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Crisis Management

A Combined Effort with Civil and Military Means

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In 1989/90 the world changed dramatically. Since then, the number of cases demanding international attention in the form of crisis management has continued to increase. At the moment, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, North Korea, Palestine, Sudan/Darfur are the most prominent problems that remain to be solved. This shows already the variety of crises we have to deal with. It is therefore timely to examine what happens after crisis prevention has failed, because parties involved were not able to solve political differences in a peaceful way. Most of these conflicts are domestic ones; violent conflicts between states are the exception. The causes for internal conflicts range from post-war power struggles over group's demands for power sharing to claims for autonomy or even independence.

Features of Crisis Management

The aim of crisis management is, first, to defuse the crisis or resolve a conflict. Secondly it seeks to establish a secure environment to enable parties to deal with the causes of a crisis or conflict. Finally, it aims to initiate reforms of institutions or policies to prevent a follow-on crisis. Crisis response operations are part of crisis management. They support the peace process in a conflict area and include peacekeeping and peace enforcement, as well as conflict prevention, peace making, peace-building and humanitarian operations.[1] In the German government's view, crisis management is an integral part of crisis prevention in so far as it can help prevent a relapse.[2]

Crisis management is a very complex task and none of the participating states and international organizations has all means necessary at its disposal. Even the United States lacks sufficient specialized stabilization and reconstruction capabilities, at least to deal with a crisis of a bigger order. Whenever possible, a crisis should be brought to a good end by diplomatic efforts. But very often this is not possible, and other options need to be considered, including the military one to end a crisis or conflict by force. However, this does not eliminate the underlying causes of a conflict. In most cases, after having ended the acute crisis, armed forces are employed to establish and maintain a secure and stable environment in which the structural causes can also be addressed and UN Security Council resolutions or peace agreements be implemented.

Crisis response is a staged process. It is important to note, however, that the following is only a model and might not fit all crises situations.[3] Each modern crisis is unique: Each has its specific line-up, its particular mixture of possible forms of violence and conflict. From the very beginning, political goals need to be clearly defined and adhered to, unless there is a fundamental change in the situation. This is an important precondition for success.

Phase One: Diplomacy Backed by Threat

An ideal type of crisis management may start with an attempt to persuade the country breaking the rules to change its behaviour by "diplomacy backed by threat". This could be economic, financial sanctions, travel restrictions for members of the government or a threat of military action. This is accompanied by shuttle diplomacy and intense consultations.

The UN Security Council, as the representative of the International Community, provides with its mandate an unequivocal legal basis for measures against a state at the onset of a crisis or conflict. Through a Security Council resolution, a state is therefore judged to represent a danger to international security or to have broken international law. Security Council mandates also authorize, if necessary, the use of force.

The reaction of the International Community in a particular crisis is difficult to predict, even if the facts appear to justify an intervention. Respect for national sovereignty is always a great concern, and reasons to violate it must be very substantial. As a result, often intensive crisis management measures are taken only, if public and international pressure through media and other means are too strong to withstand, or if the conflict has turned to violence.

Unfortunately, however, sanctions and threats seldom result in their intended effect. Iraq under the rule of Saddam Hussein is a good example for this. Too often sanctions actually strengthen the target regime and make, against all intentions, the population suffer instead.

[1] Definition according to NATO website <www.nato.int/issues/crisis_management/index.html (viewed 22.09.2006)
[2] See German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *One Year Action Plan Civil Crisis Prevention*, Berlin May 2005

[3] For the phases of crisis management see Klaus Naumann, *Kriseneindämmung* in: Ursula Blanke (Hg.), Krisen und Konflikte, Berlin 2004, pp. 57-58

Another example is the conflict in Bosnia. The first UN Security Council resolutions date from July 1992. They mandated monitoring operations in the Adriatic, an arms embargo against all republics of the Former Yugoslavia and sanctions against the government in Belgrade. Three months later, a no-fly-zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina was established. Nevertheless, this first phase of diplomacy backed by threat was not successful in stopping the inter-ethnic violence. Thus, if the government or the conflicting parties do not give in to diplomatic pressure, escalation is unavoidable.

Multilateral Character of Crisis Management

Crisis management has a greater effect if it is multi-lateral because it is an expression of solidarity with a wider range of options and capabilities and a broader basis for the legitimacy of the action. Moreover, the message sent to the political leaders of the opponent state is more powerful if the International Community as a whole – or at least an important part of it – shows clear disapproval of their actions. Consequently, or-ganisations acting under a UN or other mandate will try to have as many countries take part as possible. For example, 33 nations are taking part in EU Operation *Althea* in Bosnia, 25 in KFOR (Kosovo Force) in Kosovo and 37 in ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan.

Still, this form of multilateral cooperation has a downside as well: The more participants there are, the more difficult it is to agree on the concrete measures to be taken. Many rounds of consultations in different multilateral for a need to be coordinated, as in the conflicts in the Balkans the UN, the OSCE, the Contact Group (United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russian Federation), NATO and the EU. More-over, inside NATO and the EU, there are political and military committees that also have a say in the prepa-ration of a decision.[4] In addition, there are a number of bilateral contacts underpinning the multilateral process. This is obviously very time-consuming. The United States, in particular, has had problems at times with this cumbersome way of reaching agreements. During the Balkan crisis, General Wesley Clarke, then NATO commander, criticised the Alliance's way of

[4] In NATO the Political Committee, Policy Coordination Group and the Military Committee, in the EU the Political and Security Committee and the Military Committee

doing business as "war by committees". In addition, at the end of manifold consultations, as a necessary com-promise, the wording of resolutions or communiqués may be watered down, agreed – upon measures rather restricted. This does not satisfy everyone, but the effect of many countries being united in agreement may be more important than a more stringent decision sup-ported by only a few or even no decision at all if con-sensus could not be reached.

To illustrate the complexity of decision-making consider the following: In the UN Security Council a majority of nine out of fifteen votes is needed, if none of the permanent members vetoes a measure. In the NATO Council 26 states have to agree, and in the EU 27. If the EU wants to use NATO assets and capabilities in a crisis management operation, the consensus of 31 nations is necessary.

Phase Two: Diplomacy Backed by Force

The next step in crisis response is "diplomacy backed by force" to signal the resolve of the International Community and avoid any misperceptions by the government concerned. It is the last opportunity for the state to assess what it could save by accepting the demands of the UN and what it would risk by not doing so. The consequences of non-compliance must be very serious.

Again an example from the Balkans: In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in November 1992, enforce-ment operations in support of the sanctions and em-bargo began at sea. In March 1993, enforcement of the no-fly-zone over the country was authorized. Air op-erations started in April and involved finally more than 200 aircraft of various NATO nations. In one incident, several aircraft were shot down by NATO as they broke the regulations.

Domestic Decision-Making

In parallel to the decision-making on the international level, in participating states a comparably difficult process of coordination also takes place domestically. Governments are organised in departments and agen-cies. As a result crisis management is a particular challenge to them because it typically involves more than just one administrative actor. Furthermore, countries that intend to participate in crisis manage-

ment operations aim to secure public support at home. This is particularly important if armed forces are to be involved. In Germany, the employment of the military in crisis management operations requires parliamentary approval. To get a broad majority and public consent, it is necessary to justify planned measures convincingly. The UN mandate provides the basis for this. Additionally, broad and sustained support is a precondition for being effective in carrying the mission through. Comprehensive public diplomacy and information activities are therefore equally important.

The opponents in a crisis or conflict know very well that, in democracies, it is difficult to govern against public opinion. Therefore, as in Afghanistan at the moment, opponents target public opinion in participating nations with their attacks on ISAF troops hoping to break up the front by inflicting a growing number of casualties. A broad public mandate can reduce the danger of this happening.

Phase Three: Force Backed by Diplomacy

If the International Community still does not reach its goal, phase number three, "force backed by diplomacy", aims to destroy the adversary's power base. Yet, this is still far from a war situation, because the aim is not to occupy territory permanently, simply to make the regime yield. In this phase, it is particularly important that politicians responsible and the military executing their orders work closely together and in great confidence. Phase three can last some time, according to the degree of force applied. Politicians and public opinion observe operations very intensely to make sure that the use of force is not excessive and that collateral damage is kept to a minimum. The opposite would be disadvantageous in operational terms too: It could bolster adversarial propaganda and strengthen the resistance. In this phase as in others, there is always a diplomatic back channel kept open to the opponent to make sure military action does not last longer than necessary.

A mandate in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter defines not only the mission, but also the composition and equipment of armed forces to be employed. So-called "robust" missions demand greater capabilities, as well as deeper coordination and more command facilities which the UN does not have at its disposal. As a result, the UN increasingly uses regional organisations like NATO, the EU and the African Un-ion, or coalitions of the willing with a lead nation to implement its mandates. Ten years ago, mission participants had to be impartial observers, only authorised to defend themselves; now they are actors mandated to rigorously pursue the political objectives defined by the Security Council. This is an important change.

In Bosnia, the third phase started in February 1994. It employed NATO air strikes against artillery and mortar positions in or around Sarajevo at the request of the UN to protect the Muslim population from Bosnian Serb attacks. In October of the same year, NATO fired missiles at Bosnian Serb radar sites and executed air attacks on a Bosnian Serb command and control bunker in support of UNPROFOR (UN Protection Force). These events were decisive in convincing the Bosnian Serb leadership and the government in Belgrade to give their consent to negotiate a peace agreement. The agreement was later initialled at Dayton and signed in Paris in December 1994.

If it is not possible for the Security Council to agree a resolution authorizing the use of force, in an exceptional situation, a group of countries may act on their own. This was the case with Kosovo in 1999. After intense warnings to President Milosevic, NATO decided to use air strikes as a means to avert a serious humanitarian crisis. It was hoped that NATO military action could stop ethnic Albanians from being killed or forced out of their homes with the intention of ethnic cleansing. The Alliance did this with the implicit sympathy of the larger International Community, but against the declared will of the Russian government. In the end it was successful. After a 77-day air campaign, an agreement was reached with the governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia on the principles for a political solution to the Kosovo crisis, an immediate end of violence and a rapid withdrawal of Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces. This result was welcomed the same day by the UN Security Council, which also decided to establish an international civil and security presence in Kosovo under UN auspices. The civil presence is UNMIK (UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo), the security presence is KFOR (Kosovo Force). After more than seven years, both exist still today.

Phase Four: Diplomacy Backed by Reconstruction

After crisis or conflict resolution, "diplomacy backed by reconstruction" works to create a situation where intervention and the application of force are no longer necessary. The goals of the ensuing peace-building include self-sustained stability, ensuring human rights and democratic principles and security sector reforms to make it subordinate to directives by an elected government. Structural changes of state institutions may also be necessary. In this phase, operations by international military forces guarantee security and stability, which need to be used as effectively as possible by non-military actors.

Sustainable reconstruction requires the commitment of sufficient funds and other resources – above all time. This part of crisis management needs a clear mandate: "The objectives must be realistic and modest", as Mr. Steiner, the former Special Representative of the Secretary General in Kosovo said. "If the Security Council mandate is not crystal-clear on central issues, the whole mission is infected."[5] This was the case, when UNSCR 1244 left open the most important question, which had been the very reason for the conflict with the Former Republic of Yugoslavia: the status of Kosovo. Even today it remains undecided, but international negotiations are working on it.

The sequence of steps in the reconstruction process is essential. "Security and rule of law come first, democratization is for later", so Mr. Steiner describes a lesson learned in Bosnia, where too early elections, just five months after the war, were a mistake. Without sufficient time to establish security and the rule of law and to allow new parties to form and mobilize effectively, nationalistic parties won, the very ones which had been responsible for the war in the first place.

It is important in the reconstruction and peace building process to involve the local authorities and population, to lead them to ownership and retaking responsibility for the affairs of their country. This is not an easy task. The extended length of the operations often creates a certain dependency among local governments and public, but it is necessary for them to come to terms with this critical task nevertheless.

[5] See Michael Steiner, *Legitimacy is Essential: Remarks on Instruments of International Involvement in Post-conflict Situations* in: Federal Foreign Office, *Beyond Cold Peace: Strategies for Economic Reconstruction and Post-conflict Management,* Conference Report, Berlin 2004, p. 91

Complexity of Reconstruction Operations

The *General Framework Agreement for Peace* in Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be implemented in its military part at first by IFOR (Peace Implementation Force), later SFOR (Stabilization Force) and today EUFOR (European Forces), on the civil side by the Office of the High Representative of the Secretary General of the UN. Already the length of this reconstruction phase – from 1995 to today – shows how difficult and important this mission is to fulfil. Hostile attitudes have had to be overcome and genuine cooperation between former conflicting parties had to be established. This is a truly long-term process and demands patience and persistence. The incentive for reform has been strengthened considerably by the promise of eventual membership in both NATO and the EU. EU membership for Bosnia is the foundation of economic prosperity, particularly in a country where 50 percent of the population lives at or below the poverty line. But if, as a result of internal EU problems, the accession seems to slip too far into the future, this could have adverse effects.

The following demonstrates how complex international cooperation to implement the Dayton Peace Agreement was: Measures comprised exercising political and economic pressure on the conflict parties, mediation between them, monitoring and enforcing the armistice and disarmament and further 30 measures of civil implementation and stabilization. Included in this laundry list of measures were coordination of conflict management, economic reconstruction, reconstruction of infrastructure, enforcement of the arms embargo and economic sanctions, demining, assisting in democracy building and, finally, arresting indicted war criminals. These tasks were mandated or executed as appropriate by the Peace Implementation Council, the Contact Group, troops of IFOR and SFOR under NATO command, the Western European Union, UN bodies as UN High Commission for Refugees, UN Mission for Bosnia-Herzegovina and the International Police Task Force, the OSCE mission, the EU with a number of subordinate bodies and the World Bank. Accordingly, the multinational military commands worked together very closely with the Office of the High Representative informing each other and consulting as appropriate. On a regular basis, the High Representative chaired meetings of the "Board of Principles", the main coordination body for

all activities of the International Community in Bosnia.

NATO–EU Co-operation

In July 2003 – late but fortunately not too late – NATO and the EU agreed a concerted approach for the Western Balkans laid down in a framework document. The cooperation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is part of it. This agreement resolved differences of opinion regarding the best way to stabilise the region. It is the only agreement of its kind relating to a region where both NATO and the EU have security and economic interests.

The objective of the agreement is to help the five states of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia-Montenegro) attain sustainable stability on the basis of democratic and effective government structures and a viable market economy. Efforts on their own and full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal are fundamental prerequisites for these countries to get closer to the EU and NATO membership. Both organisations want to use their instruments to foster desired development. For implementing the reforms in the defence and security sector a division of labour was established: the EU looks after police reform and government affairs, while NATO pursues the military preparation for eventual NATO integration.

Meanwhile, Bosnia is on track. With increasing political stability and the implementation of reforms in the government structure, armed forces and police, the international military contingent has progressively been reduced to 7,000 personnel from originally 60,000. Further reduction is already planned. In parallel, step by step security tasks will be taken over by police forces.

Military participants in crisis management operations enjoy the ability to use established multinational command structures. Only the field headquarters in the operations area needs to be established for the particular mission, but even this can rely on earmarked components that are ready at short notice. The difficulties are greater for the civil part of the mission: The respective UN mission headquarters must be set up from scratch. In addition, it has a greater variety of issues to deal with, ranging from internal security to economic development. Some-

times it has even to take on the responsibilities of a whole government, as was the case in the Balkans.

Crisis Management Capabilities of NATO and EU

A look at the crisis management capabilities of NATO and the EU shows that NATO basically uses military capabilities whereas the EU employs a comprehensive mix of civilian means in addition to the military. This "soft power" component constitutes a comparative advantage over the Atlantic Alliance in crisis management operations. EU member states are ready and able to send specialized personnel in large numbers into crisis and disaster areas at short notice. More than 5,700 police, 630 experts for law and order, 560 experts for administration and management, and about 5,000 personnel for emergency services are available.

As the military capabilities of the EU are still limited, large-scale military crisis management operations are only possible, if the organisation is able to take advantage of NATO assets and capabilities. This has been made possible through agreement of "Permanent Arrangements" between both organisations in early 2003, which provides the EU the use of NATO planning capacities. Furthermore, in particular cases, the EU also has access to collective NATO resources and capabilities – including the NATO command structure and communication systems. Preconditions are that NATO "is not engaged as a whole", meaning the USA is not interested in taking part in this particular crisis management operation, and there is the agreement of all NATO members. In Bosnia, the EU uses NATO command facilities, infrastructure, communications, transport and much more. It is the biggest operation under the "Permanent Arrangements" so far. The cooperation on the ground is excellent, the information flows smoothly and the result has been extremely positive.

To date, NATO and EU have twice exercised crisis management consultations and procedures to train participants and find out where improvements in the process were necessary.

Civil-military Coordination

Military and civil crisis management measures take place one after the other or in parallel. Let us look at

the important issues of civil-military cooperation and coordination.[6]

As mentioned already when talking about Bosnia, the main coordination of actors happens under the stewardship of the UN head of mission. Although NATO has only military capabilities in its inventory, it fulfils many tasks that also benefit civilian authorities and the public. Returning to Bosnia, SFOR provided a wide range of assistance to other participating organisations. It created a secure environment for municipal elections in 1997 and supported the OSCE in the preparation and conduct of these elections. It assisted the OSCE in implementing the Confidence and Security Building Measures and Regional Arms Control agreements. The Office of the High Representative received telecommunications, engineering and air transport support. The UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) got assistance in its task to arrange for the return of refugees and displaced persons. Close cooperation took place with the International Police Task Force through surveillance, communication and transport, as well as back up for their operations. Some military specialists have even built houses for returning refugees.

The EU has conducted 18 civil and military crisis management operations to date. Most of them were small civil missions focussing on law and order such as police advisory functions as in Macedonia, in Iraq or in Congo. In Bosnia, the EU carries out three missions in parallel: the military Operation Althea and two civil ones, the EU Police Mission and the EU Monitoring Mission. In Darfur/Sudan, support of the African Union Mission in Darfur region of Sudan (AMISII) is a civil-military mix, but with only about 50 personnel rather small.

To strengthen the network between deployed armed foces and the multitude of civil governmental and non-governmental actors, the EU established Civil-Military Liaisoning. Civil-Military Coordination on the other hand, aims at linking more closely together all civil and military functions and actors in the ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) framework to make sure policies are coherent.

In Bosnia, the EU works together with the UN to exercise pressure on conflict parties and to coordinate the civil implementation of the Dayton Agreement. It

supported the reconstruction of infrastructure, cooperation initiatives, customs operations, establishment of free media and judicial reform.

A very different coordination concept is used in Afghanistan. Here, civil-military activities are coordinated in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. 27 are planned. PRTs are multinational, inter-departmental and inter-agency structures. They cooperate closely with the local and regional Afghan authorities, international and non-governmental organisations. The activities of all PRTs are surveyed by a PRT Executive Steering Committee with co-chairmanship of the Afghan Minister of the Interior and the Commander ISAF.

All these measures show how decisive cooperation and coordination are for the success of the missions as a whole. They try to bridge the different organisational principles, responsibilities and modes of operation of government departments, EU commission general directorates and a multitude of governmental and non-governmental organisations. For example: In the beginnning it was not easy, to get a common understanding between the German Ministries of Defence, Foreign, Development and the Interior on what the German PRT in Kunduz should do and how to cooperate. Today, it is working very well.

Conclusions

Every crisis is unique. As a result, unique strategies and solutions must be formulated and adopted to deal with new conflicts and crises. But we can also learn from past experiences. We have seen that crisis management operations are very complex enterprises. A multilateral framework provides each management phase with greater political impact and power of persuasion. However, it also requires comprehensive efforts in consultation and decision-making. Civil-military cooperation and coordination of these activities need particular attention to ensure coherent and effective policies. There are different models to bridge diverse structures and philosophies. Yet, despite the provision of huge resources in manpower, skill and finance by the International Community the final result of these operations remains uncertain. Ultimately, a fresh start cannot be made without also a new mindset of the local populations. Nothing less can lead to a lasting solution for these deeply rooted problems.

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[6] See also Markus Reinhardt, *Zivil-militärische Beziehungen im Rahmen der ESVP,* Begriffe, Sachstände, Herausforderungen, SWP, Diskussionspapier FG3-DP05, Mai 2006 <www.swp-berlin.org>

However, the increasing length of operations and the costs for contributing countries impact on the readiness of the International Community to engage itself as easily as before. Thus, one of the lessons should be to do still more in crisis prevention, as it is much less expensive compared to crisis management operations and saves lives.

Crisis management needs to be understood as a beneficial long-term investment in a safe and just world. Although it may be very cumbersome and demands a lot of patience, it should be of concern to all of us and needs genuine support.