pre-trained individuals drawn from the federal and state government, and private sector. One of the challenges of the database is maintaining a balance between sector or thematic experts, and country or regional experts.

Discussion in this session noted that NGOs were an important component of civilian capacity and too often ignored. Participants were attracted to the idea of regional collaboration in the development of a deployable capacity within the deployable sector. More work needs to be done to develop that thought. There was general agreement on the difficulties of coordination. The issue of the cumbersome UN recruitment process was also highlighted as one of the challenges for countries to increase their contributions. There was an undercurrent of worry that peace operations might generally be a cover for 'interference' in the internal affairs of a regional state. Non-interference is a strongly held principle within the Asia-Pacific region.

SESSION 4: FORWARD THINKING AND FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

This session was an opportunity for the participants to delve deeper into the key points raised during the day and brainstorm about the way forward with respect to the civilian domain of peace operations.

In response to the participants' request for more information about developments in other regions, the session opened with the SIPRI project team giving an overview of existing structures, initiatives and policies at the national and regional levels. The project team noted that, although the structures exist, they have yet to be properly tested as no country has deployed a civilian team from the rosters they have established. Thus, they cautioned against adopting any structure or initiative wholesale and suggested that any development ought to be tailored to the region, including the pace of change that is likely to work.

A summary of the day's main themes and points was also provided. This included the identification of appropriate and possible entry points to further raise the issues of civilian capacities on the regional agenda and the development of a network of centres of excellence to foster closer ties

SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

GOVERNING BOARD

Göran Lennmarker, Chairman
(Sweden)

Dr Dewi Fortuna Anwar
(Indonesia)

Dr Vladimir Baranovsky
(Russia)

Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi
(Algeria)

Jayantha Dhanapala
(Sri Lanka)

Susan Eisenhower
(United States)

Ambassador Wolfgang
Ischinger (Germany)

Professor Mary Kaldor
(United Kingdom)

The Director

DIRECTOR

Dr Bates Gill (United States)



STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Signalistgatan 9
SE-169 70 Solna, Sweden
Telephone: +46 8 655 97 00
Fax: +46 8 655 97 33
Email: sipri@sipri.org
Internet: www.sipri.org

between countries, and to determine what civilian architecture, if desirable, is possible for the region.

Discussion in this session acknowledged different models for cooperation and focused on what might be appropriate for the region. The participants explored various entry points and at this stage, stating that track two forums, such as the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), and other informal groupings of countries in the region are preferable.

With respect to the development of a network of centres of excellence, it was noted that while an Asian chapter of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC) exists, it is largely dormant. It was suggested that a first step might be to establish ad hoc exchanges of experts and trainers.

The ASEAN participants argued that any regional approach needed to have ASEAN at its core. The ASEAN Political-Security Community, which all the ASEAN member states have agreed to establish, would be the most appropriate formal framework to develop a civilian architecture, if it were decided that that was desirable and necessary for the region. However, the pace of implementation would probably fluctuate, given that the implementation of any ASEAN action plan depends to a large degree on the ASEAN chair. It was also noted that an operational regional civilian architecture might not be realistic in the near future, given the varying levels of acceptance of the idea among ASEAN member states. The best approach might be for national governments to develop their own initiatives and to integrate them into a regional framework when it becomes appropriate.

WORKSHOP CO-ORGANIZERS



Australian Government
Asia Pacific Civil-Military
Centre of Excellence

