International Policy Dialogue

Development Policy and the Armed Forces

financial forecast we will ultimately prove successful in satisfying both components: at the European level, persevering in our efforts in development policy and continuing on the financial front as regards ODA at present, yet simultaneously creating a basis where, in difficult situations, especially in Africa but also in other regions, these two components – the idea of security and development policy – are both viable in close interdependence. This is the subject we are considering today and tomorrow.

Issues Note

Susan L. Woodward
Professor of Political Science
The Graduate Center
The City University of New York, USA

The two key actors in any post-conflict peace operation are the military and the development people. Without security and jobs, the peace will fail. But these two actors work within a context. All issues of organizational autonomy, division of labor, cooperation, and complementary or integrated strategies must be framed within that context and the goal of building a viable peace. That context has three crucial elements: (1) the political and strategic framework; (2) the doctrinal and operational habits of the armed forces and development agencies; and (3) the local population. This note aims to generate discussion on the relation between development policy and the armed forces by confronting the lessons from the Balkan conflicts and the reasons why the relevant three – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Macedonia – are currently so troubled.

The Balkan conflicts are unusually important for this policy dialogue because European and transatlantic capacity and practice developed in response to the Balkan cases.[1] Whether through the reaction of headquarters to failures and criticisms or the application of field experience and operational innovations by the thousands who worked in Bosnia-Herzegovina to subsequent missions, all peace operations now bear the marks of lessons learned in the Balkans since 1991. Nor is this learning process at an end, with the full Europeanization taking place of the three current missions – Macedonia, now Bosnia and Herzegovina, eventually Kosovo – as well as the crisis management missions to Serbia and Montenegro.

Political and strategic framework

A post-conflict peace mission is about implementing some political agreement, however detailed or vague, negotiated or imposed. All activities, both planning and operations, must relate to that framework and the terms of its legal mandate.

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1 The influence is equally great on the academic literature and on popular perceptions of the issues at stake in civil wars and post-conflict reconstruction, but those are subjects for another discussion.

Neither security nor development objectives happen in a vacuum; they should be designed to support that political goal. That peace process is also an intense, high-stakes political contest (often a continuation of the war itself with other means), and the resources and policy approach contributed by both the armed forces and the development agencies directly affect the outcomes in that contest. As a rule, neither actor calculates this effect.

No country engages in such a mission without its own political objectives, and those national goals translate directly into the policy of its development agencies and the rules of engagement of its troops and police. While the heightened sensitivity of humanitarian and development actors to the recent dominance of strategic considerations and actors is understandable, this is a problem shared by both the armed forces and development officials. The result is not to subordinate civilian aid-workers to the military, but to generate conflict and disagreements among national units within peace forces and among development agencies in the field, not so much between the two.

The Balkan conflicts transformed our concept of peace operations. As a result primarily of US policy, although it had many supporters in these changes, the shift to peace enforcement had both political and military consequences.

Politically, in all three cases (Dayton, SCR 1244, Ohrid), a settlement was imposed, the necessary consent was only enough to placate foreign-office lawyers, and over time, the fiction that civilian administrations were there to assist the local population in implementing their agreement became increasingly apparent as the international administrations assumed ever greater authority to make decisions for recalcitrant locals and sanction those who were not seen to cooperate. Political conditionality – tying development assistance to specific provisions of the peace accords – became accepted practice. In Bosnia, for example, this prevented half of the country (the Republika Srpska) from receiving any assistance in the first two years, while all development assistance after 1997 was channeled in support of refugee return.[2] Military tasks evolved in response to political directives, from standard demobilization tasks (separation of forces, weapons cantonment, confidence-building measures) to assistance during elections, protection of returning refugees and internally displaced persons, arrest of indicted war criminals, protection of cultural sites, political negotiations, and multi-varied "policing".

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[2] Under the leadership of the Reconstruction and Return Task Force of the Office of the High Representative. That political conditionality created distortions is clear, but what those remain to be examined fully; for example, current evidence suggests, counterintuitively, that neglect was a blessing.

Militarily, UN peacekeeping principles were replaced by heavily militarized, robust rules of engagement and doctrine, extensive use of airpower, intelligence assets, and heavy artillery, and a separate military chain of command from the civilian hierarchy and even national Rules of Engagement (RoE). There are now two types of peace operations – those where the United States of America (USA) is involved militarily on the ground and those where it is not. The differences affect planning, mission structure, and conceptualization of security, including the concept and operations of civil-military cooperation (for example, that civil affairs/CIMIC for the USA is part of war-fighting doctrine, to win "hearts and minds" against an enemy and as force protection, contrasting sharply with peacekeeping doctrine). The strategic interests of the USA and its allies jettison the principle of neutrality, often to the point of war fighting alongside "peacekeeping" missions. Any discussion of relations between development policy and armed forces must begin with which type of operation it will be.

Nonetheless, two aspects of the strategic context for the Balkan operations should caution against applying its lessons elsewhere. Presence in Europe has given European security interests a strong (and some argue distorting) influence on development policy and on the concept of security that would not apply elsewhere. Consider the Stability Pact; the role of Justice and Home Affairs on organized crime and border control, the stabilization and association agreements, and eventual EU membership and its criteria as an incentive in the peace processes. Second, the sheer amount of resources available to Bosnia and Kosovo has no parallel except Palestine and is unlikely ever to be repeated. Even UNPROFOR, usually dismissed as totally inadequate, was endowed with troops and finances beyond anything seen before. Political reasons also led the World Bank to be heavily involved in the region, from early (wartime), detailed planning for recovery and reconstruction to organizing multiple, multi-year donors' conferences and innovating instruments for risk insurance, decentralized operations, and regional frameworks.

Doctrinal and operational habits of the armed forces and development agencies

Our current understanding of the relation between development policy and the armed forces is based on practices and innovations from the Balkan operations. Driven by high politics at the strategic level, European and US organizations (e.g., NATO, OSCE, the EU, Council of Europe) as well as UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, the World Bank, bilateral aid agencies, and many others, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of soldiers, police, professionals, and secondees to this theatre, developed new capacities and reformed earlier practices in response

to the opportunity opened up by the heterodox and trial-and-error operations of these three cases. These reforms were largely operational, particularly refinements in the delivery of aid, in donor coordination, and in more targeted conditionality.

The current emphasis on the need for cooperation and coordination also derives from these conditions. In contrast to standard UN operations, with their single mandate and mission planning, unified chain of command, civilian leadership, and clear roles and standing operating procedures for civil affairs officers, UNHCR, military forces, etc., the American insistence on the separation of military and civilian commands and the multiple, parallel civilian hierarchies aimed at capacity-building for European organizations complicated the tasks of coordination (e.g., in Bosnia, between OHR and OSCE as well as IFOR, and in development policy, among the World Bank, the EU, the OHR task forces resulting from American impatience, and the many well-funded bilateral donors such as USAID, DFID, the Dutch, and the Japanese; in Kosovo, among the four pillars of UNMIK[3]). This organizational novelty reinforced the tendency to focus on operational improvements.

The primary doctrinal, or policy, lesson drawn from the Balkan experience is the importance of rapid response. This influences nearly all of the current reform efforts and capacity building in Europe and at the United Nations – the capacity to plan and deploy integrated force packages rapidly. Emergency response units within development agencies gained prominence and resources, and development activities are increasingly focused on the first 3 to 18 months after a peace agreement, now considered the make-or-break period of peace-building. The bureaucratic and financing gap between relief and development was replaced conceptually (and in small part organizationally, such as the post-conflict unit created at the World Bank) by a relief to development continuum. The task of refugee return gave significant boost to area development approaches (originating in Cambodia and Central America) and especially to the idea of Quick Impact Projects (QIP). The fact that the military can deploy faster than civilians and the belief that an initial "peace dividend" in economic recovery is decisive in preventing a return to war generated, in Bosnia, the now standard use of the military (largely CIMIC units) to deliver aid and initiate small-scale repair and reconstruction projects in the first year or two of peace.[4] The blurring of

formerly iron-clad autonomies went further in the relief operation during NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999, when assertive national NATO units took over responsibility for protecting Kosovo refugees from an inadequate UNHCR operation.

The consequence, besides blurring the lines between military and civilian actors, was to create new distinctions within the concepts of security and development. On security, the military were now robust and resourced but risk averse;[5] their entrance into reconstruction and enhanced CIMIC activities was primarily for the purpose of force protection, not economic recovery, and their highly militarized concept of security and reluctance to do what they called "policing" (providing security for civilians) led to a shift in the mission concept of security – to the rule of law and law enforcement, international police missions, police academies and training, courts, judges, prisons, and human rights offices and ombudspersons.[6]

The concept of development, on the other hand, has bifurcated. Its center is now on early recovery, "peace dividend", crisis-oriented activities, which, on evaluation, are notable for their lack of sustainability and waste in development terms. Indeed, no one tries to justify them on development terms. By contrast, long-term development projects and plans are still designed autonomously, on universal templates and neoclassical assumptions, without local consultation, and with little or no accommodation to the particular needs of war-torn societies and peace-building – despite the well-documented conflict between IFI-led economic strategies and liberal models of economic reform and statebuilding, on the one hand, and the political goals of peace-building, on the other. Neither security nor development has resulted in the Balkan cases.

Local population

The most consequential aspect of peace operations is the neglect in planning and operations of the "targets". Aid, both military and development, is supply-driven

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3 The same structure was repeated in East Timor.
4 On the origins of this approach, see "Evaluation of the Western Bosnia Rehabilitation Programme 1996-1998" (Centre for Defence Studies, King's College London, November 25, 1999, for DFID) and

its Interim Report of May 1999. A recent study of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan raises similar concerns to those expressed in that evaluation; see Charlotte Watkins, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs): an analysis of their contribution to security in Afghanistan, MSc Thesis in Development Practice, Oxford Brookes University, 30 September 2003 (available at: http://www.institute-for-afghan-studies.org/Contributions/Projects/Watkins-PRTs/index.htm).
5 The reason for risk averseness varies among national units, for example, a concern to keep casualties low for some, while for others, a cover for political disagreement with the force command.
6 The Brahimi Report registered this change with a call for a "doctrinal shift" toward civilian security.

and resource-led, not needs-driven or locally tailored. Yet power in the first stages of a peace mission comes either from access to foreign aid or from filling the vacuums created by the multiple delays of international military and civilian deployment, economic aid, and the creation of a government with whom internationals can work. Early winners tend to shape the path of statebuilding and peace consolidation. The greatest influence, and often threat, comes from those who are locally organized to offer security and jobs in these first days; in the Balkan cases, for example, the power of the wartime politicians and military in shaping postwar Bosnia is blamed on early elections but is actually due far more to the need for IFOR and the development agents for partners and to disperse assistance fast; in Kosovo, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) filled the power vacuum easily in June-July 1999 and even now is rarely challenged by KFOR; the deadlock in Macedonia could have been prevented if development assistance (instead of blockade and sanctions) and national security (keeping the UNPREDEP mission and accepting a civic definition of citizenship) had taken priority in 1992-1998 over EU interests and conceptions.

The Balkan conflicts now

The three current Balkan cases are very different kinds of conflicts, types of peace and reconstruction efforts, and stages toward sustainability. All three, however, suffer from two common characteristics: (1) imposed political agreements that do not have popular support, imposed implementation that did not focus on building that popular support, and imposed state and economic models that did not allow the development of an autonomous democratic politics that would have had built-in incentives to generate compromises and build alliances in support of the peace process, and (2) serious unemployment that threatens all political plans.

Rather than creating countries capable of governing themselves, with an autonomous politics and a capacity to manage differences without recourse to violence and to provide basic services to citizens, beginning with security, the peace missions have created a local politics focused on "us [locals] vs. them [internationals]". There is no development in Bosnia and the state hardly functions; there is no security in Kosovo and the economy is failing rapidly; and the Ohrid agreement in Macedonia is unraveling because its economic preconditions do not exist and its opponents are able to mobilize on popular fears for their security. Yet external interests and political disagreements are still driving the political agendas, and it is difficult to see how a change of course is possible. There is an urgent need in all cases to generate local employment.

Lessons

The resources available in the Balkans overwhelm and shame all operations in Africa and provided a critical focus on the resources actually deployed (as opposed to committed) in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the Balkan cases do not support the new conventional wisdom based on them, that the key to successful peace operations is resources, particularly a match between resources and mandate. More robust and resourced militaries do not automatically provide the secure environment needed for other activities to take place, and the lack of development and clear stability implications of large-scale, long-term unemployment in all three cases, despite the careful planning and huge investments, demonstrate clearly that it is not the quantity of resources per se that matters, but what they finance and how they are used.

Severe distortions of the local economy, financially unsustainable projects, aid dependency, capricious projects and overdetermination of governmental structure by donor policies, huge transaction costs for technical procedures and reporting requirements, lack of donor trust of local authorities, confusion among the population about who the real authorities are – these are common outcomes of peace missions. Far greater use and development of local resources from the very beginning, particularly people, an understanding that peace-building takes a long time and goes through stages, and a more modest focus on security and jobs would be more likely to succeed.

The new consensus on peace enforcement also needs debate, first because it requires military resources that will never be available in most cases, and second because the military are not even providing the security that is necessary for statebuilding and development activities. It is worth asking, for example, whether the sophisticated art of UN peacekeeping tradition, with its emphasis on psychological instruments, confidence-building among the parties rather than as a means of force protection, military doctrine aimed at avoiding the dynamic of force, and dynamic peacekeeping, has been lost, or whether Europeans can employ that alternative in operations where the USA is not involved (e.g., in Africa) or in European-led operations (such as KFOR or ISAF). A serious dialogue with those armed forces from alternative traditions and with development workers with extensive field experience on how to re-conceptualize and provide security is urgently needed. For example, how can the two use their resources together to establish functioning local administrations that can re-establish control over arms and the use of violence and begin to generate jobs? In place of the debate over who gets development funds (e.g., the military, non-governmental organizations, or development agencies), can one ask what the

consequences are for locals of using each channel – to which locals, which projects, with what political consequences?[7]

In sum, security and development are goals, not organizations. As the key actors on the ground, can there not be a creative dialogue between those with experience in peace missions in the armed forces and in development work about how to create security within the limited resources available, taking advantage of local norms and people, and how to give early priority to employing the population, not only for income but also for occupation, political autonomy, and dignity? The result will transform peace missions.

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[7] Bosnian experience with CIMIC micro-projects does demonstrate ways to make them more effective (e.g., co-location of civil and military offices, civilian dominance in setting priorities and for greater continuity and experience, clear monitoring procedures for military units), but this does not alter their marginal impact and the question of goals.

Issues Note

Rainer Goerdeler
Director for Asia, South-Eastern Europe and Afghanistan,
Deputy Director General, Cooperation with Countries und Regions;
Asia, Latin America; Europe; Peacebuilding; United Nations,
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany

I would like to try and keep to the allotted time, just as Rory O'Sullivan has done, and only add something where some aspects may need slightly more explication. However, first of all, I would like to emphasize that, in contrast to our Chair, or Enver Hasani or Rory O'Sullivan, I have not had the privilege of being able to observe, or indeed influence, what is going on in the region at first hand. This is a deficit – and one I would much rather clearly-admit right at the beginning. I am also sorry to note that no-one is here with us today from the side of the armed forces who might be able to throw light on what Mr Sullivan, in particular, clearly termed an all-too visible lack of on-site coordination – a point Professor Woodward also mentioned in a somewhat more transparent form.

I imagine we are all familiar with the daily news about the Balkans today, reporting on how, naturally, there is still a considerable degree of ethnic tension, organized crime, economic stagnation, and discrimination against minorities. After all that has been said here about the vast amounts of money poured into South East Europe over the last years for military tasks and development purposes, and all the other critical remarks we have heard, one might wonder what the entire Stability Pact has actually achieved. And let me just pre-empt myself here by adding that I fully subscribe to Professor Woodward's view: South East Europe is hardly suited as a model for other regions of the world. But why? After the dreadful destruction wrought during the Milosevic regime in the western Balkans, the international community not only genuinely tried, through the Stability Pact for South East Europe, as already mentioned a number of times, to create a new perspective, but – and I consider this to be crucial – attempted to create a long-term perspective. Not only had the Milosevic era lasted for ten years, but also nationalist movements have dominated South East Europe for around two hundred years. To that extent, despite having full sympathy for the further-reaching measures called for, as presented by Professor Woodward or