

Issue Note for the
International Policy Dialogue on
“Development Policy and the Armed Forces”

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The relationship between “development policy and the armed forces” has evolved rapidly in recent years. Broad mandates for peacekeeping operations in particular have led to many areas of interface between civilian and military tasks. Contemporary peace-support operations must frequently undertake difficult tasks related to the reconstruction and stabilisation of state structures (Kosovo, Afghanistan etc.), and development policy often plays an important role in this context. This has resulted in an increasing number of situations in which interfaces must be created between development policy and military actors.

The following points seek to raise substantive issues that are crucial to any discussion of the relationship between development policy and the armed forces, particularly with reference to peace missions.

I. The Relationship Between Development Policy and Security Policy

(1) The need for overarching strategies and measures in the areas of development, foreign and security policy has increased for two reasons:

- In recent years, the development policy sector has increasingly indicated that development policy cannot succeed without “security” (in its multiple dimensions). Security has thus become a key issue for development policy.
- The new international security agenda is based on the premise that the only effective way to counter current threats is to closely align all policies with an external focus.

(2) More effective action can only be achieved by bridging the gap that exists between development and security policy, and civilian and military activities. Fragmented approaches present a serious obstacle to more effective contributions in many situations. This applies in equal measure to governments and many international organisations (for instance, the relationship between UN development organisations and the DPKO - *Department of Peacekeeping Operations*).

(3) It should be noted however, that greater alignment and cooperation between development policy and the armed forces will not inevitably put an end to potential conflict of interests and divergent perspectives. The allocation of ODA (*Official Development Assistance*) resources varies (by country and region, for example), depending on whether the assistance is targeting the implementation of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) (poverty reduction potential, absorption capacity, performance etc.) or the reduction of threats to security and

stability (effect of those in power, fragility of the state, limited monopoly on the use of force, etc.).

(4) The debate on the relationship between development and security thus cannot have as its aim a convergence of the two tasks. The goal should rather be to ensure that the separate policies do not view and assess their respective effects solely from a narrow perspective, but instead aim to set common priorities and strategies for the country or region in question.

II. Development Policy and the Armed Forces During Peacekeeping operations

(5) Modern, multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations must perform wide-ranging civilian and military functions. Close cooperation and alignment of the two areas was identified as one of the key issues in the Brahimi Report (2000), which remain unresolved.

(6) In the context of military operations, development policy should only play a role in missions that have been legitimised by a mandate. To act otherwise would call their credibility fundamentally into question, and expose them to a high risk of being used for short-sighted military purposes.

(7) Furthermore, the role to be played by the military components in a mission is a very important matter for development policy. Combat operations (for instance, OEF - *Operation Enduring Freedom* / Afghanistan) offer few, if any, areas for development policy involvement, while stabilisation activities provide far more meaningful interfaces (e.g. ISAF - *International Security Assistance Force* / Afghanistan).

(8) Peacekeeping operations necessarily incorporate both civilian and military components. Although the military components are often important, and even indispensable, from a development policy standpoint, these activities should not be financed by the development policy sector.

(9) Without adequate interfaces, the concurrent performance of military and civilian tasks during peacekeeping operations will be unsatisfactory. However, simply merging development policy and military approaches and activities is neither meaningful nor desirable. Military and development policy measures will continue to require separate implementation. What is important, however, is to identify the situations and areas (for example, security structure reforms) in which better aligned or even joint planning, action and monitoring will be both meaningful and more effective.

(10) Development policy and military actors must achieve closer convergence and more complementary approaches at several levels. This applies not only to operational activities on site, but also at the level of headquarters and capital cities, as it enables joint planning (country strategies, etc.) to be carried out, common aims to be agreed upon, and complementary actions to be identified in the operative area that are both possible and necessary for achieving a given objective.

(11) A trend towards “regionalisation” is being discerned in peace missions. This can be seen in the efforts of the African Union in Darfur / Sudan, the creation of African Standby Forces, the current role of ECOWAS (Economic Community for West African States) / ECOMOG (Monitoring Group) in West Africa, and in the debate on converting UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) into a European operation (EUMIK). Boosting

the capabilities of regions that are currently hampered by their limited capacity to plan and implement relevant measures will be a central task in the years to come. This will become an increasingly important field of activity for external actors, and is also an area in which overarching policy action is crucial.

III. Outlook

(12) Experience in Afghanistan and the Balkans has shown how crucial the civilian elements of peacekeeping operations are to their overall success. Countries and regions cannot achieve lasting stability if they lack a strategy for civilian life. Development policy offers comparative advantages in this area, and should play an even more visible and discernible role.

(13) Supra-departmental action must play a central role in responding to the new overarching policy challenges. For this reason, models and initial experience with “3D approaches” (defence, development and diplomacy), “joined-up-government” and “whole of the government approaches” must be evaluated, and best practices made available to governments and international organisations.

(14) The current discussion highlights the need for additional standing civilian capacities to be created at an international level to accompany stabilisation operations. Development policy must also better clarify which, if any, civilian contributions could be taken outside of their normal context and made available for peacekeeping operations.

(15) The number and proportion of peacekeeping operations on the African continent is on the increase. For this reason too, particularly intensive efforts are being made (especially in the G8 context) to create African conflict resolution and crisis intervention capabilities (and consequently the ability to conduct peace missions). In this context, it will be especially important to ensure that the civilian components and capabilities of peace-support operations are not neglected, including interfaces with the military side.

(16) Situations in which the international community is able to comprehensively assume sovereign functions will remain exceptional cases, even where this is considered necessary or desirable. Considerable capacities and resources are needed for both this type of operation and for tasks of a long-term nature. Soldiers and civilians deployed under these circumstances often face major security risks, while a high level of political responsibility also attaches to external actors. This type of commitment will thus only be possible in a very small number of cases.