

**Conference Report for SGA-ASPE
Wilton Park Conference WPS09/01 on***

**“Civil-Military Strategic Principles and Doctrine:
Creating common tools for Stabilisation Operations”**

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Conference Setting

The timing for the conference entitled “Civil-Military Strategic Principles and Doctrine: Creating common tools for Stabilisation Operations” could not have been better. With the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defence finalising its JDP 3-40 Joint Doctrine for Stabilisation, as well as the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and United States Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) manual of guiding principles currently labelled “Guiding Principles for Stabilisation and Reconstruction” just ahead of its first release, the topic was especially relevant and to the point.

The atmosphere of the conference, which Wilton Park provided at Wiston House near Steyning, from 22 to 25 April 2009, encouraged open and frank discussions, governed by the Chatham House Rule, between a mixed group of over fifty government officials, military officers, practitioners, academics and experts.

Central themes of the conference evolved around the relationships between the military and civilian actors within and across national and international actors, and how these can be improved in stabilisation missions. In addition, the question of how to address the issue of the ‘civilian capacity gap’ was a theme that ran through most of the sessions, as did the question of what should be the outcome of such missions.

Definitional issues

One of the recurrent strands of discussion centred on the definition of ‘stabilisation and reconstruction operations’. As there are conceptual overlaps with terms employed by the United Nations, such as peacekeeping and peacebuilding, others call similar types of activities early recovery or peace support operations. Furthermore, some locate counterinsurgency within the concept of stabilisation operations while others did not.

* The conference was organised in partnership and with support from the USIP and PKSOI.

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It was largely agreed that 'doctrine' is not an ideal term for the civilian world, even though in its most basic definition it is value neutral. Civilian agencies however, prefer a terminology which revolves around terms such as manuals, or principles and guidelines on objectives.

Strategic Objectives

There was consensus that state building needs to be an incremental part of the strategic vision for stabilisation and reconstruction operations. There was also agreement that the desired 'End States' of combined civil and military efforts should be multidimensional and cross-cutting in nature. With the caveat that they should not be overly ambitious, many could agree that the ultimate goals of reconstruction and stabilisation operations are a) Rule of Law, b) a Safe and Secure Environment, c) a Sustainable Economy, d) Stable Governance, and e) Social Well-Being achieved through cross cutting principles of interaction, namely a) Host Nation Ownership and Capacity, b) Political Primacy, c) Legitimacy, d) Unity of Effort, e) Security, and f) Conflict Transformation.

While the terminology of 'End States' caused some discussion, the above mentioned strategic objectives are very ambitious. A careful prioritisation and sequencing between the different elements of the strategy must be achieved and adapted to each specific context in order to move the process along. A joint civil-military doctrine is almost obligatory to accomplishing such a balancing act.

Fundamentally, the objectives of stabilisation and reconstruction operations are long-term in nature. Hence, there was broad consensus that such operations should be planned with at least a ten year horizon of engagement. Again, however, a careful balance must be struck between not leaving too early and staying too long.

Legitimacy

It was largely agreed that the building of states and their legitimacy, as well as economic and social development, constitutes the strategic objective of stabilisation and reconstruction missions. Caution, however, is advised not to be overly ambitious creating state structures which are near perfect, rendering exit strategies impossible and hinder local legitimacy and capacities to grow. Such a pragmatic approach needs self-constraint not only the extent of social engineering, but also within the scope of capacity building. Furthermore, this process is intrinsically linked to legitimacy which needs to be established between the emerging state structure and the population, resting ultimately on local ownership, and providing the basis for sustainable development. Hence, the involvement of the local actors in achieving this goal is of crucial importance.

On the other hand, it is important to get approval for stabilisation and reconstruction operations through the United Nations Security Council, which is largely seen as the only valid source of external legitimacy. In addition, many discussants agreed on the necessity to increase aspects of this kind of legitimacy through involving more non-OECD partners in the discussion, planning and implementation of the operations. Especially the rising powers of China, India and Brazil were mentioned, alongside African nations such as South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt.

Joint Civil-Military Doctrine

Throughout the conference, it became clear that a joint civil-military doctrine for stabilisation and reconstruction operations at the strategic level is not only possible, but also desirable. The various existing documents, such as the UN Capstone Doctrine, OECD guidelines, the USIP forthcoming Manual and various national policies highlight the feasibility. However, there are several caveats attached to this consensus. First of all, the question remains about who should lead on both the crafting process of such a doctrine at the strategic level its implementation. Secondly, as mentioned above, both the crafting and implementation processes need to address the question of prioritising and sequencing of actions, which might be a contentious issue at the political level. On the lead to implement, it has been advocated to conceive civilian leadership with military support in a permissive operational environment, but also to consider military leadership if the operational environment does not allow for a non-military lead.

Establishing common doctrines at the international level is much more difficult to achieve. Again, the UN Capstone Doctrine served as an example - a DPKO internal document open for amendments and comments by UN member states. Most participants agreed that the higher the level of common strategic documents and the more actors (states, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, etc.) included, the vaguer the concepts and content has to be, in order to allow for inclusion, consensus and acceptance.

Operationalising the doctrine

It was said that cooperation between military and civilian actors works relatively well at the field and tactical levels, although improvements, especially in sharing best practices, would be desirable. With more coherence developing at the strategic level, there was a consensus about the need to link the military and civilian efforts in stabilisation and reconstruction operations at and to the operational levels of the mission.

The main recommendations to increase coherence, efficacy and efficiency at the operational level include fostering joint comprehensive planning of missions at all levels and across a large variety of actors. More importantly, there needs to be emphasis on training the emerging strategic doctrine as jointly as possible at all levels of interaction.

Throughout the conference, which was largely driven by experiences and lessons from Afghanistan, there was a recurring call to address the 'civilian capacity gap.' However, while it is certainly true that national civilian agencies have not been too keen to contribute personnel to stabilisation and reconstruction missions, there were some voices pointing to civilian capacity already present in the theatres of operation, such as NGOs or local civil societies. This last point also highlights that stabilisation and reconstruction operations do not occur in a vacuum and deploy into environments where external and internal actors are already present, such as the humanitarian community.

Further recommendations

At the highest political levels, more pragmatic discussion is needed on the international security architecture seeking a possible division of tasks between the UN, NATO, EU, AU and others, including the NGOs. However, as mentioned, the higher the political levels and the more actors involved, guidelines and principles for strategic military-civilian action need to be vaguer.

The current economic crisis will have an impact on stabilisation and reconstruction operations. At least, it will force all actors to do more with less. The need for civilians to step up efforts, especially Afghanistan, is crucial in this regard, as this operation is widely seen as the most important strategic mission for the Euroatlantic community, with regard to proving its capabilities.

Finally, other than formal coordination mechanisms for civilian and military actors, implementation must occur with respect for each other's mandates and objectives. Once non-state actors and international organisations are included, network management methods of coordination could be envisaged. In this sense, there was a strong consensus that there is a need for "unity of effort," and not necessarily "unity of command."

Conference Programme

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- *State Legitimacy As Strategic Vision*
 - Espen Barth EIDE, Deputy Minister of Defence, The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, Oslo
 - Daniel SERWER Vice President, Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations and Centers of Innovation, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC
 - Emma BIRIKORANG, Research Fellow, Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department, Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Accra
- *Strategic Principles And Doctrine For Stabilisation Operations: Progress To Date And Future Needs*
 - Major General Per Arne FIVE, Deputy Military Adviser to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations, New York
 - Colonel Stephen SMITH, Deputy Director, Peace Keeping and Stability Operations Institute, Carlisle

THURSDAY 23 APRIL - CIVIL-MILITARY PRINCIPLES AND DOCTRINE FOR STABILISATION OPERATIONS

- *Establishing Common Civil-Military Principles And Doctrine For Stabilisation Operations: The USIP/PKSOI Manual*
 - Beth Ellen COLE, Senior Programme Officer, Centre for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations, United States Institute for Peace, Washington DC
 - Andrew RATHMELL (Discussant), Strategy Project Director, Directorate of Strategy, Policy Planning & Analysis, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London
- *Carrying Civil-Military Strategic Principles And Doctrine Forward*
 - Richard TEUTEN, Head, Stabilisation Unit, Department for International Development (DFID), London
 - Brigadier General Giovanni MANIONE, Director, Civil Military Cell, European Union Military Staff, Council of the European Union, Brussels
- *Recent Lessons From The Field: Dealing With Doctrinal Gaps And High Level Trade-Off Issues In Afghanistan*
 - Julian LINDLEY-FRENCH, Professor of Strategic Studies, University of Leiden; Professor of Military Operational Science, Netherlands Defence Academy and Senior Associate Fellow, United Kingdom Defence Academy, Shrivenham
 - Abubakar SIDDIQUE, Chief South Asia Correspondent, Radio Free Europe, Prague

• *Break-Out Groups:*

- Civil-Military Principles And Doctrine Across The Spectrum Of Crisis Management
 - Colonel Ian WESTERMAN, Assistant Director Multi-Agency Operations, Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC), Shrivenham
- Enhancing Linkages And Interactions Between The Major Component Areas Of Stabilisation Missions
 - Matthew REECE, Deputy Civilian Operations Commander - Chief of Staff, Council of the European Union, Brussels
- Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons And Options
 - Colonel James RUF, U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, Carlisle
- Applying New Civil-Military Principles And Doctrine For Stabilisation Operations To A Revised Afghan Strategy
 - Yann BRAEM, Deputy Head, Inter-Agency Afghanistan-Pakistan Team, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris

FRIDAY 24 APRIL - EMBEDDING AND EMPLOYING COMMON CIVIL-MILITARY PRINCIPLES AND DOCTRINE

- *Operationalising Civil-Military Principles And Doctrine*
 - Stephen HENTHORNE, Principal Subject Matter Expert for Joint-Interagency-Multinational Stability Operations, and Senior Advisor (AJP-9/CIMIC) to the Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence, Enschede
 - Major General (Retd) Robert GORDON, Senior Adviser, Challenges Forum, Folke Bernadotte Academy, Sandöverken
- *Planning At Strategic Headquarters Level Versus In Theatre*
 - Diego RUIZ PALMER, Head, Planning Section, Operations Division, NATO HQ, Brussels
- *Metrics For Stabilisation Operations*
 - Michael DZIEDZIC, Senior Programme Officer, U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington DC
 - Svein Erik STAVE, Researcher, Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo
- *Conference Conclusions: Defining The Priority Measures To Take Forward*
 - Louise ANTEN, Head of Conflict Research Unit, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, The Hague

SATURDAY 25 APRIL – (Departure of participants)