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(Un)Sustainable Peacebuilding:

NATO's Suitability for Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Multi-Actor Environments

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At a glance...

- *Since 1989, NATO has worked feverishly to carve out a role for itself as a peace-keeping and peacebuilding organization.*
- *In spite of these efforts, NATO is not capable of taking on the full array of military and non-military roles required for effective peacebuilding.*
- *More effective approaches to peacebuilding will require NATO member countries and others to strengthen their civilian peacebuilding capacities.*
- *More fundamentally, NATO members must reach a common understanding of Alliance security priorities including the role of out-of-area operations.*

Since 1989 the West has been confronted by the stark reality that weak states can pose as great a danger to international stability and security as strong states. If the balance of power was the preoccupation of strategists in centuries past, it is the lack of power that concerns most today. From the Balkans to Africa, across the Middle East through South Asia and into the Pacific, weak states have resulted in conflicts that have regularly dragged the international community into their quagmires of death, destruction and stagnation. Originally created in 1949 as a defensive military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has found itself increasingly acting as a proactive risk manager — first in the Balkans and, most recently, in Afghanistan. But how sustainable is NATO's involvement? This question is especially pertinent when one considers that the main challenges facing weak and failing states — a lack of governance, poverty, endemic crime, shadow economies — are far beyond the reach of NATO's warships, tanks and missiles.

NATO can, of course, utilize its soldiers in a stabilization operation to help create 'security' but even that depends on what kind of security one seeks. When the dominant conception of security was the territorial defense of Europe and North America, NATO was created as an organization that could help standardize equipment and operational protocol amongst several different countries to provide an effective deterrent against Soviet invasion. In this period, NATO's naval, air and land based military assets were perfectly well suited to the job of deterring

and, if necessary, responding to a Soviet attack against a NATO ally. Today, however, the international security environment is radically different. If weak states and an absence of power more often than not the locus of concern, then NATO's traditional military and security resources are of diminished value in this new environment. This prompts a series of questions: How shall one define security? Does one want security from hunger or poverty? Or is it security from violence? Is the unit of reference the state or individuals? In conflict zones such as the Kosovo, Sudan, Sierra Leone, or Afghanistan, security is a radically different concept than that understood by NATO member states across Europe and North America.

Oftentimes the challenges in these situations require more than just military capacity. A multitude of problems such as a failing economy, a lack of governance and the rule of law, disease and the like require more than simply military force and consequently necessitates the involvement of other actors, such as the United Nations, the European Union or the World Bank at the international level, as well as development agencies such as the Department for International Development (DFID) in the UK and the US Agency of International Development (USAID) at the domestic level. Additionally, a number of non-governmental organizations may also be involved. Crucial to any peace-building effort is the ability of these various organizations to work together, each contributing their value added skills, to create a complete effect that hopefully helps to pull these weak states out of their downward spiral. Thus, NATO's ability to (a) utilize civil-military capability within the alliance structure and (b) to work in association with other international actors is critical to the sustainability and eventual success of any peace-building mission. This paper, therefore, turns a critical eye on this issue, utilizing a variety of primary and secondary sources.

The next section explores and defines the terms of the study including peace-building and sustainability, before turning to an examination of the empirical and anecdotal evidence focusing primarily on the case of Afghanistan with reference, where applicable, to NATO's experience in the Balkans. The paper concludes with some reflections on the findings and provides thoughts for policy-makers. The ultimate conclusion is that neither NATO, nor the wider international community, are currently are equipped for sustainable peace-building.

Sustainability and Peace-building – defining terms

Any exploration of NATO's suitability for the challenge of sustainable peace-building requires definitions of the key terms. It is perhaps best to start with the idea of sustainability. Sustainability can be defined at least two ways. The first way is to look at the sustainability of alliance involvement in peace-building. Does NATO possess the correct capabilities — both material and symbolic? Can NATO sustain the kind of activities that are required for peace-building? The other way is to look at the subject is from the point of sustainable outcomes. Is the peace-building being undertaken enough to root security, stability and peace for the long-term? Both are important questions, but in the end it would seem the first is a prerequisite for the second. Without sustainable involvement of the Alliance, the odds of a sustainable peace are low. This paper, therefore, looks at how sustainable NATO involvement in peace-building is, and relates that to how sustainable the current arrangements between NATO and organizations such as the UN, EU, etc., that are engaged in peace-building are.

The next task at hand is to define exactly what sorts of objectives are required in peace-building and to provide a metric of sorts for NATO's suitability. In this regard, it is probably first worth establishing exactly what peace-building means in this paper, as opposed to nation building or state-building. Francis Fukuyama contends that nation-building is quite simply the American vernacular for state-building, which he defines as the construction of political institutions, coupled with economic development to help create the basis for a state.[1] Nation-building is a term not favored in Europe; Fukuyama goes on to argue, because

1 Francis Fukuyama,"Nation Building and the Failure of Institutional Memory" in Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq, Francis Fukuyama (Ed), (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), pp. 3-4.

it implies the establishment of a new political order.

> "in a land of new settlement without deeply rooted peoples, cultures and traditions. Nations — that is to say communities of shared values, traditions, and historical memory — by this argument are never built, particularly by outsiders; rather, they evolved out of an unplanned historical-evolutionary process."[2]

This is quite true and what more often than not occurs in most modern interventions is state-building rather than nation-building. Peace-building is rather similar to state-building in that it seeks to (re)establish the authority of the state. This requires the building of state structures that are often destroyed in civil wars and intra-state violence. But are the two synonymous? The problem with many official definitions of peace-building and state-building is that they are frustratingly vague. For example, in the UN's Agenda for Peace from 1992, peace-building was defined as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict."[3] This provides little in the way of usable guidance for the study or indeed the actual implementation of peace-building. Karen von Hippel provided another concise, but rather vague definition in her study of U.S. interventionism, writing that state-building "… signifies an external effort to construct a government that may or may not be democratic but preferably is stable."[4] To provide a more usable definition, it is perhaps best to consider the factors that lead to a breakdown of peace. Civil wars and the breakdown of the state emerge when people no longer believe they are represented by their government. As a result, the disaffected elements of the public turn to violence. There are both defensive and offensive elements to this conundrum. As authority erodes, the various groups arm themselves for defensive purposes. This, according to Doyle and Sambanis, leads to a domestic version of the security dilemma. At the same time offensive factors arise as well:

> "Offensive incentives arise because factions and their leaders want to impose their ideology or culture, reap the spoils of state power, seize the property of rivals, and exploit public resources for private gain or all of the above. Peace thus requires the elimination, management or control of 'spoilers' or 'war entrepreneurs'."[5]

Thus on the one hand there is a very real military component to a peace-building mission, in the sense that the military is needed to help to implement a peace agreement, or less ideally, to force a peace agreement. This is a rather critical observation. The question with regard to NATO's most recent operation is, is it even peace-building? In 1996 Lloyd Axworthy noted that peace-building was:

> "a lifeline to foundering societies struggling to get back on their feet. After the fighting has stopped and the immediate humanitarian needs have been addressed, there exists a brief critical period when a country sits balanced on a fulcrum. Tilted the wrong way it retreats into conflict, but with the right help, delivered during the brief, critical window of opportunity it will move towards peace and stability."[6]

The most important takeaway from this is the phrase 'after the fighting has stopped'. It would seem fundamentally implied that, for peace-building efforts to occur, an actual peace must have been reached and agreed upon by all participants, or else can one say that peace-building measures are occurring during a war? This is perhaps one of the most evident differences (of many) between the previous NATO mission in the Balkans and the current mission in Afghanistan. In the former there was an agreed upon peace and, even then, efforts to build peace were difficult. In Afghanistan no such agreement exists between the government in

2 Ibid.

3 Necla Tschirgi, (1996) Defining Peacebuilding, International Development Research Centre, Canada, p. 2. Available at: https://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/bitstream/123456789/23281/1/112813.pdf

4 Karin von Hippel, Democracy by Force: US Military Internvention in the Post-Cold War World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 10.

5 Michael W. Doyle & Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantative Analysis" American Political Science Review 94: 4 (December 2000), p. 780.

6 Cited in Tschirgi.

Kabul and the insurgent forces of the native Taliban and foreign al Qaeda forces.[7] As a result, this study (and the ISAF Operation) is, in many ways, already flawed since peace-building in Afghanistan today is essentially an oxymoron. Roland Paris reinforces this point, writing:

> "Devising ways of responding to violence has been a topic of considerable debate among policy-makers and students of conflict management in recent years. But no less important is the task of determining what to do once the fighting stops."[8]

The takeaway highlighted here is the emphasis again on 'once the fighting stops'. This would seem to be a pre-requisite for peace-building/state-building and thus implies a difference to peace-making. To make sense of this dilemma, it is most useful to consider Paddy Ashdown's typography of 'post-conflict activities'. Ashdown separates state-building from what he refers to as 'stabilization'. In the stabilization phase, the emphasis is on "security and law and order and creating the institutions that will deliver them."[9] Although it must be noted that both the stabilization and state-building phases will run into each other and will blur, they are, in many ways, distinct and for good reason. Ideally, in creating the institutions of state governance, the international community should wait until the country is fully stabilized otherwise the "institutions created before the conflict has been fully stabilized will reflect the character of the conflict, not what the country needs for a stable and enduring peace."[10] The key is not to shortchange long-term development and sustainability for what will ultimately be short-term gains if the stabilization phase is rushed. As such, conceptually (if not practically) there is a dichotomy between stabilization activities (which here perhaps is most synonymous with peace-building) and long-term state-building.

So far the idea of peace-building, what could also be seen perhaps as stabilization, has been discussed in a values-free manner. The reality is, however, that western peace-building is not values free. Generally when one talks of peace-building in the UK, US, or even indeed within an organization such as the United Nations, there is an implicit — and oftentimes, explicit — assumption that the building of the state will be done along liberal democratic lines coupled with free-market economic policy. This is critical to note when considering the sustainability of NATO involvement in a peace-building operation given the Alliance's overwhelming commitment to democratic ideology. Would western publics sacrifice their youth in a conflict to establish sharia law in Afghanistan as opposed to democracy?

The answer is most likely not, as former Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer noted when such issues arose in Afghanistan. There is thus an over-riding focus in the literature and practice of peace-building that economic liberalization is a key component. But as Roland Paris has illustrated, liberalization of the economy may actually do more harm than good if pursued too hastily. Paul Collier and various co-authors also agree that rapid liberalization can have a negative effect. Interestingly Collier also concluded that massive amounts of economic assistance and aid delivered immediately following a conflict can have negative repercussions. The same is true of installing a democratic process. Essentially "the expectation was that democratization would shift societal conflicts away from the battlefield and into the peaceful arena of electoral politics (…) and that marketization would promote sustainable economic growth, which would also help reduce tensions."[11] This argument is built on the basis of the 'liberal peace thesis' which traces roots back to students of the idea such as Kant and Locke. But the evidence illustrates that approaches to peace-building in the 1990s and the 2000s oftentimes exacerbated the social conflicts they

7 Neither the Taliban nor Al Qaeda affiliated/inspired forces were notably not included in the Bonn talks. Whilst it would have been wholly unacceptable to include an Al Qaeda linked party in the Bonn discussions the Taliban as an Afghan movement and belligerent should have been included.

8 Roland Paris, "Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism" International Security 22: 2 (Autumn 1997), p. 54.

9 Paddy Ashdown, Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21st Century (London: Weidenfeld &Nicolson, 2007), p. 98.

10 Ibid, p. 99.

11 Roland Paris, At Wars End: Building Peace After Conflict (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 6.

were trying to alleviate. With regard to NATO's past involvement in the Balkans and current involvement in Afghanistan, this appears to be the case. Peace-building is an ambiguous term but, for the purposes of this paper, it will be defined ideally as a period following the cessation of long-term hostilities and major combat operations (MCO) in which the foundations of state construction are established. As such, peace-building will entail enforcement of a new order via the military, whilst simultaneously removing the defensive and offensive incentives that motivate actors to challenge the government. These tasks include providing for the rule of law, governance, an equitable share in state resources, and the peaceful expectation of change. Ideally, peace-building occurs after a peace has been agreed, but some levels of violence during the peace-building phase should be expected. The discussion up to this point might seem terribly academic, but it is fundamentally necessary. A major reason that NATO has had such a difficult time in Afghanistan is in part because the Alliance failed to have a discussion about the exact nature of this mission and the desired end state, without which is it next to impossible to implement a strategy.

The question is what does NATO bring to the table in this regard, especially when one considers the pre-requisites for sustainable peace-building? The pre-requisites exist on two levels — both are categories of equal importance however. First order issues concern the ability to maintain political support within the domestic constituencies of the actors involved. Where NATO is concerned this is amplified due to the need to maintain alliance cohesion and competing domestic considerations within each member state. Then there is the need to get the planning priorities right, which will require a detailed and as un-biased as possible reading of the political situation on the ground. The second order issues — those encountered during the deployment — revolve around the need to: maintain security, enable even economic development, alleviate political animosities, cultivate an indigenous human resource base, construct state structures and address regional geopolitical issues relevant to the crisis in the target state.[12]

The Comprehensive Approach

Peace-building, as illustrated above, is a task that encompasses a wide range of activities — most of which cannot be accomplished through a military alliance such as NATO. NATO does, however, have a role to play in helping to first perhaps pressure a cessation of violence and then secondly to help secure the target country for civilian actors. The Alliance's operating procedures, joint training and interoperability, combine to make it the single most effective military alliance on the planet. This was evident during a visit to Mazar-i-Sharif in 2006 when I queried the Swedish commander working with the PRT there on his preferred partner for peace-building missions: the UN or NATO? His answer was an unequivocal NATO. He said the quality of the Alliance troops was higher than those generally involved in UN missions, NATO's common procedures and interoperability fit well with Swedish military culture and policies and, of course, everyone spoke English, which was a significant plus.

The Alliance has worked feverishly to carve out a role for itself as a peace-keeping or peace-building organization in the decades since 1989. Crisis management was identified as critical to the security of the North Atlantic region in the 1999 strategic concept. As such, the Alliance is ready to contribute to effective conflict prevention activities in line with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty. The applied practice of crisis management in the Balkans and most recently in Kosovo has led the Alliance to develop the idea of the 'comprehensive approach'. The comprehensive approach was born out of the Concerted Planning and Action (CPA) initiative, pushed into Alliance discussions by Denmark in 2004. The CPA initiative grew out of the experiences of the 1990s and early 2000s, when

12 For more thinking on this see: Francis Fukuyama (Ed) Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), Paddy Ashdown, Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21st Century (London: Weidenfeld &Nicolson, 2007), Karin von Hippel, Democracy by Force: US Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

it became obvious that NATO would need to work on adapting itself to conflict less than all out war, whilst simultaneously working better with other actors engaged in peace-keeping operations. Essentially, NATO allies began to recognize that, at the tactical level, a shared understanding of the problem and the collaboration necessary to resolve these complex stabilization missions was lacking. This not only needed to be addressed at the tactical level but also at the operational level and at the strategic level across national government. In essence this was not simply a NATO issue, it was a national issue with each national government needing to better sync-up the three aspects of state power — economic, military, diplomatic — as employed by various ministries of state.

The idea was not to create new capabilities, but to refine existing capacity for the missions at hand. In 2006 this initiative was bolstered with US support and the ideas behind the concept were further clarified. It was at this juncture that the idea was labeled the 'comprehensive approach'.[13] At the Riga Summit in 2006 the comprehensive approach was formally placed on the agenda and the summit tasked the relevant bodies within NATO to formulate an action plan on how to integrate the comprehensive approach into its work. Although an Alliance initiative, the comprehensive approach has been embraced predominately by countries in the 'north' of the Alliance. Key supporting nations were at first the Scandinavian allies, followed then strongly by Canada, the UK and the eventually the US. The southern European allies, as well as those in central and eastern Europe have been less interested in developing the philosophy of the comprehensive approach and have invested little in capacity development.

One of the most misunderstood facets of the comprehensive approach is that it is a philosophy or way of thinking, not a 'to do' manual or set of rules. It is a conceptual framework destined to emphasize the need for the various actors relevant to a stabilization missions to work together on the issue from planning right on down to implementation. This is particularly important because, up until the comprehensive approach framework was developed, the task of stabilization missions fell predominately on the military forces of a country that were neither trained nor equipped to do many of the missions required for sustainable peace-building. The CA functions at two levels: the national level (US, UK, CAN etc.) and the supranational level (NATO, UN, EU). The CA recognizes that the military is part of the equation, but it is careful to note that it might not be the most critical part. NATO itself refers to "military support to stabilization and reconstruction in all phases of a conflict."[14] The UK government identified four major components of the CA: 1) proactive cross-government approach; 2) shared understanding; 3) outcome based thinking; and 4) collaborative working. In essence, the government's ministries should be forward thinking anticipating crises and working together to alleviate them.[15] They should embody a shared understanding of the issue at hand, framed of course within the cultures of their ministry. Outcome based thinking, planning towards headline government objectives should be the main focus of each actor within the CA. Ideally this process should be transcribed to the international level with each organization working to achieve the headline goals of an internationally mandated operation, such as that in Afghanistan to achieve to implement the Bonn Agreement. The CA should be reinforced by familiarity, trust and transparency across government providing better connectivity between and within government ministries.

The comprehensive approach should be easier to implement at the national level as headline objectives come from one sovereign actor. At the international level, however, there are a number of actors that whilst signing up to an internationally mandated headline goal may not agree on how to achieve that goal, and ultimately they don't answer to any sovereign and dominant supranational President or Prime Minister. Coordination under such circumstances is difficult. It is therefore interesting to note the difficulties in implementing the comprehensive approach at the national level, before a critique of the supranational

13 Friis Arne Petersen and Hans Binnendijk, "The Comprehensive Approach Initiative: Future Options for NATO", Defence Horizons 58 (September 2007), pp. 1-3.

14 NATO Website, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm (accessed on 17 July 2009).

15 Joint Discussion Note 4/05: The Comprehensive Appoach, Development, Concepts and Doctrine Center UK Ministry of Defence, January 2006.

level. The comprehensive approach is a two-level game, but it is a game the international community has, by and large, failed to play well, and it should not be surprising that the results in Afghanistan have been dismal. To illustrate the array of issues involved in NATO's suitability for post-conflict reconstruction, this paper focuses on three issues. First, it reviews the establishment of the Provincial Reconstruction Team as a viable option for NATO to provide stabilization and reconstruction assistance. Secondly, a case study focusing on the UK preparation for the mission in Helmand is utilized to illustrate difficulties on the national level with civil-military planning. Finally, a review of inter-agency relationships between NATO, the EU and the UN is undertaken to highlight the most pressing problems at the supranational level with civil-military effort in stabilization missions.

Implementing the comprehensive approach

The international involvement in Afghanistan was never comprehensive from the start of the operation. The mission began in 2001 with a purely military operation, designed to hunt and kill Al Qaeda officials. There was no civilian component to the initial US-response and the general political climate of the war on terror was not conducive to luring civilian organizations to Afghanistan. Thus it is no surprise that subsequent efforts to link-up civilian and military resources have been rather poor. In addition to the civil-military divide, it is important to note the divided chain of command in Afghanistan since 2003. There is both a terrorist hunting mission labeled 'Operation Enduring Freedom' and a stabilization mission known as ISAF. This further complicates efforts to create a uniform approach to counter insurgency, stabilization and reconstruction operations. It is not surprising that civil-military relations have been so poor in Afghanistan — post-conflict missions are drastically different challenges from the type states have traditionally faced. But, these challenges have been evident for the last ten years and yet, across the board, NATO allies have failed to reform their procedures to enable them to more effectively operate in post-conflict environments. As Michelle Flournoy pointed out many of the lessons learned about 'complex contingency operations' as they were termed in the Clinton Administration were 'unlearned', either ignored or rejected by the George W. Bush administration.[16] Thus, in many regards, civil-military action in Afghanistan set about to recreate the wheel. The US solution to the dilemma of how to best provide security and reconstruction, whilst avoiding committing too many troops on the ground, arrived in 2003 in the form of the Provincial Reconstruction Team, or PRT for short. The PRT followed on from ad-hoc civil-military enterprises such as the Combined Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) created during the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.[17]

The PRT is a small, joint civil-military cell intended to help expand the legitimate governance of the central government across Afghanistan, enhancing security through security sector reform and reconstruction efforts. It was meant to fill what is commonly known as the 'security-development gap' or the 'security-development dilemma'. Basically, there can be no development without security, but there is also little long-term security if development does not follow soon after 'peace' is established. The PRT was seen as a way to bring development capabilities to areas that were only semi-permissive, i.e. relatively unstable and insecure areas, but nonetheless not caught up in heavy fighting. The PRT was created by the US when three were deployed between December 2002 and March 2003 in Afghanistan. This approach was later codified with the PRT Working Principles Document published in February 2003. It was here that the primary objectives of the PRT — security, reconstruction and central government support — were formally identified. By October 2004, some 19 PRTs had been established by the US and other NATO allies.

PRTs vary in size and composition from nation to nation. They also generally have different operating procedures and approaches to the problem at hand dictated from their home country, rather than the NATO leadership.

16 Michele Flournoy, "Nation-Building: Lessons Learned and Unlearned" in Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq, Francis Fukuyama (ed) (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 86.

17 Olga Oliker, et al. Aid During Conflict: Interaction between Military and Civilian Assistance Providers in Afghanistan, September 2001-June 2002. (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001).

This has resulted in various problems, not in the least a lack of uniformity has led to uneven efforts around Afghanistan. The PRT can comprise anywhere from 50-300 personnel, around 90 percent of which are usually military. The civilian team includes political advisors (POLADS) and development specialists. The PRT will usually have various components included the headquarters (HQ), civil-military relations team (CIMIC), as well as engineers, security, a medical team, linguists, military observer teams and interpreters. PRTs are not offensive in nature. They are intended for reconstruction and development, rather than war fighting. The presence of civilians complicates any efforts at war fighting as the civilians encumber a different burden of responsibility. They must be protected and sheltered by the military due to duty of care issues and as such a PRT in an overly hostile zone will not be effective inasmuch as the civilian component will be unable to operate. Flexibility was considered a key feature that would make the PRT successful — the ability to adapt to the situation. But, as McNerney illustrated it also appeared that the PRT was all things to all people, and thus were not as effective as they could have been had their mission and roles been more specific. "A vague mission, vague roles, and insufficient resources created significant civil-military tensions at the PRTs, particularly over mission priorities."[18] This often started pre-deployment:

> "Civil-military coordination was a challenge for the PRTs. Military commanders and civilian officials were not always sure about the role civilians should play on the PRTs. Regarding the US-led PRTs, military units deployed with limited preparation for working with civilian government officials. Civilians deployed in an ad hoc manner, with only a few meetings at the Pentagon and around Washington, D.C., for their preparation. The civilian and military members of the UK-led PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif, by comparison, trained and deployed together and understood that their mission was to support both military and civilian objectives. One example of the results of these different approaches was that while the Mazar PRT made it a priority to support civilian-led missions like police training, disarmament, and judicial reform efforts, the PRT in Gardez initially resisted State Department requests for police training assistance. Civil-military coordination on the US-led PRTs has certainly improved over time, but limited pre-deployment preparation, strained resources, and confusion over priorities continue." [19]

In addition to inter-governmental cooperation issues, the PRTs also suffered from external relations issues and have been heavily criticized by organizations such as Save the Children. The arguments from this side are essentially that the assistance provided by PRTs can blur the differences between a humanitarian NGO and military forces. They do not believe that military assistance should be called humanitarian and they also have issues with the idea of 'coordinating' with the military. Although they are open to deconflicting and to communication and intelligence sharing, they repeatedly state their independence from the military mission. Some of the most strident critics argue that the military makes it less feasible for civilians to work in a conflict zone, rather than more feasible. Although civilian agents came under increasing attack as the ISAF military mission (and PRTs) expanded across the country, it is impossible to link up the cause and effect with attacks on civilians. The fact that the PRTs actually engaged in activities, rather than simply providing a secure environment was very different from the experience in the Balkans and just marks a significant turning point in the implementation of stabilization missions. There is a solid rationale, in many ways, for concern, given that those PRTs constitute one-third of the military engagement in Afghanistan. The other two forms are of course Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and ISAF. Thus, there is plenty of room for confusion amongst the local population as to the differences between PRTs, OEF and ISAF. And because PRTs look rather civilian, the division between them and NGOs is blurred. When considering disagreements on how reconstruction in Afghanistan should be undertaken,

18 Michael McNerney, "Stabilization and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Are PRTs a Model or a Muddle?" Parameters (Winter 2005-06), available at: http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/PRTs_model_or_muddle_Parameters.htm (accessed on 17 July 2009).

19 Ibid.

this issue must be taken into account.

Civil-Military Coordination: The National Level

The success of the PRT is based, however, on success at the national level in implementing the comprehensive approach. Even with its short-comings, if the PRT is sufficiently balanced between civilian and military efforts, the PRT does help to address the security-development gap. The PRT is also a sub-set of the larger national operation occurring under the NATO ISAF rubric. As a result, an inability amongst NATO allies to successfully implement the CA will result in magnified failures at the NATO level. How is a military alliance such as NATO supposed to act in concert with civilian organizations when the nations that compose this alliance have trouble getting the constituent parts of their foreign affairs apparatus (defense, diplomacy, development) to work together? The problems across the various allies are not identical but they share many of the same features. Bureaucratic turf wars, a lack of funding, a civilian capacity gap and a failure to institutionalize lessons learned are just of few of the most common ones. Within NATO the idea of the comprehensive approach, while technically endorsed by all the allies at the 2008 Bucharest Summit, is unevenly engaged. It has primarily been the focus of the northern European and North American allies. This leads to further imbalance within the Alliance. Give that an examination of all 26 allies government structures is beyond the scope of this paper, the focus here is on a UK case study, that being the planning and implementation for Helmand. Within NATO, the UK has been a leader in developing the theory and practice of the comprehensive approach but, despite this, the UK's efforts have often been less than sterling.

Following the British experiences in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq, Her Majesty's Government (HMG) created the Post Conflict Reconstruction Union (PCRU) in 2004. The main objectives of the new unit were to develop a deployable civilian capacity, to facilitate cross-Whitehall planning and to serve as a repository of expertise and lessons learned. The PCRU was not created as a new department or ministry. Instead it had buy-in from the Department of International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defense (MOD). The group consists of around 30 personnel, which are generally seconded from one of the parent ministries. The organization was renamed the Stabilization Unit (SU) in 2007 to more adequately reflect the tasks the group undertook — especially given that neither of its principle operating environments circa 2007 (Iraq and Afghanistan) were particularly post-conflict in nature.

Theoretically the SU has three main tasks: planning and assessment deploy civilian capability to operations and finally to identify and then issue lessons learned from each engagement. The group has been very active on planning and operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in Nepal and Africa. Although its parent institutions supposedly support the group — DFID, the FCO and the MOD — this has often worked better in theory than in practice. The planning for the British mission in Helmand and the eventual implementation is one useful case study.[20]

Planning for the UK mission to Helmand occurred from November to mid-December 2005. The preliminary operations team included a number of individuals with varied backgrounds. The group included a military core, as well as five members of the PCRU.[21] The core team was to coordinate the process and facilitate the first true joint plan between the MOD, FCO and DFID. The idea was that this planning would differ from previous planning efforts because it would be driven by a joint set of objectives rather than three, possibly disparate departmental set of objectives. Separate planning allowed each department to play to its strengths, not necessarily for the greatest benefit of the mission. But even with this joint approach, there were still problems. For example, when it came to the rule of law, the

20 It is worth noting that the SU and the planning process have developed greatly in the last few years following several different reviews of the planning for the Helmand mission. Nonetheless the planning for Helmand in 2006 illustrates many of the basic problems that continue to plague both UK and other NATO allies with regards to national level CA planning and implementation.

21 Mark Etherington, Babu Rahmen, Hugh Walker, Roy Flemming and Minna Jarvenpaa.

FCO had the lead, but had no resources or expertise in this area. DFID, on the other hand, did have the resources and expertise but, because it was not the 'lead' organization, it did not assist on the issue.

When the team landed in Afghanistan they arrived in Kandahar expecting to go out and collect first-hand information on the situation. However, the Post Security Committee located at the British Embassy in Kabul refused the civilian PCRU team permission to leave the base, despite the fact that the Post Security Committee had never been to Kandahar or Lashkagar. The PCRU team had to lobby the embassy hard that on the ground that canvassing was essential to the planning phase. When the team eventually did start to go out and about, in Afghanistan, the Embassy as well as DFID started to push back against the PCRU team. As the PCRU team went around Kabul to get international and Afghan views of the Helmand situation, the Embassy and DFID both worried that the PCRU was forming new relationships and would upset existing FCO and DFID relationships in Kabul. There was thus little support to facilitate PCRU meetings and in some cases downright obstructionist measures by UK assets in country took place. Thus despite the fact that the PCRU team was British and supposedly owned in part by the FCO and DFID, the team encountered stiff resistance to their mission. Nonetheless, the PCRU team continued to hold workshops in mid-November 2007 on various topics such as governance, security and counter-narcotics with a range of actors on the ground, including the FCO and DFID teams already in place. Prior to the workshops two members of the PCRU deployment, Minna Jarvenpaa and Mark Etherington, were actually able to travel to Helmand to gather some data on the situation. They managed to spend two days with the US forces running the PRT in Lashkagar of which the UK would assume control.

Three weeks into the mission the team produced their first report. The conclusion of the team was that the goals of the Cabinet Office were completely unrealistic. They were probably not achievable at all, and they were certainly not achievable by 2009, which was then the end of the mission mandate. The response in Whitehall to the report was not good. As one observer put it, officials in the Cabinet Office started 'flipping out'. They wanted motherhood and apple pie but, when they were told they could not have this, they were very displeased. In the words of one observer, the reaction at the Director General level was 'a bit hysterical really'. The PCRU managed to modify the goals a bit, but they remained quite optimistic. In early December 2007, Jarvenpaa and Hugh Walker took another trip out to Lashkagar and spent roughly a week on the ground. This was the first time they were able to get out of base with a close protection team to meet local government and civil society actors. There were "no NGOs, little of what people in the West would recognize as civil society." Jarvenpaa and Walker met with doctors, teachers and village elders. They also commissioned a local Afghan woman named Rahala to help them with their investigation. Rahala was educated in London at the MA level and worked for the UN on woman's training program during the Taliban era. She was "invaluable" to the planning process, helping the team to gain access and insights that would have otherwise been impossible to garner. The main concerns of the Afghans at this time were "security, security and security". The locals kept saying security and they often cited the local police as part of the problem. Illegal bribes, harassment and forced entry into homes were routine problems.

At the end of the five week period, the team began a marathon planning session to process all the data and get it off to London. They held a joint drafting session, whereby all the actors went through the text of the plan projected on an overhead screen line-by-line. The deadline was Monday 15 December, as the text was required for a Reid Group Meeting that following Friday (19 December). Not much happened there after on the PRCU side. Between January and March 2006 it was relative quiet, it was then decided that the PCRU would go to Lashkagar to plan activities that would occur during the operation. When it came time to implement the plan, the process once again derailed. The military forces first dispatched to Helmand were the UK's 16th Air Assault Brigade under the command of Brigadier Ed Butler. Butler was

not involved in the planning process and essentially the military that would be implementing part of the plan had not been involved. Some in the PCRU team questioned if 16th Air Assault even read or had a copy of the plan to hand. Indeed, 16th Air Assault was doing its own planning apart from the PCRU-led process. In Ed Butler's opinion, while the PCRU plan was well intentioned, it never looked at the military lines in enough detail to be truly implementable.[22]

The situation was even more difficult because there ideally should have been a civilian chief to the operation, but there was none. The military was thus able to make decisions as it pleased, with little attention paid to the civilian aspects of the mission. UK forces began to respond to pressure from local Afghans about what towns they should take control of etc. As one British official on the ground put it, "the governor was essentially dictating UK troop movements". Sanguine was supposed to be a 36-hour operation, and then suddenly there was a platoon house. Before anyone realized what was happening, 16th Air Assault ended up spread across the province without enough troops to really control territory and the subsequent lack of security meant that reconstruction and development could not occur. The joint-plan went right out the window. But the military still wanted the development people to come in and get on with work; however, since they had gone too far too fast, there was no civilian capacity to follow on. Furthermore, the security situation was not stable enough due to the lack of troops.

On the military side, there were also significant problems with command and control (C2) arrangements. The decision had been taken that a UK Brigadier could not serve under a Canadian Brigadier. Butler was Commander British Forces (COMBRITFOR) in Afghanistan, but the actual mission in Regional Command South (RC South) was under Canadian command. As such, the UK sent in Colonel Charlie Nagg to lead 16th Air Assault. Nagg was a good guy, but Butler's troops kept double checking with Butler regarding Nagg's orders since, at the end of the day, Butler was really their commanding officer.

22 Interview with Ed Butler, 10 July 2007.

Furthermore, it was a big-step up for Nagg who had been accustomed to leading 600 men at the regimental level. Suddenly, he was two levels higher leading a 3,500-man task force. In the end, Butler ended up focusing on the task force and Nagg looked after the PRT. Butler thus actually served under the Canadian one-star, but says that it was not a problem. In the end, despite a serious amount of joint planning, when it came to implementation the idea of civil-military jointness failed to materialize in a highly productive fashion. Perhaps some of the most scathing failures were not at the operational level, but at the strategic level.

Both the military and civilian actors involved in the planning and implementation of the Helmand plan, were all exceedingly critical of the political level which they felt viewed the situation far too naively. Time and time again in interviews, the lack of strategic planning at the political level in Whitehall was raised. What were the big issues facing Helmand? Afghanistan? The UK Joint Campaign Endstate was, in the words of a senior military official, 'unrealistic'. When the political level was told that the campaign plan was unrealistic, they simply refused to accept reality. It should have been apparent that with a three-year plan utilizing very limited monetary and military resources that the UK's objectives would be difficult to meet. However, the political level did not redress the situation. While joint planning and implementation has improved in the years since the drafting of the Helmand plan, high political expectations coupled with low levels of military and civilian resources has meant that the situation on the ground in Afghanistan has failed to develop in the way that was expected. Furthermore, because the expectations of the Afghans have been dashed again and again, Western credibility has been damaged.

There are multiple lessons from this national level experience. The over-riding lesson is certainly that objectives must be realistic and they must be matched with the requisite resources. This is a political level issue that will determine the overall direction of the entire effort. Sadly, this context is often overlooked and as the most recent review by General McChrystal indicates this issue is still

problematic some eight years into the conflict. As the war in Afghanistan continues, there has been too little discussion over how the resources match up (or fail to) with the aims and objectives; 'success' has until most recently been almost completely undefined. Without a definition of success or failure it is next to impossible to devise a 'winning' strategy. Adequate resources to successfully enact this strategy are then required, but sadly political will in the UK, US and elsewhere within NATO has been lacking.

The next lesson is the need to fully integrate the planning process with units that will actually be implementing the planning on the ground. The PCRU team included military planners, but not representatives from the actual military force (16th Air Assault) going into Helmand. There must most likely be a comprehensive campaign plan that is devised by the lead military actors with input from other civilian planners, rather than a plan driven by civilians. If the military is expected to implement a plant they must feel that they own it and can achieve what they have set out to do, rather than having a plan handed onto them. On the civilian side there needs to be a structure that helps to weaken institutional interests. Competing interests between DFID, FCO and MOD (budgetary, importance, visibility etc) all reduce the effectiveness of the whole of government approach. In the planning phase this is problematic, in the operational phase it costs lives. One step that could be taken in this regard would be to more fully integrate the civil service across difference branches so that civilian personal serve in different departments in the course of their career (FCO, MOD and DIFD). Patterns of funding should also be redressed. In the UK the MOD has an additional budget for operations, but DFID does not and thus is reluctant to spend funds from their regular allotment, especially when it means forsaking long-term departmental priorities. This was the case back in 2006 when DFID had to pull funds from other initiatives to support the operation in Afghanistan which HMG deemed critical, but that DFID had previously not allocated for. These lessons are also applicable to the US and other allies; in particular the need to reduce stove-piping and an ability to allocate funds more effectively are critical issues in Washington. With such problems at the national level, it should be no surprise at all that at the supranational level the situation is even more problematic.

Civil-Military Coordination: the International Level

On the ground in Afghanistan as of 2009 there was a diverse set of actors, including NATO, the UN, the EU, the ICRC and a host of non-governmental organizations. Involved as well, on a bilateral basis, were various ministries of foreign affairs and development. Most of the military inputs did go through NATO, but the civilian efforts were much less organized. As a result, the Afghan government found itself inundated with everyone ostensibly trying to help, but inadvertently overloading the nascent government. As the international efforts accelerated in 2006 with NATO's push to extend the remit of the government across the country, the frustration from donor countries was palpable. One Dutch defense advisor put it to me bluntly. "We contribute to NATO, the budgets of the EU and the UN, as well as substantially to many of the NGOs on the ground in Afghanistan. Yet none of them can manage to coordinate with each other. Instead, it seems like they are working against each other. It is absurd." [23]

Tracing the root of the problem is difficult and it most likely starts at the planning phase. As recounted earlier, the initial invasion of Afghanistan on 7 October 2001 was US-led. The Bush Administration did not want to formally involve the NATO alliance, because they viewed it as cumbersome and limiting. If the US was going to contribute most of the forces, then why deal with NATO's bureaucracy and whiny allies? Instead they chose a coalition of the willing, involving the special forces of a few select allies, and went into Afghanistan to capture bin Laden and route out Al Qaeda. As Bob Woodward has documented, the administration did not expect to topple the Taliban government — that was a second order effect and the White House was stunned at how quickly the government collapsed. As such, a development-security gap opened up. Following the initial combat operations, the US then turned to the wider international community for assistance. A post-conflict governance plan was drawn

23 Interview with Dutch Defence Advisor, London, 23 July 2006.

up at Bonn — one that notably did not include any representation from the legitimate hostile parties.[24]

The exclusion of the Taliban from the Bonn process, contrary to what many believe, means that no real peace treaty was achieved for Afghanistan. At this point, as the international community began to get involved, the US was already well into planning for the war in Iraq and they simply assumed that Afghanistan would care for itself. The assumption was that the various NGOs and international organizations in Afghanistan all shared common goals and were in lock step behind the US. This, however, was not the case. Each and every NGO in Afghanistan has a different mission and different goals. While they may seem to match up to what the US wanted, there were fundamental differences. Simon Brooks, the ICRC Representative in London made this clear at numerous workshops on post-conflict stabilization operations. "We may be on the same river, and we may be rowing in the same direction," he said, "but we are not in the same boat. Please do not automatically assume we are in the same boat." Assuming that every actor in Afghanistan was in the US, or even the NATO boat, led to a great degree of chaos and resentment.

From the start of the mission in 2003, NATO focused overwhelmingly on the military aspects of the mission. Lip-service was paid to the civilian side, but in the end the focus was on military operations. As one NATO ambassador noted, the focus in the North Atlantic Council was on debating military operations rather than strategic guidance. "The problem of course" he said, "was that civilians started becoming military planners and they were bad at it." The question that arises here is: exactly who then should have pushed the NAC to focus more on strategic guidance and less on day-to-day operations? The logical answer would be the Alliance heavyweight, the US. But the US was not providing any real leadership within NATO. The disdain for NATO amongst those in power in the Bush White House was palpable. As Director of Policy Planning Jamie Shea said in 2008, President Bush never gave a single speech on the future of NATO. Dr. Shea was invited to Washington for what was supposed to be a speech on NATO by the president which, in the end, turned out to be about the war on terror, in which NATO was mentioned a few times. There was no vision for what NATO should be doing in Afghanistan and there was no vision of how the Afghan mission fit into the future of NATO. The US was very clear on what it would not support regarding day-to-day operations, but it was much less clear as to what it would support. As such, NATO drifted along.

As the conflict dragged on, it became ever more apparent by 2005-2006 that the civilian side of the operation could not be neglected. The Alliance did install a senior civilian representative, but he was given no power. The result was a horribly ineffective post that did little to advance the mission.

> "[NATO] put a general on the ground who had power over everything that moved on the ground, then they created this NATO civilian rep who had no power, no authority, no staff, nothing right... he was kind of a glorified journalist. And every time the NATO civilian rep tried to have views, everyone panicked. Oh the military can't take orders from a civilian. But there was no sense of how this could be arbitrated. The NAC should have arbitrated this — the civilian is not giving orders, the NAC is giving strategic guidance which both the civilian rep and general were implementing."[25]

As a result, a number of the NATO country ambassadors in Afghanistan started the push the Alliance to become more strategic, to stop looking at merely the tactical military ops and to put some real effort into the idea of the comprehensive approach. As NATO became more willing to address this issue, however, it became ever more apparent that NATO had no real ally on the ground. The United Nations was present, via the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), but they were very reluctant to work with NATO. There was an inherent tension

24 In this case, the legitimate hostile party was the Taliban. The Al Qaeda forces in the country on the other hand were terrorists and therefore not legitimate and thus were rightly excluded from the talks.

25 Interview with NATO Ambassador in Kabul, May 2009.

with the UN since they needed to work with NATO, but at the same time there were several voices within the organization that kept saying that the UN could not get close to NATO since the UN was a civilian organization and NATO was a military one. This presumption is of course questionable, when one considers that the UN leads the largest number of military peacekeepers on the planet.

Even though NATO wanted to get more serious on the civilian side, by 2008 the Alliance still had not addressed the lack of a proper docking mechanism, which would ultimately be required to engage with civilian organizations.

> "Where was the docking mechanism for the UN? You have the NATO civ-rep, who everyone knew was powerless. Then you have a general with a different mandate, and that would have been a problem to have the UN rep cozying up to the NATO general. Sure, people met but it was informal. There were weekly meetings, breakfasts — UN rep, COMISAF, NATO civ-rep, some key ambassadors… this was in 2008, so what had been going on prior to this?"[26]

The frustration amongst those on the ground as late as 2008 was palpable. If there was progress on the ground, it was only due to personalities. At the operational level several interview subjects confirmed that there was good cooperation. One official who was cited time and time again for his efforts to help deconflict and join-up NATO and UN efforts was Chris Alexander, a Canadian diplomat who served as the deputy representative of the UN secretary general in Afghanistan. Alexander was good about going to the generals, comparing notes and more, but there was no one above him, at the strategic level, doing the same. And to top it off, Alexander was catching a considerable amount of flak from the UN Secretariat.

Although the US had clearly abdicated a leadership role as early as 2003, a lack of leadership pervaded both of the key organizations involved in the conflict as well. One very frustrated western diplomat put it bluntly:

> "You also had two weak secretary generals — de Hoop Scheffer and Ban Ki Moon — can you imagine these guys cooking up anything? Can you imagine the conversation? There was no leadership. Sure, there were extraordinary challenges but seriously."

This may be a fair, but perhaps slightly exaggerated interpretation. NATO did attempt to engage the UN on several occasions, but the UN declined. The response was essentially that NATO was a regional security organization, whereas the UN was international. If NATO wanted a formal relationship with the UN it needed to go through UNDPKO or another part of the substructure. Another reveling piece of information about the UN Secretariat's view of Afghanistan was to be found in an internal review conducted by the Secretariat where the top-ten priorities of the Secretary General were identified and detailed. Afghanistan was not on the list.[27] Needless to say, several of the chief supporters of the UN and NATO, such as Canada, were not pleased. Bureaucratic turf wars of this type are not uncommon in post-conflict situations and have been problematic in other deployments such as those in the Balkans.

Cooperation between NATO and the EU was not much better. Although a number of EU member states are engaged in Afghanistan via NATO and also through various EU civilian efforts, the crisis there has received scant attention from senior EU policy-makers. EU foreign policy guru Javier Solana was heavily lobbied by the British Government to visit Afghanistan. He eventually did get to the country, but his first visit was in 2008. Prior to that date, there had been no political level visit by an EU official to Afghanistan. Thus while many like to say that the US abdicated its leadership role in Afghanistan to pursue the war in Iraq, the reality is that the EU also failed to provide positive leadership on what is arguably an international problem. The situation was even more frustrating, given that the EU was categorically failing to deliver on its part of the reconstruction efforts. The most illustrative example of this is the EU Police Training mission, known as EUPOL for short.

26 Ibid.

27 Interview with Senior Canadian Diplomat, March 2009.

The General External Relations Council for the EU Commission announced on 12 February 2007 that:

> "The [police training] mission will work towards an Afghan police force in local ownership, that respects human rights and operates within the framework of the rule of law. The mission should build on current efforts, and follow a comprehensive and strategic approach, in line with the CMC. In doing so, the mission should address issues of police reform at central, regional and provincial level, as appropriate."

The mission was to consist of 160 to possibly 190 police trainers from about 15 EU states, with assistance from Canada, Norway and New Zealand. But the mission failed to come together properly. NATO had to arrange bi-lateral security agreements with every country deploying in the police force because the Turks blocked a broad NATO-EU arrangement. This was highly embarrassing given that NATO had asked the EU to take on this mission. The EU for its part failed to staff the mission adequately, implemented a poor training program and failed to root best practices into the Afghan police force. A very frustrated official highlighted this issue:

> "This was the one area where the Europeans could have responded on burden sharing. Burden sharing did not just have to be military. There was an obvious and very required place for burden sharing on the civilian policy. And the Euros are equipped for this more than the North Americans and Anglo Saxons are. And they failed. How is it that Canada, a non EU member, ended up being the 5th largest contributed to EUPOL? We should have been the 25th."

Within the EU the traditional US-European split became rather evident. The Europeans were contributing a fraction of the money and resources to the project, but wanted to run the show. The reality was that given the amount of money the US was investing and the number of advisors on the ground, it was inevitable that the US would end with the lead. As one observer put it, "the EU thought it was engaged in a turf war with the US on reconstruction policy. I said to them, you're not even on the same pitch — never mind a turf war." In addition to the US-NATO split, there was failure across the board to link bi-later police assistance with the larger US-EU NATO police training effort.[28] The problems between the EU and NATO, however, are not specific to Afghanistan.

NATO and the EU have had long-running disputes over how they should cooperate and generally it is the EU that fails to get its act together. For example, when EU and NATO ambassadors meet, they only discuss 'joint EU-NATO operations' of which there is only actually one — Bosnia. As such major international issues such as Darfur, Iraq and yes, Afghanistan, where both the EU and NATO are on the ground, goes un-discussed. There are several reasons for the lack of good relations between the two organizations. A larger strategic issue is that historically France has not viewed NATO as a legitimate forum in which to discuss international security, preferring instead to focus on the EU. But there are a number of more bureaucratic reasons why the two actors fail to work successfully together. At the core is the dispute between Turkey and Cyprus.

To start, Turkey objects to Cyprus sitting in on EU-NATO meetings because, unlike the other NATO neutrals in the EU, it is not a member of the Partnership-for-Peace (PfP) programme. In terms of the regulations, the Turks are correct in their opposition. According to a December 2002 EU-NATO agreement, all EU members that are not NATO allies must be a member of the PfP program to attend the joint EU-NATO meetings. This arrangement worked well until the EU enlarged to include Malta and Cyprus. Then, in 2004 when the Cypriots rejected a UN peace plan in a nationwide referendum, the Turks started to block Cyprus and Malta from participating in the EU-NATO meetings. This inability to get the EU and NATO to discuss long-term strategic issues, as well as more pressing operational issues has a direct effect on the mission in Afghanistan. Although NATO asked the EU to take

28 Robert Perito, Afghanistan's Police: The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform (US Institute of Peace, Special Report 227: August 2009).

over the police mission, the EU had to go to each and every country involved in the mission to get bilateral military agreements signed to ensure that the EU forces would be protected because Turkish political maneuverings prevented a single EU-NATO agreement. When the Turkish issue is combined with traditional French concerns over the role of the NATO verses that of the EU, it is not difficult to see why cooperation has been less than optimal. Although there is a belief that French reintegration into NATO will improve the situation, cooperation between the EU and NATO remains extremely poor. Furthermore, the issue is not so much French intransience as it is the political arrangements within the EU and the arrangements with NATO.

Conclusion

NATO is one part of what are inevitably multi-part crisis response operations. If the Alliance is engaged to provide a specific component to a mission then, with some modifications in the way it does business, NATO forces can be utilized to provide military assistance to a stabilization mission. NATO is not equipped, nor is it capable, of undertaking the gamut of roles required to conduct sustainable peace-building. Indeed, even with regard to military assets the Alliance has encountered significant difficulties in fulfilling the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) submitted by the theatre commander.[29] It is difficult to see how if NATO cannot fill the military CJSOR, the gamut of civilian assets required for stabilization operations could ever be deployed for such a mission. This just makes the issue of coordination and national civilian resources two of the most pressing regarding NATO's suitability for long-term peace building.

At the national level, NATO member states must address the generally collective inability to deliver civilian effects. Even if acting through NATO means using primarily the military component, most states will also be engaged in the civilian effort and, what Afghanistan has illustrated, is the inability of states to deploy civilian power assets into crisis zones. States interested in pursuing interventions will need to continue to develop and invest in civilian assets. Much has been written on this subject already. Key takeaways from the literature include: creating a deployable civilian force, generally in the shape of a reserve, increasing the funding to civilian development agencies; and creating coordinating civilian organizations to help deliver civilian effect. To avoid repetition, this paper will not rehash these recommendations. Suffice to say that these may work better in theory than in practice. The creation of a stabilizing body is a good example of a worthwhile idea that does not go far enough. A body to coordinate the defense, diplomatic and development initiatives of a state is a good idea. But if that body is fighting against institutionalized cultures, it will have limited success. One way to improve this idea as one of the case studies above illustrates, is to reduce departmental stovepipes. Careers tracks need to be designed so that they include cross-department postings (i.e. defense to foreign affairs, etc) and such postings should be incentivized. Current arrangements in the US and in many other allied countries actually punish civil servants that step out of their departmental tracks. At a more senior level more pre-planning and gaming has to occur. NATO should actively encourage member states to develop a planning curriculum along a NATO standard and these planning exercises could eventually be expanded to encompass international planning. Such training and experiences will make the response in an actual crisis more cohesive that it currently stands.

Within NATO, the allies must have a serious discussion about the merits of intervention. If NATO is used for purely military support to stabilization operations then the alliance should have less trouble than it current does in Afghanistan where it has, unfortunately, assumed responsibility for much more development than it should have. Thus NATO has two major dilemmas. First, it cannot provide a solution to the problem without the help of other organizations. Part of this problem is that few other organizations have really stepped up to the plate to help contribute to the mission and many are at the very least inadvertently hostile towards NATO. The root of this problem is the initial intervention by the Bush Administration that sidelined international assistance — this legacy

29 For most of the ISAF mission the CJSOR has gone unfulfilled.

remains problematic today. Second, the Alliance needs to consider how such interventions relate to Allied security and if they can generate the political will across a diverse spectrum of nations to get involved and stay involved over the long-term. The reality of NATO is that it is now a multi-tier alliance with very different conceptions of security. NATO needs to discuss the applicability of the unanimity clause for future operations and the implications of a multi-tiered alliance, as well as how to fund and undertake missions in the absence of unanimity. This is reality and any good organization should adapt to reality and move on rather than living in the past. If NATO can accept this new reality, it may be able to salvage a role for itself in the 21st century; if it lives in the past it will most certainly cease to be a functioning military alliance within the next decade.

At the supranational level the international community must create a global forum or organization where crisis response is codified and normatized. The chaos that the international community experienced in Afghanistan is not new, indeed every time the world responds to a crisis situation such chaos generally ensues. A standing body that facilitate discussion and planning where possible will help to reduce the politicization of conflict response, remove bureaucratic turf wars that obstruct interventions and ensure more constant and stable delivery of assistance. Planning and joint-training between the UN, World Bank, and various regional organizations such as the EU, NATO, and AU would help to provide a more stable framework for future interventions, helping to avoid a repetition of the problems in Afghanistan that have sadly cost a good deal of money and resulted in an unnecessary loss of life amongst both the stabilization forces and the Afghan civilian population.

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