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Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Nexus

TIP TRAINING FOR PEACE

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EDITORIAL

BY **VASU GOUNDEN**

Whilst the African continent is significantly afflicted and affected by armed and violent conflict, it has also provided a series of innovative responses to resolve such conflicts. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding initiatives have evolved, transformed and adapted to new realities, with the aim of providing more effective and sustainable responses to armed conflicts and the processes that follow the aftermath of these conflicts. This evolution is visible in various forms. On the one hand, peacekeepers have been providing a wider range of responses, moving away from the simple monitoring of peace agreements only to providing stronger support for longer-term peacebuilding priorities – including electoral assistance, institutional support to governments, confidence-building, security sector reform, and so on. On the other hand, larger peacebuilding processes are seen not only as practices that begin with the drawdown of missions, but are actually initiated concomitantly to the deployment of peacekeeping operations. Such transformations in peacekeeping operations indicate the increased complementarity – and even a certain level of overlap – between peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

An important and current debate in the conflict resolution field is the distinction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, especially in situations where this has become less clear and where there is now more overlap in tasks. This debate is of less concern at the conceptual or theoretical level, but more valid at a practical level. It is at the core of designing strategies for dealing with armed and violent conflicts, of allocating appropriate and efficient efforts and resources for implementing larger peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, and of defining clear strategies that can meaningfully support post-conflict societies in their quest for lasting peace. This important debate is, therefore, at the center of considerations and decision-making on how to make responses to conflict more meaningful, effective and sustainable for the societies being assisted.

However, whilst this ongoing debate is essential for a better understanding of the nature of peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, many questions are yet to be answered. There is an important need for increasing understanding on whether, when and how peacekeeping operations should be involved in early peacebuilding tasks. Also, determining how to improve coordination between peacekeeping operations and other peacebuilding actors on the ground is key, particularly as peacebuilding processes should be undertaken as national responsibilities and not be led solely by external actors. In addition, as each conflict context – whether it is Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo or South Sudan – presents different characteristics, dynamics, challenges and opportunities for applying and understanding the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding better, these questions need to be understood and applied in the context specific to particular countries, regions and scenarios. These are but a few examples of the many questions and issues that need to be addressed when attempting to strengthen the capacity of peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes in the provision and support of sustainable peace.

The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) is one of the main actors at the forefront of shaping and supporting both the peacekeeping and peacebuilding fields. It has assisted countries in developing peacebuilding strategies, and has supported the strengthening of peacekeeping missions throughout Africa. Through its ongoing work and projects, ACCORD remains committed to the goal of strengthening the understanding of the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. To this end, this special Issue of *Conflict Trends* unpacks and provides clarity on some of the key questions and issues related to the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus, and how it impacts peacekeeping operations and the larger contexts in which they operate.

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CONTEXTUALISING THE PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING NEXUS

BY **GUSTAVO DE CARVALHO** AND **DORCAS ETTANG**

Once upon a time, peacekeeping operations tended to be calm and consensual. ... Today's peacekeeping may take an entirely different form. There is less clarity about peace, the conflict might even be ongoing, with no clear views on who the parties to it actually are. ... Not taking sides may be difficult. ... The 'international community' is called upon to help in diverse situations of tragedy and emergency. ... In essence, instead of keeping the peace, the international community is invited to participate in the building of peace.[1]

UN PHOTO/ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN

The above quote, though largely a simplification of peacekeeping, presents in a very direct way the evolution of the field over the past 20 years. Peacekeeping has evolved from mainly traditional ceasefire operations to focus on more complex conflict scenarios where wider responses are required, including early peacebuilding initiatives and programmes. In this context, and according to the September 2010 Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) – Department of Field Support (DFS) *Paper on Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding*, 10 of the current 16 United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations

Above: Darfur drama actors perform at El Srief (North Darfur), as part of a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) outreach activity, organised by the African Union – United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and supported by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the North Sudan DDR Commission and the local non-governmental organsiation, Friends of Peace and Development Organization (July 2011). Such coordination among various organisations and institutions at all levels increases the effectiveness and reach of peacebuilding activities and programmes.

are multidimensional in nature, and have mandates from the UN Security Council to perform a broad range of peacebuilding activities.[2]

This evolution in the peacekeeping field emanated from changes in the international system and the nature of conflicts in which the UN and other international organisations are directly involved. As such, the institution and practice of peacekeeping has faced constant pressure for adaptation and increased effectiveness. To this end, peacebuilding has, therefore, been identified by some as the "overall framework in which external assistance to post-conflict countries should be included encompassing peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and development".[3]

Currently, it is clear that institutions involved in peacekeeping are trying to find a way to become more meaningful and maximise their impact. Thus, while peacekeeping is still largely seen as a tool to provide security and stability in the aftermath of a conflict, there is also an increased belief that to do so requires a shift towards more sustainable and long-term post-conflict processes. This shift becomes particularly relevant for the civilian capacities within a peacekeeping mission that have focused frequently on peacebuilding and statebuilding components in their functions and the initiatives in which they are involved.

The 2010 UN General Assembly president, Ali Treki, noted that the UN needed a broader and holistic strategy in bridging peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts to build sustainable peace in complex and fragile situations and tackle the interlinked issues of security and development in a comprehensive manner.[4] This highlights the need not only to strengthen peacekeeping and make it relevant to current conflict contexts, but also to solidify its contribution to peacebuilding processes. It portrays a larger commitment by the UN to continue its focus on peacebuilding within its institutions.

Many of the changes that peacekeeping has faced are due to the fact that, in an immediate post-conflict context, the priority is not only to keep the peace and halt violence, but also to ensure that issues of gross human rights violations, weak infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, trauma and weak state authority are addressed. This, therefore, requires that peacekeepers – who are usually the first group on the ground – take these issues into account. Such issues have implications for clarifying

UN PHOTO/MARK GARTEN

Ali Treki, the 2010 UN General Assembly president, noted that the UN needed a broader and holistic strategy in bridging peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts to build sustainable peace in complex and fragile situations.

UN PHOTO/TIM MCKULKA

Contemporary peacekeeping operations now include peacebuilding functions, such as electoral support. Here, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) provided technical and logistical support to Sudan's National Elections Commission: UN helicopters delivered ballots and polling materials for the national elections, to remote areas in southern Sudan (April 2010).

and establishing how the mandates of peacekeeping missions are designed and implemented.

This article first presents why peacekeeping should be part of a wider peacebuilding process, and that both processes must be linked in complex situations where such functions are needed. It highlights how peacekeepers are increasingly performing early peacebuilding functions at the policy and practical level. Second, the article discusses some of the implications of the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and how it can be clarified and strengthened further.

Policy and Practice Considerations

Since the 1990s, various peacekeeping operations – such as the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) or the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) – were mandated in a wider scope of actions. Therefore, while peacekeeping still remains largely focused on providing stability and security in a post-agreement environment, various new functions have been incorporated. These functions, which are grouped under the peacebuilding umbrella, are now often undertaken by contemporary peacekeeping operations – and include electoral support; supporting the restoration and extension of state authority; the strengthening of civil society; and supporting the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants. Peacekeepers are indeed providing peacebuilding support – both in terms of directly supporting critical peacebuilding tasks and through enabling local actors in developing and implementing peacebuilding priorities and strategies.

PEACEKEEPING HAS EVOLVED FROM MAINLY TRADITIONAL CEASEFIRE OPERATIONS TO FOCUS ON MORE COMPLEX CONFLICT SCENARIOS WHERE WIDER RESPONSES ARE REQUIRED, INCLUDING EARLY PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES

UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

The UN General Assembly holds a thematic debate on "United Nations Peacekeeping: Looking into the Future" (June 2010).

Main Roles Performed by Peacekeepers in the Broader Peacebuilding Effort, According to the UN Secretary General

- "Peacekeepers articulate strategic priorities by supporting consensus among national counterparts and the broader international community.
- "Peacekeepers enable peacebuilding by others, by providing a security umbrella, monitoring commitments by parties to the conflict, expanding and preserving political space, facilitating assistance efforts, delivering administrative and logistical enabling support, and coordinating or directly managing various resource streams.
- "Peacekeeping operations directly implement certain peacebuilding tasks, including measures for short-term stability and laying the foundations for long-term capacity building and institutional development in collaboration with partners."[5]

Jennifer Hazen appropriately highlights that more frequently peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding have been conceptually identified as three distinct activities in a post-conflict context and that, if successful, peacekeeping would lay the foundation for peacebuilding.[6] Emily Munro points out that, in integrating peacebuilding activities into peacekeeping missions, challenges emerge – particularly concerning the frequent ambiguous nature of most mission mandates on peacebuilding responsibilities, and the inconsistencies between mission tasks and budgets.[7] While these statements provide important distinctions in terms of the focus of activities that need to be conducted, they also highlight the confusion that occurs – especially in areas where they overlap in implementation. This confusion was seen in the challenges that peacekeeping operations have faced in transitioning to longer-term peace consolidation and development in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Haiti, Liberia and Timor-Leste.[8] These challenges include struggles with delivering on mission mandates to protect civilians and, at the same time, respond to threats; inadequate capabilities and support structures to carry out mandates effectively; and the lack of crisis

Table 1: Relevant Documents Highlighting the Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Nexus

UN Document	Examples of Sections in the Document Highlighting the Nexus
Secretary General Report on Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict	*"The Security Council plays an essential role in signalling strong international attention and support for a peace process and for the initiation of peacebuilding, calling on all stakeholders for their constructive support and engagement and authorising a number of potential steps, including peacekeeping operations."* [11]
A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping	*"UN Peacekeepers play a critical role in building peace after conflict, in establishing the conditions for recovery and development activities and in carrying out some of the tasks essential to stabilisation and early consolidation of peace."* [12]
Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group - Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict	*"The separation of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and political affairs into separate boxes, and the alignment of departments and funding modalities with these arbitrary divisions, constrain the UN's ability to deploy the right capacity at the right time and to adjust in response to changing needs."* [13]
2011 Substantive Session – UN General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (also referred to as C-34)	*"The Special Committee stresses the importance of the explicit definition and clear identification of peacebuilding activities in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, whenever appropriate and of their helping to lay the foundations for longer-term peacebuilding and sustainable peace and development."*[14]

planning and decision-making in times of environmental crisis (such as the earthquake in Haiti).

More recently, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations has called for better definitions and identification of peacebuilding activities in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. It is expected that the DPKO and DFS will soon develop an "early peacebuilding strategy for peacekeepers to guide the prioritisation and sequencing of initiatives in the areas of civil affairs, policing, justice, corrections, security sector reform, mine action, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration".[9]

The increased interaction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities has had a direct impact on discussions at UN Headquarters level. The Security Council is often in discussions about the matter, and the topic has subsequently received increased attention. Between February 2010 and February 2011, five Security Council Presidential Statements on topics linked to the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus were released.[10] Furthermore, various critical documents (see Table 1) that highlight this relationship have been released. Attention to the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus became a central issue in discussions and in these documents, within the context of how to enhance UN responses to conflicts.

A common theme can be gleaned from the aforementioned documents. On the one hand, they all confirm the idea that peacekeeping should pave the way for longer-term sustainable peace, through their support of comprehensive peace agreements and by laying the foundation for legitimate governance.[15] On the other hand, these key documents also acknowledge that there are several challenges in strengthening the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus, so that it contributes to the overall efficiency of the UN.

Implications of the Nexus on the Practice of Peacekeeping

There are a number of implications for peacekeeping operations when considering the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Local Ownership

Local ownership is central to discussions on the principle and practice of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Building local institutions and national ownership is a long-term process that continues long

UN PHOTO/MARTINE PERRET

The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) trains and empowers the local police force in Dili (2008). Peacekeeping operations should ensure that local actors and institutions are enhanced from the onset of peacekeeping missions.

after missions have drawn down. In this context, it is now widely acknowledged that, to provide lasting results, the host country and local actors should be widely engaged in the process of reconstructing their society. One of the main challenges in increasing the linkages between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is to avoid the 'dependency' syndrome, where local actors are heavily reliant on external actors to lead and manage the peacebuilding process.

However, whilst its importance is widely acknowledged, there are still challenges in fully implementing local ownership in practice. In the past, many peacekeeping operations have performed as an alternative to the state, which hindered sustainable programmes. Hazen confirms this view by stating that peacekeeping missions have tended to adopt a short-term approach by advising and assisting national governments with post-conflict processes and/or performing tasks that the government is unable to perform.[16] This short-term approach cannot contribute successfully to addressing the underlying causes of the conflict and to rebuilding the country in the long term. In clarifying the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus, the focus must remain on building and enhancing national capacities and establishing national responsibility and commitment to the process.

Although current peacekeeping operations have consciously focused on strengthening and targeting national capacities through various peacebuilding activities, more concrete efforts would ensure that these capacities are strengthened in an ongoing and in-depth manner, and that local actors and institutions are

A COMPREHENSIVE AND WELL THOUGHT-OUT STRATEGY ON HOW TO TRANSFER INFORMATION, SKILLS AND EXPERTISE FROM INTERNATIONAL TO LOCAL CAPACITIES NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED

enhanced from the onset of the peacekeeping mission. These efforts would include the training and building of local capacities in conflict resolution and peacebuilding; providing technical assistance to national institutions; supporting the policy development and implementation process; and creating avenues for dialogue, information and knowledge-sharing between various local institutions and actors. Furthermore, national capacities must be involved in the initial planning, coordination and implementation of all activities. A comprehensive and well thought-out strategy on how to transfer information, skills and expertise from international to local capacities needs to be developed. This will contribute to building a thorough and clear understanding of the peacebuilding process, and will ensure that local actors are enabled to achieve a sustainable peace.

Provision of Peacebuilding Expertise Within Peacekeeping Operations

It is important that peacekeepers possess sufficient capacities to perform their peacebuilding functions fully. Working in a peacebuilding context, these capacities would require that peacekeepers are knowledgeable on a wide range of thematic areas such as the rule of law, gender issues and security sector reform, and have skills in mediation, negotiation, analysis, persuasion and communication. This knowledge will ensure that they are able to respond to changing situations on the ground, meet the relevant needs on the ground, and contribute to long-term peacebuilding efforts. With the objective of increasing the UN's capacity to respond to post-conflict challenges, the UN is undergoing a process to review its civilian capacities. This will ensure that the needed capacities are available to contribute adequately to rebuilding post-conflict states. This process is still underway and, at the time of writing, the UN Secretary General's report on the review has not yet been released. As such, it is difficult to assess how fundamental the changes in the UN system will be, concerning the civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict. However, there is the expectation that the process can and will support the UN to utilise civilians more efficiently in supporting post-conflict societies – particularly through increased partnerships within the UN system and beyond, better

UN PHOTO/TIM MCKULKA

Staff members of the United Nations Integrated Referendum and Electoral Division (UNIRED) provide assistance during a three-day training workshop conducted by the Central Equatoria State Referendum High Committee in Juba, Sudan. The workshop was designed to provide classroom and practical training to county-level representatives ahead of the referendum held in early 2011.

UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

The UN Security Council discusses transition and exit strategies in peacekeeping operations (February 2010).

national ownership, and increased flexibility in the utilisation of resources and deployment.[17]

Clarity on Strategies for Peacekeeping Transition

How the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding plays out in the context of missions that will potentially draw down and transition is relevant. Questions such as how to ensure successful transitions from peacekeeping missions to other forms of support, and how to ensure that roles and functions are handed over to national partners so that they are able to lead and guide the peacebuilding process, are important. In planning a transition from a fully robust peacekeeping mission to a smaller mission, important factors to consider include how effective the role of peacekeepers have been in initiating sustainable peacebuilding processes, and if local actors are equipped and knowledgeable to take over these processes. These considerations are important, as peacekeepers are mostly international staff and are deployed for a short term, and the processes they initiate should ideally remain long after they have drawn down.

Many of the peacebuilding functions performed by peacekeepers are evolving processes that are increasingly part of a larger peacebuilding process in the country. One clear example of this has been the role of civil affairs officers in performing certain early peacebuilding tasks.[18] In particular, the experience from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) highlights how civil affairs officers gradually became much more involved in peacebuilding tasks. In the early stages of the mission, civil affairs officers were more engaged in the gathering of information and in conflict management. As the mission (and the country's situation) evolved, civil affairs officers continued to be involved in those initial engagements, but also became more focused on

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A MISSION TRANSITIONS OR DRAWS DOWN AT THE RIGHT TIME, TO AVOID 'OVERDEPENDENCY' BY THE HOST COUNTRY, ON THE ONE HAND, AND TO ENSURE THAT IT LEAVES THE COUNTRY IN A STABLE STATE, ON THE OTHER

working with local actors and institutions in supporting and strengthening their capacities.

It is important that a mission transitions or draws down at the right time, to avoid 'overdependency' by the host country, on the one hand, and to ensure that it leaves the country in a stable state, on the other. As such, there is a need for increased understanding of the initial benchmarks that are set to measure the goals and achievements of a mission, which are used to determine the best time to exit from a particular country. Understanding these benchmarks within an ever-changing situation in a country will ensure that there is sufficient planning well in advance of drawdown, and can help to gauge adequately when the local actors are ready to take over the process.

Coordination between Various Actors

In any effort to branch into peacebuilding activities in a clear and systematic manner, it is important to note that a wide range of actors exist in the field – and are playing similar roles. Ongoing efforts to build coherence and coordination among these various actors and institutions at all levels (including local actors and institutions) already exist.

There are challenges between the coordination mechanisms of peacekeeping and peacebuilding institutions. At the level of the UN Headquarters, coordination among the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, the DPKO and the Peacebuilding Support Office remain inadequate, especially in relation to their activities. Frequently, their activities are not fully coordinated, and planning of peacekeeping missions are not yet fully integrated. The role of the World Bank is important, and the need for close collaboration between it, the UN and other financial and development partners is necessary. Much more can be done to achieve this. This challenge is also felt at the mission level, especially between the mission and other peacebuilding actors on the ground.

Recent developments within the UN system to build coherence and coordination amongst its missions, agencies and country teams at the political and strategic level will help to solidify the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Recognising that these bodies have worked independently, it will require concrete and well thought-out efforts to harmonise their approaches. When achieved, this will ensure that the UN can respond to short-, mid- and longer-term peacebuilding activities in a holistic manner. Through this integrated and strategic approach, the UN can provide support to core peacebuilding processes, such as providing safety and security during elections, as well as economic revitalisation. In the case of UNMIL, the mission has been active in facilitating the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in the country, and has played equivocal roles in facilitating the overall peacebuilding process. In spite of ongoing efforts to improve coordination, much more can be done so that sustainable results are achieved.

Conclusion

This article has focused on contextualising the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus within current-day peacekeeping operations. It has also attempted to draw out the linkages between peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the policy and practice of contemporary peacekeeping operations. Understanding how the peacekeeping field has evolved from purely military operations to more robust and multidimensional operations will strengthen the UN's role on the global stage. Furthermore, the need for stronger and consistent joint efforts between the DPKO and the UN's peacebuilding structures in understanding the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is important, especially in the design and implementation of mandates.

How future peacekeeping mandates will be designed and implemented will have implications on how local ownership is perceived and achieved and how the capacities of peacekeepers are built to perform peacebuilding functions effectively. This will provide more clarity on the transition of peacekeeping missions, especially as they draw down. It is acknowledged by the Security Council that there is the need for enhancing

ALTHOUGH CURRENT PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS HAVE CONSCIOUSLY FOCUSED ON STRENGTHENING AND TARGETING NATIONAL CAPACITIES THROUGH VARIOUS PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES, MORE CONCRETE EFFORTS WOULD ENSURE THAT THESE CAPACITIES ARE STRENGTHENED IN AN ONGOING AND IN-DEPTH MANNER, AND THAT LOCAL ACTORS AND INSTITUTIONS ARE ENHANCED FROM THE ONSET OF THE PEACEKEEPING MISSION

peacebuilding activities by formulating a strategy based on the interdependence between sustainable peace, security and development in its entire dimension.[19] Dialogue between the General Assembly, Security Council, the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries, and partners within and beyond the UN system through both formal and informal channels, highlight the ongoing efforts to understand and clarify the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus. It is important that these ongoing efforts and discussions remain relevant and integral to the specific contexts on the ground in which the UN works – as it is here that the challenges in understanding the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus are most visible.

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13 United Nations General Assembly and Security Council (2011) *Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict: Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group,* A/65/747-S/2011/85, 22 February 2011.

14 United Nations General Assembly (2011) op. cit.

15 United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (2010) op. cit.

16 Hazen, Jennifer M. (2007) op. cit., p. 326.

17 The review of civilian capacities is a process that was initiated at the 2009 UN Secretary General Report on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict. Its Senior Advisory Group released a report in February 2011 with recommendations for the process. The recommendations are mostly based on enhancing civilian capacity through (1) a more locally owned process; (2) utilising appropriate and wider range of partners; (3) with the right expertise; and (4) in a flexible manner.

18 Civil affairs is one of the civilian functions of peacekeeping. Its main role is to interact with the local communities, understand them and create strategies for supporting conflict management initiatives and enhancing local governance, on a daily basis.

19 United Nations Security Council (2001) *Presidential Statement*, 2001, No. 5, PRST 2001/5, 20 February.

NAVIGATING HYBRID POLITICAL ORDERS: BALANCING PEACEBUILDING IN CHAD

BY **DIANA FELIX DA COSTA** AND **JOHN KARLSRUD**

UN PHOTO/OLIVIA GREY PRITCHARD

Introduction

There is an increasing understanding of the need to take into account the hybrid political orders existing in post-conflict environments where peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations are deployed. However, most of this work is still at the conceptual level. This article will attempt to advance the theoretical and policy debates on the relationship between local-level and national actors, and the complexities within the notion of local ownership, by highlighting some of the inherent challenges for local-level peacebuilding. It also highlights some of the potential avenues for further development of local peacebuilding approaches in hybrid political orders through examples from Chad. The practices employed in Chad have followed liberal peacebuilding patterns with unpredictable challenges at times, but also some successes. This article argues that a more bottom-up oriented approach to peacebuilding, which strengthens local confidence in – and ownership of – formal and traditional institutions, can improve the success of peacekeeping operations.

Peacebuilding efforts have come to a crossroads,[1] with mounting criticism for supporting national elites at the expense of traditional authorities at the periphery,[2]

Above: MINURCAT's civil affairs officers meet and talk with local, displaced women. It is important to garner the confidence and support of the local population and to develop peace processes from the ground up.

withering consent of host states,[3] a sharply contracted economic environment in the post-financial crisis period and a general criticism against the liberal peacebuilding agenda.[4] The legitimacy of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions suffers from long drawn-out missions that often do not seem to be able to deliver stability, improved security or justice to host populations. The peacebuilding agenda is thus under considerable stress. Yet, while some of the criticism seems to argue for ending what is considered a neo-colonial enterprise, others have argued that most of the critics still conceive of peacebuilding reform that is broadly within the liberal agenda.[5]

This article will focus on examples of local peacebuilding undertaken by UN peacekeeping officers in Chad. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

UN PHOTO/ARPAN MUNIER

Peacekeepers must develop working relationships and partnerships with local leaders and authorities.

(DPKO) civil affairs officers and their colleagues are often the only UN presence in the field, and their tasks include supporting the strengthening of state authority and coordinating the support of other UN and international actors, among other things. They thus represent one of the nodes where peacekeeping and peacebuilding intersect.

While it is crucial for peace processes to evolve at a national level and for international support to solidify its subsequent acceptance and recognition, it is equally important to garner the confidence and support of the populations living in rural areas, and to develop peace dividends from the ground up. How can this be achieved? How can international actors work towards linking the centre and the periphery when implementing peace processes? And how can international actors undertake the difficult balancing act between respecting the national government as the main counterpart, while acknowledging that, at the local level, the national counterpart may be one of the parties to the conflict? In such cases, what can be done to build confidence among the local population?

This article will argue for a more multilayered approach to peacebuilding, where local ownership takes into account local actors as well as national counterparts, and where the support offered from the international community is better tailored to local needs and takes into account the power dynamics between the centre and periphery. The legitimacy of peacebuilding ultimately depends on a careful balancing act between the respect for national sovereignty and the need to engage with all stakeholders, local administration authorities, local traditional authorities and other non-state actors.

A Triangular Relationship

The relationship between local actors and international actors is not straightforward. There is no easy fix to this conundrum: international peacekeepers are present in the field at the mercy of the host state which, depending on their relative bargaining power, can also ask the peacekeepers to leave – as was seen in Chad in 2010. According to Clapham, peacekeepers "view themselves bringing solutions", while the host populations perceive the international support "as contributing resources, which may be captured and used by one or more of the internal parties to the conflict, in order to improve their position within the conflict itself".[6]

This relationship can be framed as a 'triangular relationship' between traditional local authorities, administrative state authorities and international actors

(largely understood by both traditional and administrative state authorities as a homogenous category, despite the wide array of types of actors within the 'international' sphere). International actors, working within the liberal peacebuilding paradigm, often overlook or neglect the interplay between government administration authorities and traditional authorities at the local level, focusing their attention on the relationship with the host state and seeking to strengthen this at the local level, to extend state authority and services.

Boege et al term the interplay between traditional and administrative local actors as "hybrid political orders".[7] Local ownership should be discussed in terms of the interaction and relationship between these 'hybrid political orders' – the fusion or established relations between traditional and administrative authorities – and the third party. As argued by Reich, the debate of local ownership is not to be measured in absolute terms; rather, the focus should be on the complex relationship between insiders and outsiders, since it is here that power is or is not shared and negotiated, and that equality among partners can be fulfilled.[8]

The following section presents four general lessons from Chad on how to develop approaches that consider existing local-level dynamics within the national political context, and outlines ways to build confidence among all stakeholders. It concludes with a summary on the very delicate balancing act between hybrid political orders.

Supporting Multiple Layers of Governance

Most post-conflict states contain multiple layers of governance. As suggested by Boege et al, further reflection should be placed on comprehending the context of what truly constitutes political order in such places.[9] For example, in eastern Chad at the regional and local level, there are government and customary authorities – such as governors and sultans, sub-prefects and chefs de canton – who together constitute what is commonly known as 'local authorities'. In effect, in regions where formal central government representation and its institutions are largely absent from rural areas, local ownership depends on a working partnership between traditional authorities (who effectively act as regulators of social life) and administrative state local authorities (who represent the central government).

Peacebuilders must work towards a fine balance, not only by being aware of potential tensions that might exist – as often do – between these two categories of local actors, but also to reflect on questions of genuine legitimacy of state actors and their customary counterparts, and support each group accordingly. Within the Intercommunity Dialogue Strategy (ICD), developed and implemented by the Political and Civil Affairs Section (POLCA) of the UN Mission to the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), as well as the wider mandate of Civil Affairs in general,[10] great emphasis was placed on the extension of state authority to areas where they were previously absent. This was done as a means to prevent intercommunity tensions and violence. While this is laudable, there is some concern regarding the heavy emphasis that international actors - such as UN peacekeeping officers, UN funds and programmes - put on extending the presence of the state. Particularly in cases where the state is regarded by many as highly corrupt and illegitimate, how representative peacekeeping officers are can be questionable – particularly if the state is effectively one of the perpetrators of violence. It also raises issues of customary authorities being sidelined as community representatives.

Contextual Awareness and Understanding the Local Political Environment

In some of its offices in Chad, MINURCAT's POLCA had a good understanding of the region it was operating in, built on a consistent rapport with both the administrative and customary authorities.[11] Through collaboration with MINURCAT's Human Rights Section, information was systematically collected and constant communication maintained with other actors – including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its national non-governmental organisation (NGO) counterpart, alongside other NGOs involved in protection and economic recovery. The POLCA office used up-to-date information to inform its community peacebuilding strategy. Staff invested in building relationships and trust with local authorities and developing follow-up mechanisms, including supporting reconciliation commissions and encouraging other more long-term actors in eastern Chad to implement economic recovery projects with tangible peace dividends. In other locations, however, UN agencies and NGOs expressed confusion over POLCA's role in intercommunity dialogue. The POLCA officers showed less understanding of the context, and few initiatives were undertaken. Field offices seemed to lack awareness of what was happening in areas beyond their area of operations, and information flow within POLCA was weak.

The core tasks of the UN DPKO Civil Affairs officers are to support state authorities, facilitate reconciliation between population groups and liaison between the centre and periphery, facilitating the local voice in national policy processes.[12] These various tasks call for a deep understanding of the local political environment and the operational context – balancing the role of supporting local authorities and strengthening their capacity with the role of being an external facilitator in conflict resolution processes. UN DPKO officers and other peacebuilders at the local level are expected to develop a keen understanding of the various formal and informal governance mechanisms at play. They should see

UN PHOTO/OLIVIA GREY PRITCHARD

In some areas, MINURCAT's Political and Civil Affairs Section (POLCA) had a good understanding of the region it was operating in and the needs of the local people. Here, locally elected women leaders of internally displaced persons and refugees receive solar-powered radio transmitters donated under an initiative led by POLCA.

themselves as more than providers of logistical assistance, support for capacity development and developing infrastructure. They can negotiate the relationship between formal and informal forms of governance at the community level, and the relationship between the local and central level. They are important providers of both political and economic resources, and can confer legitimacy upon their interlocutors. The peacebuilders themselves are perhaps the most important resource of the external intervention, and their understanding of the world they inhabit can have very real consequences on the ground.

The Perilous Assumption of a National and Local Commitment to Peace

Local peacebuilding, according to the liberal peacebuilding template, involves extending the authority of a state – regarded by many as highly corrupt or illegitimate, or simply as an alien and largely external force. This is often done at the cost of traditional authorities, who are the de facto 'leaders' at the local level. This approach can have the unintended and unwelcome result of increasing instead of decreasing tension and violence.

The situation at the local level may or may not reflect the engagement – or, perhaps most accurately, the lack of engagement – at the national level. In Chad, the recent elections in April 2011 – considered to be the cornerstone of the international community's strategy for a 'democratic transition' in Chad – offered little hope to many Chadians, who are eager for peace and saw the elections as just another way of legitimising the status quo. The results were unsurprising: President Déby won a fourth term in power; now reaching more than 20 years in office.[13]

While elections are proposed by many as a solution for a democratic transition, it is unlikely that they will lead to sustainable peace before a comprehensive and inclusive national dialogue is held. Indeed, average Chadians are tired of violence and conflict. While a national inclusive dialogue could benefit greatly from stronger international pressure from actors such as France and the United States (US), local initiatives such as the local intercommunity

dialogue are partially thwarted by the lack of progress in a genuine wider national engagement to a peace process. Local administrative authorities – particularly administrative state authorities – at the community level were quick to understand the benefits of collaborating with MINURCAT, both in terms of perceived legitimacy in face of the international community, and of the material and political resources they could benefit from through engagement.

The rebel groups, which mostly hail from the east, only account for a minor part of the population, while the major part of the population lives in the south. Similar to Sudan, there is a north-south divide in Chad, and the south controlled Chad until 1979.[14] The southern population – and indeed the population at large – is scarcely involved in the political and security structures of the state. Their resilience relies on local patrimonial structures that provide security, food and provision of services. They survive as nomadic herdsmen or subsistence farmers, and often have an instrumental relationship to national authorities, as well as international humanitarian, peacebuilding and development actors. However, this is rarely accounted for in the strategies of international actors, which assume that support to state authorities at the local level will improve the resilience of the local population. Instead, this support can be taken hostage by national authorities to strengthen their power at the local level, and devolve the authority of traditional leaders.

Managing Consent and Building Confidence – The Balancing Act between Formal and Traditional Authorities

One helpful way to look at the relationship and power negotiations between the various sets of actors is to focus on the interplay between different local actors – including between administrative and customary authorities – and of these with international actors. In addition, the UN is also aware that its legitimacy as a mission partially depends on it being able to 'win' or guarantee the support of traditional authorities.

While it is crucial to strengthen central state institutions, this must be done parallel to existing customary structures. More focus should be placed on supporting a dialogue and partnership between central government authorities and its few representatives at the local level with traditional authority structures. In

UN PHOTO/EVAN SCHNEIDER

MINURCAT assisted local governors and state officials to establish water drilling units in dry and remote areas. This helped to strengthen the confidence of the local population and humanitarian community in local officials and MINURCAT.

THE PEACEBUILDERS THEMSELVES ARE PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE OF THE EXTERNAL INTERVENTION, AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD THEY INHABIT CAN HAVE VERY REAL CONSEQUENCES ON THE GROUND

the balancing act between national government, local administration and traditional authorities, an analysis must be undertaken to map the interests of actors at all levels. Peacebuilders navigate very complex and difficult waters in fragile states, where their strategies, formed in the liberal peacebuilding mould, can inhibit their ability to perceive and understand the interests of all the parties:

> Domestic combatants have a clearer and longer-term view of what they are trying to achieve; they are uncluttered – or uninhibited – by the value system within which the peacekeepers are operating; they are often well aware of the domestic and international constraints on the behaviour of the peacekeepers, while suffering from few such constraints themselves; and they have a far better grasp of the local political scene.[15]

In Chad, MINURCAT's ability to implement the intercommunity dialogue successfully rested in its capacity to build confidence that the security situation could be improved by engaging in dialogue at the local level. One of the lessons from Chad is that, in the midst of conflict, there is space to build local pockets of peace. Many conflicts are essentially local in their nature, and can be resolved locally.

However, national authorities may be wary of engagement with traditional authorities. While espousing a will for peace, national authorities may not be as forthcoming in practice. In eastern Chad, the national authorities were perceived by many at the local level to be one of the parties to the conflict – having supported the Zaghawa tribe (from where President Déby and many of his closest allies hail) in the ethnic violence that in large part resulted in the displacement of local populations. The sustainability of activities and the level of confidence and trust that the local population has in national authorities depends on an awareness of these perceptions, and taking them into account when designing and implementing projects.

At the local level, MINURCAT enjoyed a very good relationship with governors and other state officials. As an example, the mission supported them with a water drilling unit which, in cooperation with the humanitarian community, was able to locate, drill for and establish water sources in very dry and remote areas. The water drilling unit was hugely popular and assisted in strengthening the confidence of the local population and humanitarian community in local officials. During a high-level visit by UN officials from headquarters in early 2010, after the president of Chad had sent a letter asking the mission to leave, local officials who were close to the president underscored their wish for the mission to stay – mentioning the support to intercommunity dialogue, security patrols and the water drilling unit as important contributions at the local level.[16]

What emerged was a tension between the national and local level, where local-level officials enjoyed the effects of material support through the increased confidence of the population and the legitimacy this conferred on them. On the other hand, national authorities, having a national outlook and different interests, wanted to end the mission as they did not want to be perceived as a 'fragile' or 'weak' state. When the mission could no longer provide any significant material resources, there was a strong resistance against involvement in 'internal affairs' and the improved relationship between Sudan and Chad made the need for an external security provider obsolete, from the president's perspective.

Liberal Peacebuilding Navigating Hybrid Political Orders: A Balancing Act

Peacebuilding literature has focused on the need to support 'fragile', 'weak' or 'failed' states in re-establishing security, core state functions and the provision of basic services to the population. Yet, as suggested by Boege et al, speaking of 'weak' states suggests there are other actors that are strong in relation to the state. Effectively, it acknowledges that "the state is only one actor among others and 'state order' is only one of a number of orders claiming to provide security, frameworks for conflict regulation and social services".[17]

Conflict resolution in eastern Chad, as in most sub-Saharan countries, is based on legal pluralism. Conflict management institutions and social practices from different domains – traditional society, religion and state, for example – co-exist and intermingle in conflict mediation and resolution processes. Pawlitzky et al highlight how, in eastern Chad, reconciliation processes launched and led by mixed delegations (comprising traditional, religious and state authorities) had higher chances of successfully bringing local community leaders together in constructive dialogue, and generating a reconciliation agreement and strategy.[18]

To be able to adapt to new surroundings, time and space are needed to adjust, understand and learn about the different context. International peacekeepers need to reassess their role within the peacebuilding process. As suggested by Pouligny: "Contrary to what they may

be inclined to feel or believe they [international actors] are not the main actors, but should think of themselves as facilitators of a leverage process."[19] As such, they should act flexibly and modestly, and accept that what they have to offer is only useful in so far as it builds upon national capacities and works with local actors.

Conclusion

The critiques offered by Richmond, Chandler, Paris and other scholars has been just, but has lacked practical suggestions for how it should be operationalised. In the UN, the importance of the role of civilian peacebuilders has gained ground with the issuing of the Capstone Doctrine in 2008, the Secretary General's report on peacebuilding released in 2009 and the Guéhenno Report on civilian capacities released this year.[20] In these attempts at reforming peacekeeping – including offering greater emphasis to peacebuilding within peacekeeping – the UN has shown intent to restructure and improve its practices. However, in academic literature, little has been offered in terms of functional examples on how peacebuilding practices can be improved. This article represents an attempt to bridge the divide between academic critique and UN policymakers, by providing examples from Chad that highlight some of the dilemmas that peacebuilders are confronted with, and point at some potential solutions.

multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations have sufficient expertise, contextual knowledge and stamina to carry out effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding work at the local level. A mission can bring added resources and contribute positively to local level peacebuilding efforts, but it is clear that if peacekeeping operations take on this task, it must be done in close cooperation with other UN agencies, NGOs and local partners to ensure that engagement continues after the mission has left.

UN civilian peacekeepers facilitate local-level peacebuilding such as the provision of basic services, intercommunity dialogue and strengthening local security, which may often consist of simple, low-cost interventions.[21] When done well, such interventions can provide a UN operation with key knowledge and contribute to the bottom-up peacebuilding that is key to the long-term success of any peace operation.[22] However, engaging in peacebuilding at the local level requires specific local knowledge, flexibility and long-term, sustained commitment – a challenge for large, unwieldy and time-limited peacekeeping operations. Together with the short-term, project-based cultures of some donor organisations, this generates considerable pressure for the rapid achievement of concrete and measurable results. Success is thus often measured in terms of tangible outcomes – such as the quantity of infrastructure rehabilitated or numbers of returned internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees –

EVEN WHEN GOOD LOCAL CONTEXT ANALYSIS IS CARRIED OUT AND THE HOST STATE IS RESPONSIVE, A LACK OF COMMITMENT FROM LOCAL ACTORS WILL CAUSE LOCAL PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES TO FAIL

Multiple and competing layers of governance exist in most fragile states. Even when good local context analysis is carried out and the host state is responsive, a lack of commitment from local actors will cause local peacebuilding initiatives to fail. The most pressing question when assessing the UN's role in local peacebuilding is whether local actors actually want external assistance in the first place. MINURCAT's mandate problematically assumed that national and local authorities in Chad were committed to resolving local tensions and promoting reconciliation efforts and actively interested in changing the status quo. This was a perilous assumption in Chad, where the government often appeared to support specific ethnic groups and had a long history of co-opting customary authorities and opposition members.

The aim of the international effort must first and foremost be to help develop the confidence and resilience of the local population. With all-embracing mandates incorporating issues ranging from rule of law and gender to human rights and security sector reform – to name just a few – legitimate questions can be raised as to whether rather than whether the underlying causes of conflict (and the political dynamics) have been sustainably addressed. Any engagement has to be sustained, long term and aimed at building the capacity of local governance structures and partnerships with national NGOs and other actors, to ensure continuity after the UN pulls out.

UN peacekeeping operations may prove to be an asset in facilitating the space required for local-level peacebuilding and in advocating for early recovery activities, by fostering structures that meet basic human needs and maximise public participation. However, this has to be done alongside national authorities and developing actors within a realistic time frame. International peacekeepers and peacebuilders represent a considerable supply of material and other resources to all levels of governance in a fragile state, which has instrumental value to all parties. Navigating between a mandate directed at supporting a host state and avoiding detrimental impact on existing traditional structures will remain a serious challenge for international actors. However, examples from Chad show that, while this balancing act may at times fail, it can be achieved.

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Endnotes

1 In this article, peacebuilding is understood broadly as efforts "to identify and support structures that will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" [Boutros-Ghali, Boutros (1992) *An Agenda for Peace*. UN document A/47/277-S/24111 (17 June 1992)]. It will use the term 'peacebuilders' for the civilian staff that work in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, with tasks intended to reduce the fragility of states ravaged by conflict and strengthen their resilience against a relapse of conflict.

2 Felix da Costa, D. and Karlsrud, J. (2010) A Role for Civil Affairs in Community Conflict Resolution? MINURCAT's Intercommunity Dialogue Strategy in Eastern Chad. *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, 48 (October 2010); Humanitarian Practice Network, ODI, London; Autessere, S. (2010) *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. New York: Barnard College, Columbia University.

3 Karlsrud, J. and Piccolino, G. (forthcoming) Withering Consent, but Mutual Dependency: UN Peace Operations and New African Assertiveness. *Conflict, Security and Development,* 11 (4).

4 This article will focus on early peacebuilding activities within peacekeeping operations, as defined by the Secretary General in his opening remarks of the Security Council discussion on peacebuilding, 13 October 2010, where he stressed that peacekeeping missions should be enabled "to have an impact as 'early peacebuilders'" [UN (2010) 'As Security Council Weighs Measures to Strengthen Peacebuilding, Secretary-General Stresses Rapid Deployment of Trained Staff, Predictable Financing, Women's Input', press release, Available at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sgsm13181.doc.htm> Accessed on: 28 October 2010]. See, for example, Paris, R. (2004) *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Richmond, Oliver P. (2006) The Problem of Peace: Understanding the 'Liberal Peace'. *Conflict, Security and Development,* 6 (3), pp. 291–314; and Chandler, David (2006) *Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-building.* London, Ann Arbor: Pluto Press.

5 Paris, R. (2010) Saving Liberal Peacebuilding. *Review of International Studies,* 36 (2), pp. 337–365.

6 Clapham, C. (1996) Being Peacekept. In Furley, O. and May, R. (eds) *Peacekeeping in Africa*. Surrey: Ashgate, pp. 303–319 (p. 306).

7 Boege, V., Brown, A., Clements, K. and Nolan, A. (2008) *On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State Formation in the Context of 'Fragility'*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center, Available at: <http://www.berghofhandbook.net/uploads/download/boege_etal_handbook.pdf>.

8 Reich, H. (2006) *'Local Ownership' in Conflict Transformation Projects – Partnership, Participation or Patronage?* Berghof Occasional Article No. 27 (September 2006), Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Available at: <http://www.berghof-center.org/uploads/download/boc27e.pdf>.

9 Boege, V. et al. (2008) op. cit., p. 6.

10 See United Nations DPKO (2008) *Policy Directive: Civil Affairs.* Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (April 2008), Available at: <http://www.undg.org/docs/8915/Civil-Affairs-Policy.pdf; United Nations (2008) *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines (The Capstone Doctrine)*>. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, New York: United Nations, Available at: <http://www.peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org/Pbps/Library/Capstone_Doctrine_ENG.pdf and MINURCAT's ICD Strategy>.

11 The assessments in this section are based on field research undertaken by Diana Felix da Costa in August 2009, as well as John Karlsrud's work in Chad with MINURCAT as a Special Assistant to the SRSG between August 2008 and January 2010, and strategic planner from July 2009 to February 2010.

12 United Nations DPKO (2008) op. cit.

13 BBC (2011) 'Chad's President Idriss Deby Re-elected Amid Boycott', 10 May 2011, Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13342664.

14 Power shifted from south to north in the late seventies after President Tombalbaye was killed in a coup in 1975. Subsequently, Chad was led by a military junta under the command of the southern General Félix Malloum until 1979, when Nigeria and the Organization of African Unity brokered the Lagos Accord that established a new northern-dominated government. Since then, power has shifted hands several times, but has remained among the tribes from the north.

15 Clapham, C. (1996) op. cit., p. 308.

16 One of the authors, John Karlsrud, was part of the mission, where the SRSG and his team visited Amleyuna, Gaga, Farchana, Hadjer Hadid and Abeche in eastern Chad on 12 and 13 January 2010.

17 Boege, V. et al (2008) op. cit., p. 6.

18 Pawlitzky, C., Jánszky, B., Behrends, A. and Reyna, S. (2008) '*Sources of Violence, Conflict Mediation and Reconciliation: A Socio-anthropological Study on Dar Sila',* July 2008, Available at: <http://minurcat.unmissions.org/Portals/MINURCAT/English_final_revised.pdf>.

19 Pouligny, B. (2004) Civil Society and Post-conflict Peacebuilding: Ambiguities of International Programmes Aimed at Building 'New' Societies. Paper presented at the conference Post-conflict Peacebuilding: How to Gain Sustainable Peace? Lessons Learnt and Future Challenges, Graduate Institute of International Studies Geneva, 11–14 October 2004, Available at: <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/cherlist/pouligny/111004.pdf, p. 12>.

20 UN (2008) *The Capstone Doctrine*; UN (2009) *Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict,* UN document (A/63/881-S/2009/304, New York: United Nations; and Guéhenno, J.M. et al. (2011) *'Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict: Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group'*, Available at: <http://civcapreview.org>, Accessed on 26 August 2011.

21 Felix da Costa, D. and Karlsrud, J. (2010) op. cit.

22 Kalyvas, S.N. (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil War.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

UN PHOTO/STATON WINTER

VIOLENCE IN LIBERIA: FALLING BETWEEN PEACEBUILDING AND PEACEKEEPING

BY **JENNIFER M. HAZEN**

The peacekeeping burden has grown substantially over the past decade. The budget for United Nations (UN) peacekeeping in 2010–2011 stood at US$7.83 billion.[1] The expansion of peacekeeping has resulted from both an increase in the number of civil wars that have ended (and therefore the number of peacekeeping missions deployed), and the expanding nature of peacekeeping mandates. The shift from traditional peacekeeping, aimed at providing a buffer between warring factions, to multidimensional peacekeeping, which now encompasses many additional tasks, has stretched the capacity of peacekeepers to respond to the challenges of post-conflict environments. It has also raised important questions about the role of peacekeepers in peacebuilding activities. Although the UN is still in the process of clearly delineating the tasks and responsibilities of peacekeeping versus peacebuilding, there is growing consensus that peacekeepers, although ill-equipped to be long-term peacebuilders, can contribute to early peacebuilding.[2] This contribution largely centres on providing a secure environment in which others can implement peacebuilding tasks.

When civil wars end through negotiated settlements, attention often shifts to how best to prevent a return to conflict. Peacekeeping provides a security umbrella under which parties can implement peace agreements and where peacebuilding can take place. This is necessary, as post-conflict countries often lack the capacity to carry out basic

Above: Peacekeeping provides a security umbrella under which parties can implement peace agreements and where peacebuilding can take place.

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

Widespread reports of armed robbery, rape and mob violence continue to undermine public perceptions of security in Liberia.

governance functions, such as providing law and order, crime prevention and basic security. A UN peacekeeping presence provides the basis for peacebuilding by deterring the largest threats to the peace – often through a focus on the belligerent parties – and providing security more generally. Peacebuilding, by contrast, "entails a range of activities aimed at making peace self-sustaining and reducing the risk of relapse into conflict", and always continues beyond the departure of the peacekeeping mission.[3] The two processes are important for the transition of a post-conflict country from fragile to stable. However, they are insufficient without a third process: statebuilding.[4] Statebuilding is "an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions, and legitimacy of the state" to enable the emergence of a "capable, accountable, and responsive state".[5] While building institutional capacity and legitimacy are the responsibility of a state and its population, and not something that can be imposed by external actors, this does not preclude a role for international actors.

Liberia exemplifies the challenge of ensuring statebuilding is not forgotten. Reports from the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) over the past several years indicate the situation in Liberia is "generally stable" with no evidence of a return to war at hand. Peacekeeping has been successful in providing an enabling environment for the national peace process. However, nearly eight years after the end of the war, the country remains "fragile". UNMIL has yet to hand over full responsibility for security to national authorities. Widespread reports of armed robbery, rape and mob violence continue to undermine public perceptions of security. A 2009 special report on Liberia's progress on achieving specific benchmarks stated: "Liberia is far from attaining a 'steady state of security'."[6] Concerns about a growing regional drug trade, poorly reintegrated ex-combatants, widespread corruption and limited economic opportunities suggest that, while UNMIL provides a deterrent to a return to war, the pervasive nature of localised violence and crime may do more damage to prospects for security and development in Liberia in the long run. Preventing this from happening is a challenge for both peacekeeping and peacebuilding, but can only be addressed through statebuilding.

Understanding the situation in Liberia today requires acknowledging the starting point of post-conflict efforts. After nearly 14 years of civil war:

> Liberia was a completely failed State, with three warring factions controlling different parts of Monrovia and the interior. The already limited infrastructure lay in ruins, a third of the country's population had been displaced, and the public sector had completely collapsed. The national army and the police had disintegrated into various factions, and what remained of the security sector was dominated by a proliferation of agencies created by successive regimes to persecute political opponents; the justice system had completely broken down; and criminal economic exchange, dominated by the illegal exploitation of natural resources, was thriving.[7]

Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf called this starting point "the abyss" and emphasised the enormous challenges facing the country – the "land of a thousand priorities".[8] Everything – from security forces to government institutions and economic activities to social relations – had to be rebuilt from a limited foundation. However, while most institutions did not function in late 2003, neither was there a blank slate upon which to build. Liberia faced a history of conflict, grievances, ethnic divisions, discriminatory policies and institutional legacies, which were exacerbated by both the war and the peace process. Thus, it was not a matter of rebuilding a dilapidated state but, in fact, creating new state institutions that addressed this legacy and avoided reifying the conditions that led to war in the first place. This highlights an important intersection of peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts: statebuilding aims to create effective governing institutions, while peacebuilding aims to ensure those institutions do not re-create past cleavages or increase the likelihood of future conflict.

'No security without development, no development without security' is a phrase commonly heard. But war is not the only threat to development. Oftentimes, violence does not end with the signatures on a peace agreement. Instead, violence of varying types – criminal, political, communal – continues in the post-conflict period. This violence is not the result of a return to war. Instead, it is common criminal and interpersonal violence enabled by limited state capacity to ensure law and order. The end of war is no guarantee of either security or development. In fact, the two are often linked. Weak state institutions and poor economic opportunities provide an environment conducive to crime and violence. At the same time, violence and crime can

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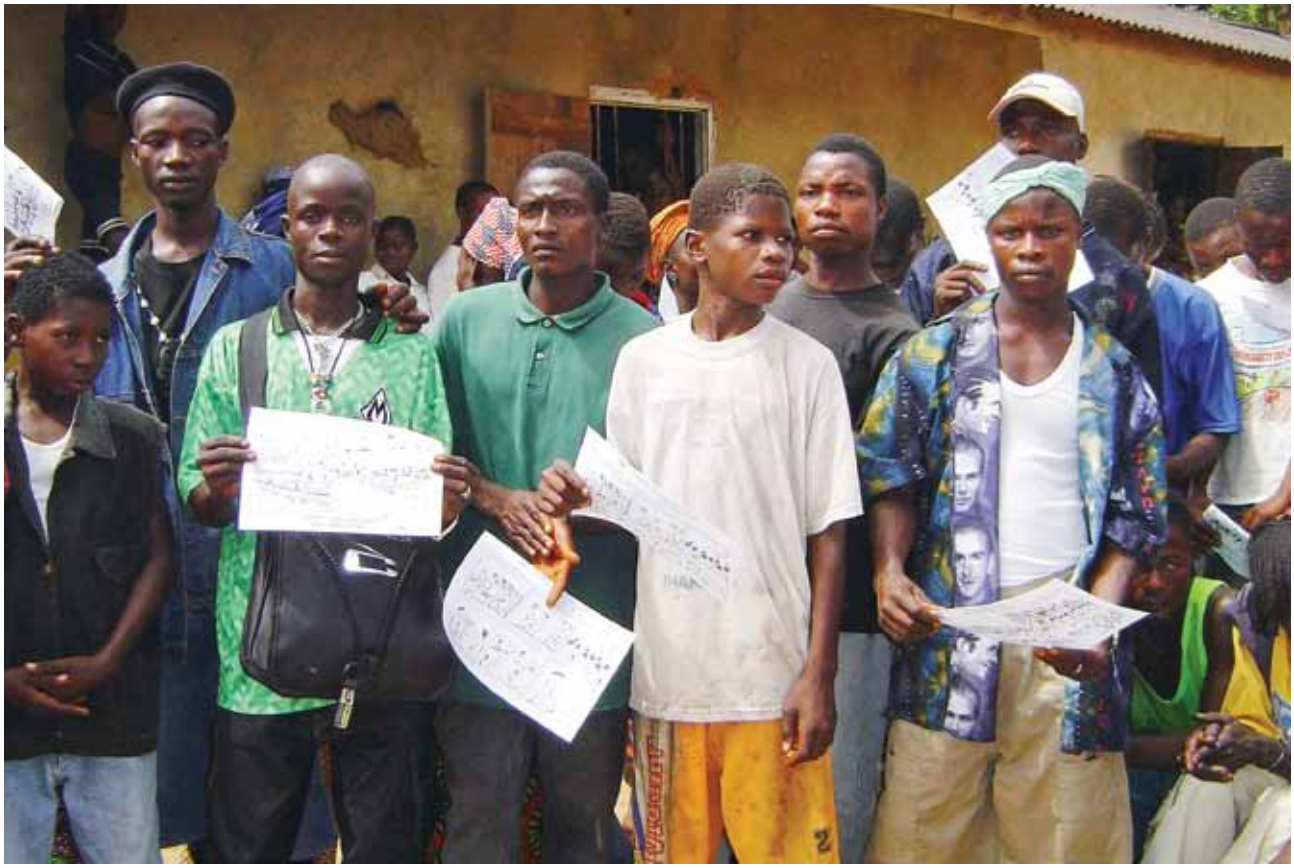
In Monrovia, most residents feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods and have fears that someone in their households will become a victim of crime.



UN PHOTO/M NOVICKI

Ex-combatants and the large population of unemployed youth are often blamed for the widespread crime in Liberia.

deter investment, reduce economic opportunities, weaken governance and reduce popular confidence in government, thereby hindering – or even delaying– development. Crime and interpersonal violence take their toll on communities and on recovering economies, impeding progress in both security and development. The World Development Report 2011 identifies insecurity as "a primary development challenge".[9] An important primary step to statebuilding is "securing physical control over a territory"[10] – while the UN has established a broad security blanket against large threats, the Liberian government has not yet achieved the most basic of state functions: providing security to the population. This suggests that addressing post-conflict violence requires linking peacekeeping and statebuilding more closely. Peacekeeping can provide temporary security, but only statebuilding can produce long-term security.

The primary role of peacekeeping is to provide a secure environment. As such, peacekeeping efforts have come to entail certain expected elements, such as providing a deterrent force to renewed war, supporting national authorities to provide basic security, supporting the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, and supporting the reform of state security forces (SSR) – such as the police and the military – to enable them to take on the responsibility for providing national security independent of external support.[11] In their security role, peacekeepers tend to focus on the most visible and most obvious threats to peace: the belligerent factions. While it is important to focus on the most dangerous threats – those who are most likely to spoil the peace and renew the war – this can often leave low-level but perhaps more insidious violence unchecked. Although this violence rarely threatens the overall peace process, it does threaten the prospects for human security and development, and handicaps peacebuilding efforts. Large security threats remain the purview of peacekeepers, but common crime is often left to a national police force with limited capacity and resources to respond.

Liberia's situation illustrates the challenge well. Over the past few years, every UN Secretary General's report on Liberia has listed the key security concerns as armed robbery, rape and mob violence. The reports also highlight the inability of the Liberian police to respond to rising crime rates and emphasise that peace and stability rest mainly on the security provided by UN peacekeepers (both military and police), and that any drawdown of the force levels should be carefully considered in light of the persistent deficiencies within the Liberian security sector.[12] One challenge is simply

UN PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER HERWIG

A United Nations police officer of UNMIL trains a Liberian National Police recruit on arrest procedure.

to understand the dynamics of violence and crime on the ground.

Although UN reports commonly cite a high incidence of crime, the data available on crime and violence remains inadequate to provide solid evidence of rates of specific crimes, or even whether the general trend is improving. UNMIL originally collected this data in the early years of the peacekeeping mission, because the Liberian police lacked the capacity to do so. However, the quality of the data – and even the number of categories of crimes – varied over time, largely depending on those tasked with collecting the inputs. This has made it difficult to compare data across years.[13] The Liberian National Police (LNP) have now put in place a system to collect crime statistics. All police stations are supposed to report crimes on a regular basis using a standard form, to ensure the comparability of data across regions of the country. Current reporting varies – and, given the difficulty of deploying police forces outside of major towns, it is unlikely that the data is complete. However, if the LNP statistics on violent crime reported in 2009 and 2010 are taken as indicative, the main violent crimes included robbery (armed and unarmed), assault (aggravated and simple) and rape, and the general trend has been an increase in these and other violent crimes.[14] This helps to explain why both the UN and the LNP continue to express concerns about violence and crime.

By contrast, the population is increasingly concerned about development issues.[15] In 2010, when asked about their most serious concerns, respondents focused on clean water, healthcare, education, transportation, sanitation, housing and electricity, while very few mentioned the security situation. Roughly two-thirds of the respondents reported feeling safer in 2010 than in 2009 (12 months prior). This is a significant change from a 2008 assessment, which found that "most Liberians felt their security was more precarious than at any time since the war ended".[16] However, the 2010 survey results suggest a stark contrast between Monrovia and the counties. In Monrovia, less than half of the respondents felt safe in their neighbourhoods, compared to 83% feeling safe or very safe in their communities in the counties. Nearly two-thirds of respondents in Monrovia expressed fear that someone in their household would become a victim of crime, whereas only one-third expressed this fear in the counties. The most commonly cited concerns mirrored those reported by the UN and LNP: robbery, assault and violence against women. Although at present the population is most vocal about development needs, feelings of insecurity clearly linger within the population.

Concerns also persist about ex-combatants and the large population of unemployed youth. In the early years of peacebuilding, 'ex-combatants' served as easy scapegoats for anything that went wrong. The label, although less used now, is commonly heard alongside 'criminal' and 'youth' to describe perpetrators. Ex-combatants remain the focus of discussions of the illegal occupation of rubber plantations and the prevalence of motorcycle taxi unions, whereas unemployed youth are often blamed for widespread crime. The solution to concerns about crime and violence is widely expected to come from economic improvement through development, with attention focused on the presumed underlying cause of crime: lack of economic opportunities.[17] Yet jobs are unlikely to come available quickly or in sufficient numbers, leaving the potential for crime to fester, criminal organisations to develop firmer roots in the economy, and the past criminal war economy to transform into a criminalised peace economy. This suggests that waiting for the situation to get better on its own as the economy grows and institutions develop is not the best solution, but that more needs to be done on the security side to enhance police capacity, both to deter crime and punish crimes that do take place.

Should a peacekeeping force be responsible for taming non-conflict post-conflict violence? UN peacekeepers have been tasked with protecting civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, supporting national efforts to establish a secure environment for physical safety and the protection of rights, and taking deterrent action to decrease levels of violence and crime.[18] Given this, it is not a stretch to argue that more attention should be paid to reducing levels of violence and crime, and that such efforts fall within a peacekeeping mandate. Unfortunately, there exists little agreement on what protection means, and it is not always clear to UN troops and police what is expected from them.[19] UNMIL, through formed police units, backstops the LNP and

UN PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER HERWIG

The Liberian government needs to assume responsibility for the security of the country by reforming the Liberian National Police and improving their capacity to provide law and order.

responds to incidents the police prove unable to handle. This is important, and has aided in improving popular confidence in the security forces. However, responding to major episodes of unrest is not the same as responding to systemic and frequent incidents of criminal violence. Most of these incidents occur in Liberia without response, investigation, or oftentimes even reporting.

The 2003 peace agreement provided for the disbanding of the Liberian police and the complete reconstruction of the force. UNMIL is mandated to assist the Liberian government in monitoring, training and restructuring the police force. This has proven a difficult task. Given that the starting point was zero, UNMIL focused initially on simply increasing the numbers in the ranks. However, this approach did not translate into ensuring a quality police force.[20] Initial monetary support for UNMIL's role in training the police was limited, leaving UNMIL having to "beg for essential facilities and equipment" needed to implement its mandate.[21] Funding for police reform improved, but remained uncoordinated and piecemeal. The result is not surprising. A June 2009 UN review of the LNP provided "a sobering assessment… characterizing the force as ineffectual".[22] While many factors have contributed to the poor quality of the LNP, the report highlighted the "shortcomings in the training and mentoring that UNMIL police advisers are providing" and the lack of donor support.[23] Law and order clearly stand out as priorities for 2011.

Criminal violence is not a problem that either peacekeepers or peacebuilders alone can solve. Improving security requires more than just good policing. Addressing widespread crime and violence requires a competent national police force, modern laws, an effective judiciary system and proper correctional facilities. These are primarily statebuilding tasks. Improving police capacity to investigate crimes and arrest perpetrators does little to provide a deterrent or improve popular confidence in the government when those same perpetrators are often released due to the dysfunction of the judicial system, or simply escape from prison. Improving security will also require addressing the underlying factors that enable, and even encourage, crime and violence – including unemployment, poverty, corruption and economic incentives for violence.

Peacekeeping addresses large security challenges. Peacebuilding addresses the root causes of conflict, and

aims to improve conflict management within government and society. Both sets of activities focus on preventing a return to war. But neither focuses directly on statebuilding. Peacekeepers have mandates to assist and support statebuilding efforts, just as peacebuilders strive to ensure statebuilding efforts are conflict-sensitive; but what is needed to fill the gap is actual statebuilding. These tasks have been left to war-torn governments with limited capacity and means to achieve them. In part, this has resulted from national concerns about sovereignty – and, at times, at the behest of national governments wanting to pave their futures themselves, rather than simply respond to dictates from the international donor community. It also stems from a growing recognition among donors that statebuilding is a national task – one that can be supported but not imposed from outside. Both are admirable notions, but neither ensures security in a post-conflict country.

The most fundamental building block – a necessary condition for both peacebuilding and statebuilding – is security. The UN can provide security, especially early in the life of a peacekeeping mission, when government capacity to ensure law and order is limited. However, the blue security blanket of UN peacekeeping is no replacement for improving a national government's capacity to address security challenges. In mid-2009, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf admitted that police reform was off track.[24] Reporting in 2011 suggests that significant improvements have yet to be made. If the Liberian government is to take responsibility for the security of the country following the October 2011 elections, then significant progress needs to be made in building institutional capacity, and reforming the police and improving their capacity to provide law and order. This will require better training – something the UN admits has not been adequate through UNMIL[25] – and better funding – something that donors will need to put forward. Ultimately, reducing insecurity requires a better coordination of peacekeeping and peacebuilding and a more proactive approach towards statebuilding.

Criminal and interpersonal violence remain a widespread problem in Liberia – one the LNP are not yet able to handle, and one the UN has proven unwilling to address more directly. Certainly the challenge is a national one, but the international community can do more to aid the government in pushing statebuilding efforts forward. Leaving these problems to the government, and therefore deferring addressing them until police institutions are stronger and government capacity is rebuilt – a process President Sirleaf has stated will take at least 20 years – provides time for crime and violence to grow. This, in turn, hampers efforts toward encouraging development and improving security. Passing the buck now only creates larger problems down the road.

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THE UN MISSION AND LOCAL CHURCHES IN SOUTH SUDAN: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS IN LOCAL PEACEBUILDING

BY **INGRID MARIE BREIDLID** AND **ANDREAS ØIEN STENSLAND**

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On 9 July 2011, South Sudan declared its independence from Sudan, marking the formal end of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). While many disputed issues between the parties remain unresolved, one of the main challenges facing the new United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) will be the prevalence of South-South conflicts. Some of these conflicts are directly linked to the conflict between the North and the South, but most are rooted in tribal, ethnic and political differences within the South. These conflicts are likely to increase in the post-CPA period as a result of political power struggles, resource competition, armed insurgencies, redrawing of internal borders, resurfacing of ethno-political tensions, cattle rustling, arms proliferation, lack of peace dividends and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

UN multidimensional peacekeeping operations, commonly described as early peacebuilders, play a key role in post-conflict peacebuilding. In this process, the integration of peacebuilding at the macro (national) and micro (local) levels is increasingly recognised as a determinant of success.[1] Thus, in view of the conflict dynamics in South Sudan, local peacebuilding has

Above: On 9 July 2011, South Sudan declared its independence from Sudan, marking the formal end of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. One of the main challenges facing the new UNMISS will be the prevalence of South-South conflicts.

Map ACCORD. Source United Nations.

emerged as a vital task for the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission[2]. However, the recent UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and partners have a mixed record when it comes to local peacebuilding.

In recent years, scholars and practitioners have expressed increasing interest in the potential of religious actors in peacemaking.[3] South Sudanese churches played an important role in peace processes during the civil war, and were instrumental in bridging intercommunal differences and uniting different ethnic and political groups in the South. While the role of the churches in local peacebuilding has diminished, they still have many of the features that contributed to their historical success – including their presence in rural areas, indigenous knowledge and local legitimacy.

This paper therefore argues that the new UN mission would benefit from partnering with local churches to improve the impact of local peacebuilding initiatives in South Sudan. To this end, it explores the approaches to local peacebuilding applied by UNMIS and the local churches. The overall objective is to identify the comparative advantages of both actors, and discuss challenges and opportunities for synergies in local peacebuilding.[4]

UNMIS's Role in Peacebuilding and Conflict Management

UNMIS was authorised under UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1590 to support the signatory parties, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in implementing the CPA[5]. Similar to the new mission, UNMIS was a multidimensional mission comprising civilian, police and military components under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary General. The mission, with its headquarters in Khartoum and Juba (regional), was present in all 10 states of South Sudan. In the capacity of being an integrated mission, UNMIS was further expected to coordinate and engage in joint planning with the UN Country Team to consolidate peace.

While the overall political mandate and priority of the mission was to support CPA implementation – sometimes at the cost of local conflict management initiatives – the mission leadership increasingly acknowledged the importance of integrating national and local-level peacebuilding. The escalation of violent conflicts on the ground, although not necessarily linked to any of the CPA parties, further resulted in calls for enhanced efforts to prevent and resolve local-level conflicts.

The Civil Affairs Division (CAD) of UNMIS was directly mandated to support the authorities and local communities in areas related to local peacebuilding – including conflict management and reconciliation, political analysis, and support to political space and governance structures at the sub-national level.[6] This entailed support to peace and reconciliation initiatives at the local level, in coordination with the Government of South Sudan (GoSS), state and local-level authorities and traditional leaders.

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Christianity is an integral part of South Sudanese identity. Women hold crosses as they march during the Independence Day ceremony in Juba (July 2011).

Strengths of the Mission in Local Peacebuilding and Conflict Management

UNMIS had several features and capacities that made it a key player in local-level peacebuilding and conflict management in South Sudan. Through regular patrolling and interactions with local communities, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and local police, the UN mission was well-placed to develop sound conflict analysis and early warning mechanisms. The presence of CAD officers in all of the mission's field offices facilitated access to government, traditional and community leaders, and offered an opportunity for the mission to obtain locally informed data. CAD's contextual knowledge and analysis of the political, security and conflict dynamics on the ground was commonly used to inform and recommend courses of action to the mission leadership in efforts to prevent and mitigate conflicts. This had the potential of making UNMIS a valuable advisor to the parties and other stakeholders in local conflicts.

The UN mission also had a strong position and leverage vis-à-vis GoSS because of its consent-based presence and support to the peace process. Particularly at the top level, the UN was and still is perceived as a legitimate actor. This position was valuable when the UN mission contributed with support to mediation and the management of local conflicts that required involvement from the top level. While UNMIS did not have funds to implement local peace- and conflict management projects,[7] the mission could make use of its broad international network, including partnerships with UN and non-UN implementing organisations, to support and secure funding for local peace initiatives.

The mission also had access to valuable logistical assets, including helicopters and airplanes. In the context of South Sudan, where the poor infrastructure prevents both government officials and humanitarian agencies

UN PHOTO/OLIVIER CHASSOT

Local churches are often the only indigenous non-governmental actors present in many localities and they therefore have an important role to play in peacebuilding.

from reaching out to communities, these assets proved invaluable to the mission's engagement in conflict management, and to transport participants to peace conferences and community consultations.

In addition to these functions, UNMIS had a comparative advantage over other actors due to its ability to deter violence through the pre-emptive deployment of troops. While the effect was short-lived, the set-up of temporary operational bases in Jonglei State in 2009 is illustrative of how the mere presence of UNMIS troops averted further clashes between the rival tribes.

Weaknesses of the Mission in Local Peacebuilding and Conflict Management

The main conflict management tool utilised by UNMIS at the local level was the support to and facilitation of so-called 'grassroots' peace conferences. While these conferences sought to involve a broad spectrum of the local community – including chiefs, elders and youth, as well as key politicians and government authorities – the impact of a majority of these initiatives has been limited. This needs to be seen in relation to the lack of implementation and follow-up by the relevant stakeholders. Most of these peace conferences tended to be one-off events – with top-down resolutions imposed by the government – instead of long-term processes.[8] Lack of ownership and commitment among the parties and local stakeholders resulted in sub-optimal follow-up – and, in some cases, allowed actors at the local, state and national level to manipulate and undermine the process.

Lack of presence in and – outreach to – remote locations further contributed to hamper the mission's ability to prevent and manage local conflicts effectively. Even though UNMIS had access to helicopters, and its military component carried out air patrols on a regular basis, the time on the ground was limited. This prevented the mission from building trust and developing networks in remote areas. In some cases, this also had negative implications for the UN mission's ability to identify and involve relevant local stakeholders in peace initiatives, particularly women with limited access to these arenas. Instead, UNMIS became too dependent on the government authorities, who not only lacked the

UN PHOTO/TIM MCKULKA

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South Sudanese church and civil society leaders meet and speak with Hilde Johnson, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, at a specially convened meeting in Juba, to enable UNMISS to better serve the people of South Sudan (July 2011).

necessary legitimacy on the ground, but sometimes also had their own vested interests in the conflict.

Indigenous knowledge, or deep insights into the values and beliefs of the local community, is critical to identify complex causes and solutions to conflicts. While local staff members are an invaluable source of such insights, they tend to be in short supply. Moreover, the UN, similar to the government, is still perceived as an 'outsider' and may still lack the needed indigenous knowledge and legitimacy among the local communities.

Because of its non-implementing mandate, the CAD was totally reliant on UN and non-UN implementing partners – such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) – to support substantially and implement peace initiatives. However, cooperation with these actors had been weak and ad hoc for a number of reasons – including bureaucratic constraints, diverging mandates and priorities, and limited flexibility. Hence, much of the conflict management work of the CAD was reduced to reporting, advising, logistical support and monitoring. Instead of focusing on measures and initiatives to prevent conflicts, the mission tended to be reactive in response to mass-scale violence or CPA violations.

Church Involvement in Conflict Resolution during the Civil War[9]

The South Sudanese churches, under the auspices of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), came to play a significant role in peacebuilding during the civil war, both at the national and local level.[10] As part of the NSCC's People to People (P2P) Peacemaking programme, the peace conferences in Akobo in 1994 and Wunlit in 1999 reconciled rivalling tribes and political factions after years of internecine conflict. The NSCC also mobilised external funding and support through its international networks.

Following the signing of the CPA, the churches lost much of their significance in local peacebuilding, due to both internal and external causes. The problematic merger of the NSCC and the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) led staff members to seek jobs in GoSS, the UN and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Additionally, financial mismanagement in the SCC and the new focus on CPA implementation spurred donors to redirect their funds to the new legitimate government in the South.

Added Value of Churches in Local Peacebuilding

Churches are eager to engage in local peacebuilding. They see it as one of their main purposes, and seek to promote peaceful coexistence through their own limited financial means. Several features of local churches make them well-suited to play an active role in grassroots peacebuilding.

Christianity is an integral part of South Sudanese identity, and the legitimacy of the local churches is strong. During the civil war, the churches grew rapidly as a result of the emergence of local leaders and lay evangelists, making Christianity accessible to local notions of spirituality. Over time, Christianity became a symbol of the resistance against the Arab Islamist regime

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

Women are already active members in their congregations and churches provide an important arena for strengthening the position of women in local peacebuilding.

in Khartoum. This was, no doubt, augmented by the fact that local churches were among the few actors that stayed and suffered with the local populations during the civil war. As a result, politicians at the federal, state and local level were attentive to criticism and praise from the church. This was seen during the Kajiko II conference in October 2010, where the SCC united the church leaders in support of the referendum, and held politicians accountable for lack of service delivery. Illustratively, this was also where President Salva Kiir chose to announce his amnesty to breakaway SPLA commanders and militia leaders.

Local churches are often the only indigenous non-governmental actors present in many localities. Because pastors and church leaders live and work in rural towns and villages year-round, they have well-established networks in local societies. They can disseminate information and messages of peace and reconciliation to their congregations. During the war, churches also played an early warning function, relaying information about conflicts to the international community. Inter-church committees (ICCs) – local ecumenical forums – serve as coordinating mechanisms across denominations, and are a natural entry point for external actors wishing to engage the local churches. Additionally, presence in rural areas has given the local churches invaluable indigenous knowledge – a key factor in the success of the P2P conferences. The facilitators acknowledged the importance of people with various forms of authority and placed them at the heart of the process – including chiefs, spiritual leaders, women, youth, government administrators and the military. The use of traditional practices, combined with Christian rituals, proved a powerful covenant 'binding' the signatories.

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES ALSO PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN SO-CALLED PEACE COMMITTEES OR PEACE COUNCILS, CREATED AT THE CONFERENCES AND INTENDED TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE, DEVELOP MEDIATION SKILLS, AND DISSEMINATE AND IMPLEMENT RESOLUTIONS

The ICCs and their member churches were important partners for the NSCC in facilitating the P2P peacemaking conferences. The churches consulted and mobilised local communities and contributed to the peacebuilding initiatives being ongoing processes rather than once-off events. Because the churches have a permanent presence in most communities, they have incentives to follow up resolutions long after the peace conferences are over. Church representatives also play a central role in so-called peace committees or peace councils, created at the conferences and intended to promote dialogue, develop mediation skills, and disseminate and implement resolutions.

Although the local churches have few women in leadership positions, women are central members of their congregations and participate in a range of activities – including domestic conflict resolution, community work, and so on. As women are already active members in their congregations, churches provide an important arena for strengthening the position of women in local peacebuilding.

Limitations of Local Churches

The churches are not immune to the weaknesses that affect South Sudanese society at large. Corruption and nepotism are also found within the church organisations. Further, because denominational borders often follow ethnic and political cleavages, churches can also be involved in ethnic politics.

Following the CPA, church organisations became fragmented and started focusing on internal organisation-specific interests, rather than ecumenical cooperation. This weakened cohesion across denominations, and hence their ability to cooperate in support of peacebuilding activities.

The brain-drain phenomenon continues to weaken the capacity of many local churches. Their failure to meet the criteria of donors hinders access to funding – and hence their ability to engage effectively in local peacebuilding. Without funding, they are also unable to provide sorely required training for their staff members, thus perpetuating the low levels of capacity. Several local churches have given up external fund-raising altogether. Without increased skills in financial and project management, local churches will not be able to escape this vicious 'capacity-funding' cycle.

Conclusion and Recommendations

UNSCR 1996 (2011), mandating the new mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), recognises "the importance of supporting peacebuilding efforts in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development" and "sustained cooperation and dialogue with civil society in the context of stabilizing the security situation and ensuring the protection of civilians". UNMISS envisions a more decentralised approach, with a focus on reaching the most vulnerable areas and populations and engaging local communities in a bottom-up manner. To achieve these objectives, the mission needs to partner with local actors already present on the ground. Some recommendations on how a strengthened partnership with local churches can contribute to the mission's peacebuilding efforts follow.

- First, while the UN mission has a strong position vis-á-vis the government, it needs to strengthen its legitimacy and outreach on the ground. To this end, local churches can function as an interface between the secular, modern UN mission and the traditional, spiritually oriented communities in rural areas.
- Second, while the UN mission has proven its ability in developing sound conflict analyses, these can be strengthened further by tapping into the indigenous knowledge of the local churches. This will improve the mission's conflict management initiatives, including early warning mechanisms.
- Third, capacity building of local churches is not only a trade-off – it is also a necessary element for the UN mission to succeed in sustainable local peacebuilding. In addition to its support to the judiciary, army and local police, the UN mission and partners could provide capacity building and the training of local churches in conflict management and mediation skills as well as fund-raising and financial management. This is imperative if churches are to escape the 'capacity-funding' cycle. At the same time, any

WHILE THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES IN LOCAL PEACEBUILDING HAS DIMINISHED, THEY STILL HAVE MANY OF THE FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR HISTORICAL SUCCESS – INCLUDING THEIR PRESENCE IN RURAL AREAS, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND LOCAL LEGITIMACY

intervention at the local level in the form of funding will require tact and careful follow-up to avoid corruption and rivalry among the churches.

- Fourth, the UN mission's lack of presence in remote areas – as well as its rather short attention span, due to numerous mandated tasks – hampers the mission's ability to follow up peace initiatives thoroughly. Local churches make valuable partners due to their continuous presence and well-established networks on the ground. When acting through ecumenical forums, they also have the potential to transcend ethnic identities.
- Fifth, the crucial role of women in peacebuilding is well-recognised in UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820. However, UNMIS was not able to utilise this potential sufficiently. The reasons for this are complex, and are related to women's overall marginalisation in South Sudanese society. Importantly, women's domestic responsibilities inhibit them from participating in training and workshops taking place outside their own communities. Through more conscious mobilisation and programming, UNMISS and its partners can encourage and aid local churches to facilitate peacebuilding initiatives at the grassroots level, where churches are already present and women are more likely to participate.

This article has explored the strengths and weaknesses of UNMIS and local churches in local peacebuilding in South Sudan. Our analysis illustrates the limitations of both actors in this process. For UNMIS, this included insufficient presence in remote areas, lack of indigenous knowledge, and limited follow-up of peacebuilding initiatives. Local churches' demonstrated ability to act as agents of change has, on the other hand, been constrained by their weak capacity and lack of funding to implement more comprehensive programmes. While there is no quick fix to solve South Sudan's conflicts, many of these challenges can be mitigated through increased cooperation between the UN mission and local churches. As both actors have comparative advantages in local peacebuilding, a strengthened partnership can create synergies and enhance the impact of local-level peacebuilding in South Sudan.

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PEACEKEEPING TO PEACEBUILDING FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE: THE UNMIL CASE

BY **KRISTEN A. CORDELL**

UN PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER HERWIG

Introduction

In a post-conflict environment, keeping the peace through the provision of kinetic or physical security rapidly transitions to addressing the wider needs of the population through peacebuilding tasks. Under the umbrella of peacekeeper protection, peacebuilding efforts work to ensure the basic safety and protection of civilians, establish credible political processes and systems, ensure access to basic services (including food and water), and normalise economic activity. The transition between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is overlapping, fluid and diverse – and, for the purpose of this article, is described as a nexus.

Gender mainstreaming is a core part of both peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, as it ensures that the services and benefits established will reach both

Above: UNMIL launches the "16 days of Activism" campaign with messages on thousands of wooden stars to strengthen the rights of women and to stop gender-based violence (2008).

UN PHOTO/ERIC KANALSTEIN

Women read election instructional material provided by UNMIL peacekeepers during a sensitisation tour, in Parloma, Liberia (2005).

men and women within the community. In the least, this means ensuring that women will be protected in an ongoing conflict through peacekeeping. More broadly defined, it means that women will be active players in an evolving equitable society through peacebuilding. However, it is rarely so simple. Between the conclusion of armed conflict and the introduction of development opportunities lies a wide spectrum of gender equality issues. How international peacekeeping operations can engage and involve women across the divide from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, specifically replicating the success of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), is the primary focus of this article.

Background

For women, war does not end with the cessation of conflict. In the post-conflict environment, women are continually plagued by political exclusion, economic marginalisation, sexual violence and constraints on human rights. This has dramatic limitations for any country's development and long-term stability.[1] To successfully navigate the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, relevant actors must take integrated action on a variety of social, economic, political and security platforms in a gender-relevant manner. Wider than simply the provision of physical security, an inclusive approach has proven to be an operational imperative – not just a goal of well-meaning peacebuilders.

A core part of this inclusivity is women's participation in post-conflict transitions as a means for ensuring state stability. The links between the two are now more clear than ever. In 2009, the RAND-sponsored study, *Women and Nation Building,* found that stronger emphasis on gender equality and women's inclusion early in peacekeeping activities was likely to improve the outcomes of state stability (the overarching goal of the peacekeeping community writ large).[2] This finding, built on World Bank-sponsored research, indicated that societies which remained stratified by gender showed a continued proclivity towards violence and oppression in the long term. The author concluded that: "Gender equality is not merely a matter of social justice but of international security in predicting state aggressiveness internationally."[3] In other words, there is a positive correlation between domestic gender inequality and external aggression. Thus, those in the peacekeeping community who push for the installation

UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE

Laymah Gbowee, Executive Director of Women in Peacebuilding Network Africa (WIPNET) of Liberia, speaks on the role of women in peacebuilding in Africa, at a joint press conference held by women's organisations from around the world, at the UN headquarters in New York (2006).

of new institutions and governance mechanisms, but are cautious on women's inclusion, may have things in the wrong order – especially if long-term stability is the goal.

Peacebuilding (in all its various forms) is focused on self-sustaining peace and a reduction of the risk of conflict relapse, with gender equality as an inherit goal.[4] There are hundreds of resources available on the integration of women in peacekeeping. However, the implementation of such policy – especially in the murky post-conflict context – remains unclear. How can peacekeepers include women in the most fragile, early transitions without jeopardising a fragile peace? In addition, how can the same multilateral operations enforce gender mainstreaming across the life of the mission and beyond?

Mandate

As a tool for examining the components of gender equality in effective peacekeeping-to-peacebuilding transitions, this article presents the case of UNMIL. The research was conducted as part of a comprehensive draw-down best practice exercise hosted by UNMIL in 2010.[5]

UNMIL provides an excellent template for the study of the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, because it postured itself to address gender equality within its various activities from the start. As a multidimensional peacekeeping operation, UNMIL's work on gender mainstreaming came under the leadership of the Office of the Gender Advisor (OGA). This office is the responsible party for coordinating the effort and aligning the goals for the integration of gender throughout the mission. Despite limited resources (and, in many ways, due to limited resources), the office realised early on that full mainstreaming throughout the mission's various units would be the only way to carry out its mandate over the transition process. This approach is crucial in the "space" between conflict and peace, where "effective support requires integrated action across the peacekeeping, development, human rights and humanitarian pillars of the system."[6]

"For a mission to be successful, the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding must be coordinated

by an overall strategy so that sets of tasks do not exist in a vacuum, but are part of a larger vision of what it will take to reach a sustainable peace."[7] A cross-cutting and strategic approach to mainstreaming gender was not just best practice, but the only feasible practice at the time. Given the limits of time, staffing and resources of the OGA, it was essential to build the internal capacity of various units within the mission to integrate gender independently (or with as little oversight as possible). The OGA took a strategic approach in helping units across the mission to identify gender-relevant goals and relevant stakeholders for each task, and coordinate with local and national level processes.

One example of this approach is the work the OGA undertook early on with the Civil Affairs Unit, in preparation for a national presidential election. The OGA encouraged the Civil Affairs staff to identify the importance of women in the upcoming election, create messages around voting that were gender-specific, and work to build the capacity of the National Election Committee on gender. The result was not only a gender-relevant election, but also a Civil Affairs staff that fully understood the relevance of gender throughout their work. This cross-cutting approach introduced a 'common vision' for gender mainstreaming in the mission from the start.

Best Practice Strategies

In 2003, UNMIL's founding mandate – UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1509 – specifically addressed the "importance of a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peacebuilding in accordance with resolution 1325",[8] and gave special attention to addressing violence against women and girls as a tool of warfare. The resolution also called for the establishment of administrative structures, the restructuring and support of the police, and the consolidation of the justice sector – interventions essential for addressing and responding to gender issues in a cross-cutting manner. It effectively laid the framework for UNMIL, as well as emerging Liberian institutions, to address actively the needs of women and girls in emerging state stability.[9]

Effective transitions are reliant on peace agreements that are treated as living documents, with flexibility

UN PHOTO/STATON WINTER

Judges of the Arts for Adolescents and Women's Rights Painting and Drawing Competition discuss the rankings of the finalists. The event is organised by UNMIL and the Union of Liberian Artists (July 2011).

UN PHOTO/PAULO FILGUEIRAS

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia, addresses the panel discussion, "Women as a Critical Force in Democratic Governance", jointly organised by the Council of Women Leaders and Communities of Democracy (September 2010).

and long-term open-endedness.[10] The Liberian Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was also a product of the will and attention of local women to move the peace process forward. The CPA called for "gender balance in apportioning responsibilities for programme implementation", across "programming for national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, for the moral, social and physical reconstruction of Liberia in the post-conflict period". [11] The document set gender quotas for members of the Transitional Legislature Assembly to include representatives from women's groups, and ensured a gender balance in elective and non-elective posts. The result was a highly gender-aware transitional framework, including a Transitional Cabinet with three women out of 21 members, a Transitional National Assembly with four women out of 76 members, a National Elections Commission with three women out of seven members, and representation for women on the newly formed Liberian National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Rehabilitation (NCDDRR).

In the earliest of operations, UNMIL supported UNSCR 1509 and the CPA. One of the first examples was the push for the inclusion of Women Associated with Fighting Forces (WAFF) in the country's ongoing disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRR) activities. Not only did inclusion give the process credibility and a wider beneficiary framework, but women were recognised as actors who would be important to the country's rebuilding process. To accomplish this, UNMIL/

THE OGA ENCOURAGED THE CIVIL AFFAIRS STAFF TO IDENTIFY THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION, CREATE MESSAGES AROUND VOTING THAT WERE GENDER-SPECIFIC, AND WORK TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE NATIONAL ELECTION COMMITTEE ON GENDER

UN PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER HERWIG

UNMIL's Police Unit worked with partners to recruit and retain more women in the Liberian National Police.

OGA advocated for early policy mandates on DDRR in Liberia to include resources for WAFF.

UNMIL worked to reach women through centralised information operations and decentralised networks for an inclusive outreach process. It empowered national women's civil society organisations to sensitise and disseminate information to women in the country. A centralised campaign demystifying the DDRR process for women was facilitated through the Public Information Office (PIO). The full integration of women in the DDRR process ensured that they would be beneficiaries of development and economic support programmes. By supporting women combatants in the demobilisation process in the country, UNMIL created the conditions for effective DDRR that would fully reintegrate women who had participated in the conflict.

As peacekeeping missions evolve to peacebuilding efforts, military forces draw down, effectively to "allow the country the room and freedom to grow and to take responsibility for those aspects of security and logistics it can".[12] As the military presence shrinks, a fully functional national security sector should provide safety and ensure stability over time (this is especially relevant in areas where conflict is fluid and regional). With an inclusive DDRR process setting the tone for widespread inclusion of women, the OGA was able to turn its attention to capitalising on the inclusion of women in the country's emerging security sector.

In 2006, UNMIL's Police Unit (UNPOL) established the Liberian National Police (LNP) Committee for National Recruitment of Women. Within this committee, UNPOL worked with partners to recruit and retain women within

WOMEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 35, WHO COMPLETED AT LEAST NINTH GRADE, WERE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A THREE-MONTH SHORT ACADEMIC PROGRAMME, TO BE FOLLOWED BY THREE MONTHS OF POLICE TRAINING AT THE NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY

the LNP better. They created the Educational Support Programme (ESP) – a condensed version of a high school diploma that women could complete as a prerequisite for entering the national police force. Women between the ages of 18 and 35, who completed at least ninth grade, were eligible to participate in a three-month short academic programme, to be followed by three months of police training at the National Police Academy. The ESP dramatically increased the number of women in the LNP – a positive change for women in the country.

Within the transition from conflict to peace, the Head of Mission, or the Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG), is a crucial actor who has the potential to "generate and sustain the international political support that is critical to keeping the parties on track".[13] Throughout its life cycle, UNMIL's SRSG supported a vision that would not trade women's inclusion for other political priorities.[14] The SRSG passed this vision down through the ranks, advancing a common goal for all mission staff and setting the tone for all activities. Within the mission, strong leadership advanced the OGA's ability to address cross-cutting issues and presented a gender awareness that "worked its way down" to other units and partners in the mission and the UN. This has simplified the need for the OGA to "make the case for gender", and allowed the office to spend time providing substantive and technical expertise for the mission.[15]

The OGA also established a strong relationship with the UN Country Team (UNCT), as a tool for managing the transition to peace. The clearest example is in relation to addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the country. In 2009, the field of actors addressing this topic was growing – as were the monetary resources. UNMIL's OGA helped set up the Gender Theme Group (UNGTG) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to provide strategic coordination for partners within the UNCT. As the co-chair of the UNGTG, the OGA worked alongside the UN Fund for Women (now UN Women) to support the government and UN gender mainstreaming initiatives. Together, these bodies coordinated a range of programmes and projects on SGBV, ensuring both a responsible use of resources in the immediate term and a platform for developmental organisations to take over this important work in the long term.

At the national level, the OGA introduced a range of participatory processes to engage women's civil society in emerging national frameworks. This illustrated a high recognition of local political will for gender issues in the country. The office worked to support local capacity through facilitating participatory processes that would leave organisations more stable for a peaceful transition. This is key, given that the peacekeeping and peacebuilding relationship must extend "beyond the UN, [through] close collaboration with key partners, such as international financial institutions and regional organizations".[16] The OGA supported government authorities by providing training programmes and capacity building, technical expertise and long-term support for the Ministry of Gender – the key government body for mainstreaming gender in Liberia. Examples include input on the preparation of a poverty reduction strategy (PRS), the Liberian National Action Plan on 1325 (LNAP), the National Gender Policy and the Truth and Reconciliation Report (PRSP). In each case, women's networks (with the support of the OGA) facilitated a large number of county-level consultations across Liberia, resulting in the mobilisation of women to participate, and policy documents that reflect their needs and preferences. The final product – full gender-inclusive national documentation – will guide the transition to development in the country.

UNMIL PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT TEMPLATE FOR THE STUDY OF THE NEXUS BETWEEN PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING, BECAUSE IT POSTURED ITSELF TO ADDRESS GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN ITS VARIOUS ACTIVITIES FROM THE START

Conclusion: Gender and the Road to Development

Today, Liberia is at a crucial stage in the transition from conflict to peace. The recovery process is well underway. However, recovering from armed conflict will require inclusive peace through long-term changes in social infrastructure and reform. Through their long-standing civic participation and dedication to peace and prosperity, women have solidified a place in the public sphere, but still face limits in security, access and equality. Perhaps nowhere is this more clear than in the lead-up to the country's 2011 election [17] where, despite a strong showing (as candidates and voters) in 2005, few women have signed up as candidates.[18]

Retaining the momentum of gender equality over the changing actors and national systems while promoting sustainability of effort is a significant challenge. National actors and institutions must take over the tasks of

the international community. Economic recovery and infrastructure sustainability are replacing the provision of security as priorities. It is critical that policy which is created with the express goal of empowering women not be left on the shelf, but instead be implemented effectively and efficiently by relevant actors. UNMIL – specifically the OGA – has systematically capitalised on the abilities and capacities of the country's women to build a stable and equitable society. The networks and mechanisms established by this office must be maintained and expanded with increased national ownership.

Through a multidimensional, straightforward approach, UNMIL advanced a series of best practices for gender mainstreaming in a challenging post-conflict transition. The lessons of this approach should influence mission planning across the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the world.

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9 Subsequent UNMIL resolutions (developed during various phases of the mission) have reaffirmed the original commitment of resolution 1509, including on issues of gender-based violence, protection and sexual exploitation and abuse. These resolutions have made UNMIL the central body for the restoration of state authority, enhancing human security and providing protection – all crucial elements in restoring the security of the nation's women.

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CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION AND TRANSITION MANAGEMENT: THE UNMIL EXPERIENCE

BY **CHRISTOPHER HOLSHEK**

CHRISTOPHER HOLSHEK

It has long been widely recognised that "cooperation and coordination between the military and humanitarian components are critical in multidimensional peacekeeping operations".[1] While the stress on issues of civil-military coordination (CIMIC) has largely been regarding peacekeeping and humanitarian organisations, less attention has gone to the role of the military in fostering peacebuilding; moreover, the role of CIMIC across the spectrum of peace support operations and enabling the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The concept put at work in the United Nations (UN) Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), which directly addresses the challenge of connecting security and development, has proven a case study of interest to the larger peace and stability operations community, with implications for general civil-military approaches for military and civilian professionals alike.

Background

In January 2008, UNMIL began to slowly draw down its forces parallel to the Government of Liberia's

Above: The Liberian project manager of a youth agricultural training farm explains the pilot project to the UNMIL Chief of CIMIC and staff officers of the resident Bangladesh peacekeeping battalion.

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An Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) soldier assists UN peacekeepers with screening patients at a medical outreach centre in Sinoe County (2008).

implementation of its Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).[2] The international community supported the PRS using the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other plans designed to help build the capacity of the Government of Liberia – particularly at the county level – to deliver essential public services. These services included security, governance, the rule of law, and economic and social development. The intent of these frameworks is to reach fulfillment of these services, articulated in a series of benchmarks, by the time of the next general election in November 2011. This will mark the end of the second (or drawdown) phase and the beginning of the third and final phase of withdrawal, characterised by civilian-led peacebuilding focused on development to supplant security-intensive, military-based peacekeeping operations.[3]

In recognition of its role in underpinning this stabilisation process, with the onset of these frameworks that ended the peacekeeping consolidation phase and started the drawdown phase (transitioning to peacebuilding) in January 2008, the UNMIL Force approach to CIMIC changed substantially, based on the constant concern in Force Command reports on "the increasing dependence of the Government of Liberia on the assets of the Force…"[4] Since then, the greatest risk for security and stability in Liberia has been persistent dependency on the mission in general and the military in particular as Force capability diminishes, bringing on potentially destabilising effects that risk the investment and sacrifices of many to bring lasting peace there.

For the drawdown phase, both risks and opportunities abounded. Under enormous international pressure, accelerated drawdown intensified these civil-military concerns. Further, military reductions paralleled a humanitarian assistance drawdown, requiring more efficient and effective coordination in the transition from relief to recovery. The real and perceived effectiveness of county governments, in particular, to deliver essential public services – among them security and the rule of law – has been the vital centre of gravity to the fulfilment of the mandate and the mission's exit strategy. Additionally, large concentrations of idle and unemployed youth have presented the most dangerous threat to long-term civil stability. This is particularly true among young men in urban areas, who are ideal recruits for illicit activities as Liberia struggles economically, further feeding the general problem of a corrupt society.

However, there have also been opportunities to facilitate the transition from military-intensive peacekeeping to civilian-led, self-sustained peacebuilding, per the PRS.

One opportunity has been the relatively peaceful and stable situation enduring from the peacekeeping effort. Another has been the substantial development assistance presence still residing in Liberia – among this, strong bilateral donor nation support of Liberia as well as coordination among those nations, the mission, and the Government of Liberia in support of a well-developed, home-grown transition plan (that is, the PRS). There has also been the essentially positive environment for CIMIC under strong mission leadership, emphasising integrated mission coordination under the 'one UN – delivering as one' concept, and viewing CIMIC as one among a number of mission coordination management tools. Last but not least, the Liberian government and population have thought positively of the international presence – due in no small part to an effective public information campaign.

With the linkages between capacity development and security thus clearly established, the race was on to facilitate the transition process, build local capacity, and work the Force out of many jobs deemed essential to stability but ultimately the responsibility of the Government of Liberia – all before the Force itself reduces to a level of ineffectiveness to influence the transition process.

"creating and enabling environment for the implementation of the mission mandate by maximizing the comparative advantage of all actors operating in the mission area".[6] Especially with respect to the latter, the Force engages in CIMIC with the aim of leveraging civilian partners to reduce its own role.

The concept of CIMIC in Liberia is well articulated in the UNMIL Force CIMIC Directive, a unique UN playbook that has been sourced at the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and shared with other field missions. Less concerned with 'winning hearts and minds' through the direct use of military forces for humanitarian assistance or development projects that serve to reinforce rather than reduce dependency – and often creates friction with civilian partner organisations, the CIMIC intent in Liberia has been to use the capabilities of the Force to "…enable and multiply civilian initiatives, and conducted in coordination with the UNMIL civil component (jointly) and UN agencies as well as NGOs and the Government of Liberia (collaboratively)".[7] This entails a more indirect role for military assets – more clearly in support of civilian agencies and leading less from the front and more from behind the UNMIL civil component,

Figure 1: Depiction of CIMIC Concept Employed at UNMIL

The UNMIL CIMIC Concept: "It's Not About Us; It's About Them"

As introduced in 2008, the UNMIL CIMIC concept is firmly nested in the UN integrated mission concept and "…motivated by the need to maximize coordination and coherence between the military component and the civilian components of the same integrated mission, between the military component of a UN peacekeeping operation and the rest of the UN system, and between the military component of the mission and other external and internal civilian actors in the same mission area".[5] The UNMIL CIMIC concept helped form the basis of what is now articulated in the new 'UN–CIMIC' policy for all UN peacekeeping forces – namely, that civil-military coordination, writ large, has two core functions: first, to support management of the "interaction between civilian and military actors"; and second, to foster a

UN agencies and the Government of Liberia, aligned with them and their frameworks and benchmarks, to promote local ownership of civil administration and essential public services responsibilities, and to help build civil authority and public confidence. To de-emphasise 'winning hearts and minds', the slogan for UNMIL CIMIC became: "It's not about us; it's about them."[8]

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual intent of UNMIL CIMIC: of leading more from behind than the front. The idea is to bring the Force from the front to the rear of assistance efforts through a deliberate process of transition management. First, the military shifts the use of its assets away from direct assistance to the population and more to enabling efforts led by UN agencies. These work in tandem with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), while gradually integrating CIMIC efforts with those led by

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Liberian Ministry of Public Works personnel receive on-the-job training in culvert restoration from Bangladeshi engineers.

these agencies (that is, to 'civilianise' military assistance efforts). Simultaneously, it looks to improve partner efforts to build the capacity of Government of Liberia entities to perform civil administration functions (that is, to 'localise' ownership of the peacebuilding process to address the local civil situation and all its challenges). In this double transition, the aim is create the proper alignment of assistance efforts to facilitate the conditions desired by all three stakeholder groups.

The military itself is the real 'force multiplier'. At the same time, the assumption of a more indirect and supporting role has made it easier for the Force to diminish its presence and operations, while mitigating or reducing potential destabilising drawdown-related gaps and risks associated with over-dependency as the Force prepares for withdrawal – very much in its own security interests. In other words: it works itself out of a job.

A good example of the application of this civil-military transition concept is the CIMIC approach to project management. To facilitate transition, ownership and sustainability, UNMIL CIMIC directs that its projects should involve Government of Liberia officials throughout the entire relief or development project life cycle – that is, assessment, planning, coordination and execution – to 'front-load' ownership and simultaneously enhance project management skill development, which is a clear capacity development outcome. In addition, it should demonstrably support specific PRS objectives. Understanding that 'civil success is Force success' gradually makes the Force a minority stakeholder in the provision of essential public services, and thus facilitates the CIMIC end state. The indicator of this is the successful execution of Force drawdown with no debilitating civil-military impacts and 100% civilian lead in all civil-military initiatives.

Similarly, UNMIL's approach to its military-assisted Quick Impact Project (QIP) programme has, accordingly, de-emphasised 'hearts and minds' and focused more on helping to build capacity and confidence – specifically, in the renovation or construction of local rule-of-law infrastructure, including dozens of police stations, courthouses and detention facilities. While Force engineers largely did this earlier on, local contractors were increasingly employed,

where they gained experience, with the additional impact of creating local employment and trained labour. This transition management combination of CIMIC and QIP is a model way the UN in general can maximise both CIMIC and QIP's stability-oriented development dollars.

The key linkages of this concept are UNMIL CIMIC's lines of coordination, which are pointedly indirect as civilian partners are placed between the Force and local entities at all levels of coordination. At the tactical (or county) level, CIMIC support to the county or district government occurs through the UNMIL Joint County Offices. At the operational (or national) level, CIMIC coordination occurs through the Offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) and Deputy SRSGs, who head up the UN Country Team. The Chief CIMIC Officer provides operational level 'reach back' for tactical CIMIC in the form of planning guidance and identification of resources beyond those locally available. The rule is simple: all requests or proposals for military support to civil administration first comes through the appropriate UNMIL civilian mission coordination office and level of command.

There are two other essential characteristics of the UNMIL CIMIC concept. First, because peace support operations are in an operating environment that is largely psychological rather than physical, UNMIL CIMIC forges a close relationship between CIMIC and information operations, which is critical to achieve desired outcomes. Regardless of measurable development progress, if the common perception remains that the country's future is fragile and that the departure of UNMIL would precipitate renewed mass violence – the underlying security concern

WHILE THE UN PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE, FOR EXAMPLE, ACKNOWLEDGES THE LINKAGE BETWEEN PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING AND ADVOCATES GREATER 'COORDINATION' OF THE PROCESS, IT MAKES NO MENTION OF THE MILITARY'S OBVIOUSLY CRITICAL ROLE IN ENHANCING THIS TRANSITION

UN PHOTO/STATON WINTER

The Deputy Commissioner of the Liberian National Police cuts the ribbon on a new security depot in Dolo's Town, Margibi County, Liberia (July 2011). The depot is one of UNMIL's Quick Impact Projects, which involves refurbishing or constructing courthouses, police stations, and police barracks to strengthen the rule of law in Liberia.

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The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL's) first Bailey bridge launch in December 2008. The author is pictured (centre-left) with AFL engineers, officers, contract mentors, international developers, Ministry of Public Works men and women, and female AFL members.

in Liberia – the country may indeed destabilise following drawdown and withdrawal. This key linkage between security and development is thus largely perceptual. Second, UNMIL CIMIC emphasises building both capacity and confidence in ways that go beyond simple public information. It directs that Liberians be visibly in the lead of capacity-building efforts or events such as medical outreach, even if most of the effort is from the Force. In clear support of governance and security sector reform, when feasible, it also looks to involve local police and the military in CIMIC projects to build their capacity and, more importantly, promote public confidence in the government by transferring the psychological capital of public trust gained by the UNMIL to the Government of Liberia.

In addition to the more familiar use of CIMIC activities as sources of 'good news stories', CIMIC itself has been supportive of public information through 'key leader engagement' of indigenous public opinion makers and international civilian relief and reconstruction managers. This encourages greater sensitivity to local culture and the use of non-media public communication. In countries like Liberia, traditional communication practices in rural areas beyond the reach of media are often primary. In this context, for example, a well-synchronised CIMIC information effort can also educate locals on issues such as public health, gender-based violence and other drivers of conflict important to both civilian and military stakeholders.

A major UNMIL CIMIC challenge has had to do with the capability of the Force to implement a concept of CIMIC that goes beyond the widely held belief that CIMIC is some kind of public relations activity. As with most African peace support operations, a critical vulnerability has been the relatively low understanding of this more comprehensive idea of CIMIC among both military and civilian players in the mission, along with a shortage of trained military CIMIC officers – even though civil-military operations are at the core of peace and stability operations.

To mitigate this, UNMIL instituted a multisourced education and training strategy to improve overall understanding of CIMIC, build CIMIC capability and thus enhance mission coordination. This includes a CIMIC course that has trained Force officers but included the Government of Liberia , NGOs and UN police, as well as members of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberian National Police (LNP) – thus further contributing to both capacity building and security sector reform. The introductory CIMIC course concentrates on two important CIMIC operations skills: assessments and project management. Additionally, UNMIL CIMIC officers are required to build further subject matter expertise through virtual access to

the UN Peace Operations Training Institute CIMIC course and the first part of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Activities (OCHA) Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) course.

'Their Game Plan is Our Game Plan'

The final goal of integration of UNMIL CIMIC with civilian efforts is coined in a catchphrase to promote its transitional thrust: 'Their game plan is our game plan.' CIMIC activities in Liberia are within the same four-pillar structure as the PRS. A closer look at the range of activities in each of the four pillar areas helps illustrate the breadth and depth of CIMIC activities in Liberia:

- In the security pillar, the Force has provided training and capacity-building assistance to the AFL to enhance community-based approaches and instil an organisational ethos of public service and sensitivity to civil society. Force encouragement of the AFL led to its first military civil action project in December 2008, with the launch of a Bailey bridge along a strategic supply route into south-east Liberia. The Force also assisted with management consultation to the Center for Civil-Military Relations, a civil society organisation at the University of Liberia, co-sponsoring a number of events designed to promote civil dialogue on security-related issues. It also assisted AFL/LNP outreach and gender mainstreaming through train-the-trainer workshops, participation in leadership seminars and joint community sensitisation activities.
- In economic revitalisation, the Force has provided vocational skills training for over 8 000 ex-combatants and youth on generator, vehicle and building maintenance; carpentry; masonry; welding; tailoring and designing; animal husbandry; computers; and first aid and basic medical care. UNMIL, together with local government and international and local NGOs, also ran agricultural training model farms for thousands more youth and ex-combatants, as well as in support of community-based village capacity development, in Bong, Nimba and Lofa counties.
- In governance and rule of law, the Force helped to build local physical capacity in the execution of numerous specially selected rule-of-law QIPs. It also indirectly shared information and data collected by military observer teams on the civil situation – in order to build civil administrative information capacity, as well as assist with local assessments, early warning of civil unrest, and monitoring of development progress.
- In infrastructure and basic social services, major project areas have included medical outreach featuring 'on-the-job' training of Liberian medical staff; support to Ministry of Public Works synchronised road

UN PHOTO/STATON WINTER

UNMIL peacekeepers teach young Liberians, in Tubmanburg, to lay bricks as part of a job training programme (May 2010).

rehabilitation projects involving multiple partners; execution of World Bank and UNDP-funded civil engineering projects for more than 600km of major road maintenance, with security and governance as well as commercial implications; and logistical and best-practice support and sharing to NGOs, NGO collaboration and coordination, and information-sharing. UNMIL CIMIC also assisted in public education, including the rehabilitation of more than three dozen schools, and providing and mentoring dozens of schoolteachers to fill capacity gaps.

Critiques

This critical dearth in understanding points to another major weakness: the failure to grasp the comprehensiveness and importance of the transition process itself. As the general election nears, and with it the beginning of UNMIL withdrawal, key transition tasks, particularly in the security sector, have only been identified and agreed upon, but not yet put into place in any serious, concerted way. Security sector reform in Liberia is still being 'coordinated'. This is very late in the game, reflecting a still relatively widespread failure to appreciate fully the importance of building confidence and not just capacity in transition management – the psychological aspect of which is the most critical and yet requires greater patience and risk management.

Conclusion

UNMIL CIMIC has been distinctive in UN peace support operations. It goes beyond 'CMCoord' and it is more comprehensive, with greater emphasis on indirect support to capacity development rather than just humanitarian assistance, involves managing transitions from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, is more collaborative, and clearly links security with development within a human security context. Consistent with complex and interconnected peace operations environments and the UN integrated mission approach, it establishes the role of the military as the enabler of the civilian-led peace process, duplicating the civil-military relationship desired in democratic societies, and marking an unambiguous path to the 'end state' of all peace operations: self-sustained peace and civil society. This transition management aspect, which is at the heart of CIMIC, should be of interest to military and civilian peacekeepers and peacebuilders alike during the steady state of mission planning and preparation prior to a crisis, and certainly not as drawdown begins. With the challenges, risks and opportunities in international conflict mitigation and building peace growing in complexity and intensity, as the linkages between security and development continue to grow, and especially in the face of diminishing financial resources, all contributors must find a way to work more effectively to transition to self-sustainable peace – or face failure – together.

Col. Christopher Holshek is a retired United States Army Civil Affairs Officer who served as UNMIL Chief of CIMIC from January 2008 to July 2009.

Endnotes

1 Lloyd, Gary, Van Dyk, Giele A.J. and De Kock, Francois (2009) The Psychological Selection Profile for Civil-Military Coordination Officers in Peace Support Operations: The Results of Field Research in the Sudan. *African Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 9 (3), p. 54.

2 The PRS, launched in April 2008, is the Government of Liberia's donor-funded post-conflict plan to reduce the drivers of conflict and bring Liberia to a baseline of self-sustained development along four major pillars (I – Consolidating Peace and Security; II – Revitalizing the Economy; III – Strengthening Governance and the Rule of Law; and IV – Rehabilitating Infrastructure and Delivering Basic Services). A copy of the document is available at: <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/content.php?sub=Final%20 PRS&related=PRS>.

3 For an excellent discussion and critique of UNMIL's approach to peacekeeping-peacebuilding, see Gray-Johnson, Wilfred (2009) Assessing the United Nations Approach to Post-conflict Peacebuilding in Africa: The Mission in Liberia. *Conflict Trends*, 3, pp. 11–18.

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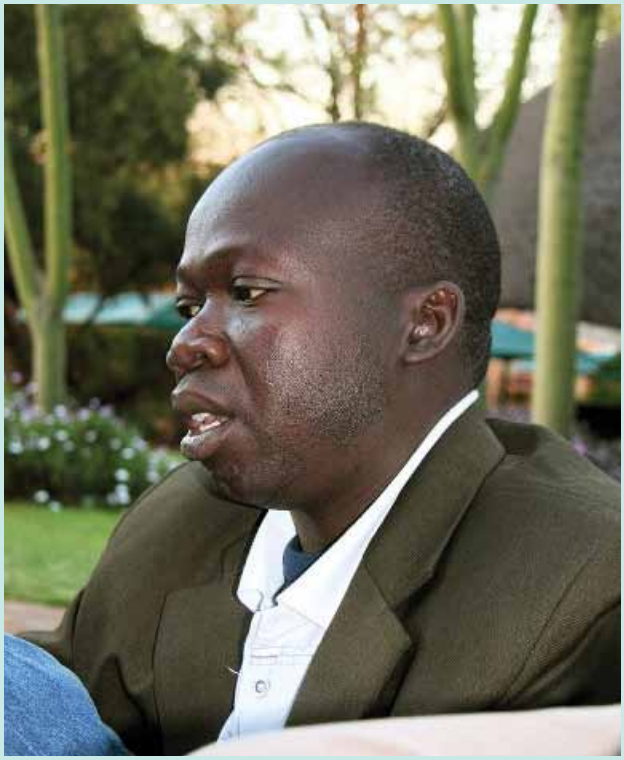
PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE PEACEKEEPING-PEACEBUILDING NEXUS[1]

The relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding has gained increasing attention by those who want to understand post-conflict environments and international interventions better. Opportunities to understand the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus are most often presented to practitioners who directly implement mechanisms to deal with conflict and post-conflict environments. As such, it is important to learn how practitioners understand the peacekeeping and peacebuilding relationship – particularly concerning roles, responsibilities and opportunities. Thus, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) interviewed three representatives from different sectors who are directly involved with practical issues that pertain to the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus. The interviewees include a representative from a South Sudanese civil society organisation, a representative from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) government, and a representative of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on peacekeeping and peacebuilding policy issues.

Moses John

Executive Director, Sudanese Organisation for Nonviolence and Development

South Sudan is the newest nation in the world, with independence gained on 9 July 2011. The new country is now faced with enormous challenges that need to be addressed by a comprehensive peacebuilding process. The South Sudan context also presents an array of opportunities for the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission to enhance its support to the South Sudanese peacebuilding process, particularly through engagement with civil society. Moses John, Executive Director of the Sudanese Organisation for Nonviolence and Development (SONAD), shared his views on the South Sudanese peacebuilding process and the role that the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) can play in this regard.



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Conflict Trends: How do you see the role that peacekeepers are playing currently in South Sudan?

John: South Sudan is now nearly one month as a nation and has very little experience of the role of peacekeepers in consolidating peace. I believe that UN peacekeepers have played a mostly positive role in peacebuilding in South Sudan. UN peacekeepers were able to follow the withdrawal of forces between South and North Sudan in accordance with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) timelines. It established media for peace, such as Radio Miraya FM, which is a widely trusted radio that provides reliable information and has wider connections with the communities in the remote villages of South Sudan. The peacekeepers also provided logistical support in terms of flights, cars and sometimes other means of transport to peace stakeholders, including

the military and members of the political parties, for dialogue meetings within South Sudan and between South Sudan and North Sudan. It's worth noting that peacekeepers were able to document human rights violations that occurred in South Sudan, although very little change happened as a result of UN reports. They also provided security and logistical support before, during and after the April 2010 general election and the referendum held in January 2011.

Despite the positive roles played by peacekeepers in South Sudan, there are also some negative aspects. The general population perceives them as passive forces, as they can do very little – especially during intercommunal conflicts, where hundreds of lives were lost in South Sudan. Some of these killings occurred right in front of UN peacekeeping forces, yet they were unable to do anything as they did not have the mandate to intervene. Some peacekeepers were also accused of sexual exploitation and related human rights violations.

With the appointment of Hilde Johnson as the UN Chief in the Republic of South Sudan, we will see peacekeepers play a much greater role than before, for two main reasons. First, the mandate given is clear: to support and strengthen the capacity of the government of South Sudan to develop and maintain political diversity, respect for democratic and human rights principles and to consolidate peace following the CPA. Second, Johnson has earned the confidence of the people and government of South Sudan for playing an active role during the CPA negotiations in Naivasha, Kenya, and has spearheaded the donor conference to support Sudan following the CPA.

***Conflict Trends**: How can peacekeepers better support longer-term peacebuilding processes in South Sudan?*

John: I want to stress one aspect only: work in partnership with the local peace actors! This includes youth groups, women's groups, traditional leaders or chiefs, religious bodies, political parties and the local government. Peacekeepers should allow the local population to own the work if it is to be sustained. Otherwise, the work halts by the time the peacekeepers' mandate ends. Peacekeepers must be ready to learn the local conflict dynamics from the local people, not just from information they read on the Internet. Most information on the Internet about the conflict in South Sudan is written by people in the Sudanese diaspora – and on the ground. Strengthening the capacity of local actors is a long-term investment for peace. Also, respect for local resources, cultures and traditions is important.

***Conflict Trends**: How can local capacities be more involved in the peacebuilding tasks that the UN mission is implementing?*

John: There should be clear policy in terms of the work that the local and international organisations should follow, including the UN. The UN peacebuilding tasks should search for appropriate partners to work with, including ministries that are focused on peace and defence issues. There should be a consortium of local and international NGOs involved. International organisations should implement activities in partnership with local organisations.

***Conflict Trends**: In the eventual drawdown of the mission, what are the main priority areas that need to be addressed by the mission?*

John: Ensure sustainability of the work of the mission through empowered local actors. Withdrawal should be done in phases, not just when the mission's mandate comes to an end.

Célestin Cibalonza Byaterana

Director of the Office of the Minister of Interior and Safety in the DRC

The DRC case provides a real example of a very complex peacebuilding process in Africa. Célestin Cibalonza Byaterana, Director of the Office of the Minister of Interior and Safety in the DRC, shared his views about the country and his perspectives on what role the UN stabilisation mission in the DRC can play in the Congolese peacebuilding process, particularly with regard to the involvement of local actors.

***Conflict Trends**: How do you see the role that peacekeepers are playing currently in the DRC?*

Byaterana: In the DRC, the Blue Helmets of the United Nations Organization Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) play a peacekeeping role in maintaining peace with their interventions to handle hostilities on the ground. This role is usually to protect civilians and restore security in the provinces.

***Conflict Trends**: How can peacekeepers better support longer-term peacebuilding processes in the DRC?*

Byaterana: The DRC government has set up a structure called the Framework for the Stabilisation and Reconstruction of Post-conflict Zones in Eastern Congo (STAREC), in partnership with MONUSCO.

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This structure has been set up to facilitate the population's reintegration by creating better living conditions in post-conflict areas (building roads, houses, and so on). Through this initiative and the subsequent partnership, MONUSCO can continue to support longer-term peacebuilding processes in the country.

Conflict Trends: *How can local capacities be more involved in the peacebuilding tasks that the UN mission is implementing?*

Byaterana: For local capacities to be involved in restoring peace, they have to be directly associated with the peacebuilding process. They must be involved in identifying problems and in proposing solutions to these problems. Civil society supports the government in the popularisation of peacebuilding processes and assists the population to understand and grasp these efforts. They also support MONUSCO in its mandate to secure post-conflict regions and assist with the provision of information to facilitate the mission's work.

Conflict Trends: *In the eventual drawdown of the mission, what are the main priority areas that need to be addressed by the mission?*

Byaterana: The main priority areas include strengthening the state's authority, peacebuilding, improving living conditions for the population and creating an ongoing dialogue on issues that affect the population in all sectors (including security, employment, the economy and culture).

Cedric de Coning

Research Fellow, ACCORD and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)

The relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is particularly important at the level of policy development. Cedric de Coning, Research Fellow at ACCORD and NUPI, shared his views on the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, particularly the evolution of these concepts and the relationship and the impact they will have in the development of mechanisms for dealing more efficiently with conflicts and post-conflict environments.

Conflict Trends*: How do you see the role of peacekeeping operations in supporting longer-term peacebuilding processes?*

De Coning: Peacekeeping operations that are mandated to support the implementation of peace agreements typically support the first three crucial stages of a peace process, namely the stabilisation, transition and consolidation phases. They help to ensure a secure environment within which the transition can unfold. They facilitate the transition process during which new political and governance arrangements are negotiated and implemented. And once the new post-conflict arrangements are in place and the risk of relapse is at acceptable levels, peacekeeping operations draw down, hand over their responsibilities and withdraw. The peace consolidation process, and various forms of internationalsupport, continues after the withdrawal of the peacekeeping mission. The core point is, thus, that peacebuilding does not come after peacekeeping; rather, peacekeeping is a tool that the international community should use during the first phases of a peacebuilding process.

The peacekeeping period typically represents, in very generic terms, one-quarter to one-third of the longer-term peacebuilding process; that is, a very rough rule of thumb could be that if a peacekeeping operation was deployed for eight years, the overall peacebuilding process is likely to continue for another 24 to 32 years.

Conflict Trends: *How can current peacekeeping operations be strengthened further within a peacebuilding process?*

De Coning: Peacekeeping operations can be strengthened by developing assessment, analysis, planning, management and evaluation approaches, mechanisms and tools that

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are able to cope with the complex social change processes they are meant to influence. This implies processes that can monitor, adapt and co-evolve with the highly dynamic, non-linear and complex systems we are dealing with. Too often, we are narrowly applying borrowed causal theories of change, and are blind to their effects, including the negative and unintended side effects that undermine the very goals and objectives that these missions have been mandated to achieve.

Conflict Trends: *As external actors, peacekeeping operations face challenges between short- and long-term measures in their work. In this context, two of these challenges include: determining the departure of the peacekeeping missions, and the benchmarks that they need to reach before they can depart. How do you see these apparent contradictions and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations?*

De Coning: A peacekeeping operation should be evaluated against the extent to which it contributes to long-term self-sustainable peace consolidation. Pursuing shorter-term goals that generate institutions which merely mirror international benchmarks are perverse. Peacekeeping is not an end in itself. Peacekeeping is only an initial security guarantee and change catalyst. Its role is limited to providing external stimulus to what has to be a local change process. It should only intervene, as a last resort, to avoid a relapse into violent conflict. The primary principle that should inform peacekeeping design is thus the recognition that, for peacebuilding to achieve self-sustainable peace consolidation, it has to be an indigenous process.

Robust social systems that are resilient enough to cope with major political and social change, without relapsing into violent conflict, cannot develop in a few short years. Societies need time to generate, absorb, adapt and refine new social norms, and to integrate these into new institutions grounded in, and interlinked with, the network of indigenous systems. It thus follows that, for such transitions to be sustainable, these change processes have to be at a pace that can be meaningfully absorbed by the local society.

Endnotes

1 Interviews were conducted on 7–12 August 2011 by Gustavo de Carvalho and Dorcas Ettang of ACCORD.

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