THE FUTURE OF PEACEKEEPING:

An Experts' Discussion to Contribute to the Dialogue on Foreign Policy

March 21st, 2003

A workshop co-hosted by the Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria, The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, the Canadian Consortium on Human Security and the Simons Centre for Peace and Disarmament, Liu Institute

Report

by

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Introduction

Twenty experts met at the Liu Institute for Global Issues on March 21 to contribute to the dialogue on foreign policy, specifically to provide insight into the challenges of contemporary and future peacekeeping operations.

The workshop addressed the following six areas: the future of peacekeeping; the status of the Brahimi Report; efforts to enhance UN rapid deployment; the further development of the multinational Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG); the use of force to protect civilians in armed conflict and, finally; to

Contemporary and Future Challenges in UN Peacekeeping Operations
Summary:

Anthony Craig, Office of the Military Advisor, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Mr. Craig's presentation outlined the following 4 areas where UN peacekeeping operations face challenges:

- 1) Revitalizing support from Northern countries
- 2) Overcoming the perception that the UN cannot handle robust operations
- 3) Obtaining the right capabilities in a timely fashion
- 4) Establishing effective communication systems within UN bodies, between the UN and military officials and between the UN and national capitals.

Mr. Craig indicated that a key priority of the UN Department of Peacekeeping (DPKO) is to restore the support and participation of Northern member states. It is evident that there are active efforts to push missions onto regional groups with insufficient capabilities. This is viewed as a dangerous trend as it is essential to have the continued presence of strong and well-organized forces to ensure that peace is indeed kept.

The Under-Secretary General is particularly interested in hearing the concerns of

expressed confidence that it is increasingly capable of coping with a force such as the RUF (Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone).

A key factor that most inhibits rapid deployment of a UN mission is securing a decision from the member states. This situation could be improved if member states committed to the new Rapid Deployment Level of the UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS), providing the necessary information to facilitate planning and movement. The response, to date, suggested the need for additional membership at this level. However, within UN circles, the SHIRBRIG is seen as particularly useful and important.

Mr. Craig acknowledged other factors that have been raised by some in the North when indicating a reluctance to help in UN operations: alliance commitments; concerns about mission ma

Mandate: This is a reflection or manifestation of international will. A mission's mandate is a political rather than a military product in that it reflects political rather than military reality. A key problem with this element of peacekeeping operations is that mandates are normally only understood by those who draft them. As such, mandates are often misunderstood or misinterpreted on the ground.

Forces: A dequate military personal and equipment will only be supplied to a conflict zone if the international will exists to make it politically viable. This often results in the inadequate deployment of military personnel.

Rapid Deployment: If a sufficiently strong and well-equipped force can be deployed within an appropriate amount of time, conflict and killing can be halted.

Nation Building: It is much more expensive, time consuming and complicated to build rather than destroy. It is therefore necessary to foster international will such that countries remain engaged until the mechanisms of good government have been established and integrated. If this task is avoided, the risk of renewed conflict remains.

Discussion

The ensuing discussion on this topic focused largely on three themes: (1) the disengagement of the North, especially with regard to missions in Africa; (2) perceptions and misperceptions regarding Chapter 7 missions and (3) the barriers to protection of civilians during UN missions.

First, it was generally agreed that there are numerous factors accounting for Northern disengagement from UN peacekeeping. Several problems stemmed from insufficient political will, limited funding and other institutional preferences. Moreover, there are competing priorities amidst limited resources. Increasingly, Northern member states were overstretched with commitments to other organizations. One participant claimed that some Western defence establishments have a strong NATO bias and a preference for "big-league, big budget, advanced technology, war-fighting roles". Others pointed out that there is a misperception that other institutions, such as the EU and NATO, are better able to manage robust operations. Alternatively, a concern was expressed that countries, which participate in overseas missions, should be commended regardless of whose auspices the operation is under.

Status Update on Implementation of the Brahimi Report

Summary:

Victoria Holt, Senior Associate, The Henry L. Stimson Center

Ms. Holt reviewed the implementation status of reforms recommended by the August 2000 report of the *Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, referred to as the "Brahimi Report." This work is part of her Stimson Center project (www.stimson.org/fopo) that tracks these and related reforms and works to see them implemented. Since the report's release, the UN has undertaken new peacebuilding missions (e.g. Afghanistan) and transitioned peacekeeping operations (e.g. Sierra Leone, Bosnia, East Timor, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo). But it has not taken on any new UN peacekeeping operations that would test its capacity (e.g., changes in peacekeeping doctrine and strategy, achieving clear and credible mandates – such as threshold conditions being met – assembling leadership at the U.N. prior to deployment, funding DDR with the deployment, and providing strategic guidance to mission leaders.)

Holt reviewed the state of progress on most of the major Panel recommendations. Substantive progress has been made on: the creation of Strategic Deployment Stocks and refurbishing of the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy; hiring of new staff for, and structural adjustments within, the DPKO; creation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in missions such as UNMEE; 36.4397 121.5392 Tm Tw 12 0 0 12 907w87 10.0016 Tw 12 0 j (mD3t12 9.5392)

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apparent implementation); creation of a roster of civilian specialists; and improvements to mission leadership.

Slower progress is clear in developing a capacity to deploy within 30/90 days; developing civilian policing (including pools, regional training and on-call lists for the

the UN. Rather than condemn the report for what it does not do, others argued the necessity of implementing the few recommendations that have not, as yet, been tackled. One idea raised in the session was to bring in outside groups, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help promote the remaining agenda and overcome the lack of political will for further reforms.

Several panelists challenged the perception that the Brahimi report dealt primarily with traditional peacekeeping. They noted that the emphasis from the start had been on robust operations and ensuring sufficient military capacity to deter and, if necessary, take action to prevent further atrocities.

It was the opinion of one participant that implementation of the Brahimi recommendations had exceeded earlier expectations and that having accomplished many of the objectives demanded by member states, there should be a corresponding increase in national contributions. Yet repeatedly, even resolutions of the UN Security Council warned of a commitment-capability gap, as numerous member states continued to deny the UN sufficient personnel, mechanisms and funding. Aside from shifting the heavy burden onto developing countries, this generated concerns about an increasingly unrepresentative two-tiered system that is far too selective and slow. In its own words, the Brahimi Report had focused on "the minimum threshold of change" necessary.

Efforts to Enhance Rapid Deployment to UN Peace Operations

Summary:

Dr. H. Peter Langille, Senior Research Associate and Human Security Fellow, Centre for Global Studies

According to Dr. Langille, improving UN rapid deployment is proving to be a slow process. Routine delays of four to six months had become the norm by 1997. In an emergency situation, delays of this length frequently entailed serious consequences for civilians. If the objective is to protect, he emphasized that the UN must get to the mission quickly with a credible presence so there is far less likelihood of people being murdered on a large scale or mass ethnic cleansing.

Langille noted that, once again, speakers at the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping stressed that rapid response was the key to saving lives and reducing costs. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had also recently urged member states to intensify their attention and response to assist with rapid deployment. However, the focus of attention was changing, with wider agreement that the UN Secretariat had fulfilled much of its share of the bargain to modernize and reform. The onus now is very much on the member states, particularly those from the wealthier developed world who demanded the reforms as a precondition to further participation.

Indicating the need for more ambitious changes, Langille briefly overviewed five areas of recent progress and complementary reforms. First, as a result of the Brahimi report and related efforts, the DPKO had been expanded in a manner that would facilitate planning, management and support. Second, there are now sufficient strategic deployment stocks at the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi to provide the basic infrastructure and kits for prompt start-up of a complex operation. Third, the on-call lists for a military mission headquarters attracted sufficient responses to fill each of the 154 positions with two nominations, possibly giving it some potential as a future rapidly-deployable mission headquarters. Fourth, the UN Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) wa

Nevertheless, the SHIRBRIG was the most advanced mechanism for UN peace operations and this was a foundation to build upon. As authorization for the limited use of force and for protection of civilians had recently become the norm, it was imperative that SHIRBRIG be better prepared for such assignments. A major effort would be needed to recruit new members, expand the headquarters, planning element and brigade pool, as well as to develop appropriate doctrine. Given the challenge of avoiding a more divided and risky world, Canada should encourage forward thinking on complementary national

range of useful services, it would have to be composed of dedicated military, police and civilian elements.

This workshop provided a clear indication that the issue of a UN rapid deployment capability remains popular. Although far from attracting a consensus, the majority of participants were inclined to elaborate on some form of UN mechanism,

to be appointed as the SHIRBRIG force commander in 2004, Canada may be effectively bound into the next deployment.

In reviewing the history of SHIRBRIG, Brigadier General Côté noted an evolution that included a few major departures from the original restricted mandate. For one, the initial deployment to UNMEE quickly overrode the earlier agreement to avoid deployment into desert conditions. This operation had helped to foster mutual respect between the SHIRBRIG headquarters and UN staff. The latter retain a very high opinion of the SHIRBRIG planning element and hope to see a larger SHIRBRIG mission headquarters in the near future.

Brigadier General Côté proceeded to explain that Canada's agenda for the next year would entail efforts to show more flexibility. Civilians would be included in the Headquarters to provide peacebuilding expertise in the earliest stage of a deployment. The Chair would identify and solicit support for other tasks such as humanitarian assistance, providing observers, providing personnel for the core of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters and providing a formed planning and reconnaissance team. A side from the effort to recruit new members, there would be an attempt to attract other similar brigades. By necessity, this would have to be a careful selective process, but there were hopes for countries from Africa, the Far East and South America.

Finally, Brigadier General Côté indicated it was too early to move on *The Responsibility to Protect*. He noted that the project is in its early stages and the concept needs to be operationalized through dialogue with DFAIT before marketing it with others. Essentially, a better understanding of what *The Responsibility to Protect* entails from a military perspective is necessary before it can be incorporated into UN missions and mandates.

Summary:

Tony Anderson, Regional Security and Peacekeeping Division, Department of

Foreign Affairs

Mr. Anderson explained that in some quarters, there is a strong perception that

Canada continues to be a world leader in UN peacekeeping. In others, ho.6 626.1601 TI7d 0 7.1601 T1 Tc -0

Mr. Anderson concluded his presentation by stating that rather than try to change the system and return to doing everything under a UN flag, we should celebrate successes regardless of which organization leads the mission.

(There was no immediate discussion due to time constraints, but participants returned to the subject throughout the day.)

Discussion:

Much discussion focused on Canada's perceived role as an international peacekeeper. Several panelists noted that Canadians, particularly youth, identify with their country's role as a peacekeeper, as well as with its longstanding support of the UN. For many, the UN clearly remains the institution of preference. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of departmental and government support for the UN over the past four years.

However, one panelist countered that modern peacekeeping is largely misunderstood by the general public; that peacekeeping is now more than simply 'blue helmets'. It has become a complex, multifaceted process that involves much more than a military component. Hence, it was argued that more weight and credit should be given to the non-military organizations, such as development groups, for peacebuilding work. It was also felt that the Canadian public should be better educated as to the current development, peacebuilding and peacekeeping work being done by various government departmen501nnd pe 377 oig33 3 Tm57 0 12 129.2383 295BT/TT1 1 Tf0ed th

Lessons Learned from the IPA Seminar

Summary:

<u>David Lightburn, The Pearson Peacekeeping Training Centre and</u> <u>Colonel Jussi Saressalo, The International Peace Academy</u>

SHIRBRIG was deployed for the first time under the mission heading UNMEE to help bring about the cessation of hostilities between Eritrea and Ethiopia in June 2000. In an effort to understand and learn from both the positive and negative experiences of UNMEE, the International Peace Academy (IPA) brought together over one hundred military and civilian experts to discuss SHIRBRIG's performance and formulate recommendations for future missions.

While each UN mission is unique, it was deemed that many of the lessons learned from UNMEE are applicable to peacekeepi

Third, National Support Elements (NSEs) were problematic during UNMEE because they were deployed rigidly rather than in a manner specific to the needs of this particular mission. Thus, it was suggested that common elements such as movement control and transport could benefit from common standards and procedures. There were further problems when the relatively cohesive UNMEE force handed the mission over to the new force commander after the initial six months. It was recommended that the 'first-in' officers should stay longer to ensure a smoother transition from the SHIRBRIG to a regular UN force.

Fourth, it was determined that SHIRBRIG's membership must be enlarged to provide a sufficient and effective operational pool from which to draw resources. When on the ground, SHIRBRIG needs to work more closely with the UN, observers and the civilian community in question. Work on this level will ensure a more coherent peace-building and development process, in the post-conflict phase.

Finally, it was pointed out that SHIRBRIG's steering committee meets only twice yearly. It was suggested that another committee could be created that would be able to meet more frequently to ensure high levels of communication and understanding regarding practical elements of brigade deployments.

Discussion

Some participants commented that SHIRBRIG seems to act as a 'fig leaf' so some member states can say they are doing something when in reality they are not.

Nevertheless, it was repeated that the lead departments within the UN are very supportive of SHIRBRIG because it provides coherence and accessible leadership. Many participants felt that SHIRBRIG itself is a useful tool that is improving as we learn from experience.

When asked why SHIRBRIG succeeded in UNMEE, it was explained that the forces were able to work together as a coherent team due to previous experience training together. All but one SHIRBRIG member, (which had observer status only) participated in Partnership for Peace training sessions and deployed to Kosovo together.

Perspectives on the UN's Potential

Discussion

An important impediment to protection of civilians during UN missions was thought to lie with mission mandates. It was stated that individual nations have an aversion to Chapter 7 mandates because they fear losing troops and the higher cost often associated with these missions. Another problem was attributed to complicated mandates, which are not readily understood by troops on the ground. Complex mandates may be politically useful, but they must be translated into something that is clearly understandable for the UN commander on the ground.

This idea sparked several comments regarding the role of rules of engagement in UN operations. It was explained that each force has its own, national, rules of engagement that it must adhere to. The fact that UN missions are multinational leads to obvious problems. Developing a unified system of rules of engagement for all UN missions was deemed to be inapprop

As the most advanced mechanism for rapid deployment to UN peace operations, SHIRBRIG appears to have considerable potential to conduct operations that protect civilians. But one participant cautioned that the SHIRBIG's potential still depends on securing political agreement among the participating member states to ensure the prior preparation of their military units for new missions. This was assumed to be feasible, but only if a concerted effort was made. A Co-Chair concurred that Canada had a unique opportunity as the Chair and President of the SHIRBRIG and that this opportunity should not be squandered.

While many would concede the risk in being too ambitious, too early, there may be also be a risk in underestimating the extent of support for protection of civilians, shared by other SHIRBRIG members and UN officials. With a commitment to protection of civilians, one participant claimed the SHIRBRIG member states could attract additional participants.

The initiative to enhance UN rapid deployment, the SHIRBRIG, *The Brahimi Report* and *The Responsibility to Protect* were primarily intended to prevent mass murder in any future Rwandas, Srebrenicas, Sierra Leones or East Timors. This workshop was organized to foster a dialogue on the future of peacekeeping that would link these complementary priorities, help to identify next steps and, hopefully, avoid the risks of 'too-little', 'too-late'.

During the extensive discussion following each presentation, a wide variety of questions and comments were raised. For the sake of clarity, these have been grouped into nine themes with corresponding recommendations:

NEXT STEPS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The future of UN peacel	keeping is l	being jeopara	lized by t	he official	l assumption,
	here and abroad, that the	ne UN is no	ot			

6. Immediate attention should be accorded to operationalizing the concept of

protection in a way that can be conv