Then and Now:

Understanding the Spectrum of Complex Peace Operations
Table of Contents

Introduction .......................................................................................................................................1
Complex Operations and the International System........................................................................2
Evolving Models of Peace Operations: From Traditional to Complex............................................3
  Post-9/11 Strategic Environment ...............................................................................................6
Addressing Complexity in Peace Operations ................................................................................8
  Coherence in Mission Planning and Execution .........................................................................8
  Separating Protection of Civilians and Counter-Insurgency Operations .....................................10
Current Approaches for Managing Complexity in Peace Operations............................................12
  Integrated Missions ..................................................................................................................14
  Hybrid/ Joint Operations ...........................................................................................................17
  Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) ................................................................................18
Conclusion and Recommendations................................................................................................22

List of Tables
Table 1: The International Security Environment and Peace Operations ......................................5
Table 2: Levels of Integration and Objectives of Current Approaches ........................................13
Table 3: Levels of Integration of Current UN Peace Operations ..................................................15
Table 4: Hybrid Operations: Characteristics and Examples .........................................................17
Table 5: PRT Core Functions, Objectives and Strategies ..............................................................19
About the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre

Peace operations and the environment in which they are conducted have evolved significantly since the first deployment over 50 years ago. Today’s global environment requires States to mobilize “whole of government” resources to secure peace and reconstruct failed states. In this effort, it demands effective and unprecedented levels of cooperation and coordination among military, civilian and police components.

The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC) specializes in this integrated approach of bringing together military, civilians and police in an open and collegial environment. This, coupled with years of experience in problem-based and multi-disciplinary education and training, has earned it an international reputation for excellence in peace operations training, education and research, a reputation which brings credit to Canada from around the world.

For more information please contact us:
Pearson Peacekeeping Centre
HCI Building, Suite 5110
1125 Colonel By Drive,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6 Canada
www.peaceoperations.org

About the Author

Kristine St-Pierre is a Research Analyst with the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre. Ms St-Pierre manages The Pearson Papers, the Mission Monitor and conducts ongoing research on complex peace operations. She also supports the development of training material and courses, and oversees the ‘women in peace operations’ project. Her main areas of interest are international peace operations, Canadian and European defence policy, and environmental considerations in peace operations and reconstruction efforts.

Ms St-Pierre has held positions with the Canadian Mission to the European Union in Brussels, the Henry L. Stimson Center in Washington, D.C., and the United Nations Association of Canada, as well as Foreign Affairs and Environment Canada. She has published articles on a number of issues, including hybrid missions, Darfur and UNAMID, EU and Canadian conflict management responses, as well as EU and NATO rapid response forces. Ms St-Pierre holds a Masters degree from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and a BA (Honours) in Environmental Studies. She is fluent in French, English, and Spanish, and has studied Italian.

Please send any comments to kstpierr@peaceoperations.org.
Introduction

Peace operations are constantly evolving, adapting to the challenges of new security environments. The evolution, however, is neither straightforward nor linear. Since the first peacekeepers were deployed in 1956, the concept of peacekeeping has changed dramatically. Originally, it referred to the interposition of a neutral force between parties to a conflict to stop or contain hostilities, support a ceasefire, or supervise the implementation of a peace agreement. While traditional peacekeeping, as a mechanism for resolving peace, is far from obsolete, the concept is constantly evolving as a result of changes within the peace and security environment.

Since the end of the Cold War (1989), peacekeeping has undergone substantive transformation. Contemporary peace operations are now multidimensional, multifaceted, and multifunctional. They are characterized by a mix of military, police, and civilians who are often deployed to hostile situations where there is no peace to keep. They involve a range of organisations including the UN, regional organizations, NGOs and other non-state actors. Finally, they incorporate political, economic, social and/or cultural elements as well as military security components and cover a multitude of tasks including monitoring, enforcement, protection of civilians, security, governance, rule of law, human rights, humanitarian assistance, and elections. Over the years, peace operations have been compelled to change and adapt to new environments at an unprecedented rate, translating in what is now referred to as ‘complex peace operations.’ In this paper, complex peace operations are defined to include the range of operations conducted by all actors and encompass all types of operations short of war, including traditional peacekeeping, peace enforcement, reconstruction and stabilization operations.

The complexity in peace operations points to the need to broaden our horizons from traditional peacekeeping and to include more recently evolved concepts that deal with today’s different conflict environments. The complexity of operations and of the context in which military, police, and civilians are being deployed also underscores the fact that there are no—and nor should there be—“one-size-fits-all” models of peace operations. In addition, while there should be space for some improvisation based on circumstances and context, peace operations should not rely entirely on ad hoc structures. In order to be effective, peace operations must portray a balance between flexibility and coherence. As this balance differs from operation to operation, it is imperative, in order to better respond to future crises and conflicts, that we get a clearer sense of where we are on the spectrum of complex peace operations. It is thus crucial that all actors understand the current peace and security environment in which they are operating and how the context affects and influences the nature and conduct of complex peace operations.

---

1 Alex J. Bellamy, Paul Williams, and Stuart Griffin, Understanding Peacekeeping (Cambridge: Polity, 2004).
2 United Nations, An Agenda for Peace, A/47/277-S/24111 (17 June 1992), available at www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html. It should be mentioned that while this definition serves as a useful reference point, there are no single definition of peacekeeping.
3 This paper uses the term ‘peacekeeping’ when referring to traditional peacekeeping operations conducted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The paper further uses ‘Complex peace operations,’ ‘peace operations,’ and ‘contemporary peace operations’ interchangeably. It should be noted that some analysts and practitioners go one step further by dropping the ‘peace’ and referring to the spectrum of operations as ‘complex operations’ only. The argument behind the use of complex operations is that these are said to be more comprehensive and more reflective of the current context in which operations are undertaken. While the overarching goal of any operation is to achieve peace, more immediate goals include the elimination of an enemy, in which case CO would be a better description of the operation rather than CPO. Nevertheless, this paper uses CPO, as it is important to keep the ultimate goal of all operations—viable peace—in mind.
5 This paper will provide an institutional basis for ongoing and future research projects on complex peace operations. The first strand of research seeks to identify benchmarks of success in current operations as a means of measuring the progress of peace operations (both in terms of planning and execution on the ground). The second will focus on implementing integration through interagency cooperation, looking at PRTs and integrated missions in greater detail, and through different methods of coordinating among UN peace operations and multinational forces.
In doing so, this paper explores the following three questions:

(1) How has the international security environment affected complex peace operations?

(2) What challenges does complexity in peace operations pose and what actions have actors taken to address this complexity?

(3) What specific approaches have emerged to better manage this complexity and increase the effectiveness of interventions?

The paper first discusses the evolving nature of peace operations as a consequence of the changing nature of the discourse in the international system. The paper then discusses specific ways by which complexity in peace operations is being managed. Finally, the paper examines the development of three current approaches to peace operations in an attempt to understand how each approach addresses complexity and to identify lessons learned to date. These approaches are: (1) Integrated Missions, (2) Hybrid or Joint Operations, and (3) Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). The paper concludes with three main points for improving the planning and management of complex peace operations.

Complex Operations and the International System

Peace operations constitute a major component of the international security system and their evolution can be understood as a response to the changing international system. According to Robert Jervis, a system is a set of units or elements that are interconnected in a way that changes in one part of the system produce non-linear changes in other parts of the system. These changes cannot occur without affecting other parts of the system, which Jervis and Cilliers regard as feedbacks (or unintended consequences of actions within a system). The properties and behavior of the system as a whole are different than those of its parts. Therefore, to understand the system in its entirety, one cannot simply look at the sum of its parts; one must look at the relationship and interconnections among the parts. Thus, in order to understand the nature of contemporary peace operations, it is imperative to look at the state of the international system and the influence it exerts on actors within the system. The evolution of the international system has had a tremendous impact not only on how peace operations are conducted, but also on how they are perceived.

While a system is extremely resilient to change, its high degree of interconnectedness means that disruptions in one part of the system can easily spread to other parts of the system. In other words, any intervention or change within a complex system will have more than one effect. As peace operations are intended to manage change, they are not neutral in their effects, causing both “intended” and “unintended” consequences. Unintended consequences in peace operations are

---

6 It should be noted that the changing nature of conflict, although not the focus of this paper, also has a profound influence on the international security system.
11 Ibid., 3.
outcome(s), both negative and/or positive, that were not anticipated by the operation’s mandate. By accepting Jervis’ contention regarding systems, we should be better able to understand the non-linearity of outcomes or consequences. While it is impossible to fully understand the interactions and behaviors of complex systems, the process of trial and error enables the international community to identify unintended consequences (both positive and negative) of peace operations. Moreover, by analysing lessons learned and emerging trends, it may be possible to identify new and recurring system outcomes, which will in turn, help policy-makers and mission planners to better anticipate possible outcomes and develop policies and mission structures on these calculations.

It must be understood, however, that peace operations are not an end in itself; they are a strategic tool for achieving an identified goal. Peace operations should be viewed in the context of a continuum of crisis management, extending from prevention of conflicts through conflict management and sustainable peace. Ultimately, peace operations should be dynamic and flexible; they should be able to adapt to changing and/or unforeseen circumstances and should allow for the optimal response for a specific situation. However, peace operations should also demonstrate a degree of coherence in its planning and its management, as well as clearly defined guidelines.

**Evolving Models of Peace Operations: From Traditional to Complex**

There are numerous ways to approach the evolution of peace operations. Chronological typologies of peace operations where types of operations are associated with time periods have been a common feature of the literature. However, there is a growing realization amongst scholars that such categorization (including the use of Cold War and post-Cold War as broad categories) is often misleading, and even inaccurate as it suggests that because peace operations have changed over time, early types are no longer in use. To overcome this concern, Bellamy et al. for example, categorize peace operations according to their aim and the means by which they seek to achieve that aim. Durch and Berckman take another approach by looking at the changing demand for UN and other peace operations, and the associated changes in perceptions of major actors.

---

12 In other words, “outcomes that lie in a sense entirely outside that mandate.” See Frédéric Mégret, “The vicarious responsibility of the United Nations,” in *Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping Operations*, Aoi et al., 51. For example, civilian casualties have seen a dramatic increase in Afghanistan, with at least 1,200 casualties since January 2007. In a briefing delivered to the Security Council in October 2007, Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan, alerted to the fact that “the biggest threat to the civilian population…was not suicide attacks…but the ongoing campaign of intimidation, abduction and execution being carried out by the anti-government elements against anyone who seemed to be connected to the Government or the international community.” See United Nations, *Integrated political-military strategy needed to overcome increased violence and bring peace to Afghanistan*, SC/9143 (15 October 2007): 3.

13 Jervis, 72.


16 As Bellamy et al. argue, “[t]here is no clear cut between Cold War and Post-Cold War operations” (p.5). In addition, the 1990s are not homogeneous in terms of peace operations and can be divided into different phases or periods. Tardy also argues that such categorization does not attest to the concept’s heterogeneity (p. 3).

17 Ibid.

The approach followed here is similar to that of Durch and Berckman, but goes beyond their analysis by examining the international security environment and analysing how changes within that environment set the context for the type and conduct of peace operations. The international security environment is defined here by three key variables:

1. Dynamics among international players
2. Major players in peace operations
3. Nature of conflicts (or the context in which peace operations are deployed)

Table 1 tracks how changes in the international security environment from the Cold War to today have shaped the nature and conduct of peace operations. It is argued that the character of the international security environment is shaped by the general disposition or dynamics among international players (as expressed largely through UN Security Council interactions\(^1\)). This dynamic is defined by international norms and patterns of behaviour,\(^2\) as determined by the preference of major actors operating within the system. This dynamic is further defined by the nature of the system and lessons learned from the past, and changes as a result of major events within the system. It can be said that the international security environment has undergone five major changes since the Cold War, each of which correspond to a change in international dynamics and a different period. The Post-Cold War is divided into three periods to allow for a more thorough understanding of changes within the system and their impact on peace operations. Finally, as conflicts occur within this environment, their nature is also, in part, influenced by it.

---

\(^{1}\) For example, according to O’Neill and Rees, the increase in the number of UN missions has more to do with the “increased capacity of the UN Security Council to agree in particular crises” than with “any dramatic change arising out of the end of the Cold War.” 39.

### Table 1: The International Security Environment and Peace Operations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>International Security Environment</th>
<th>Peace Operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Cold War**                | **Dynamics:** Cold War confrontation, Bipolar world/polarization | • Traditional Peacekeeping  
• Chapter VI mandates (non-coercive and impartial operations)  
• Deployed after a ceasefire  
• Unarmed or lightly armed UN forces  
• Predominantly military personnel  
• More robust peacekeeping as exception  
• 13 missions between 1948 and 1988 |
| **Major Players:**          | UN                                                          |                                                                                  |
| **Nature of conflicts:**    | Mostly inter-state conflicts, High intensity conflicts over short period, Defined battlefields, Regular uniformed combatants, Disputants mostly willing to negotiate |                                                                                  |
| **Post-Cold War I**         | **Late 1980s to early 1990s**                               | • New wave of UN missions/ mostly Robust Peacekeeping or Peace Enforcement  
• Chapter VII mandates  
• Conflict is ongoing/ no peace to keep  
• Application of force to end fighting  
• Military, but also police and civilians  
• Increasingly complex/multidimensional  
• Missions authorized triple: 20 missions between 1988 and 1993 |
| **Dynamics:**               | End of Cold War and bipolarity, Enthusiasm/Optimism         |                                                                                  |
| **Major Players:**          | UN, Rise of non-state actors                                |                                                                                  |
| **Nature of conflicts:**    | Intra-state conflicts or “new wars”, Low intensity conflict over long period, Ill-defined battlefields, Non-uniformed combatants and spoilers, Civilian population increasingly the target, Disputants often unwilling to negotiate |                                                                                  |
| **Post-Cold War II**        | **Mid-to-late 1990s**                                       | • Drop in Western contributions/ rise in developing world contributions  
• Surge in regional actors undertaking peacekeeping under Chapter VIII  
• Peace operations become “international enterprise”  
• Increasing blur between peacekeeping and peace enforcement |
| **Dynamics:**               | Failures of early 1990s (Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia), Western nations disillusioned by UN and peacekeeping in general, Retreat/ Lull in UN peacekeeping |                                                                                  |
| **Major Players:**          | Rise of regional and sub-regional organizations, NATO, EU, AU, ECOWAS |                                                                                  |
| **Nature of conflicts:**    | Same as previous                                           |                                                                                  |

---

22 Durch and Breckman.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>International Security Environment</th>
<th>Peace Operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Post-Cold War III** | **Dynamics:**  
| (1999 to today)     | • NATO campaign in Kosovo; geographic proximity of conflict  
|                     | • Reflection on lessons learned  
|                     | • Development of peacekeeping concepts and practices  
|                     | • Renewal/ Cautious optimism  
|                     | **Major Players:**  
|                     | • Development of new partnerships between UN and regional and sub-regional organizations  
|                     | • NGOs and non-state actors  
|                     | **Nature of conflicts:**  
|                     | • Same as previous  
| **Post-9/11**        | **Dynamics:**  
|                     | • Weak/failed states become center of attention\(^{23}\)  
|                     | • 9/11 propels anti-terrorism/ ‘war on terror’ at forefront of national security interests  
|                     | • Partnerships between UN and other organizations become more prominent  
|                     | • UN viewed as legitimate body in peace operations and counter-balance to US preemptive strategy  
|                     | **Major Players:**  
|                     | • UN, Regional Organisations, Coalitions of the Willing, Independent States  
|                     | • NGOs and other non-state actors  
|                     | **Nature of conflicts:**  
|                     | • Same as previous  
|                     | **Contributions to UN peace operations by Western countries become increasingly strategic**  
|                     | **Large-scale peace operations reflect strategic interests of major players (Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon)**  
|                     | **R2P gaining currency**  
|                     | **Surge in UN peacekeepers: presence in the field exceeds 100,000**  
|                     | **UN peacekeeping budget surpasses $5 billion**  
|                     | **Prominence of new concepts: hybrid operations, PRTs and integrated missions**  
|                     | **Increasing blur between peace enforcement, counter-insurgency/ stability operations, and war**\(^{24}\)  

**Post-9/11 Strategic Environment**

Although we recognize that any understanding of the current period necessarily requires an understanding of previous periods, the focus here is on the Post-9/11 period. Therefore, while the consequences of the Cold War are still relevant to our understanding of the current nature and conduct of complex operations, there is no question that the context in which contemporary peace operations are launched has been shaped by the events of September 11, 2001; the latter constitutes a defining moment in international relations. However, as Tardy argues, “the attacks of 11 September 2001 are more a demonstration of evolutions that had been going on for years than an unexpected event that would mark the beginning of a new era.”\(^{25}\) In this sense, the extent to which the attacks influenced the nature and conduct of peace operations remains a matter of debate. This perception of the influence of 9/11 is highlighted by the dash line in Table 1 between

---


\(^{24}\) See Durch and Breckman; Gowan and Johnson.

\(^{25}\) Tardy, 3.
the ‘Post-Cold War III’ and ‘Post-9/11’ periods, which indicates a more continuous evolution within the system rather than a complete change.

Inasmuch as the 9/11 attacks are a manifestation of the changing nature of the international system, and peace operations are shaped by changes in the international system, peace operations will be affected. As a result, it is useful to situate peace operations within the context of the post-9/11 strategic environment. For one, the events of 9/11 challenged accepted notions of security, forcing states to “dramatically reconsider their understanding of their own security.” The events also signaled the growing threat posed by non-state actors, and further obscured the distinctions between external and internal security, and between military and civilian security.

The post-9/11 period also further solidified the UN’s position as the only international body that “enjoys such broad legitimacy in the field of international peace and security,” but also has the largest range of means at its disposal. While there is no doubt that post-9/11 peace operations have been “heavily influenced by U.S. concerns,” the latter’s long time skepticism of UN-led peace operations has to some extent been replaced by an—albeit—still limited focus on multilateral efforts, providing training and funding for regional and sub-regional peace operations in Africa, as well as paying 26.7 per cent of the UN peacekeeping budget. In addition, the invasion of Iraq without Security Council authorization in 2003 may have contributed to strengthening multilateralism and the UN’s importance and legitimacy in peace and security. The UN authorized the multinational force under unified (U.S.) command in 2003 (SC resolution 1511). There is also a recognition that any exit strategy from Iraq will likely have to encompass a transition to UN or NATO forces. In fact, the importance of the UN presence and role in Iraq was reiterated by Security Council Resolution 1790 (December 2007) which requested that the UN political mission be “expanded and extended so that the UN can be a greater part of helping to stabilize and bring forward a democratic Iraq” in anticipation of a future U.S. military drawdown. It is also clear that U.S. efforts in Afghanistan would not be possible without the crucial role from the UN, unconditional support from alliance members, as well as contributions from other EU member states.

Perhaps even more important than the aforementioned changes, the events of September 2001 meant that the reality of complex systems could no longer be ignored. While complex peace operations involved every aspect of the conflict spectrum from prevention through to stabilization and reconstruction of post-conflict environments, international institutions and States were still responding in silos, and not adapting to what Jervis and others had identified as necessary in a complex system. One can conclude that in this multidimensional, multilayered complex emergency, there will be significant interaction among political, economic, humanitarian and military actors. Cross cutting issues and emerging trends also impact how the international community broadly defined responds and/or reacts to the continued shifts in international relations. While this complexity makes it more difficult for the international community to determine how it should or can respond to crises, what is certain is that these responses must

---

26 Ibid.
28 Gowan and Johnstone, 10.
31 Mackinley 1996; Albala-Bertrant, 21.
depart from institutional legacies centered on stove-piped policies.\textsuperscript{32} The following section looks at the key challenges brought about by the increasing complexity of peace operations and identifies the various ways in which these challenges have been addressed.

**Addressing Complexity in Peace Operations**

All operations face the fundamental challenge of establishing a secure and safe environment. Where operations diverge is in the way this security is sought and achieved. The current approach to managing complexity in peace operations has been permeated by two main recognitions in international relations. The first recognition is the fact that interventions must address the entire spectrum of operations, requiring a much more integrated and comprehensive response over a longer-term period. Indeed, it has become evident that a response using only military means and traditional “blue helmets” will provide only part of the solution and that much more needs to be done than solely “keeping the peace” in order address the underlying causes of conflicts and achieve sustainable peace.\textsuperscript{33} The second recognition is the fact that the nature of the problem has changed, requiring interventions to adapt to new challenges. The major challenge today is that of stabilizing and rebuilding weak or failed states, which often lack well-defined social and security institutional infrastructure and are plagued by internal conflicts in which the civilian population is the most likely target.\textsuperscript{34} With this in mind, the paper now turns to an analysis of the challenges posed by increasing complexity in peace operations and looks at what has been done to respond to these challenges.

**Coherence in Mission Planning and Execution**

One of the lessons learned in the 1990s is that the UN cannot undertake peace operations alone; the UN needs partners to meet the demand for peacekeepers and to intervene where the UN is not capable or willing to do so. The UN has recently witnessed a surge in the number, size and complexity of its peacekeeping missions, as the demand for UN peacekeepers reached an all-time high and the peacekeeping budget surpassed the $5 billion mark.\textsuperscript{35} Since 1998, the number of uniformed personnel deployed to UN peace missions has increased six-fold.\textsuperscript{36} As of October 2007, the UN is supporting 20 peace operations involving over 100,000 military, police and civilian personnel (of which more than 80,000 are uniformed personnel).\textsuperscript{37} This does not include the forthcoming African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the multidimensional UN mission to Chad and the Central African Republic (MINURCAT), which will add up to 30,000 personnel. In addition, there are two dozen UN-authorized missions led by regional organizations (NATO, EU, AU), coalitions or individual states. As with the UN, deployments by regional organizations are also at an all-time high with more than 76,000 military
and police officers deployed as part of the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan, the EU in Bosnia, the DRC, and soon to be in Chad, and the AU in Darfur and Somalia.\textsuperscript{38}

The UN faces increasing difficulty in meeting the demand for UN peacekeepers: issues such as quantity, funding, quality, and skills pose immense challenges for the international body. More actors in peace operations not only give the UN greater flexibility in responding to conflicts, but also extend its reach through the provision of additional resources. As a result, the UN has been engaging with regional organizations and helping to build their capacity in peace and security. Regional organisations have, to various degrees, also taken political and operational steps to further institutionalize their cooperative relationship with the UN.\textsuperscript{39} Indeed, new systematic partnerships are emerging.\textsuperscript{40} Even so, however, partnerships remain largely \textit{ad hoc} in nature, which has not facilitated recent attempts at cooperation, especially between the AU and UN, and the EU and UN. The challenge is to make these partnerships work,\textsuperscript{41} and in order to do so, efforts are needed “to make [relationships between the UN and regional organisations] more systematic and predictable…for both the shorter- and longer-term goals of peace-building.”\textsuperscript{42}

Regional organisations are also adapting to the changing security environment and finding innovative ways of responding to new challenges.\textsuperscript{43} For example, NATO has developed a “Concerted planning and action” strategy and is now conducting its largest out-of-area operation with over 41,000 troops in Afghanistan involved in both reconstruction and intense fighting. The EU, for its part, is widening its approach to peace and security and taking on greater responsibility, as seen with both military and police deployments in Africa, the Balkans and Afghanistan. The AU is also demonstrating an increasing commitment to resolving African conflicts, though a lack of capacity and funding continues to undermine its efforts. However, while the capacity of regional organisations is improving, it remains highly uneven, with NATO and the EU as the only two organisations with established capability.\textsuperscript{44} There is still no “clear division of labour or agreed sense of comparative advantage” among the different organisations, risking spreading their resources thin and lessening the impact of their actions.\textsuperscript{45}

While there seems to be a broad consensus on the need for integration, questions remain as to the \textit{what}, \textit{when} and \textit{how} to integrate. Perhaps a more appropriate term is that of ‘coherence.’\textsuperscript{46} ‘Coherence’ seeks to promote mutually reinforcing and complimentary policies within organisations and agencies, and across the spectrum of actors working towards a defined goal. More specific to peace operations, ‘coherence’ seeks to promote a comprehensive, system-wide response by advocating both intra- and inter-agency consistency across policies and field operations, including civil-military engagement. In practice, the UN “integrated mission” concept

\textsuperscript{38} The EU is conducting two missions in Bosnia-Herzegovian, a military mission (EUFOR Operation Althea) since 2004 and a police mission since 2003. The EU has two missions in the DRC: a police mission since the summer of 2007, as well as a security and rule of law mission conducts (EUFOR). The EU is also preparing to deploy a contingent to Chad and the Central African Republic. For more information on EU deployments, see the Security and Defence page of the European Council website at www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=261&lang=EN&mode=g; see also Kristine St-Pierre, “Hybridizing UN Peace Operations: The Role of the European Union and Canada,” \textit{Review of European and Russian Affairs} 3, no. 2 (2007): 6.


\textsuperscript{41} Jare.

\textsuperscript{42} See Henri L. Stimson Center, \textit{A Better Partnership?}.

\textsuperscript{43} Eide.

\textsuperscript{44} While the EU and NATO share most of their members, their individual capability remains nevertheless different.

\textsuperscript{45} Gowan and Johnstone, 1.

came about in response to the UN’s search for greater coherence within the UN system and for greater consistency at the strategic planning and theatre-level stages of peacekeeping missions. The search for coherence also prompted the creation of PRTs which seek to coordinate operational-level responses through Reconstruction Groups. Last but not least, hybrid operations are also part of the coherence ‘frenzy,’ in that they require a certain level of cooperation between organisations in order to achieve the desired objective. Greater coherence at both the policy and operational levels will not only amplify the impact of peace operations on the ground, but can also play a crucial role in easing the transition between peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and reconstruction and state-building efforts in post-conflict societies.

While a response’s effectiveness will depend on the level of coherence within an organisation, it will also depend on whether international efforts are coherent, consistent and reinforcing rather than fragmented and debilitating. For example, NATO’s piecemeal approach to security in Afghanistan has proven to be “an obstacle to establishing a comprehensive and sustainable foundation upon which all other facets of post-conflict reconstruction rely.” In addition, General McNeill recently admitted to the “lack of unified effort among the international community in terms of the reconstruction effort” as impeding progress. Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre perhaps best summarizes the requirements for managing complexity in peace operations: “the challenges facing peace operations today can only be met with a coherent, multidimensional approach, clear guidelines and institutional flexibility. Engagement must be long-term, well planned, properly coordinated and must have sufficient and reliable resources.” Indeed, greater and closer cooperation among all actors involved in complex operations (at both the actor and institutional levels) is critical to the success of peace operations.

Separating Protection of Civilians and Counter-Insurgency Operations

Nowhere is this complexity more present, and worrisome, than in the blurring of the lines between peacekeeping, peace enforcement and war. In a presentation at the 2007 annual IAPTC meeting, William Durch suggested that the “separation between war fighting and peacekeeping is breaking down largely due to the increased need for robust operations and the recognition that the international community has a responsibility to protect those affected by violent conflict.” Given that civilians have become the primary victims of today’s conflicts, often being deliberately targeted and subjected to human rights abuses, it is not surprising that recent years has seen some progress towards strengthening the protection of civilians in peace operations. In 2006, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1674 establishing a framework for action on the protection of civilians. For the most part, peacekeeping mandates now incorporate a requirement to protect civilians to the extent permitted by a force’s capabilities and areas of deployment. Although protection of civilians has been widely accepted by the international community, the similar, yet far more daunting ‘responsibility to protect’ principle has not benefited from the same

---

47 Capstone Doctrine, 7-8.
48 Ibid.
49 See Støre.
52 Støre.
54 United Nations, Secretary-General tells Security Council creation of working group on civilian protection ‘inevitable next step’ to give practical meaning to commitment, SG/SM/11290 (20 November 2007).
55 Ibid.
collective impetus.\(^\text{56}\) While endorsed by Governments at the 2005 World Summit, much work remains to be done to ‘operationalize’ the concept in a way that can ensure timely actions in the face of genocide, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity.

The real concern is not the blurring of the line between peacekeeping and peace enforcement, but the line between peace enforcement, stability operations (including counter-insurgency) and war.\(^\text{57}\) For example, Gowan and Johnstone argue that placing peace operations in the context of the “war on terrorism” is not going much further than recent trends in which UN peacekeeping mandates include the protection of civilians, which often requires more robust military action.\(^\text{58}\) In particular, the authors note that a number of recent UN and non-UN missions “have taken on operational aspects of counter-insurgency,” including in Sierra Leone, the DRC, and Haiti, where peacekeepers have (though on limited occasions) conducted active searches for identified enemies. The authors further note that while a clear shift towards state-building can be observed in the cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon, “there is also an all-too-obvious counter-insurgency element to these operations—be it actual as in Afghanistan and Iraq, or potential as in Lebanon.”\(^\text{59}\) While their argument clearly highlights the decreasing space between peace enforcement—where force is used to protect civilians or to enforce a peace agreement—and war—where the aim is to defeat an identified enemy, the authors go too far in equating efforts to counter rebels in Sierra Leone, militias in the Congo, and urban gangs in Haiti with counter-insurgency operations against extremist groups in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon. There remains a fundamental difference between counter-insurgency operations and robust or active military action to protect civilians. Counter-insurgency operations seek to defeat an identified enemy, upon which victory can be claimed. Peace enforcement through protective actions, on the other hand, seeks to enhance the security of civilians by protecting them from identified or unidentified third parties or spoilers. There is an interest in keeping a space between peace enforcement and war separate, even if limited.

Another major challenge is that even if missions like Afghanistan and Iraq received authorization by the UN Security Council, the question of how these operations should be viewed—i.e., as counter-terrorism, peace enforcement, state-building, or even neo-imperial war—remains a matter of contention among major players.\(^\text{60}\) The way these missions are perceived, will in turn determine the kind of response that will follow. In this sense, there is a growing consensus that experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan should no longer be viewed as “ephemeral anomalies.”\(^\text{61}\) They reflect the new environment of peace operations: increasingly unpredictable and volatile environments where peace is ephemeral or all-together absent and where reconstruction is pitted against counter-insurgency strategies.\(^\text{62}\) In conjunction with this perception is a strong recognition that a change in military culture is necessary to meet the new exigencies associated with a more complex security environment.\(^\text{63}\) Afghanistan and Iraq not only demonstrate a shift from conflict prevention and management to state-building, but both interventions also brought with them a change in the nature of international assistance. While prior to 2001 assistance to countries at

---


\(^{57}\) As Gowan and Johnstone.

\(^{58}\) Gowan and Johnstone identify three components of the role of peacekeeping, one which is peacekeeping as an element of the “war on terror.”

\(^{59}\) Ibid., 13-14.


\(^{62}\) However, in some cases, such as in Afghanistan, the rising level of violence has forced NATO to adapt by focusing its operations on warfighting rather than peacebuilding and reconstruction.

\(^{63}\) Cassidy, 74.
war, emerging from war, or facing a natural or man-made disaster was administered primarily by non-governmental humanitarian organisations, assistance in the context of Afghanistan and Iraq has been increasingly undertaken by the military.\textsuperscript{64} While this new paradigm stem in part from the level of insecurity found in these conflict environments, it is also a consequence of the inability of international forces to shift rapidly and effectively from war-fighting to state-building.\textsuperscript{65}

While Cassidy argues that to effectively engage in the new security landscape, a new mindset must be adopted that centers on stability operations and counter-insurgency,\textsuperscript{66} it must be clear that the fact that Iraq and Afghanistan-style operations are no longer anomalies does not suggest that such large-scale military operations will be the norm in the future or will act as precedents for future interventions. In fact, Gowan and Johnstone contend that the large-scale nature of these operations, as well as the resources and costs involved make it highly unlikely that both will become precedents for similar kinds of interventions in the future.\textsuperscript{67} As a result, while there is no doubt as to the need for a new mindset, such mindset should focus instead on comprehensive approaches in which protection of civilians, capacity-building, and local ownership is at the forefront.

**Current Approaches for Managing Complexity in Peace Operations**

The spectrum of complex peace operations is not linear; responses do not fall neatly on a continuum. Rather, approaches vary depending on the nature and number of actors involved, as well as the level of integration or coherence among them. In recent years, a number of new approaches for managing complexity in peace operations have emerged. They are: (1) Integrated Missions; (2) Hybrid or Joint Operations; and (3) Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Table 2 reflects how these approaches vary according to their level of integration and objectives. Variations, however, also exist within each framework, making it extremely difficult to identify lessons learned and to compare experiences. These approaches are still in their infancy, and as a result, lessons learned have yet to be fully fleshed out and understood, and fed back into the system. As these concepts will continue to evolve, there will be a need for a more thorough and systematic approach to lessons learned.

\textsuperscript{65} Stephenson, 15.
\textsuperscript{66} Cassidy.
\textsuperscript{67} Gowan and Johnstone.
Table 2: Levels of Integration and Objectives of Current Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches</th>
<th>Level of Integration</th>
<th>Main Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| UN Integrated Missions     | • Integrate overall UN mission planning structures and functions (military, political/developmental and humanitarian) | • Enhance efficiency of UN response  
• Ensure smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding |
| Hybrid/Joint Operations    | • Between UN and other players (incl. regional organisations, multinational forces, and individual states) | • Enhance efficiency of overall response  
• Rely on comparative advantage of actors  
• Burden-sharing |
| Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) | • Between military and civilian elements of a response | • Enhance efficiency of reconstruction efforts  
• Ensure coherent responses to problems  
• Rely on relative strengths of military and civilian elements |

There is a concern that these concepts rely too heavily on ad hoc relationships rather than moving towards institutionalized cooperative relationships, and use trial and error as the basis for informing future developments instead of lessons learned. While every operation is unique at some level, identifying lessons learned remains crucial as they help inform best practices in peace operations and contribute to the refinement of future operations. More specifically, how these concepts play out in the field, and the lessons that come out of their application will dictate and/or define their usefulness and applicability in the future. In this context, the outcomes of current efforts could easily form a “make or break” opportunity for the major players involved in peace operations.\(^68\) In addition, the lessons to be learned from new approaches will likely have a tremendous influence on future reconstruction efforts in conflict and post-conflict environments.

The success of a peace operation depends on the overall efforts of all actors involved, but also on the success of the overall approach itself. In other words, new approaches of peace operations are built on the recognition that military operations alone cannot achieve sustainable peace and instead, must be part of a comprehensive approach that includes reconstruction and state-building efforts.\(^69\) However, the fact that even in the most highly integrated operations, military forces tend to respond principally to their national chains of command and act within the confines of their national doctrine and rules of engagement, is a challenge that needs to be overcome.\(^70\) New approaches are also based on the recognition that different actors can offer different advantages.

---

\(^{68}\) Based on a statement by Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre.


In this sense, burden-sharing of tasks and responsibilities is becoming more and more important in the conduct of peace operations. While burden-sharing may be used as a reason for one’s limited contribution, it nevertheless helps to level the costs of operations and increases the likelihood that someone or some agency will pick up the slack.

Today’s conflicts call for coordinated responses that are multidimensional in nature, but also specifically designed and adapted to fit each situation. As a result, while there is a need for a more systematic approach to planning of peace operations and for unified efforts on the ground, the strength of current approaches also lies in their flexibility—the ability of an approach to be flexible in its setup and to adapt quickly to a new situation. Nevertheless, allowing for flexibility in peace operations approaches also has its downfalls. Too much flexibility can create confusion on the part of outside actors, including the NGO and donor community, as to the roles and responsibilities of the different players involved in the operation. In Afghanistan, for example, flexibility in the setup of PRTs caused much confusion within the NGO, but also Afghan community itself, about the nature of a PRT, its objectives and its limits. PRT activities have also been criticized as counterproductive, especially in the areas of reconstruction and governance.

### Integrated Missions

In seeking greater ‘coherence’ in its approach to mission planning, the UN developed the concept of integrated missions with an Integrated Mission Planning Process, which defines the steps towards ensuring integration at all levels of mission planning. Commissioned by the UN Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, the Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations defines ‘integrated mission’ as:

> an instrument with which the UN seeks to help countries in the transition from war to lasting peace, or to address a similarly complex situation that requires a system-wide UN response, through subsuming actors and approaches within an overall political-strategic crisis management framework.

The objective of integrated missions is “to bring the UN’s resources and activities closer together and ensure that they are applied in a coherent way across the political, military, developmental and humanitarian sectors” and it is based, in part, on the recognition that more coherent approaches to conflict resolution are needed to manage the transition from war to peace. It is also based on the assumption that the integration of mission planning and management processes will enhance efficiency. While there is still confusion as to what an integrated mission should look like on the ground—as integration can take many forms and can occur at many levels—the concept continues to evolve. Three levels of integration can be identified: no integration, partial integration, and full integration.

---

71 Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction, Department of State, Joint Center for Operational Analysis/United States Joint Forces Command, and Bureau of Policy and Program Coordination, United States Agency for International Development, Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment, 5 April 2006, 11.
72 Ibid., 11.
74 Ibid.
Table 3: Levels of Integration of Current UN Peace Operations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Integration</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Full Integration     | · No separate OCHA office  
                      · Political missions  
                      · Post-conflict situation  
                      · No large-scale humanitarian emergency | · UNAMA (Afghanistan)  
                      · BINUB (Burundi)  
                      · MINUSTAH (Haiti)  
                      · UNAMI (Iraq)  
                      · UNMIL (Liberia) |
| Partial Integration  | · UN HC located within mission  
                      · HC acts as DSRSG and reports directly to SRSG  
                      · Separate OCHA office outside of mission | · UNOCI (Côte d’Ivoire)  
                      · MONUC (DRC)  
                      · UNIOSIL (Sierra Leone)  
                      · UNMIS (Sudan)  
                      · UNMIT (Timor Leste) |
| Limited Integration  | · HC is separate from mission | · MINURCAT (Chad-CAR)  
                      · UNAMID (Darfur)  
                      · UNMIK (Kosovo) |
| No Integration²      | · Chapter VI mandate  
                      · Limited civilian component  
                      · Limited humanitarian component  
                      · Separate and independent humanitarian component | · UNFICYP (Cyprus)  
                      · UNMEE (Ethiopia-Eritrea)  
                      · UNOMIG (Georgia)  
                      · UNDOF (Golan Heights)  
                      · UNMOGIP (India-Pakistan)  
                      · UNIFIL (Lebanon)³  
                      · UNTSO (Middle East)  
                      · UNRWA (Middle East)⁴  
                      · MINURSO (Western Sahara) |

¹ Examples include all UN peacekeeping and political missions administered under the DPKO in addition to the UN political mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

² All non-integrated missions, except the mission in Lebanon, were created before the IMPP was developed.

³ The mission in Lebanon is an exception, as it has a chapter VII mandate, but the peacekeeping and humanitarian components as well as the military and civilian components remain separate.

⁴ UNRWA, created on 8 December 1949 by UN General Assembly resolution 302 (IV), is not a UN peacekeeping mission per se, but it was created to protect and assist Palestinian refugees after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

Table 3 identifies levels of integration of current UN peace operations and their respective characteristics. An integrated mission approach means that the UN Humanitarian Coordinator (of the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), which has traditionally remained outside of peacekeeping mission structures, is fully integrated within the mission structure (often

---

taking on the role of a Deputy SRSG) and reports directly to SRSG. In such cases, therefore, the SRSG oversees the political, military, and humanitarian strategies. While this model appears to be preferred by practitioners in the field, it is not always feasible. In a partial integrated mission approach, UN OCHA retains its separate identity and as a result, the focus of integration concentrates more on coordination and information sharing. UN missions that are not considered to be integrated are missions that, in most cases, operate under a Chapter VI mandate and comprise a limited civilian component.

As previously mentioned, one of the major downfalls of integrated operations is the tendency for military forces to respond to their national chains of command and act within the confines of their national doctrine and rules of engagement. This predisposition by the military has an effect on the level of integration that can be achieved. For example, full integration within a mission is more likely in a political mission where there is no military component (or where the military element is provided by another organisation), i.e., the UN political mission in Iraq and in Afghanistan, in clear post-conflict situations such as in Liberia, or where there is no imminent humanitarian emergency as in Haiti. Integration will likely be less in missions where there is both a major military and major humanitarian component operating side-by-side. While integration is working well in MONUC, UNMIS, and UNOCI, it is likely to be much more difficult in MINURCAT and UNAMID. The UN mission in Lebanon, for example, is not integrated at all.

Still, it is important to realize that not all elements of a mission need to be integrated at all times and that “integration should be based, among other things, on a consideration of the various functions and roles that missions have to play in the context of complex multifunctional operations.” In other words, the need for an integrated mission should derive from the goals that are to be achieved and from the inherent benefits of integration in the specific case being considered. While more efforts must be taken to mainstream the principle into operations, each situation requires its own structure. An integrated approach should not be based on “inflexible blueprints,” but on an understanding of the security environment, the underlying causes of the conflict, and the actors present.

Lessons learned from integrated missions are difficult to pinpoint, especially in terms of their operational effectiveness, as experiences with integration differ from one UN mission to the other. While integration may be easiest to achieve and most appropriate “where there is a viable peace agreement and with a clear mandate for peacebuilding activities,” Eide et al. find that the benefits of integration may be larger in complex situations, as the humanitarian perspective is part of the mission structure and can therefore be better protected. They, however, also find benefits to maintaining a separate role for OCHA outside of peacekeeping structures, especially where conflict is still active.

---

77 Gordon.
78 Oversees Development Institute (ODI), “Protection in Practice – UN Integrated Missions,” Report from the 9 February meeting Protection
80 ODI.
81 Ibid.
83 Støre.
84 Gordon, 51.
85 Ibid.
86 Eide et al..
Hybrid/ Joint Operations

Hybrid operations are not a new phenomenon; in fact, most missions deployed in the 1990s could be considered hybrids. Hybrid operations are operations in which UN and non-UN forces share, following different frameworks, peacekeeping or peace enforcement responsibilities. In a 2004 report prepared for the UN DPKO’s Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, Jones and Cherif identified four types of hybrid frameworks: sequential, parallel, coordinated, and integrated. Each type exhibits a different level of integration between the UN and non-UN components. Further differentiation can be made by looking at the nature of the non-UN component (whether a regional organization, multinational force or individual state). Table 4 provides an overview of the four hybrid frameworks with examples of specific deployments.

Table 4: Hybrid Operations: Characteristics and Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Hybrid Frameworks</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>UN and non-UN actors operate with single or joined chain of command</td>
<td>Darfur (UN and AU, NATO, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated</td>
<td>UN and non-UN actors are coordinated but operate under different chains of command</td>
<td>Kosovo (UN, NATO, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chad (UN, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel</td>
<td>UN deploys alongside other organisations; no formal coordination</td>
<td>Afghanistan (UN, NATO, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DRC (UN, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iraq (UN, NATO, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequential</td>
<td>UN precedes or follows other forces</td>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire (UN, France/EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DRC (UN, EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Haiti (UN, Coalition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sierra Leone (UN, UK)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hybrid operations are often looked upon as a better option for the future as they combine UN legitimacy with regional capability. As discussed earlier, there is often disparity in the capacity level of regional actors. Nevertheless, as a tool for responding to conflict and for managing complexity in peace operations, hybrid operations portray a number of advantages. Regional actors in hybrid operations can ease UN responsibilities by taking on some or all peacekeeping and peace enforcement tasks; they can reinforce a UN mission at short-notice, for example, during elections or if violence breaks out; and they can provide the UN with more time to prepare.

---

87 Jones and Cherif; see also Kristine St-Pierre, “Hybridizing UN Peace Operations: The Role of the European Union and Canada,” Review of European and Russian Affairs 3, no. 2 (2007): 3-5. It should be noted that an operation authorized by the UN Security Council, but conducted by a regional organization refers to a Chapter VIII mission and is not considered a hybrid operation.
88 Jones and Cherif.
89 Based on Jones and Cherif; see also St-Pierre, 4. In a more recent article, Jones further categorizes hybrid operations based on the formal relationship between organisations: short-term military support; civilian-military division of labour; linked peacekeeping-observer operations; handover operations; and integrated operations. He warns, however, that such categorization “obscures more than it reveals.” See Bruce D. Jones, “Looking to the Future: Peace Operations in 2015,” commissioned paper for the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, Background Paper (November 2007): 6-7.
91 See Durch and Berckman; Jones and Cherif; CIC 2006.
for a mission by deploying in advance of the UN force. Notwithstanding these advantages, the greatest added value of hybrid operations may be the fact that they are often more willing to deploy under a Chapter VII mandate, which allows for the use of force. Consequently, hybrid missions are often perceived as more robust and capable than UN forces acting alone.

Due to increasing pressure for better-developed inter-institutional arrangements, the UN has found itself at the middle of new institutional agreements with both the European Union and African Union. These developments demonstrate the UN’s adaptability to the substantive changes in complex conflicts. These developments also point to the growing flexibility with which the UN and the international community can respond to crises, due in part to the growing number of actors that the UN can rely on. Even with these frameworks, however, the concept of hybrid operations and what it means on the ground and in operational terms still imparts confusion, as they incorporate “personnel and missions from a range of organizational, national, and ad hoc origins.”

Jones and Cherif argue that the real concern regarding the growing trend towards hybrid operations “should be with the quality of capacity provided for any given conflict responses, not the organizational framework through which the response is provided.”

Greater flexibility does not guarantee that actions will be taken on issues such as national and security interests, or on issues of funding, personnel, and equipment which can significantly restrict the scope and duration of an operation. As past operations have shown, regional actors are more likely to get involved in a hybrid operation if the intervention serves their interests. In addition, while hybrid operations can allocate different responsibilities to different actors, it is important to ensure that these responsibilities are well-defined and understood by all actors in the field. For example, the high number of actors, both international and local, working in Afghanistan has imparted much confusion with regards to who is doing what. Afghanistan is also a case in point in terms of lack of coordination and coherence among the UN and NATO in particular, resulting in the UN being sidelined. The planned joint deployment of an UN and EU mission in Chad and the Central African Republic is also causing confusion for those involved and those working outside the missions. Both missions are mandated by the same Security Council resolution—the first time that an EU military force and UN operated under a single UN mandate—their roles and responsibilities differ creating ambiguity in the eyes of many.

**Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)**

The PRT concept is the newest approach to conflict management and perhaps the most difficult to grasp and understand, as there is no single PRT model and PRTs do not operate in consistent ways. A PRT is a joint civilian and military structure that was first introduced in 2002 as part of the U.S. plan for transitioning from warfighting to ‘stabilisation and reconstruction’ operations. In general, PRTs have a standard core structure comprised of a headquarters,
CIMIC sections, logistics, military observers, civilian reconstruction personnel, and support capabilities such as security, logistic engineers and interpreters.\textsuperscript{103} Given their joint civilian and military structure, PRTs are multi-agency, combining personnel from various agencies. PRTs are also multi-national, combining a mix of local and international personnel. Their overall aim can be divided into three core functions: 1) improve governance; 2) administer reconstruction projects; 3) enhance security. Table 5 identifies PRT core functions and objectives, and provides a list of strategies that are used in achieving these objectives.

Table 5: PRT Core Functions, Objectives and Strategies\textsuperscript{104}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Functions</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Governance     | - Extend authority of central government at local and provincial levels | - Maintain close links with central government  
- Build leadership and institutional capacity at local and provincial levels  
- Provide technical and organisational support |
| Reconstruction | - Undertake development projects (economic and health infrastructures) | - Deliver reconstruction and humanitarian assistance in remote and/or insecure areas  
- Coordinate with UN political mission and agencies, international associations, and NGOs |
| Security       | - Enhance security through force protection | - Support security sector  
- Quick-impact projects (QIPs) (to win ‘hearts and minds’)  
- Effects Based Operations  
- Active patrolling  
- CIMIC community-level activities  
- Information-sharing |

There are currently a total of 25 PRTs in Afghanistan and the same in Iraq. In Afghanistan, most PRTs are operating as part of NATO’s ISAF, while the rest are administered by the U.S. under Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). In Iraq, the U.S. heads most PRTs with the UK, Italy and South Korea each operating one PRT. Each PRT differs from one another, some more significantly than others.

The U.S. Department of State defines the PRT concept as “a civilian-military inter-agency effort that is the primary interface between U.S. and Coalition partners and provincial and local governments.”\textsuperscript{105} More specifically, PRTs are seen as “an important tool in achieving [U.S.] counterinsurgency strategy by bolstering moderates, promoting reconciliation, fostering economic

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 46.
development and building provincial capacity.” Examples include projects that help the local population rebuild damaged transportation routes, infrastructure, and wells. In Afghanistan, the mandates of NATO PRTs also differ from those under U.S. command: the U.S. operation is a combat mission while ISAF operates under a peacebuilding mandate. However, while the link between PRT priorities and combat operations may be more obvious in U.S. PRTs, ISAF’s expansion into four of the five districts in Afghanistan, including increasingly volatile areas such as Kandahar, has brought both priorities closer together. The stated objectives of U.S. and NATO PRTs are also very similar, both prioritizing support to the Afghan government through reconstruction efforts.

PRTs also operate in different environments with specific security challenges, and as a result, they are often tailored to the area in which they operate. PRTs vary based on the different approaches, perspectives, and *modus operandi* of the nations involved in PRTs. Personality and nationality of commanders also plays a role, as do policy priorities and national security and reconstruction agendas of contributing countries. PRTs also vary in size and composition, in the impact of force protection measures, in the balance between protection and reconstruction efforts in the relative autonomy of the civilian components of the PRT. The division between the military and civilian component of a PRT also varies. While PRTs are defined as a mix of military and civilian units, they are for the most part commanded by military officers and the military component is often much larger. In addition, while some approaches view both components as separate, others are not as cognizant of the separation resulting in the civilian component having much less autonomy than where a division exists. However, it should be noted that the ratio of military to civilian differs with each PRT and that civilian units are, on the whole, increasing.

The emergence of PRTs not only complicates the discourse on humanitarian space, but also adds to the debates regarding the role and function of military personnel, humanitarians, development objectives and diplomatic/political initiatives. The situation in Iraq as in Afghanistan is one in which peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts are pitted against counter-insurgency and stabilization operations. PRTs are simultaneously supporting combat operations and providing assistance, effectively blurring the distinction between humanitarian and politico-military responses. Many practitioners, including NGOs, have criticized the current application of the PRT concept on the basis that it militarizes humanitarian assistance, effectively jeopardizing both the short- and long-term goals of assistance. As Brandsma explains, “[t]here is a possibility of PRTs eclipsing the achievements of NGOs in winning the hearts and minds of the people, as a result of blurring the lines between aid and military.” However, because there have been very

---

107 The Department of State gives the following definition: “The PRTs support the Afghan government through reconstruction and good governance initiatives, including projects that help Afghans rebuild damaged roads, community buildings, and wells.” See U.S. Department of State Web site, “Operation Enduring Freedom.” NATO, for its part, describes the aim of PRTs as to “assist [the Afghan Government] to extend its authority, in order to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment in the identified AOO [Area of Operations], and through military presence enable SSR [security-sector reform] and reconstruction efforts.” See SACEUR, Unclassified ISAF OPLAN 10302, JP1LANSCRO/7340-024/04, 8 April 2004; See also Gordon, 47.
108 Gordon, 46
110 Gordon 2006.
111 Presentation by Gavin Buchan, Director for NATO Policy, Canadian Department of National Defence (DND), Ottawa, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, 18 December 2007.
112 Gordon.
few objective evaluations of the performance of PRTs, their impact on humanitarian and security responses is still a matter of debate. In addition, the degree to which countries are involved in direct humanitarian assistance and development work varies based on national approaches. Some countries use Quick Impact Project (QIP) and deterrent strategies as means of generating force protection. Others focus on building relationships—through active patrols and sending teams to live in communities for several weeks at a time—as a means of gathering information and intelligence.

The variety of approaches as well as the absence of adequate data makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the PRT model. While Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) exist, they tend to vary across PRTs and focus largely on quantitative factors. Nevertheless, in an analysis of the U.S. experience with PRTs, Perito makes four recommendations to address common problems shared by PRTs. While Perito looks specifically at U.S. PRTs, his recommendations can also be applied to coalition-led PRTs. According to him: 1) there is a need to develop a common concept of operations and organizational structure for PRTs with a single chain of command; 2) civilian agencies should have experienced and skilled staff that are ready to deploy to avoid using the military to staff civilian functions; 3) more reports on PRT programmes, activities and achievements must be made available to the public; and 4) there is a need to agree on a set of objectives for PRTs and measures of effectiveness to better evaluate PRT performance. The last point is especially important when considering that PRTs have proliferated even if no formal means of evaluating PRTs exist.

The variety of PRT approaches also makes it difficult to determine whether such framework can be exported or transferred to other theatres. According to study on Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment, conducted jointly by the U.S. Department of State’s Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction, of State, the Joint Center for Operational Analysis/ U.S. Joint Forces Command and USAID, PRTs are most appropriate in a mid-range of violence where instability still precludes heavy non-governmental organization (NGO) involvement, but where violence is not so acute that combat operations predominate. If PRTs are used outside this range, the model needs to be changed.

More specifically, the study cautions that if replicated, PRTs must be tailored to meet the specific requirements of the new environment, including security and cultural contexts. The study further recommends that in new environments, the initial focus of PRTs “should be on mapping the causes of conflict and developing targeted programs in order to understand and respond to conditions underlying instability.” While the effectiveness of PRTs in other contexts will largely depend on the level of resource commitment, the security environment and political realities, the study concludes that the development of interagency doctrine is essential “to maximize the future application of the PRT concept.” The U.S. interagency assessment also recommended the need to ensure that “there are processes to continuously review the changing

---

115 Gordon.
116 Perito.
117 Gordon believes they can be exported to other theatres (p. 46).
118 Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, 6.
119 Ibid., 7.
120 Ibid., 26.
nature of the volatile south and mechanisms to ensure that rapid response and reach-back capacity is available to respond to new dynamics.\textsuperscript{121}

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Peace operations are high on the political agenda of states and regional organisations, and will likely remain as such in the years to come, as Western countries reconsider their commitments in Afghanistan, as the U.S. struggles to find an exit strategy for Iraq, and as crises in Darfur, Somali, the DRC and other places offer constant reminders of the international community’s responsibility in peace and security. Given this backdrop, it is a critical time for all actors in peace operations to build on the momentum achieved so far, and to act consciously in helping one another in achieving sustainable peace around the world.

The objective of this paper was to assist actors in understanding the current peace and security environment in which they are operating and how the context affects and influences the nature and conduct of complex peace operations. It is often said that understanding which tool is right for the job can mean the difference between failure and success.\textsuperscript{122} While certain contexts may be more conducive to a specific approach to conducting peace operations, further research on this topic is required.

The paper offers three recommendations for improving the management of complexity in contemporary peace operations.

1. **Balance between flexibility and coherence**: It is essential to continue to emphasize flexibility in peace operations\textsuperscript{123} and provide space for improvisation based on specific circumstance and context. However, operations should avoid relying too heavily on \textit{ad hoc} structures and should continue to seek coherence in its planning and its management.

2. **Improve guidelines using lessons learned**: It is important to further study the modalities of peace operations to further define and improve guidelines for conducting peace operations. Although each operation is unique, lessons learned remain crucial as they can inform best practices and contribute to the refinement of future operations. In particular, how different approaches play out in the field, and the lessons that come out of their application will dictate and define their usefulness and applicability in the future.

3. **Better frameworks for cooperation**: Given the complexity and robustness of contemporary peace operations, actors will likely continue to rely more and more on partnerships when conducting peace operations.\textsuperscript{124} It is necessary to continue developing systematic frameworks to strengthen cooperation and partnerships among all actors operating in the field. The growing importance of multinational forces in peace operations requires that concrete steps be taken to ensure a more seamless transition between such forces and a UN peace mission, which in turn implies better inter-institutional arrangements.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 21.
\textsuperscript{122} Capstone Doctrine, 31.
\textsuperscript{124} See Gowan and Johnstone.
In the end, managing complexity in peace operations will remain a difficult task. Only by understanding the nature of the security environment and how this environment shapes and influences the nature and conduct of peace operations will the task get easier. This paper sought to do just that.

[^125]: Støre.