

TRANSLATING CONCEPTS: DOCTRINE

The development of military doctrine helps establish an institutional basis to prepare forces for specific missions. Both NATO and the US Department of Defense define doctrine as “fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.”²⁴³ In many countries, doctrine provides armed forces a broad set of principles and guidelines for their assignments. A former officer involved in developing doctrine in Africa suggested that it provides the written-down, big picture description of a potential operation, the manner in which it should be conducted, and the types of situations for which forces should anticipate and plan. From doctrine, training goals are developed; doctrine also leads to tactics, techniques and procedures, and standard operating procedures.²⁴⁴

In preparing forces for operations, military doctrine is designed at many levels, from the strategic to the tactical, from single service to joint operations, from the national to the multinational. However, policy shapes the use of such doctrine, as political leaders establish the goals of a mission and may direct what forces are to do—and not to do—to achieve those goals.²⁴⁵ Some blurriness also exists between formal military doctrine and policies widely viewed as doctrine, such as

²⁴³ US Department of Defense, *DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, JP 1-02 (US Department of Defense, 12 April 2001, as amended through 31 August 2005), www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/.

²⁴⁴ This list reflects US military thinking and terms; most Western countries have organizational doctrine and components that are derived from it, but terminology differs. Dr. Charles Grimm, US advisor, ECOWAS, June 2004; Col. Tim Parks (UK), Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center, Accra, Ghana, June 2004; and Col. Michael Larmas Smith (retired), interviews with author. Workshop, *Operational Capacities for Civilian Protection Missions*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington, DC, 8 December 2004.

²⁴⁵ For *Operation Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan, for example, the initial US decision not to focus on nation-building or peace operations “affected the strategic direction of the operation” and was “an outgrowth of the lack of a political/military planning process.... [that] stunted the development of a coherent approach to address the reality on the ground in Afghanistan.” Col. William Flavin, *Civil Military Operations: Afghanistan Observations on Civil Military Operations During the First Year of Operation Enduring Freedom* (Carlisle, PA: US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, Army War College, 23 March 2004), 11.

the guidance developed for most multinational organizations like the United Nations.²⁴⁶

The development of doctrine is recognition itself that forces may be directed to conduct a particular type of operation. The problem with writing doctrine, suggested by more than one officer, is that it makes it more likely that the military would be called on to perform that kind of mission again. While there is no doubt that the United States could intervene to stop a genocide, for example, some have suggested that this is a reason the US resisted new military doctrine explicitly for “humanitarian interventions” after the American experience in Somalia in the 1990s.²⁴⁷ On the other hand, the 2006 US National Security Strategy declares that: “The world must act in cases of mass atrocities and mass killing that will eventually lead to genocide even if the local parties are not prepared for peace.”²⁴⁸ The decision to intervene militarily is fundamentally a policy decision, of course. The doctrinal question is how prepared personnel and their leaders are for operations and what their understanding of those operations entails.

Doctrine is not a silver bullet, however, to ensure military capacity for specific mission types. Experts point out that not all doctrine has equal weight. Its development alone ensures neither awareness nor use by the relevant forces. Much doctrine, frankly, is ignored. The content of doctrine matters, but its importance is determined by whether, and how, it is used.

Gaps in military doctrine for a particular situation do not necessarily indicate that troops are ill-prepared. In some circumstances, doctrine may not address a specific situation, but personnel can develop techniques in the field.²⁴⁹ US personnel serving in Iraq have used the Internet to share ideas about how to handle scenarios they face, for example, creating new guidelines in real-time.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ Some consider “doctrine” to be guidance at many levels, such as the supranational (e.g., the UN Charter), the national (e.g., policy guidelines), the operational (specific to missions) and the tactical (instruction, training, commander level). Observation by Mark Malan, quoted in The Challenges Project, *Challenges of Peace Operations: Into the 21st Century, Concluding Report, 1997-2002*, Swedish National Defence College and Challenges Project Partner Organizations (Stockholm: Elanders Gotab, 2002), 91.

²⁴⁷ Military officers suggest that the US would turn to doctrine for actions similar to humanitarian intervention, but not labeled as such.

²⁴⁸ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2006, 17.

²⁴⁹ There is a debate about what is doctrine, seen as a set of enduring principles to guide action, and whether that includes tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), which are based on doctrinal principles. Observation by Col. William Flavin, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, Army War College, interview with author, 9 June 2006.

²⁵⁰ Websites such as <http://platoonleader.army.mil> and www.companycommander.com offer an opportunity for company commanders and platoon leaders to share information about present day operations. Both sites were open to public viewing in 2004 but are now unavailable to the public or operate under restricted access.

Militaries also have a certain degree of flexibility and can “train up” for specific missions when necessary. In other cases, doctrine for one kind of operation may be applied to another. Doctrine for the emergency evacuation of a nation’s citizens from a foreign country (non-combatant evacuation operations, or NEO), for instance, could apply to providing immediate protection to civilians from other nations as well.

One gap is clear, however. There is little well-developed or well-known doctrine addressing operations authorized to use force to protect civilians under imminent threat either in the context of a peace support operation or as a stand-alone mission. Further, there is no common terminology to identify such missions or the likely tasks

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“triggered” by a mandate to protect civilians. As a result, doctrine most applicable to missions requiring personnel to protect civilians in non-permissive environments is usually called something else. Likely scenarios are covered in part by doctrine for missions such as counterinsurgency, peace support, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, operations other than war, humanitarian assistance, non-combatant evacuations, small wars, military policing, and civil-military cooperation. Such doctrine encompasses traditional military and humanitarian concepts of protection: as an obligation of warfighting, as observance of international humanitarian and human rights law, and as support to the provision of humanitarian space. Some peace operations doctrine also provides limited lists of military tasks for protecting civilians.

Almost no doctrine, however, addresses the concept of civilian protection as the goal of a military mission. There are areas where doctrine identifies coercive tactics to protect civilians, but they are not categorized as such. Thomas G. Weiss rightly argues that “there seems to be a lack of institutional adjustment, at least as is indicated by military doctrines, that, to date, have failed to specify ways to meet the needs for coercive protection of civilians, the challenge of the responsibility to protect.”²⁵¹ That gap is also true for peace operations with mandates to protect civilians under imminent threat.

Therefore, existing doctrine offers only a partial roadmap for armed services faced with preventing deadly violence against civilian populations. There is a

²⁵¹ Weiss, “The Humanitarian Impulse,” in Malone, ed., *The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, 48.

clear baseline of preparation for peace operations involving the use of force, and for combat missions with tasks applicable to protecting civilians. At the same time, significant changes in doctrine are underway, as countries and multinational organizations are developing new and revised doctrine for forces across the range of peace and stability operations. Thus, this chapter reviews some examples of military doctrine, considers their core ideas for national and multinational forces in situations where civilians require protection, and looks at how that impacts preparedness for operations mandated to protect civilians in hostile environments or to intervene on behalf of populations facing mass violence.

RECURRING THEMES IN EXISTING DOCTRINE

National and multinational doctrines embrace a variety of approaches to peace operations, non-combatant evacuations, civil-military cooperation (CIMIC), and other related missions. It is nonetheless possible to identify patterns in how such doctrine treats the protection of civilians. The following is a broad outline of existing categories of doctrine and how each touches on, but rarely addresses directly, civilian protection.

Peace Support Operations Doctrine

Peace operations or peace support operations (PSO) doctrine usually focuses on building a political peace and promoting host-state governance capacity. Historically, PSO doctrine divided into two broad categories—relative to the level of consent among parties to the conflict and the anticipated need to use force. The first type, often called “traditional” or “Chapter VI” peacekeeping,

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assumes a high degree of consent locally, little requirement for peacekeepers to resort to force, and the steadfast impartiality of peacekeepers. Typically led by the UN, such operations involved troops in tasks such as observing a ceasefire or monitoring compliance with a peace agreement. Peacekeeping was thus different from “peace enforcement” which was conducted primarily by militarily-led coalitions authorized to use force to achieve its goal.

In the 1990s, peacekeepers were increasingly sent to support stability within states and help governments find their footing after civil war. These missions,

termed “complex” or “multidimensional,” assumed that fighting had ceased and that troops would operate in permissive environments where they were tasked to rebuild governance. Following the serious challenges to peacekeeping in Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo, Angola, Sierra Leone, and elsewhere, however, many states and multinational organizations came to recognize that missions needed more tools—and force—to succeed. Peacekeepers confront the challenge of determining whether and how to employ force, for example, when:

- a ceasefire is signed but groups are not fully committed to it;
- warring parties have factions that disagree with the decisions of their leadership;
- local governance is weak and violent crime is not suppressed by national forces alone; or
- powerful economic interests spur a return to warfare absent an effective deterrent force.

In their most robust state, peace operations have also been called “peace enforcement” or “coercive missions,” among other labels.²⁵² For the most part, such missions are considered interventions rather than peace support operations; the UN traditionally leaves peace enforcement to coalitions or multinational organizations like NATO. Some current UN missions, however, use significant force and may thus bridge the gap between peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

The doctrine for such peace support operations has evolved as well. While recognizing basic principles of consent, impartiality, and the minimal use of force, standard doctrine now allows for more ambitious peacekeeping activities. Full consent may not be presumed before peacekeepers deploy; rather, doctrine may require promotion or management after arrival. Impartiality becomes active impartiality, whereby peacekeepers are to take action when parties contravene peace agreements or the mission mandate. The use of force for self-defense is clarified to include the use of force in defense of the mandate or the mission.

By late 2004, the framers of some national doctrine abandoned distinct PSO categories, concluding that boundaries between “peacekeeping” and “peace enforcement” were arbitrary or potentially harmful. They saw the need for PSOs to be ready for diverse and shifting environments—to engage in patient negotiation one minute and aggressive enforcement action the next. Even in environments that appear to be non-threatening, troops should be prepared for combat activities and have sufficient firepower to dominate the local security

²⁵² The lack of universal terminology and definitions causes confusion among analysts and policymakers alike. See William J. Durch, with Tobias C. Berkman, “Restoring and Maintaining Peace: What We Know So Far,” in William J. Durch, ed., *Twenty-first-Century Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, forthcoming), Table 1.1.

environment. This “unified” depiction of PSOs is innovative, if not universally endorsed.

Most PSO doctrines approach the protection of civilians cautiously, remain vague about their specific requirements, and do not address tactics for stopping *génocidaires*. There are good reasons for this. The fundamental principles of PSOs seem to run counter to robust, coercive civilian protection. PSOs are expected to be impartial. Although they may use force to uphold their mandate, PSOs do not seek to defeat a party to a conflict, regardless of how abhorrent its behavior. Similarly, PSOs focus on managing consent and hence providing support to a political agreement, not taking sides.

Active intervention by a PSO to defend civilians under threat could build consent among the local populace—a group that likely thinks that the international force is there to protect them. But PSOs generally do not aim to

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defeat a particular group—even if it would serve to end ongoing violence. The direct use of force to stop mass killing requires either interpretation of a PSO mandate authorizing “defense of mission” to protect civilians or a more explicit mandate to stop an abusive armed attack. This kind of mandate is possible, but not uniformly anticipated in current doctrine and practice. Thus, if genocide occurs, many forces lack a recognizable

strategy to act—since mass violence is not presumed to be a threat for most peacekeeping operations and its prevention lies outside their usual goals. Certainly, including civilian protection in a PSO mission or mandate makes it easier to justify aggressive action against a murderous militia as an impartial act in defense of the mandate. But arriving at more active types of civilian protection through PSO doctrine nonetheless requires a shift in traditional interpretations of mandates and an exercise in leadership not often found in peace operations.

Most PSO doctrine steers clear of traditional warfighting strategies and tactics to secure an area. To protect civilians under threat, PSO doctrine is more likely to touch directly on dissuasive, limited, and “defensive,” rather than coercive, strategies for protecting civilians—that task is left to others. It usually includes direction on the support of local governance capacity, including the provision of public security to the local population, the establishment of an atmosphere of

law and order, the promotion of a secure and stable environment, and the assistance of humanitarian groups. In more benign environments, therefore, PSOs help protect civilians from crime, lawlessness, and low-end physical threats. There is also room for more active (if not strategic) protection tasks, such as the defense of safe areas, humanitarian corridors, or IDP camps. Many of these tasks are precisely those that militaries are often unprepared and unwilling to fulfill, as they are often perceived as the domain of military police (and thus the job of the local government).

CIMIC Doctrine

Doctrine on CIMIC or civil-military operations (CMO) typically touches on activities relevant to civilian protection. CIMIC addresses military interaction with a broad range of civilian actors, including the host state government, NGOs, and local civilians. Most CIMIC is designed to ensure that military operations have a limited negative, if not positive, effect on local civilians—and vice-versa. CIMIC thus involves tasks important to the “indirect” protection of civilians, such as minimizing harm during operations, building up local infrastructure, distributing emergency aid and medical assistance, and other “hearts and minds” actions.

Cooperation with humanitarian groups and NGOs remains an important aspect of CIMIC doctrine. Especially in lower threat environments, the military liaises with these groups to support the physical safety and well-being of civilians. CIMIC doctrine can provide important guidance for civilian protection in places such as the DRC, where lives are threatened less by direct, violent massacres than by disease and malnutrition due to instability. Lessons address the protection of humanitarian space, respecting humanitarian neutrality, and cooperating with relief groups when appropriate. Although humanitarians are concerned about aligning themselves with the military and jeopardizing their neutrality, some may take advantage of the military’s logistics and rapid response capacity to serve their missions. Likewise, militaries can benefit from NGO knowledge about local concerns. CIMIC doctrine explains these issues—outlining the need for measured cooperation and information exchange among military and humanitarian actors, combined with a respect for humanitarian space—and aims to create a more effective international response on the ground, particularly in regards to non-violent threats to civilian life such as displacement, disease, and hunger.

CIMIC doctrine, however, implies that the *primary* military mission is something *other* than improving or protecting civilian lives. CIMIC is most often used to enhance its success in pursuing its goals; it is not likely to be the

goal of the mission itself. Like PSO doctrine, therefore, it is used in the protection of civilians, but does not address the topic directly or fully.

NEO Doctrine

Non-combatant evacuations doctrine is specifically about protecting civilians—in limited groups and in unique situations. It describes military operations to remove citizens from a threatening environment, such as the evacuation of either one’s nationals or local VIPs from a country. Most NEO missions do not address threats to the general population, natural or otherwise. For example, the US, France, and Belgium sent a NEO mission to Rwanda in 1994, which arrived days after the genocide began, to evacuate US and European citizens, but did not take action to protect Rwandan Tutsi or moderate Hutus under attack.²⁵³ Indeed, for a large-scale emergency, NEO doctrine is only partly applicable—a foreign force could not have evacuated over one million Tutsis from Rwanda. The principles in NEO doctrine, however, start with protecting civilians and in providing immediate security to them. These principles, including organizing the physical protection and evacuation of defined groups, could be applied to vulnerable civilians, such as refugees or IDPs, if the threats to life were localized and contained.

Civil Order Doctrine

Civil order doctrine, sometimes referred to as “crowd control” or “crowd confrontation,” addresses a scenario of mass civil disorder, such as a violent riot. At its most extreme, civil disorder could devolve into mass ethnic-based killings or genocide. A robust form of civil order doctrine could therefore do much to inform efforts at protecting civilians, by preparing troops to quell mass hysteria, violence, and looting (as seen in Iraq following the US invasion in 2003, or in Kosovo in March 2004) through the appropriate, graduated use of force. Most civil order doctrine is designed for domestic rather than international use, however. In addition, civil order doctrine might not address large-scale violence organized and directed from the top down by a powerful political actor.

Small Wars and Counter-Insurgency Doctrine

In the face of political actors bent on killing large numbers of civilians, some countries might respond by declaring war, albeit on a limited scale. Most militaries see warfighting as their primary mission, but some have returned to

²⁵³ That US Marines were on the ground so quickly and in such force belies the idea that no international response could have arrived in time to stem the genocide, although deploying a small NEO force is less challenging than sending one to counter large-scale genocide. For a comprehensive account of the US response to the Rwanda genocide, see Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 329-390.

look at doctrine for asymmetrical warfare, counterinsurgency, or small wars. These involve the defeat of an under-resourced enemy that survives using guerilla tactics and knowledge of the local landscape. They also potentially involve the occupation of foreign lands.

Within such doctrine, there is little explicit mention of a *civilian protection* imperative. As described, small wars and counter-insurgencies are fought for *political* aims; they involve winning local support for the aims of the invading party, irrespective of the humanitarian cost. Minimizing harm to civilians may be an important objective within such operations—and it may increase support—but it is not *the immediate aim* of the mission. If such missions were redefined to protect civilians as the central goal, they would involve new humanitarian requirements for military actions and tactics designed to eliminate “the enemy’s” capacity to kill. The importance of *how* a protection mission is conducted (e.g., its adherence to the laws of war, its ability to minimize civilian collateral damage, and the number of troops available on the ground to impose general law and order or counter a nascent insurgency) would increase, as would its link to the success of any follow-on peace support operation.

There is a strong argument behind these doctrinal approaches that the protection of civilians is *the result* of functioning, effective government and, therefore, that military support to help improve the conditions for such institutions to succeed is the best way to protect a population. While there is little dispute over the wisdom of this longer-term approach, it does not address the means to support physical protection to civilians facing immediate violence.

EXISTING DOCTRINE: THE UNITED NATIONS, KEY STATES, AND NATO

Militaries and multinational organizations are at different stages in the degree to which they use doctrine, which is developed primarily for military organizations, and how that doctrine addresses the protection of civilians. Many leading nations engaged in peace operations supported the work of the Challenges Project, which argued in 2002 that:

[T]here are many different, and sometimes overlapping, opinions about doctrine for complex peace operations—but as yet no clear UN guidance on the subject... There should be a multinational and inclusive effort to define the meaning and scope of doctrine applicable to UN peace operations; troop contributing countries should then take steps to build common doctrinal statements into their national doctrines; led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, specific efforts should be made to apply lessons learned in the

formation of peace operations doctrine, paying particular attention to the need to enhance military, police and civilian coordination.²⁵⁴

Generally speaking, protection is addressed by most doctrine in traditional approaches, such as part of international humanitarian law, and has little recognition within strategic doctrine.

UN Doctrine

The United Nations does not—yet—have official doctrine for its peace operations, let alone doctrine for missions with mandates “to protect civilians under imminent threat.” Doctrine traditionally is viewed as a national responsibility. In the past, UN Member States have been suspicious of efforts to develop UN doctrine, reflecting their national sensitivities and concern about a more autonomous, empowered UN military capacity. This attitude is shifting, however, and the UN is moving to develop greater guidance, and doctrine, for those serving in its missions.

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Without doctrine, the UN has published a series of reports outlining a basic philosophy for peace operations. In 1992, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda For Peace* provided a definition of peacekeeping as “the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all parties concerned, normally involving United Nations

and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well.”²⁵⁵ The report, written amidst the post-Cold War, post-Gulf War high of the early 1990s, set an ambitious agenda for UN forces to promote international peace and security, but gave little practical guidance. Boutros-Ghali’s January 1995 *Supplement to An Agenda For Peace* updated the original, taking into account contemporary UN struggles with peacekeeping and efforts to mount complex, multidimensional missions in the mid-1990s. The report affirmed “consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense” as the key definitional characteristics of peacekeeping. It also kept the more active use of force at arms-length, emphasizing that “peace-keeping and the use of force

²⁵⁴ The Challenges Project, *Challenges of Peace Operations*, 16-17.

²⁵⁵ United Nations, *An Agenda For Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping*, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, A/47/277 – S/2411, 17 June 1992, para. 20.

(other than in self-defense) should be seen as alternative techniques and not as adjacent points on a continuum, permitting easy transition from one to the other.”²⁵⁶ The *Supplement* thus left little room within peacekeeping for the use of force to protect or provide security for local civilians.

In 2000, the pivotal *Report of the Panel on Peace Operations* (or, “Brahimi Report”) outlined a strategy for improving UN peacekeeping, and recognized Secretary-General Annan’s desire to extend more protection to civilians in armed conflict. It urged that peacekeepers who witness violence against civilians “be presumed to be authorized to stop it, within their means,” in support of “basic United Nations principles.” But it also cautioned against a “blanket mandate” as potentially unachievable, especially given the scale of threats to civilians in the areas of UN deployments, noting:

The potentially large mismatch between desired objective and resources available to meet it raises the prospect of continuing disappointment with United Nations follow-through in this area. If an operation is given a mandate to protect civilians, therefore, it also must be given the specific resources needed to carry out that mandate.²⁵⁷

On one hand, the Brahimi Report urged that peace operations be capable of meeting the requirements of their UN mandates and employing robust rules of engagement when needed to support the mission. But the report also pointed out fundamental problems for the UN: force deficits, shortfalls in capacity, and increasingly ambitious mandates from the Security Council. In their more challenging environments, UN forces had trouble protecting even themselves, let alone UN civilian employees, humanitarian workers, and resident civilians. Nor could they assume that troop contributing countries would be keen to take on assignments.²⁵⁸

Since the Brahimi Report, formal UN guidance has improved. The DPKO, through its Peacekeeping Best Practices Section (formerly Unit), has spearheaded efforts to analyze and incorporate lessons from past missions and to codify guidance on conducting operations. In 2003, it released the *Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations*, developed to inform personnel of what to expect during deployments. The *Handbook*, for example, includes definitions of “impartiality,” “consent and cooperation,” and “appropriate use of force” that allow for robust UN peacekeeping. Impartiality,

²⁵⁶ United Nations, *Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations*, A/50/60 – S/1995/1, 25 January 1995, 6-7, 9.

²⁵⁷ *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305 – S/2000/809, para. 63.

²⁵⁸ The report included recommendations for UN operations in non-permissive environments. See Durch, Holt et al., *The Brahimi Report and the Future of UN Peace Operations*, 23-25.

for example, “does not mean inaction or overlooking violations.” Rather, the *Handbook* urged UN peacekeepers to “actively pursue the implementation of their mandate even if doing so goes against the interests of one or more of the parties.” While consent remains a key requisite for “[p]eacekeeping and progress towards a just and sustainable peace,” if it is “withdrawn or uncertain from the outset, the Security Council may also exercise the option of authorizing a robust, deterrent military capability to promote consent by closing the option of war.”²⁵⁹ From the United Nations, these are strong words.

The *Handbook* provides some basic guidance on tasks related to the protection of civilians. On “providing a secure environment,” for example, the *Handbook* explains:

Military forces, as part of a UN peacekeeping operation, are often tasked with providing a secure environment to allow other aspects of the mission’s mandate or peace process to be implemented. A secure environment is generally a precondition for moving ahead on several elements of peace agreements, such as safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons, cantonment, disarmament and demobilization, the free flow of persons and goods and delivery of humanitarian assistance. As part of the task of providing a secure environment, the military component may be asked to provide a visible deterrent presence, control movement and access through checkpoints, provide armed escort for safety and to facilitate access, conduct cordon and search operations, control crowds or confiscate weapons.²⁶⁰

This description of distinct, recurring tasks in peacekeeping mandates usefully identifies tasks for operations requiring the protection of civilians. While cast as the means for providing a secure environment, the list covers roles for peacekeepers that range from dissuasive to coercive means of providing protection to civilians, such as traditional strategies (i.e., the provision of support to humanitarian assistance and space) and more coercive measures (i.e., cordon and search). This section does not link the provision of “a secure environment” to civilian well-being explicitly, however. Rather, protection is likely to result from support to peace agreements, which require a secure environment. Implicitly, then, the protection of civilians is considered a task toward another goal. Certainly the phrase “secure environment” can be interpreted in a number of ways that leave civilians out of the equation.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ *Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations*, 56-57.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

²⁶¹ The *Handbook* does not suggest addressing the protection of civilians as part of the restoration of law and order either, something which “is not normally a military task and requires significant specialized training,” and will be “only in exceptional circumstances, with the goal of returning to civilian policing as soon as possible.” *Ibid.*, 63.

Indeed, the *Handbook* directly addresses the task to “protect civilians” only to say:

In specific circumstances, the mandate of a peacekeeping operation may include the need to protect vulnerable civilian populations from imminent attack. The military component may be asked to provide such protection in its area of deployment only if it has the capacity to do so.²⁶²

The premise is that UN missions with this mandate are *overtly* dependent on capacity. Forces are not *presumed* to have the ability to act in support of the mandate. So, even when the Security Council includes “protect civilians” in its mandates, additional factors—actual capacity, perceived capacity, and location—are expected to impact whether and how a peacekeeping force carries it out. Indeed, Council mandates often include such caveats.

Unfortunately, the *Handbook* offers no further details on tasks for protecting civilians. It cites the examples of UNAMSIL and the MONUC as missions mandated to afford protection to civilians under physical threat “within their capabilities and areas of deployment”—without suggesting exactly what these operations did, or could have done, to implement this mandate.²⁶³ Moreover, it does not address more aggressive, proactive strategies that may be needed to protect civilians, such as directly eliminating the capacity of abusive armed groups. The implication is that such activities are outside the scope or capacity of UN peacekeeping.

More changes are underway at the UN, however. Within DPKO, efforts include developing guidance on the use of force and on military involvement in humanitarian and development activities, to clarify the responsibilities of actors in peacekeeping operations.²⁶⁴ The Peacekeeping Best Practices Section completed assessments of the crises in the DRC in Ituri and Bukavu, which address important issues of civilian protection.²⁶⁵ Prior to getting a green light for official, unified doctrine, Best Practices embarked on a “guidance project” to provide structured guidelines to personnel on common tasks within peacekeeping operations, such as DDR. The project may produce the most detailed and substantive DPKO guidance on the conduct of forces in peacekeeping operations ever developed.²⁶⁶

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ Department of Peacekeeping Operations Directive, “Military Involvement in Humanitarian and Development Activities,” draft document on file with authors, February 2006.

²⁶⁵ Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, *Operation Artemis*; and MONUC, *MONUC and the Bukavu Crisis 2004*, Best Practices Unit, DPKO, on file with authors, March 2005.

²⁶⁶ DPKO official, interview with author, 27 November 2005.

In December 2005, the Secretary-General highlighted doctrine for UN peacekeeping, suggesting the need to inventory and establish doctrine, and to address questions, such as “What are the conditions under which we adopt particular approaches to the protection of civilians?”²⁶⁷ In March 2006, Member States signaled their general consent, and a change in attitude, toward development of UN doctrine and offered this as a definition:

The evolving body of institutional guidance that provides support and direction to personnel preparing for, planning and implementing UN peacekeeping operations, and which includes guiding principles and concepts, as well as the policies, standard operating procedures, guidelines and manuals that support practitioners.²⁶⁸

The Secretariat was asked to prepare an interim glossary of terminology for “further development of a peacekeeping doctrine, guiding principles and concepts.”²⁶⁹ This request may match a desire by many to see the UN develop more formal guidance and to address the protection of civilians in that effort.

Key Nations

Without its own doctrine, the UN relies on what is developed by Member States. Some countries have sophisticated doctrine for peace support operations; others have none. Canada and Great Britain come closest to providing guidance to their armed forces on coercive protection and reflecting the language of *The Responsibility to Protect*. Few others have the protection of civilians identified strategically and as an overall goal of military operations, although they offer strategies akin to coercive protection. To see where current doctrine may already prepare forces for protecting civilians as a major task or as the goal of a mission, it is useful to consider selected national doctrines.

Canadian Doctrine

Canadian doctrine includes four types of military operations other than war (MOOTW): peace support operations, humanitarian operations and disaster response operations, non-combatant evacuation, and crowd confrontation. Except for PSOs, there is little in this doctrine that relates to coercive civilian protection in non-permissive environments. As discussed earlier, NEO and crowd confrontation have tangential relevance to such protection. Humanitarian

²⁶⁷ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/60/640, 29 December 2005, 11.

²⁶⁸ UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group at the 2006 substantive session*, A/60/19, 22 March 2006, para. 7.

²⁶⁹ UN General Assembly, “Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations Concludes Current Session,” GA/PK/189, UN Department of Public Information, 20 March 2006, www.un.org/news/Press/docs/2006/gapk189.doc.htm.

and disaster response operations primarily involve using “military resources to assist in the alleviation of human suffering,” and are meant “to augment and complement the capabilities of humanitarian agencies” presumably in permissive environments.²⁷⁰ The military may provide logistics, airlift, and rapid response capacity, but has no potential combat or coercive role.

Yet Canadian PSO doctrine includes some of the only direct references to humanitarian intervention—or to a mission with a comparable overriding civilian protection mission goal—found in the doctrine of major developed state militaries. The 2002 Canadian joint doctrine publication *Peace Support Operations* briefly describes humanitarian intervention as a non-PSO “enforcement action,” and outlines how force may be used by the military to protect populations at risk of deadly violence:

Humanitarian interventions are launched to gain access to an at risk population when the responsible actors refuse to take action to alleviate human suffering or are incapable of doing so and where actors internal to a state are engaging in gross abuses of human rights. Intervention is a combat operation intended to provide protection to the at risk population and aid workers by imposing stable security conditions that permit humanitarian access. These operations can be precursors to complex peacekeeping operations.²⁷¹

The doctrine provides a few further details, linking humanitarian intervention to peacekeeping:

Humanitarian intervention can establish the conditions for [a] successful peacekeeping operation. Many of the same tasks performed in a CPKO [Canadian Peacekeeping Operation] would be carried out during a humanitarian intervention. Though the presence of overwhelming force may be necessary it may be best applied in the same restrained manner as in a PSO.²⁷²

Importantly, “humanitarian intervention” here is explicitly aimed at providing protection to civilians rather than serving a larger political goal. This formation places it outside the realm of peace support operations. At the same time, the doctrine makes clear that humanitarian intervention requires restraint—a different approach to the use of force than in warfighting.²⁷³ Canadian doctrine also makes a direct reference to *The Responsibility to Protect* framework for triggering international intervention:

²⁷⁰ Chief of Defense Staff, Canadian Forces, *Peace Support Operations*, Joint Doctrine Manual, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030 (Canada: National Defense, November 2002), 2-5.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 5-12.

²⁷³ Canadian doctrine describes PSOs as “authorized in support of the political objectives of internationally recognized organizations such as the United Nations (UN) or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).” *Ibid.*, 2-1.

As well described in the Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, nation states have certain fundamental obligations to their citizens. If a state fails to carry out these obligations to the extent where there is serious and irreparable harm occurring to human beings, in particular, large-scale loss of life or ethnic cleansing, the UN may mandate intervention.²⁷⁴

There are no more detailed descriptions of humanitarian intervention found in Canadian doctrine, however. Its discussion of peace support operations describes tasks relevant to protecting civilians, framed within their broader political aims. They include:

- the provision of security to protect humanitarian activities and to provide a “security shield behind which international agencies and NGOs attempt to construct a stable state;²⁷⁵
- temporary “Military Civil assistance” to provide emergency food or health aid when capable NGOs are not immediately available;²⁷⁶ and
- “Public Security assistance” to local law enforcement in the absence of capable police forces.²⁷⁷

Canadian doctrine clearly states that the role of the PSO includes re-establishing security in a mission area and, depending on the compliance of parties, suppressing well-armed and violent groups.

Interestingly, this doctrine discards the traditional use of Chapter VI and VII to frame the use of force, arguing that it is unimportant in considering the actions of military forces in the field. Rather it distinguishes between “traditional” peacekeeping operations, which have been in existence since the 1956 Suez Crisis, and more modern, “complex” peace operations that may be mandated to protect civilians. Moreover, the latter form of PSO must be ready for challenging contingencies and significant use of force: “The full employment of combat power may be required if the situation on the ground deteriorates during a PSO.”²⁷⁸ Likewise, complex peacekeeping forces “must be structured for the worst-case scenario. These operations are established to deal with complex emergencies, gross violations of human rights or genocide.”²⁷⁹ How, exactly, a peacekeeping force should “deal with genocide” is not further elaborated.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 1-5.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 4-11, 2-4.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 4-10.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 4-14.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 3-7.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 5-8.

A 2003 Canadian workshop between government and NGO participants suggested that this doctrine be a “base” for developing further doctrine, strategy, and tactics, including a new manual on humanitarian operations.²⁸⁰ By late 2005, the Canadian government was reportedly revising its military doctrine to include greater application to missions involving the protection of civilians.²⁸¹

UK Doctrine

The United Kingdom’s *Peace Support Operations* includes tactical, operational, and strategic considerations for a range of activities with relevance to civilian protection. In a section on “humanitarian operations and human rights,” it details a number of “protection tasks”:

The foremost task for the military force may be to restore the peace and create a stable and secure environment in which aid can run freely and human rights abuses are curtailed. Specific protection tasks may include Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEOs) but will more normally apply to the protection of convoys, depots, equipment and those workers responsible for their operation. Conditions of widespread banditry and genocide may exist, and when aid operations are being consistently interrupted there may be a requirement to use force in large measure to prevent the genocide and achieve the mission.²⁸²

Here, the turn of phrase, despite referencing measures to prevent genocide, reveals caution in the British approach to the protection of civilians as a mission for its own sake. Taken literally, the doctrine holds that “widespread banditry and genocide” are not sufficient grounds to require the use of force—only when “aid operations are being consistently interrupted” must the military act. This frame for action may reflect a presumption that the mission is to support aid delivery, not protection or genocide prevention. Additional tasks in the “humanitarian operations and human rights” section include conflict containment, the forcible separation of belligerent parties, the establishment of protected or safe areas, the guarantee and denial of movement, and sanctions enforcement.

²⁸⁰ *The Responsibility to Protect as part of Canada’s Defence Effort*, Report from NGO-Government Roundtable (Ottawa: Peace Operations Working Group, Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee, 22 September 2003), www.worldfederalistscanada.org/R2Ppapers.htm.

²⁸¹ Senior official, Canadian Mission to the United Nations, interview with author, 29 November 2005.

²⁸² Chief of Joint Operations, Permanent Joint Headquarters, Peace Support Operations, Joint Warfare Publication 3-50 (JWP 3-50) (United Kingdom, as directed by the Chiefs of Staff, 1998), 6-11 through 6-12.

The United Kingdom issued a revised 2004 version of its doctrine, *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations*, aimed at the operational level.²⁸³ The publication promotes a unified, “one doctrine” concept of peace support operations. Rather than divide PSOs into separate mission-types, it argues that all PSOs should observe the same basic principles. PSOs are defined by the desired effect they hope to achieve, namely, “to uphold international peace and security by resolving conflicts.”²⁸⁴ They encompass activities across a spectrum between war and peace. In such operations, adaptability and multifunctionality are keys to success. Forces should be prepared to engage in a variety of tasks and switch quickly from “enforcement” to “stabilization” and “transition” stances.

The doctrine provides some minimal guidance on how the military should engage in the “provision of protection.” “Protective tasks,” it states, “include protection and safeguarding of individuals, communities and installations... Commanders should be aware of the need to balance protective tasks against the need for more active operational measures.”²⁸⁵ Here, “protection” is a mostly passive activity, akin to guard duty. No elaboration on either “protective tasks” or “more operational measures” is offered.²⁸⁶ Other, somewhat more active tasks related to civilian protection, include: the establishment of “restricted areas,” which can include “centres of population;” “crowd control;” “interposition” as a “short-term emergency response to forestall or manage a local crisis;” and the establishment of “protected or safe areas.”

In no section does the UK bundle relevant tasks under a single heading about the protection of civilians. Indeed, the doctrine explicitly points out the need for further guidance on the concept, with language that echoes the *The Responsibility to Protect* report:

There are occasions when a national government or sub-national organs of government fail to uphold international norms. They may be unable or unwilling to prevent a faction or group being subject to, or threatened with, significant harm.... Consequently, a responsibility to provide protection may fall upon the international community.... To respond to these changes, and the associated responsibilities, those who are tasked with, or choose to assist with,

²⁸³ United Kingdom Ministry of Defense, *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations*, Joint Warfare Publication 3-50 (JWP 3-50) (UK Ministry of Defense, Joint Doctrine and Concepts Center, Second Edition, June 2004).

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 5-22.

²⁸⁶ Workshop, *Operational Capacities for Civilian Protection Missions*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington, DC, 8 December 2004.

upholding, renewing or restoring acceptable governance need an expansion of the concepts and doctrine that guide their actions.²⁸⁷

US Doctrine

The United States has extensive doctrine at many levels for peace support operations (tactical, operational, service-oriented, and joint, among others). The Army first developed much of this doctrine in the 1990s. Organized for long-term missions, the Army is, perhaps, the military branch most prepared for peace and stability operations. In contrast, given its expeditionary nature, the Marine Corps is often the first to arrive in a crisis. As a result, civilian protection tasks might be more relevant to Marine Corps responsibilities, as a large-scale genocide or ethnic cleansing campaign could require a rapid, responsive intervention.

In a section devoted to MOOTW, the Marine Corps doctrine, *Marine Corps Operations*, explains that Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) “are usually the first forces to reach the scene and are often the precursor to larger Marine and joint forces.”²⁸⁸ Where large-scale violence breaks out, therefore, forward-deployed, quick-reacting MAGTFs could play a significant role in organizing an immediate response. In addressing “MAGTF Reconnaissance and Security Operations,” *Marine Corps Operations* acknowledges that the protection of civilians may be a necessary task for many MOOTW: “Security operations in MOOTW are complicated by the requirement to extend the protection of the force to include civilians and other nongovernmental organizations.”²⁸⁹ It is not clear if the referenced civilians are local people or those affiliated with the mission, but their protection is construed as a “requirement” imposed on the military and a complication rather than the explicit goal. *Marine Corps Operations* further recognizes that the MAGTF could be called to uphold the rule of law when a local government is incapable of providing “the necessary security and law and order for itself or its population.” Although military police remain the preferred forces for such “law-and-order missions,” the MAGTF can be used “to maintain general law and order, establish a civil defense effort, and protect the government infrastructure.”²⁹⁰

The Marine Corps also has doctrine addressing specific types of operations. These include hypothetical examples of future missions. *Expeditionary*

²⁸⁷ *Peace Support Operations*, JWP 3-50 (revised, 2004), 1-6.

²⁸⁸ US Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Operations*, MCDP 1-0 (Washington, DC: Headquarters US Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, 27 September 2001), 10-2.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 11-17.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10-19. A large-scale break down in law and order could be a contributing factor to genocide or ethnic cleansing, as seen in the Rwanda genocide of 1994.

Operations doctrine, for example, describes an intervention into a chaotic West Africa in 2017 to defeat forces that led a coup and launched genocide. The goal is to defeat those forces and “stop the tribal slaughter.”²⁹¹ This scenario would require skills associated with warfighting but, with the aim of protecting civilians, it reflects the Marine Corps posture of preparing to respond to a wide range of crises. The doctrine does not, however, detail the tasks and training necessary for such an operation.

US Army doctrine, *Stability Operations and Support Operations* of February 2003, addresses civilian protection tasks for the military. It divides peace operations into peacekeeping and peace enforcement based on the level of consent among local parties. Likewise, it also distinguishes peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions from warfighting operations, based on their impartiality. The doctrine identifies various tasks within peace enforcement, many of which support the goal to “establish a safe and secure environment” and relate to civilian protection scenarios.²⁹² They include: “forcible separation of belligerents,” “establishment and supervision of protected areas,” “sanction and exclusion zone enforcement,” “movement denial and guarantee,” “restoration and maintenance of order,” and “protection of humanitarian assistance.”²⁹³ The principle of restraint does not preclude use of “overwhelming force” when there is a need to “establish dominance,” demonstrate resolve or “protect US or indigenous lives and property, or to accomplish other critical objectives.”²⁹⁴

Army doctrine describes other operations that touch on civilian protection, but none fully suggests a military intervention to halt ongoing abuses in a hostile environment. For example, the doctrine categorizes “relief operations” as a type of “support operation” in which troops “respond to and mitigate the effects of natural or man-made disasters.” Here the focus is to “mitigate damage, loss, hardship, or suffering,” but these operations are undertaken “[t]o support the efforts of local authorities or the lead agency.”²⁹⁵ This framework presumes that “local authorities” are not themselves responsible for abusing civilians, and that the environment is calm enough to allow a “lead agency” other than the military to effectively intervene.

²⁹¹ US Marine Corps, *Expeditionary Operations*, MCDP 3 (Washington, DC: Headquarters US Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, 16 April 1998), 134.

²⁹² US Army, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*, FM 3-07 (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, February 2003), 4-6.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 71.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4-16.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-9.

Likewise, the requirement to offer “support to civil law enforcement” in response to “civil disturbances” touches on, but does not encompass, the protection of civilians. While bringing a halt to the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 could be conceived of as quelling an extreme “civil disturbance,” the Army focuses on domestic disturbances where local agencies are cooperative:

In extreme cases, civil disturbances may include criminal acts of terrorism and violence.... The Army has a role in assisting civil authorities to restore law and order when local and state law enforcement agencies are unable to quell civil disturbances. Under provisions of the Constitution and selected federal statutes, the president may order federal armed forces to aid local and state civil authorities to protect the Constitutional rights of citizens.²⁹⁶

The more relevant case for such operations is the Los Angeles riot of 1992, rather than Bosnia or Rwanda in the 1990s, or Darfur today. Yet this approach to mass violence in foreign states might approximate a civilian protection mission. The Army has addressed this gap in offering protection in part by assigning its military police the roles of providing protection to refugees; supporting a secure environment for humanitarian relief efforts; dealing with crimes, persons, and property; performing patrols; and other “law and order” functions while deployed overseas.²⁹⁷

An appendix in *Stability Operations and Support Operations* on “Refugees and Displaced Persons” addresses some protection issues of concern to humanitarian actors:

Military forces have been called on to secure displaced persons within their country of origin. Support for IDPs can take several forms. Often, relief convoys need military security. At times, military forces must insulate internally displaced groups from the population at large. Safe areas may be established to ensure the safety of the targeted group. As with military support to refugee operations, the military forces operate with their civilian partners.²⁹⁸

Such tasks, often labeled “civilian protection” by both military actors and civilian humanitarians,²⁹⁹ could be important for saving lives in hostile environments with violence against civilians. By themselves, however, the protection of IDP camps, relief convoys, and safe areas would be unlikely to halt genocide or ethnic cleansing. Indeed, US doctrine views the use of military intervention alone to protect civilians abroad as an inadequate response to the

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 6-21.

²⁹⁷ US Army, *Military Police Internment/Resettlement Operations, Field Manual No. FM 3-19.40* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1 August 2001). Reportedly this doctrine was updated in 2005 to include international deployments by military police.

²⁹⁸ US Army, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*, F-3.

²⁹⁹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict,” OCHA, www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/.

threat to civilians. US doctrine aims to support civilians by addressing the structural problems and viable institutions (political, economic, social, and military) first, and then to establish law and order, governance, and security to a population.³⁰⁰

Thus, overall, the United States does not have a clear doctrine for missions suggested by *The Responsibility to Protect*, or for peace enforcement and peace support operations in which the protection of civilians is the central goal. But as described here, US doctrine addresses many tasks associated with such missions, including support to humanitarian space, support to law and order, and the explicit and active protection of vulnerable populations. Even without explicit US doctrine for civilian protection missions, the US could conduct a well-organized military intervention. One US military expert was optimistic. “It’s not that bad,” he suggested. “You can draft all the doctrine you would need.”

With a 2005 Defense Department directive to integrate preparation for stability operations more squarely within US military preparedness for traditional combat operations, doctrine is slated for review and revisions across the armed services.³⁰¹ As the US moves to revise its doctrine, there is an opportunity for a more explicit recognition of how US forces should deal with vulnerable populations in conflict—and more explicitly address the protection of civilians in imminent threat and with the means of coercive measures, as needed. A US Army officer with expertise in military doctrine suggested that, for the US, the decision to act was in policy hands, since “the door is open” in American doctrine.³⁰²

French Doctrine

By the mid-1990s, French military doctrine began to embrace the robust use of force to prevent and control international crises as part of peace support operations, well before the US, the UK, and Canadian militaries. A March 1995 directive issued by General Jacques Lanxade, chief of staff of the French armed forces, outlined three main types of PSOs and “international law enforcement operations,” from consent-based peacekeeping all the way up to limited war.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ US doctrine, *Foreign Internal Defense*, for example, describes US support to foreign governments for their internal defense and development with a mixture of civilian and military support to protect against subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-07.1, Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, revised, 30 April 2004), www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_07_1.pdf.

³⁰¹ DoD Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, 28 November 2005).

³⁰² US Army Colonel, interview with author, July 2006.

³⁰³ Thierry Tardy, “French Policy Towards Peace Support Operations,” *International Peacekeeping*, 6, no. 1 (Spring 1999), 73; Joseph P. Gregoire, “The Bases of French Peace Operations Doctrine,”

Opérations de maintien de la paix, or “peacekeeping,” were authorized under Chapter VI of the UN Charter and based on the consent of local parties “following the cessation of hostilities.” *Opérations de restauration de la paix*, or “peace implementation,” were authorized under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and involved impartial efforts to bring peace to a country “experiencing civil war where the safety of the civilian population is gravely threatened but where no aggressor can be identified” (roughly equivalent to “peace enforcement” in NATO doctrine). *Opérations d’imposition de la paix*, or “peace enforcement” (but not in the NATO or US sense of the term), involved limited warfare under Chapter VII, and could involve “opposing with force a well-identified aggressor” in order to “impose or re-establish peace.”³⁰⁴

Notably, the French definition of “peace implementation” explicitly denotes civilian safety, rather than political concerns, as the motivation behind deployment. Likewise, French “peace enforcement” appears to span the doctrinal boundary between peacekeeping and warfighting, in which coercive protection might be situated.

Elsewhere, French doctrine endorses a concept of “active impartiality,” through which forces can aggressively target any actor preventing the implementation of their mission. This implies that French forces would have few qualms about defeating a group of *genocidaires* outright if their mission included the protection of civilians.³⁰⁵ Moreover, France does not see PSOs as wholly distinct from warfighting. All missions exist on “a continuum of possibilities” where “the principles of war fighting” are “the foundation of action.”³⁰⁶ French missions should also include “undisputed military superiority” over any potential adversary.³⁰⁷ French doctrine, in this sense, anticipated changes in UK and Canadian doctrine, which came to embrace such robust PSO concepts only after the turn of the century.

Dutch Doctrine

Netherlands doctrine is heavily influenced by the 1995 massacre in Srebrenica, where Dutch peacekeepers failed to take action against Serb forces committing atrocities against Muslim men and boys.³⁰⁸ The Royal Netherlands Army’s

Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy Series (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, September 2002), 4.

³⁰⁴ Etat-Major des Armées, *The French Force Commitment Concept*, No.

827/DEF/EMA/EMP.1/NP, 23 July 1997, 27.

³⁰⁵ Gregoire, “The Bases of French Peace Operations Doctrine,” 5.

³⁰⁶ Steve Rynning, *Changing Military Doctrine: Presidents and Military Power in Fifth Republic France, 1958-2000* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), Ch. 5.

³⁰⁷ Gregoire, “The Bases of French Peace Operations Doctrine,” 6.

³⁰⁸ A/54/549, *The fall of Srebrenica*, paras. 470-474.

(RNLA) *Peace Operations* doctrine was updated in June 1999, and has a more traditional approach towards peacekeeping than its Canadian, British, and French counterparts. Within this framework, however, it recognizes the potential need for coercive action to protect civilians.

The doctrine allows that part of a peace operation's "political success" consists in "creating a safe environment for the population in the conflict area," and that a peace force "may...be charged with the protection of...the civilian population."³⁰⁹ It also states that peace operations must adhere to the laws of war, including taking care to minimize civilian casualties. The doctrine also requires contingency plans for the protection of civilians in areas of operation.³¹⁰ However, several elements of the doctrine limit the extent to which the RNLA is likely to engage in active civilian protection.

As with other PSO doctrine, the RNLA focuses on consent and impartiality as essential elements of peace operations. The doctrine distinguishes peacekeeping from peace enforcement on the basis of consent, or its absence. But the doctrine stresses that where consent is missing or in doubt, "direct efforts must be made at all levels to *stabilise and promote this consent*."³¹¹ All peace-enforcing activities are considered to jeopardize the operation by making consent more difficult to obtain or re-establish. Furthermore, mandates for peace operations will not designate enemies or set military victory as a condition of success.³¹² Thus, the RNLA appears highly unlikely to undertake an operation to destroy or defeat a force threatening civilians as part of a peace operation, though it will in some cases guard civilians against such threats.

The most robust forms of civilian protection considered in the doctrine are the establishment and maintenance of protected areas and non-combatant evacuations.³¹³ In a protected-area operation, the peace force guards a specified geographic area against attack. The operation is authorized to use force to disarm military elements within the protected area and to defend the area in the event that one or more parties do not consent to the safe area or temporarily suspend their consent.³¹⁴ Active operations are confined to controlling approaches and conducting patrols.³¹⁵

³⁰⁹ Royal Netherlands Army, *Peace Operations: Army Doctrine Publication III* (The Netherlands: Royal Netherlands Army, approved 29 June 1999), 61, 89.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 102, 111.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 16-17, 83, emphasis in original.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 77.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 201-216, 287-306.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 202-204.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 207.

NEO missions remove civilians or unarmed military personnel from conflict areas. The doctrine focuses heavily on issues related to the evacuation of Dutch nationals, but it does contemplate facilitating movement of refugees out of a conflict zone.³¹⁶ Depending on the situation, the evacuees may use civilian transport protected by a military escort or they may be evacuated using military assets. Evacuations may take place where the host government does not consent and/or does not control the security situation; such situations may call for a full-scale combat operation.³¹⁷

Several other operational tasks in RNLA doctrine may involve civilian protection directly or indirectly: monitoring human rights violations; securing the freedom of movement of humanitarian agencies; and assisting civilian police in the protection of individuals, groups, or installations. The military may be called on to

Few developing states have written doctrine for peace operations. India, a country with significant peacekeeping experience, is one of the exceptions.

protect civilian humanitarian relief agencies or to supply humanitarian relief itself.³¹⁸ Yet, fundamentally, operations undertaken to eliminate irregular forces threatening either the government or the population are considered combat operations, outside the scope of the peace operations doctrine.³¹⁹

Indian Doctrine

Few developing states have written doctrine for peace operations. India, a country with significant peacekeeping experience, is one of the exceptions. *Indian Army Doctrine* includes basic, paragraph-length descriptions of three “Non-Combat Operations” that could be used to protect civilians in low-threat environments: “Maintenance of Law and Order,” “Disaster Relief,” and “Humanitarian Assistance.” It also includes a short section on “Low-Intensity Conflict Operations and Counter-Insurgency Operations.”³²⁰

A chapter dedicated to UN peacekeeping missions offers a view of basic peacekeeping principles: “consent of the parties involved, international support, unity of C² [command and control], impartiality, mutual respect, legitimacy,

³¹⁶ Ibid., 287.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 292.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 163, 244, 279, 308, 313ff.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

³²⁰ Indian Army, *Indian Army Doctrine*, Part II, Chapter Five, Section 15 (Shimla, India: Headquarters Army Training Command, 18 October 2004), http://indianarmy.nic.in/indianarmydoctrine_2.doc.

credibility and coordination of effort.”³²¹ The doctrine makes a clear distinction between Chapter VI peacekeeping operations and Chapter VII peace enforcement. It also offers that Chapter VI peacekeeping contingents should prepare for tasks “such as security, protection, civic action and logistics,” but without more discussion. Chapter VII missions, on the other hand, require a more active military role in which “the tasks (demonstrations, blockade or other operations) and functioning of the contingent would be similar to that while functioning as part of a multi-national force.” There is further discussion of ROE, mandates and preparation of forces, but no other references to protecting civilians.

Multinational Doctrine: NATO

For multinational organizations, common doctrine assists their ability to organize and coordinate forces in operations. Of the five major multinational groups willing to lead military missions involving the use of force (and with authority for intervening to protect civilians), none has doctrine designated for operations involving the protection of civilians under imminent threat. As discussed earlier, the UN does not (yet) have official doctrine. The EU, the AU, and ECOWAS are still developing guidance for their deployments. Only NATO has its own fully developed military doctrine for peace operations and other missions. This doctrine is derived from its Member States and reflects a need to balance differing philosophies and interests.

NATO doctrine, *Peace Support Operations*, argues for a clear separation between peacekeeping, and peace enforcement and asserts that any peace support force must be correctly tailored to its operational environment. In other words, a force outfitted for peacekeeping should not attempt peace enforcement. If a peacekeeping force witnessed a loss of local consent and a rapid escalation of violence, for example, the doctrine recommends that the force withdraw or be fully replaced. Given that genocide and ethnic cleansing can emerge suddenly in regions of conflict, NATO doctrine implies that forces may pull out in the face of mass slaughter if reinforcements cannot arrive in time or if political will is lacking. This concept contrasts with that of the British, French, and Canadians, among others, who presume PSOs deploy with all the capacity needed for even the most nightmarish contingency.

The NATO doctrine has no specific section on civilian protection, but recognizes many military tasks required to protect civilians from large-scale abuse. *Peace Support Operations* comes close to addressing requirements for

³²¹ Ibid., Section 16.

coercive protection in its discussion of *Protection of Humanitarian Operations*, as a role for more combat-ready forces:

[Peace support operations] are increasingly conducted in situations in which there are wide spread and ongoing abuses to basic human rights, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Such abuses frequently occur in collapsed or collapsing states in which the rule of law has ceased to exist. Only a PSF [peace support force] prepared for combat can operate in such an environment, curtail human rights abuses, and create a secure environment in which civilian agencies can redress the underlying causes of the conflict and address the requirements of peace building.³²²

While not detailing how to protect civilians, NATO states that the ROE and mandates are the bottom line for guiding troop behavior (as discussed in Chapter V). The doctrine argues that overly restrictive ROE (and inaction) may be inappropriate, and that military action may be needed in cases of widespread abuse of civilians.³²³ NATO doctrine implies that “circumstances of widespread violations of human rights and ethnic cleansing” may require a forceful military response on behalf of civilians’ safety and well-being. The doctrine further describes tasks useful for coercive protection operations. These include the imposition of no-fly zones, the forcible separation of belligerent parties, the establishment and supervision of protected or safe areas, and the creation of “safe corridors” for the passage of civilians and aid flows.

NATO’s 2001 tactical doctrine, *Peace Support Operations Techniques and Procedures*, also describes relevant missions and tasks. These include *Humanitarian Relief, Restoration of Law and Order Operations, Protection of Humanitarian Operations and Human Rights, Conflict Containment, Establishment of Protected or Safe Area, and Guarantee and Denial of Movement Operations*. Few of these tasks make protection an explicit purpose. The section on denial-of-movement operations comes close, however, presuming that a force capable of peace enforcement and escalation may be tasked with preventing “harassment of an unprotected population.”³²⁴

Thus, NATO is cautious about intervening on behalf of civilians. While not tailored for humanitarian intervention missions *per se*, NATO doctrine covers operations from peace support to full combat. In this range, NATO would view protecting civilians from mass violence as a job for military personnel prepared for a hostile environment and for warfighting. Its emphasis is the opposite of

³²² NATO Allied Joint Publication, *Peace Support Operations*, AJP-3.4.1 (NATO, Military Agency for Standardisation, July 2001) Chapter 6, para. 0634.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 3-5, 3-6.

³²⁴ NATO, *Peace Support Operations Techniques and Procedures*, ATP-3.4.1.1 (NATO, August 2001), para. 0120.

that offered by the UN and other organizations that approach the use of force with great caution. NATO looks toward peacekeeping, and its extension toward peacebuilding and humanitarian operations with care—an understandable stance given its historical roots as a defensive organization. Somewhere between these approaches is a place where the tasks, doctrine, and training for civilian protection—and coercive protection—can be developed more specifically.

ACTION WITHOUT DOCTRINE

Doctrine is still developing for the military missions of the African Union, ECOWAS and the European Union. Within the AU and ECOWAS, few Member States have written national-level doctrine on which to base multinational doctrine, let alone for missions involving civilian protection.

Developing countries in other regions also lack doctrine. Jordan, for example, has significant experience in UN peacekeeping operations and hosts the preeminent peacekeeping training center in the Middle East, yet it does not have official peacekeeping doctrine. Pakistan has highly experienced troops, with service in multiple peace operations including hard missions in Somalia and the DRC. While a top UN troop contributor today, Islamabad has not written doctrine for peace operations. National training is designed to prepare the army for a potential role in peacekeeping, but not specifically in civilian protection.³²⁵

Experienced troops from developing nations may nevertheless have an understanding of operations from the field—rather than from formalized doctrine and training for peace operations. As one Nigerian officer put it, pointing to his head, doctrine is “up here.”³²⁶ In informal surveys of military officers from Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America countries participating in US classroom-based training courses on peace operations, not one said that their national doctrine covered civilian protection in peace operations.³²⁷ Yet many offered that they considered the protection of civilians to be part of their role in peacekeeping missions, if not a central motivation; others offered examples of the challenges they imagined with such a mission mandate.

³²⁵ Senior Pakistani Army official, interview with author, May 2005.

³²⁶ Nigerian military officer, ECOWAS Secretariat, interview with author, Abuja, Nigeria, June 2004.

³²⁷ Author discussions with military officers, in seminars run for the US Enhanced International Military Education and Training program, Washington, DC, May 2005, and Newport, RI, July 2005; and seminar, Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, May 2006. Many represented countries experienced in peace operations: Bangladesh, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Italy, Mongolia, Nepal, Rwanda, Romania, Pakistan, Senegal, Ukraine, and the United States.

The African Union

There is little to no written guidance on the conduct of AU-authorized or AU-led missions. The AU Protocol does not discuss doctrine, but suggests that the Commission provide guidelines for the training of the national standby contingents at both the operational and tactical levels, including training guidelines for international humanitarian law and human rights law. Further, the Commission plans to develop and circulate operating procedures to support the standardization of training, doctrines, manuals, and programs for national and regional schools of excellence. It also plans to coordinate the ASF training courses, command and staff exercises, and field training.

The AU will need to develop and provide clear guidance to its forces on the conduct of operations if it is to develop an effective African Standby Force by 2010. The AU is likely to seek outside support from its members and other nations with experience, especially if it is to have effective guidance for humanitarian interventions.³²⁸ Efforts to help the AU develop doctrine are beginning and include support from the United Nations.³²⁹

ECOWAS

ECOWAS has not had written doctrine for its past deployments of forces; it is working on doctrinal guidance for its operations.³³⁰ The development of doctrine and concepts for the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) may be assisted by ECOWAS member states, partner countries such as the United Kingdom, and training centers such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC). This regional force may contribute to the African Standby Force but, as mentioned, that effort has yet to produce continent-wide doctrine and is unlikely to start with civilian protection scenarios.³³¹ According to one ECOWAS advisor involved in this project, he was “not aware of anything that meets the definitions and scenarios” of civilian protection.³³²

ECOWAS has engaged in a process of capacity-building, underway since 2004, that offers a new avenue for the organization to consider the protection of civilians as the potential goal of a mission or as tasks, whether as part of a regional, continental, or UN-led operation.

³²⁸ Jakkie Cilliers and Mark Malan, *Progress with the African Standby Force*, Occasional Paper No. 98 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, May 2005).

³²⁹ A/60/19, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations* para. 141.

³³⁰ ECOWAS Secretariat, interviews with author, Abuja, Nigeria, June 2004; former US advisor to ECOWAS Secretariat, interview with author, March 2006; Malan, *Developing the ECOWAS Civilian Peace Support Operations Structure*. Canada has provided ECOWAS financial support to increase its staff, in part to support development of ECOWAS doctrine.

³³¹ Advisor, DES-PADS, ECOWAS Secretariat, interviews with author, October 2005.

³³² *Ibid.*, June 2004, October 2005.

The European Union

Like the AU and ECOWAS, the European Union does not yet have official military doctrine. The EU published more detailed guidance on its global security role with EU High Representative Javier Solana's 2003 *A Secure Europe In a Better World: European Security Strategy*. The document addresses emerging threats to EU security and the ways in which the EU can both protect itself and contribute to the global security architecture. Among other issues, it identifies "regional conflicts," "state failure," and "organized crime" as threats to EU security. It recommends tackling these issues through the EU's unique combination of military, humanitarian, and policing capacity.³³³ It also argues for developing a "strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention," and that the EU engage in preventive efforts "before humanitarian emergencies arise."³³⁴ The document makes no mention of potential EU efforts to halt genocide, ethnic cleansing, or mass killing, although it details statistics on human insecurity in the developing world as part of a general vision of post-Cold War security threats. That the EU could publish such a "security strategy" represents an important step, as the EU seeks to further elucidate the ESDP and its global security "niche." The document shows that the EU is concerned with humanitarian emergencies, human insecurity, and state failure, but does not guide how EU forces might conduct PSOs or protect civilians in practice.

The doctrines of individual EU countries, however, are much more fully developed. Given that most EU Battlegroups will involve only a handful of states, or a single lead nation, effective national doctrine might be all the EU needs. The French-led Battlegroup, for example, could operate under French military doctrine. Nevertheless, if the EU hopes to integrate its military capacity and deploy true multinational battalions and brigades, it will need unified military doctrine.

DOCTRINE AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Is there doctrine for civilian protection? Should there be?

Doctrinal publications identify varied military strategies and tactics for protecting civilians. They are not yet well developed in one place, however, as guidance to military and civilian leadership for peace support operations or for interventions to stop mass violence. UN-led missions directed to "protect civilians" do not have standard direction on how, precisely, peacekeepers should

³³³ Javier Solana, *A Secure Europe In a Better World: European Security Strategy* (Brussels: adopted by Heads of State and Governments, EU Council, 12 December 2003).

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

carry that out, which may improve with UN guidance. Nor do other multinational organizations offer their forces such direction.

The lack of linguistic and operational clarity about what “protection” means has important real-world implications for troops deployed today. PSO doctrine generally lacks explicit guidance in key areas—how to stop a belligerent from committing gross human rights abuses, for example, when that action is not a threat to the operation itself or to an important party in the peace process. Such situations are especially difficult when a host government *itself* is a primary source of insecurity. PSOs trying to operate with consent of the parties and impartiality may be ill equipped to deal with intentional, large-scale killing. Thus, missions trying to balance protection tasks with broader political aims may find their goals at odds. The direct targeting of abusive armed groups complicates efforts at political reconciliation, for example, at least in the short term. Political goals and protection goals of PSOs might overlap and be complementary, or they may compete for limited military resources or work against each other.³³⁵ Either way, the goals are not the same. This is exactly why the gap in doctrine matters.

***Clearer military doctrine on
the protection of civilians
will help make UN
mandates to protect civilians
operational, and identify
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tasks.***

Clearer military doctrine on the protection of civilians will help make UN mandates to protect civilians operational, and trigger a better set of expected military responsibilities and tasks. It would allow militaries to inform civilian leadership of what is needed to implement specific types of protection operations and improve effective preparation. Doctrine could address the use of force and coercive action in achieving the mission’s broader goals, and be clear about the distinction between military interventions explicitly aimed at halting mass violence and those missions where protection is but one of many tasks. Moreover, since developing states and emerging multinational organizations follow the lead of the US, NATO, UK, France and other major militaries in developing their own doctrine, strengthening the doctrine within these major militaries could be used to prepare additional forces, including those that deploy with the EU, the AU, and ECOWAS.

The absence of such doctrine, of course, is a hindrance rather than a death knell for effective peace operations and civilian protection. The relative lack of

³³⁵ For examples of each of these scenarios, see Chapter 8 and its study of the DRC and MONUC.

explicit military doctrine on coercive protection tasks does not mean that a well-trained military would be incapable of performing effectively and efficiently. If a mission is told clearly what it is expected to accomplish on the ground, some argue, it can figure out the correct course of action regardless of pre-existing doctrine, provided that troops are sufficiently well-trained and equipped, and that the mission has effective command and control arrangements.

Furthermore, developing civilian protection doctrine should not be difficult. Much current doctrine covers components of likely scenarios, and offers ways for forces to anticipate and respond. Useful guidance is likely to be a matter of arranging and reframing specific military tasks to support operations where the protection of civilians is either a dominant task or the goal of the mission in and of itself. Either way, doctrine should address the use of force, the concepts of protection and the role of military actors in providing physical protection and using coercion. It should also address questions of impartiality, consent, host-nation sovereignty, relationship to civilian leaders and humanitarian actors, and the caveats of “within capabilities” and “area of deployment.” The best approach may be to incorporate the protection of civilians within existing doctrine for peace support operations and for other kinds of military interventions. With or without doctrine, the effective training and the deployment of experienced forces might be the most important keys to success—a subject considered next.