

Box 3.4.1 Civilian Police Capacity

The growing number, scale, and scope of police functions in peace operations has meant that demand has vastly outstripped supply. A number of states and organizations have taken steps to increase global civilian police capacity, including the UN, the Group of Eight (G8), and a consortium of European governments.

At the World Summit of September 2005, the heads of state and government endorsed creation of the Standing Police Capacity (SPC) in the United Nations, which had earlier been requested by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping. A “standing” capacity of experienced officers and advisers on the UN payroll was seen as a necessary next step beyond the existing “standby” system of 100 on-call officers, because few experienced law enforcement personnel are readily available for rapid deployment.

The SPC will serve as a vanguard in starting new operations, and provide expert advice to existing operations. The startup function includes planning for police operations, setting up the headquarters, developing detailed implementation plans, assessing the existing capacity of local law enforcement agencies, and advising them on reform and restruc-

turing. The SPC would remain in the mission area for about 120 days, until the UN police component is fully staffed and operationally effective. When not required to start up new operations, the SPC would provide targeted and time-limited advisory services to existing operations, with a focus on enhancing indigenous law enforcement institutions.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations issued a policy directive on 1 May 2006, setting out the functions and organization of the SPC for an initial twelve-month period. Twenty-five professional staff are being recruited, plus two support personnel. It will be based at UN headquarters in New York initially, but move outside North America after the first year. An evaluation of the SPC will be conducted at the end of the year to consider its performance and determine whether it should be expanded to 100 personnel.

By contrast, the Center on Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoESPU) is not an operational entity, but a training center established in March 2005 as the Italian government’s contribution to the G8’s 2004 action plan for building global peacekeeping capacities. This envisaged training some 7,500 gen-

darmerie by 2010. CoESPU’s role is to “train the trainers” and develop doctrine and disseminate lessons learned through liaising with states and international organizations. It is expected that some 3,000 students will have passed through CoESPU by 2010.

There is also a separate operational cell in Vicenza. In January 2006, five European governments (Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and Portugal) inaugurated a thirty-officer headquarters located in the same barracks as CoESPU. This is the standing element of the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF), which is intended to deploy up to 800 personnel in thirty days. It had been first proposed in 2004 by the Dutch presidency of the EU, but it is not a formal EU body. Decisions regarding its deployment will be taken by a high-level committee of representatives of the states involved, and the EGF is potentially available not only for EU missions, but also for those of NATO, the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and ad hoc coalitions. Its costs are borne by the states involved. The EGF headquarters undertook a number of exercises in 2006, but has not directed an actual deployment.