Roundtable on Civil–Military Coordination

The Police, Humanitarians and the Protection of Civilians:
Coordinating ‘Civilian’ Contributions

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ECHO Headquarters, Rue d’Arlon, 88, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

DRAFT Summary Note

The Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the European Commission (DG ECHO) organised a one-day roundtable meeting on 1 March 2012. The meeting brought together international police and humanitarian actors to consider the role of international police deployments in protecting civilians, and the interaction with humanitarian actors in this regard. Using case examples from past and current international police deployments, the discussion explored the differing roles and mandates of international police with regard to the protection of civilians and complementarities with the efforts of humanitarian organisations. It also considered lessons learnt around interaction and dialogue between international police deployments and humanitarian actors on this issue.

The roundtable was the second in a series of events held as part of HPG’s two-year research and public affairs project ‘Civil–Military Coordination: The Search for Common Ground’. In order to promote an open and frank debate, the meeting was held under the Chatham House rule and participation was by invitation only. What follows is a summary of the discussion.

The evolving role of international police in protecting civilians
The role of international police and gendarmerie forces has evolved significantly in recent years. They are deployed in a range of contexts, including ongoing conflict as well as post-conflict situations. A range of multilateral organisations, including the UN, NATO, the African Union and the European Union, are able to deploy police and/or gendarmerie-type forces, and in some cases there are several such deployments in the same theatre of operations, for example in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The mandates under which these forces are deployed may include ‘executive authority’, where the international police deployment is tasked with substituting for national law enforcement actors; empowering or building the capacity of national law enforcement actors; monitoring the performance of national law enforcement actors; or a combination of these. Depending on the nature of the mandate, the tasks undertaken by police and gendarmerie forces include monitoring and reporting, mentoring, training, joint patrolling and co-location with national police forces, crowd control and criminal investigations.

With respect to the EU, European police (EUPOL) are deployed in a number of conflict and post-conflict contexts in line with the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). They are deployed with varying mandates provided by the Council of the European Union under the framework of the Treaty on the EU. The EU draws on a variety of capabilities, including the European Defence Agency, Operations Centre, Civilian ‘OHQ’ (the Civilian Planning and Concept Capability (CPCC)) and Civilian Response Teams. To date there have been 17 civilian missions, of which eight are ongoing (EUPOL Afghanistan, EUPOL COPPS in the Palestinian Territories, EUPOL Bosnia-Herzegovina, EUPOL DRC, EUMM Georgia, EULEX Kosovo, EUBAM Rafah and EUJUST LEX Iraq). Three new missions are planned, in East Africa (Regional Maritime Capacity Building), South Sudan and the Sahel. Although the concept of the protection of civilians as such has not been explicitly mentioned in the mandates of CSDP missions/operations, relevant provisions have been included in several missions/operations and deployments are seen as contributing to improved protection through enhancing the rule of law and an improved security environment. In 2003, the EU developed draft Guidelines on Protection of Civilians for CSDP missions, and these were revised in 2010 to articulate the need to integrate protection
of civilians in the initial assessment, planning and strategies for all CSDP actions, including those involving civilian means.

The European Gendarmerie Force (EGF), established in 2004, is a joint initiative of six EU member states (France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal – Romania joined in 2008). It is a unique and robust capability which can deploy rapidly to non-benign environments. The EGF is currently deployed in Afghanistan, but has also previously deployed to Bosnia (under the EU-led Operation Althea) and Haiti (under the UN-led MINUSTAH). The force has the capacity to undertake the full spectrum of police responsibilities, including substitution for the national police and building national police capacity. It can be deployed under civilian or military command through the EU, NATO, the OSCE, the UN or ad hoc coalitions.

UN Police (UNPOL) has developed significantly in recent years. UNPOL have undertaken a wide range of deployments in conflict and post-conflict situations as part of UN peacekeeping operations, and UN police advisors have also been deployed in UN political missions. Fifteen of the 18 current deployments focus on capacity-building for the national police, and none currently exercises executive authority. The protection of civilians has become a core objective of UN peacekeeping operations in the last decade, and eight current missions have explicit mandates to protect civilians. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the UN Department of Field Support (DFS) have developed a clear concept of operations for the protection of civilians, which applies mission-wide – incorporating the military, human rights, rule of law and police components of a UN mission. Guidelines have also been developed on Drafting Comprehensive Protection of Civilians Strategies for UN Peacekeeping Missions, and five missions have developed such strategies. In general, UNPOL tasks relating to protecting civilians include responding to an imminent threat, operational support to host-state police, empowering host-state police, preventive measures and early warning mechanisms. A preliminary review of internal coordination mechanisms within UN peacekeeping missions for the protection of civilians is currently underway.
International police and gendarmerie deployments contribute to protecting civilian populations in conflict and post-conflict situations, even where this is not included as an explicit objective or task in the mandate. This involves providing physical protection, as well as making significant contributions to establishing a safe and secure environment and building sustainable capacity to uphold the rule of law in the longer term. As shown in the DRC, Haiti, the Balkans and elsewhere, international police and gendarmerie forces play a crucial role in identifying and mitigating the threats facing civilians.

At the same time, international police and gendarmerie forces often face a range of challenges to the implementation of their mandate generally, including their ability to protect civilians. The contexts in which these forces are operating are dynamic and characterised by high levels of violence. These forces do not have the same authority as in their home country, and language and cultural barriers may restrict interaction with local actors, including affected communities. These forces are rarely deployed in sufficient numbers to provide effective protection across mission areas, but must focus on and prioritise tasks and resources. This also means that there is often a significant gap between their capacity and the expectations the local community, national actors and the international community have as to what they can achieve. One particularly significant challenge relates to the political constraints placed on their work, including the sensitivities of the host government and other member states regarding the deployment, mandate and operational activities of international police and gendarmerie forces. In addition, although a number of multilateral organisations have developed or are developing policy relating to the contribution which international police and military actors make to protecting civilians, there is as yet no comprehensive operational or tactical guidance in this area.

Discussions at the roundtable meeting highlighted the type of interactions that have taken place between international police and some humanitarian actors on the protection of civilians in a number of different contexts. This has included inputs into the training of international police forces on international humanitarian law and dialogue in the field on the use of force and adherence to international humanitarian law in practice. However, some participants pointed out that there is no clear guidance
for international police and gendarmerie forces on how they should engage with the humanitarian community with regard to protection of civilians. DPKO has perhaps gone furthest in articulating the role of the police components of UN missions, and how this might relate to the contributions of other military, human rights, political and humanitarian actors. The UN framework for developing mission-wide protection strategies is a valuable tool for coordinating with other components of the UN presence, including UN humanitarian actors, and the DPKO/DFS concept of operations and other guidance on strategies and coordination are also helpful in clarifying roles and responsibilities with regard to the protection of civilians.

Other obstacles to coordination between international police forces and humanitarian actors that were highlighted during discussions included a lack of understanding of the roles, responsibilities, mandates and capacities of both sets of actors. Some participants expressed concerns regarding the plethora of actors on both sides and the need for greater coordination within as well as between the two groups. Some humanitarian actors stressed the importance of aligning the work of international police forces with simultaneous efforts to build the capacity of judiciaries and penal systems. Some participants also raised concerns about the militarisation of the police in some contexts, and the need to ensure a clear distinction between civilian and military actions and capacities.

International police and humanitarian actors in Darfur

A joint UN and African Union mission (UNAMID) has been deployed in Darfur since 2007. Alongside other components of UNAMID and the wider international response, the police component of the mission is seeking to ensure greater protection of the civilian population. However, as participants explained, the police component was originally deployed with very limited staff and logistical resources. UNAMID is explicitly mandated by the UN Security Council to protect the civilian population, but the mission leadership (civilian and military) can decide how the mission’s resources and capabilities will be used to this effect, and they have the space to make decisions about the appropriate tactics on the ground. In this regard, UNAMID leadership issued a Strategic Directive which sought to provide clarity on the differing roles and responsibilities of the military and police components, including outlining the
scenarios in which each would be used, and what tasks each component would be expected to perform.

The police component has been tasked with crime prevention and confidence-building; patrolling around IDP camps; long-, medium- and short-range patrols; providing operational support to the host state police, including on specific types of crime (e.g. sexual violence); and general training of the host state police. This work is coordinated with other parts of UNAMID in an effort to ensure a comprehensive approach to policing, the judiciary and the penal system. There were a number of key challenges in implementing these tasks, including high levels of insecurity, problems in gaining the consent of the host state and the confidence of local people, local political dynamics and insufficient capacity and resources. As in other contexts, a key question for UNAMID police has been balancing support for the national police with the requirement to ensure that they are held to account where they are responsible for violence and abuse.

However, over time UNAMID police have been able to increase the overall number of police officers, including female officers, and have increased the number of those with relevant cultural and language skills. This has greatly facilitated engagement with local communities, which in turn has been crucial in mitigating and responding to protection threats and creating a more protective environment. In IDP camps where the national police were not able to patrol because of security concerns, UNAMID police invested in building the self-protective capacity of displaced people through a community policing initiative, and the deployment of Formed Police Units (FPUs) has enabled the police component to operate independently of its military counterpart in less secure areas.¹

The relationship between UNAMID police and the humanitarian community has been largely positive. Participants attributed this to a consistently open and constructive

¹ United Nations FPUs are defined as cohesive mobile police units, providing support to United Nations operations and ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel and missions, primarily in public order management. FPUs have three core tasks: public order management; protection of United Nations personnel and facilities; supporting police operations that require a formed response and may involve a higher risk (above the general capability of individual United Nations police). See Policy (Revised): Formed Police Units in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, DPKO/DFS, United Nations, 1 March 2010.
approach from both sets of actors, which facilitated more constructive discussions on
the prioritisation of UNAMID police deployments in high-risk areas during the early
stages of the operation, when police numbers were very low. Participants highlighted
in particular the importance of regular and consistent dialogue between UNAMID
police and the humanitarian actors managing IDP camps, which they explained was
critical to identifying and appropriately addressing issues affecting the security of the
IDP camps as early as possible. Participants also noted that, in some instances,
UNAMID police had greater and more consistent engagement with camp populations
than humanitarian actors.

Participants also explained that, because the relationship had been largely positive,
they had been able to deal more effectively with major issues. For example, the
government was pushing politically for the return of IDPs to their areas of origin,
although there were serious concerns amongst the humanitarian community regarding
security in the return areas and the voluntary nature of this process. UNAMID police
were tasked with patrols of areas that were designated by the government as suitable
for return. An open dialogue between UNAMID police and the humanitarian
community, including consistent sharing of information and analysis, was crucial in
ensuring a complementary and appropriate approach on this issue. In terms of lessons
learnt, participants also noted that UNAMID police often received requests for
humanitarian assistance from local communities in the course of their activities. In this
regard, participants highlighted the importance of UNAMID police not ‘over-
promising’ on behalf of the humanitarian community, and the need for prompt follow-
up by the humanitarian community directly with these communities once they had
been alerted to their issues by UNAMID police.

**International police and humanitarian actors: Georgia**

The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM), an unarmed civilian monitoring
mission, was established on 15 September 2008 to monitor compliance with the EU-
brokered Six-Point Agreement of 12 August and the Agreement on Implementing
Measures of 8 September 2008. These agreements form the peace plan intended to
conclude the armed conflict between Georgia, and Russia and the separatist
governments of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008. Its staff of 300 have
civilian and military backgrounds, including police officers. EUMM was originally tasked with the following:

- Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) and Confidence Building – teams work on the Boundary Lines near South Ossetia and Abkhazia, dealing primarily with conflict-related issues and encouraging cooperation between the conflict parties.
- Compliance – teams monitor military and law enforcement facilities, ensuring that they are complying with the Memoranda of Understanding between the EUMM and the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Defence.
- Humanitarian and Human Rights – teams focus on humanitarian issues involving people displaced by the conflict, and human rights.

The mission also monitors the normalisation of the situation after the 2008 war, including the restoration of the rule of law in areas directly affected by the conflict and the living conditions of IDPs and local residents in areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

There have been a range of protection threats affecting the civilian population in the region during the period of EUMM’s deployment, including large-scale displacement. EUMM’s role in protecting civilians stems from the EU legal and policy framework (e.g. the CSDP guidelines on protection of civilians); from the fact that protecting civilians is an integral component of its mandate of stabilisation, normalisation and confidence-building; and because protecting civilians is a moral imperative. The EUMM works within the broader EU framework in Georgia which, in collaboration with other international stakeholders, has developed a three-tiered approach to protection of civilians: political action/diplomacy, protection from physical violence and establishing a protective environment. EUMM has adapted its activities with the normalisation of the situation in many parts of the region, although the causes of the conflict have not yet been comprehensively addressed. The mission is now primarily focused on continued monitoring of compliance with the MOUs and the security situation on the ABLs, including the human security conditions of the civilian communities along this line and in the breakaway areas, as well as contributing to
confidence-building between all the parties involved. Such confidence-building measures include the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM), which brings together participants from Georgia and Russia, as well as the de facto Abkhaz and South Ossetian authorities. IPRMs are held in Abkhazia, with EUMM as co-facilitator, and South Ossetia, with EUMM as a participant. Attached to the Mechanisms is a hotline telephone system in both theatres. The hotline has allowed participants to establish a common understanding of specific incidents, and has been effective in defusing tensions.

The EUMM has faced a number of challenges in the course of its deployment, including the complexity of the conflict dynamics, the geopolitical context and the operating environment, as well as in relation to its mandate. The sensitivities around protection of civilians issues in the region mean that it is particularly important to have a well-coordinated response, both within the EU framework (EU Special Representative, EU delegation, EU member states, EUMM) and with other international stakeholders, though this has at times been difficult to achieve. In addition, the fact that the mission does not have executive authority means that its ability to enhance the protection of civilians is reliant upon influencing the behaviour of conflict parties through security sector reform and mentoring of national (and de facto) law enforcement entities. However, some participants highlighted that there may in fact be hidden benefits to this type of mandate since it may mean that the mission is seen as having greater impartiality by the conflict parties, thereby helping to build their trust.

The relationship between EUMM and the international humanitarian community has been positive, and some of the specific tasks assigned to the EUMM, such as monitoring humanitarian access and the return and reintegration of displaced populations, have required close collaboration with humanitarian actors. The EUMM participated in the Cluster system and worked closely with the OCHA team in Tbilisi. The international humanitarian response has subsequently been significantly reduced and the OCHA office has been closed. However, EUMM continues to participate in protection meetings and in meetings with the UNHCR country office on issues relating to prevention of displacement and durable solutions for displaced persons.
There have also been challenges to the relationship between humanitarian and the EUMM relating to EUMM’s mandate. Some humanitarian actors were sceptical about EUMM’s added value as its mandate was limited to monitoring. On a practical level, the humanitarian community at times felt overwhelmed by the number of requests for assistance which EUMM staff passed on from affected populations; in turn, EUMM monitors were at times frustrated with the delayed response of some humanitarian actors to these requests. The quick rotation of EUMM staff also made it difficult at times to sustain a consistent level of trust and familiarity with their humanitarian counterparts. However, over the period of EUMM’s deployment, efforts have been undertaken by both the mission and UNHCR to ensure a more structured and constructive approach to their interaction, and formal mechanisms have been put in place to facilitate more open and regular communication and information exchange on key issues.

**International police and humanitarian actors: Afghanistan**

The international intervention in Afghanistan has included a range of objectives relating to building the capacity of civilian law enforcement agencies, with a view to establishing a safe and secure environment and the rule of law. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created in 2001 after the fall of the Taliban. NATO assumed leadership of ISAF in 2003 and was later tasked with creating a secure and stable environment, supporting reconstruction and development and strengthening governance and the rule of law across the country. Protecting the civilian population has become central to the ISAF mission. ISAF considers that protecting the civilian population can be achieved, in addition to other efforts, through building the capacity of the host state security forces. However, the approach has, in the past, been problematic and the different international efforts (ISAF and bilateral) intended to achieve this objective have faced enormous challenges.

At the Bonn conference in 2001, Germany was tasked as the lead nation for building national police capacity. EUPOL Afghanistan officially assumed this responsibility from Germany in 2007. The US and other NATO member states were also actively engaged in capacity-building for the police throughout this period, primarily focusing
on provinces where their own military forces were deployed under the ISAF framework. These disparate efforts to train the Afghan National Police (ANP) continued until 2009 when they were reorganised under ISAF command with the creation of the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A). However, there are still formidable obstacles including low literacy and lack of basic skills among recruits, allegations of corruption, lack of female recruits and difficulties in achieving an ethnic balance.

Although ISAF support to the ANP is seen as integral to the success of the international community’s wider military strategy in Afghanistan, participants at the roundtable noted a growing acknowledgement within NATO and among its member states of the drawbacks of the militarised model of policing pursued to date, which has prioritised military (i.e. counter-insurgency) objectives over civilian policing. This has been manifest in a focus on armed engagement and tactical training. Some participants noted that there is now more openness amongst international stakeholders to pursuing a civilian approach that prioritises civilian objectives such as maintaining public order and criminal investigation procedures, which are integral to building the rule of law. On a more fundamental level, ISAF’s efforts to build police capacity are hampered by the fact that it is mandated to support the government of Afghanistan, which does not enjoy full popular legitimacy and is disconnected from its citizens in many parts of the country.

The European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) has also struggled to provide capacity-building and training to the ANP. The EUPOL mission, deployed in 2007, was mandated to support the establishment and reform of an effective civilian police force in line with international standards. However, it has found it difficult to deploy its target of 400 trainers and currently has only 350 police officers in place. These personnel are mostly based in Kabul and focus on providing advice on policy and strategy to the Ministry of Interior. Contrary to some international stakeholders, EUPOL has consistently pursued a civilian police model and has advocated for others to do the same.
A number of humanitarian actors have expressed concerns about the international approach to training and capacity-building of Afghan civilian law enforcement entities, including the militarisation of the police and the limited coordination among international actors engaged in capacity-building. In addition to EUPOL and NATO trainers (there are now 1,300 under the command of the NTM-A), there are nearly 5,000 US trainers, mentors and advisors working with the ANP. Thus, international support to the ANP is still not sufficiently coherent, but is rather a mix of various models, shaped by competing interests. Some participants also highlighted concerns regarding the training and accountability of Afghan forces, both the regular ANP and new community defence initiatives such as the Afghan Local Police (ALP). There are also concerns about sustainability after the transition to Afghan security control is completed in 2014.

Interaction between ISAF and EUPOL and the humanitarian community at the strategic, policy or operational levels has been extremely limited, although it is noteworthy that there has been consistent, if not always constructive, engagement between ISAF military forces and the humanitarian community. In particular, there has been no formal dialogue between humanitarian actors and EUPOL in Afghanistan or Brussels, although this is a stated activity in the EUPOL strategy. Humanitarian actors have been unsure who to engage with on police issues, and how to do so in a strategic way. Some humanitarian actors view both international and host state police as combatants rather than civilians, and are reluctant to engage with them for fear that association will undermine their own ability to operate, and to be seen to operate, in a neutral, impartial and independent manner. However, a number of participants felt that more proactive attempts to coordinate by humanitarian actors, specifically focused on protection objectives and in line with their own mandates, was important, and should include supporting accountability mechanisms, promoting adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law and providing input to training strategies and modules as appropriate.

During plenary discussions, it was noted that the training initiatives for the ANP that existed prior to 2009 were generally of very poor quality and were even less coordinated than currently. It was also suggested that initial plans for capacity-
building for the ANP were too ambitious, and that the greater incorporation of traditional, community-based, informal law enforcement entities and justice mechanisms may have been a more pragmatic and successful approach. Participants remarked that policing mechanisms that had operated in Taliban areas prior to 2001 could have formed the basis of a community police force in the post-2001 period. Others pointed out that traditional or informal law enforcement entities may work well in some areas of the country because of particular cultural, political and contextual factors, but that such structures are problematic in other areas. These problems have primarily concerned allegations of corruption and human rights abuses.

Participants also debated what constituted feasible or desirable engagement between the humanitarian community and the international police actors operating in Afghanistan. There was consensus that greater interaction and dialogue was desirable, but some participants noted that, given the diversity of views within the humanitarian community, achieving a consistent approach would be difficult. It was also noted that a protection dialogue, which included sharing threat analyses and highlighting humanitarian concerns with international police actors in Afghanistan, is crucial in working towards more positive protection outcomes for the civilian population. Such engagement was seen as particularly important because of the imminent drawdown of international forces and the potential for a further breakdown in law and order as a result.

Conclusions and recommendations
Noting the various multilateral institutions involved in the deployment of international police and gendarmerie forces and the variety of mandates under which such forces are deployed, there was consensus that international police and gendarmerie forces can make a unique contribution to the protection of civilians in a number of ways. Depending on the specific mandate, this contribution may be through substituting for host state police (executive authority), through building the capacity of and empowering the host state police, and through monitoring and reporting on the activities of the host state police. Many deployments combine several of these functions, though there are currently no UNPOL deployments with executive authority. The contribution which international police can make relates not only to the
provision of physical protection for civilian populations; even where the mandate does not confer executive authority, international police can contribute to the creation of a safe and secure environment and the establishment of the rule of law. This contribution is not dependent on having explicit protection of civilians objectives in formal mandates, though it was generally accepted that including such objectives was advantageous.

International police and gendarmerie forces face a range of challenges to the effective execution of their mandates, including protecting civilians. At the strategic level, participants highlighted that greater coordination is required amongst the various multilateral institutions and contributing countries (PCCs) deploying such forces, including in the same theatres of operation, to ensure a more standardised approach to protection and to maximise resources. There was also consensus amongst participants on the need to ensure a holistic approach to the rule of law by coordinating strategies to build the capacity of the host state police, as well as the justice and penal systems. At the policy level, the efforts undertaken by both the European Union and the UN to provide greater clarity on the protection role and responsibilities of police deployments are important, but some participants asserted that operational guidance will be necessary to support them in executing their protection responsibilities on the ground. Linked to this, participants also noted major gaps in the allocation of resources, including force numbers and composition as compared to the mandates under which many of these forces are deployed. As a result, expectations of what they can achieve are at times unrealistic. In particular, it will be necessary to ensure that the concept of operations for the police and gendarmerie forces in each theatre of operations is based on a comprehensive understanding of the protection threats facing civilian populations, since this will facilitate advocacy on allocation of resources from PCCs and the prioritisation of resources on the ground from the outset of the mission deployment.

A number of participants highlighted commonalities between international police and humanitarian actors. Whilst noting that gendarmerie forces can be deployed under military command, participants agreed that international police are civilian actors and as such often have greater proximity to civilian populations than military forces. This
proximity is essential to identify and understand the threats that local populations are facing and how they can best be mitigated. Often, communities channel their concerns, grievances, needs and wishes through police actors; in such cases appropriate links with humanitarian actors become essential. In many instances this community-based approach also includes efforts by international police and humanitarian actors to build the resilience and capacity of local populations so that they can play a role in their own protection in partnership with other relevant players.

There was consensus amongst participants that appropriate interaction between international police and gendarmerie forces and humanitarian actors could contribute to more positive protection outcomes for civilian populations. However, in practice such engagement has not always taken place. With respect to the humanitarian community, some organisations are reluctant to engage with international police and gendarmerie forces because they do not distinguish between international police or gendarmes and international military forces, or are concerned that local people will not make this distinction. They therefore fear that associating with the international police may undermine their ability to be seen to operate in a neutral, independent and impartial manner. In addition, many humanitarian actors are not familiar with the mandate or role of international police and gendarmerie forces and do not know how to engage with them. Notwithstanding the diversity of the humanitarian community, there was consensus amongst participants that there should be some form of dialogue by humanitarian actors with international police and gendarmerie forces. What form this takes should necessarily be determined by the wider context, the mandate under which these forces are deployed and the activities they are undertaking on the ground. Evidently, such forces are often not a traditional armed actor and humanitarian organisations should increase their understanding of their mandates, role and tactics in order to determine what form of engagement is appropriate.

With regard to international police actors, some (notably EU missions and UNPOL) are required to engage with humanitarian actors as per existing guidelines, although this does not always happen in practice. International police and gendarmerie forces are often unclear about the mandate of humanitarian organisations, the relevance of humanitarian principles and how to engage humanitarian actors at a strategic or
operational level. Participants acknowledged that there are examples of positive interaction between humanitarian actors and international police (less so in respect of gendarmerie forces). Experiences in Darfur, Georgia and Afghanistan offer important lessons regarding the value of even a minimum level of coordination, and how to make this relationship work effectively on the ground. Participants noted that, where there have been positive experiences, strategies and tools for engagement have developed organically, as in Darfur and Georgia. It is important to capture this positive practice, as well as lessons learnt elsewhere, in the development of operational guidance for humanitarian actors and international police and gendarmerie forces. Clearly, structured and regular dialogue and interaction, including sharing of threat analysis and other information and concerns, is critical to increase awareness amongst international police and gendarmerie forces and humanitarian actors of their respective mandates and strategies/tactics, to clarify roles and responsibilities with regard to protecting civilians and ultimately to ensure more positive protection outcomes for affected populations.