

# 3. Civilian roles in peace operations

SHARON WIHARTA AND STEPHANIE BLAIR

## I. Introduction

The year 2009 marked the 10th anniversary of the seminal Brahimi report, which proposed an overhaul of the United Nations peacekeeping system.<sup>1</sup> The report highlighted for the first time the centrality of the civilian contribution to the effectiveness of UN peace operations and called for a strengthened UN capacity in this area. A decade later, progress in the civilian dimension is mixed. The number of civilian tasks mandated in UN Security Council resolutions for UN peace operations and the number of civilian missions undertaken by regional organizations have increased dramatically in recent years. These increases are coupled with a near doubling of the number of civilians assigned to global multilateral peace operations: they currently exceed 6500 (see figure 3.1).<sup>2</sup>

The imperative for civilian personnel in peace operations came to the fore in 2009, most notably in Afghanistan. A new United States strategy for Afghanistan—announced in March—placed greater emphasis on security, governance and local development, while continuing to prioritize the rule of law and counternarcotics measures.<sup>3</sup> In order to realize the strategy, a ‘civilian surge’ would accompany the planned increased troop levels. The outgoing head of mission for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Kai Ede, supported the change in strategy and cautioned against neglecting the political and civilian aspects of the peacebuilding process in Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup>

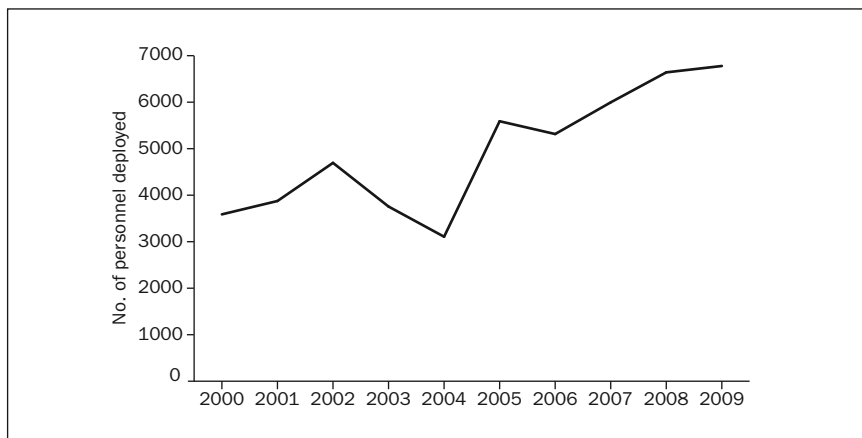
Given the strong need and continued demand for civilians, and the persistent challenges of deploying the appropriate people at the right time and in the appropriate numbers, significant attention has been paid to the ‘civilian capacity gap’. This issue is thus at the top of the agenda of several governments and of multilateral organizations, including the UN, the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the African Union (AU). In 2009 the UN Secretary-General produced a report

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (Brahimi Report), A/55/305-S/2000/809, 21 Aug. 2000.

<sup>2</sup> This figure does not include civilian police deployment. See also appendix 3A.

<sup>3</sup> DeYoung, K., ‘Civilians to join Afghan buildup: “surge” is part of larger U.S. strategy studied by White House’, *Washington Post*, 19 Mar. 2009.

<sup>4</sup> MacFarquhar, N., ‘U.N. envoy to Afghanistan warns of peril of emphasizing security over social issues’, *New York Times*, 7 Jan. 2010.



**Figure 3.1.** Number of civilians deployed to United Nations peace operations, 2000–2009

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, <<http://www.sipri.org/databases/pko/>>

on peacebuilding that underscores the need for increased civilian capacities and provides the impetus to critically review the UN's civilian capacity.<sup>5</sup> Although the civilian dimension of peace operations has been strengthened by a range of recent institutional innovations, such operations are still not appropriately configured and staffed for their roles. This chapter discusses how the civilian capacity gap should not be viewed or addressed simply as a recruitment or deployment issue, but should take into account, for example, the planning and financing of peace operations. Such an assessment highlights that the operational challenges in the civilian dimension are due to a lack of conceptual clarity.

Section II provides an overview of the state of play of the civilian dimension of peace operations and peacebuilding and surveys some of the ongoing institutional developments and reforms in multilateral organizations and national governments. Section III looks at the operational challenges plaguing the civilian component of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), as well as how the lack of conceptual clarity has affected the mission's efficacy. Section IV offers conclusions. Appendix 3A presents extensive data on the multilateral peace operations that were active for all or part of 2009.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, S/2009/304, 11 June 2009.

## II. Addressing the civilian capacity gap in peace operations

In the past decade peace operations have taken on a more multidimensional characteristic, integrating the political, humanitarian, development and military dimensions. Thus, a typical multidimensional peace operation is usually mandated to perform a variety of tasks to assist the host country's transition from conflict to sustainable peace. Peace operation mandates now routinely include basic civilian activities, such as demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR); security sector reform (SSR); public information; rule of law; law and order; justice; human rights; humanitarian relief and rehabilitation; supporting the return of refugees and internally displaced persons; elections; constitutional support and institutional reform and capacity building. For many of these activities, the deployment of troops is neither appropriate nor relevant. Moreover, the functions require specific expertise that is predominantly found in the civilian sphere.

The sheer diversity of civilian functions and skills makes it difficult to address the question of capacity without first defining the term 'civilians'. Is the term restricted to the group that administers and manages the mission? Or is it broader? To what jobs does it refer? A number of 'toolkits' describe or seek to categorize the multitude of tasks and functions necessary in peacebuilding contexts. Most of them describe a basic core set of functions but illustrate the point that no common definition exists for the civilian roles and functions used by the AU, the EU and the UN, much less by individual countries<sup>6</sup> The monthly statistics produced by the UN's Department of Public Information on personnel deployment in UN peace operations include a broad category of civilian staff but do not disaggregate between civilians whose jobs range from information technology to the promotion of human rights. This diversity of definitions is further magnified by the difference in institutional mandates within which the civilians must operate. In this chapter, the term 'civilians' refers to non-uniformed personnel working in multilateral peace operations, but excludes 'humanitarian' non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

As mission mandates have grown increasingly complex, the requirement for qualified civilian expertise has grown apace, and with it a proliferation of civilian functions in peace operations, at least in the UN context. In fact, the recent UN Secretary-General report on peacebuilding identified two new core peacebuilding objectives: support for employment generation, in

<sup>6</sup> Chandran, R. et al., 'Recovering from war: gaps in early action', Report by the New York University (NYU) Center on International Cooperation for the British Department for International Development, NYU, New York, 1 July 2008, <<http://www.cic.nyu.edu/peacebuilding/statebuilding.html>>.

particular in agriculture and public works; and sustainable natural resource management.<sup>7</sup> The emergence of numerous peacebuilding objectives has led to the creation of multiple posts by various UN agencies and departments to address a single issue; this can lead to overlapping duties on the ground. Security sector reform is a good example. A dedicated unit in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) addresses SSR issues, but SSR is also dealt with by, among others, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

While the proliferation of civilian functions may have led to greater awareness of and attention to typical peacebuilding priorities, reflecting the complexity and magnitude of peacebuilding, the purpose of some of the functions is less clear. For instance, civilian protection is one such ambiguous function. A recent study conducted for the DPKO and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) revealed that, despite a decade of including civilian protection in mandates, the UN still struggles with what it means, both definitionally and operationally, for a peace operation to protect civilians.<sup>8</sup> The lack of common understanding of what constitutes civilian protection, and therefore which agency or department within the UN should take the lead, has created inter-agency turf battles. In practice, this has led to a divisive debate on whether protection should be a cross-cutting or a separate civilian function in peace operations, and the division of labour between the military and civilian components has also been affected. A clearer definition of what constitutes 'expertise' and the requirements necessary for each civilian function would prevent duplicative efforts.

### **Common challenges and institutional responses**

The dominance of the civilian agenda for many multilateral organizations and national governments parallels the process of enhancing international effectiveness in peacebuilding efforts. A multitude of institutional development processes that are intended to improve civilian capacity for stability operations, state building and crisis management efforts have been implemented across the spectrum of actors. As international and regional organizations as well as individual states have responded to the rising demand for civilian skills and expertise, a perceived 'civilian gap' has become apparent due to inadequate capabilities and capacities that have hampered

<sup>7</sup> United Nations (note 5), p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Holt, V. and Taylor, G., with Kelly, M., *Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks and Remaining Challenges* (United Nations: New York, Nov. 2009).

implementation.<sup>9</sup> According to one analyst, ‘the single most important limitation has been a lack of civilian capacity for such operations, which has led to an over reliance on military forces.’ Although reform is an ongoing process, the reforms that have been made have been criticized as being ‘marginally successful so far’.<sup>10</sup> However, institutional choices that are made concerning structures, policies and mechanisms will have direct impact on improved civilian capacity. Recruitment and deployment issues have been a top (if not the only) priority driving the civilian agenda. Nascent structures have also faced continuing upheaval because of structural reforms that aim to improve inter-agency processes in the desire to operationalize whole-of-government approaches. These organizations face a remarkably similar set of challenges and constraints—despite their differences in structure, purpose and even national context.

As multilateral organizations and national governments look to alternative solutions to expand and diversify the pool of civilian experts, a contentious issue, but one that deserves more attention, has arisen: the role of private sector actors. The emergence and growing role of these actors in the military dimension of peace operations through the provision of security, logistics and equipment to the EU, NATO and the UN and to some humanitarian NGOs has already received much attention in academic and policy discussions.<sup>11</sup> Critics argue against the use of private sector actors because of legitimacy, accountability and transparency concerns, which are exemplified by the US Government’s recent experience of employing such contractors in Iraq. Concern also exists about a similar encroachment on the civilian sphere by private contractors. For example, the new NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan employs a significant number of private contractors.

Institutional developments in the civilian dimension of peace operations do not occur in isolation. Calls to strengthen civilian capacities raise the important question of financing. In the EU and the UN the planning and financing processes are separate and do not happen at the same pace. Missions are often hampered by slow and cumbersome budgeting cycles (as

<sup>9</sup> Blair, S. and Fitz-Gerald, A., ‘The need for conceptual clarity: evaluating the current stabilisation debate’, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (forthcoming 2010). See also Serafino, N. M., *Peacekeeping, Stabilization and Conflict Transitions: Background and Congressional Action on the Civilian Response/Reserve Corps and other Civilian Stabilization and Reconstruction Capabilities*, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress RL32862 (US Congress: Washington, DC, 5 Feb. 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Bensahel, N., ‘International perspectives on interagency reform: testimony presented before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations on January 29, 2008’, RAND Testimony series, Santa Monica, CA, <<http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT298/>>, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of the issue see Chesterman, S. and Lehnardt, C. (eds), *From Mercenaries to Market: The Rise and Regulation of Private Military Companies* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2007).

discussed in the context of UNMIS in section III below). At the national level, continued over-reliance on the military is arguably due to the fact that defence departments or ministries often have far larger budgets or discretionary spending authority than the civilian sector.<sup>12</sup> The civilian agenda must therefore take into account broader factors.

However, the issue of the civilian contribution to peace operations has been dominated by the West. Efforts behind the scene are under way to support multinational approaches through widening the debate to include actors from the 'Global South'.

### **The United Nations**

As part of its ongoing broad 'Peace Operations 2010' reform agenda, the UN Secretariat issued two key documents in 2009: the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding, and a DPKO–Department of Field Services (DFS) non-paper, 'A new partnership agenda: charting a new horizon for UN peacekeeping'.<sup>13</sup> Both aim to improve the efficacy of UN engagement in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and came about, in part, in response to the Security Council's 2008 request to the Secretary-General to provide advice and strategy for more effective UN support and assistance to countries that are in transition from conflict to peace.<sup>14</sup> Much of what was included in the two documents reinforced recurring lessons of the past decade. Their emphasis on better planning, achievable mandates, clarified roles for civilians, strengthened leadership teams in host countries and institutional harmonization within the UN system are recognition that much more needs to be done.

The Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding outlines what is needed in the civilian field and the gaps in the available capacity. It emphasizes the need to strengthen the leadership capacity of the political, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development elements of any future UN presence in a host country. This approach is echoed in the 'New Horizons' paper; its emphasis on strong mission leadership capability is a shift to a peace operation 'that focuses on the skills, capacity and willingness of personnel, as well as material, to deliver required results'. Senior leaders are expected to possess substantial negotiation and mediation expertise, have in-depth regional knowledge with requisite language abilities, and possess vast

<sup>12</sup> Barton, F. and Unger, N., 'Civil–military relations, fostering development, and expanding civilian capacity', Brookings Institution and Center for Strategic and International Studies, Workshop Report, Apr. 2009, <[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2009/04\\_development\\_unger.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2009/04_development_unger.aspx)>.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations (note 5); and United Nations, Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting the New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping* (United Nations: New York, July 2009).

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, Security Council, Statement by the President of the Security Council, S/PRST/2008/16, 20 May 2008.

experience in strategic planning and the management of large, complex organizations. Recognizing that the number of individuals with such credentials is small, the UN proposed to focus on choosing a team of senior leaders. In order to improve the selection and retention process, in 2008 the DFS created a dedicated unit for senior leadership appointments. The 'New Horizons' paper also envisages a second-tier team of experts with similar expertise to support the management team.

However, no unified team of analytical, planning and coordination experts to support the executive team currently exists in the UN, and no structure or mechanism is in place in the UN Secretariat to assess the necessary support and expertise for in-country leadership teams. Instead, individual experts are deployed piecemeal by the respective agencies. Noting that civilian planning capacity is still weak, the DPKO was thus tasked to review the quality and efficacy of existing integrated task forces and the recently established integrated operational teams (IOTs) to determine if the task forces and IOTs could play a role to improve the current situation.<sup>15</sup>

The 'New Horizons' paper notes that considerable progress has been made in building up the reservoir of expertise in areas such as DDR, SSR and the rule of law. Other areas, such as public administration (i.e. public finance and basic monetary and fiscal policy expertise), have not come as far, in part perhaps because such expertise is not readily available in the UN system. The report recommends that, rather than building in-house capacity in these areas, strong partnerships should be developed with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to draw on their expertise.

Building on the lessons learned from previous and ongoing UN multi-dimensional peace operations (see section III), the 'New Horizons' paper articulates the importance of setting out clear operational standards for mission mandate tasks. Such standards would define the core tasks and operational requirements and serve as the basis for identifying the requisite personnel and resources. It appears, however, that the focus would be on uniformed personnel (military and police) instead of on the civilian component.<sup>16</sup> However, it is the latter that requires most, given their overlapping roles.

Both the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding and the 'New Horizons' paper devote substantial attention to the issue of how to rapidly deploy civilian capacities to the field. Delaying such deployment can severely impede a mission's ability to implement its mandate. A recent

<sup>15</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, 'Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations', Report of the Secretary-General, A/63/615, 17 Dec. 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Jovin, R., United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Division of Policy Evaluation and Training, Interview with author, Jan. 2010.

study recommends that the UN abandon the current model of trying to deploy all civilian staff at once and instead adopt a three-phased approach: (a) deployment of a bare-bones team of up to 30 personnel in the start-up phase; (b) deployment of 'sector specialist teams' of 40–130 personnel in the 'ramp-up' phase; and (c) deployment of long-term personnel.<sup>17</sup> Another approach to the deployment challenge, which appears to be favoured not only by the UN but also by regional organizations and national governments, is the notion of a standing capacity or the creation of rosters (standby capacity).<sup>18</sup> A standing capacity refers to a group of staff that are employed full time with the express purpose of being available for rapid deployment when the need arises. A standby capacity consists of persons pre-identified to be deployed on demand. Staff can be pre-screened, pre-interviewed and even pre-contracted, depending on the level of investment. Another standby option, often referred to as a rostered capacity (i.e. a database of potential candidates), is to make use of people already employed who can be temporarily reassigned when emergency surge capacity is needed.

The UN intends to build on the early success of the DPKO's Standing Police Capacity and the mediation standby teams of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). A standing capacity may be appropriate for police personnel, but less so for public administration experts. The two models are still in their infancy and, before rosters for each civilian function proliferate, existing models should be reviewed to assess their applicability to other civilian functions. Currently, no single point exists for national or multilateral actors to request or obtain information on available resources: who should administer a clearing house for the rosters, and where should it be located? The political will, or lack of it, to feed into and maintain the rosters should also be addressed or they may be in danger of becoming empty shells that are not used.

Interestingly, a 2006 proposal by the Secretary-General to introduce 2500 career positions for the development of 'a cadre of highly mobile, experienced, trained and multi-skilled civilian staff to meet the baseline human resources requirements of UN peace operations' has not been realized because the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) of the UN General Assembly's Fifth Committee did not

<sup>17</sup> Chandran, R. et al., *Rapid Deployment of Civilians for Peace Operations: Status, Gaps, and Options* (New York University, Center on International Cooperation: New York, Apr. 2009).

<sup>18</sup> See de Coning, C., 'Civilian expertise: partnership to match supply to demand', Paper presented at 'Cooperating for peace: the challenge and promise of partnerships in peace operations', Seminar co-hosted by Geneva Centre for Security Policy and International Peace Institute, Geneva, 10–11 Dec. 2009, <[http://www.nupi.no/content/download/11498/112274/file/DeConing - Panel 4\\_Civilian\\_Expertise.pdf](http://www.nupi.no/content/download/11498/112274/file/DeConing_Panel_4_Civilian_Expertise.pdf)>.



approve the proposal.<sup>19</sup> Under that proposal, career models would be developed, and selected staff would receive targeted training programmes and rotate between secretariat and field positions in order to gain a well-rounded experience of peace operations. However, the ACABQ argued that the human resource reform under way would address many of the concerns that gave rise to the proposal.<sup>20</sup>

Another initiative in the UN context is the move towards greater reliance on existing capacities in the host country. UN field missions and offices, particularly in developing countries, have been requested to identify qualified national staff, who will be placed on the rosters for potential selection for employment in post-conflict countries. This stems from an emerging consensus that neighbouring countries, countries with similar socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and countries that have previously undergone post-conflict transition can greatly contribute to the international community's peacebuilding efforts by sending civilian experts who may have a better understanding of the specific challenges of post-conflict countries.<sup>21</sup>

### **EU civilian capacity: an ongoing and ambitious transformation process**

The EU's demanding agenda for reforming civilian crisis management operations deserves closer scrutiny. Civilian crisis management is an important tool under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The structures for civilian crisis management, as they are termed in the EU, have endured a year of sustained uncertainty because of the tumultuous upheavals associated with the approval of the 2007 Lisbon Treaty.<sup>22</sup> During the 10 years of its existence the CSDP (previously known as the European Security and Defence Policy, ESDP) has undergone profound institutional changes in intense periods of growing demand for civilian crisis management capabilities, including the conduct of 13 civilian operations since 2003.<sup>23</sup> However, 'the institutional structures that support

<sup>19</sup> For details of the Secretary-General's proposal for the 2500 civilian career peacekeepers see United Nations, General Assembly, 'Investing in people', Report of the Secretary-General, Addendum, 'Reforming the field service category: investing in meeting the human resources requirements of United Nations peace operations in the twenty-first century', A/61/255/Add.1, 22 Aug. 2006.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, 'Fifth Committee takes up \$300 million budget for 2008/09 peacekeeping support account', Press release, 6 June 2008, <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/gaab3857.doc.htm>>.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations (note 5).

<sup>22</sup> Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed 13 Dec. 2007, entered into force 1 Dec. 2009, <[http://europa.eu/lisbon\\_treaty/](http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/)>.

<sup>23</sup> The EU has conducted 13 civilian crisis management missions: 7 police (EUPM, EUPOL PROXIMA, EUPOL Kinshasa, EUPAT, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Afghanistan, and EUPOL RD Congo); 3 rule-of-law (EUJUST THEMIS, EUJUST LEX Iraq and EULEX Kosovo); 2 SSR (EUSEC

the planning and conduct of these operational activities are yet to come of age'.<sup>24</sup> The implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, will shape the EU's structural reform for years to come. It also highlights a sustained high level of ambition to be a global player in both foreign policy and operational terms through the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the merger of civilian and military planning functions. The creation of the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) in 2007 and of the Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD) in 2009 'mark a departure in ESDP institutional development'.<sup>25</sup> Finally, the ongoing Civilian Headline Goal (CHG) process (discussed below) has continued to undergo significant review and revision since 2004 with the adoption of CHG 2010 in 2007.

### *Civilian Headline Goals*

At the June 2000 European Council, the EU set out its main tasks for civilian crisis management, known as the Civilian Headline Goals.<sup>26</sup> Initially comprising police, rule of law, civil administration and civil protection, these were extended in 2004 to include monitoring missions and support to EU special representatives by 2008.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the EU indicated that it would also contribute to activities such as SSR and support DDR processes. Further demonstrating its high level of ambition, the EU indicated that it 'must be able to conduct concurrent civilian missions at different levels of engagement; to deploy civilian means simultaneously with military means at the outset of an operation and finally, civilian crisis management operations under the ESDP must be deployable autonomously, jointly or in close cooperation with military operations'.<sup>28</sup> Yet critical analysis suggests that the 'following process of civilian capability development by far exceeded general expectations in terms of both speed and quantitative success'.<sup>29</sup> According to one assessment, 'The so-called Civilian Headline Goal (CHG) process . . . was a rigorous attempt to get member states to commit civilians for potential deployment scenarios. Each member state pledged a

DR Congo and EU SSR Guinea Bissau); and 1 border control (EUBAM Rafah). For detailed information see the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, <<http://www.sipri.org/databases/pko/>>; and appendix 3A. It is important to note that the EU classifies civilian police operations under the category of civilians. For details of all CSDP missions (including those excluded from the SIPRI database) see CSDP map, <<http://www.csdpmap.eu>>.

<sup>24</sup> Gebhard, C., 'The crisis management and planning directorate: recalibrating ESDP planning and conduct capacities', *CFSP Forum*, vol. 7, no. 4 (July 2009), pp. 8–14.

<sup>25</sup> Gebhard (note 24), p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> Council of the European Union, 'Strengthening the Common European Security and Defence Policy: Presidency Report to the Feira European Council', document 9149/00, Brussels, 15 June 2000.

<sup>27</sup> Council of the European Union, 'Civilian Headline Goal 2008', document 15863/04, Brussels, 17 Dec. 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Council of the European Union (note 27).

<sup>29</sup> Gebhard (note 24), p. 9.

certain number of civilians, and yet the CHG process does not appear to have helped the EU get boots on the ground.<sup>30</sup>

In order to comply with its ambitious objectives, the EU adopted a step-by-step approach to the development of its civilian crisis management capabilities: 'it entails the definition of planning assumptions on the basis of scenarios, the elaboration of capability requirements lists, the assessment of national contributions and the identification of capability shortfalls'. In 2007, building on the results of the CHG 2008 and on the growing body of ESDP crisis management experience, the EU adopted CHG 2010 to 'help to ensure that the EU can conduct crisis management, in line with the European Security Strategy, by deploying civilian crisis management capabilities of high quality, with the support functions and equipment required in a short time-span and in sufficient quantity'.<sup>31</sup>

Recognizing the iterative nature of the CHG process, EU ministers set out an annual plan as part of CHG 2010, launched in 2007, to include the Report on Civilian Preparedness in October 2009 and the Civilian Capability Targets in November 2009. EU ministers agreed to hold 'a yearly conference to assess the state of play, monitor progress and guide future efforts in the field of civilian ESDP. Ministerial Guidelines will be issued at the end of the CHG 2010 process'.<sup>32</sup>

These initiatives highlight the inherently political nature of the EU's efforts in regard to its civilian agenda, with little attention paid to tangible results. Equally, this overly politicized process has overshadowed the challenges of the EU's decentralized approach to harnessing civilian capacity, which relies on seconded staff that have been selected and provided by member states. This leaves field missions overly reliant on member states' contributions and therefore often under-staffed. Finally, in 2009 implementing the Lisbon Treaty took centre stage and has become a significant focus for policymakers, taking scarce civilian capacity away from operations.

### *Structural reforms and implications of the Lisbon Treaty*

The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 provided the impetus for the reorganization of the EU's architecture. This included the creation of the post of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is both a vice-president of the European Commission and a member of the Council, and the launch of the EEAS—the EU's new foreign service—to support her efforts. Unfortunately, the treaty provided little direction or

<sup>30</sup> Korski, D. and Gowan, R., *Can the EU Rebuild Failing States? A Review of Europe's Civilian Capacities* (European Council on Foreign Relations: London, Oct. 2009).

<sup>31</sup> Council of the European Union, 'Civilian Headline Goal 2010', document 14823/07, 19 Nov. 2007, para. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Council of the European Union (note 31).

guidance on the role of the EEAS and the necessary restructuring and merging of functions between the Council and the Commission with implications for civilian crisis management.<sup>33</sup> Recognition is growing that the implementation will be progressive, rather than a single launch, and it is likely to take until 2014.<sup>34</sup> Like reform processes elsewhere, the proposals in the Lisbon Treaty aim to improve the EU's ability to act in a more 'comprehensive' fashion on the international stage, not least in the area of civilian crisis management.

In June 2007 the EU created the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability to oversee the operational level organization and control of missions, which became operational in May 2008. This provides the EU with a unified civilian commander and structural counterpart to the EU Military Staff (EUMS). In December 2008 the European Council agreed on the creation of the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate through the merger of former directorates VIII (defence aspects) and IX (civilian crisis management) of Directorate-General E (external and politico-military affairs) in the Council Secretariat, to integrate civilian and military planning at the strategic level, which became operational as of 16 December 2009.<sup>35</sup> However the transition and the modalities of relationships with other structures, in particular the CPCC, will take some time to function smoothly. At the time of writing much effort has been expended by officials on organizational restructuring, and in particular the relationship of the CMPD with the CPCC and how the EEAS will affect the planning of civilian missions.

<sup>33</sup> The Lisbon Treaty in matters relating to the Common Foreign and Security Policy offers only the following guidance: 'In fulfilling his mandate, the High Representative shall be assisted by a European External Action Service. This service shall work in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the Member States and shall comprise officials from relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission as well as staff seconded from national diplomatic services of the member states.' Treaty of Lisbon (note 22), Article 1(30), amending Article 13a of the Treaty on European Union. See also Avery, G., 'Europe's foreign service: from design to delivery', European Policy Centre Policy Brief, Nov. 2009, <[http://www.epc.eu/TEWN/pdf/95967659L\\_Europe's\\_foreign\\_service.pdf](http://www.epc.eu/TEWN/pdf/95967659L_Europe's_foreign_service.pdf)>, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Lieb, J. and Maurer, A., 'Creating the European External Action Service: preconditions for avoiding a rude awakening', SWP Comments no. 13, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), June 2008, <[http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/produkte/swp\\_aktuell\\_detail.php?id=9162](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/produkte/swp_aktuell_detail.php?id=9162)>, pp. 1-8. The authors note that the expiry of the EU budget for 2007-13 would generate a review of the EEAS's establishment in 2013. The period up to the Council's decision on the EEAS (expected in Apr. 2010) can be considered a first stage, to be followed by a second that will last years. A status report, to be produced in 2012, will review the function and organization of the EEAS; if necessary, the initial decision will be revised, possibly in 2014. Avery (note 33), p. 2; and Crowe, B., *The European External Action Service: Roadmap for Success* (Chatham House: London, May 2008), p. 8. For the political, legal and institutional reasons for the time needed to make the EEAS fully operational see Adebahr, C., 'The first will be the last: why the EU foreign service will remain embryonic for some time', *CFSP Forum*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Mar. 2008), pp. 5-9.

<sup>35</sup> Council of the European Union, Presidency Conclusions, Brussels, 11-12 Dec. 2008, Annex 2, Declaration by the European Council on the Enhancement of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), Article 6.

One of the main concerns with the creation of the CMPD is the risk that the proposed integration of the civilian and military dimensions of EU crisis management strategic planning could lead in effect to the absorption of the civilian dimension into the military dimension. Merging of directorates VIII and IX could mean that the planning of civilian missions is not conducted by civilians with the relevant political, professional and operational expertise. The increased militarization of the CSDP could, in turn, have a negative impact on civilian crisis management.<sup>36</sup>

### **The African Union**

The African Union has not yet deployed its own multidimensional peace operation or stand-alone civilian mission. However, its experience with the AU–UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and its own commitment to fully operationalize the African Standby Force (ASF), including the civilian component, by 2010—pushed the civilian aspects of peace operations to the top of the AU’s agenda. Interestingly, developments in Africa differ from the European approach, which has focused on creating institutional structures and capacities in the public sector. In Africa, institutional developments do not consist of recalibrating individual governmental department or capacity because African governments often lack the capacity or resources to undertake such institutional changes. Instead, the civilian debate and the development of civilian expertise have been led by training institutions (often funded by external donors) working in support of the AU. This also reflects the militarization of peace operations within national governments and is made evident at the continent-wide level, where the structure of the ASF and the corresponding efforts to build its capacity have largely focused on military aspects.

The need to develop a civilian component in the ASF has also become apparent because it is the least developed or institutionalized of the ASF’s three components. No civilian personnel serve on the AU ASF Planning Element or in a majority of the regional brigades. The development of the civilian policy framework has thus fallen to the training institutions. The absence of a civilian architecture in the AU has several implications: the civilian policy framework is not institutionalized and hence not properly integrated into the overall ASF framework.<sup>37</sup> It is hoped that the civilian dimension will be given greater attention by the UN’s AU Peacekeeping

<sup>36</sup> European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, ‘Statement on civilian–military integration in European security and defence policy’, Brussels, 18 Feb. 2009, <[http://www.eplo.org/documents/EPLO\\_State ment.pdf](http://www.eplo.org/documents/EPLO_State ment.pdf)>. See also Gebhard (note 24).

<sup>37</sup> Dersso, S. A., ‘The need for “civilianising” the African Standby Force’, African Peace Support Trainers’ Association, Peacekeeping This Month, 26 Mar. 2009, <<http://www.apsta-africa.org/news/article260309.php>>.

Support Team in the context of the Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union.<sup>38</sup>

### **National efforts**

Like the EU and the UN, individual states have struggled to close the gap between demand and supply of civilian capacity, while attempting to operationalize whole-of-government approaches through inter-agency integration. It is both a broad and narrow issue. Driven by the civilian deployment challenge, in 2004 three governments in particular—Canada, the United Kingdom and the USA, known as ‘the trilaterals’—created inter-agency units to overcome these challenges. They have all adopted a similar, tiered approach to their deployment pools that combines the skills and experience of people across the public and private sector. However, these three countries face the common challenges of duty-of-care issues, retention and availability. Canada has created the Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (START); the UK has established the Stabilisation Unit; and the USA has its Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Yet a ‘cultural gap’ in all three countries impedes the integration necessary to realize a whole-of-government approach and deliver a ‘unity of purpose towards a shared goal’.<sup>39</sup>

START was established in 2005 in the International Security Branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs and was ‘created to enhance the Government of Canada’s capacity for international crisis response through a coordinated, whole-of-government approach’.<sup>40</sup> As part of a reorganization of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the offices that dealt with humanitarian affairs, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peace operations, and mines and small arms were incorporated into START. Like its US counterpart, ‘since it remains in a single ministry, it has not made much progress in achieving interdepartmental cooperation’.<sup>41</sup>

In 2004 the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office created a new Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) in order to facilitate government-wide planning, to build a deployable civilian capacity, and to serve as a source of expertise and lessons learned from previous operations. It is a joint office of the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development. The PCRU changed its name to the Stabilisation Unit in December 2007. However, coordination has been hard to achieve in practice. It has been called ‘an

<sup>38</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, Letter dated 11 December 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, A/61/630, 12 Dec. 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Blair and Fitz-Gerald (note 9).

<sup>40</sup> For more information see Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, ‘About START’, <<http://www.international.gc.ca/start-gtsr/start-definition-gtsr.aspx>>.

<sup>41</sup> Bensahel (note 10).

orphan with three parents' and said to lack 'a single champion that is invested in its success and that has the power to promote its mission and force coordination among reluctant bureaucrats'.<sup>42</sup>

The S/CRS, created in July 2004, but only signed into law in September 2008, has a mission to 'lead, coordinate, and institutionalize' civilian capacities for post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization efforts.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, it was initially understaffed and, despite its mission to lead, the 'CRS has not yet been designated as the lead agency for any stabilization or reconstruction missions, and the planning frameworks it has established have not yet been fully utilized'.<sup>44</sup>

Other countries, notably in developed countries—including Australia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden—have made attempts to contribute to the civilian agenda either through supporting multinational efforts in the EU and the UN or by training their own nationals, often including the creation of units in the relevant ministries or governmental agencies.<sup>45</sup> For example, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has contributed to the budget of the Hiroshima Peace-builders Centre at the University of Hiroshima, the German Government has created the Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF, or Center for International Peace Operations), the Finnish Government has created the Centre for Civilian Crisis Management, and the Swedish Government created the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway have created stabilization units in their ministries of foreign affairs.

### III. The UN Mission in Sudan

The various and ongoing efforts to create structures, mechanisms and policies in multilateral organizations and national governments to augment their civilian capabilities may not translate into concrete or workable solutions in the field. The UN Mission in Sudan illustrates the conceptual and operational challenges facing the civilian sphere in peacekeeping operations. UNMIS is not unique in its difficulty to fill and sustain its civilian component; other UN missions with sizeable civilian components face similar problems, as do EU stand-alone civilian missions. It is nevertheless

<sup>42</sup> Bensahel (note 10).

<sup>43</sup> Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, US Public Law 110-417, signed into law 14 Oct. 2008, <<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:HR5658:>>, title 16. In Dec. 2005 National Security Presidential Directive 44 designated the US State Department as the lead agency for such efforts, and directed the Coordinator to co-chair a new inter-agency Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) for Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations. White House, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44, Washington, DC, 7 Dec. 2005, <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44.html>>.

<sup>44</sup> Bensahel (note 10).

<sup>45</sup> For an audit of countries' contributions to EU operations see Korski and Gowan (note 30).

useful to look at some of the issues facing the mission as examples of a more widespread set of challenges.

Established in March 2005, UNMIS currently has the second largest civilian component of a UN multidimensional peace operation, with 827 civilian staff deployed and an authorized ceiling of 1440.<sup>47</sup> As with other UN multidimensional operations, Security Council Resolution 1590 mandated the mission 'to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement' (CPA).<sup>48</sup> The implementation of the agreement entailed a comprehensive set of tasks and responsibilities for UNMIS: monitoring the ceasefire; establishing a DDR programme to promote political inclusiveness, including raising awareness and understanding of the ongoing peace process; promoting the rule of law, including the reform of state institutions (judiciary and police); monitoring and promoting human rights; offering electoral assistance; and facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. In addition, Resolution 1590 authorized the mission with Chapter VII powers to use force to protect civilians 'under imminent threat in its areas of deployment and as it deems within its capabilities'.<sup>49</sup>

In the run-up to the elections in 2010, 2009 proved to be a tense period of worsening insecurity in Southern Sudan, particularly in the Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes states. This added to the ongoing challenges that UNMIS faced in implementing its mandate. Since its inception, the mission has run into numerous difficulties with getting the necessary number and appropriately skilled personnel in almost every component—military, police and civilian—of the mission. This inevitably affected the mission's ability to implement its ambitious mandate.

## Planning

UNMIS was preceded by an advance mission that was deployed to the field in June 2004. The UN Advance Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS), consisting of 164 civilian staff, was to facilitate the peace process and prepare the ground for an eventual fully fledged multidimensional mission on the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.<sup>50</sup> This was a novel step for the UN in its

<sup>47</sup> MONUC has the largest deployment of civilian personnel. See appendix 3A.

<sup>48</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 1590, 24 Mar. 2005. The text of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is available at <<http://www.usip.org/resources/peace-agreements-sudan>>.

<sup>49</sup> Chapter VI of the UN Charter allows the UN Security Council to recommend measures for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, including the deployment of peacekeepers, to be taken with the consent of all parties concerned. Chapter VII empowers the Security Council to impose such measures on the parties as are needed to restore international peace and security, regardless of the parties' consent. Charter of the United Nations, 26 June 1945, <<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>>.

<sup>50</sup> On UNAMIS see the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database (note 23); and Wiharta, S., 'Planning and deploying peace operations', *SIPRI Yearbook 2008*, pp. 97–112.



pre-mission planning process, and in theory it was to have resulted in the establishment of a needs-driven mission based on on-the-ground assessments and consultation with the parties to the CPA. However the escalation of the conflict in Darfur and the concomitant support provided by UNAMIS to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) diverted a considerable amount of UNAMIS resources. UNAMIS's political affairs, civil affairs and human rights components ended up focusing their attention on the political process in Darfur. For example, the first three Civil Affairs field offices were located in Darfur.<sup>51</sup> The unexpected responsibilities in Darfur resulted in a rushed final effort to start up UNMIS.

At the time of UNMIS's establishment, the UN's Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) had not yet been formally constituted but was the framework for planning UNMIS.<sup>52</sup> UNAMIS received a concept of operations (objectives and priorities of the mission) and the basic elements of the mission plan (the mission structure, including the thematic and functional components) from the planning team headquarters in New York. UNAMIS and the existing UN Country Team (UNCT) thus had little influence on the shape of the mission. Essentially, UNAMIS's role was to come up with an organizational chart of the mission and an auditing exercise, specifying how many posts were necessary to implement each mandated task (e.g. human rights) for the comprehensive results-based framework that is submitted to the ACABAQ before the launch of a mission.

The incoming mission's lack of autonomy to recruit the appropriate individuals for the job was further impeded by the apparent politicization at UN headquarters in filling senior positions for UNMIS.<sup>53</sup> The results-based framework is designed to make UN peace operations more accountable—operations are measured against their key objectives, outputs and activities, with the view to adjust their resource requirements as necessary. While the missions have some input into the number of staff required for a particular function, they have little or no say in adjustments to the type of functions necessary, without an explicit change to the Security Council mandate. For instance, if it were deemed that an economic advisor was necessary for the mission, the head of mission would not be able to recruit such a person until the following budget cycle, and only if that were included in the Security Council mandate. Clearly, getting the right configuration for the complex civilian component of a UN peace operation is impeded by the UN's rather rigid bureaucratic architecture. However, the guidelines for the IMPP implementation were further improved in 2009 to ensure that

<sup>51</sup> Schumann, P., UNMIS, Director, Civil Affairs (Aug. 2004–Sep. 2005), Chief of Staff (Oct. 2005–Dec. 2006), Regional Representative and Coordinator in South Sudan (Jan.–Aug. 2007), Interview with the author, Jan. 2010.

<sup>52</sup> For more on the IMPP see Wiharta (note 50), pp. 97–112.

<sup>53</sup> Schumann (note 51).

field missions and the UNCTs play a greater role in designing the strategic framework by drawing up field-level guidelines.<sup>54</sup>

### **Recruitment and deployment challenges**

UNMIS was slow to reach its authorized strength. By the end of 2005, nine months after it had been established, only half of the civilian staff were deployed. In September 2006 the vacancy rate of civilian personnel was reduced to 36.5 per cent but, reportedly, the number of personnel resigning was larger than the number of personnel hired.<sup>55</sup> More critically, it was the middle to senior management positions that were difficult to fill. Part of the problem had to do with the UN's recruitment procedure, which is a lengthy and cumbersome process. Senior mission leadership have indicated that filling all the civilian positions in the first year can be counterproductive and unnecessary. They favour a phased and flexible deployment during the start-up phase and have indicated that the usual recruitment cycle of 6–12 months should be waived so as to allow for more flexibility. For example, given the wide geographical spread of UNMIS field offices and the different priority areas for each of them, a specialist programme planner in the civil affairs section who is recruited for 3–9 months would have been preferable to several generalists for 6–12 months.<sup>56</sup>

Compounding the administrative difficulties is the physical and security environment in which UNMIS operates. UNMIS is considered to be one of the 'harsher' postings. The bulk of UNMIS civilian staff are deployed to the regional offices in Abeyi, Jonglei and Juba, remote parts of the country with harsh living conditions. At the same time, the government in Khartoum has imposed several restrictions on UNMIS personnel, thus limiting their movement and ability to carry out their tasks. These recruitment and deployment challenges refer only to the deployment of international (and to a large extent) Western civilian experts. Little effort has been made to identify qualified Sudanese staff to fill some of the civilian posts. UNMIS has the highest number of national professional officers compared to other UN missions, but such staff still represent less than 1 per cent of UNMIS's total civilian deployment.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Le Roy, A., UN Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Remarks made to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, 23 Feb. 2009, <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/articles/article230209.htm>>.

<sup>55</sup> Center on International Cooperation, *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2007* (Lynne Reiner: Denver, CO, 2007), pp. 30–34.

<sup>56</sup> Schumann (note 51).

<sup>57</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, 'Financing arrangements for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009', Note by the Secretary-General, A/63/756, 11 Mar. 2009.

### Clarity and coherence in mission mandates

The issue of coordination between different components of a peace operation is an important factor in ensuring that the civilian staff can effectively implement their programming activities. During the mission start-up phase the deployment of UNMIS's mission-support component, in particular the security unit, reportedly lagged behind the rest of the functional components. As a result, many functional components, such as the human rights, civil affairs and political affairs sections, were prevented from making field visits to undertake assessments that ultimately would inform the programming strategy.<sup>58</sup> Consequently, the initial programming priorities were general in nature, and UNMIS was perceived by the Sudanese population to be doing less. Better coordination between the various components could also lead to a more efficient use of mission resources. For instance, joint assessments between the military and civilian components in Juba meant that scarce resources, such as helicopters, were used more efficiently.

While systemic challenges are important in themselves, and need to be addressed to improve the efficacy of the civilian component, the fundamental question concerns the type of functions civilians should serve. In UNMIS, it was decided that civilian protection would be a stand-alone function. In Darfur, however, civilian protection was a cross-cutting function. A rape victim could thus be interviewed by several UN agencies, all with civilian protection as part of their remit. Whether or not this cross-cutting approach translates into tangible gains for the Sudanese population remains to be seen.<sup>59</sup> The lack of clarity of civilian functions also extends to the roles and responsibilities of different sections. For instance, the political and civil affairs sections often have overlapping duties. More importantly, the institutional reforms undertaken thus far by the UN do not adequately address the division of labour between the peace operation and the UN Country Team. Are they to work in parallel or should the UNCT's substantive work be subsumed by the peace operation? In Sudan, the UNCT was already working on issues such as rule of law, demining, DDR and refugee returns when UNMIS was established. This caused considerable confusion to the relevant Sudanese entities, which were already dealing with one UN partner and then had to work with another.

Interestingly, the Security Council resolution that established UNMIS was specific enough to ensure that it would have an adequately sized civilian component to implement the mandated tasks. However, it failed to ensure that the manpower was matched with much needed financial

<sup>58</sup> Schumann (note 51).

<sup>59</sup> McMurry, N., 'Protection in practice: the role of peacekeepers in Southern Sudan', Stimson Center, 7 Dec. 2009, <<http://www.stimson.org/pub.cfm?ID=912>>.

resources. Thus, despite having well-staffed sections, UNMIS was in a poor position to effectively implement its mandate because it did not have the requisite financial resources to carry out activities.

#### IV. Conclusions

Civilians play an ever more central role in peace operations and peacebuilding and, consequently, the growing demand for their expertise is unquestionable. The year 2009 was marked by sustained attention to the civilian dimension. In the past five years political commitment and institutional efforts have expanded, creating structures to support the civilian contribution to peace operations and to overcome the deployment challenges that have plagued past missions. These attempts to address the civilian gap reflect the resolve of the peacekeeping and peacebuilding community to enhance the state of the civilian architecture.

Yet, despite the commitment to strengthening the civilian dimension and the range of institutional innovations described here, these nascent structures are still neither appropriately configured nor provided with adequate resources. Enhancing the civilian dimension is a broader agenda and goes beyond expeditiously deploying the right experts in the numbers necessary. It requires revisiting the broader architecture and examining the linkages between inter-related factors, such as financing peace operations and recruitment. It also necessitates critical analysis of the purpose and objectives of each civilian function in order to avoid duplication of tasks within the mission.

At the field level, UNMIS starkly illustrates that the challenges of civilian deployment cannot be resolved by reforms in the DPKO alone. An overhaul of other parts of the UN system, in particular the way in which missions are financed, is necessary if improved efficacy of peace operations is to be felt on the ground. 'Good institutional arrangements will not of themselves deliver the desired result, but their absence certainly makes this more difficult.'<sup>60</sup> More importantly, UNMIS highlights that peacebuilding calls for tailored approaches and, consequently, requires flexible approaches to mission design and staffing that can only be achieved through a more demand-driven and iterative planning process. The lessons learned from UNMIS and other missions have clearly fed into the recent multilateral and bilateral policy initiatives on civilian actors and underscore that, although an overhaul of the global civilian institutional architecture is necessary and timely, it is clearly highly ambitious.

<sup>60</sup> Crowe (note 34), p. 13.