

Assessing Implementation and Recommending Next Steps

When the Brahimi Report was commissioned in March 2000, memories of Rwanda and Srebrenica had just been refreshed by two searing UN reports, and none of the four big operations begun in 1999 looked like a winner: UNAMSIL, in Sierra Leone, seemed hamstrung by thugs. UNMIK, in Kosovo, was pleased merely to be able to say that nobody froze to death during its first winter in charge of the territory. UNTAET, in East Timor, was still finding its footing and MONUC's military observers were starting an operation that few believed could accomplish even its limited task of monitoring withdrawal of foreign armies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Yet each of these operations has since found its footing. While all received able third-country military assistance—Australian-led forces in East Timor, NATO-led peacekeepers in Kosovo, British forces in Sierra Leone, and temporary EU-sponsored, French-led forces in the DRC—these operations also reaped the benefits of the growing UN ability to plan, recruit for, support, and lead large, complex peace operations, growth spurred by release of the Brahimi Report. Persistent, change-minded UN leaders and staff members promoted, refined, and built upon recommendations in the Report and the follow-on comprehensive management review, and filled some gaps left by the Report, for example, on gender-related issues and HIV/AIDS.

Much of the UN's emphasis, consistent with the emphasis in the Brahimi Report, has been on improving performance in peacekeeping, where change has been significant. In other areas, change has been less marked. In particular, the United Nations and its members need to devote comparable energy and resources to the softer side of peace operations: the peacebuilding elements that promote acceptable conditions for mission drawdown and exit.

5.1 DOCTRINE AND STRATEGY

Since the release of the Brahimi Report, UN leaders have more often spoken truth to power, telling the Security Council that some jobs are too hard for the Organization but that others must be done. The Secretariat advised that the United Nations not get involved in peacekeeping in Afghanistan, for example, but strongly supported a forceful upgrade to the peacekeeping mission

in DR Congo and deployment of a robust new operation in Liberia. The experience of the past three years confirms, in other words, that the United Nations needs to do both robust peacekeeping and complex peacebuilding well.

Many of the changes provoked by the Brahimi Report and the tools since created and refined to support peacekeeping operations—in information technology and networks, management, recruitment, and logistics—could be applied equally well to the needs of peacebuilding, whether as a component of complex peace operations or in smaller, special political missions. But some key Panel recommendations have not been implemented, and the capacity of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to support peacebuilding remains underfunded.

DPKO's recent assumption of responsibility for managing all complex peacebuilding operations indicates that the Secretariat is adapting to a new collaborative model—call it post-enforcement peacebuilding—where a coalition force maintains order while the UN addresses other pressing needs. These can include relief and economic development; political reconstruction, democratization and human rights; and “security sector reform” (involving police retraining, judicial reform, and the application of international standards of democratic policing and justice). Dialed up, such responsibilities become a transitional civil administration mandate like that in Kosovo; dialed down, they look like UN responsibilities in Afghanistan or Iraq; dialed down further, they become the mandate for a resident or visiting mission giving technical advice to governments and their loyal oppositions in new democracies.

At the higher end of that scale, however, the UN may now be only marginally more capable than it was in 1999. Addressed as a “strategic” issue by the Report, transitional administration remains a touchy subject within the United Nations, even though the Organization has weathered the demands placed upon it by East Timor and Kosovo. Both the UN bureaucracy and the majority of UN member states associate such governance responsibilities with colonial legacies and have been reluctant to promote the tools and capacities needed to mount such missions rapidly. The missing tools include civilian technical and administrative specialists for governing a territory temporarily; an interim legal code and code of criminal procedures to apply pending revival of an agreed local legal system; and mechanisms to support the development of, and phased handover of responsibility to, local rule of law institutions. Especially without legal clarity, every future transitional administration mission will initially flounder trying to find, translate, understand, and train its personnel to uphold a local code that may have no post-war legitimacy in the eyes of one or more local groups. Valuable time and credibility will be lost in the process.

5.1.1 Recommendations: Doctrine and Strategy

Given the unimplemented elements of what the Brahimi Report termed a “doctrinal shift” in the UN’s approach to rule of law elements of peacebuilding, the United Nations and member states should:

- Review and assess the ability of the Department of Political Affairs to backstop successfully the increased numbers of fact-finding missions and special political missions, and consider an outside management review for DPA comparable to that given DPKO in 2001.
- Include disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) funding for ex-combatants in the first-year mission budgets of all peace operations with DDR responsibilities and allow unspent funds to roll over into subsequent years for missions like MONUC whose programs are delayed by local politics.
- Analyze the current roadblocks to UN capacity to support restoration of governance, transitional administration, civilian police (with or without executive authority), and other rule of law components in field operations. Address how best to integrate UN capacity in these areas with the capacity and programs of regional organizations such as the European Union and African Union.
- Address seriously the issue of a criminal code and code of procedures for transitional administrations to apply ad interim and for use in training prospective mission personnel.
- Create a reserve capacity to undertake transitional administration operations, expanding UN civilian recruitment rosters to include job descriptions unique to transitional administrations.

5.2 CAPACITY FOR ANTICIPATING, PLANNING AND MANAGING OPERATIONS

The centralized analytic capability recommended by the Report was resisted by key developing states but other, major improvements in UN knowledge management have been implemented. Some of the knowledge and analytical capability that “EISAS” was supposed to provide may evolve as a byproduct of improved networking among operations and between operations and Headquarters; the growing capacity of the DPKO Best Practices Unit to assess operational experience and disseminate information useful to ongoing operations; and the collaboration of UN offices with one another and with outside experts to undertake periodic strategic assessments of the conflict environment. Such capacity will remain critical to UN early warning and early action for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping alike.

The Integrated Mission Task Force concept, first tried in planning for Afghanistan (UNAMA) and used since, was broadly embraced by the Secretary-General and by member states but has not yet succeeded as a management practice. Something like an IMTF is critical, however, to planning complex operations that involve major civilian substantive components, as DPKO is not and should not become the system's reservoir of all expertise on all possible operational subjects. The UN will remain a highly distributed enterprise and the objective of operational planning and support should be an efficient and well-coordinated division of labor, drawing on necessary skills from the dominant pools of those skills, as and when needed, to launch an operation that will need the support of many organizational entities working in concert. Advancing the IMTF concept further will require unaccustomed ventures into joint decision-making, but ventures that are necessary, nonetheless.

Other elements of the UN system that have a voice in peace operations also need help. These include the mission support and analytical capabilities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and key elements of the Department of Political Affairs.

5.2.1 Recommendations: Capacity for Anticipating, Planning, and Managing Operations

In this area, the United Nations and member states should:

- Reconsider the UN's pressing need for strategic information gathering and analysis in light of 9/11, the bombing of UN offices in Iraq, and other challenges facing field personnel; improving such capacity would promote both the safety and security of field personnel and effective mission planning and implementation.
- Fund fully Secretariat plans for creative use of advanced information technology, recognizing that UN spending in this area, as a fraction of total budget, lags far behind other international organizations such as the World Bank.
- Revise and if necessary relabel the IMTF concept to reflect an evolving, multi-tier planning process that both affirms the lead department concept and gives an effective voice to mission resource providers outside DPKO:
 - Create a *mission strategy group*, comprising the heads of DPA, DPKO, and OCHA, chaired by DPA and with the participation of the mission SRSG, when appointed; this group would approve basic mission objectives for presentation to the Secretary-General and Security Council and also function as the appeals board for issues unresolved by the IMTF.

- Include in each IMTF the mission's technical assessment team; have IMTFs chaired by the mission's Deputy SRSG, when appointed, with a deputy chair designated jointly by DPKO's ASGs for Operations and for Mission Support; have IMTFs create the detailed concept of operations and coordinate the contributions of mission asset providers, with disputes referred to the mission strategy group for resolution.
- Give DPKO and other Secretariat elements that support peace operations a stable funding base to retain skilled, experienced Headquarters staff as operations come and go and as the total mission budget fluctuates:
 - Establish current Headquarters staffing levels for peace operations as a "floor" that will not be breached unless Headquarters support costs exceed ten percent of mission budgets for two consecutive years;
 - Maintain, otherwise, Headquarters support at five percent of the total peacekeeping mission budget, calculated on a five-year moving average, with provision for emergency staffing in years when mission budgets increase substantially; and
 - Consider moving the Peacekeeping Support Account (now about \$112 million/year) into the regular biennium budget, as recommended by the Brahimi Report, while moving peacekeeping operations (UNTSO and UNMOGIP) and special political missions that are now funded in the regular budget (at about \$118 million/year) into a broadened "peace operations mission budget."
- Give the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the people that it needs to improve the recruitment, selection, and training of human rights experts for complex peace operations and provide for their integration into mission planning and into rule of law teams.
- Support DPA's acquisition of voluntary money and people for the pilot Peacebuilding Unit to analyze how and why peace-building measures succeed or fail; have the Unit work closely with the DPA Policy Planning Unit and with the DPKO Best Practices Unit; make the PBU a regular budget item in the 2006-2007 biennium budget if the pilot program is productive.
- Give DPA's oversubscribed Electoral Assistance Division the support it needs to meet member states' requests for election-related advice, including assessed operational funding akin to that given special political missions.

5.3 RAPID AND EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT

Having received essential budget support from member states, elements of the UN—particularly the Department of Peacekeeping Operations—are now faster, better, and maybe cheaper at fielding complex operations (cheaper because quicker starts and more robust initial forces mean quicker stabilization and potentially briefer missions). The United Nations now has specific deployment benchmarks against which to plan and prepare peace operations, larger logistics stockpiles, and more effective rosters of stand-by forces. Serious shortfalls in capabilities remain, however.

To realize the goal of deploying a complex operation within 90 days, the United Nations needs additional member state participation at the highest levels of the UN Stand-by Arrangements System, especially provision of key enabling and specialized units (e.g., medical, transportation, engineering, and signals).

The Civilian Police Division's—indeed, the UN's—capacity to recruit and deploy in the rule of law area still falls short of what is needed to meet present, let alone future, mission demands rapidly and effectively. Everywhere that complex operations have deployed into almost-post-conflict situations like DR Congo, Liberia, or Iraq, the singular shortage in international capacity has not so much been troops but police or constabulary forces to take on the sorts of tasks that infantry dislike. The shortage of police and other rule of law capacity in post-conflict settings is global, and it is not getting any better, because states do not see fit to maintain larger standing police forces than they need instantaneously. Because states routinely maintain military forces that are larger than peacetime requirements, they have excess capacity to send abroad to keep the peace, but they maintain no such surplus of skilled, internationally oriented police and other rule of law-related personnel. Thus states not only need to build capacity in rule of law but also to *change how they define “excess” capacity* in this area.

Further, integration of rule of law-related components of peace operation also seems to be badly lagging and, if not, then badly advertised. DPKO received just two of the six posts that it sought to integrate rule of law people and practice into future field operations, yet operational planning expertise for rule of law exists nowhere else in the UN system. Although the Task Force on Rule of Law very helpfully highlighted the various elements of the UN system that can assist DPKO by addressing parts of the issue (local training, development funding, or technical advice), it remains the case that the United Nations, if asked to deploy another mission with a substantial criminal justice component (police, prosecutors, judges, corrections), is nearly as hard-pressed to do so now as it was three years ago.

Public information also continues to need help. It is one of those functions that everybody, in principle, realizes is important to a peace operation—yet no one assigns it the highest priority. When mission planners or, especially, mission financiers must choose between public information and other capabilities, public information is usually what gets left behind on the dock. Yet a mission needs to be able to explain itself and the evolving situation to the local population, and often will be the only objective source of news to which a post-conflict population has access.

5.3.1 Recommendations: Rapid & Effective Deployment

To improve capacity for rapid, effective, and successful deployments, the UN and member states should:

- Improve the effectiveness of the UN Stand-by Arrangements System through increased member state participation at higher levels, including more accurate listings and greater availability of key enabling units required for effective deployments.
- Encourage and support further development of regional “brigade-sized forces” comparable to the multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) and MONUC’s largely South Asia-based Ituri Brigade, recognizing their potential for effectiveness, especially if such forces have the opportunity to train together in advance of deployment.
- Encourage developed states with overseas military training capacity to help regional organizations such as the African Union implement their plans to develop brigade-level forces capable of contributing to UN and regional peace operations.
- Increase the capacity of the Civilian Police Division, which remains too small to develop standards and procedures, plan operations and manage a force of 4,000-8,000 officers who are individually recruited, vetted, and hired.
- Expand the staff of the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit within the Civilian Police Division, to give DPKO the capacity that it needs to evaluate the operational rule of law requirements of missions, collaborate in the design of effective rule of law teams for complex operations, and also find, recruit, deploy, and manage the criminal justice personnel that a complex peace operation needs.
- Recognize the value of member states contributing more highly skilled, named individuals to on-call lists for the rapid deployment of police and other rule of law personnel for peace operations; replace “bidding for slots”

on these on-call lists with real candidates with professional experience and familiarity with UN rules, procedures, and operational requirements.

- Build a responsibility center within the UN Secretariat for public information strategies and rapid deployment for peace operations; this capacity remains weak despite reorganization of the UN Department of Public Information.

The ambition of the Brahimi Report and of this study was to assess the operational and organizational capacity of the United Nations. The challenges of reform and revitalization are never fully met, of course. They evolve with time and events, and accomplishments can be constrained by both money and politics. But efforts to date demonstrate that change within the UN system is not only possible but can be quite effective. Improvements in UN peace operations capacity have given the international community a more useful instrument for international peace and security, and recent experience has begun to validate the last three years of change with tough peace operations that hold significant promise of real life success stories.

But while the UN can now move faster and plan better, it is only as strong and effective as the national forces put at its disposal, and trends in that area are potentially—but not necessarily—troubling. Growing regional capacity for peace operations may be well-coordinated with the United Nations and made available to it or be devoted largely to regionally-initiated and regionally-focused efforts. UN-regional collaboration can and has taken several forms, sometimes working in sequence (with coalition forces succeeded by UN peacekeepers) and sometimes in parallel (with coalition peacekeepers, UN peacebuilders, police, and/or administrators working alongside one another). Around the world, there is and will be sufficient damage to repair and to prevent in war-prone and war-torn regions that all available institutional capacity will likely be needed to take on these tasks. In building global capacity to deal with war and its aftermath, we should leave no organization behind.