



Report and Summary

Irresponsible Idealism?:

Examining the challenges of the Norwegian approach to Civil-Military Interaction

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Acronyms

ACT – Allied Command Transformation

AJP – Allied Joint Publication

ACBAR – Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief

ANSO – Afghanistan NGO Safety Office

AOG – Armed Opposition Group

CCOE – CIMIC Centre of Excellence

CIMIC – Civil-Military Cooperation

CMC – Civil-Military Fusion Centre

COIN – Counterinsurgency

CREN – CIMIC Requirements and Education in Norway

ECHO – European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

ETEE - Education, Training and Evaluation

EU – European Union

FFI – Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt (Norwegian Defence Research Establishment)

FFOD – Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine (Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine)

FOH – Forsvarets Operativ Hovedkvarter (Norwegian National Joint Headquarters)

FSTS – Forsvarets stabsskole (Military Staff College)

GIRoA – Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

HVS – Hærens Våpensskole (Army Land Warfare Centre)

ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross

IEA – Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban)

IO – International Organization

IHL – International Humanitarian Law

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoD – Ministry of Defence

MOT – Mentoring and Observation Team

MSF - Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCC – National Contingent Commander

NCO – Non Commissioned Officer

NGO – Non-governmental organization

NORDCAPS – Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support

NRC – Norwegian Refugee Council

NUPI – Norsk Utenrikspolitisk Institutt (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs)

OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OMLT – Observation Mentoring Liaison Team

PRT – Provincial Reconstruction Team

PSKOI - US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute

QIP – Quick Impact Project

SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

UN – United Nations

UNAMA – United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

UNDG – United Nations Development Group

Prologue

The decision to deploy a nation's military to an international operation is an enormous responsibility. It implies a responsibility towards alliances and member nations, towards host governments, and not least, to unarmed civilians living through conflict. Deployed militaries carry this responsibility with them to the area of operations, where they operationalize them "on the ground".

This responsibility is based upon at least two assumptions; that conflict involves and includes civilians (in one way or another), and that deployed militaries need to reflect a respect for human rights and human security, protecting civilians as much as possible given and within the military mandate. As such, a responsible military actor will have a high competency (through training, education and lessons learned from experience) in the field of civil-military interaction, that can adjust to diverse scenarios in all operations.

Norway has developed a model of civil-military interaction that, at its core, is designed to respect civilian actors as much as possible, in large part by keeping militaries out of civilian (more specifically "humanitarian") space. Such a model necessitates (among other things) an increased understanding by military actors about the civil-military dynamics within the specific operational contexts in which they conduct their activities. This model has resulted in a reduced (if not eliminated) core military competency in civil-military interaction (known as Civil-Military Cooperation, or CIMIC). CIMIC is not the only military function that works in the civil-military interface, but it has been subject to intense criticism for activities that are seen to contravene the Norwegian model, and it is the only military function that is primarily responsible for understanding and negotiating the space between military actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civilian actors. The reactions towards CIMIC and the development of the Norwegian civil-military model illustrate well the necessity for opening up a dialogue and asking the questions: does the "Norwegian model" for civil-military interaction work for all actors, both civilian and military, in all contexts? Do we have a clear understanding of roles of different actors within different contexts? Is there anything we still have to learn? And finally, how can we ensure that we improve civil-military competencies amongst diverse actors, particularly the military, given its responsibility towards civilians in areas of operations?

This report, which summarizes some of the key results of the research and analysis conducted during the CIMIC Requirements and Education in Norway (CREN) project at the University of Tromsø, wishes to contribute to opening a dialogue on Norway's approach to civil-military interaction. The CREN project has also resulted in a soon-to-be-published book which goes into greater detail regarding the complexities of the civil-military interface which defies quick-fix solutions or policy mantras.¹

The CREN Project had as its primary objective to assess education and training capabilities in civil-military interaction broadly speaking, and NATO CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) in particular, in Norway. The main finding of this 4 year research project is that the Norwegian policy regarding civil-military interaction, expressed as the "Norwegian model", has significantly reduced but not improved the civil-military interaction capacity within the Norwegian military, which in turn has not led to any significant focus in training and education in this field.

This report is not meant to be a final word on the subject, but is rather meant as a springboard that can open up a very complex discussion about the future of interactions between militaries and civilians. What can be concluded however, is that reducing competency for any actor in this area, and not least the military, is not an answer.

¹ Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørsv (expected publication December 2012/January 2013). "Irresponsible Idealism: The Challenges of the Norwegian Approach to Civil-Military Interaction." Ashgate.

1 Introduction

In principle, civil-military interaction² refers to the range and nature of contact, coordination, and/or cooperation between national (local) and international (foreign) civilian (ranging from government officials to NGOs, to local populations) and military actors in crisis situations. In practice, civil-military interaction refers to that untidy place where the ethics, ideals, practicalities, and realities regarding the relations between militaries and civilians meet up, and often collide, if not understood and managed properly. Civil-military interaction has been relevant to operations to varying degrees since the World Wars of the 20th century, but it has played a central, and controversial, role in complex operations since the end of the Cold War. The concept is grounded upon assumptions about security (by whom, for whom), legitimacy (mandate and authority), responsibility (enabling and empowerment for *all* actors, not least local populations) and ethical foreign policy (balancing the need to “do something” for vulnerable populations while maintaining national security priorities). Civil-military interaction depends upon, at a minimum, a comprehensive knowledge of all actors relevant to or engaged within the crisis situation, including different mandates and goals. Beyond this, and depending on the context of the crisis (humanitarian, natural disaster or conflict, peacekeeping, military operations, etc), interaction consists of a balance of security considerations, capacity and logistics, and competence between actors. Civil-military interaction is relevant in all operations where civilians and civilian organizations are operating and/or affected by military activity, including ground and air operations. Civil-military interaction is extremely difficult to manage, but impossible to avoid.

The term “civil-military interaction” is a broad concept that is reflected through a number of specific doctrines, models, guidelines and policy approaches. Often these approaches are developed and applied by military institutions like NATO, but also by civilian organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Not all actors in the civil-military interface have “guidelines” either, as local communities do not interact with civilian agencies

² Civil-military interaction as applied here does not refer to the interaction between militaries and civilian nationals within the same state, for example the balance between military actors and civilian governing structures and actors within the USA or Norway etc which is more often referred to as civil-military relations (this is consistent with other work on the subject, see Rietjens, S. and M. T. I. B. Bollen, Eds. (2008). Managing Civil-Military Cooperation: A 24/7 Joint Effort for Stability. Military Strategy and Operational Art. Hampshire, Ashgate Publishing Limited.)

and militaries on the basis of models, and policy approaches.³ They nevertheless play a central role in this interface as well. Thus the concept is not exclusively military, and nor should it be. Among the many approaches and policies that abound (for those that use them), one can see that they range from the tactical and operational to strategic and political, including the so-called “Oslo Guidelines” (Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil-Defence Assets in Disaster Relief), NATO CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation), UN CIMIC (Civil-Military Coordination), the ICRC Code of Conduct, COIN (Counterinsurgency), the “Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies”, PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team), NATO Comprehensive Approach, Gender Field Advisors (GFAs), EU Comprehensive Coordination, and the UN’s Integrated Missions, among others. These terms are all relevant to civil-military interaction, however they are by no means synonymous and do not serve similar purposes. What is clear is that civil-military interaction is a key concern for both civilian and military actors, and that the proliferation of models and guidelines demonstrate a desire for better preparation in this field.

Many of the actors involved in the civil-military interface in complex emergencies struggle to find a satisfactory balance between roles and mandates while they operate in close proximity to one another. Many actors have a poor understanding of one another, and there is a lot of mistrust. Some typical, and stereotypical, claims about different actors include:

1. The military cannot be trusted because they will use and abuse other actors in the pursuit of their own military objectives (including force protection and so-called “hearts-and-minds”);
2. Military specialists in civil-military interaction, CIMIC officers, are particularly incompetent as “wanna-be” NGOs;
3. CIMIC is synonymous with soldiers building schools and hospitals;
4. NGOs are corrupt disaster/conflict magnets looking for ways to maintain their existence;
5. NGOs mismanage funding;
6. NGOs use principles of independence and impartiality to prevent project monitoring and oversight by local governing bodies and donor nations;

³ Thanks to Leonard van Duijn, a Dutch development studies expert currently at NTNU, for ensuring this point was highlighted.

7. Local populations will only tell you what they think you want to hear so that they can get something out of you or cannot be trusted;
8. Donor/troop-contributing nations use NGOs to make themselves look good and to meet their own political goals.

Ideally, a model of civil-military interaction needs to rise above the mistrust, allow for open dialogue between actors and flexibility between contexts and mandates, and assist actors towards compromise and coexistence if not coordination or cooperation. The measure of a successful model is one where all relevant actors can say that it functions satisfactorily for their respective needs and positions, and can be used as a basis for education, training, and preparation for future operations.

1.1 The approach

The following report summarizes the results of a four year project (CREN-CIMIC Requirements and Education in Norway) conducted at the University of Tromsø (Institute for Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning). Inspiration for this project was initially generated by my (the author) own research interests in multi-actor (civilian/military) security constellations and the responsibilities military actors have towards civilians during operations. The project idea was further inspired by discussions with the Norwegian Army Land Warfare Centre (HVS or Hærens Våpenskole) about the role of CIMIC in contributing to the operationalization of this responsibility. The original mandate of the CREN project was to obtain an overview of civil-military related education and training in Norway, and thereafter, to provide recommendations for improving this, if necessary.

More broadly I wished to ask “Does Norway have an effective policy and practice (including adequate military training and education) in the area of civil-military interaction?” and on the basis of the research collected I have come to the conclusion that Norway’s current policy in the field of civil-military interaction has not been effective and has at times been misguided due to confusion and misunderstanding about military and civilian roles, a simplification of contexts, resulting in an inflexible political mandate and a reduced focus on military expertise in the field.

The discussion that follows in this report in support of the above claim examines and compares the civil-military policy referred to as the “Norwegian model” to the military function that specializes in a specific form of civil-military interaction that works within the complex nexus between military, NGO and governmental actors. The analysis includes a

review of Norwegian policy and the results of interviews and discussion groups conducted with over 120 respondents (NGO, ministry, and military actors) located in Norway as well as in Afghanistan. Respondents were questioned on their perceptions of civil-military interaction in practice and policy, on the efficacy and/or relevance of the specific task of CIMIC as a military tool for civil-military interaction, and on the adequacy of military training and education in the field of civil-military interaction.

The interviews for this project have been further supplemented by responses to 46 questionnaires delivered to Dutch, American, Polish and Norwegian officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) on the specific subject of cultural awareness, a core competency employed by a number of military functions, including CIMIC, in the civil-military interface. This survey was designed as a contribution to the USJFCOM led Multinational Experiment (MNE) 6 project on cultural awareness, but has been informative for the CREN project in further identifying needs in the area of civil-military interaction.⁴

Individual names of interview respondents are withheld, and reference is made only to the institutions/target groups (4) represented by respondents. Names are mentioned only when the names have been published or made public already.

1.2 The Norwegian model

The Norwegian experience in civil-military interaction in Afghanistan has been particularly instructive in illustrating the difficulties surrounding the civil-military interface, particularly at the tactical and operational levels. Norway, as both a donor nation (UN, NGOs, World Bank) and a troop-contributing nation (NATO, UN), directly and simultaneously contributes to multiple dimensions within the civil-military interactive sphere. The Norwegian government, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has attempted to front a civil-military “model” that ensures respect for and prioritizes the safety of civilians (both local, civilian populations as well as humanitarian workers) during times of crisis. The “Norwegian model” advocates a clear divide between “political authorities” and “humanitarian” activities in theatre (Kristoffersen 2006; Utenriksdepartement 2009), while at the same time endorsing tight coordination between these same actors. Often this model has been expressed in such a way as that a divide exists not between *political* (military and civilian) and *humanitarian* (allegedly apolitical) actors, but between *military* and *civilian* actors (placing *all* civilians in

⁴ As a part of the Norwegian delegation to the Multinational Experiment 6 (objective 4.3) I designed a short survey about military perceptions regarding the efficacy of cultural awareness as a required competency within various military functions, including CIMIC.

the same category). The model is predominantly informed by humanitarian principles (particularly independence, impartiality and neutrality) and the notion of humanitarian space (a type of “protective zone” around humanitarian actors to ensure their independence, impartiality and neutrality), which does not and cannot apply to all civilian actors.

This model, though rooted in important and well-established humanitarian principles, has not contributed to better civil-military interaction but seems to have exacerbated mistrust and polarized debate, not least by restricting constructive dialogue. The model makes assumptions about civilian actors that can be misleading (ie: that all civilians all can be equated with “humanitarian”) and assumptions about humanitarian space and international humanitarian law (IHL) that need considerably more explanation (IHL does not exclude military actors from delivering aid to vulnerable populations whereas the debate on the Norwegian model appears to make another claim). The model has *not* contributed to further development or improvement in military education and training in civil-military interaction based on lessons-learned, nor does it allow for the adjustments and difficult choices that must be made by all actors in specific conflict contexts. The model lacks important content, contextual awareness, and guidance. As such, the model’s acontextualized departure point (not recognizing different demands in operations or the important differences between actors) takes an important message and weakens it.

1.3 Focus on CIMIC

The Norwegian military, as well as other militaries, has been frequently subject to criticism for not adequately respecting the needs and space of civilian actors, in particular in Afghanistan (Aftenposten 2008; Rasmusson 2010; Stangeland 2010; Staveland 2010; Staveland and Akerhaug 2010; Staveland and Akerhaug 2010a; Staveland and Akerhaug 2010b; Reinert Omvik 2011; Tømte December 2010). The military function of CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) has often been singled out in these critiques (Gompelman 2011). Although CIMIC is not the only military function that plays a role in the civil-military interface, it is a function that has been specifically designed to take a primary responsibility for this interface from the military side, particularly to understanding and better negotiate the space between military actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civilian actors (the same space that is the core focus of the Norwegian model). CIMIC is a non-kinetic (non-lethal/no use of force) military tool that, along with other kinetic (use of force) and non-kinetic tools, is meant to contribute to the successful completion of a military operation. Because this function is so directly involved with, and interested in, civilian

(particularly NGO and local) perspectives and activities, it can be quite openly political and therefore be very controversial. The way this function is developed to handle the diverse challenges of the civil-military nexus will, in principle, say a lot about the nature of civil-military education and training in the military, and how the civil-military interface is integrated into military planning. As well, although CIMIC does not embody all that is civil-military interaction, its functions lie at the core of this dynamic, and the problems and critiques that CIMIC has been vulnerable to are often used against other military actors who engage this interface.

Norwegian CIMIC has encountered serious criticism for specific practices that threatened the distinctions between civil and military activities in an operations area. The Norwegian government has been very concerned about ensuring that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly humanitarian organizations, are granted the respect and space they need to carry out their duties in safety and in accordance to humanitarian principles. As an apparent consequence of this concern and for all intents and purposes, CIMIC is being phased out of the Norwegian military. This development has not decreased interest in and expressed need for CIMIC “activities” amongst many military actors.

Some of the issues raised in this report are not new, and key problems remain in the civil-military interface, both in Norway as well as other NATO member countries (Pugh 2000; Frerks, Klem et al. 2006; Kristoffersen 2006; Rietjens and Bollen 2008). Too little attention has been paid to earlier analyses of CIMIC practices, and a more comprehensive debate is needed. The Norwegian experiences of nearly a decade in Afghanistan demonstrate that this discussion still needs attention, and these experiences provide a good case upon which to tackle contradictions and controversies that to date have not been adequately addressed. Even if the approach in Afghanistan will not be repeated, it does not negate the need for better civil-military competency on all sides, in preparation for a wide variety of possible scenarios where military activities will affect civilians. Increased competency includes increased and agile self-awareness amongst military actors regarding how civilian actors perceive and respond to military activities, tools/activities/tactics to help address tensions embedded in the dual role of donor/troop contributing nations, increased knowledge about the different demands emanating from peacekeeping, peacebuilding and “peace enforcement”/combat operations and the resulting relationships between civilians and militaries, better understanding of civilian agency mandates in different contexts, as well as greater awareness over the contradictions and challenges inherent within humanitarian/”civilian” roles. This

knowledge is necessary for all military actors and not only CIMIC operators, however given the breadth and depth of knowledge that is needed, it is important to build expertise and train experts whose focus is civil-military interaction, particularly between militaries and civilian organizations. Thus it is necessary to develop training and education that meets general needs, as well as ensuring that there is a specialist capacity.

1.4 Establish and maintain responsibility

It is the responsibility of the troop contributing nation to ensure that its military can conduct its' mandated task with the required skills necessary when deployed. Civil-military interaction requires knowledge and preparation by both civilian and military actors. This report focuses primarily upon military actors, with the purpose to examine and improve (if necessary) military capabilities, practices and engagement with civilian agencies and populations. Thus far, any prioritization of such skills and knowledge for Norwegian military operations appears to have been equated with the potential for increased "interference" of military actors in civilian activities. Thus, non-kinetic functions crucial to civil-military interaction have not been prioritized, even though challenges in the civil-military interface have not been avoided as a result, not least demonstrated by the criticisms still being waged against the Norwegian military already many years into the Afghanistan operation despite the controversial function of CIMIC not being present since 2004.⁵ This trend suggests that an examination and evaluation of the needs of the civil-military environment are necessary, to further determine what knowledge and skills need to be (re)developed.

1.5 Three factors: definition, context, and silence

The main conclusion of this report is that civil-military competencies within the military, particularly the role of CIMIC, have been reduced rather than improved to meet the needs of the Norwegian Armed Forces and their civilian counterparts in future operations. In order to discuss the reasons behind this finding, the report addresses three central factors:

1. Confusion around CIMIC definition and responsibilities
2. Lack of clarity about context
3. a culture of silence

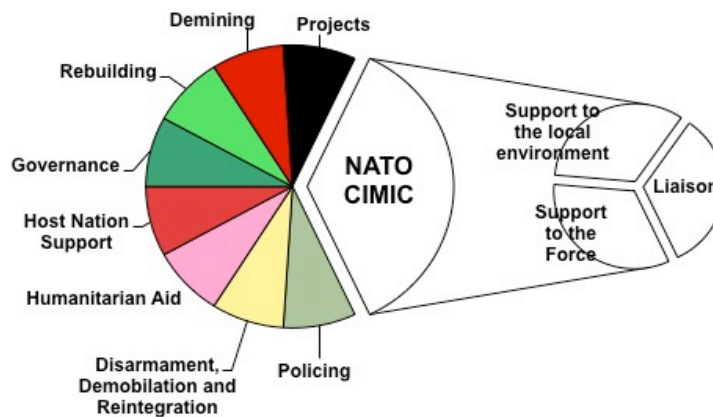
⁵ Norway has deployed CIMIC officers to ISAF headquarters, but until 2011 did not have them at the Norwegian PRT.

These three factors have contributed to a reduced capacity to perform in the civil-military interface, and have done little to improve education and training in the field of civil-military interaction.

2 CIMIC – weeding through the confusion

CIMIC is just one function that contributes to civil-military interaction, the latter which is a much broader concept that includes and integrates other concepts such as legitimacy, authority and obligation (Hoogensen Gjörv forthcoming 2012). CIMIC cannot take responsibility for the civil-military interface alone, and nor should it. However, it is a function that can play a central role in how the civil-military interface operates, as it is supposed to act as a key conduit between the commander of the operation, and other actors in the area of operation, not least governmental and NGO actors. As the nexus between military and civilian actors lies at the core of the Norwegian model and the CIMIC function, understanding the role of CIMIC and how this function has been and should be practiced is relevant.

CIMIC within the civil-military interface:



Nils Steinvik (2008), with revisions by Gunhild Hoogensen Gjörv (2011)

Figure 2: CIMIC in the broader civil-military context

2.1 Definitions

A CIMIC function has been developed and employed by NATO and the UN. For the sake of simplicity, and as it is most relevant to Afghanistan, I will focus on the NATO definition of

CIMIC in this report, but the function is also significant for UN operations.⁶ The core tasks of NATO CIMIC and UN CIMIC are in fact very similar, with the significant difference being the institutional mandate of the operation (UN or NATO) and whether “support to the force” is a relevant task (NATO 2003; UNDPKO 2010). It should be noted as well that NATO and UN CIMIC should not be equated with the American military function called “Civil Affairs”, which includes nation-building activities/mandates that neither NATO or UN CIMIC embody.

The general purpose of CIMIC is to ensure that the military contribution and the military commander of a complex/civil-military operation takes account of “social, political, cultural, religious, economic, environmental, and humanitarian factors when planning and conducting military operations,” which further includes taking “into account the presence of increasingly large numbers of international and non-governmental civilian organizations” (NATO 18 January 2002). CIMIC explicitly operates in a multi-actor security environment where it is recognized that non-military actors contribute to security, stability and the minimization of conflict (ibid). It is within this nexus between military and non-military practices that CIMIC contributes to ensuring that the military operation and commander is fully aware of, and to the degree possible, cooperating with, non-military actors.

The NATO definition is currently found as an Allied Joint Publication (AJP) which is agreed upon by all members of NATO (including, therefore, Norway). AJP 9 is based upon the strategic NATO military policy document MC 411/1. NATO CIMIC doctrine has been recently revised and is in the approval and implementation stages. All comments here refer to the current, unanimously adopted AJP 9 doctrine adopted in 2003, or to the MC 411/1 document, which remains as the NATO CIMIC military policy and as a key guiding document. It is also the 2003 NATO CIMIC version that is reflected in the Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine (known by the Norwegian name of Forsvarets Felles Operative Doktrine - FFOD) (Forsvarets stabsskole 2007(Kristoffersen 2006)), demonstrating a further commitment to this definition. NATO CIMIC doctrine is currently defined as:

The coordination and cooperation, in support of the mission, between the NATO Commander and civil actors, including national population and local authorities,

⁶ The UN definition of CIMIC is not identical to the NATO definition, although the tasks of both are very similar. More on these distinctions can be found in the soon-to-be-published book Hoogensen Gjørsv, G. (forthcoming 2012). *Irresponsible Idealism and the Challenges of Civil-Military Interaction: Norway as an Example for the World*. London, Ashgate Publishers.

as well as international, national and non-governmental organizations and agencies” (AJP-9, 2003: 1-1; MC 411/1).

CIMIC doctrine is based upon the recognition of a wider range of threats to international security than previously existed. It is further recognized that Commanders need to account for much more than purely military concerns, and need to include political, cultural, social, religious, economic, environmental and humanitarian factors when planning military operations (NATO 2003).

NATO has additionally explored multiple additional operational and strategic civil-military interaction concepts such as the Comprehensive Approach, EBAO (Effects Based Approach to Operations), and “enhanced” CIMIC, to name a few. The NATO definition is distinctly framed from a military perspective, whereby activities conducted by CIMIC operatives are in support of the commander and the mission.⁷

Confusion has surrounded this definition, and there has been little to no effort to clear up what this definition means in practice. This has led to multiple approaches to CIMIC by different nations. One military respondent noted that many military practitioners misunderstood the intention with the word “coordinate” thinking that “suddenly their responsibility was to facilitate and coordinate cooperation between actors” (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a). This was not the intention, according to the respondent. It is not the military’s responsibility to coordinate (ibid). The NATO military policy states that “CIMIC implies neither military control of civilian organizations nor the reverse” (NATO 18 January 2002).

The confusion surrounding what is meant by “coordination” or “cooperation” is understandable however, as within the NATO CIMIC core function of liaison, a central task is coordination, which might be interpreted as “control” for some civilian actors. As well, NATO CIMIC doctrine states that a central goal for the mission commander is to “obtain support of the population, IOs and NGOs”, in support of the force and the overall mission (NATO 2003: 1-4), which can also be interpreted as an interest in controlling civilian actors. Military activities, no matter what they are, are often seen in a questionable light by many civilian actors. The scepticism over CIMIC doctrine or practices should be no surprise, and given the power of the military, their activities should be subject to scrutiny. NATO CIMIC doctrine is military doctrine, and is designed for military purposes. However, given the responsibilities of militaries, they need to be an actor which is included in coordination processes with other actors, in information sharing (where appropriate) so as to shape

⁷ Note that UN CIMIC is also a military function, housed within the broader UN CIMCoord (Civil-Military Coordination) framework of the UN. UN CIMIC officers are beholden to the overall UN mission rather specifically to their military Commander in the operation.

operational planning and minimize civilian casualties. In addition to recognizing and working within a multi-actor security environment, minimizing civilian hardship and casualties is a core *raison d'être* for CIMIC, both for respecting human security and human rights as much as possible within a military mandate (“ensure that any unnecessary hardship is avoided” (NATO 2003: 4-2)), but also as a form of force protection as CIMIC ensures that local populations feel as secure as possible (trust) with the intervening military presence (ibid).

The FFOD adopts a NATO approach to CIMIC whereby the function should support the Commander and mission (Forsvarets stabskole 2007). Norwegian doctrine further stipulates that CIMIC is a function that has increasing relevance in operations, it ensures a focus on long-term goals, and is “a very important function for all operations” (ibid: 141). NATO CIMIC (which the FFOD supports) further stipulates that CIMIC has three core functions (see the AJP 9): liaison, support to the force, and support to the civilian environment.

Although CIMIC is centrally designed to provide liaison capacity, open information collection and civilian situational assessments that assist operational planning, it has become known mostly for “projects” where military personnel attempt to provide humanitarian and development support (Kristoffersen 2006; Hoogensen and Gjørsv 2010). Although some project activities are not excluded from CIMIC activities as a whole, they are activities that should only be engaged upon as a last resort measure.

One of the first and most surprising finds for the CREN project was the heavily negative politicization of the term CIMIC amongst Norwegian practitioners (military and civilian), the lack of understanding/awareness of what CIMIC actually is, combined with a confusion surrounding the concept of civil-military interaction generally speaking and what it means. Although there is evidence of problems in earlier practices of CIMIC, the negative reaction to CIMIC does not appear to be equal to the “damage done”, nor is this significantly negative view by any means shared amongst all NATO nations.⁸ The principle negative impression (amongst both Norwegian and other NATO nation military respondents who questioned the value of the CIMIC function) was that this function is too peripheral, and seemed to have too

⁸ On numerous occasions statements have been made by various (usually top-level) ministerial officials that other NATO nations were interested in the Norwegian model and wished to adopt the same approach. In interviews, and in informal conversations, with various NATO representatives and NATO member embassy officials (as well as with some Norwegian ministry employees), I found no evidence that NATO members were interested in the Norwegian model (includes Dutch, Canadian, American, UK, German). Quite the opposite, I instead heard some NATO member representatives claim that they their nations had earlier (a number of years ago) attempted such an approach, but abandoned it as it did not appear to function well for them. One respondent in this group considered the Norwegian approach to be an abdication of responsibility.

little to do with the operation per se, and had not demonstrated its added-value. Civilian responses ranged from indifference (the CIMIC function has little bearing upon their own activities) to strong negative reactions that CIMIC (and other military functions) attempted to control and/or conduct civilian activities. At the same time, it was equally expressed by both civilian and military actors that they noticed gaps in knowledge and power to maneuver in the civil-military interface, largely regarding knowledge about the needs, mandates and functions of other actors. A key finding was that a CIMIC function for the military is needed, but has not been operationalized in accordance to expectations of different actors, and not according doctrine; a finding already emphasised in Kristoffersen's 2006 report, and confirmed time and time again during the CREN project (Kristoffersen 2006; Hoogensen Gjørsv forthcoming 2012). An important role of this function, identified in doctrine but often ignored or overlooked, is that of training and education for the military about the civilian environment and needs. This role has been neglected.

Civil-military interaction is a process that directly relates to a multi-actor security approach where multiple actors, including civilians, negotiate a security compromise for that time and place (Hoogensen Gjørsv forthcoming). Militaries have, at the same time, become aware of the benefit of operating amongst a relatively "content" population. Keep the people content, particularly with "quick impact projects" (QIPs), and they won't resist or act against you.⁹ This latter type of interaction with local populations has been known as a form of "force protection" as well as "hearts-and-minds" and has been criticized for a lack of ethical basis, as it appears that the military use and abuse a relationship with civilians to effect their military goals. To what extent are QIPs consistent with CIMIC doctrine?

2.2 CIMIC doctrine does not advocate projects, but *political mandates* might

⁹ Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) have been frequently the source of criticism by civilian actors against the projects conducted by military actors (that these projects have little foundation in local population needs and are executed improperly). QIPs are not included as a part of NATO CIMIC doctrine (although there is acknowledgement for last-resort support to civil society which can be interpreted to include "projects" of some sort), but they are included in UN CIMIC doctrine DPKO (2008). United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines. D. o. P. Operations. New York, United Nations.

Military-driven or inspired projects have often gone above and beyond (if not completely disconnected from) that which is advocated by CIMIC doctrine, even contradicting both NATO doctrine and FFOD, where military time and resources will only be devoted to such civilian needs if no other assets (read: civilian) are capable of providing support, and insofar it is necessary and consistent with overall mission requirements and timelines (NATO 2003; Kristoffersen 2006; Hoogensen and Gjørv 2010). In other words, military efforts will only be used towards civilian needs in the event of a humanitarian or development needs “vacuum” where civilians have neither the ability nor capacity to meet these needs themselves. The moment civilians can meet these needs, military efforts are to be transferred to civilian control. This is a “last resort” approach.

“Connections with the civilian side of the PRT is very personality based. If you want something you will get in touch. You might be able to avoid them also.” Military respondent

CIMIC, in Norway as well as other NATO countries, developed a stronger project focus than doctrine advocates (Kristoffersen 2006; Hoogensen and Gjørv 2010). “Projects” in this instance refer to military actors engaging in activities such as delivering food, blankets and clothing to local populations, or building schools, hospitals, and wells, all of which fall under the sort of work conducted usually by humanitarian and development organizations. The development of CIMIC activities towards projects was already well illuminated in the 2006 report by Lene Kristoffersen, where the author examines some of the reasons as to why Norwegian CIMIC took a larger project-oriented focus.

Kristoffersen identifies six explanations, noting that “available funds and directions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs . . . had a strong impact on the Norwegian approach to CIMIC” (Kristoffersen 2006). Kristoffersen explains that the political objective of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to show visible effects of Norwegian efforts in Afghanistan, helped to generate the project focus in CIMIC. In this respect, the Ministry “aimed at promoting the saints”, not soldiers, to Norwegian and Afghan audiences (ibid). This political objective was further supported, argues Kristoffersen, by Finnish CIMIC approaches, a lack of NGO efforts in the areas where Norwegian CIMIC was deployed, a conflation with American Civil Affairs (a nation-building function within the American Armed Forces that is distinct from CIMIC), and lastly, the possibility of a “feel and do good syndrome” among

CIMIC officers that made them less critical of the project focus, though Kristoffersen admits that she did not have evidence demonstrating this “syndrome”.

Kristoffersen provided a useful report in 2006 that should have been used as a departure point for the development and improvement of a Norwegian CIMIC function and capability that could at the same time have integrated the insights that were important to the “Norwegian model”, thereby designing a “*Norwegian CIMIC model*”. Instead CIMIC has been all but marginalized. The “project” component of the CIMIC function, which in principle should be quite minor, has dominated the *image* of Norwegian CIMIC, and has significantly impacted the impression of CIMIC by both civilian and military actors. Two explanations offered by Kristoffersen in 2006 have played significant roles in the perceptions of Norwegian CIMIC that were mapped during the 2007-2011 CREN research period. The first explanation is in connection with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). After the 2003-2004 period when Norwegian CIMIC was operative in Afghanistan, a backlash occurred as a result of the relationship between MFA and CIMIC. Funding was funnelled directly through military channels to do projects that civilian organizations felt was rightly their domain (Kristoffersen 2006; Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a; Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010c). It was argued that projects conducted by military actors like CIMIC amounted to a militarization of civilian work, confused local populations, and put both local, beneficiary populations as well as foreign civilian workers in danger by being associated with the military (ibid).

Kristoffersen’s explanation regarding the “feel-and-do-good syndrome” also has played a role in generating negative perceptions of CIMIC. Kristoffersen could not demonstrate that this “syndrome” actually existed amongst CIMIC officers, but raised it as a possibility. In many of the interviews conducted for the CREN project, this “syndrome” was raised as an issue by NGO and Ministerial respondents about the military in general and CIMIC in particular. CIMIC personnel were targeted as those who did projects to “do and feel good”. This argument was also often connected to an assumed lack of competence and legitimacy to conduct such projects, and a lack of understanding for the civilian environment. Combined, the image of CIMIC became one of a group of military practitioners who had no competence but just wanted to “help out”.¹⁰ But just like Kristoffersen’s research, the CIMIC personnel I

¹⁰ Part of this image might be due to the different positions found within a CIMIC group or element, which includes military trained officers (who should, in theory, have the same fighting capacity as any other military officer) and “functional specialists” who can be either military or civilian, but who have a specialized capacity in the civilian context that is helpful to the mission. The latter does not necessarily have military skills, and should not be conflated with the military personnel who do have military training and education.

spoke with did not articulate this “syndrome” as a rationale for the work conducted either in 2003-2004 (the period when Norway had deployed CIMIC teams to Afghanistan), nor in their work generally speaking. This sentiment to “do good” was expressed by a few military personnel (non-CIMIC), but not often enough to demonstrate that this “syndrome” might exist (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a). In fact it appeared that particularly CIMIC personnel had developed a precautionary approach towards “feel good” operations given their previous experiences and the resulting critique, if they were concerned with it at all.

2.3 CIMIC – don’t ask don’t tell

“CIMIC happens in Afghanistan, but we are not allowed to call it CIMIC”
military respondent (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010b).

Many of the military respondents stated that CIMIC activities (according to how they themselves defined this) were taking place in Afghanistan even though there was no formal CIMIC element allotted to the Norwegian area.¹¹ It was clear that certain typical CIMIC practices were in place, and operationalized by other military functions. In particular focus were the MOTs or Mobile Observation Teams, which included experienced and older liaison officers as a crucial part of the team. Older officers contributed to establishing an environment of respect when meeting with civilian counterparts, but there was no question about their military skills or capabilities otherwise (where age might be associated with reduced combat skills). When asked if CIMIC educated personnel could have contributed in the role as the liaison officer (a core skill for CIMIC is liaison), the responses reflected the negative assumption that the CIMIC officers were not well trained enough: “MOTs have a bigger portfolio, they can take care of themselves, are sharp, have pretty high protection abilities because they are in high risk zones, they have a very high military level, over the normal level” (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a). The same sort of response was noted amongst other military personnel who had more direct contact with local populations, whereby CIMIC skills (as they described them) were necessary, but not CIMIC trained officers.

¹¹ As mentioned earlier, no Norwegian CIMIC units or personell had been deployed to the Norwegian PRT prior to 2011.

Many military respondents reflected upon the fact that military personnel had, in general, very little contact with the civil society

“Little is channelled through the PRT. The civilians do their projects according to what they think are the needs, and the military do their own thing.”
Military respondent

generally speaking, and that this was a disadvantage to the operation. One respondent in particular described the positive benefits of having military personnel located in closer proximity to local populations to make the military more accessible. The respondent described setting up a room or a station in the centre of the town/city so that the military personnel could have daily contact with civilians both to hear more about civilian needs, but to also be “present” so that local populations had a better sense of what the military was doing, if not additionally become convinced that the military presence was a good thing (building trust). What this respondent described was what is also known as a “CIMIC centre,” a practice in which CIMIC personnel are trained, for the purposes of increasing accessibility for and between both military and civilians (NATO 2003).¹² The impressions and reputation of CIMIC amongst some military respondents therefore was apparently an obstacle to thinking inclusively and taking advantage of diverse military specializations and benefits of a “multidisciplinary” approach. This includes any insights or lessons learned from CIMIC, in particular regarding liaison, civilian situational awareness (community/NGO based, not enemy based), and training and education in operationally relevant analysis on culture and gender. CIMIC, at the same time, should engage in increased “military-military cooperation” with other functions to learn lessons from others and maintain and improve military skills, not least to mitigate against any misinformation or negative impressions of this non-kinetic function and what it contributes the military operation.

That military actors like CIMIC or others would conduct “projects” has come therefore under considerable fire. However projects in general, run by civilian or military actors, tended to be targets for criticism. Many military and some government respondents were sceptical of NGO-run projects as well. Military and government actors were often not adequately informed about the nature or progress of these projects, who or what these projects supported, or had heard of questionable or negative results:

¹² This is a risk-laden task requiring “sharp” (combat) skilled people in this role. Although this is a feature of CIMIC training and practices, the demands of the role are not associated with the images of CIMIC. This is a contradiction that needs rectifying.

“One project that was Afghan driven seemed to have some visible effects. Seemed to be the first sort of project where this was the case”. Government respondent

“Some development projects have worked against the political goal of the international efforts, supporting the opposition. Put gas on the conflict because you strengthen the enemy.” Military respondent

These impressions were not unknown to NGO personnel either, and one NGO respondent noted there was more tension than cooperation between actors as mandated by the Norwegian model:

“The Norwegian model is completely the opposite of what the military wanted. They need tight cooperation with other actors to complete the assignment, and this they cannot do.” NGO respondent.

Afghanistan provides only one specific example of the civil-military challenge. The way of doing things in Afghanistan will likely not be repeated, as each situation demands unique and specific measures. But this is why we develop expertise, so that practitioners within civil-military interaction, including in the field of CIMIC, can draw on past experiences and think critically about the specific problems in the civil-military interface when new situations arise. This does not exclude the insights of the Norwegian model. But it does mean that the Norwegian model cannot develop fully without insights from all parties, including military actors. The Ministry of Defence needs the insights of the people on the ground, including CIMIC personnel, to know how to best contribute to the Norwegian model. The model needs to be complex enough to allow for a variety of solutions, including “second best” and “last resort”, which can adjust to mandates (UN, NATO, etc), and is relevant to most if not all actors.

2.4 Security

Militaries are deployed with the goal to provide security. Most often this is state security, but the past few decades have demonstrated that human security matters as much if not more, for individuals, communities, states and the international community. Human security has been linked to state security as well, not least regarding initiatives to curtail or curb terrorism. None of these linkages between security perspectives are uncontroversial, and the struggle to determine best policy and practices for different contexts remains. Militaries themselves need to understand their role in negotiating the complex domain between state and human security and the extent to which their actions can be justified on the basis of state security, and the extent to which they are responsible for human security. CIMIC, in theory and doctrine, is one of those functions designed to assist and provide security through force protection and

support to the operation, by focusing on civilian protection and support, liaison, civil-situational awareness (assessments of needs and civilian organization activities), and training and education for the rest of the force about the civilian environment.

The connection between actors and differing security perceptions, and the ways in which coordination and, at times even cooperation function, has not been adequately examined. Training and education in the field of CIMIC have focused considerable attention upon the mechanics of the function, the “how to” aspects. There needs to be, however, a more explicit analytical discussion about the role of other actors, and the ways in which they impact security. CIMIC is not about being a gender expert (gender training), an aspiring anthropologist (cultural awareness training), or a political scientist (governance), but about using the appropriate analytical tools to have a better understanding about how these factors in relation to military activity influence the security dynamic, and thus the overall mission.

By examining the work of CIMIC (as understood through doctrine) through a security lens, community actors (local populations), NGOs, and government officials, are clearly relevant to the success or failure of the Commander’s mission, but not necessarily or always as “pawns” in the mission, as is often argued (“using” civilians to ensure success of the mission).¹³ Different actors perceive and operationalize security in different ways, and these approaches interact within a multi-actor security framework. All of these actors, their practices and mandates, and how they interact with each other (power dynamics) are important to military planning, including meeting local security needs as much as possible. Not doing so might directly or indirectly harm the mission.

¹³ It is sometimes argued by some civilian organizations that contact between military and local populations amounts to the use of civilians for military purposes, either for intelligence or part of a hearts-and-minds campaign. Although it should not be denied that military operators have clear interests when engaging civilians (organizations or local populations), it is at the same time assumed that the latter are somehow passive “objects” that do not have any decisive role. This assumption needs to be problematized.

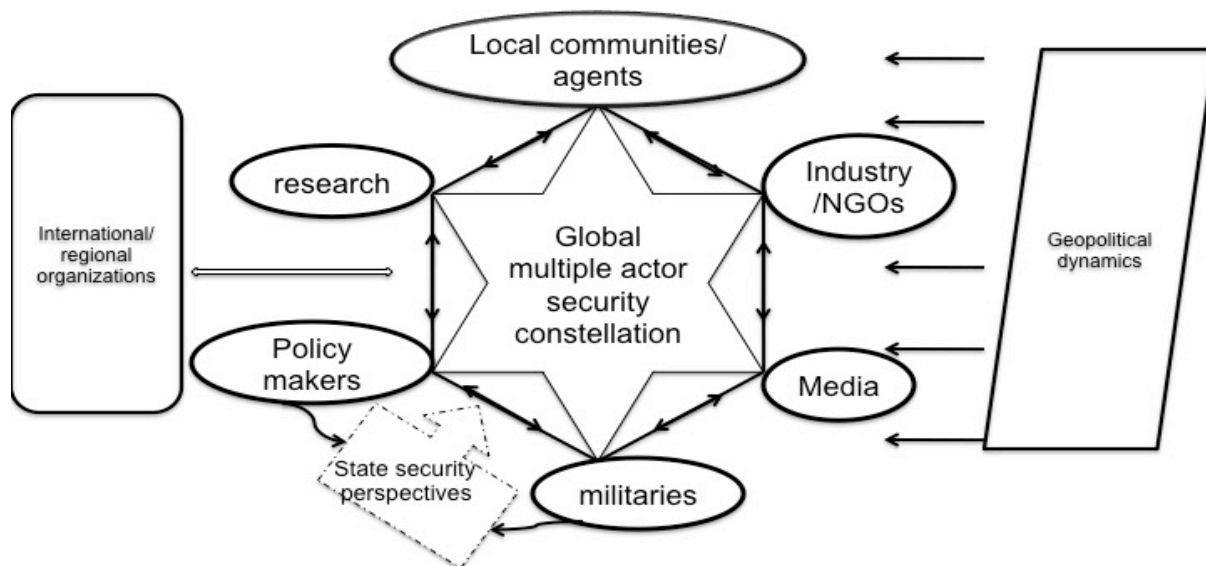


Figure 3: Multi-actor security framework ¹⁴

The activities of militaries impact the activities and lives of civilians, and civilians can be made vulnerable. The impacts of military activities upon local populations, and NGO workers and activities have been the source of frequent concern, whereby it is argued that close contact with militaries threaten civilians (as retribution by opposition warring parties). Civilians are not always just passive objects however. Local populations may respond to what they regard as poor choices by militaries as well, and use cultural and political tools to determine their own, optimal position in a conflict so as to provide better security for themselves, their families, or their communities. In other words, local communities cannot be treated as passive objects. Additionally, the work of NGOs, it has been argued, can be threatened by close proximities of militaries. These vulnerabilities need to also be adequately taken into account. However, civilian organizations like NGOs cannot be evaluated only in terms of their potential vulnerabilities in the operations area. Indeed, the work of NGOs may also threaten the success of a military operation if NGOs work closely with opposing forces. In other words, multiple actors jockey and adjust their approaches to creating security in

¹⁴ Hoogensen Gjørsv, G. (forthcoming). "Security by any other name: negative security, positive security and a multi-actor security approach." *Review of International Studies*.

specific contexts, depending on the power and impacts of other actors. This applies to both military and civilian actors.

CIMIC liaison is meant to contribute to an understanding of the roles of these actors and civilian situational awareness of the operation area. CIMIC operators should be able to contribute to the military understanding how (under what circumstances, which includes education and training in cultural awareness, gender awareness, political awareness) different civilian actors define and create security. Such information is necessary to operational planning, to understand what the impacts will be on civilians when the military engages in an operation in a specific region. If an operation takes place in an area, will it be so detrimental to locals that they will respond negatively instead of positively? What (human) security measures are different civilian actors employing (access to basic needs, sustained employment, social/political alliances with other civilians)? How will the operation disrupt these practices, and will such disruptions cause problems for the mission? Will the threat level be too high if an operation takes place close to an NGO project? If so, how so? What needs do civilians have that are not being met before, during and after an operation, and how can needs be met by local authorities and/or NGOs? If no civilian authorities are available to assist local populations, should or should not military assistance be provided, and under what circumstances? These questions are all mission relevant, not least as an overall understanding of the civil situational awareness determines whether or not kinetic tactics will be successful in the end.

In other words, a core feature of CIMIC is a combination of civilian protection and force protection, established through a complex understanding of the security dynamics between actors. Civilian protection (support to the civil environment) is necessarily a part of this as damage caused to the civilian environment by military actors can backfire on the military (creating extra threats for the military that were not initially there) if the civilian environment is not understood for what civilians can and cannot tolerate under given circumstances.

2.5 Current status of CIMIC positions in Norway

At the moment (January 2012) there are four (4) CIMIC positions in the Norwegian military. Located in the Norwegian Land Army Warfare Centre (HVS), one position at the rank of Major is allotted to curriculum development and design, including support for international training. In Norway's only Brigade, Brigade North, there is one CIMIC position located in

the G9 branch,¹⁵ this is the Branch Chief who has the rank of Major. One position at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel is located in the National Joint Headquarters (FOH) in operational planning, and finally there is one

Lieutenant Colonel position as CIMIC Instructor at the Military Staff College (FSTS). The G9 Branch in Brigade North was recently reduced from two officers to one, as well as reduced in rank.¹⁶ The position in HVS, in charge of training and education for CIMIC,

The significance of rank reductions means that the Norwegian armed forces believe that CIMIC can be led by lesser experienced/qualified people, who might also have less operational experience.

(Hoogensen Gjørsv, forthcoming 2012)

will be reduced from Major to Captain. The position of CIMIC Instructor at the Staff College is also threatened to be eliminated. The elimination of possibly more positions amongst a vulnerable four, provides fairly conclusive evidence that Norway is not planning improvements in this specialized function for civil-military competency, but indeed the opposite.

¹⁵ G1-G9 distinguishes between different functions/specialities: G1 human resources; G2 Intelligence; G3 operations; G4 logistics; G5 long term planning; G6 Communication and Information Systems; G7 Education and Training; G8 Economy and Budget ; G9 civil-military cooperation.

¹⁶ All other branches, G1-G8, retain the rank of Lieutenant Colonel for the Branch Chief. Only the G9 Branch will be reduced to Major, and it is the only branch to be manned by only one person.

3 Context, context, context

The “Norwegian model,” which represents the Norwegian approach to civil-military interaction, does not reflect an understanding of the complexity of operational environments. The current NATO CIMIC doctrine is also somewhat weak on this point, though not to the same extent as the Norwegian model. The nature of the operation affects the need for humanitarian space, and for distinctions between different actors, even distinctions between civilians, let alone military.

NATO CIMIC doctrine explicitly examines the relevance of CIMIC in two different contexts: Article 5 Collective Defence Operations (CDOs), and non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations (CROs) (NATO 18 January 2002; NATO 2003). CIMIC doctrine acknowledges that the tasks and focus of CIMIC will differ according to these different contexts. It is also assumed within doctrine that CIMIC plays a broader role in CROs than in CDOs, but provides only guidance as opposed to concrete examples of the different natures of the contexts.¹⁷ A better understanding of context can possibly be found when we unpack the different meanings within “peace” operations.

Many operations are characterized as “peace” operations, but what does this mean? The Norwegian government claims the main goal for peace operations is to contribute to international stability and security, in solidarity with the international community and in accord with the obligations of membership in the UN and NATO.¹⁸ The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan is not considered a UN force, but has a “peace enforcement” mandate through Chapter VII of the UN Charter.¹⁹ The Norwegian government refers to the conflict in Afghanistan as a “peace operation,” but does little to go further regarding in what way this is a peace operation and how the term “peace” is used when endorsing the use of force, particularly when that use of force is supporting one particular warring party.

¹⁷ In my forthcoming book I argue that one of the weaknesses of CIMIC doctrine (the 2003 version as well as the MC 411/1 military policy), is the lack of analysis behind the relevance of these contexts. The data from the CREN project demonstrates that CIMIC may indeed be called upon to do much more during higher intensity conflicts or CDOs in relation to “last resort” activities, as the likelihood for civilian cooperation is lower at these times. See Hoogensen Gjørsv, forthcoming 2012.

¹⁸ See the government of Norway website on peace operations (fredsoperasjoner): <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/tema/sikkerhetspolitikk/fredsbevarende-operasjoner.html?id=441848> (accessed April 2011).

¹⁹ See: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-FAB4AC4D-B7B4C844/natolive/topics_69366.htm. (accessed April 2011).

Varying degrees of acceptable uses of force follow from different approaches, from **peacekeeping** to **peacemaking**, **peacebuilding** and **peace enforcement**. These are distinct scenarios, assumed by distinct actors (ideally) (DPKO 2008). Peacemaking and peace enforcement generally take place when conflict is still active, or rather, when things are still unstable enough that conflict flares up quite easily (ibid).

Peacemaking employs diplomatic action to bring the parties of a conflict to the negotiating table and eventually to a peace agreement. This activity relies largely on government, ministry, IO officials, NGOs and/or other independent officials.

Peace enforcement allows for coercive measures including the use of force (often via the military). Peace enforcement is authorized by the Security Council, at times employing other regional organizations (such as NATO) which operationalize the enforcement of peace (ibid).

Peacekeeping on the other hand is designed to preserve a peace that is already established, albeit possibly weakly established. At times force is applied in peacekeeping, often referred to as “robust” peacekeeping. However this is force applied usually as self-defence measures and with “the consent of the host authorities and/or the main parties to the conflict” (ibid: 19).

Peacebuilding is the long-term and complex process of providing stabilization through strengthening national capacities and addressing the root causes of conflict in that society (ibid). Thus far, all of these approaches assume a semblance of consent by most parties, but today’s operations are, of course, more “complex”.

The United Nations refers also to “multi-dimensional” peacekeeping operations employing multiple actors and relevant to a wide variety of scenarios, including falling back into violent conflict. As such, peace operations are increasingly complicated and blurred as they are composed of all of these different scenarios, which do not occur in a linear fashion and can often fluctuate repeatedly between scenarios. What it also means is that peace enforcement, although mandated by the United Nations Security Council in the name of international peace and security, can nevertheless resemble “taking sides” in a conflict (either the side of a weak governing body which requires support to gain control and establish governance like Afghanistan, or on the side of group(s) fighting against repressive regimes that are a threat to international peace and security like Libya). In the UN context however, all of these scenarios presuppose an assumption of a post-conflict status (even if violence still erupts on occasion) (ibid). Multi-dimensional operations are also acknowledged to be considerably more political

than so-called traditional peacekeeping consisting of observation and supervision of cease-fires and acting as a buffer between parties (ibid). This also affects the perception of the United Nations and actors acting on its behalf, at least amongst the conflicting parties. All of these scenarios will affect the ways in which actors can interact with each other, how they will be perceived by other actors, and their room to maneuver. These scenarios also raise the question regarding how we interpret the notion of “peace” and what scenarios can be related to it.

NATO also refers to such operations under the broad category called “crisis management operations” which they claim are also “loosely” referred to as peacekeeping operations.²⁰ Under the heading of “peace support operations” NATO includes peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peacemaking, peace building, and other concepts.²¹ The definitions are similar, but here NATO is more explicit under “peace enforcement”, whereby it is acknowledged that consent amongst all of the conflicting parties has *not* been established or at least remains uncertain. This makes peace enforcement even more political as it implies establishing peace with the use of force against the will of at least one warring party (or at least without the consent of that party). In looking for recent examples, this most resembles the situation in Afghanistan, as well as in Libya.

3.1 Different actors have different roles in different contexts

The context affects the actors present within the operation. The range of actors is complicated and diverse, where some play more active roles than others depending on the context. These can range from civilian and military actors belonging to the local (host nation) environment, to civilian and military actors from donor/troop-contributing nations. Military actors are often more easily distinguishable by virtue of their uniforms, and are those actors endowed with the responsibility to use force on behalf of the state. Civilian actors are very diverse, and represent diverse interests. The term “civilian” should not be understood as synonymous with “humanitarian”, although these two terms are all too often conflated. Civil-military interaction includes interaction between militaries and humanitarian actors, as well as with

²⁰ See the NATO website “Crisis Management” for definitions: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49192.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed September 2011).

²¹ NATO identifies various mission types beyond those mentioned here under “peace operations” as this suffices for the purpose of this report. A more in-depth discussion about types of operations relevant for NATO, UN and EU now and in the future can be found in the FFI report: Norheim-Martinsen, P., T. Nyhamar, et al. (10 October 2011). *Fremtidens internasjonale operasjoner (Future International Operations)*. FFI-rapport. Kjeller, Forvarets Forskningsinstitutt (Norwegian Defence Research Establishment). **2011/01697**.

development actors, civilian government (ministerial) actors, and not least, civilians in the community in which the military is deployed.

3.2 Context determines the nature of “humanitarian space”

Humanitarian space has been a key, and controversial, concept that has played a central and often defining role in Norwegian debates on civil-military interaction.²² The concept claims a bounded space or distance, physical/geographical/ideological, for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian actors from politically-motivated actors, particularly militaries, which express political goals through violence. This “space” is meant to ensure access of humanitarians to vulnerable populations or those in need, regardless of that population’s political associations or affiliations with parties to the conflict. Ideally, all parties to the conflict will understand that humanitarian actors are neutral to, and independent of, the conflict.

The context critically affects the nature of relations between politicized actors like military and governmental civilian actors (both foreign and domestic), non-governmental development actors, and non-governmental humanitarian actors, illustrated below:

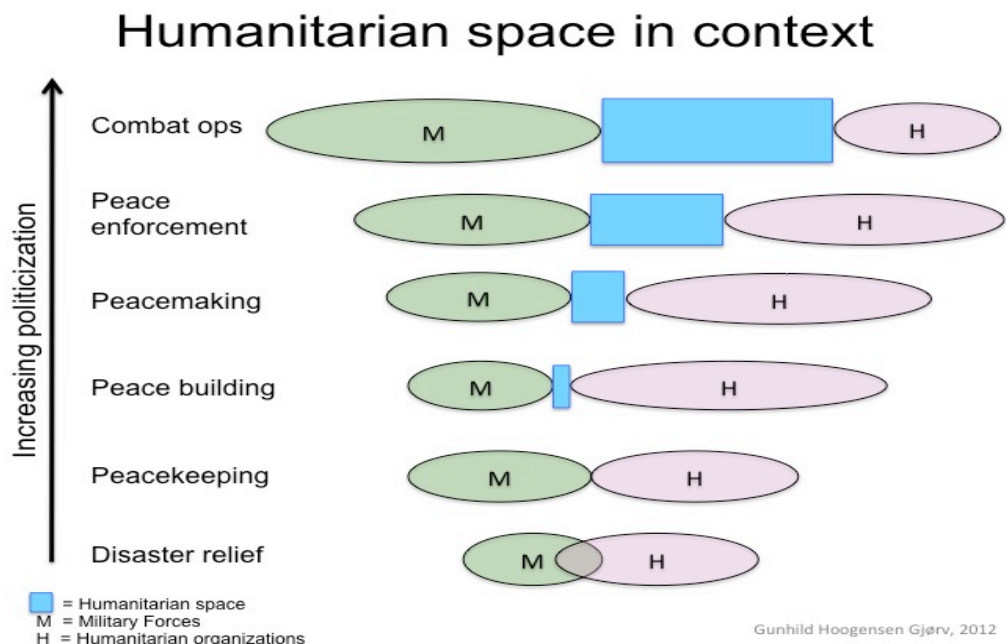


Figure 5: humanitarian space in relation to context

²² The notion of "humanitarian space" is by no means uncontested, and indeed questions have been raised as to the validity of this concept in practice. Some of these questions/concerns are raised here, but will be more thoroughly addressed in the book: Hoogensen Gjrv, G. (forthcoming 2012). *Irresponsible Idealism and the Challenges of Civil-Military Interaction: Norway as an Example for the World*. London, Ashgate Publishers.

The context determines the way in which humanitarian space ought to be understood within that context, and speaks to the complexity of the relationship between military and particularly humanitarian (but not necessarily other civilian) actors. Understanding the context is thus of the utmost importance. “Peace operation” as a concept can be quite vague, and it is difficult to establish what is meant, and if consent has been given by all parties. If the end goal is “peace”, does that make *any use of force* a “peace” operation? Despite the “peace enforcement” mandate, ISAF refers to their operation in Afghanistan as a military operation, not a peace operation. These distinctions are important, as they determine the nature of the civil-military interaction that will or could take place in a given context. It also means it is not possible to have a “one-size-fits-all” approach to civil-military interaction. Questions of legitimacy, authority, and obligation arise and operate differently in fluctuating contexts of security. It also means that key actors in the civil-military interface require enough training and competence to be able to understand the differences and operate accordingly.

3.3 The “vacuum” problem

“There are no areas where no NGOs are going but there are vast areas where very few NGOs are going” Anja de Beer, former director of ACBAR (Mirwais 2006)

Militaries need increased awareness of the range and mandates of civilian actors in their operations area, and the potential tensions or avenues of cooperation with these actors. Any activities resembling humanitarian work, and even more so development work, should only be exercised in last-resort cases. However, it needs to be also acknowledged that the more politically charged/violent the operation, the more likely that militaries are expected to broaden their scope in non-kinetic activities as relations with civilians (local populations) become more tenuous, capacities of civilian agencies/organizations are often reduced, and human insecurity is increased. These activities can only be successfully engaged if actors are adequately educated and trained in this for specific and diverse contexts. Security in complex operations requires that multiple actors with different skills work simultaneously, when possible. When military actors have determined that a military operation needs to be conducted in a specific area, an operation that can have varying consequences upon the local population in that area (destruction of property, wounded and/or killed, reduced infrastructure, etc), there not only needs to be planning to minimize negative consequences (mandated by CIMIC doctrine), but assessments during and after for immediate follow-up for non-combatant/civilian needs immediately after the operation.

These needs can be diverse, varied and complex, and ideally civilian actors of varied skill sets, backed by military distance/comprehension of situation and/or support, are on hand to address these needs. A “vacuum” occurs however when one or more actors are not present, meaning that some of the immediate (and even long term) needs of communities cannot be met. This may have consequences for both the community in question (that the civilians in the region suffer, possibly both as a result of the military operation but also as a result of lack of follow-up afterwards) and/or that the kinetic phase of the military operation that took place quickly loses ground as the local population reacts negatively. A number of military respondents noted that the military must react and engage in so-called humanitarian activities when they have finished an operation in an area, in the event that there are no humanitarian organizations to address the post-kinetic phase of the operation (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a). Militaries are indeed obliged under IHL to deliver humanitarian to people in need, although this aid cannot be understood to have political conditions attached. Even if this is the goal of military humanitarian activity, it is difficult to disassociate from any recent kinetic activity.

When militaries create or employ support mechanisms to ensure that security is provided to local populations during and after the kinetic phase of an operation, their work is often a politicized, militarized task, reflecting the overall mandate of the international community or individual foreign state providing the military troops. If civilian actors follow closely on the heels of the kinetic phase into an area of operation, there is a strong likelihood that the civilian actor will be associated with the political agenda of the military actors. Many civilian organizations, particularly humanitarian organizations, do not and cannot be associated with the mandates and actions of the military (hence the claim for “humanitarian space”, although this claim does not go uncontested, even in the humanitarian community). The core concern is that the local population obtains the necessary goods and services to get the community up-and-running after the kinetic phase of the operation where damage/injuries and death may have occurred. In more volatile operations, post-kinetic activities attempt to ensure that the area of operation is less likely to fall into the hands of the enemy while the community establishes security on the basis of support from the political machinery (including military) that sanctioned the operation.

In highly contentious conflict situations that have yet to be politically resolved (who will lead the region/country), lack of coordination with and monitoring of civilian efforts could ensure that the military efforts can be weakened if both civilian and military efforts are not

coordinated. Of course, a lack of military success cannot be attributed solely to a lack of post-kinetic operational activities or lack of coordination. A number of respondents, both military as well as NGO, remarked that a significant problem was that there were just not enough military troops who could stay within the area of operation long enough to establish a sense of security in the community and ensure that opposing forces did not return (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010a; Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010c). This was indeed noted to be a core issue. Given that there are often not enough international troops to maintain a longer-term physical security (and indigenous troops are either too few or not well-enough trained), the alternative is relying on other security-building measures, primarily those that do not rely on the use of force. These non-kinetic measures transfer considerable responsibility for security to civilian actors (at times in concert with military actors) and are developed according to “need”.

Ideally, the people living in the region are the ones who determine what the needs are. If those people do not have the resources themselves to meet these needs, they rely upon other actors to support them until that time that the community members can manage the situation themselves. Humanitarian organizations are often those who are positioned in areas of need, often long before any other actors are present (including military). As such, humanitarian organizations generally have time to build a relationship with the communities they are in contact with, and have the potential to draw on a long and well-developed institutional/community memory when understanding and determining the needs for the region.²³ Humanitarian organizations additionally determine need in a way that is differentiated from the needs associated with the political mandates of other actors, not least donor/troop contributing countries who often arrive on the scene much later, usually in the heat of conflict or post-conflict. When political/military actors arrive, and the military conduct operation that necessarily include both kinetic and non-kinetic phases, this can and does cause a strain on the work being done by humanitarians (and other civilian organizations) that might already be in the area.

Close proximity to political/military actors risks compromising the principles of humanitarian NGOs. In addition, these same agencies may not see a particular need to go into the same locations as the military. NGOs do not have the same political goals, they are not preoccupied with securing the area against insurgents or opposing forces, and therefore will not support an

²³ This is generally the case that NGOs which are well established over a long time period have a history and background with communities and are therefore well placed to address local needs. This is not always, or is less so, the case however if organizations experience high employee turnover, Hoogensen Gjørsv, G. (2007-2010c). Interviews NGO/IGO respondents. Oslo/Geneva/Kabul/Mazar e Sharif/Meymaneh.

operation just because the military has identified this need in the region where they are operating. Additionally, not every “need” should even be responded to, as humanitarian organizations sometimes must say “no” because they have determined that the situation is not appropriate for their response.

A key basis for needs-assessment is the “do-no-harm” principle (Anderson 1999). This principle alerts practitioners to potential negative results even though the intention is to do good (ibid). Providing aid should not exacerbate social or other divisions in a society or create new conflicts. In accordance with that principle a “do nothing” approach might be the most appropriate. Assuming that something must be done in every instance presupposes that the local population is thoroughly incapable of providing support and aid themselves, or that “doing something” is always associated with “something good”. One NGO respondent noted that the most important humanitarian work is ideally conducted by people in the communities themselves, the neighbour, the son-in-law, the women in the street – the locals (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010c). Such insights, including understanding how tension and conflict can arise in a given context, gives humanitarian agencies that have a long-standing presence an edge in determining needs.

Ideally, local government or leaders and/or national host government agencies and departments would be prepared to come in and provide the first line of support in establishing human security. They must also be considered the most important potential actors in this instance as support is best maintained when it is located in local and national structures that are recognizable and legitimate with the local population (CIMIC in this instance would support with information and coordination with the military actors). However, it is also these civilian actors that are often weakest, unwilling and/or least capable to provide these measures. International organizations (IOs) as well as international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor/troop contributing governmental departments and agencies, and other civilian actors should otherwise be ready to “fill” the vacuum left by the military after the kinetic phase, and immediately contribute to human security measures, building trust within the local community and between that community and local/regional/national governance (CIMIC again playing a similar role as noted above). The problem, as seen through the eyes of many military actors, is that these civilian agencies are often not in place, and therefore no one is there to fill the vacuum and continue the establishment and facilitation of security in the area. Often the reason for a lack of these political *and* apolitical civilian actors is that the security level is too low for their actors to

operate (in addition to the reservations humanitarian actors have about being associated with military actors). As such, it is considered necessary, although not desired, that the military provide some temporary solutions that jump start the next phase of security creation (humanitarian aid and development), often referred to as quick impact projects (QIPs). At this stage CIMIC may be called upon, as a last resort (according to doctrine), to identify possible projects.

A standard civilian response to the above critique is that the civilian actors are indeed on location and doing the work they ought to be doing, and that the military should stay away from anything resembling development or humanitarian work. Civilian agencies and institutions are in place, but perhaps not blindly following the military as they complete operations, but identifying where the most acute needs lie (which may or may not be associated with military operations).

One option is to just leave the vacuum as it is. Stop with the kinetic operation, and withdraw when the typical “military” activity (fighting) is largely over. This does not address security in its entirety however. If the host nation has not or will not contribute to broader security for the individuals and communities living within the state, other actors (often “insurgents” or other groups that wish control) are present who “fill the vacuum”. Security is created, but on terms that are not necessarily consistent with the values and political goals of the national and international mandates. This may not be a core concern of NGOs (or particularly humanitarian NGOs) but it is very relevant to donor/troop contributing nations.

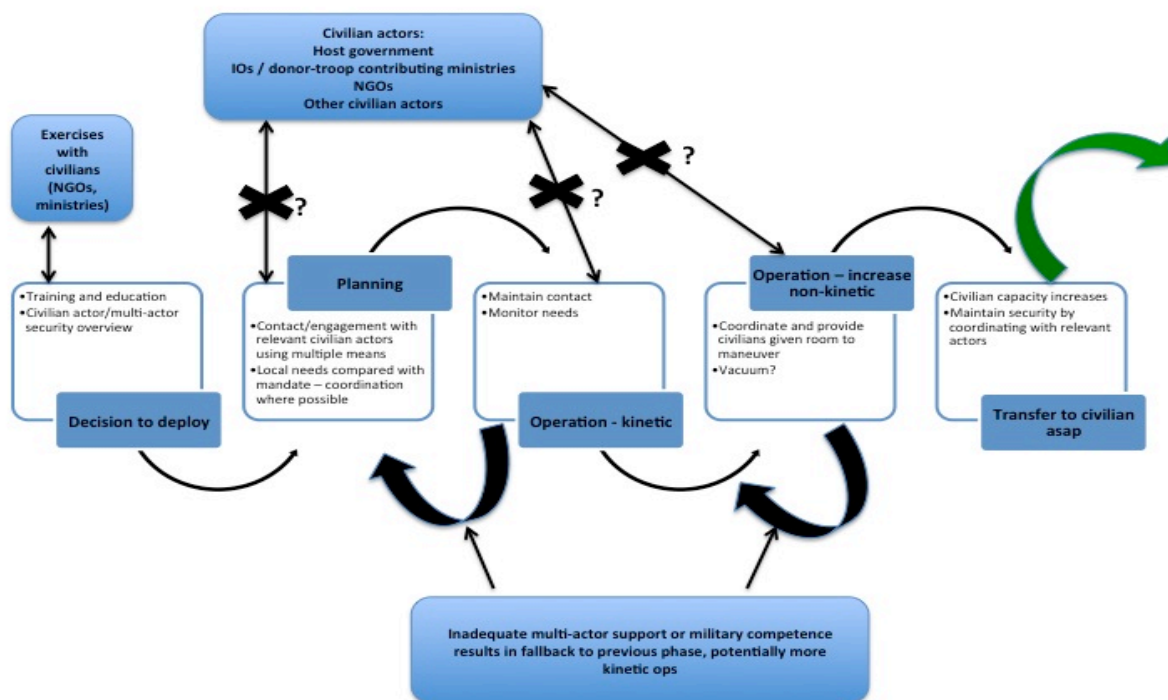


Figure 6: civil-military interaction throughout an operation

The important issue is that we recognize how and who creates security, and that the state or state apparatus is not always the actor who does so. As such, what this case demonstrates is that:

1. the creation of security (including during an operation) cannot be accomplished by one actor (military) but by a variety of military and non-military actors; and,
2. that the final result (that security which is created) is highly dependent upon the political goals of the actors themselves, including the community at large

In the event that civilian actors are not present during non-kinetic phases of an operation, regardless of the reason, it is clear that it is necessary to have skilled operators on the ground, within the military operation itself, who are capable of making needs assessments, identifying the best possible actors on the ground who can provide for needs, or determine when *non-action* might be the most preferable action. All of these tasks require military competency regardless of the operation. It is when some non-kinetic action is required, resembling humanitarian or development-oriented work, that the question arises as to whether or not military actors are the best choice to conduct such actions. Consistent with other principles of civil-military interaction, having military operators take up the slack temporarily with such

actions should be a last resort choice (OCHA 2008), usually when the military itself must take some action due to a lack of other actors available.

3.4 A case: the clash of mandates

It is the close proximity of the military to humanitarian efforts that is most oft reported in the Norwegian media when regarding civil-military interaction. But it is not only military proximity, but also civilian (or at least certain types of civilians), when certain civilians themselves work closely with militaries as noted earlier with regard to civilian cooperation with the American military (Staveland and Akerhaug 2010a; Staveland and Akerhaug 2010b)

Given the importance of humanitarian principles, how can we explain those situations when humanitarian actors accept that their work will be manipulated for political gain by other, politicized (fighting) actors?

Humanitarian organizations must keep channels of communication open with all actors who operate in the same area as they do. Part of the difficulty lies in the allegiances of the local authorities themselves, if they (in the case of Afghanistan) are operating as representatives of GIRoA, or IEA, or any other. NGOs favouring communication with just one warring party would, in principle, be breaching neutrality.

If one of the warring parties is likely to use the activities of humanitarian NGOs to its advantage, to gain credibility and legitimacy (or win hearts-and-minds?) amongst the local population, an important question is whether or not NGOs should be protesting this with equal vigour as protests against any such similar relationship to other warring parties (ISAF) who might also wish to increase their credibility in the region? Is it acceptable to allow the (in this case) IEA use humanitarian activities for their own political purposes? Should humanitarians ensure that no warring party will do so, or should all warring parties, in this case the GIRoA, its NATO allies, as well as the IEA, be able to increase their credibility through the work done by humanitarian organizations?

It is undoubtedly difficult to control if and how the activities of NGOs, both humanitarian and development, will be used and manipulated by warring parties to the advantage of warring parties. Is this a problem? Perhaps from a humanitarian perspective, no. The security of NGO personnel in Afghanistan (and in other similarly constructed complex emergencies) thus seems to depend on at least two, and conflicting, strategies. On the one hand, “humanitarian space” needs to be supported and maintained, but the expectation is that this is only possible

in interactions with other actors that have a respect for this space (at least to a degree). This space is necessary to have any contact or trust with other warring parties in the region. However, when it comes to other warring parties, once established that the NGOs are not supporters of GIROA or NATO forces, the security of NGOs is dependent upon an almost wholly opposite approach, and that is further acquiescing to the political interests of local power-holders and warring parties.

Humanitarianism, and particularly humanitarian space, is a central driving force behind the Norwegian model. Although humanitarian space is very important for the reasons already outlined above, it also is subject to considerable challenges that call into question the way in

Norwegian Church Aid's Atle Sommerfeldt referred to a former Norwegian PRT Commander (Rune Solberg) as just a "civilized version of a warlord" (Tømte December 2010).

which it can be used, by whom, and under what circumstances. Under examination it becomes clearer that humanitarianism and humanitarian space are complex concepts. Upon examining the some of the different civilian roles that are present in complex emergency situations, it is apparent that humanitarian goals are not always compatible with other civilian political or military goals, some of which include humanitarianism as part of a broader but political solution to the problems of complex emergencies.

The complexity of the civilian landscape means that militaries need to have a specialized knowledge about civilian actor diversity and the respective mandates that follow these actors. Only in this way can true respect for humanitarian space be preserved. This was also the core message coming from humanitarian organizations: militaries require a better knowledge about who the different organizations are, what they stand for (mandate) and how they operate. Virtually all of the NGO respondents for this project stated that militaries did not have adequate knowledge about NGO mandates, principles, and space. Ironically, building such knowledge within the military is one of the primary activities of CIMIC, which is the very function that is on the chopping block in Norway.

4 A culture of silence and irresponsible idealism?

“Dialogue has two opposites – silence and monologue” (Støre 2010)

It is silence and monologue that has dominated the topic of civil-military interaction in Norway. The “Norwegian model” as it currently stands has relevance and application for some complex emergencies, but not all. Despite the weaknesses of the model in certain contexts, there is a culture of silence surrounding it, particularly within the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) community, but as well as the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Although many respondents, ministerial, NGO and military, give credit to the model for its insights into the protection of humanitarian space, there have been even more respondents who despair over the lack of opportunity to discuss weaknesses and improve a system of interaction between diverse actors during an operation. A remarkable silence could be found at the MoD, a silence that did not mirror the interest in the topic within the MoD (at least at the lower echelons of the ministry). A number of respondents I spoke with wished to eliminate the rampant confusion around the complex concept of civil-military interaction, but this was difficult to achieve. In one meeting, the two respondents requested that the door be closed before anything was said on the subject (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010b).

Respondents from either of the two ministries often reflected two positions – either opposed to the notion of CIMIC (and most civil-military interaction or cooperation was equated with CIMIC), or aware of the complexities of the problem but unable to take the discussion forward. Over the CREN project period it became clear that Norwegian actors experienced a “disconnect” between bureaucrats and field practitioners who, although working for the “same boss” or ministry, have significantly different perceptions and agendas which collide rather than coalesce. Jonathan Moore, a previous adviser to the UNDP, wrote the following about similar disconnects:

Another difficulty is the void between officials at the lower bureaucratic levels and in the field – whose job it is to know what they are doing and with whom, to comprehend the specifics and to take practical action – and those at higher political levels in capitals, people whose incentive-and-reward system emphasizes the need to accommodate other interests and priorities and to deal with macropolicies for which details simply get in the way (Moore 1999).

The following quotes (translated from Norwegian in all but the first case) exemplify, or provide “snapshots” of some of the comments made that did not fully pay tribute to the Norwegian model, but instead reflected this disconnect:

“I feel like a freak.” MFA respondent (when representing the Norwegian position at NATO meetings)

“What is the Norwegian model? Very immature, even after all these years, and not made operationally relevant.” MFA respondent

“We cannot demand that NGOs follow up where we like, and we are made to be so dependent upon NGOs to do the projects” MoD respondent

“There should not be only one type of organization that is allowed to save lives” MoD respondent

“The debate reflects the ideas of people who have never been there.” MoD respondent

(Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010b).

Some MFA respondents that had worked in Afghanistan at some point during the past 5 years (particularly after the Norwegian model appeared to be enforced) expressed frustration with the lack of cooperation and coordination, that they could not get the information they needed as they, in some respects, were not trusted by the NGOs. Because of the government political affiliation, many NGOs did not wish to reveal project information to them for fear that

The lack of debate in Norway has created reified and polarized mythologies of military and NGO work.

(Hoogensen Gjørsv forthcoming 2012)

such information would be used, or passed to military sources. At the same time, some MFA respondents felt handicapped, experiencing tensions with some NGO agendas rather than work towards the alleged political goal that had sent them to the operations area.

This is not to say that all ministry officials I spoke to were sceptical or negative towards the Norwegian model. Many had serious concerns about the interaction between particularly military and humanitarian actors on the ground in Afghanistan and these concerns appeared to be at times well founded. But it was clear that a more flexible model is needed. A number of the military personnel that attempted to engage the civil-military interface often had neither a background nor had the advantage of lessons learned from previous efforts so mistakes of the past were often repeated, an ineffectual building of a hospital in 2007 serving as just one example (Gompelman 2011). The difficulty appears to be that the model is weakened by scepticism and/or concerns that cannot be expressed, which could otherwise contribute to strengthening the model.

Some Norwegian civilian (particularly humanitarian) actors have expressed satisfaction with the model because the result has been that the Norwegian military stays out of their way and

“CIMIC – that is something we don’t talk about here in the Ministry of Defence” MoD respondent (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010b).

does not encroach on NGO activities, in other words, the military keeps to “military” activities. The implied assumption (in the Norwegian case) is that military activities consist of the

use of force, and largely only that. This shows very little recognition for the range of military activities that consist of kinetic (use of force) *and* non-kinetic functions, both of which are crucial to military operations. Interestingly, the Norwegian military has been moving towards a greater emphasis towards kinetic capabilities, downplaying the non-kinetic (aside from Intelligence). Whether this is an indirect response to the Norwegian rhetoric that rejects military activities that might blur the lines between military and civilian, or a response to the difficulties in civil-military operations in general is unclear. However, an unexplored result of both the Norwegian model and the emphasis on kinetic skills will be a military that needs to take less consideration for civilian concerns and needs, as this is not the military’s “role”.

4.1 Polarization of roles? Soldiers, Saints, Virgins, Whores?

The debate in Norway, to the extent that one can call it a debate, has reified a polarized and largely unexplored view of what it is to be “civilian” and “military”, and what these categories embody. In her 2006 report examining the challenges of soldiers (CIMIC officers in particular) engaging in “projects,” Lene Kristoffersen aptly captured the dynamics of this polarized view within her chosen title “Soldiers or Saints” suggesting that to be a soldier is to be the opposite of a saint: holy, virtuous, including helping the vulnerable. As noted by Kristoffersen:

Are NATO CIMIC officers supposed to act like soldiers or saints? Should they stick to the military mindset of mission primacy, or also be able to venture into the civilian-humanitarian field if the opportunity arises and means allow for it? NATO CIMIC calls for soldiers, not saints. (Kristoffersen 2006: 27)

Saints are suggested to be equivalent to the “civilian-humanitarian field”, and set in opposition to soldiers. In general, soldiers are trained to kill people and destroy things (Smith 2005). As stated in a Norwegian policy document: “Operating as an armed soldier at one moment and aid worker the next can create confusion for both civilians and warring parties” (Utenriksdepartement 2009: 21). The armed and potentially deadly soldier is therefore pitted

against the work of providing aid, suggesting the two cannot and should not mix. The same document describes aid work, particularly humanitarian work, as such: “The core of humanitarian efforts is to save individual human lives, reduce suffering and secure human value independent of ethnic background, gender, age, religion or political association” (ibid: 5). Is the job of a soldier then to threaten human lives, increase suffering, and devalue humans in accordance to ethnicity, gender, age, religion and political association? Are soldiers the “opposite” of those who provide aid and help? When put this way, the polarization seems inappropriate. Soldiers do threaten some lives, and are politically motivated as they are mandated to fight on behalf of a political objective. This does not mean that they lack the capacity to provide aid or help where necessary, or that they are relieved of the responsibility to do so.

Oslo rhetoric did not reflect the specific challenges and frustrations experienced by many ministerial colleagues working in Afghanistan.

(Hoogensen Gjørsv, forthcoming 2012)

The polarized positioning offered in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) document above suggests that, at the very least, we need to more deeply examine what “soldier” means, particularly to Norwegian society. Without examination it implies that soldiers are then by definition (the “armed nature of the soldier”) unable to show humanity or provide support to struggling communities that are within their area of operations. For most this is not the case.

Just as this polarization negatively reflects upon the capacities and/or purpose of the military, it assumes rather exceptional if not unfailing capacities of the role of civilians combined with a lack of clarity about “who” civilians indeed are and what they represent. In Norwegian discussions about civil-military interaction, virtually *all* civilian organization work is all too often mistakenly categorized as “humanitarian” (when civilians in fact reflect multiple and diverging mandates), and by virtue of the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, civilian organizations are often implicitly endowed with a specific legitimacy embodying a moral authority and competence to serve host nation populations. A resulting problem of just *assuming* the legitimacy and authority of civilian organizations (and the lack of legitimacy of military actors) is that the reality of some difficult choices are not reflected, when civilian organizations must compromise humanitarian principles to be able to nevertheless assist vulnerable populations.

The concept of humanitarian space, supported by the principles of impartiality, independence and neutrality, can be seen to embody a type of “virginal” quality whereby humanitarian-defined actors should not be tainted or touched by the politics of other actors (so that humanitarians can have access to vulnerable populations regardless of the politics of local authorities or controlling/warring parties). This virginal (or saint-like) quality however becomes severely compromised when these principles cannot be maintained in practice. How do we address those situations when, in return for access to vulnerable populations, humanitarian work will be used to increase the credibility of one or some of the warring parties? When a humanitarian organization makes the choice to work in a region according to the demands of the local power brokers, whereby the humanitarian organization suspects that their work will be used to increase the power and credibility of these local authorities, is this a case of “the ends justify the means”, whereby an NGO breaks with “neutrality” and “independence” but for a good cause (helping people)? Or does this invoke the opposite status, willing to forego principles and be used by local power brokers in order to gain access? Do humanitarian organizations have to move between a principled stance with one warring party and an “ends justifies the means” approach with another? How should a donor/troop contributing nation react when NGOs are placed in situations whereby their activities will be used to the benefit of an opposing warring party, with which that troop-contributing nation has engaged in conflict?

These challenges are not discussed, leaving us nothing but to accept the assumptions behind polarized standpoints – soldiers or saints, virgins or whores? These polarized positions are not only misleading, but do little to help us understand the realities on the ground. There is no reflection upon the diversity of capacities of the actors on the ground (civilian or military), nor the struggles and challenges that all these actors experience. This is not an effective and productive approach to examining and evaluating the roles of different actors in complex operations, and it does not help the people dealing with reality on the ground.

4.2 Lack of clarity

The lack of clarity of the Norwegian model leaves practitioners to deal with the practicalities of this approach in an ad hoc if not awkward manner. Reducing military positions (with knowledge and skills) in civil-military interaction does not reduce the *need* for this knowledge or for better practices.

This does not mean that the Norwegian model does not reflect important principles, but there has been little adequate debate or development of guidelines about what these principles actually imply for all actors in specific contexts, what compromises need to be made to when addressing potentially opposing goals between actors, and under which contexts this particular model is or is NOT relevant. The Norwegian model has thus produced an unbalanced and uncritical approach to a Norwegian contribution to complex operations based on irresponsible idealism rather than principled realism.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Only when we stop deploying militaries to NATO, UN or EU (or other regional organizations) operations is the day we can stop paying attention to civil-military interaction. Until that day arrives, we need to have an evolving and flexible understanding of this process, both based on lessons learned as well as

impressions about what we can anticipate for the future. The ways in which we conduct operations will adjust according to context, but contact with civilians will be a remaining feature. It is often said that many of the conflicts today need a political solution, not a military one. There is a lot of truth to this. It does not stop us from deploying our armed forces however. To do so responsibly means that at the very least, we ensure our forces are as prepared as they can be to address the challenges they will confront. Many of these

challenges will involve civilians – local populations where the forces are deployed, diverse NGOs, private agencies, government ministries, media, and diverse commands (civilian-run or military-run).

The lack of focus on civil-military interaction (like CIMIC) does not result in a reduced need or use of civil-military knowledge and/or skills, but instead results in ad hoc solutions relying on individual skills and capacities. Hoogensen Gjørsv, forthcoming 2012

5.1 Missing in action: a focus on CIMIC training and education

The CREN project was originally designed to map and assess training that both directly and indirectly contributed to the development of CIMIC knowledge and practice in Norway. The negative and/or hush-hush responses to CIMIC by different respondents, NGO, government, or military, made it important to first investigate where these attitudes were coming from, before endeavouring to find anything about a training in a field that was almost considered a taboo. Much of the research, therefore, ended up focusing on the dynamics and politics of civil-military interaction in Norway. It became quickly very clear that there was little to nothing in education and training specifically oriented towards the function of CIMIC (Norwegian CIMIC officers need to get their education internationally, often at the NATO school Oberammergau or the CIMIC Centre of Excellence (CCOE)). To the extent that Norwegian policy was in disagreement with international practices of CIMIC, little effort was made to design a more “Norwegian” style of CIMIC, that could either be imported into the

international training and education programs available, or to at least train Norwegian CIMIC officers more specifically within the Norwegian military education system.

The culture of silence, lack of understanding and poor practice of CIMIC doctrine, as well as a lack of acknowledgement of the relevance of context, appears to have contributed to these developments where Norway has had less rather than more input to CIMIC training and education. The end result is more than just a little problematic. CIMIC provides knowledge and information about the civilian environment that other civil-military functions do not (although there are overlaps between civil-military functions, including intelligence, gender field advisors, etc), particularly with regard to international and non-governmental organizations, but also in working transparently with non-military security actors in support of completing the mission. If this is not provided by specialized CIMIC officers, it has to be provided by someone else. “Someone else” who is trained and educated appropriately.

The military training and education programs offered within the different military schools (ranging from officer candidate school or “befalsskole” to war college, staff college and higher) do include different aspects of relevant to civil-military operations, however during the period of interviews and analysis (2008-2010) there appeared to be little coordination between different course modules/lectures at the different levels. In other words, it is clearly recognized within all the educational institutions that knowledge about civil-military operations as a whole, and knowledge about culture, religion, and/or gender more specifically, is very important. But any connections made between these different learning “moments” across schools or training programs was more difficult to discern. In other words, a comprehensive, interconnected and progressive education and training focus on civil-military interaction did not appear to be present.

During the course of the CREN project period I often heard that the best advisors to the commander on the civil-military interface are civilian advisors. Civilian advisors, though beneficial in many ways, do not (usually) have the military background to best translate civilian concerns to a military context. This must instead be done by the commander. As well, commanders cannot count on the constant or immediate availability of pertinent information coming from other institutions or from research sources (often referred to as “reachback”), and need to draw on immediate advice and knowledge that is located on the ground. Without these assets, militaries are less able to respond to the whole range of challenges of the civil-military interface. This includes the ability to have both basic knowledge and awareness of

humanitarian space and of IHL (provided through general education and training in the military education system), but also expert “in-house” knowledge that can quickly adapt to changing scenarios, and can negotiate different civilian needs in relation to the given military mandate. The Norwegian Armed Forces needs to take a critical look at how it is able to manage these multiple levels of knowledge and skill-development.

De-prioritizing CIMIC capabilities has not solved the challenges of civil-military interaction in complex emergencies. At best, militaries have learned to stay away from or avoid civilian actors (many even avoiding their own government civilians housed in the same PRT).

However challenges still exists, and there is still a need for military education and training in civil-military interaction.

It is not possible (or rather it would be irresponsible) to predict precisely what sort of operations we will be confronted with in the future. One might say “never another Afghanistan” meaning that structures like the PRT (also used in Iraq), or strategies like COIN, will not be repeated. Possibly. But that does not reduce the importance of having a base of knowledge and principles for civil-military interaction that can provide structure and guidelines while still being able to adjust to specific contexts. It is not an easy task. For this reason education and training, lessons learned and sharing of experiences, and open debate are crucial for future preparation. We may not get involved in another Afghanistan, but instead end up with a “Libya”, without being entirely sure what that might entail, not least with regard to impacts on, and relations with, civilians.

Where Norway could be useful is in making clear that NATO countries themselves have moved too far away from doctrine, and how to operationalize doctrine better.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Conceptual Development:

1. Design a Norwegian CIMIC doctrine that explicitly recognizes the civil-military needs of the military, to what extent this can accommodate humanitarian space and codes of conduct
2. Design mechanisms of interaction between actors that respects codes of conduct for different actors, supports interaction on the basis of the different needs of these actors, and allows for a successful completion of both the civilian and military sides of the mission (look at guidelines, as were being developed by the Norwegian Refugee Council, for example).

5.2.2 Practices:

1. Establish better interagency/inter-ministerial cooperation - including agenda setting and a better understanding of security roles for different actors
2. Make use of current and develop new knowledge and expertise in civil-military relations (ie: G9, CIMIC doctrines, etc) to establish a solid, reliable and consistent system of interaction between civilian and military actors.
3. Concerted and clear focus upon primary CIMIC roles in planning, advisory roles, and education and training
4. Distancing from “project” work, although willing to advise other military units engaged in such work when necessary

5.2.3 Education:

5. Introduce a civil-military interaction course at the Military Academy/krigsskole (follow, for example, the Dutch design).
6. Establish a tighter connection between courses (“red thread”) on civil-military interaction (or related) and follow up/through with one another, from basic training through officer candidate school, Military Academy and Staff College, as well as higher.
7. Establish a better understanding of the links between civil-military interaction and role in national/international security
8. Two tier education and training: 1. CIMIC specialists (analytical advisors, planners) as well as 2. ensure basic knowledge across the board to all in the military (through modules or courses in all regular education institutions)
9. Education development: Lessons-learned and research-based.
10. Comparative research on different PRT practices with CIMIC (compare different PRTs and what sort of CIMIC practices they employ)
11. Review current evaluations of courses offered – what are students getting out of the courses, possibly run new evaluations if necessary

6 Prognosis

As Afghanistan comes to an awkward and difficult close (for many international actors in any case), and Libya and the impacts of that operation on civilians is explored, Norway has an excellent opportunity to evaluate the needs and experiences from all actors and work towards a stronger framework of civil-military interaction.

The prognosis does not look good however for either Norwegian CIMIC (and other civil-military relevant functions), or the Norwegian model. Civil-military interaction has always been a part of conflict though it manifests itself in many different ways according to context. A specific civil-military function within militaries was developed and practiced already during WWII, and the function we know now as CIMIC developed rapidly during the post-Cold War period during the humanitarian and military interventions of the 1990s and the stabilization operations of the 21st century. The nature of operations will continue to develop and change based on lessons learned (largely what *not* to do next time) and political goals. The need to address concerns at the nexus between military and civilian actors, not least civilian aid organizations, will always remain, though the nature of the contact and exchange will also differ according to the nature of the operation. Thus future NATO operations which might focus on smaller, elite forces rather than large scale deployments of ground troops, or UN operations that continue to support the diverse and complex needs of peacekeeping operations, require a flexible, adaptable, knowledgeable support function that specifically tackles the on-going responsibility of militaries to and on behalf of civilians.

Appendix: overview of respondents

1. Military – 49 respondents

1. Norwegian and Dutch officers (CIMIC, Intelligence, Info Ops, MOT, OMLT) (Norway, Netherlands)
2. Human Terrain (USA, Afghanistan)
3. Norwegian PRT Commanders (Norway, Afghanistan)
4. Norwegian Battalion commanders (Norway)
5. Norwegian Officer candidate school (Norway)
6. Norwegian Military Academy/War college (Norway)
7. Norwegian Defence Command and Staff College (Norway)
8. CCOE - CIMIC Centre of Excellence – (Netherlands)
9. PSKOI- US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (USA)
10. NATO ACT, including Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC), Education, Training and Evaluation (ETEE), Civil-Military Fusion Centre (CMC). (USA)

2. IO/NGOs – 34 respondents

11. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (Switzerland)
12. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) (Switzerland, Afghanistan)
13. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (Afghanistan)
14. Norwegian Red Cross (Norway)
15. Doctors without Borders (Norway)
16. Norwegian Refugee Council (Norway, Afghanistan)
17. Norwegian People's Aid (Norway)
18. Norwegian Church Aid (Norway)
19. Afghan Women's Network (Afghanistan)
20. Central Asia Institute (CAI) (Afghanistan)

3. Research Institutes – 10 respondents

21. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) (Norway)
22. Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) (Norway)
23. Institute for Defence Studies (IFS) (Norway)
24. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) (Switzerland)

- 25. Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) (Switzerland)
- 26. George Madison University – Peace Operations Policy Program (USA)
- 27. US National Defence University (USA)

4. Government Ministries – 25 respondents

- 28. Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway, Afghanistan, USA)
- 29. Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Afghanistan)
- 30. Dutch Ministry of Defence (Netherlands)
- 31. Norwegian Ministry of Defence (Norway)

5. Afghan Respondents (discussion groups as well as anecdotal/informal – with interpreter or in english) – 25 respondents

- 32. NGO associated/employed Afghan citizens
- 33. Local residents

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