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Peace Operation Partnerships: Lessons and Issues from Coordination to Hybrid Arrangements

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If a central preoccupation for peace operations in 2007 was managing the interplay between political processes and security operations, that challenge was exacerbated when two or more institutions were jointly responsible for the overall peacekeeping response. The difficulties of inter-institutional arrangements were most visible in Darfur, where the United Nations and the African Union negotiated both over arrangements for a “hybrid” operation and over co-management of the Darfur peace process. But during 2007, inter-institutional arrangements complicated efforts in Kosovo and Afghanistan as well, and in a host of other settings.

While public debate over the UN-AU operation in Darfur proceeded as if it was the first time such arrangements had been used, the hybrid operation there should more correctly be understood as the latest development on a continuum, as a continuation of a trend that has increasingly characterized peace operations over the past decade. Indeed, of the more than fifty peace operations covered in this volume, nearly forty involved some form of inter-institutional partnership.

This trend has taken multiple forms of joint or joined-up action by the UN, regional organizations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and UN-mandated multinational forces. A combination of the multidimensional mandates of contemporary peace operations, the resurgence of regional and subregional organizations, legitimacy and capacity considerations, and the exponential growth of peace operations precipitated this wave of institutional partnerships.

Despite their frequency, these partnerships continue to be primarily driven by operational exigencies, and have been managed through ad hoc mechanisms. Although there have been calls for more formalized partnerships, little progress in this direction has occurred.

This chapter explores the contours of these partnerships, and elucidates some of the associated problems, benefits, and lessons learned. While there was some evidence over the past two years of the emergence of a rational system for these partnerships based on comparative advantage or division of labor, the reality of international and regional politics is pushing global peacekeeping toward a different future, one in which several different organizations—principally, the UN, NATO, the EU, and the AU—each develop a fuller range of multifaceted capabilities, ranging from rapid, robust response to longer-term, civilian peacebuilding functions.

There are benefits to this model, but also costs. It will also take years to develop, even if trends continue on their present course. In the long interim, it looks likely that inter-institutional arrangements, in a variety of forms, will continue to dominate the peacekeeping landscape. The lessons learned suggest that these actors will have to overcome issues of politics, planning, personnel, and predictable funding.

Background: Evolving Partnerships

Inter-institutional partnerships have evolved dramatically over the past decade. Some of the earliest experiments occurred in West Africa, where the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the UN were both involved in peacekeeping operations in Liberia (1993–1998)

and Sierra Leone (1997–2005).¹ The relationship between the two organizations at the time was at best testy, sometimes downright antagonistic. ECOWAS claimed both a more immediate ability to respond, and a greater legitimacy that arose from the regional character of its operations. The UN, by contrast, claimed that the Charter gave it primacy of response, notwithstanding the recognition in Chapter VIII of the role that regional organizations can play in helping to maintain international peace and security.² These early partnerships were not limited to West Africa, as the UN entered into similar arrangements elsewhere, most notably in the Balkans.

Over time, however, the UN has come to see the value of regional action,³ especially in immediate response to breaking crises, while regional and subregional organizations have increasingly recognized the merit—even the requirement—for Security Council authorization or at least support for their actions. Moreover, the simple reality of rising operational demands and the political requirements of different regions gave rise to a whole range of operational and political partnerships between organizations. Although each has been *sui generis*, they have broadly conformed to one of three types: sequential, parallel, or integrated operations.⁴

Sequential Operations

In the first type of partnership, different peacekeeping organizations undertook sequential operations at various stages of a response. For instance, in East Timor in 1999, Australia led the deployment of a mandated multinational force, the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), which created the security framework for the subsequent deployment of the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Similarly in Liberia in 2003, ECOWAS deployed temporarily to create the conditions for the longer-term presence of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)—a far happier collaboration than in the first UN-ECOWAS experience in Liberia in the 1990s. Several sequential operations, dating back to

the early 1990s, have taken place—in Somalia, Kosovo, Côte d’Ivoire, Haiti, and Burundi.

Most of these sequential operations have been from a regional or multinational organization to the UN. However, we are now witnessing another generation of sequencing. The handover from NATO to the EU in Bosnia (and potentially from the UN to the EU in Kosovo), and the handover from the UN to an AU special task force in Burundi,⁵ mark a new phenomenon of regional organizations mounting longer-term stabilization missions in the wake of robust international peacekeeping.

Parallel Operations

Increasingly common are parallel operations—where the UN and other entities operate in the same theater, under different command, but to achieve the same broad goals. In the 1990s there were several such parallel deployments—in Liberia, Bosnia, Georgia, Tajikistan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Côte d’Ivoire. There have been several variants.

One version is *short-term military support* from one organization to another. These operations are well illustrated by two different EU deployments to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)—the International Emergency Multinational Force, codenamed Operation Artemis, and the EU Force Democratic Republic of Congo (EUFOR RD Congo), in 2003 and 2006 respectively.⁶ National variants on this model include the UK deployment to Sierra Leone in 1999 in short-term support to the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and France’s (longer-term) deployment of Operation Licorne alongside the UN mission in Côte d’Ivoire.

A further variant is found in *linked military-observer operations*. The first such deployments were the joint UN and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) operations in Georgia and Tajikistan. Here we see one organization (the CIS) providing the military backbone of the operation, with a second (the UN) undertaking military observation, with the UN Mission of Observers to Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the UN Observer Mission in

Georgia (UNOMIG) mandated to ensure international oversight and add Security Council legitimacy to the CIS operations. Similarly, the UN-AU linked deployments along the Eritrea-Ethiopia border combined capability and legitimacy, though in that context the AU and the UN helped legitimate each other's presence.

A final variant is found in *parallel civilian-military operations*. Undertaken by NATO and the UN in Bosnia, this model has also been replicated in Kosovo (Kosovo Force [KFOR] and the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo [UNMIK]) and Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, the International Security Assistance Force [ISAF], and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan [UNAMA]). In all of these cases, the UN provides both a political framework for the military operation, bolstering its legitimacy, and the core political and civilian support to the national authorities. A quite different type of parallel civilian-military operation is found in Gaza, where the EU has a civilian operation (the EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah [EU BAM Rafah]) that undertakes border monitoring on the Palestinian side of what is known as the Philadelphi corridor, while the US-led Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai (MFO Sinai) has a military presence on the Egyptian side, which in turn oversees Egyptian army deployments along the Rafah corridor.⁷ The recently authorized EU-UN deployments to eastern Chad and the Central Africa Republic—whereby the EU will provide troops while the UN provides the police and civilian component—is the latest iteration of this model. EU police deployments in the DRC and Afghanistan are similar.⁸

Integrated Operations

Rarest are integrated operations—missions in which two organizations share command or where one organization subordinates its command to another. Indeed, so far there have been only three such operations. The first was the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), which joined the operations of the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS) during 1993. There, the UN and the OAS operated under a dual-hatted Special

Representative who had full command over both organizations' capabilities.

A second, partially integrated operation was in Kosovo. We have already noted the parallel military and civilian deployment of KFOR and UNMIK respectively. However, within UNMIK four different organizations—the UN Secretariat, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—fused their civilian capabilities into a single operational structure under the command of a UN Special Representative. This arrangement was first mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999), and then negotiated and confirmed by the governing councils of the separate organizations.

Perhaps the financial and logistical support to the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) should be listed under this type of partnership as well. Although at no point did the UN, NATO, or the EU—all of which provided a range of financial and logistical support to AMIS—actually place their capabilities under direct AU command, nevertheless their capabilities were deployed for the sole purpose of enabling the AU operation and did not constitute co-deployed missions in their own right.⁹

The UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) is of course the latest and the most developed of this rare breed of partnerships. Unlike the previous versions of this model, it establishes unified operational command over both the military and civilian components of the operation.¹⁰

The Darfur Operation

Capacity and legitimacy considerations played roles in the negotiation—“design” would be the wrong word—of UNAMID's structure. First, the experience of AMIS highlighted the financial and logistical shortcomings of the AU. Second, there was the need to resolve the government of Sudan's protracted refusal to accept a UN force, alongside Western troop contributors' inability to place their forces under non-UN command. The eventual compromise was for a force under joint UN and AU command.¹¹ (For further details, see the Sudan mission review in this volume, Chapter

3.6.) The agreement in its most basic form comprises the following elements: (1) joint decisionmaking by the UN Secretary-General and the AU chairperson about the appointment of the Special Representative and force commander, (2) operational command at the field level by the force commander, and (3) joint reporting to the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council.

Of the various issues confronting UN-AMID, by far the most controversial and the most likely to be challenging on the ground is the issue of integrated command and control. Joint reporting has been tested before—by the OAS and the UN in Haiti; by the UN and the ad hoc Office of the High Representative in Bosnia; and by the UN, the OSCE, the EU, and the UNHCR in Kosovo—but never over unified military action. While the appointment of a joint UN-AU head of UNAMID is a good first step, it remains to be seen how reporting to the UN and the AU will work in practice. The challenge is not with the command and control at the operational level per se, but with the strategic management of the mission. Although Resolution 1769 reiterates that command and control and backstopping will be provided by the UN, the issue of backstopping could be subject to different interpretations. Thus the success of UNAMID requires both institutions to be innovative and flexible to avoid serious risks to the missions.

Benefits and Costs

There have been important benefits to these various institutional partnerships. Sequential and coordinated military operations have enabled robust peacekeeping when the UN could not or would not meet that need. ECOWAS troops in Liberia were widely credited for stabilizing the situation in 2003, paving the way for the deployment of the larger UN force, as were Australian forces in Timor-Leste. Similarly, the EU's short-term military operations in DRC have been credited with critical backstopping of the UN in hostile environments. Parallel military-civilian operations have also allowed for institutions to build on each other's comparative advantages—for example, the UN and the EU



Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon speaks with AMIS Force Commander General Martin Agwai during his visit to Darfur in advance of UNAMID deployment, 5 September 2007.

have lent their respective civilian capabilities to NATO and AU military operations, as well as to each other; or put obversely, NATO in particular has added its muscle to UN political-civilian engagements in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

There have also been costs, however, and difficulties. In both sequential and short-term coordinated operations, the UN (and other institutions) faced significant handover challenges. This has been acute when the UN has taken over from poorly equipped or poorly supported regional organizations. In Liberia, for instance, the UN had to divert resources from other missions to meet the immediate logistical challenges of some of the rehatted troops.¹² Even with better-resourced organizations, however, handover problems occur. For example, according to a DPKO study, the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) did not fully benefit from Operation Artemis's assets at hand-off, since there was no residual presence of personnel or equipment, and since the EU did not consent to further requests for follow-up visits by its personnel.¹³

There have also been recurrent coordination problems between parallel operations.

Early experience of this in Bosnia (between the UN and NATO) shaped both US and UN thinking about peacekeeping in the following years—but in divergent ways, with the United States learning that military and civilian elements should be kept separate, and the UN learning that they should be integrated. The current operation in Afghanistan is reliving some of these tensions. In Kosovo the experience has by and large been smoother, but even there, at times, NATO and UNMIK have undertaken divergent strategies to deal with violence against or emanating from minority Serb populations (see the Kosovo mission review, Chapter 3.3).

Political issues also arise from the use of parallel or sequential operations. For example, the robust use of national assets, usually by Western countries (Australia, the United Kingdom, France, the United States), to prepare the ground for follow-on UN operations or bolster existing ones while providing clear benefits, raises the question of why these contributors are not willing to place their assets inside UN command structures (such are the politics of peacekeeping that this question is rarely raised vis-à-vis ECOWAS or AU actions). It is notable, of course, that this is precisely what occurred in the 2006 Lebanon operation, though European contributors to that mission did insist on special management arrangements (the Strategic Military Cell—see the Middle East mission review, Chapter 3.5).

Similarly, important questions of legitimacy and ownership are raised by inter-institutional arrangements. Strikingly, whereas the late 1990s and the early 2000s saw a trend of UN authorization creating legitimacy for regional and multinational forces, more recently we have seen the UN's legitimacy challenged (Sudan, Chad)—however cynically—and the use of regional peacekeeping as a legitimating mechanism for broader international engagement.

Lessons Learned

Many of these problems have been shared by several missions, even if the operations are

themselves *sui generis*, and from some can be identified lessons that are applicable to contemporary operations:

- *Politics*: Whereas some early sequential and coordinated operations functioned without a shared political framework for action, over the past decade both regional and multinational forces have by and large come to accept the merits of Security Council authorization for their deployment and a UN political framework for their action. UN Security Council authorization of NATO's ISAF operation in Afghanistan, support to the Pacific Islands Forum-sanctioned operation in the Solomon Islands, authorization of AU missions in Africa, and UN requests for EU deployments clearly add a dimension of legal and/or political legitimacy to these institutions' operations.

- *Personnel*: Although the rehatting of troops in sequential or parallel operational contexts can create logistical burdens (as noted above), experiences from East Timor, Burundi, Liberia, and elsewhere suggest a high value to the remaining mission from retaining some of the troops who participated in previous or parallel operations—especially if those troops are from the lead nation.

- *Planning*: The use of joint planning mechanisms to overcome coordination problems was perhaps best developed in Kosovo, during the early phase of UNMIK, which created a joint planning cell that linked the operational heads of each of the composite organizations (EU, UN, UNHCR, and OSCE). A similar unit has belatedly been created in Afghanistan (the Policy Action Group—see the Afghanistan mission review, Chapter 3.1), in this instance also linked into the government.

- *Predictable funding mechanisms*: This further lesson is specific to cooperation with the AU. Support to AMIS clearly demonstrates that such a complex peace operation cannot function on ad hoc financial and logistical support systems. Rather, the experience emphasized the importance of predictable funding mechanisms to support peace operations un-

dertaken by less well resourced regional organizations. The African Peace Facility provided a useful model for this, though the option of using UN-assessed contributions for authorized AU operations has gained support from previously reluctant donors—especially those who both found themselves financing AU operations through voluntary funds and now find themselves paying, at several times the rate, for the UN operations that were made necessary by the limits on the AU’s capacity.¹⁴

Trends and Policy Options

Looking ahead, assessing the costs, benefits, and lessons learned from inter-institutional cooperation raises critical policy questions: whether arrangements will continue to be ad hoc; or whether we are heading toward a system of ever-more intricate and predictable partnerships between institutions, based on comparative advantage; or, alternatively, whether we will see each of the major peacekeeping institutions develop their own multidimensional capabilities, ranging from rapid, robust response to long-term civilian stabilization tools—thereby avoiding the need for inter-institutional collaboration.

On the face of it, a system of predictable partnerships based on comparative advantage would seem to be the most sensible and the most cost-effective approach. Such a system, presumably, would be based on the following institutional comparative advantages:

- Use of regional organizations, where they exist, for immediate response in peacekeeping contexts.
- Use of the UN as the mainstay provider of peacekeeping operations.
- Use of NATO or its assets as the core enforcement capacity for global peace operations.
- Use of the UN as the central coordinating entity, and as the core civilian and rule-of-law component for global operations.
- Supplemental support for civilian, rule-

- of-law, and police functions from the EU.
- Additional capacities for civilian and military action as developed on a regional basis.

Logically, perhaps. But in reality, experience and politics appear to be forcing the alternative model—each of the main peacekeeping platforms developing the full range of capabilities. There is an advantage to this. Where one organization finds itself, perhaps unpredictably, barred from responding (e.g., NATO in Lebanon, the UN in Darfur and Chad), another will have the full capacity to take its place. But there are significant costs, too: in the need for multiple planning staffs, multiple civilian staffs, and most importantly, multiple standby forces—this in a context of sharply strained troop supply and rising peacekeeping budgets.

The rationale for the current approach differs from context to context. In both a European and an African context, a high premium on security independence appears to be the driving force of this model. The EU’s aspiration for a security architecture independent of NATO is clearly articulated in the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) (though indications of a possible shift in French policy may presage a change in NATO-EU relations). In Africa, a history of instability and disappointing international response to conflict and crisis, notably the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and the ongoing crisis in Darfur, is driving the AU’s interest in developing robust response capabilities, as well as a civilian component. In NATO, the experience of Afghanistan is generating demand among some members at least for the organization to develop what it terms a “comprehensive” capacity—though EU-NATO politics may cut against this ambition. Finally at the UN, the recurrent experience of finding that putative partners are either unwilling to deploy or unacceptable to local counterparts drives a sense that the organization must have, intrinsic to itself, the full complement of response options, from robust enforcement

to support for civilian governance, rule of law, and economic governance.

Conclusion

The complexities of the international political system militate against developing a predictable and reliable interlocking system. Given this, but given also that development of the full range of capacities at each of the major peacekeeping institutions is years away, inter-institutional arrangements—from sequencing to parallel operations to full-blown integration—will be

the dominant mode of peacekeeping for the foreseeable future. These would benefit from standardization of the lessons discussed above: the use of joint planning mechanisms to overcome problems of strategic coordination; rehatting troops, especially from the lead nation, in the context of sequential or parallel operations; establishing appropriate and sustainable financing mechanisms for weaker institutions; and—perhaps most important, because it creates the context for the others—establishing a common political framework for action.

Notes

1. For more on operations undertaken by ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and the UN in the 1990s, see Alhaji M. S. Bah, “A Tale of Cooperation: ECOWAS, the United Nations, and Conflict Resolution in West Africa,” *Queen’s International Observer*, January–February 2006, <http://www.qiaa.org/observer/bah.htm>; Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia’s Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000); Festus Aboagye, *ECOMOG: A Sub-Regional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management, and Peacekeeping in Liberia* (Accra: Sedco, 1999); Fummi Olonisakin, “UN Cooperation with Regional Organization Peacekeeping: The Experience of ECOMOG and UNOMIL in Liberia,” *International Peacekeeping* 3, no. 3 (1996): 33–51.

2. For more on the UN’s cooperation with regional entities, see United Nations, *Cooperation Between the United Nations and Regional Organizations/Arrangements in a Peacekeeping Environment: Suggested Principles and Mechanisms* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Lessons Learned Unit, March 1999).

3. Whereas in 1992 Boutros Boutros-Ghali downplayed the role of regional organizations in UN peacekeeping in his *Agenda for Peace*, thirteen years later the 2005 World Summit Outcome made specific reference to the value added to peace operations by regional organizations, focusing particularly on their ability to respond rapidly in the times of crisis. See United Nations, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN Doc. A/RES/60/1, 24 October 2005, p. 23.

4. Bruce Jones and Feryal Cherif, “Evolving Models of Peacekeeping: Policy Implications and Responses,” 2004, <http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbpu/library/bruce%20jones%20paper%20with%20logo.pdf>.

5. The UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB) was itself deployed on the back of the African Union’s first peace operation: the AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB).

6. Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom contributed small numbers of troops to Artemis. For more on the mission, see United Nations, *Operation Artemis: The Lessons of the International Emergency Multinational Force* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Best Practices Section, Military Division, October 2004).

7. A similar civilian-military divide characterizes the international presences in Iraq, though the mandated multinational force in Iraq is not a peacekeeping operation per se.

8. See European Union, EU Council Joint Action 2007/677/CFSP, 15 October 2007; United Nations, UN Doc. S/RES/1778, 25 September 2007.

9. The AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the AU Mission in Support of Elections in Comoros (AMISEC), and the Force Multinationale de la Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l’Afrique Centrale (FOMUC) also received external financial support, primarily from the EU’s African Peace Facility.

10. For an in-depth analysis of the complexities of peacekeeping in Sudan, see Alhaji M. S. Bah and Ian Johnstone, “Peacekeeping in Sudan: The Dynamics of Protection, Partnerships, and Inclusive Politics,” May 2007, http://www.cic.nyu.edu/internationalsecurity/docs/cic_paper2_sudan_final.pdf.

11. See UN Security Council Resolution 1769, UN Doc. S/2007/468, 30 July 2007. For additional details on the mandate, see also United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the Hybrid Operation in Darfur*, UN Doc. S/2007/307/Rev.1, 5 June 2007.

12. For more information, see United Nations, *Lessons Learned Study on the Start-Up Phase of the United Nations Mission in Liberia* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Best Practices Section, April 2004). See also *ECOMIL After Action Review*, final report (Accra, August 2004).

13. *Operation Artemis*, p. 14.

14. For more on the facility, see “Mid-Term Evaluation of the African Peace Facility Framework Contract” (Report no. 9ACP RPR 22), December 2005, €250 million, http://www.dgroups.org/groups/cool/docs/apf-evaluation-final_report_ecdpm_version_for_ecorys_190106.pdf.