

GÜNTHER GREINDL (Ed.)

**Multilateral Cooperation
in Peace Support Operations –
Challenges and Limitations**

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Multilateral Cooperation in Peace Support Operations – Challenges and Limitations

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Message of Greeting

Günther PLATTER
Austrian Federal Minister of Defence

Austria looks back at a long tradition of international operations. So far, in the history of the Austrian Armed Forces, about 60,000 soldiers have been abroad in the service of security, peace, and stability. Worldwide their service is held in the highest esteem as they contribute to international operations with great competence and sensitivity.

The security political changes of our time have made it evident that we need to take care of security and stability in conjunction with other nations. Austria can only be secure if her environment is secure, too. These operations are based on the high motivation with which our soldiers accomplish their tasks.

Public support of the participation of military forces in peace operations is of essential significance. The BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA raises the general public's interest and promotes the profound discussion of international stability.

The BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA plays a key role by providing a communication platform to Austrian soldiers with experience in international operations. Further, it supports the exchange of experiences and valuable know-how. Comradeship and friendship are key to the Forum's work.

I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to say thank you to all soldiers of the Austrian Armed Forces for their commitment to international peace and stability. They thus contribute outstandingly to security in various regions of the world, which is at the same time to the benefit of the Austrian population.

I wish the BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA continued success. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to you for your dedicated work.

Günther Platter
7 June 2006

Introduction by the Editor

General Günther GREINDL (ret)

The first BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA was conducted at Schloss Rothschild in Reichenau south of Vienna in May 2005. The forum dealt with “Peacekeeping Forces Today and Tomorrow”. The proceedings were published and distributed to the participants as well as to national and international experts on peacekeeping. This year again the Austrian Blue Helmet Association organized in cooperation with the Directorate General for Security Policy of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence, with the National Defence Academy and with the Austrian International Operations Command a Blue Helmet Forum. The Austrian daily newspaper “Die Presse” has been the media partner of the forum.

The aim of the Blue Helmet Forum is to provide an opportunity to address the complex issues of “Peace Support Operations” with a focus on the military aspects. It brings together experts from the military field and important persons from politics, business, media and diplomacy, for whom knowledge of “Peace Soldiering” is of relevance.

The BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA 2006 dealt with “Multilateral Cooperation in Peace Support Operations – Challenges and Limitations”. This publication contains the contributions of the military and civilian experts, who have given presentations. It also summarizes the very interesting discussions. The opening of the Forum was conducted in German. This allowed the

participation of a wider national audience and a more extensive reference to Austrian aspects of the multinational cooperation. For the purpose of this publication the two opening presentations and the message of Kurt Waldheim, former President of the Republic of Austria and former United Nations Secretary General, were translated into English.

Peacekeeping is at the centre of the United Nations. It was invented in the wake of the Suez crisis in 1956. During the cold war the United Nations soldiers were almost exclusively the peacekeepers of the world. The concept of peacekeeping was associated with the Blue Helmets who have been seen as the impartial guardian of stability in many crisis spots. In 1988 they were collectively awarded the Peace Nobel Prize in recognition of their service. However, the United Nations do not have a monopoly on peacekeeping. On the contrary, chapter VIII of the UN-Charter gives regional arrangements or agencies a role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Such agencies “shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlements of local disputes.....before referring them to the Security Council”. The European Union, NATO, OSCE and the African Union are such “agencies” performing already important tasks in various peace operations.

The maintenance of peace and security has become a common task of the United Nations and the regional organisations. The growing engagement of these organisations in peacekeeping operations requires close interaction among them taking into account the specific responsibilities and capabilities of each organisation. In

other words there must be a clear and shared understanding of the very nature of peace operations.

Peace operations are, as opposed to war, not designed to destroy an enemy or to gain victory. Their aim is to restore or maintain peace. According to Clausewitz war is “the continuation of policy by other means” meaning the use of military force to impose one’s will. Peace operations can be seen as continuation of policy by complementary means comprising a number of civilian and military tools to stabilize a situation and to create the conditions for a peaceful settlement. Peace operations are neither war nor peace. They are governed by the rule of law. This raises two questions essential for the success of peace operations. How are peace operations authorized to be considered legitimate? Who is capable to conduct them effectively? Legitimacy is the key factor for wide acceptance of an international intervention and operational effectiveness is the prerequisite for success.

As far as legitimacy is concerned there is no doubt that the United Nations are the only institution to authorise the use of force in peace operations. According to Chapter VII of the UN-Charter “The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to peace.....and decide, what measures shall be taken....to maintain or restore international peace or security”. Besides this legal aspect it is the composition of the Council, which adds additional weight to any of his decisions. This holds true for as long as the members of the Council are willing to agree and to pass a resolution containing a clear mandate. Unfortunately, often this is not the case. If the Security Council is not able or not willing to act, member states can individually or

collectively exercise their inherent right of self-defence. However, Article 51 of the Charter limits this right. Self-defence is only permitted “if an attack occurs against a member” and “until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security”.

Military operations based on Article 51 always run the risk of being controversial. The decisive question as to what constitutes an attack on a member state gives rise to different interpretations by the various member states. Right from the beginning these operations suffer from erosion of political support. For the long term success peace operations need the backing of the Security Council and of the largest possible number of United Nations Member States. In conclusion it is quite clear, that all peace operations should be properly mandated by the Security Council in order to be recognized as legitimate interventions.

The other important factor for successful peacekeeping is operational effectiveness. The selection of a capable lead organisation therefore deserves careful consideration. Complex peace operations require coordination of civil and military assets and interaction with other actors like Governmental Organisation (GOs) and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). Peacekeeping is a very complex task and the lead organisation needs to be able to provide a command structure, as well as capabilities of its own, which can cope with this demanding job. In many cases the UN will be the obvious choice, but often the EU, NATO or the African Union are willing and able to take the lead. Each Organisation has its strengths and its weaknesses. To

better illustrate this fact an illustrative ranking in selected key capabilities is given below. It depends on the nature of the mission and the tasks at hand as to which organisation is best suited to take the lead in a particular peace operation.

Illustrative ranking in selected key capabilities

	UN	EU	NATO
Political/Strategic			
Legitimacy	1	3	3
Civ/Mil Coordination	1	1	3
Resolve	3	2	1
Civilian Capabilities			
Democratization	1	2	3
Demobilization	2	2	1
Civilian Police	1	1	3
Human Rights	1	2	3
Humanitarian Assistance	1	2	3
Military Capabilities			
Command & Control	3	2	1
Peace Enforcement	3	2	1
Peace Keeping	2	2	1
Rapid Reaction	3	2	1
Funding			
Civilian Capabilities	2	1	3
Military Capabilities	3	2	1

The illustrative ranking allows some general observations on each organisation's capacity. The weakest point of the United Nations is their lack of military capability. On the

other hand, legitimacy is a factor of overriding importance where the United Nations have the highest credibility. Even in cases where UN would not be in the lead, the Security Council needs to provide a mandate to ensure maximum support by all involved actors and the local population alike.

The European Union has developed a comprehensive package of crisis management instruments comprising of civilian and military assets. A strong point of the Union is the availability of considerable funds for humanitarian aid. Humanitarian assistance is an indispensable aspect of modern peacekeeping.

For peace operations where the enforcement of a mandate requires predominantly the use of military force, NATO is obviously the most effective actor.

The illustrative ranking above shows that each organisation has sufficient capabilities to lead complex peace operations. The best result would be achieved if all the above organisations would cooperatively engage those capabilities, which they can deliver best. A cooperative engagement would achieve the highest level of efficiency, a typical example being former Yugoslavia. However, often the cooperative involvement of all organisations in an interlocking system of crisis management may not be possible or desirable. In these instances the question as to which organisation takes the lead will depend on the strategic context. While in Europe we have seen NATO or the European Union as lead organisations, the Greater Middle East may be increasingly seeing NATO in charge. The UN on the other hand will be most likely taking responsibility in

African peace operations, for as long as the African Union has not developed effective peacekeeping capabilities. In Africa we may also see a division of labour whereby NATO with the NATO Response Force (NRF) or the EU in line with the Battle Group Concept may be involved in rapid, short term military operations to restore peace and the UN may take on the long term nation building and peacekeeping.

No matter at which type of peace operation or at which organisation we look there is a need to command effective military forces. None of the above mentioned organisations commands military forces of their own. They need to generate them on a case by case basis from national resources of their member states. In the end it will always be a multinational force conducting a particular peace operation.

In theory the military efficiency of each multinational force, either under command of UN, EU or NATO should be the same, since they are all generated from the same set of forces. As we know from experience, this is not the case. What are the reasons for that? To be effective multilateral forces require intensive multilateral military cooperation based on common concepts. Multilateral military cooperation is a dominant element of today's military life. It already goes far beyond the staff level, were multinationality has a long history. The challenge of today is the generation of effective multinational forces, from brigade down to company size units. The more multinationality we see at the unit level, the more military efficiency will depend on the quality of multilateral cooperation in peace support.

Empirically, we can distinguish different levels of quality in multilateral military cooperation:

- **The ad hoc cooperation in the mission.** This is the weakest form and leaves the achievement of operational effectiveness to the personnel in the field. Although unsatisfactory, it was more or less the working method during the period of the cold war peacekeeping.
- **The pre-deployment mission cooperation.** This form of cooperation is based on common standards and includes also some pre-deployment training, as well as operational fitness inspections. The United Nations prepare their forces this way. It is the form of preparation and cooperation which allows the generation of multinational forces for complex peacekeeping operations, but is not intense enough to pre-establish multinational units. Nevertheless this constitutes a qualitative leap of the UN working method and offers still ample opportunities for improvement.
- **Enhanced cooperation by agreement.** This cooperation is designed to prepare forces of a group of countries for a specific mission or to pre-establish a multinational unit for clearly defined types of operations. A typical example of this kind of multinational military cooperation for peacekeeping is SHIRBRIG. The various aspects of this high quality of cooperation were presented at the forum by the Chief of Staff SHIRBRIG.
- **Permanent enhanced cooperation.** This level of cooperation presupposes a common purpose, institutionalised procedures and commitment of forces by the participants. EU and NATO provide

the framework for enhanced cooperation. The NATO Response Force and the EU Battle Groups are striking examples of multinational forces able to achieve the highest military standards through permanent enhanced military cooperation.

All types of military cooperation, ad hoc or permanent, have to tackle the same key subjects. Following key subjects are at the centre of multilateral military cooperation.

Force Generation

The political decision by member states of any organisation to commit forces to a peace operation will be always very late. This presents a serious challenge to the multinational decision making process for the establishment of an operation. In addition, the planners face great difficulties to balance the pledged contributions with the requirements of the mandate. Normally, there are sufficient infantry units available whereas key enablers like engineers or helicopters are lacking.

Command and Control

The direction of a peace operation is effected through the chain of command on the political, strategic, operational and tactical level. Troop contributing nations take a keen interest in being represented at the various headquarters. Balancing their demands without jeopardizing the effective functioning of the staff is one of the constant challenges of multinationality.

Rules of engagement/deployment

A peacekeeping force needs to have one set of rules of engagement binding for all participating contingents. The commander must also be free to deploy his soldiers where they can best serve the implementation of the mandate. Unfortunately, there is yet no multinational force where troop contributing nations would permit the engagement of their contingents without caveats.

Logistics

The concept of logistics is determined by the lead organisation. In EU or NATO lead operations the troop contributors are entirely responsible for their logistics. The United Nations follow a different philosophy. For the first 60 days of an operation, national contingents must be self sufficient. Then the UN resumes responsibility for most of the logistics. Civilian contracting is widely used to save scarce and costly military assets. The integration of civilian and military logistic resources is not without friction. It requires careful balancing and a clear definition of mutual responsibilities.

Training

A soldier - who is well trained- will perform his tasks with confidence and will earn the respect of partners and opponents. Training is a decisive factor for operational efficiency. Training for peace operations is a shared responsibility between troop contributors and lead organisations. Individual soldier training is clearly a national responsibility. However, mission specific

training and staff training need the input of the lead organisation. Training is an area where multilateral cooperation produces not only considerable economies, but does at the same time improve the training quality. Multilateral training is also the best preparation for a common deployment in the mission.

There are many other issues, like intelligence, soldier's behaviour, discipline, cultural awareness and financial matters, which need attention when discussing multilateral military cooperation. Most of these issues are interlinked and raising one subject will inevitably lead to another.

Multilateral military cooperation in peace operations has a long history. It is, however, a growing business in quantity as well as in quality. It will be prominently on the agenda of every armed force world wide. The BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA 2006 has taken up this subject at a time when the Austrian Bundesheer is going through a transformation from a static defence force to a flexible mobile force deployable for international peace operations. The general topic of the Forum "Multilateral Cooperation in Peace Support Operations - Challenges and Limitations" is therefore of increasing relevance in Austria.

The BLUE HELMET FORUM 2006 has been critically looking at the different aspects of multilateral military cooperation in order to make a contribution to its improvement. It has brought together experts from various organisations with experience in generating and deploying multinational forces. Many of the key questions of multilateral military cooperation have been

touched during the forum, either by the excellent presentations or in the discussion groups. It was the aim of the BLUE HELMET FORUM AUSTRIA 2006 to make a modest contribution by pointing to challenges and limitations of multilateral military cooperation.

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