



DIIS REPORT
THE CIVIL-MILITARY AGENDA



DIIS REPORT

**SYNTHESIS REPORT:
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS**
A DANISH PERSPECTIVE

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Preface

The Danish government has commissioned to DIIS this study on how to develop further the concerted civil and military planning and action in international operations. Over the last decades Denmark has engaged in international attempts aimed at preventing or settling conflicts and restore peace. Armed conflicts are high on both national and international security agendas in part due to a growing perception that a connection exists between internal conflicts and external threats to the international order and security. The fact that Denmark has soldiers engaged in warfare – and that some of them lose their lives – naturally impacts on political and public debates. However there is a danger that any reflection on these conflicts is immediately politicised and seen as being either for, or against, Denmark's participation in a given conflict; or, for or against, a particular actor amongst the Danish institutions active in this area. With this study, we hope to contribute to the public debate on what is required if civil and military operations are to be approached in a more comprehensive way.

The study has been carried out by researchers and analysts at DIIS and other research institutions in Denmark and abroad. A reference group was set up in order to follow the work. The group consisted of experts and practitioners from research institutions, think tanks, NGOs, and the Danish Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs. While I am grateful for their comments and rich contributions, the reports and recommendations resulting from the study are entirely DIIS' responsibility.

DIIS' ambition has been to generate a solid empirical basis for the study in order to produce an evidence based report and thereby avoid undue politicization. Thanks to the willingness of the interviewees to participate, this has to a large extent been possible when dealing with representatives of the different institutions involved in international operations. However, the very conditions of safety and security in the areas of Danish military deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan have severely limited the available data from the populations and authorities who are directly involved in the conflicts. This is unfortunate since it reinforces a pattern of omitting the local perspective when operations are assessed. Thus the reports can discuss how the organization of civil-military relations could be improved, but they are more silent with regards to the effects and impacts of operations, as well as the causal relationships between the forms of intervention and the outcomes. The study also focuses on the way in which security, development, and political

instruments and institutions are organized, but it does not consider the wisdom of military engagement itself.

Finally I would like to thank our colleagues at DIIS Michael Jedig Jensen, Peter Albrecht, Jacob Bang Jeppesen, Karsten Jakob Møller, Kira Simonsen, Ida Vammen, Ane Toubro, and Jørgen Staun for their valuable support and assistance in the process of writing the synthesis report.

Coordinator Finn Stepputat, DIIS

Executive Summary

1. In November 2007, the Danish government announced a study to be undertaken by DIIS of 'the concrete possibilities for further strengthening of the concerted civil and military planning and action [*samtænkning*] in connection with peace-supporting operations, primarily based on experiences from Danish engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹ The study was to contribute to a revision of the Danish Concerted Planning and Action strategy from 2004 in relation to the new parliamentary defence agreement for 2010-14.

2. The study was carried out between March 2008 and February 2009,² most of it as a desk study, but also comprising visits in Helmand and Badakhshan in Afghanistan, and more than a hundred interviews in Denmark, Afghanistan, London and Den Haag. The outcome is published in this synthesis report, as well as in separate studies of the Danish experiences with concerting civil-military activities in Iraq and Afghanistan respectively; of the general lessons learned from civil-military cooperation; and of the different approaches to civil-military cooperation as they are presently evolving in Denmark, United Kingdom and the Netherlands, as well as the UN, the EU and NATO.

3. A number of different concepts and approaches to civil-military cooperation have emerged among international organizations and governments. As yet there is no common language or definitions, and the same concepts are understood in different ways. But the recognition that armed conflicts cannot be overcome by military means alone is common, and the experience of setbacks in terms of security in Iraq and Afghanistan has created a certain urgency to find ways of combining civil and military instruments. However, there are many political and institutional obstacles to the process.

4. The study looks at how coherence is sought across three different but interlinked dimensions: a) across the institutions of the Danish government; b) Danish harmonization with other international actors; and c) Danish (and international) alignment with local and national actors.

¹ Mulighedernes samfund. Regeringsgrundlag November 2007. See also terms of reference in Annex 1.

² Fieldwork for the Afghanistan study was undertaken in May-June 2008. The cut-off date for the sub-report on Afghanistan is July 2008, but the synthesis report includes additional sources issues and continues up to February 2009.

5. *Coherence across the Danish government.* In 2004, the Danish Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence co-launched the Concerted Planning and Action initiative. The aim was to support stabilization in areas of Danish military deployment by increasing synergies between civilian and military activities, if necessary by having the military facilitate humanitarian work and reconstruction activities for the benefit of the population. An interdepartmental civil servant group has developed the concept, while strategies and operational tasks have been taken over by country-specific, networking task forces. The policy has been operationalized through the designation of a special budget line, Concerted Planning and Action training for CIMIC officers, and the deployment of Civil Advisors with the Danish troops. Coordination at field level has taken place in a Danish Steering Unit or in multinational Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

6. The understanding of the Danish concept has differed between different actors and has changed over time. It has been understood as

- a) military involvement in reconstruction activities at the tactical level in the absence of civilian actors;
- b) as a concept for peace-building in which the armed forces provide a security umbrella for reconstruction to take place;
- c) as a concept for counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization, where reconstruction and governance reform are used together with military actions to separate the population from the insurgency and win hearts and minds; and
- d) a strategic level-concept that ensures a common strategic framework for military, humanitarian, reconstruction, development, governance reform and diplomatic efforts to achieve common objectives in specific international operations.

7. The Concerted Planning and Action concept and the structures for its implementation have created a framework for the development of closer relations between mainly the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Intense discussions have taken place around issues of the concentration of activities and funds in areas of military deployment, the use of development funds, the recruitment and protection of civilian advisors, and the objectives of 'concerted planning and action projects' (*samtænkningsprojekter*). Implementation has focused on these projects at the tactical level in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the high degree of geographic overlap in Basra, logistic interaction between larger Danish reconstruction programmes and military deployment was much more intense in Iraq than in Afghanistan, where until 2008 Danish development aid focused on

national processes and multilateral programmes. From 2008 more aid has been spent in Helmand, and in 2009, 10-15% will be allocated to this province, depending on conditions.

8. Interviews and documents suggest that planners have generally seen security and development interventions as mutually supportive rather than considering how specific civil and military activities influence each other, as well as the local dynamics of conflict and political stabilization. This started to change with the increased focus on Helmand and the movement towards a counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization strategy in late 2007. However, little consideration has been given the possibility that some forms of reconstruction and development may have adverse effects on stabilization. Likewise, at the national, strategic level, a comprehensive approach should also include, for example,

- a) considerations of how the regional distribution of aid influences patterns of conflict and insurgency;
- b) how military strategies in one region affect support for the government in other regions;
- c) how reform of the army, police and justice sectors at the central levels can improve the security situation at the provincial and district levels; etc.

These considerations go far beyond the specific Danish contributions, but they represent the major strategic challenge which Denmark has to engage in together with the other actors.

9. Operations in fragile state contexts, and in particular stabilization operations, are demanding in terms of human and financial resources. Protection of civilian personnel is very costly and makes their work-time less efficient, while the embassies' routine tasks and participation in high-profile peace processes requires more personnel. In the ministries, operational involvement runs against the grain of current aid modalities. More man-hours are needed for the operational back-up and for coordination across institutional boundaries in a situation where administrative personnel are being cut back. Likewise stabilization operations place high demands on the resources of the military, where prioritization is needed if the military is to be involved in reconstruction and protection activities.

10. *Danish Harmonization with other International Actors.* Denmark has actively promoted a comprehensive approach to civil-military activities at the interna-

tional level. The Danish efforts have primarily been pursued within NATO, while Denmark has been less active in the UN and the EU. The Danish approach has emerged from Denmark's participation in NATO and Coalition operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. At the strategic level, Denmark has influenced the acceptance of the Comprehensive Approach in NATO. In the EU, Denmark has been handicapped by the defence opt-out. However, from the narrow perspective of the integration of civil-military activities, both the UN and the EU offer obvious advantages, since they comprise civilian and military capabilities within the same political organization. But while the UN may have the legitimacy to lead a comprehensive approach and organize a strategic framework for operations, the organization lacks the capacity, and in particular the robustness to operate in non-permissive environments. Presently, only NATO has the capabilities to operate in areas of high levels of conflict. Nevertheless, from a longer term perspective, in accordance with the current policy of making civil-military operations as multilateral as possible, with an eye to crisis situations beyond Afghanistan, and finally considering the unique position of the UN in the international legal order, Denmark should consider how to contribute to the strengthening of the UN.

11. *Danish (and international) Alignment with Local and National Actors.* Lessons learned from previous and ongoing international operations show that an integrated approach must be highly contextualized and adapted to the specific conditions on the ground. This also includes distinguishing between: a) situations in which the primary aim is stabilization and few if any civilian actors are present; and b) more traditional post-conflict situations, where civilian and military actors can operate more independently. While the aim of aligning as much as possible with local and national actors remains relevant under both conditions, clearly the challenges and opportunities for doing so differ from context to context. In places like Helmand, state institutions are challenged, non-existent or controlled by other social forces, often under arms. The aim here is to reduce violence, protect populations, facilitate political processes and the solution of conflicts by non-violent means, and thus constitute the preconditions for state-building to take place. Thus, reconstruction as well as military activities should be handled with their political effects in mind since they have the potential to ameliorate as well as fuel local conflicts. Hence the importance of instruments such as peace and conflict impact analysis. National development priorities may have to be reconsidered and sequenced differently, as illustrated by the potentially negative consequences of education-sector programmes in Helmand.

12. For the same reasons, international operators and national government representatives should ideally be able to manage other instruments and factors than reconstruction and military operations. This includes reducing collateral damage, rectifying unjust arrests, local conflict resolution, relations with local militias, local fora for reducing misunderstandings, deals for peaceful co-existence, credible programmes for reconciliation to provide a way out for insurgents, etc.

13. Both stabilization operations and post-conflict reconstruction demand access to knowledge of local conditions and experience of the kinds of fluid and volatile politics that characterize the margins of the state. However, these are often in short supply. Furthermore, rapid changes at the field level place high demands on coordination between the different levels of operation. Trade-offs between security, development and political objectives are hard to avoid, and it may not always be possible to follow best practice. Such exceptions should be made explicit and the consequences considered. As an example, the trend towards off-budget funds for areas of military deployment could have unintended consequences if they are perceived by the population as favouring provinces with violence and drug production. On the other hand, connections between central, national programmes and local government may not function well. Therefore early attention should be given the issue of local government and relations between the central and local levels of authority.

14. Unfortunately the present study has not been able to assess in any detail the effects on the local contexts of concrete civil-military activities. Monitoring of these and their impact is difficult under present security conditions and remains one of the weak points in comprehensive approaches. But it is obvious that involvement in stabilization operations is a huge challenge to the capacity of the institutions involved, and that expectations regarding what can realistically be achieved have to be reduced considerably.

15. *Recommendations.* The study identifies a number of areas in which a comprehensive approach to civil and military activities can be enhanced:

At the *international level*, challenges regard the sharing of analyses, the development of strategic frameworks, operational planning and coordination processes, the lack of guidelines for civil-military relations in stabilization and reconstruction, standards for civil-military monitoring and evaluation, shared lessons-learned processes and, more specifically, improved oversight of Provincial Reconstruction Teams and phasing out of PRTs in permissive environments.

With regard to *host nation/local levels*, the challenges include better use of local knowledge, pressure for more on-budget support, and early attention to sub-national levels of government and to the linkages between central and local government. Also, understanding local perceptions of security and strategies for protection of the population need higher priority.

For the *Danish entities*, challenges consist in systematic and joined-up monitoring, reporting, evaluation and lessons-learned processes (some of which are underway); the links between the field, the embassies and the ministries; upgrading the qualifications and experience with stabilization operations of civil personnel; the ability to make full use of the qualifications of personnel returning with experience and up-to-date information from postings in the host country; strategies for knowledge management and analysis in relation to operations in new and unfamiliar areas; and the institutionalization of conflict-related instruments of analysis.

16. Furthermore, the study makes the following specific recommendations with regard to the future of the Danish concept, policy, organization, human resources and other relevant issues. The report specifically recommends that a future Danish concept for a comprehensive, integrated approach to civil and military activities:

- a. is understood as a politically guided orchestration of security, development and diplomatic (conciliatory) instruments that explicitly takes into consideration their peace and conflict impact
- b. is developed alongside a government policy on fragile and failed states
- c. incorporates security-sector reform activities, including police, judiciary and prison reform
- d. includes strategic considerations of the relations between programmes and developments at the national level of the host country and civil-military activities in the areas of military deployment.

The report further recommends that the Danish government:

- e. establishes an inter-departmental office for stabilization and reconstruction (or peace- and state-building) operations. The office should be placed under a high charge in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister's Office, or a Ministerial committee,
- f. establishes a peace and stability fund to enhance cooperation and increase flexibility in funding international activities that are not necessarily development related

- g. encourages career tracks that incorporate interdepartmental and conflict-related skills, including experience of hardship operational postings, as well as postings in related international organizations
- h. strengthens its strategy for the placement of Danish personnel in conflict-related international organizations and partner governments
- i. supports the long-term development of civilian capabilities by facilitating the internationalization of personnel in relevant ministries and state entities, encourages universities to establish additional, international conflict-oriented education options for civil servants and experts with relevant domestic experience, and considers the increased recruitment of experts in the regions of operation
- j. develops comparable conditions of international deployment across government institutions
- k. develops inter-departmental expertise in the area of security-sector reform, including police, justice and prison reform, in particular in support of EU development in this area
- l. further upgrades CIMIC education, preferably in international cooperation, to improve the military's capacity if the government wants the armed forces to fill voids in support of reconstruction activities
- m. recognizes the additional administrative costs of engaging in stabilization, peace- and state-building operations
- n. reinforces its policy on how to strengthen the capacity, legitimacy and territorial presence of the UN in international peace- and state-building operations, including by contributing military troops, civilian expertise and/or combined civil-military units to UN integrated missions
- o. continues existing policies and mechanisms of interaction with non-governmental organizations, while leaving humanitarian agencies the space to pursue independence and neutrality vis-à-vis the Danish political objectives
- p. works for the development of a set of guidelines to regulate relations between civil and military entities with regard to reconstruction, development and security-sector reform in stabilization and post-conflict operations
- q. encourages research as well as debate among the general public, parliamentarians and international partners on the issue of militias and other non-statutory armed groups.

I. Introduction

In November 2007, the Danish government commissioned a study of 'the concrete possibilities for further strengthening of the concerted civil and military planning and action [*samtænknin*g] in connection with peace-supporting operations, primarily based on experiences from Danish engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan.'³ The study was to contribute to the revision of the Danish Concerted Planning and Action policy (CPA) from 2004, and feed into the preparations of the parliamentary defence agreement for 2010-14.

The study was undertaken between March 2008 and February 2009 by the Danish Institute for International Studies. This report provides a synthesis of the study, including a set of recommendations for how to develop further the concept and implementation of concerted civil and military planning and action. The study points to: 1) the challenge of stabilization operations, and the need for a politically sensitive orchestration of security, reconstruction and conciliatory instruments aimed at enhancing the preconditions for state-building; 2) the need to strengthen the administration of civil-military relations by setting up an interdepartmental office for stabilization, peace- and state-building; and 3) the need in the medium term to strengthen the capabilities and robustness of the UN to take a lead in a more comprehensive approach.

Since 2004, the institutions involved have developed the concept gradually, including during the period in which the study has been undertaken. Thus, Concerted Planning and Action is very much a moving target, and the study tries to extract the lessons and good practices learned during the implementation development of the policy in the contexts of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The prolonged engagements and continued insecurity in Iraq and Afghanistan have created unforeseen problems and raised profound questions as to how, when and if the end-goals of the missions can be achieved and the troops withdrawn. The view has been widely expressed that there is a need for more robust civil engagement in the areas of operation in order to improve administration, services and livelihoods and thus convince the population that support for the government is the better alternative. 'It is a common task,' the Danish Defence

³ Mulighedernes samfund. Regeringsgrundlag November 2007. See also terms of reference in Annex 1.

Chief has said.⁴ Or, as the American Chief of Staff put it bluntly, ‘We cannot kill our way to victory.’⁵

This study looks at the Danish initiative and experience as part of the more general pursuit of integrated approaches to conflict prevention, peace- and most recently state-building. For a number of internal and external reasons, many states have problems upholding a monopoly of force, controlling their territory, providing services, protecting the population and nurturing livelihoods. These problems increase the risk that fragile situations may develop, with armed conflict, humanitarian crises, continued poverty and collapsing state institutions affecting the societies concerned. Fragile states represent a problem primarily for the affected populations. But in an international system based on states, the lack of effective statehood has also increasingly been seen as representing a risk for other states and the international order, since the overall ability to address transnational threats and problems is weakened.⁶

After 9/11, but in prolongation of the 1990s post-conflict interventions,⁷ state-building has emerged as an overarching goal of international responses to state fragility. This was affirmed at the UN World Summit in 2005 and by the decision to establish the UN Peace-Building Commission. At the operational level, attempts to increase cooperation and coherence across military and civilian institutions have been taken by most international agencies and organizations. This includes the development of instruments such as the UN Integrated Mission concept,⁸ the OECD’s Whole of Government Approach (WGA),⁹ NATO’s Comprehensive Approach (CA)¹⁰ and the EU’s Crisis Management and Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO).¹¹

Importantly, these concepts should not be confused with the military strategic concept of Civil-Military Coordination (CIMIC in the NATO doctrine). CIMIC is directed at support functions, liaison and cooperation with civilian authorities, lead agencies, organizations and populations; but unlike the comprehensive approach,

⁴ Admiral Tim Sloth Jørgensen, Power Point Presentation, October 2008.

⁵ CNN.com, 12 September 2008.

⁶ See, for example, the European Security Strategy from 2003.

⁷ See the Brahimi report, UN 2000.

⁸ See de Coning’s (2008) separate DIIS report on the UN.

⁹ OECD has also adopted a set of *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States*. See DIIS 2008. On the basis of these principles, more operational instruments are in the process of being formulated.

¹⁰ See Jakobsen’s separate DIIS report on NATO (2008).

¹¹ See Gross’ separate DIIS report on the EU (2008).

CIMIC remains under military command and control and serves military mission purposes.¹²

Integrated and comprehensive approaches

Whereas the ambition of integrated approaches – to achieve greater coherence in responses – is uniform, it is important to understand the different motivations and paths that have led to this apparent consent. At least three different fields have hosted discussions and experiments with increased coherence in the international response to armed conflicts, humanitarian emergencies, fragile and collapsing states:

1. *Humanitarian aid, development and conflict*: In the 1990s, the identification of a ‘gap’ between emergency relief and longer term development efforts spurred discussions on coordination and placed demands on relief agencies to incorporate longer term perspectives, including institution-building and conflict transformation, into their concepts and operations. As humanitarian and development organizations increasingly found themselves involved in areas of armed conflict, their interaction with armed actors intensified. Many chose to develop their ability to operate in conflict areas. Instead of disengaging from areas of conflict, or just delivering humanitarian aid, a number of NGOs chose to work *on* conflict by engaging in conflict transformation and civilian peace-building activities during conflict, and civil society oversight of security-sector reform after conflict. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Agenda from 2001 also provided a rationale for interaction between armed forces and humanitarian organizations.¹³
2. *Development aid, security and the ‘fragile states’ agenda*: During the 1990s, development aid was increasingly identified as a means to prevent violent conflict by attacking their root causes. This ‘securitization’ of development¹⁴ was radicalized after 9/11, when, rightly or wrongly, ‘failed’ states came to be associated with terrorism. Unlike mainstream development processes such as the Millennium Development Goals and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which largely excluded considerations of security,¹⁵ linkages of security and development became a constitutive element in the policies towards the failed and fragile state. As part

¹² NATO 2003.

¹³ ICISS 2001.

¹⁴ Which, in fact, brought it back to its roots in the Marshall Plan and the national security-oriented development plans of developing countries, in particular in Latin America and Asia in the 1960s (see e.g. Wilson 2005).

¹⁵ IPA 2006a.

of this move, development agencies are increasingly promoting the concept of security-sector reform, focussing the effectiveness and democratic control of the security forces.

3. *Comprehensive approach and counterinsurgency:* Emerging primarily from within the United States and NATO, recent interest in the comprehensive approach (CA) may be seen as a reaction to the problems of translating the initial military victories in Iraq and Afghanistan into sustainable peace. Both the US Army's counterinsurgency manual FM3/24, the Field Manual for Stability operations FM3/07¹⁶ and the recent NATO concept of the Effect Based Approach to Operations recognize that the kind of asymmetric, intra-state wars in which NATO is engaged cannot be won by military means alone.¹⁷ Therefore NATO has to work with civil organizations to reach the desired effects.¹⁸ The armed forces do not have command and control over these, but the comprehensive approach concept has been developed as an umbrella for such cooperation under civilian leadership.¹⁹

Some compare the comprehensive approach to the concept of counterinsurgency (COIN). The classical COIN literature regards an insurgency as primarily a political problem which should be dealt with by removing popular support from the insurgency using mostly non-military means.²⁰ Some of the fundamental principles are the minimum use of force; unity of (civil and military) effort; a combination of static and mobile force with emphasis on the former for protection of the population; and learning from and adaptation to changing insurgent tactics. Basically, although counterinsurgency 'wars' cannot be 'won', insurgencies can be 'managed to death'.²¹ The Danish Government launched the concept of Concerted Planning and Action at a NATO conference in Copenhagen in June 2005 in order to promote thinking on how to enhance civil-military relations.²² Despite a mixed reaction,

¹⁶ A new US Army Field Manual for Stability Operations, FM3-07, launched in October 2008, endorses military involvement in state-building.

¹⁷ In line with the change of emphasis in development aid from output measures to outcome and impact, the effect-based approach is more interested in the intended and unintended effects of operations than the tasks of operations themselves.

¹⁸ NATO 2007: 1-1 *EBAO handbook*.

¹⁹ See, for example, Jakobsen 2008.

²⁰ Galula 2008 [1964]; McCuen 1966; Trinquier 1961. The classic phrase talks about draining the water from the fish, thus turning Mao Tse Tung's guerrilla tactic – moving among the people like fish in the water – on its head.

²¹ Teriff et al. 2008: 93.

²² Fischer and Christensen 2005.

the approach was endorsed as the Comprehensive Approach at the Bucharest Summit 2008 and an action plan drawn up.²³

The concepts that emerge from these different fields show substantial differences in the balance, forms and objectives of integration. But they all rest on the assumption that a more integrated approach to strategy, planning and implementation will increase the overall effectiveness of peace- and state-building operations by providing security, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, development, governance and rule of law in a coordinated manner. The different instruments are not just added on to each other, but are ideally seen as parts of one overall strategy in which they support and reinforce one another and are overseen by joint (if not unified) leadership.

The current concepts remain 'works in progress' that build on the experiences of the past fifteen years of international involvement in humanitarian emergencies, armed conflicts and collapsing states. From these experiences, an *ideal type process of integration can be assessed in terms of the ability to:*²⁴

1. *analyse* the context and object of intervention and develop a common understanding of the problems to be addressed,
2. formulate shared political-strategic objectives and a coherent *strategy*,
3. transform the strategy into an operational *plan* with agreed results, timelines and responsibilities, including an appropriate balance between military and different civilian instruments
4. direct and *coordinate* the military and civilian contributions involved, ensuring that they relate to the strategic goal,
5. *monitor* and evaluate such activities in relation to the desired effect in the field and agreed metrics,
6. *feed back* monitoring information into analysis, strategizing and operational planning.

As far as possible, these six elements have been used by the study team as overall guidance for the different parts of the study. However, the study also recognizes that the Danish pursuit of greater coherence involves at least three different dimensions:²⁵

²³ See Jakobsen 2008.

²⁴ see Jakobsen' (2008) and Schmidt's DIIS report on Afghanistan (2009).

²⁵ De Coning 2007.

1. Harmonization with international activities, including those of other donor states, as well as various international organizations
2. Coherence of the donor government's activities and other national contributions
3. Alignment of international activities with the plans of the local or national 'host' authorities and the needs of the local population at the receiving end.

Despite Danish efforts and the possibilities of influencing harmonization as well as alignment processes, these dimensions will contain elements that are beyond the control of Danish actors' planning and implementation. Cases in which there are no legitimate, political representatives in place represent a particular problem of alignment. Figure 1 presents a very schematic overview of this analytical frame.

Methods and structure of report

This synthesis report draws on seven individual studies commissioned in the Terms of Reference:

1. Integrated national approaches to international operations: an analysis of three national concepts (Denmark, the UK and the Netherlands) for increasing coherence and coordination between the military and civilian components of international operations.
2. The experience of civil-military relations in international operations: a synthesis of lessons learned so far, based on existing reports and articles on comprehensive civil-military approaches.
3. A study of civil-military relations in the context of the Danish involvement in Basra, Iraq 2003-7.
4. A study of civil-military relations in the context of the Danish involvement in Badakhshan and Helmand in Afghanistan, 2004-8.²⁶

²⁶ The case studies of Iraq and Afghanistan are not comparable, as they have been approached in different ways. The Iraq study looks at how the operation developed from 2003-7 and is based on available documents and interviews in Copenhagen. The Afghan study is based on visits and extensive interviews in May-June 2008 in Kabul, Badakhshan and Helmand. Both studies were initially designed to analyse the effects of integrated civil-military approaches in the areas of operation. Given the security situation in Basra and Helmand at the moment of planning (March 2008), this part of the study was given up. Thus, the assessment of possible effects (see the Terms of Reference, Annex 1) is limited to the review of existing reports in sub-report 2. In this sense our study reinforces an unfortunate pattern, since only a very few unclassified reports are available to provide an evidence-based analysis of the effects of civil-military relations on the security and working conditions of the population and organizations in the areas of operation.

5.-7. Studies of the UN, the EU, and NATO with respect to the Comprehensive Approach.²⁷

Figure 1: Analytical frameworks

	DK harmonization with international activities	DK Coherence (cross-government)	DK (and international) alignment w. local and national actors
Strategic level - analysis - strategy	UK, US, NATO, EU, UN	Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, NGOs, Police, intelligence	Relations with central government
Implementation - planning - coordination - monitoring - feed-back	e.g. Coalition Provisional Authority, ISAF, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, EU missions, UN Integrated Missions	Steering Unit, Danish Battalion, Development Advisor, CIMIC troops, etc.	Relations with local government, contractors, local NGOs, factions etc.

The synthesis report includes additional material where appropriate.²⁸ It is structured in accordance with the analytical framework presented in Figure 1:

Chapter 2 presents the international context and explores the pursuit of integrated approaches at the levels of strategy as well as implementation. This is done with a special focus on Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chapter 3 analyses the Danish government's approach to civil-military cooperation and its development in the context of the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the problems and dilemmas of alignment that relate to the pursuit of integrated approaches in both national and sub-national contexts of operation.

²⁷ An additional brief gives an overview of the US civil-military approach and relations with the EU, NATO and the UN.

²⁸ Complementary sources are used, for example, with regard to Afghanistan, since the cut-off point for this report is July 2008 and because it is focused primarily on the second dimension, Danish national coordination.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of the previous chapters and focuses on the challenges that confront Denmark in relation to analysis, strategy, planning, coordination, monitoring/evaluation and feed-back mechanisms. On this basis, and drawing upon other national experiences with integrated approaches, the analysis concludes and makes recommendations for the future development of concept, policy, strategy, organization and resources.

2. The international context of civil-military relations

Denmark is pursuing the agenda of concerted planning and action within a wider international context. This chapter looks at 1) the strategic level of developing concepts, policies and instruments for civil-military coordination among the main international actors (UN, EU, NATO and the US) with whom Denmark interacts; and 2) the level of implementation of international civil-military policies in the specific contexts of Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. As such, this chapter deals with the first column of the matrix in the introduction – Denmark’s role in the harmonization of international action – looking at the scope for furthering comprehensive, integrated approaches in the international context.

Denmark will always remain dependent on larger, international efforts. The room for manoeuvre of Danish civil-military interventions is thus constrained by political, strategic and operational decisions made by bilateral partners and international organizations. Even when Denmark takes responsibility for a specific delimited territory – such as the ten districts in Basra – planning and implementation necessarily involves cooperation with other national and international organizations.

The sections below give an overview of each of the major players’ main concepts, the political and practical reasons for continued problems, and the Danish options for attending to these. The focus then turns to the level of implementation and the pursuit of coherence in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. The last section outlines some of the generic problems of harmonization that spring from the diversity of actors and concepts involved in the field.

The strategic level: Denmark and the main international actors

*UN and the Integrated Approach*²⁹

In response to the lack of coherence of many UN-led peace operations, since 2005 the UN has developed the Integrated Missions approach. Its aim is to ensure the strategic and operational partnership between a given UN peace operation and the country team (of UN agencies, funds and programmes) and to facilitate UN participation in wider comprehensive approaches. The integrated approach comprises political,

²⁹ See de Coning 2008 for an extensive description and analysis.

security, development, human rights, rule of law and, where appropriate, humanitarian dimensions. It seeks to provide a shared vision among all UN actors as to the strategic objective of the UN presence. As the approach is driven by the launching of a peacekeeping operation, the focus is primarily on security and politics.

The structure of integrated missions varies from country to country, yet a common feature is that integration is based on the principle of the independence of participants. The UN Special Representative does not have the actual legal, financial or administrative authority to direct the resources at the disposal of the various UN agencies, funds and programmes, but has the authority to coordinate the UN entities and facilitate a wider, comprehensive approach. The concept is thus based on the assumption that common values and interests are sufficient to underpin operational integration. Feed-back from the field shows that this assumption may be flawed, and that many practical problems inhibit system-wide coherence. In particular, the development of a strategic framework and ensuring local ownership remain problematic, and the UN has begun to recognize that there will be circumstances in which a common approach is not attainable.³⁰

*NATO and the Comprehensive Approach*³¹

Since the 2005 meeting in Copenhagen on the Concerted Planning and Action initiative, NATO has increasingly realized that its goals cannot be achieved without cooperating with entities that can provide civilian capabilities for reconstruction and state-building within a Comprehensive Approach. Unwilling to function as a civilian gap-filler, the alliance is faced with the dual challenge of creating a common understanding of its role in a Comprehensive Approach – including a doctrine and procedures for employing NATO resources – while also developing cooperative relationships with other international actors (such as the EU, UN, and the US), local actors and private entities who can bring civilian capacities to the table.

The Comprehensive Approach remains in its infancy. At the strategic level, concepts, doctrine and procedures have not yet been formally adopted, but an action plan has been in effect since 2008.³² The alliance remains deeply divided with regard to the understanding of the concept. Some members understand CA as counterinsurgency

³⁰ UN 2008.

³¹ For and extensive description and analysis, see Jakobsen 2008.

³² See communiqué at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.htm>. Accessed March 20, 2009.

operations, while others are focussing on capacity-building in the security sector and otherwise separate civil and military activities.

*The EU and Crisis Management*³³

As part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the EU is developing a common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) comprising a range of civil and military instruments for crisis management. The Security and 'Effective multilateralism' strategies endorse a comprehensive approach to crisis management, with Civil Military Cooperation (CMCO)³⁴ as the cornerstone of a culture of cooperation. A key element is the appointment of EU Special Representatives (EUSR) for the coordination of crisis management in priority countries. Other elements include the Civil Planning and Conduct Capability from 2007, the integration of Directorates General for Defence (DG8) and Civilian Crisis Management (DG9) and the launch of hybrid civil-military missions (such as AMIS in Sudan).

The development of an EU crisis management capacity depends on the efforts of the member states, which have different concepts and commitments in the field of civil-military relations. Governments have made commitments to generate forces for EU crisis management comprising both military and civilian personnel. Structures have also been created for coordinated planning and operation. However, the demand for and expectations of EU crisis management have in many cases not been matched by the capacity to respond. Member states have been neither willing nor able to deliver the committed civilian and military personnel, thus delaying greatly the full deployment of EU missions. The complex planning and operational set-up (with separate civilian and military lines of command) is still in its infancy and has to overcome many problems, including those related to the pillar structure and the parallel systems of representation of the Commission's Head of Delegation and the Council's EU Special Representative.

Denmark has opted out of the military part of the European Security and Defence Policy. As a result, Denmark cannot contribute to military EU crisis management operations either financially or militarily, nor can it take part in the elaboration or implementation of decisions or actions of the EU that have implications for defence.³⁵

³³ For an extensive description and analysis, see Gross 2008.

³⁴ The CMCO was developed during 2003 under Danish and Greek chairmanship.

³⁵ See DIIS 2008.

*The US and the Comprehensive Approach*³⁶

Under the strategic guidance of the global War on Terror, and following set-backs in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US has developed a comprehensive approach directed at stabilization and nation- (state-) building. Initiatives comprise the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CSR) in 2004, a USAid Fragile States Strategy (2005), and the Department of Defense 2005-directive that establishes stabilization and reconstruction as a core US military mission on a par with combat operations. More recently, the administration has established a standing civil affairs brigade, as well as a joint civil-military led regional command in Africa, AFRICOM. And in October 2008 a new Field Manual (FM3-07) laid down counterinsurgency and nation-building as the main objectives of US army operations.

In terms of resources and capacity-building, the process has been highly skewed towards the military side. The Department of Defense has been disbursing an increasing share of US Official development aid, not least through the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) in Iraq and Afghanistan. While the military recognizes its limitations and is pushing for more deployable civilian capacity, the assistance authorities of Department of Defense have also been extended beyond these two theatres of the Global War on Terror, as is evident in the establishment of AFRICOM.³⁷ With the new administration, there are signs that these trends may be reversed.³⁸

The challenge of interrelations and the Danish options

Even though the main international organizations have all embarked on processes of building increased civil-military coherence, a number of political and institutional problems stand in the way of strategic cooperation and harmonization:

1) *EU-NATO*. The 2002 Berlin Plus arrangements facilitated closer relations between the EU and NATO, yet two issues continue to hamper political and strategic cooperation: a) the *participation* problem, related to Cyprus's entry in the EU in 2004 and NATO member Turkey's subsequent vetoing of high-level NATO-EU relations; and b) the *scope* problem, based on disagreements between 'Atlanticists' and 'Europeanists' about what European organizations should be doing. 'Europeanists'

³⁶ See also Mann 2009.

³⁷ Patrick and Brown 2007b.

³⁸ The Department of State's budget increases non-military funds and personnel for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

are concerned that closer EU-NATO cooperation would enhance US influence in the EU and hamper the development of a strong and independent European Security and Defence Policy.³⁹

2) *EU-UN*. The EU and the UN have developed increasingly good and institutionalized high-level relations with regard to the use of the EU's crisis management capabilities as seen in the EUFOR mission in the Chad Basin. Since they signed the Joint Declaration on UN-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management in 2003, the UN have been keenly interested in the development of the EU's rapid deployment capacity as a force to be used for temporarily 'bridging' gaps in missions, or as an over-the-horizon strategic reserve ready to intervene if a UN force got into trouble (and individual EU members have the will to contribute). The EU's own forces, while responding to UN requests, remain a separate legal entity under EU political command and strategic direction rather than being subsumed in the integrated mission concept.⁴⁰ Unlike SHIRBRIG (the Multinational Standby High Readiness Brigade), which was designed for and placed directly under UN command as part of an integrated mission structure, the EU can decide whether to deploy troops independently or as part of a UN operation.

3) *NATO-UN*. So far relations between NATO and the UN have not been close or institutionalized. The attacks on the UN in Iraq increased UN concerns that it was becoming too closely associated with the US and the latter's Coalition of the Willing. Recently, contacts have taken place at a high level. The UN may see some use for NATO in conflicts which are not permeated by the War on Terror, such as the DR Congo, but it has also shown an interest in cooperation in terms of training, security-sector reform, logistics, information-sharing, strategic force reserve etc. Hence, if NATO can overcome the scepticism regarding out-of-area operations, there is scope for developing links at the operational level.⁴¹

These constellations represent Denmark with a particular problem in its attempts to promote comprehensive and integrated approaches in international fora. As already noted, the opt-out from EU military cooperation prevents Denmark from contributing to EU military crisis management. This hampers Denmark's ability to promote the issue in the EU. But perhaps more importantly, given the increased UN interest in using EU

³⁹ See Jakobsen 2008. The Europeanist vs. Atlanticist distinction is admittedly schematic.

⁴⁰ See Gross 2008 and de Coning 2008.

⁴¹ Jakobsen 2008. Other countries, such as Russia, are sceptical of UN-NATO rapprochements.

capabilities in peace and stabilization missions in Sub-Saharan Africa, Denmark will end up with a dilemma if it finds itself supporting integrated civil-military missions in UN fora while not being able to contribute troops for these missions through the EU.

The limited Danish contribution of civilian and military personnel to UN-led operations further hampers Denmark's ability to support the civil-military agenda in the UN. Following the decision to close down the Standby High Readiness Brigade in 2008,⁴² Denmark's ability to promote the agenda credibly at the UN would therefore seem to depend on its willingness to make (increased) personnel contributions to UN operations under the auspices of NORDCAPS (Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support). Whether they will materialize remains to be seen, but enhanced Nordic cooperation on comprehensive approaches is currently being considered. Denmark has circulated a proposal to enhance Nordic civil-military cooperation, and the former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Thorvald Stoltenberg has suggested establishing a joint civil-military Nordic stabilization entity. The establishment of such a force could increase Nordic influence on the development of the UN's role in a comprehensive approach.

This situation presents a dilemma for Denmark. At present Denmark is best placed to push the Comprehensive Approach within NATO, where the country has already succeeded in putting the topic on the agenda. This can be followed up in various ways.⁴³ To the extent that UN forces lack the robustness to operate in non-permissive environments and the EU has comparatively limited capacity, this option makes sense. On the other hand, NATO's lack of 'in-house' access to civilian instruments and expertise represents a challenge for the development of a Comprehensive Approach, while the EU and UN both integrate civilian and military capabilities within the same political organization. The defence opt-out currently prevents Denmark from pursuing the EU track, but strengthening the UN might be an option to reconsider, in particular when looking beyond Afghanistan.

Implementation: country and field levels

Civil-Military Cooperation in Kosovo

The Kosovo experience provides a useful backdrop for understanding the problems and controversies that have come to the fore in Iraq and Afghanistan.

⁴² Christian Brøndum, 'Helt slut for FN-styrke', *Berlingske Tidende*, 27 November 2008.

⁴³ See Jakobsen 2008 for a set of recommendations.

During the NATO air campaign and ensuing refugee crisis, NATO took the lead in providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees partly out of necessity, as the humanitarian organizations were completely overwhelmed, and partly to legitimize the military operation. NATO governments channelled the bulk of their assistance through member-state organizations and institutions rather than through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), which was in charge of overall coordination. As a result, very little strategic coordination took place and the assistance varied greatly depending on the nation that was providing it. NATO's involvement was heavily criticized by the humanitarian organizations for compromising their humanitarian space and for not meeting generally accepted standards of impartiality, sustainability, proportionality and cost-effectiveness.⁴⁴

Civil-military relations improved markedly once NATO's Kosovo Force had been deployed and created the security required for the humanitarian organizations to operate independently. A division of labour was established in which NATO forces provided security and logistics, and the humanitarian organizations provided relief and implemented reconstruction projects. This provided the basis for the lessons learned from Kosovo: the military was expected to provide security, logistics and intelligence and act in support of the UN, which was expected to be in charge of overall coordination, and the NGOs, which were expected to provide most of the humanitarian relief and implement the reconstruction projects.⁴⁵ However, the inability of the military forces in Iraq and Afghanistan to establish the security required for this model to function left the international community completely unprepared for the challenges that this created in these operations.

International cooperation in Afghanistan

Despite a clear UN mandate and broad international backing, the international operation in Afghanistan has turned out to be a divisive and complex process. Civil-military relations have been at the core of this process, in particular as the security situation has worsened in the south and east of the country. A UN-mediated political process has guided international support for the interim and later elected Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The UN tasked the International Security Force (ISAF) to assist the government in exercising and extending its authority across the territory. Since 2003, when NATO took command of ISAF, this has involved the establishment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), an

⁴⁴ Minear et al. 2000; Suhrke et al. 2000.

⁴⁵ See, for instance, Jakobsen 2000.

innovative feature in the NATO context.⁴⁶ PRTs were also set up in Iraq, but will be described in this section.

The PRT was originally conceived as a way of kick-starting development and consent-winning in areas of combat, but was generalized as a politically convenient⁴⁷ gap-filler to help extend the authority of the central government, facilitate a safe and secure environment, and enable security sector reform and other reconstruction activities in priority provinces.⁴⁸ Like traditional peacekeeping forces, many of the PRT's depend on their negotiating skills and the consent of the local parties for success. Although the PRTs can call in military back-up in the form of rapid reaction forces and air power in emergencies, they remain more of a diplomatic than a military tool. Others, such as the UK-led PRT in Helmand, have become integrated with the military forces fighting insurgents in the south and east. They cannot be considered separate units, as they plan, execute and evaluate operations jointly with the military staff.⁴⁹

The role of the PRT is poorly defined, and structure, civil expertise, civil or military leadership, function, funding and relations with Afghan authorities and civilian development agencies vary hugely across the 26 PRTs and 13 lead PRT nations in Afghanistan. The PRT has been controversial and has alienated civilian agencies because some PRTs, despite NATO doctrines and statements to the contrary, have infringed on humanitarian space and overstepped international guidelines with regard to humanitarian and reconstruction activities.⁵⁰ While variation is to be expected due to the differences in local conditions, there is a need to improve practice by, for example, enhancing NATO's civilian Comprehensive Approach advisor capacity, greater NATO oversight of PRT's and maybe a certification process of lead nations. However, as long as NATO and Afghan forces cannot improve the security situation, this will remain the main obstacle to cooperation with NGOs and other civilian agencies in the areas of military deployment.⁵¹

⁴⁶ See Jakobsen 2008 for further information and analysis.

⁴⁷ The PRT offered a mechanism for NATO members to provide non-combat troops to the UN-authorized ISAF mission (Jackson and Gordon 2007).

⁴⁸ NATO, *ISAF PRT Handbook*, Edition 3 (3 Feb 7).

⁴⁹ See Thruelsen 2008b.

⁵⁰ Jakobsen 2008. The NATO doctrines in question regard CIMIC and Peace Support Operations. See also, for example, Cornish 2007, and most recently Waldman 2009.

⁵¹ Jakobsen 2008.

While they have a role to play in areas where the security dynamics inhibit the operation of civilian agencies,⁵² PRT's may well be counterproductive in more permissive areas. In fact, many studies, including the present one, question whether the current security situation is so bad as to warrant the continued operation of all 26 PRT's in Afghanistan.⁵³ Thus, an alternative model for civil and military interaction at the field and tactical levels would imply a more limited interaction, focusing on information, de-confliction and certain well-defined tasks, as exemplified by the Norwegian PRT approach. The challenges are how to define the situation and prospects, and how to phase out or transfer the PRT to the national authorities.

Under all circumstances, studies suggest that the PRT functions better – given sufficient civilian capacity, planning, funding and leadership – when the relevant ministries and agencies have a well-defined structure for cooperation 'back home' at the level of the lead nation's capital.⁵⁴ This level of cooperation is also necessary for a relatively smooth adaptation to shifting security situations in the areas of operation.

The bilateral 'Whole of Government' approach inherent in the PRT has disadvantages in terms of fragmentation of the international contribution and differences between rich and poor PRTs. Central funding could remedy this latter problem. In terms of alternative approaches, the EU does not have an established mechanism for delivering coordinated civil-military activities in the field. The UN has some experience – mainly from more permissive environments – in deploying multidimensional teams or co-deployments of civil and military entities at the sub-national level. These teams are multinational replicates of the central mission at the national level.⁵⁵ Hence they serve mission objectives directly and are funded from the mission rather than bilaterally, which, in principle at least, improves the prospects for coordination and adherence to a strategic framework.

In general, civil-military relations in Afghanistan have been marked by the role of the US and the focus on fighting terrorism. This has had diverse operational effects, including heavy-handedness in combat operations, a tendency not to consult with national authorities and an enormous quantity of economic resources. The latter

⁵² However, rather than a PRT model of 'managing reconstruction', a more strategically coordinating 'interagency planning team' has been suggested as a temporary tool for operations in these environments. See Jackson and Gordon 2007.

⁵³ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam et al. 2008; Bayley 2008; ICG 2008.

⁵⁴ Abbaszadeh et al. 2008: 7.

⁵⁵ Sudan is a case in point. De Coning, personal communication.

two features have contributed to making coordination less likely to take place, due to time and disbursement pressures. In general, the US has tended to sideline the UN in the process.⁵⁶

Apart from contributing to strategic development and coordination through NATO and the EU, Denmark has acted as the lead nation in a World Bank working group on education, and has more recently taken part in the top-level Policy Action Group and the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board.

Multinational Cooperation in Iraq

Civil-military coherence in the multinational intervention in Iraq was hampered by two issues: 1) poor or non-existent planning for the post-war reconstruction phase by the US (and UK), which had authority over post-war Iraq until 2005; and 2) the upsurge of powerful insurgencies and continued insecurity, which made it increasingly difficult for civilian organizations to operate. The UN played a very limited role, and the disagreements and perceived lack of clarity with regard to the mandate influenced the limited presence of international NGOs. The UN was perceived by insurgents to be complicit with the Coalition and left Iraq after the bombing of their headquarters, as did most of the international NGO community.

This left reconstruction efforts entirely to the Coalition governments, who, apart from the US, which funded pervasive national-level programmes, focussed on bilateral programs in their respective areas of military deployments. The decision by the US and the UK to classify pre-intervention plans for reconstruction and humanitarian assistance – to the extent that such plans existed – further complicated cooperation and coherence,⁵⁷ as did the general lack of a strategic framework, the ad hoc nature of offices and systems, and what in Basra was perceived as a centralized and bureaucratic approach in the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority.⁵⁸

Generic problems of harmonization

Harmonization of the multitude of actors on the international scene is invariably a problem, but the challenge seems to be even greater when military force and the lives of soldiers are involved. Even though civil-military relations are on the national and

⁵⁶ Mann 2009.

⁵⁷ Minutes from meeting in the Humanitarian Contact Group, 21 February 2003.

⁵⁸ See Iraq Report (Hoffmann 2009); see also Bowen 2009.

international agendas across the board, there are considerable differences in concepts, approaches, organization and implementation, including the very definition of the challenges and aims of specific operations. This contributes to problems of coordination between the international actors in the field. Furthermore, the agenda is placed at the crossroads of different high-profile political and security issues, which impacts on the prospects for civil-military coordination, as in EU/NATO or UN/US relations. Some countries (notably the US) will never place their troops under UN command and control, and experience with 'dual key' situations in the Balkans increased the reluctance of other countries to do so.

A future system of international peace operations could logically rely on a predictable arrangement based on the comparative civil and military advantages of the different international and regional organizations. But the political realities are more likely to induce a system in which the organizations (except for NATO) try to enhance both civil and military capabilities.⁵⁹ As an organization, the UN may have developed the most sophisticated concept, but in the context of Iraq and Afghanistan, the UN concept has been of limited relevance. The UN has had limited capacity and minimal presence in the territory, and the US has actively been sidelining the organization.⁶⁰ NATO and Coalition forces have been dominant in civil-military relations, and the absence of international agencies and NGOs in parts of Iraq and Afghanistan have brought NATO and Coalition forces to rely on bilateral (and local government) capabilities for reconstruction and governance.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Sarjoh Bah and Jones 2008.

⁶⁰ Mann 2009.

⁶¹ However, the Kosovo operation was heavily bilateralized, despite the much more permissive environment.

3. The Danish Approach

This chapter describes the Danish Concerted Planning and Action concept and its development in the context of Danish military deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. Examining how Danish civilian and military institutions have worked together, the chapter provides the analytical input for the second column in Figure 1, page 19.

Concerted Planning and Action

In March 2004, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence issued the joint paper *Concerted Planning and Action of civilian and military efforts in international operations*,⁶² which was included as an annex to the defence agreement 2005-9. The concept aimed at supporting stabilization and normalization in the areas of Danish military deployment by increasing synergies through the concentration and coordinated planning and implementation of all civilian and military activities in these areas, 'whatever the security situation.' Thus, in the absence of civilian organizations, the army may temporarily have to facilitate humanitarian work and the reestablishment of infrastructure, local administration (including policing and courts) and other direct improvements for the local population.⁶³ Apart from this, three general principles regarding aid can be inferred from the document: Danish aid should 1) to some degree be concentrated in the area of military deployment and 'as far as possible' 2) be implemented by civilian organizations, and 3) coordinated within an international framework.⁶⁴

Concerted Planning and Action has been incorporated as an instrument in more general policies and strategies for Denmark's response to the challenges of globalization.⁶⁵ The strategy for the implementation of the policy itself involves the following elements:

⁶² The CPA initiative was launched through a joint op-ed by the two ministers, Per Stig Møller and Svend Aage Jensby, 'Vi skal koordinere civil og militær indsats', 10 March 2004. Accessed 03/09/08 at <http://www.um.dk/da/menu/udviklingspolitik/humanitaerbistandogengosamarbejde/humanit%c3%a6rekriserogkatastroforebygelse/civilmilitaersamtaenkning>

⁶³ The precise wording leaves scope for interpretation as to whether the armed forces should only facilitate humanitarian aid, rule of law and local governance, by, for example, reconstructing physical infrastructure, or actually engage in (re-) building local capacity.

⁶⁴ See also the Terms of Reference of the Standing Civil Servant's Committee 2004.

⁶⁵ See Stepputat 2009 DIIS report on national integrated approaches.

1) At the strategic level, the Concerted Planning and Action is anchored in a *Standing Civil Servants' Committee* (Embedsmandsgruppen for Samtænkning) chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Office for Humanitarian aid and NGOs. The committee includes various offices from the Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministries, the Prime Minister's office, the Danish Defence Command, the Danish Emergency Management Agency, the National Police Commissioner's office, and the Defence Intelligence Service. Since 2008, the Ministry of Justice and the Courts of Denmark have been represented as well, while intelligence has left the committee. All these entities are participating on an equal basis with no higher authority vested in any of them. NGOs and (in principle) private firms are involved through dialogue with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, as well as the Defence Command in the Humanitarian Contact Group that was established during the Balkan engagement and predates the Concerted Planning and Action initiative.

From the outset, the main task of the Standing Committee was to discuss, plan and oversee civilian stabilization activities in the Danish area of deployment to maximize synergies with the military effort, on which the Committee had no influence. Activities were foreseen to include the planning of relevant exit strategies and adjustment of the concept based on evaluations and lessons learned.

However, as the engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan unfolded, the development of strategy, planning and coordination was taken over by the regional offices in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Middle East office developed its own ad-hoc working relations with the relevant ministries and other state entities involved in the Iraq operation. In the case of Afghanistan, this operational arrangement was formalized in 2007 as a Task Force, managed by the Asia office.

In this process, the Standing Committee was itself partly sidelined as alternative networks developed. Taking account of this development, in 2008 a new set of Terms of Reference removed the operational tasks from the Standing Committee and turned it into a guardian of the concept. Responsibilities include the further development of the concept based on lessons learned and the development of criteria of effectiveness and success for country-specific operations, in particular for discussions in advance of decisions on Danish engagement. The new Standing Committee is also oriented towards the development of concepts and capabilities in international organizations.

2) At the field level, the 2004 paper put a *Steering Unit* in charge of the coordination of Danish efforts based on the positive experience of Sarajevo and Kosovo. The

paper also introduced the possibility of embedding a civilian *Development Advisor* with the deployed military contingents. A Steering Unit was set up in the case of Iraq, but in Afghanistan involvement in Provincial Reconstruction Teams made a Danish Steering Unit obsolete.

3) A set of *guidelines* were developed for the armed forces' facilitation of reconstruction projects in situations in which civilian entities could not operate. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reserved DKK15 million (€2 million) for this purpose from the humanitarian budget, a limited but nevertheless controversial allocation. Apart from respecting international standards regarding military-humanitarian relations, such projects have to meet elementary humanitarian need, assist vulnerable and excluded groups, create immediate results in the form of material assistance to the local population, assist the (re-)construction of local public administration or promote the legal security of individuals and groups.⁶⁶

The guidelines emphasize the principles of local ownership, coordination and definition of success criteria. Furthermore, they incorporate the criteria, known from Quick Impact Projects, of seeking quick but sustainable impact while avoiding future, longer term commitments.⁶⁷ Projects of up to USD 50,000⁶⁸ can be approved by the commander upon consultation with the development advisor. Importantly, such projects are distinguished from military CIMIC projects on the one hand and proper development projects on the other. They primarily serve the needs of the population rather than the purposes of force protection (situational awareness, intelligence, freedom of movement). Dubbed 'Concerted Planning and Action projects', these tactical-level projects have generally – in public, as well as in the armed forces – been identified with the concept of Concerted Planning and Action.

4) The policy paper emphasizes the importance of *joint training and education*. For this purpose, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with a Danish NGO, has developed a two-week Concerted Planning and Action course for CIMIC officers. The course began in 2007, 2½ years after the launch of the initiative. This may be

⁶⁶ MFA 2005. *Guidelines for military-civilian co-operation in humanitarian and reconstruction efforts financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. The 15 million DKK provoked strong reactions from the NGO community, since this sum was taken from the humanitarian aid budget. It was since added to the budget from other sources and removed altogether in 2008.

⁶⁷ Quick Impact Projects were invented in the context of the UN High Commissioner for Refugee's engagement in the refugee crisis and repatriation operations in Central America in the late 1980s. They were designed to kick-start local development in areas of return.

⁶⁸ Until 2007, the limit was USD 25,000.

taken as one indicator of the more general problem with the Standing Committee, namely the very limited administrative resources allocated for the Concerted Planning and Action initiative.⁶⁹

Box 1. The UK approach⁷⁰

The UK Whole of Government (or Comprehensive) Approach has developed around the issue of security-sector reform as well as NATO/Coalition-led military operations. The government has set up inter-departmental funds and bodies to facilitate coordination of the three key departments and to fill in the gaps in activities that none of them can fill independently. The Stabilisation Unit has increased operational capacity and functions, as well as becoming a repository of expertise in terms of both institutional memory and human resources. But the case also shows the importance of ensuring the agreement of all the relevant parties as well as a clear lead organization. While the Cabinet Office is able to play this role in certain instances, this is not the case in the field, where coordination as a consequence becomes personality-driven. After eight years of experience, it remains to be seen whether institutional collaboration in the UK can be established in a way that does not lead to inter-departmental tensions.

Box 2. The Dutch approach⁷¹

The Netherlands' Integrated Approach has developed alongside the military engagements in NATO and Coalition-led military operations, but security-sector reform has been an important element as well. Integration is pursued through a series of instruments, including exchanges of advisors, inter-departmental funds and steering committees. However, operations are still by and large stove-piped, and no overall planning format exists. Little integration of civil and military strategies has occurred, but civil-military relations are building up from the field. Recently a new Fragility and Peace-building office has been established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which focuses on issues of the fragile states agenda. But even though the ambition is to enhance an integrated approach, other ministries have not been involved in the process.

⁶⁹ One staff member from Defence and one from Foreign Affairs have been servicing the Standing Committee as one among many other assignments.

⁷⁰ See DIIS report on integrated national approaches (Stepputat 2009)

⁷¹ Ibid.

The Danish experience with CPA in Iraq

Denmark joined the US-led intervention of Iraq on 21 March 2003 and contributed a battalion-sized ground force in southern Iraq to the post-war occupation force in May 2003. While an embassy was opened in Baghdad, Danish civilian support was concentrated primarily in the Basra province, where Danish troops were deployed under British command.

Poor pre-war planning and analysis of the Iraqi political setting had detrimental effects on the Coalition's post-war stabilization effort, both in terms of the organization and the rapidly deteriorating security conditions that came as a surprise to the Coalition. This in turn rendered strategizing and planning very difficult for Danish entities that had to be content with trying to fit in and plug holes, and to adjust to the shifting and non-permissive conditions. Hence, Denmark's combined efforts had a somewhat ad-hoc and improvised character.

Denmark spent approximately DKK 2,323 million on military activities in Iraq and DKK 645 million on humanitarian and reconstruction activities in the period 2003-7. As far as possible, Danish projects in Iraq followed conventional development standards by focusing on capacity-building and participatory development. However, Danish reconstruction efforts in Iraq were largely stand-alone projects rather than part of sector programmes because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought out niches in southern Iraq that were not already covered by larger donors such as the US, UK and the EU, and that could add profile to the Danish presence.

As set out in the Parliamentary Decisions, the Danish ground force in Basra initially focussed on providing physical security by being present in the territory, patrolling, protecting strategic locations and participating in 'search and arrest' operations. Following a Parliamentary Decision in November 2004, the focus moved towards civil-military cooperation and the Concerted Planning and Action initiative.⁷² From May 2005 and onwards, the emphasis was placed on the training and education of the Iraqi security forces.⁷³

In broad terms, these shifts are reflected in three phases that Danish civil-military cooperation passed through during the country's engagement in southern Iraq:

⁷² B42.

⁷³ B89.

March 2003 to August 2003. In this phase, civilian and military activities were generally separated, with the military being responsible for creating a secure environment, thus enabling civilian entities to carry out reconstruction and humanitarian activities. The phase ended when it became obvious that NGOs and international organizations would not be operating inside Iraq because of the security situation.

September 2003 until May 2005 was characterized by increased interaction and cooperation between civilian and military entities. Concerted Planning and Action was initialized and tested as the military 'Reconstruction Unit Denmark' became involved in the facilitation of reconstruction and to a very limited extent humanitarian projects funded by Foreign Affairs. In February 2005, the first civilian adviser to the Danish battalion arrived, and the Steering Unit was established.

May 2005 to August 2007. This period of the consolidation of Concerted Planning and Action began as elected district and provincial councils started functioning and ended with the withdrawal of the Danish battalion. In this period, activities focussed more consistently on capacity-building and training of the Iraqi administration and security forces as part of the Danish exit strategy. In 2006, the multinational Provincial Reconstruction Team was established, and Danish advisors transferred from the Steering Unit.

Despite agreement among the strategy-makers in Copenhagen on the conduct of civil-military cooperation, things were not always so smooth on the ground in Iraq. Soldiers complained that the combined Danish effort lacked a coherent strategy, especially with respect to the place and relevance of the small 'Concerted Planning and Action projects'. Strategists in Copenhagen argued that a detailed plan for civil-military cooperation would hamper the flexibility and freedom of initiative of personnel confronted with rapidly changing conditions in the field. However, the deployed personnel requested more detailed guidance and support from Copenhagen.

In the ten districts of the Danish area of operation, the reconstruction projects facilitated by the Danish battalion followed a zig-zag course, but they found more direction as elected councils began functioning in 2005. The various water, school and other projects served as media for developing the administrative capacity of the new councils. Many groups and individuals who controlled the councils had links to factional militias and illicit or criminal activities in the war economy of southern Iraq. While this represents a serious dilemma for democratization and reconstruction strategies in zones of conflict, where they risk reinforcing patterns of conflict, the

councils nevertheless served as entry points to local power-holders and promoted a continuous dialogue. Projects may have served the constituencies of the councils rather than vulnerable or marginalized groups, but the projects seem to have had the potential to open up a political space for negotiations between different stakeholders and levels of authority and hence to enhance political order in the area. This political effect should be distinguished from the generally assumed function of forging consent and hence security by providing public goods that people appreciate. While this potential was generally left unexplored, in 2007 the Steering Unit, Provincial Reconstruction Team and the Danish battalion made a promising plan to forge links between district and provincial government.⁷⁴

On the ground from mid-2005 onwards, civilian and military activities in southern Iraq were extensively coordinated between the Steering Unit and the Danish battalion with regard to providing escorts for the Steering Unit and consultants, as well as monitoring projects and holding joint meetings with district councils in the area of military operation. The civilian advisers played important roles as a mediating link between the battalion and the Steering Unit, as well as facilitators between local institutions and leaders, and the Danish entities. However, interviews suggest that only limited strategic discussion or coordination took place between civilian and military entities, and only at individual initiative. The majority of Danish-funded activities in Basra took place without any concerted civil-military planning effort apart from the military escorts of Danish consultants, and even the Steering Unit was not involved in many of the programmes.⁷⁵ In the experience of Steering Unit staff, their flexibility and results under the volatile conditions would have improved with a clearer strategic framework and mandate for decentralized decision-making, continuous support from headquarters and a local grant authority.

The Danish experience in Afghanistan

Denmark participated in the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom from its start in November 2001. Shortly after the passage of UN Security Council Resolution #1386 and the Bonn agreement in December, the Danish government decided to open a diplomatic representation in Kabul. The Parliament supported a Danish contribution to the newly established the International Security Assistance Force

⁷⁴ The plan was never implemented, as the Danish troops were withdrawn.

⁷⁵ NIRAS 2006.

(ISAF) which was later extended and broadened,⁷⁶ and the Danida Board authorized a 3-5 year relief and reconstruction package for Afghanistan of DKK 785 million (€100 million).⁷⁷ Less than six months after the Bonn agreement, the diplomatic representation was up and running, monitoring programmes implemented through multilateral agencies, international and Danish NGOs, and later Afghan government institutions and programmes.

Advocating ownership and capacity-building from the beginning (during the Danish EU Presidency in 2002), Danish aid contributions have mainly supported national multi-donor trust funds, the National Solidarity Program and the education sector. In the framework of the World Bank-led Consultative Group process, Denmark has acted as the lead donor in the working group on education. The Danish plan for cooperation with Afghanistan 2005-9 set aside DKK 670 million for the period. After the Afghan Compact in 2006, aid was increased to DKK 200 million per year. The latest plan for Afghanistan 2009-12 sets aside DKK 400 million (€53 million) per year, including DKK 50 million (€6.5 million) per year which can be allocated directly to Helmand, where the bulk of the Danish armed forces are deployed.⁷⁸ In comparison, a total of DKK 8 million (ca. €1 million) from the humanitarian budget was used for small reconstruction projects facilitated by the armed forces in Badakhshan and Helmand from 2005-8.

Danish military deployment has grown from an initial 50 troops in the Kabul area in 2002-3 to 360 in 2006 and up to 750 from 2007. With the geographical expansion of ISAF's mandate from 2003, Danish forces were posted in various Provincial Reconstruction Teams, including 40 troops in the German-led PRT in Badakhshan in northern Afghanistan.⁷⁹ Since 2006, when ISAF took over operations in the south, the bulk of the Danish troops have been deployed in the Danish Battle Group as part of the British-led Task Force Helmand. The deployment of two infantry companies, scout squads and a tank platoon permits independent Danish combat operations.⁸⁰ The Battle Group is mainly operating in the area of the strategically important district centre of Gereshk.

⁷⁶ B45 January 2002; B57 December 2003; B43 November 2004; B64 February 2006; B161 June 2007; B6 October 2007; and B24 2008.

⁷⁷ Danida Styrelsesnotits, March 2002.

⁷⁸ MFA 2008. The DKK 50 million can be increased or decreased depending on how the situation develops.

⁷⁹ Phased out in 2008.

⁸⁰ Thruelsen 2008.

The Concerted Planning and Action initiative functioned from 2005. Prior to this, the military facilitated projects on an ad-hoc basis through the local grant authority of the Danish Representation in Kabul.⁸¹ From 2005, development advisors were posted in Mazar-e-Sharif, Chaghchakan and Badakhshan, but activities remained limited, in need of overall strategy, and hard to distinguish from traditional CIMIC activities.⁸² In this period Danish NGOs were strongly urged by the ministries to go to Badakhshan, but with limited results.⁸³ Consequently, the Danish plan for 2005-9 envisaged that the state and private companies might engage in traditional NGO activities.⁸⁴ But as it turned out, the relative security for civil organizations in Badakhshan did not really warrant a Provincial Reconstruction Team model of integration of civil and military activities, as observed in the report on Afghanistan.

A very different scenario for civil-military relations developed as ISAF went south in 2006. The extended engagement involved combat forces, and in the Parliamentary decision, peace-enforcement rather than peace-keeping was envisaged in the 'more complex and unpredictable security situation' in the south.⁸⁵ A large US-led combat operation, including airstrikes, prepared the ground for the ISAF troops, which nevertheless met immediate resistance upon arrival. The first strategic approach in Helmand and elsewhere in the south was heavily focused on combat (kinetic), enemy-centred and military-led operations in extended areas. The continued and even reinforced resistance contributed to a change during 2007 towards a strategy informed by counterinsurgency principles focusing on limited but densely populated areas (development zones) and non-kinetic, civilian-led operations.⁸⁶ This change of strategy on the ground dovetailed with the increasing acceptance in NATO of the comprehensive approach and the necessity of combining military action with good governance and economic development, as advocated by Denmark, along with Germany, Norway, Spain and others in Riga 2006.⁸⁷

⁸¹ An initial request by the MoD that it be allowed to deliver short-term development assistance at its discretion was rejected by the MFA (NCG 2006 §141).

⁸² MFA Danida 2005; Danida 2006.

⁸³ Interviews with NGOs, Kabul, April 2005. DACAAR set up a project, and Mission Øst established a substantial presence.

⁸⁴ Danida 2005.

⁸⁵ Parliament Decision B64, January 2006 which states that, 'even though the core of ISAF's engagement will consist in the introduction of PRTs in the south too, the sharpened security situation is mirrored in a more robust combination and equipping of the military contributions, including the Danish' (our translation).

⁸⁶ Thruelsen 2008; Schmidt 2009; Suhrke 2008. The notion of an 'enemy-centric raid strategy' was coined in a criticism of the US strategy 2001-3 by General Barno, who commanded the US Forces in Afghanistan in 2003-5 and introduced a version of a counterinsurgency strategy (Barno 2007).

⁸⁷ The change of strategy was also prepared in the high-level Policy Action Group and at the Joint Coordinating Monitoring Board meeting in Tokyo, both of which had Danish participation (interview, MFA, December 2008).

In the current version in Helmand, the focus is on how to clear, hold, build and eventually expand the so-called ‘ink-spots’ of populated areas. Thus, when the Danish Battle Group and Task Force Helmand had ‘cleared’ the district centre of Gereshk at the end of 2007, they held it in order for reconstruction and capacity-building to take place with a certain level of security.⁸⁸ But for a number of reasons it took six to eight months before Copenhagen increased civilian capabilities beyond the already allocated civilian advisor in Gereshk. Thus funds were limited, and hardly any NGOs and only a few minor private constructors were around. A Danish education advisor was posted in the overstretched Provincial Reconstruction Team headquarters in Lashkar Gah, while the one Danish civil advisor was in Gereshk 60% of his time to assist the fragile district administration in gaining control and establish services.⁸⁹ Hence, the military expressed frustration with not being able to demonstrate that the Afghan government was the better option for the population.⁹⁰ Taking more land makes little sense if the population does not perceive a change in living conditions. But even more important in winning the support of the population is the ability to provide security and protect people from retaliation for their collaboration with the government and international armed forces.⁹¹

While the government and donors seek to enhance everyday security through the reform and capacity-building of local police forces (see next chapter), the protection of civil advisors and experts is one issue that has delayed their deployment. Their activities depend on transport, information and CIMIC and escort teams from the armed forces. But as one report shows, the military priorities, competing commitments and overall resource constraints in the armed forces limit the availability of these services and hence the possibility of achieving ‘non-kinetic effects.’⁹² The use of private security companies on contract to the UK government has relieved some of these constraints, but this option entails another set of sensitive problems, as detailed elsewhere.⁹³

⁸⁸ Commander Kim Kristensen, presentation at Royal Danish Defence College, May 2008.

⁸⁹ Deployed civilians follow a six-week work + two-week Rest & Recuperation, which, including the extended travel time, changes into a 5+3 scheme (Schmidt 2009).

⁹⁰ This permeated the impression that the authors of Schmidt 2008 and Thruelsen 2008 gained from a visit in Helmand in May 2008.

⁹¹ Azerbaijani-Moghadam et al. 2008.

⁹² For example, 75% of the planned activities of the stabilization advisor in Lashkar Gah were cancelled over a month in early 2008 due to a lack of priority and personnel (Thruelsen 2008). See also Schmidt 2009 and Veicherts 2008.

⁹³ Holt 2006; Stoddard et al. 2008; Henriksen 2008. In Helmand, Denmark has an agreement with the UK government to use the services of their contractor, Armor Group.

By the end of 2008, Denmark, and in particular the UK, had substantially increased civilian staff for governance and reconstruction tasks in Helmand, even though continued lack of road security and the resulting dependence on helicopters were seriously delimiting their mobility and potential impact.⁹⁴ In terms of organization, civil and military stabilization activities are being planned and coordinated jointly in the PRT before being implemented along separate civilian and military lines of command. Since 2008, a high-ranking ('two-star') representative of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been directing the Provincial Reconstruction Team.⁹⁵ By posting a senior political advisor to the leadership of the PRT, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has increased its ability to play a role in the overall analysis, planning, coordination and monitoring of civil and military activities. This also gives the field personnel an influence in the ministries back home that more junior and relatively inexperienced personnel do not have. As illustrated by the development in early 2008 of the operational plan, the Helmand Road Map, cooperation between UK and Danish personnel in the field often goes more smoothly than relations between the respective capitals, as well as between the field and the capitals.⁹⁶

Conclusions

Five years on from the start of the Concerted Planning and Action initiative, it is clear that the concept has generated difficult but in this context necessary discussions between civil and military representatives concerning issues of the concentration of activities and funds, the objectives of Concerted Planning and Action projects, and the protection and availability of civilian staff. In terms of its implementation, over time the government has developed guidelines, security courses for civilians and Concerted Planning and Action courses for CIMIC officers. Implementation has focused on the project activities at the tactical and field levels in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the high degree of geographical overlap in Basra, interaction – mostly logistic – between larger Danish reconstruction programs and military deployment was more intense in Iraq than in Afghanistan, where until 2008 the Danish development aid focused almost entirely on national processes and multi-lateral programmes.

⁹⁴ Interview, senior advisor PRT Helmand, October 2008. In Gereshk, two Danish and three British advisors were deployed.

⁹⁵ Interview with FCO, London, June 2008, and senior political advisor, PRT Helmand, October 2008. See also Thruelsen 2008. The military planning unit, J5, reports directly to the civilian commander, a system which has been tested in civil-military exercises, but not without problems.

⁹⁶ Schmidt 2009 and interview with author of Helmand Road Map, New York, February 2009.

Interviews and documents suggest that planners have generally seen security and development interventions as mutually supportive. In Iraq, where activities to some degree overlapped, a more comprehensive approach would have involved considerations of how the different civil and military activities would influence each other and the local dynamics of conflict and stabilization. In Afghanistan, such considerations have been seen as irrelevant because of the minimal geographical coincidence of military and development activities.

This started to change with the increased focus on Helmand and the movement towards a counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization strategy since late 2007. The first Helmand Plan from 2008 considers how development and reconstruction activities can contribute to the strengthening of the government and the marginalization of the insurgency, but not on how these activities could have negative effects on conflict and stabilization.⁹⁷ Likewise, while there is no direct overlap or linkage between Danish military and development activities at the national level, a comprehensive approach has to consider – within an overall strategic framework – how, for example, military strategies applied in one part of the country affect conditions and support for the government in other parts of the country and vice versa. These are the issues of the next chapter.

⁹⁷ The Danish Afghanistan strategy from 2007 (MFA 2007) does however mention that investment in schools could be problematic if security was not improved. Human Rights Watch (2006) warned in 2006 against building of schools because of the dangers involved for the civilian population.

4. The context of operation: challenges of state-building

This chapter corresponds to the third column of the matrix in Chapter 1, page 19. It looks at issues related to how civil-military activities play into the actual contexts of state-building and stabilization at both the national (strategic) and local (tactical) levels. As expressed in the Paris declaration, the current international development doctrine focuses on how donors and international agencies can align with and support a 'country-led', nationally owned process of development. The doctrine builds on decades of experience, but as the last two decades of international peace-operations show, ownership is the Achilles heel of international peace operations.⁹⁸

By definition, alignment is very difficult in conflict or fragile situations, where government and state institutions, if they are in place, are characterized by limited legitimacy and limited effective sovereignty, as well as low capacity (or zero willingness) to carry out reform or deal with external agendas and resources.⁹⁹ The concepts of alignment

Box 3. Definition of *state-building*

Actions that aim to strengthen the capacity, legitimacy and accountability of the state. A state is here understood as a set of institutions and practices that underpin the idea of a central, sovereign authority with monopoly of force, administrative capacity and legitimacy to rule and protect territory and population. While this definition is extracted from an idealized version of centuries of state-formation in Europe, current attempts at building states are open-ended processes with an uncertain outcome. It takes place under very different conditions, which may not be conducive to state-formation everywhere and under all circumstances.¹⁰⁰ The development community defines state-building as an endogenous process with which external actors may align. In contrast, security actors tend to focus on the international intervention and define state-building (in the US often referred to as nation-building) as a process involving 'the use of armed force as part of a broader effort to promote political and economic reforms with the objective of transforming a society emerging from conflict into one at peace with itself and its neighbors.'¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ de Coning 2008.

⁹⁹ See OPM/IDL 2008 for a study of how the Paris declaration applies in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

¹⁰⁰ See DIIS 2008b on Fragile Situations.

¹⁰¹ Dobbins et al. 2007: xvii.

Box 4: Definition of stabilization

Actions that deal with situations in which no state monopoly of force exist, where no political order dominates, and no legitimate institutions are in place to mediate conflicts peacefully between different groups. These situations characterize collapsed or failed states. However, they may also characterize regions at the sub-national level, where the state is strongly contested and sometimes even overruled or controlled by competing social forces and orders. In such situations, the objective of stabilization is to 'prevent or reduce violence, protect population and key-institutions, promote political processes and prepare for longer-term non-violent politics and development.'¹⁰² In other words, stabilization is directed at providing the 'essential preliminaries' of state-building.

and ownership are also challenged by the extent to which operations are designed to address international or (other states') national security interests.

Based on the sub-reports, this chapter deals with: 1) how state-building and stabilization may be understood as political processes which security and development activities should support; 2) how issues of civil-military cooperation influence capacity-building and sustainability; and 3) how the security context influences the balance and relations between civil and military actors and activities.

State-building and stabilization as political processes

Former state-building interventions have taught the lesson that the political context is an essential factor in defining the outcome of attempts to reform state structures.¹⁰³ This is particularly so in cases when political order and the basic rules and institutions of the state are in flux. Thus, when state-building is defined as the overall objective of security and development efforts, both must be seen as part of a process enhancing a political order, building and reforming institutions, and strengthening the legitimacy of central authorities.¹⁰⁴ While humanitarian aid, in principle at least, is impartial, neutral and independent, development and security interventions are intrinsically

¹⁰² Stabilization Unit Fact Sheet.

¹⁰³ International Peace Academy 2006.

¹⁰⁴ See the argumentation in Schmidt's (2009) case study of civil-military relations in Afghanistan.

political processes. They exclude and include different groups in the national community by defining categories of friends and enemies (e.g. reform-friendly versus spoilers). This effectively empowers some groups and institutions rather than others when international actors are entering local and national alliances and are allocating resources.

Therefore, under these circumstances it is no surprise that adversaries of the central government regard reconstruction projects and reform programmes as political statements rather than beneficial, neutral development.¹⁰⁵ This is further complicated in situations in which international interventions (as in the case of building schools for girls) are seen as imbued with particular (Western) values. People who are involved in such projects are often regarded as supporters of the government and therefore risk being targeted by its adversaries.¹⁰⁶

In terms of alignment, the central question is with whom to align and work, not least at the sub-national level, and in particular in areas with no state monopoly of force. As the case studies show, Danish entities have had to interact with non-statutory forces, such as warlords, drug lords and militias in Afghanistan,¹⁰⁷ and with factions and clans with ties to active militias and illicit activities in Iraq. In both cases, elections have been used to establish formal counterparts (government, councils, mayors and governors) with whom to align and whom support in planning and capacity-building. As has been the case elsewhere, post-conflict elections have provided armed and criminal groups with access to the institutions and representative systems of the state.¹⁰⁸ Even with vetting procedures, this is very difficult to prevent in militarized societies. In areas of armed conflict (and many other areas), internationally supported operations have no choice but to relate, in one way or another, to political actors with links to armed groups.

It is thus crucial to understand the politics of power in contexts with recent or ongoing armed conflict. As the case studies suggest, some of the characteristics are that:

- armed groups may well have political roles and agendas, while political groups often have military wings

¹⁰⁵ See also Veicherts 2006.

¹⁰⁶ See Human Right Watch 2006 for detailed accounts of assaults on schools, teachers and students in Afghanistan.

¹⁰⁷ One militia in Helmand is contracted (by the UK) as guards at the perimeter of Camp Bastion.

¹⁰⁸ On electoral vetting experience in Afghanistan, see Ayub 2009.

- alliances between different groups and actors are fluid and change over time, sometimes overnight¹⁰⁹
- fear of reprisals is a major motivating factor hindering outspoken viewpoints
- local conflicts over land, water, leadership etc. tend to become violent and linked to otherwise unrelated national-level issues and fault-lines of conflict
- denouncements of people as 'terrorists' or 'insurgents' is often used to delegitimize adversaries in such local conflicts
- warlords are not only motivated by 'greed', but can have political ambitions or establish state-like entities¹¹⁰
- the boundaries between legal, illicit and illegal activities are blurred¹¹¹

These are some of the conditions that the British counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization strategy in Helmand is seeking to address. This entails that development and security be used as instruments in a political strategy of: 1) driving a wedge between the population at large (as well as the elites) and the hard core of insurgency; and 2) facilitating some kind of political order which permits state institutions to insert themselves and develop their roles at the provincial and district levels.¹¹² As concluded in research on the rebuilding of failed states, the strength of internal processes of negotiation between the government, different political actors and civil society is more important for the outcome than the coordination of external actors.¹¹³

Conceptually, political stabilization moves beyond the social contract model that has characterized traditional thinking on post-conflict reconstruction. This model assumes that reconstruction and good governance will win the consent of the population, but it may underestimate the ideological importance of, for example, Islam and nationalist sentiments. The question is whether political stabilization can offset the legitimacy flaws that ISAF and the donor governments have to bear because of their association with the Westernization of Afghanistan and incidents of collateral damage, not to speak of the legitimacy flaws of the Afghan government.¹¹⁴

The general points are: 1) reconstruction and military operations both have to be thought of as elements furthering a political process for stabilization; and 2) inter-

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Suhrke 2008.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Giustozzi 2004.

¹¹¹ Collinson 2003.

¹¹² See Schmidt 2009.

¹¹³ Kumar 2006.

¹¹⁴ Suhrke 2008.

national operators and national government representatives have to manage other instruments and factors, such as the political repercussions of collateral damage, the rectification of unjust arrests and the adoption of a range of conciliatory measures. These include local fora for reducing misunderstandings, means of local conflict resolution, deals for peaceful co-existence and a credible program for reconciliation to provide a way out for insurgents.¹¹⁵ This also means that all activities, small reconstruction projects as well as national programmes, have to be handled as interventions with political dimensions. Thus, their potential for ameliorating as well as fuelling local conflicts have to be assessed, for example, by using peace and conflict impact analysis.

Subjecting the different elements of operations to a logic of stabilization inevitably means some trade-off between development, military and political objectives and principles.¹¹⁶ It also entails a more humble approach in terms of realistic benchmarks for domestically defined political value goals (e.g. democracy, gender, human rights). In particular, the question of how to deal with armed actors is difficult. If the momentum, capacity and political will to undertake country-wide disarmament and the reintegration of non-state armed groups is lacking, there are no easy solutions. The issue represents difficult dilemmas that relate to the balancing between different values and objectives. Even though this should not be seen as a zero sum game, the issue is bound to create divisions between, for example, Human Rights-oriented actors focusing on HR abuses, and political and security actors focusing on stabilization objectives.

Issues of capacity-building and sustainability

In principle there is emerging agreement among civil and military actors that international interventions for stabilization, peace- or state-building should support and strengthen the structures and capacities of the host state, but in practice this objective is hard to achieve. In terms of civil-military relations, the following issues stand out as important with regard to capacity-building:

1. Quick impact and capacity building. At the tactical level, armed forces have facilitated reconstruction projects, typically Quick Impact Projects of the 'bricks and mortar'

¹¹⁵ Suhrke et al. 2009. In the words of EU representative Michael Semple, the key consideration is not 'will reconciliation work or will fighting work ... it is how can you maintain the legitimacy of state violence unless you have a credible reconciliation track' (Hakimi 2009).

¹¹⁶ See Brett's DIIS Report 2009.

type. Here they have to learn the same lessons as humanitarian and development agencies involved in post-conflict reconstruction did in the 1990s: trade-offs are unavoidable between sustainability on the one hand and speed, security conditions, available resources, knowledge and capacity on the other. However, a more programmatic and strategic approach is necessary in order to ensure that emergency measures facilitate, or at least do not block, medium-term rehabilitation and development. A poorly implemented or wrongly located project risks doing more harm than good and detracts from the legitimacy of the government and of foreign assistance.¹¹⁷

It is increasingly being recognized (by Provincial Reconstruction Team lead nations) that Quick Impact Projects in themselves have limited effects and may work against the building of capacity and legitimacy of the government.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, some sources suggest that there is no evidence that the population demands lots of small infrastructure projects, which they considered cost-ineffective, or that these deliver greater confidence in the political process. Rather, improved governance and multi-year infrastructure programmes are in demand.¹¹⁹ Support for the capacity-building of local NGOs, construction firms and district administrations are other ways to improve the longer term impact. In this regard, the Danish support for district councils in Basra as part of the implementation of Concerted Planning and Action projects looks, in principle, as a good practice.

2. On-budget support and governance reform. Overall governance reform need to be furthered to ensure public services, rule of law and improved security. However, particularly in Afghanistan, where the general level of capacity (in terms of administration, education, infrastructure etc.) is very low and corruption is spreading, reforming and working through central government institutions can be a cumbersome process. As the pressures to produce visible results in the areas of military deployment are mounting, donors tend to bypass government institutions and invest directly in the provinces where they are deployed. Such 'off-budget' allocations risk producing parallel service systems and empty weak government institutions of qualified personnel, as implementation is subcontracted to expensive Project Management Units and similar arrangements.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Various reports on PRT practice suggest that there is ample scope for improvement (e.g. SIGIR 2007; Azarbaijani-Moghadam et al. 2008; Abbaszadeh et al. 2008).

¹¹⁸ Abbazzadei et al. 2008. Also a recent study of UK QIPs – which is classified – has led DFID to stop funding for this type of project.

¹¹⁹ ODI 2005; Foster 2007.

¹²⁰ Michailof 2009.

Overall, two-thirds of international donor aid to Afghanistan is now off-budget. Denmark has only recently allocated more funds for Helmand and from 2009 is contributing ca.12.5% directly to the province.¹²¹ In comparison, Germany spends 15% in two provinces in the north,¹²² the UK 20% in Helmand¹²³ and in 2008 Canada 50% up from 17% in Kandahar.¹²⁴ However, the bulk of aid in general and off-budget aid in particular comes from the US. Helmand is one of the largest recipients of US funds due to the Kijaki dam project.

The predominance of off-budget and non-central support is much resented by the Afghan government and the UN Special Representative due to the fragmentation involved and the possible skewing of resources in favour of provinces with insurgent movements and to the detriment of the more peaceful provinces.¹²⁵ Applying a counterinsurgency perspective on a national scale, this imbalance provides the wrong incentives: violence and poppy cultivation appear to be the kind of behaviour which attract funds for reconstruction and development. This represents a dilemma between the urgency experienced by the military in the insurgent areas, and the medium-term considerations of reconstruction and development in other areas, which may contribute to preventing the spread of support for the insurgencies.

3. Central and local government. That said, several factors challenge the wisdom of giving only support to national-level institutions and expecting programmes to spread across the territory. Links between central and provincial or local governments are typically weak in fragile and failed states. The administrative transmission belt cannot be expected to run smoothly in the short to medium term. While aligning with national plans and poverty-reduction papers may represent best practice, their strategic value may be limited, as they sometimes look like 'shopping lists with a Christmas tree approach', as one observer put it in the case of Afghanistan.¹²⁶ Finally, as emphasized in the Afghan report for this study,¹²⁷ national plans often do not take the particular conditions and possibilities of areas affected by open conflict into account. If stabiliza-

¹²¹ DKK 50 of 400 million (MFA 2008). The amount will depend on actual conditions.

¹²² See DIIS AFG Report 2008 (Schmidt 2009)

¹²³ House of Commons 2008.

¹²⁴ Government of Canada 2008. The increase was a direct response to the 'Manley report' and the high casualty rates of the Canadian armed forces in 2007 after they went south.

¹²⁵ See Karzai in *Daily Times*, 28/11/2008. Denmark is not targeted by Karzai's and UNAMA critique of off-budget aid.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C11%5C27%5Cstory_27-11-2008_pg7_15

¹²⁶ Michailof 2009: n. 9. The 2002 Afghan National Framework was an exception to this pattern.

¹²⁷ Schmidt 2009.

tion is the primary objective, a different sequence of priorities may be relevant at the local level.¹²⁸ These issues point out the necessity of giving early attention to the links between the central and local authorities as well as local government arrangements, something which came very late in the process in Afghanistan.¹²⁹

4. Strategic frameworks. It is widely recognized that the limited capacity and reach of the host government limits the possible range of reform and capacity-building programmes. Therefore they have to be implemented in a sequenced or gradual manner.¹³⁰ However, the definition of priorities – including the civil-military balance – requires a strategic framework, a robust centre of government with sufficient capacity to deal with internal and external pressures, and a strong and legitimate coordinating international agency such as the UN (which may not have sufficient capacity) or the World Bank (which does not have the mandate).¹³¹ Existing planning matrices for post-conflict societies suggest giving priority to 1) political processes that can support the legitimacy of the state, 2) frameworks for the rule of law, and 3) frameworks for legitimate security structures.¹³²

5. Security-sector reform. But even a limited focus on reforming the institutions of justice, the police and the army is a huge task to engage in for international agencies and donor countries. Apart from education and training, a series of administrative functions are necessary for the development of these institutions, not only in the capital, but even more so at the provincial level. In particular, the police are accorded a crucial role in the current counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization strategies, since the controlled areas cannot be extended if everyday security tasks are not taken over by stationary non-combat forces, but also the human security approach accords the police a central role in the protection of the population.¹³³ The current massive engagement of the US Department of Defense in police reform has been criticized for being overly concerned with the military and tactical side of police training for counterinsurgency purposes. But while the EU police reform programme focuses on

¹²⁸ Ibid. Are schools for girls, for example, a top priority before the area has been stabilized, the report asks?

¹²⁹ Nixon 2008.

¹³⁰ OECD/DAC 2008.

¹³¹ See Michailof 2009 for Afghanistan. He suggests that, despite early successes such as the finance ministry, the national solidarity and microcredit programmes, capacity-building has been neglected in ministries that are essential for reconstruction and security, such as infrastructure, energy, economy, agriculture and the interior. Also, given the levels of corruption that have developed alongside the aid and poppy economy, it is of critical importance that a civil service reform, including local government, be supported.

¹³² OECD/DAC 2008.

¹³³ Kaldor 2009.

the long-term build-up of a human security-oriented police capacity, the programme is understaffed and is progressing very slowly. A combination of the two seems mandatory, especially as they work at different administrative levels.¹³⁴

6. Multi-layered approaches. In countries with very low levels of capacity and resources, it may be necessary to consider extending the pragmatic principle of ‘good enough governance’¹³⁵ to the justice and security sectors by using multi-layered approaches.¹³⁶ In parts of the world where non-state systems of security and justice provide for the majority of the population,¹³⁷ it has been suggested means for inclusion or association with these systems should be developed in the short to medium terms while simultaneously developing the judiciary, police and army institutions of the state.¹³⁸

Afghanistan is a case in point. Given the long history of minimal state presence in, for example, Helmand and the limited state revenues for years to come, it will take decades before the central government will be able to control the entire territory successfully.¹³⁹ The multi-layered approach, however, represents very difficult dilemmas in the context of open conflict and counterinsurgency-inspired operations. The arming of and alliance with local and clan-based groups is latent in current strategies and actually ongoing in some provinces, but the frameworks for doing so are unclear, while the risks of further militarizing the situation are obvious.¹⁴⁰ In general, the issue underlines the necessity of concerted security-sector reform activities, including those directed at non-state armed groups. This is a field where civil and military capabilities need to work together, but for which there is little guidance or coordination.¹⁴¹

Security contexts and civil-military relations

How does the specific context of operation influence the balance and possible relations between civil and military actors? In general, it seems that in contexts in which the international forces are perceived as enemies and are violently resisted by

¹³⁴ Rosén 2009.

¹³⁵ Grindle 2007: the ‘minimal conditions of governance necessary to allow political and economic development to occur.’

¹³⁶ Scheye and Andersen 2007.

¹³⁷ For the justice sector, see studies in Sudan, Liberia Afghanistan, *inter alia*, at <http://www.usip.org/ruleoflaw/index.html>

¹³⁸ OECD/DAC 2008; Andersen et al. 2007.

¹³⁹ See, for example, Sedra 2007.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, House of Commons 2008: §96; Suhrke et al. 2009.

¹⁴¹ De Coning 2008.

one or more actors, there is no security guarantee for civilian organizations, which depend on acceptance by the population. More localized conflicts (e.g. Uganda or DRC) do not present insurmountable problems for civil organizations to be present in the territory and to have some form of cooperation with armed forces. But conflicts related to the global war on terror, seemingly intractable conflicts (Sri Lanka) or conflicts in which the host government is hostile to the international presence (Sudan) produce contexts in which even humanitarian organizations that 'play by the rules' of neutrality, impartiality and independence are at risk. In Afghanistan, involvement with the military represents a risk for NGOs.¹⁴² Attacks on NGOs are increasing, and their assumed relations with the military is an issue brought out by the Taliban, but since the general security situation is deteriorating, exact causality is difficult to establish.

The security issue has become much more complex during the last decade, and former key assumptions regarding humanitarian space do not hold anymore. Recent studies suggest that the blurring of civil-military boundaries and the attempts to subsume humanitarian agencies under a coherence agenda may have caused this change in some cases.¹⁴³ The bottom line, however, is that, as long as the military cannot establish a secure environment, only the military (and civil organizations with a very specific mandate, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross) are able to operate. When the civilian aid organizations apply strict security measures, they become more risk-averse and tend to disengage, which is likely to increase (human) insecurity for the local population.¹⁴⁴

Badakhshan and Helmand illustrate two different security contexts, of which the former does not warrant the close cooperation of civil and military capabilities that is necessary in Helmand. A Rapid Reaction Force would be more appropriate in Badakhshan.¹⁴⁵ In this regard, procedures are needed to decide when and how to phase out Provincial Reconstruction Teams and/or transfer them to the local authorities.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Waldman 2009; Donini 2009.

¹⁴³ Donini et al. 2008, based on case studies in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, northern Uganda, DRC Congo, Liberia, the occupied Palestine territory, Nepal, Burundi and Colombia.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Schmidt 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Jackson and Gordon 2007.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Findings

The analysis and findings of this study can be summarized according to the different elements of a comprehensive approach that were outlined in the introduction (see Figure 1). This is done below in relation to the three columns that deal with the international, Danish and host/local levels. The findings feed into the recommendations that are presented below.

Analysis

A comprehensive approach should be based on a shared understanding of the problem and the context at hand, as well as possible future developments. The volatile conditions of fragile situations and armed conflicts place high demands on continuous monitoring and analyses.

At the *international* level, the Iraq and Afghanistan cases illustrate the problems of an inadequate knowledge and understanding of the contexts of intervention, as well as problems in foreseeing the possible effects of interventions. There have also been obstacles to sharing analyses between participating countries and international organizations, among other things due to the classification of military analysis. Analysis is not isolated from political and institutional agendas that influence how situations and objects of analysis are understood by different actors. Different actors disagree as to whether specific contexts should be classified as 'conflict' or 'post-conflict', and whether the risk of terror, insurgencies or poor governance represents the main problem for the international operation to deal with.

In *Denmark*, where analytical approaches also differ between civil and military institutions, cooperation concerning operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan has brought these into closer contact. While a proper assessment of the analytical capacity is difficult to undertake, the study raises an important question: How can the overall analytical capacity and knowledge (including language skills) be improved so as to increase awareness of emerging crises and prepare better for new international operations? Procedures will differ between 1) Danish 'programme' countries for development cooperation (with off-the-shelf analyses and regular conflict assessments), and 2) non-programme countries where analysis will depend less on in-house expertise and more on established cooperation with international think tanks, NGOs with

long-term experience in the regions, and larger partner countries' intelligence and analytical capacities.

Repeating the conclusions of a recent lessons-learned exercise regarding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' conflict management,¹⁴⁷ the present study points to the need for a more institutionalized Danish approach to conflict analysis. The usually applied *ad hoc* analyses of developing crisis situations save time in the short run, but especially for those departments that are leading the strategic process, a more institutionalized approach will pay off in the medium term. Thus there is a need to undertake critical path analysis exercises, as well as scenario, stakeholder and political economy analyses. Similar conclusions have been reached in partner countries such as the UK.¹⁴⁸

Finally, *host nation and local* perspectives and sources of knowledge are too often neglected.¹⁴⁹ Support for the Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit is an example of good practice, but there is an impression that its resources are not being used sufficiently. In particular, the local (district and provincial level) contexts of operation represent a huge analytical challenge for international operations. While the national dynamics may be well known, the local dynamics of informal politics, militias, insurgencies and patterns of conflict are hard to decipher, yet remain essential for a strategic approach to armed conflicts. The necessary information is not classified and may be accessible from a variety of local and other sources,¹⁵⁰ but analysis and understanding take time, resources and continuous engagement with the local population. In an environment in which security considerations dominate, such engagement remains a huge challenge. Likewise, institutional memory represents a challenge in the face of frequent rotations, even though long-term advisors in part can remedy this.

Strategy

The participants of a comprehensive approach should agree on strategic objectives and be able to define a coherent strategy to achieve them.

At the *international level*, operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been characterized by many actors with differing objectives and the lack of common strategic frameworks.

¹⁴⁷ NCG 2006.

¹⁴⁸ Interviews in the UK and the Netherlands pointed to the issue of analytical approaches in the lead departments. And DFID did its first proper conflict analysis of Afghanistan in 2008 (Bennett 2009).

¹⁴⁹ See also NCG 2006.

¹⁵⁰ The experience of using embedded anthropologists has been mixed and much debated for the ethical questions involved in generating knowledge in a contested environment. See AAA Commission 2007.

In the case of Afghanistan especially, many actors regard the comprehensive approach as a remedy for the lack of or incoherent strategies of various military organizations and commands (ISAF and CENTCOM), the UN, different representations of the EU, bilateral donors, NGOs and the Afghan government. Several factors influence the potential for strategic coherence:

- partly unrelated, high-level political issues hamper working relations between NATO, the UN, the EU and the US, while nationalist interests sometimes sideline or block acceptance of the UN as the coordinating authority
- high levels of violence work against the presence and operational reach of the UN in large swathes of territory, which affects the ability of the UN to lead a strategic framework process.

While the UN may have the legitimacy to facilitate and lead the formulation of a shared and strategic Comprehensive Approach, it often does not have the capacity or the robustness to do so.¹⁵¹

For minor participants such as Denmark, country-specific strategic development is highly dependent on processes taking place in partners' capitals and international organizations. While Denmark has to be able to provide inputs and to seek to influence international strategic processes, developing a coherent Danish strategy, as in Helmand, is complicated by the fact that Danish entities are part of UK-led operations without having a particular area of responsibility. Thus, in real terms the strategic process has to await the complex process of negotiations between participating departments in London.

In *Denmark*, the Standing Civil Servants' Committee was set up to increase civil-military synergies in the areas of operation, but it has played only a limited role in the development of integrated strategies. The committee has functioned as an 'entrepreneurial governance network',¹⁵² incorporating new actors and facilitating critical exchanges of positions, interests, concepts and working practices, thus creating a degree of consensus among the main participants. However, like other inclusive governance networks, the Committee has been less suited to making and enforcing decisions that divide participants, such as the protection or procurement of civil advisors. Country-specific strategic and operational planning has been devolved to Task Forces.

¹⁵¹ See for example Chandran et al. 2008

¹⁵² See Torfing and Sørensen 2005.

A uniform understanding of the Danish concept for civil-military cooperation has failed to emerge over time or across the participating entities. For a long time, the concept was widely understood in terms of the limited reconstruction projects facilitated by the military. Increasingly, the understanding has spread that concerted planning and action concerns reconstruction and governance in the areas of military deployment, which is supposed to create the conditions for an exit of military forces. Looking at civil-military relations in Basra, the concept was associated with a peace-building strategy in which the military provided the security umbrella for reconstruction and development activities to take place. Apart from expecting reconstruction and development activities to produce a peace dividend and legitimize the host government, the specific ways in which these improve conditions of security (and vice versa) were often not made explicit but rather taken for granted.

Since late 2007 and the focus on Helmand,¹⁵³ the concept has increasingly been associated with a counterinsurgency-informed stabilization strategy. Here, the different elements are used more consciously as incentives to separate the insurgency from the rest of the population and to forge support for the government. However, it seems that Danish-funded (national) development programmes are still seen as functioning alongside but in support of the concerted civil-military activities.¹⁵⁴ The study suggests that a strategic, comprehensive approach will have to consider how all the different activities play into the stabilization effort, including national-level reforms and programmes.

In other countries such as the UK, the Netherlands and Norway, security-sector reform in fragile states has been an important vehicle for increased civil-military cooperation, but Danish engagement with SSR has only to a limited extent involved strategic, inter-departmental cooperation. However, the cases at hand show the importance of reform of the armed forces, police and justice sectors, including disarmament processes.

At the host nation and local levels, in cases with a representative government in place, the main problem remains the limited capacity of central government institutions, the reluctance of international actors to leave responsibility to host nation govern-

¹⁵³ Unlike other operations in which Danish troops participated in Iraq, the UK-led Operation Sinbad in Basra was an attempt to operate according to COIN principles.

¹⁵⁴ Listen, for example, to the Minister for Development Cooperation in 'After deadline' DR2, 18 February 2009.

ments and the mainly donor-driven strategic processes.¹⁵⁵ A specific type of problem is found in areas without a representative government or where the government is too challenged by competing authorities to direct political processes capable of leading to the definition and broad ownership of strategies. In these stabilization scenarios, the challenge consists in using civil and military means to facilitate conditions for these political processes to develop.

Planning

A comprehensive approach should be able to transform the strategy into an operational plan with agreed results, timelines and responsibilities, including an appropriate balance and relations between military and civilian instruments.

At the *international level*, Iraq and to some extent Afghanistan were no showcases with regard to integrated civil-military planning for the post-intervention period. There still is a need for strategic-level joint planning of civil and military activities that takes into account, for example, the effects of combat operations in some parts of the country on conditions in the rest of the country (or adjacent countries). Likewise national-level governance and reconstruction programmes have to be adjusted and sequenced to fit the specific conditions at provincial levels. This is particularly so for security-sector reform programs.

In general, operational planning processes in relation to Coalition and NATO operations are stove-piped (to a greater degree than in UN missions).¹⁵⁶ Some balancing of civil and military activities can take place in high-level working groups with the participation of the host government, international organizations and some donor governments. But civilian entities and information have only limited, ad-hoc and person-dependent access to military planning cycles and vice versa.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, in Afghanistan, planning is complicated by the parallel existence of two different military command and control systems. At the provincial level, the UK-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand is experimenting by having the PRT directed by a civilian. Combined civil-military planning takes place before separate implementation in civil and military channels.

¹⁵⁵ In Afghanistan, according to some observers, the parliament has too little responsibility and tends to become reactive and obstruct processes rather than participating constructively, while the capacity of the President's office is too limited to act as the hub of a comprehensive, civil-military strategy (see, for example, Michailof 2009).

¹⁵⁶ In the UN's mission concept, civil-military operational planning and coordination is an integral part of the organizational set-up (Joint Operations Center, Integrated Mission Planning Team etc.) (de Coning 2008).

¹⁵⁷ Mitchell 2008; Jakobsen 2008.

The military has a culture of exercises which aim at identifying and solving problems of planning and coordination, but outside the UN ambit few exercises at the international level involve civilian as well as military personnel. If Denmark chooses to continue to operate in close cooperation with the UK, Danish personnel should participate in joint UK exercises. However, in general the participation of civilian personnel (from foreign affairs and development departments, NGOs and others) in exercises is limited, given the different demands, conditions and cultures of civilian organizations compared to military.

The Danish process of transforming strategy into a comprehensive, realistic and manageable operational plan is an area that can be strengthened, even though improvements have taken place in terms of defining aims and benchmarks. Still, however, strategic aims are too ambitious, which seems to be a general problem encountered in other governments as well.¹⁵⁸

With regard to the planning dimension at the *host nation and local levels*, it is noteworthy in both country cases that the particular conditions and decisions of the participating governments have tended to tip the balance towards military, bilateral and off-budget or provincial activities. Donor governments have been inclined to emphasize the support of reconstruction and development activities in their respective areas of military operation. This has led to a fragmentation of aid and the establishment of parallel systems that weaken the central government or hamper its strengthening. Prioritizing provinces with violent conflict may have unintended consequences in terms of unattended needs in more peaceful provinces, where development activities are easier and cheaper to carry out. Such biases are easily mobilized and risk contributing to general resentment towards the international presence.

However, while on-budget support (and multi-donor trust funds) is considered best practice, the Afghanistan study suggests that benefits from national programmes do not necessarily trickle down to the provincial and district levels in the areas of open conflict. Hence, a more rigorous sequencing of aims and activities may be necessary when dealing with national development programmes in the context of stabilization, for example, with regard to education and the construction of contested schools. The study suggests an early focus on local governance and the connections between the central and local levels.

¹⁵⁸ As suggested by Savage 2008. Listen also to Bennett (2009), who observes that goals in the UK become more unrealistic the further away from the field one gets.

Coordination

Coordination should ensure that civilian and military activities serve the overall strategic aims under changing conditions of operation.

International level. While coordination is always complicated by the multitude of participating civil and military actors, coordination is usually easier at sub-national levels because of the more limited number of actors involved. The form that civil-military coordination can take at sub-national levels depends on the conditions of security. In permissive environments, coordination can in some instances be limited to de-confliction and information-sharing, whereas non-permissive environments and stabilization scenarios place higher demands on recurrent, strategic coordination. In the case of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, a central coordinating entity should make decisions regarding when conditions are ripe for phasing out PRTs.

The Danish experience confirms that the coordination and timing of civil and military activities depends on the capacity to make decisions at the field level as well as the speedy procurement of necessary resources as situations change, such as funding, civilian expertise, protection and transport facilities. In this regard, the lessons learned are that:

1. clear strategic and policy directions at the central levels, as well as decentralized decision-making and grant authority, increase flexibility and timeliness at the field level.¹⁵⁹
2. coordination with partners in the field is more difficult when the government is not represented by a civilian (political representative) of high charge in the relevant field-level coordination units (e.g. the PRT).
3. civilian field level personnel – often working on a time-limited contract basis – have at times perceived operational back-up ('reach-back') from their institutions in donor and host-country capitals as insufficient.
4. a concerted effort is necessary to develop the qualifications and experience for the posting of civilians to stabilization operations, as well as in recruiting senior officers and career diplomats for longer term hardship postings related to fragile states and post-conflict transitions.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Which, for example, was perceived as a problem in the Steering Unit in Basra. The finding is confirmed by the NCG lessons-learned exercise, which found that a clear definition of the 'political space' at the top gave a more flexible 'procedural space' at lower levels.

¹⁶⁰ The average length of service of Danish officials in Kabul was about one year as of April 2008.

5. protection, secure transportation and available CIMIC troops are major limiting factors for the meaningful deployment of civilian advisors. This complicates coordination efforts and places demands on the capabilities of the armed forces. Alternatively the use of (local or international) private security companies has to be considered.
6. diplomatic representation has been overstretched at times. In fragile and volatile situations, representations require comparatively more resources for administration, coordination and operation. In the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs, three senior representatives (representing Defence, Diplomacy and Development) are considered a minimum, in addition to the ambassador and his or her deputy. If the embassy is expected to play an active diplomatic role with regard to peace talks, strategic coordination and similar tasks, more resources are required both at the embassy and at home.¹⁶¹

Finally it should be mentioned that there is limited practical experience of field-level coordination with Danish humanitarian and development NGOs in Iraq and Afghanistan, where only a few NGOs have been present in the areas of operation.

At the *host national and local levels*, short-term deployments represent a problem for civil–military coordination since personal relations and knowledge are important. However, for the local population, links to the government, the military or development agencies may cause (fear of) reprisals because intelligence is assumed to be involved, and because local reconstruction and reform activities tend to become political markers of support to the government. Therefore, while reconstruction activities may be pertinent, they cannot just be added on to military (combat) activities. The military involvement needs to be refocused towards protection of the population, as also suggested in the current strategy for stabilization in Helmand. This creates an urgency in international attempts to speed up the reform and training of the Afghan national police and army.

The risks involved raise questions for the (local) government and their international support of where and when to engage in reconstruction activities. As the two case studies show, the potential effects of such activities go beyond the assumed consent-winning effect of providing desired services (creating a peace-dividend or legitimacy for the government). Projects have the potential to open up a political space for

¹⁶¹ See also NCG 2006 on the Danish experience during the Uganda peace process.

negotiation between different levels of authority and the population,¹⁶² but they also have the potential to do harm and stir up conflict. Therefore, in stabilization operations, not only local needs, but also conflict risks and strategic political aims have to be taken into account when planning and coordinating activities at the tactical level. It is the impression of this study that this aspect of operation can be improved on and more emphasis placed on how and when to use other instruments, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs, conflict mediation, local peace deals, amnesty programs, vetting procedures for elections, etc.

Finally, a tension exists between the urgency of producing visible results through smaller reconstruction projects and the more programmatic aims of building government capacity and legitimacy. This tension is to some extent reflected in the inclination of the military towards 'getting things done', compared with the focus of development practitioners on process and longer term considerations. However, the local population will often be aware if projects visibly do not serve longer term purposes, which can produce the opposite of the intended effects.¹⁶³ The use of small projects to develop district councils' capacity for project management in Basra in 2006-7 was probably a useful combination, but the much lower educational level in Afghanistan and many other places represents a different kind of challenge for building capacity under time constraints.

Monitoring

Systematic and shared monitoring to see if operations are achieving their objectives is necessary for democratic oversight of operations,¹⁶⁴ as well as the feed-back into the analysis and adjustment of strategies and planning. The need for improved monitoring and evaluation coincides with the increased need for (non-military) contextual knowledge for operational planning.¹⁶⁵

Defining benchmarks and indicators is essential for integrated approaches. The process forces actors to define in precise, operational and realistic terms what the missions seek to achieve, and how different instruments should be combined. The process thus also facilitates communication between the various civil and military actors.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² This can be compared to the explicit, desired outcome of UNHCRs 'coexistence QIPs', aimed at bringing divided populations together around practical improvements. See UNHCR 2004.

¹⁶³ Azerbaijani-Moghaddam 2008; SIGIR 2009.

¹⁶⁴ Parliament of Canada 2008.

¹⁶⁵ Mitchell 2008.

¹⁶⁶ CITpax 2007.

At the *international level* there are few achievements in terms of common assessment and shared standards,¹⁶⁷ even though there is a growing awareness that military action has impacts on civilian achievements and vice versa. But the emerging 'monitoring communities' are still largely separate. Sophisticated but separate systems of monitoring exist in humanitarian and development aid, administrative systems and military operations. The combination of these, plus the additional monitoring of (informal) political dynamics, makes for a complex process of negotiation and priority-setting. Furthermore, monitoring and specific knowledge of the actual impact (rather than just output) of activities is lacking in civil-military cooperation.¹⁶⁸ Usual instruments for monitoring and assessment (statistics, focus groups, questionnaires etc.) are difficult to apply in conflict settings, as access is difficult, risky and time-consuming.¹⁶⁹

Denmark is following the international trend in this regard, but possibilities for systematic monitoring have improved since late 2007 with the introduction of bench-marked objectives.¹⁷⁰ Since mid-2008, PRT Helmand has implemented an elaborate system measuring performance and outcome. Such systems are laborious to implement and maintain, and they are unlikely to be able to attribute outcome and impact to the performance of individual institutions and country contributions when these form parts of larger networks of cooperation.¹⁷¹ However, whereas an isolated Danish monitoring system may not be worthwhile, the Danish entities involved need to develop a joint filing system to help institutionalize memory in terms of lessons learned, training, analysis and briefing. At present, the relevant documents are scattered across a number of institutions, with no single individual or office having an overview.

In terms of relations with *host nation and local institutions*, the level of security may be indicated by the number and nature of security incidents, military and civilian casualties,¹⁷² and access to population centres. However, perceptions of security differ between actors. The civilian population does not necessarily define security simply in terms of an absence of fighting ('negative peace'); they see it in broader terms of human security ('positive peace'), including freedom from want and protection

¹⁶⁷ See, however, Rietjens 2008 or US Institute for Peace, 'Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments'.

¹⁶⁸ See, for example, Savage (2008). The default indicator under time restraints appears to be that, 'if the project is functional and the villagers do not complain about it afterwards, it is deemed effective' (Baker 2007).

¹⁶⁹ Abbaszadeh et al. (2008).

¹⁷⁰ However, the specific benchmarks and indicators have not been reported on.

¹⁷¹ Beeres and van Fenema 2008.

¹⁷² It should be noted that in Afghanistan, for example, no official statistics exist on civilian casualties (Kaldor 2008).

against breaches of honour, such as the kicking in of doors.¹⁷³ This coincides with the assumptions of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) agenda, as well as those underpinning multidimensional approaches to peace-building and stabilization operations, and comprehensive approaches in general.

Therefore it seems that some of the best proxy indicators of trends in security, development and governance come from looking at economic activity, such as market stalls and sales, traffic, agricultural production and micro-credits.¹⁷⁴ Also, the return of refugees and internally displaced population will usually indicate increased levels of human security. Meetings between local authorities and the population indicate levels of governance (and security), but the legitimacy of and support for the government (winning hearts and minds) is very hard to measure in any credible way, given the tense environment in a zone of stabilization.¹⁷⁵

Feed-back

Information from monitoring should feed back into analysis, strategic development and operational planning.

Despite increased activity at *the international level*, lessons-learned processes that cut across international organizations and donor governments are still few and tentative. Evaluations and lessons learned from the Balkan experience have fed into international guidelines on military–humanitarian relations in areas of conflict, but similar guidelines for reconstruction and development activities in areas of military operation have not yet been developed.¹⁷⁶

In the Danish case a number of changes, adaptations and innovations have been developed in response to feed-back from the field. The concept of Concerted Planning and Action is itself one such example. However, expectations regarding how fast different actors can be expected to respond to emerging needs and changing conditions vary considerably among the institutions involved and the different levels of operation (e.g. field, embassy, ministries). These seem to operate according to different timescales and are differently positioned and endowed for implementing changes, but when

¹⁷³ Donini et al. 2005; Gordon 2006.

¹⁷⁴ A report for the World Bank suggests 'human industry' as an indicator, referring to 'the people's ability to sustain productive work to create goods, services, better lives, civil communities, and, thus, viable states' (Haims 2008: 4).

¹⁷⁵ Stuart Gordon, personal communication, February 2009.

¹⁷⁶ Hilhorst 2008.

seen from the urgencies of the field, feed-back and response times from the rest of the system are too slow. Similar differences are observed in other countries that are in the process of implementing whole of government approaches.¹⁷⁷ In particular, the unfamiliar operational demands and the simultaneous cutbacks in the Foreign Affairs and Development Ministries create problems.

Several practices limit the utilization of experiences from ongoing and previous operations, including

- the relatively short periods of deployment in the field and at the embassies
- the use of contract personnel in the field
- the rotation of experienced civil servants into unrelated fields of work upon return from the field, in particular within the Foreign Affairs system¹⁷⁸
- the lack of joint lessons-learned exercises, and
- the lack of a centralized, consolidated filing and analysis system for reports, evaluations, lessons learned and other relevant documents, which increase the likelihood of having to reinvent the wheel.

In the current environment of pursuing coherence in national and international approaches to fragile situations, there is a risk that these communities become self-absorbed and leave out the representatives of *host nation and local levels*. Security measures and language barriers add to this risk. In this regard, the involvement of district representatives from Basra in a Danish lessons-learned workshop in 2008 represents good practice.

Conclusions

Since the conception of the Danish Concerted Planning and Action initiative five years ago, the idea that civil and military activities should be planned and implemented in a concerted way has come to be increasingly accepted among governments and international organizations. The setbacks for the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan go a long way in explaining this change, as well as the urgency with which the armed forces especially advocate the investment of civilian capabilities in areas of operation. But before 2001 too, civilian and military institutions approached each other in the context of humanitarian interventions, peace- and later state-building operations. The

¹⁷⁷ See Steputat 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Various interviews with returned experts confirm the observation in NCG 2006 that skills and experience are under-utilized in the MFA after return.

Responsibility to Protect agenda, as well as the cooperation surrounding security-sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs, have come out of these experiences.

This explains why many civilian as well as military representatives are talking about how to make international operations more comprehensive, integrated and holistic, but it also makes it clear that these concepts are understood in different ways and are related to different agendas. In addition, high-level political problems and controversies create obstacles for cooperation between some of the main actors on the international scene. And at all levels, attempts to reform the organization of national and international approaches easily become embroiled in institutional politics and interests.

The most important conclusions of the report are the following:

1. The international level: a Danish dilemma. The Danish approach to civil-military relations has developed through the country's participation in NATO and Coalition operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, where the UN (and except for Kosovo, the EU) has played a marginal role. At the strategic level, Denmark has pushed and influenced acceptance of the Comprehensive Approach in NATO, while being less active in the UN in promoting a civil-military agenda in peace and state-building operations. In the EU, on this particular issue, Denmark has been handicapped by its defence opt-out.

However, from a narrow perspective of the integration of civil-military activities, both the UN and the EU offer obvious advantages since they comprise civilian and military capabilities within the same organization. But while the UN may have the legitimacy to lead a comprehensive approach, the organization lacks the capacity and in particular the robustness to operate in non-permissive environments. Thus, only NATO has the capabilities to operate in areas of high levels of conflict. Nevertheless, from a longer term perspective, with an eye to crisis situations beyond Afghanistan and in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa, in accordance with the current policy of making civil-military operations as multilateral as possible, and considering the unique role of the UN in the international legal order, Denmark should consider how to contribute to the strengthening of the ability of UN to take the lead in a comprehensive approach to international peace and state-building operations.

If Denmark wants to have more influence on how the UN develops this role, the government will have to gain credibility by prioritizing Danish contributions to UN

missions, including military contingents. Stoltenberg's recent proposal to organize a comprehensive (civil-military) Nordic task force is one possibility.

2. The local context: the challenge of stabilization. While in more permissive areas there is no reason to integrate civil and military instruments at the tactical level, the situation is different in stabilization operations in non-permissive areas. In NATO, the UN, the EU and indeed among development organizations, stabilization operations constitute a new and unfamiliar experience. In such areas where the state is challenged or controlled by other social forces, the aim of stabilization is to reduce violence, protect populations, and facilitate political processes and the solution of local conflicts by non-violent means. Reconstruction and military activities have to serve these aims. But in addition, international operators and national government representatives should ideally be able to manage other instruments and factors, such as the reduction of collateral damage, the rectification of unjust arrests, local conflict resolution, local fora for reducing misunderstandings, deals for peaceful co-existence, credible programs for amnesty and reconciliation to provide a way out for insurgents, etc. This also means that projects and programmes (as always) should be handled with their political dimensions in mind: They have the potential to ameliorate as well as fuel local conflicts, hence the importance of peace and conflict impact analysis. Therefore national development priorities may have to be reconsidered and sequenced differently in areas of stabilization. The difficult situation for education programs in Helmand serves as an illustration of the problems encountered.

Stabilization operations depend on access to knowledge of local conditions and experience with the kind of fluid and volatile politics that characterize the margins of the state. Both factors are in short supply, which presents problems for Denmark as well as international organizations. Furthermore, the rapid changes at the field level place high demands on coordination between the different participants and levels of operation. Trade-offs between security, development, human rights and political objectives are hard to avoid, and it may not always be possible to follow best practice. Such exceptions should be made explicit and the consequences considered. The trend towards off-budget funds for areas of military deployment is a case in point. This could have unintended consequences if it is perceived as favouring provinces with violence and drug production.

3. The Danish approach: the challenge of strategic integration. The Concerted Planning and Action initiative has created a framework for the development of closer relations mainly between the armed forces, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry for

Foreign Affairs. Intense discussions have taken place around issues of the concentration of activities and funds in areas of military deployment, the use of development funds, the objectives of small reconstruction projects (*samtænkningsprojekter*) and the recruitment and protection of civilian staff. Implementation has focused on reconstruction projects at the tactical level in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the high degree of geographical overlap in Basra, interaction – mostly logistic – between larger Danish reconstruction programmes and military deployment was much more intense there than in Afghanistan, where Danish development aid has focused on national processes and multilateral programmes.

To the extent that the strategic level has been considered, operations have been perceived as peace-building, in which the armed forces provided a security umbrella for reconstruction and development activities, while the latter provided incentives for the population to support the government and security. Thus, a mutually beneficial relationship between security and development was taken for granted. A more complex, strategic approach has been emerging since late 2007 with the change towards a counterinsurgency-inspired stabilization strategy in Helmand. But there is still a tendency to consider development programmes as existing in isolation from concerted planning and action, despite the need to subject them to analysis of, for example, their potential for aggravating conflict in areas of stabilization.

Operation in fragile state contexts and in particular stabilization operations is demanding in terms of human and financial resources. Protection of civilian personnel is very costly and makes their work-time less efficient, and the embassies' routine tasks and participation in high-profile peace processes requires more personnel. In the ministries, the operational involvement runs against the grain of current aid modalities. More man-hours are needed for operational back-up and for coordination across institutional boundaries in a situation where resources for administrative personnel are being cut back. Likewise stabilization operations place high demands on the resources of the military, where prioritization is needed if the military is to be involved in reconstruction and protection activities.

Unfortunately the present study has not been able to assess in any detail the effects of concrete civil-military activities on the local contexts. Monitoring of these and their impact is difficult under current security conditions and remains one of the weak points in comprehensive approaches. But it is obvious that the engagement in stabilization operations is a huge challenge to the capacity of the institutions

involved, and that the expectations as to what can realistically be achieved have to be reduced considerably.

Recommendations

The findings of the present study point to a number of areas in which a comprehensive approach to civil and military activities can be enhanced. At the international level, challenges include the sharing of analyses, the development of strategic frameworks, operational planning and coordination processes, the lack of guidelines for military-NGO relations in stabilization and reconstruction, the standards for civil-military monitoring and evaluation, shared lessons-learned processes, and more specifically, improved oversight of Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the phasing out and/or transfer to the government of PRTs in permissive environments.

With regard to the host nation and local levels, the challenges comprise better use of local knowledge, pressure for more on-budget support, and early attention to sub-national levels of government and to the linkages between central and local government. Also, an understanding of local perceptions of security and strategies for the protection of the population need a higher priority.

Furthermore, the study points to the following specific recommendations with regard to the future of the Danish concept, policy, organization, human resources and other relevant issues (see Terms of Reference in Annex 1).

The concept

Being a forerunner when it was introduced in 2004, the Concerted Planning and Action concept has now been sidelined by other concepts, in particular the Comprehensive Approach:

1. Concerted Planning and Action has frequently been understood as a means of mutually reinforcing security and development activities. However, this relationship is not a simple one, and it is important that the new concept should build on the understanding that security and development interventions have basic political dimensions in all phases of stabilization, peace- and state-building. Given the conditions in contexts where the authority of the state is challenged or captured by other social forces, it is recommended that *the new concept be understood as a politically guided orchestration of security, development and diplomatic (conciliatory)*

instruments that explicitly take into consideration their political as well as peace and conflict impacts at the local and national levels.

2. Concerted Planning and Action has been incorporated as an instrument in Danish foreign policy that is likely to be used in volatile contexts, where the existing state has problems in providing security for the population and controlling its territory. However, Denmark has no policy on issues related to the fragile states agenda, even though these are unlikely to diminish in the foreseeable future. Therefore *an updated concept should be developed in relation to the simultaneous formulation of a policy on fragile states and situations.*

3. The Danish concept has been associated with NATO and Coalition-driven military engagements and in practice has excluded security-sector reform (including police, justice and prison reforms) as an issue of concerted and coordinated civil-military efforts. *Given the current needs and future challenges, security-sector reform, broadly defined, should be included in the revised concept.*

4. Concerted Planning and Action has primarily been understood as relating only to areas where Denmark has overlapping military deployment and reconstruction activities. However, *a revised concept should be broad enough to consider: 1) how national-level programmes of development and governance reform function in the area of military deployment; and 2) what effects civil and military activities in the area of deployment have at national (or regional) level.*

Organization

5. Based on the previous Danish experience, as well as an analysis of positive and negative experiences with interdepartmental work in other countries,¹⁷⁹ *the study recommends that the government considers setting up a permanent office for stabilization and reconstruction (or more broadly for peace- and state-building) operations.* Reflecting the changes since Concerted Planning and Action was conceived, *the responsibility should be removed from the Humanitarian and NGO Office – a location which was*

¹⁷⁹ See Stepputat 2009 on national, integrated approaches: "An inter-departmental stabilization unit is not a magic bullet, but it does seem to facilitate more systematic cooperation at the operational level, filling an operational gap between development efforts, military campaigns and national-level political initiatives. (...) [T]he UK experience also shows that expectations regarding what a stabilization unit can possibly achieve are unrealistic. The unit risks being an orphan without political weight and lacking strategic leadership. If the aim is to generate an integrated approach, there is a need for high-level responsibility and ownership in order to direct rather than just facilitate the coordination of the contributions of different entities across the government. The lack of a shared planning format and the absence on the ground of the entity formally in charge also represent problems".

based on the Balkan experience – *and placed under as high a charge as possible*, either in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (director level), under the Prime Minister’s office, and/or reporting to a Ministerial Committee. The size of the office would depend on the situation, with a small core staff including senior officers with field and international organizational experience and seconded staff from relevant ministries and entities (Ministry of Defence, police, the courts), while setting up task forces with staff from regional and thematic departments. A preliminary list of tasks would include:

- to set up and anchor interdepartmental country (or region)-specific task forces for international operations with Danish civil and military deployment
- to manage an interdepartmental fund for stabilization, peace- and state-building
- to be responsible for the recruitment, training, briefing and debriefing of contracted personnel
- to provide operational back-up for field-level entities
- to manage a database of operations for ongoing projects, monitoring and evaluation, lessons learned etc.
- to organize joint lessons-learned sessions and be responsible for analytical, methodological and strategic development regarding stabilization, peace- and state-building operations (possibly as part of an international network of institutions involved in capacity-building on these issues, such as the suggested House of Stabilization and Reconstruction)¹⁸⁰
- to assist other ministries and governmental entities (Interior, Finance, Justice, Health, Municipalities etc.) in developing international dimensions and capacities relevant to peace- and state-building¹⁸¹
- to assist other departments and offices in doing regular peace and conflict impact analysis of programmes
- to feed into relevant meetings and activities in international organizations (concept development etc.) and to manage relations with similar entities in the capitals of countries with whom Denmark has close operational relations

6. *The government should consider setting up an interdepartmental fund which is not bound by the criteria of official development aid.* An interdepartmental fund could increase flexibility and joint initiatives, and would reflect the fact that civil-military

¹⁸⁰ Udenrigsministeriet 2008.

¹⁸¹ The Australian Aid Agency, AUS Aid, has created an office to back up civil servants from other ministries posted overseas (OECD 2006).

cooperation may involve expenses that are neither purely military nor necessarily living up to ODA criteria, but rather driven by political and/or security interests.

Human resource mobilization

Across the board, international and national reports have pointed to the need for more and better qualified, rapidly deployable civilian capacity in stabilization and early recovery operations.¹⁸² This is supported by the current study. Across various levels and institutions, the needs can be summarized as follows:

7. Experienced *civilian leadership* is the key to effective peace- and state-building operations. To ensure this, *the core ministries have to develop and nurture staff with political, defence and development knowledge and sensibilities*. This includes mixed experience from the field (embassy and sub-national levels where troops are deployed), ministries and international organizations. It thus points towards the development of hybrid generalists who differ from the current ones. In particular, they need skills that go beyond the analysis of traditional foreign and domestic politics to include analysis of the informal politics and political economy that characterize areas where the state has no monopoly of force (and many other marginal areas). Considering the hardship levels associated with postings in conflict-affected areas and fragile situations, the government should *create incentives for hardship and operational posts in stabilization, peace- and state-building operations by considering these an advantage for later promotion to higher posts in the system*.

8. In order to develop further cooperation in international operations, Danish ministries should *strengthen their long-term strategy for the placement of civil servants in relevant international organizations such as the peace-building commission, UN missions and the UN Department for Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), the World Bank, etc., as well as in the capitals of the countries Denmark works closely with in international operations*. Strategic exchange of officials between partner government institutions provides a promising avenue for improving communication at the level of the respective capitals. In the field, opportunities for the co-location of diplomatic representations may provide another way of increasing the sharing of information and analysis.

9. More generally, there is a need for deployable civilian experts in governance, rule of law, security-sector reform, infrastructure, etc. The potential sources of this expertise are various, including the staff of state entities, NGOs and contracted experts, both

¹⁸² See, for example, Pizziato 2004, OECD 2006, Patrick and Brown 2007, and Chandran 2008.

nationally and internationally. However, expert knowledge and skills from Denmark may well be of limited use for local and national host governments working under heavy political, resource and capacity constraints in the host country. Capacity-building and governance reform under these conditions requires a particular set of skills. The government should therefore *support the long-term development of civilian capabilities by facilitating the internationalization of personnel in relevant ministries and state entities, encourage universities to establish additional, international conflict-oriented education for civil servants and experts with relevant domestic experience, and consider increased recruitment of experts in the regions of operation*

10. *Comparable conditions of employment and deployment in terms of duty of care, remuneration, compensations, and conditions of leave and return should be developed.*¹⁸³

Compulsory overseas posting of public servants has been suggested by some quarters in the military. This can, however, only be considered in the long term, as it would demand a change in existing employment contracts.

11. To some degree, the void in terms of reconstruction tasks in stabilization operations is being filled by specially trained CIMIC units. However, the armed forces are partly unable and partly unwilling to fill the void, not least as they cannot fill their quotas for overseas deployment and have problems fulfilling their core mandates to provide security. To the extent that they have to fill the void, *more training is necessary to upgrade their short and basic training. In this regard, support for a NATO Comprehensive Approach Centre of Excellence could be considered.*

12. Considering the centrality of security-sector reform, the government *should develop in-house and inter-departmental expertise in the area of security-sector reform, including police, justice and prison reform.* In particular, Denmark could *contribute to the development of the EU's concept and capabilities in the area of police reform,* including training and mentoring systems, as well as administrative and vetting systems.

Other recommendations

13. The UN has developed an advanced concept of integrated missions and has the legitimacy to lead in a comprehensive approach, but it lacks the capacity and robustness to take on this role, in particular in less permissive environments. With an eye

¹⁸³ See, for example, the Finnish Act on the Participation of Civilian Personnel in Crisis Management (Ministry of the Interior 1287/2004). [www.intermin.fi/intermin/hankkeet/skh/home.nsf/files/skhlaki_en/\\$file/skhlaki_en.pdf](http://www.intermin.fi/intermin/hankkeet/skh/home.nsf/files/skhlaki_en/$file/skhlaki_en.pdf), 2008-11-15.

to the future, *the Danish government should consider ways of strengthening the UN, including by sending military and civilian or combined civil-military contributions, such as the civil-military unit proposed by Thorvald Stoltenberg.* Other initiatives in the international arena could be a training seminar on integrated planning or shared lessons learned from comprehensive approaches with the participation of the UN, the African Union, the EU, the OECD, NATO and the World Bank. The government could also push for the development of flexible monitoring and evaluation systems of international stabilization, peace- and state-building operations within the OECD/DAC group.

14. While existing policies, cooperation and coordination mechanisms should continue to regulate the participation of NGOs and private companies in the Danish concept, it seems appropriate that these entities can keep a distance from the state and from the demands of a government-driven comprehensive approach. In particular, *humanitarian agencies should be left sufficient space to pursue their independence and neutrality vis-à-vis Danish political objectives.*

15. In parallel to the existing guidelines regulating military-humanitarian relations, the government should *work for the development of a set of international guidelines to regulate relations between civil and military entities in relation to reconstruction, development and security-sector reform in stabilization and post-conflict operations.*

16. Finally, as the case studies show, it is inevitable that militias and other armed groups and organizations will form part of the theatres of civil and military engagements in international operations in the future. They present very difficult dilemmas that the Danish government has to find ways to deal with. While a policy at this point will be very difficult to develop, *research and dialogue with the general public, parliament and international partners on the issue of non-statutory armed groups* should be on the agenda.

Annex I. Terms of reference

Task

An analysis of the concrete possibilities for further strengthening concerted civil-military planning and action in connection with peace-supporting operations, primarily based on the experience of Danish engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan. (From 'The Society of Possibilities': The Plan of Government, November 2007)

Introduction

Concerted Planning and Action (CPA) has become an important element in relation to conflicts in which Denmark and the international community have a military presence. Since CPA takes place on several different levels and involves many actors, the analysis of previous experiences and possibilities for strengthening comprehensive action is an extremely complex task. CPA is perceived and organized in different ways in different national and international contexts. It is a relatively new concept, and until now, it has been a challenge concretely to evaluate the effects of different forms of comprehensive action, as well as to define success criteria.

Due to its inter-institutional character, DIIS's analysis will be carried out by an anchor group that covers development, security and defence policy. In cooperation with specialists from other institutions dealing with these areas, DIIS will analyse CPA at the international, national and local levels. The analysis will focus on the areas, both tactical, operational and strategic, in which civilian and military CPA is currently being carried out. Other military and civilian actions will be included as necessary for the evaluation of possibilities for improving the concept of CPA.

Description of the work

1. Identification of the different forms that Denmark's and our coalition partners' combined civilian–military actions have taken in different conflict situations, with the main emphasis on Iraq and Afghanistan. Experiences from Kosovo should also be included.
2. Outlining the experiences that relevant multilateral and national actors have collected in connection with the different forms of CPA (including UN, NATO, EU, UK, US, and Netherlands).

3. Assessment of the effects of CPA carried out primarily by Denmark, but also our coalition partners as relevant, in different conflict situations, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan:
 - a. internationally
 - b. nationally and
 - c. locally
4. Clarification of the conflict situations in which combined civilian–military actions can be expected to have mainly positive effects, and in which situations they can be expected to have unintended effects.
5. Recommendations regarding how Denmark can use the results of the analysis to improve its CPA actions and to contribute to improving the actions of international organizations. Recommendations will focus especially on concept, organization, implementation, instruments and resources. Critical themes include:
 - a. Policy and strategy for comprehensive civilian and military action
 - b. Formulation of goals, indicators and benchmarks
 - c. Local/national ownership and capacity-building in the areas of action
 - d. Consequences for the security of the local population
 - e. Training and education of civilian and military personnel sent to the area
 - f. Different forms of CPA, including cooperation with private enterprises, NGOs and other segments of civil society in the areas of action

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