

Summary of the Conference “Comprehensive International Engagement in Conflicts – Civil-Military Interaction as Challenge and Opportunity”.

Two-and a half days of conflicting views, of assessments, brain-storming and “reality-check” of existing policies by military experts, academics, diplomats and people from the field of all backgrounds have offered valuable insights. The objective of this meeting was, inter alia, to improve the concept and implementation of CIMIC.

To achieve this goal, the summary is presented in the form of LESSONS LEARNT, LESSONS STILL to Be LEARNT and some suggestions how to get there.

1. The following selected core issues were raised at various instances:

1.1. THREATS with focus on the **unconventional category of threats** (not forgetting wars on access to resources, climate change and its consequences).

At centre-stage is the desintegration of states. Balkanization/Lebanization revisited. The international community faces the dangerous and wide-spread phenomenon of implosion of structures, loss of the legal monopoly of force with all its consequences. The complex insurgency, the PANSURGENCY in Iraq/Afghanistan (Mockaitis). Who do we chase? Still the Al-Qaida of 2001? If the US wants to be a hegemon, it has to act like a hegemon. (Schneider)

The divergent definitions of war, of terrorism and above all of “war against terror”, which dominated the debate. Speaking about “one long war” carries the risk of delegating too much authority to a government which might abuse it. (Gärtner et al.)

The world has seen already every imaginable type of horror - from the Armenian genocide, to the Holocaust, to Cambodia, Bosnia, Iraq to Darfour. (Mockaitis)

Next step: IMAGINE the UNIMAGINABLE!

Which leads us to the issue of information. Do we really know what we already know? The issue of open source information. The “information authority” is gone. (Rolington)

1.2. Intelligence for the 21st century: presenting the case-study Jane’s Information Group did in order to find out what could be concluded from 656 articles published on Al-Qaida by Jane’s before 9/11. (July 2001 issue “cutting Al-Qaida down to size”). Everything was there; the fact that they were training commercial pilots did not mean they planned opening up a commercial airline.....

“We were surprised how much we did know and yet didn’t” (Rolington)

Shift in strategy at Jane’s: change the teams of both experts and generalists, bringing ideas to the surface. Various complementary patterns (mosaic approach, scenario planning) are needed in addition to the conventional linear intelligence of collecting and validating facts. Linking data to produce immediate analysis of expected trends. “In a global electronic environment, pattern recognition has become as important as linear recognition.” (Rolington) West lagging behind websites produced by Hizbollah ante 9/11: running a sophisticated website in English, nothing comparable by western providers in Arabic!.

And how does all that affect Peace-keeping an Peace-making operations?

2. LESSONS LEARNT from the Balkans to East-Timor and Afghanistan:

2.1.TIME

From the military side: CIMIC needs much more time in order to yield SUSTAINABLE results. (Klein, Kuehne)

Assignments of 12 months make much more sense than those of six months (Brittain) – calculate the time it takes to adapt to the new environment.

From the civilian side: **Keeping to a strict calendar is not everything**; see implementation of the Petersberg Process 2001, all items accomplished within set time-limits. But did it really improve the situation in Afghanistan? (Pohly)

2.2. in that context a better handling of ROTATION and co-operation with (too) many actors in the field, in the capitals: There is a need for more **institutionalised co-ordination** from the moment of planning; an officer de liaison is not enough. (Osorio) But where does inter-agency co-ordination really function? (Debate)

2.3.WHO DOES WHAT: a clear-cut division of tasks.

From the military side: NEVER USE SOLDIERS AS POLICE-MEN (Klein). Never use police-men as soldiers or for any other purpose. The police has its professional culture of its own.

Lines of operation driven more by needs than by agreements. (Brittain) Pragmatism is the name of the game. But there is a need for agreed assessment: which priority – economic dev. (civilian objective) or security?

Blurring of Rules of Engagement: in Afghanistan we face at least three ROE. (Tanner) Streamlining needed.

Interpretation of military action by the civilian court can diverge from reality: what does impartiality mean? (Klep)

Question of **cost-effectiveness**. It takes a lot of time, money and equipment to do simple things. Out of 100 persons, 80 protect 20 who are in charge of CIMIC tasks (Klep)

From the civilian side: Looking at the post-conflict situation the moment war breaks out. But foreign policy is to the military something far away in a distant capital. For the immediate challenge: soldiers are required, not diplomats (Klep)

Police force: interesting sharing of tasks in the reconstruction of the Afghan National Police: Germany handles investment in equipment such as radios, bikes, cameras. But the US pays the weapons (Stöter) Decisions are often taken in Berlin, not in the field. Should there be more “subsidiarity”?

2.4. CULTURAL APPROACH

From the military side: there is **a limit to all improved cultural awareness**. “You cannot train away clan structures” (Kuehne)

Bring back the diaspora?

Whose value-system will prevail? The one of the residents or the one of the returnees?
It is the residents who dominate the (traditional) value system. (Daxner)
The diaspora should make sure that remittances flow into their country of origin, but not interfere with politics and administration. They only complicate things.

How does the population resent CIMIC?

MP Ms.Mehrzhad: “in the beginning a favourite attitude by the population; but when you have several attacks on wedding parties, people turn angry: the foreigners don’t let us live our culture. The foreigners need Afghan advisors.”

2.5. Get at terms with war-crimes:

From a military side: can you arrest all the war-criminals? Not really; major enterprise to track them down.

From a civilian side: ensure national reconciliation (how: amnesty or trying all?)

3. LESSONS STILL TO BE LEARNT

“The year 2007 will be a decisive year for PKO. The alarm-bells are ringing on all fronts”

(Kuehne) Failures even of success-stories such as East-Timor. What went wrong?

“We are not even successful in small countries (Haiti, Kosovo) with lots of resources at our disposal!” (Kuehne)

3.1. MORE FOCUS on local **ownership and sustainability from the early start** of an operation.

“once we get out, how will it work”.

3.2. There is a real risk of OVERSTRETCH in PKO: We get in easily, but don’t get out. If you go in, go big or go out (Tanner) – more realistic assessment in troops needed.

3.3. We, the West, try to get everything: The Westphalian State plus Democracy plus Human Rights and plus Rule of law.

It took the West approx. 400 years to get there. We want to achieve that in 2 years in Afghanistan.

The time-pressure is enormous. Result: 50% of all UN missions fail after 5 years (Klein)

Essential question: what kind of state do we wish to reconstruct?

Due regard for traditional types of governance, for the customary law instead of importing law and administration.

3.4. Situation awareness: all SHOULD contribute to it, all MUST share it. (Brittain)

4. HOW CAN WE IMPROVE the results of CIMIC?

Overall objective has to be: ENSURE SECURITY and STABILITY

There is a responsibility to protect (Tanner)

4.1. CREATE JOBS. It is not only about education. Youth from Liberia to Afghanistan needs economic perspectives, otherwise they join the fanatics.

4.2. MANAGING DIVERSITY - is there something like one coherent civil society? There are hundreds.

4.3. Stop writing too nice reports. Urgency for honesty and clear language about the situation, how to solve it, which price a society has to pay for that.

4.4. Explain the mission to the parliamentarians so that they are able to explain it to their respective electorate.

4.5. Multi-ethnic/national PKO contingent of BiH: example of the BiH blue helmet contingent – they can function as a positive example where there are similar problems (Klein)
The Austrian example of mixed PKO contingents – training together. The integrated mission approach: in order to achieve common success, there is a need for civilian and military components (Amon/Götzendorf)

4.6. Create real mandates/robust mandates! What is the main backbone for reconstruction: Is it the political agenda or something else? (Osorio) In Afghanistan UN et al. went for the political backbone, but did not deliver to the people.
UNSC Res. 1701(2006) for Unifil II is not the path to a solution.

4.7. Pay better and fair salaries to members of Police force, for instance. Otherwise increase in corruption.

4.8. Create better incentives for volunteers for reconstruction teams in Afghanistan: huge gaps between mission in Kosovo and Afghanistan. (Stöter) More policemen are needed: foreigners and locals.

CONCLUSION: WE ARE CONDEMNED TO COOPERATE. CIVIL AND MILITARY SIDES HAVE TO MANAGE TOGETHER THE DILEMMA OF OUR WORLD.

This symposium has offered a valuable opportunity to exchange views in a frank and critical way. Once we call “a cat a cat”, we can start solving deficiencies and think of new solutions. Interdisciplinary debate took place on a very high level thanks to the variety of speakers, their backgrounds and topics on a dense but very attractive agenda.

Rapporteur Karin Kneissl, Nov. 23rd 2006