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## **Conflict Resolution: A Wider Application of Campaign Planning**

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## **Abstract**

Since the end of the Cold War, interventions by the international community to resolve numerous conflicts have suffered from a large number of fundamental problems ranging from ambiguous strategic direction to poor co-ordination of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. This paper argues that, in order to minimize the recurrence of failure, the concepts and principles of military campaign planning should be applied holistically to conflict resolution interventions. The recent trends and major problems in conflict resolution missions are examined including the challenge of co-ordinating a response by a large number of international military, government and non-government organizations. The construct of a Comprehensive Campaign Plan, as proposed by Arthur Dewey, is highlighted to illustrate the potential for this wider application of military campaign planning. The paper then examines the obstacles and impediments to implementing this type of disciplined planning in the conflict resolution environment. The author concludes that the wider application of military campaign planning offers the best assurance that mandates will be clear and that participants will mutually reinforce each other. Moreover, the military should champion this concept. Senior military leaders have a unique professional obligation to ensure that rigorous planning is conducted for the military sub-campaign, even in the absence of a higher level comprehensive campaign plan, in order to define clear military objectives and forcefully challenge ambiguous strategic mandates.

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A WIDER APPLICATION OF CAMPAIGN PLANNING

By Lieutenant-Colonel D. B. Baker

Since the end of the Cold War, the international community, both under and outside of the auspices of the UN, has intervened in numerous conflicts in an effort to contain or resolve crises. Although success has been achieved to varying degrees, interventions have suffered from a large number of fundamental problems ranging from vague strategic objectives to poor co-ordination of the various peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

Our continued inability or even outright refusal to appreciate the scope and complexity of ... conflict resolution missions has cost innocent lives, resulted in unnecessary casualties, wasted enormous resources, and ensured that no real lasting success has been achieved in many troubled areas for the last decade.<sup>1</sup>

The military is one of the few, if not the only, organization that is capable of planning, generating and deploying resources on a large scale in relatively short periods of time into unstable or hostile environments. As such, the military will always be a major component to the conflict resolution effort; however, to be effective it must be employed as part of a phased plan which is linked effectively to efforts by other civil government and non-government organizations (NGOs) as part of an overall strategy.

This paper will argue that, in order to minimize the recurrence of failure, the concepts and principles of military campaign planning must be applied holistically to international conflict resolution interventions. Moreover, senior military officers have a unique professional obligation to ensure that comprehensive planning is conducted to define clear military objectives that are realistically achievable within the constraints, and are coherently linked to the strategic intent.

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<sup>1</sup> LGen R. A. Dallaire, "Command Experiences in Rwanda", in The Human in Command: Exploring the Modern Military Experience (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000) p. 49.

After a brief examination of the major problems encountered in recent international interventions, the paper will examine the essence of a campaign plan and the associated operational planning process, the major impediments and obstacles to their implementation, and finally, the arguments for the military to champion this wider application of campaign planning.

### **Modern Conflict Resolution Planning and Execution: The Case for Action**

During the past decade, multilateral peacekeeping operations have become more numerous, complex and diverse, encompassing not only military but humanitarian aspects. As a result, civilian and military organizations are working together to a greater degree than ever before. Many post-Cold War operations have been termed “second-generation” operations to reflect their new emphasis on trying to settle a conflict rather than simply to police a cease-fire. The UN defines peace operations inclusive of three principal activities: prevention and peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building.<sup>2</sup> Until the end of the Cold War, peacekeeping operations had predominantly traditional cease-monitoring mandates and no direct peacemaking or peace-building responsibilities. The sequence of events and decisions leading to deployment was straightforward: war, cease-fire, invitation to monitor cease-fire compliance and deployment of military observers to do so while efforts continued to reach a political settlement. While there appears to be no consensus on the terminology and often terms are used interchangeably, the thesis of this paper applies to the full spectrum of this new generation of international conflict resolution - from the termination of fighting through forceful intervention to rebuilding a war torn society.

More and more frequently in the recent past, peacekeeping has been combined with peacemaking and peacebuilding in complex operations deployed into settings of intra-state conflict. The risks and costs for operations that must function under such circumstances are much greater than for traditional peacekeeping. Furthermore, the

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, A/55/305-S/2000/809, 17 August 2000, p.2

complexity of the tasks assigned to these missions and the volatility of the environment tend to increase together. One of the most striking features of second-generation interventions has been their unique and previously unknown configuration of civil-military relations. According to Michael Williams, three key features of second-generation peacekeeping operations distinguished them from missions undertaken before 1989:

- intrusive with ambitious political mandates that paid less attention to national sovereignty, resulting in peacekeepers being spread over large areas;
- large number of civilians working alongside the military, either directly for the UN or for numerous NGOs; and
- increasing participation of troops from NATO countries and from some of the permanent Members of the UN Security Council who, having been largely excluded from peacekeeping missions prior to 1990, became dominant players.<sup>3</sup>

The changing nature of conflict resolution has forced a reappraisal of the limitations of UN military involvement in civil conflicts. Additionally, the distinction between UN-led consent-based operations and ad hoc coalitions of the willing in enforcement activities has sharpened. The three major Western military interventions in the Balkans in the 1990s were all conducted under different auspices – under the UN in Bosnia, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) between 1992 and 1997; under NATO in Bosnia from 1995 (including Kosovo from 1999); and under Italian leadership in Albania in 1997. All have suffered from problems in civil-military relations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Michael C. Williams, “Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping”, *Adelphi Paper 321* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) p.14.

<sup>4</sup> Michael C. Williams, “Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping”... pp.16-17.

In his study of civil military operations in the aftermath of conflict since the end of World War II, John Fishel concluded that all three pillars of strategy – ends (objectives), ways (concepts) and means (resources) – have been lacking in most cases. He points out that while national policy goals often are reasonably well-articulated, rarely are they translated into strategic political-military objectives expressed as end states and attainable objectives. The most critical, yet most elusive aspect of the “ways” to achieve an objective, is unity of effort. Here, he identified three concurrent games that play out – interagency, combined and joint – each working against unity of effort unless there is a common understanding of the ends, way and means. Finally, he highlights the failure to understand the difference between the type of force and resources required to fight a conflict and those required for termination of a conflict. Frequently, insufficient or inappropriate resources have been applied with predictably adverse consequences.<sup>5</sup>

In his examination of the UNPROFOR mission in the former Yugoslavia, John A. MacInnis observed that “...at the operational level, few of the components of the basic mandate were definable in military terms with sufficient precision to ensure unity of effort.” He noted further that “...UNPROFOR’s mandate was a composite which meant that with its three disparate imperatives – military, political and humanitarian – ‘mission creep’ was front end loaded, in other words, responsibility was so diffused that success in one area was immediately offset by lack of progress elsewhere.”<sup>6</sup>

To further complicate these ambitious and complex operations, the number of players involved in the response effort also increased dramatically. In UNPROFOR there were over 150 NGOs operating in the UN area of operations, of which only 41 regularly co-ordinated its operations with UNPROFOR.<sup>7</sup> This led to over 100 “loose cannons” operating independently. Aid was provided without being tied to a coherent strategic plan that was focused on political resolution of the conflict. Humanitarian relief was most often the result of public opinion that demanded immediate action. In both

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<sup>5</sup> John T. Fishel, Civil Military Operations in the New World (Westport: Praeger, 1997) pp.5-14.

<sup>6</sup> John A. MacInnis, “Piecemeal Peacekeeping”\_ in The Savage Wars of Peace: Toward a New Paradigm of Peace Operations, ed. John T. Fishel (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998) p. 115.

UNPROFOR and UNOSOM II, the provision of aid did not even indirectly contribute to conflict resolution.<sup>8</sup> According to Mats Berdal, the impact of aid without linkage to the overall UN objectives can have an adverse impact: "...when humanitarian operations serve as a substitute for dealing with the root cause of conflict or as compensation for diplomatic failures, formulation of realizable military objectives becomes extremely difficult. More seriously still, it may prolong the conflict by drawing attention away from its underlying sources."<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the best summary of the shortfalls in modern conflict resolution is reflected in the recent Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The Panel recommended an extensive series of changes to remedy serious problems in strategic direction, decision-making, rapid deployment, operational planning and support, and the use of modern information technology. Every recommendation for change supports three fundamental conditions required for success of future complex operations: political support, rapid deployment with a robust force posture and a sound peace-building strategy.<sup>10</sup>

This is not to say that all conflict resolution efforts have been fraught with failure. In his examination of operations in Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti, Andrew Bennett found that the Haiti mission succeeded because lessons were learned from earlier mistakes. He contends that demanding forms of collective conflict management can work under the right conditions. Success is likely when troop-contributing countries agree on the mission; deploy a mix of forces in which they have a comparative advantage; impartially enforce their mandate, but are prepared to defeat those who oppose it; deploy sufficient forces that are flexible enough to overwhelm the opponents of that mission; agree on a

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<sup>7</sup> John Hillen, Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations (Washington: Brassey's, 1998) p. 173.

<sup>8</sup> John Hillen, Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations... p. 174.

<sup>9</sup> Mats R. Berdal, "Peacekeeping in Europe," in European Security after The Cold War, Adelphi Paper 284 (London, 1994) p.65.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations A/55/305-S/2000/809, 17 August 2000, p.1



unified and decisive command structure; and, integrate military actions with a viable political strategy in the target country and in the international community.<sup>11</sup>

In general, the greatest problems associated with the post-Cold War interventions to resolve conflicts can be summarized in the following manner. First, the mandates provided by the political level have been unclear, flawed, or unrealistic given the resources committed. Second, joint civil-military operations have been handicapped by a lack of compatible culture and vocabulary, lack of mutual respect and lack of compatible doctrine and practice that could facilitate effective joint planning, and execution towards a common goal. The concepts and principles of campaign planning have the potential to mitigate these problems and the military has a critical interest in promoting their wider use.

### **The Essence of Campaign Planning**

A campaign is defined in U.S. joint doctrine as a series of related joint major military operations that arrange tactical, operational and strategic actions to accomplish strategic and operational objectives within a given time or space.<sup>12</sup> A campaign plan describes how the series of major operations are arranged in time, space and purpose to achieve a strategic objective. The plan also includes the broad concept of operations and the operational tasks and directions to subordinates. Although the current concept of campaign planning includes co-ordination and integration of interagency support as well as operations other than war, it “has its greatest application in the conduct of combat operations.”<sup>13</sup> This focus is appropriate for the military whose primary role is to conduct complex combat operations to achieve political goals through military means. The doctrine and rigour of the planning process that has evolved, reflects the collective lessons learned over decades. Although second-generation peacekeeping or conflict

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<sup>11</sup> Andrew Bennett, “Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti: What Went Right, What Went Wrong?” in Collective Conflict Management and Changing World Politics, eds. Joseph Leggold and Thomas G. Weiss (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998) pp. 133-151.

<sup>12</sup> United States, Department of Defense, Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations [www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/planning](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/planning) p. II-18.

<sup>13</sup> United States, Department of Defense, Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations p. II-19.

resolution is relatively new, the fundamental principles of campaign planning should be applicable to any complex situation that requires a phased, co-ordinated series of complex activities to achieve a specific outcome.

Retired General Gordon Sullivan, former US Army Chief of Staff, suggests that the principles of campaign planning are so universal they can be applied to complex planning in private industry.<sup>14</sup> Extension of this logic supports the notion that this concept can equally be applied to the challenging environment of conflict resolution, which often includes military operations as a major component (sub-campaign) of the intervention. While the precise content of a campaign plan is purposely left vague in military doctrine, Sullivan's synopsis of the essential elements is robust for the wider application of campaign planning opined in this paper. He identified the six essential elements of a campaign plan as:

- a clearly stated and well-understood intent;
- a clear concept;
- an orientation articulated as a strategic objective or series of objectives;
- identified resources;
- a mechanism to integrate and synchronize the plan's execution; and
- branches and sequels that will enhance the plan's flexibility.<sup>15</sup>

The concept of applying this planning process to conflict resolution is not new, although it has yet to be adopted. Gene Dewey has recently proposed what he has termed the "Comprehensive Campaign Plan (CCP)."<sup>16</sup> The CCP is intended to adapt the best of military culture – precision, discipline and leadership – to a comprehensive

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<sup>14</sup> Gordon R. Sullivan and Michael V. Harper, Hope is not a Method: What Business Leaders Can learned from America's Army (New York: Broadway Books, 1996), p. 127-145.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon R. Sullivan and Michael V. Harper, Hope is not a Method: What Business Leaders Can learned from America's Army... p.133.

<sup>16</sup> Arthur E. (Gene) Dewey and Margaret M. Zeigler, The Comprehensive Campaign Plan: A Humanitarian/Political/Military Partnership in 'Total Asset' Planning for Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (Washington: Congressional Hunger Center, Feb 1999).

civilian vice military plan of action. The CCP structure follows the template familiar to most Western military organizations:

- SITUATION:
  - a) The Threat Environment
  - b) Friendly Assets
- MISSION
- EXECUTION:
  - a) Concept of Operations;
  - b) Tasks for Participating Agencies.
- OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (Provided by the Military Component of the Operation):
  - a) Security for the Main Effort;
  - b) Logistics;
  - c) Support of Peace Accords, Political Reconciliation;
  - d) Military Observation and Reporting
- COMMAND AND CONTROL (Cooperation and Co-ordination):
  - a) United Nations HQ;
  - b) United Nations Co-ordination in the Field.
- ANNEXES:
  - a) Political Analysis and Strategy;
  - b) Humanitarian Operations Plan;
  - c) Legal and Civil Governance;
  - d) ....etc.;
  - e) Civilian Police Operations Plan;
  - f) Military Force Operations Plan.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Arthur E. (Gene) Dewey and Margaret M. Zeigler, The Comprehensive Campaign Plan...pp. 17-27. For more information this paper provides a further breakdown and description of the “Anatomy of the CCP” including an illustrative example to show how this concept could be applied to a complex humanitarian emergency.

Dewey's proposal is intended to create a more symmetrical culture and discipline among the disparate players who participate in humanitarian crises. As in the military context where the goal is to harmonize and synchronize the efforts of land, air, sea, space and special operations forces to achieve unity of effort, the CCP is intended to be a civilian master plan that accomplishes this across the diverse spectrum of independent external actors. The concept is ambitious in that it elevates the discipline of campaign planning to the civilian level of authority (albeit still at the operational level) as opposed to the more traditional approach of expanding the military campaign plan to encompass the full spectrum of military civilian operations required to resolve a conflict. The fundamental difference is that in the former, the military is not the lead organization, even though it may be the largest single "partner" in the operation. This will require strong civilian leadership and restraint by the "take charge" culture of most military organizations.

Notwithstanding the universal nature of campaign planning doctrine, wider application to the conflict resolution environment brings additional challenges. What works for a Commander in Chief (CINC) in a homogenous military culture, despite the variations between services and nationalities in a coalition, may not work as well in the wider international body of organizational cultures represented by the various civilian operational and support agencies. The next section will examine these impediments prior to examining the benefits of elevating the civilian planning precision, discipline and leadership closer to the level of the military.

## **The Obstacles and Impediments**

### *Complexity*

Because conflict resolution operations take place in a highly complex political-strategic environment, peace enforcers/keepers/builders must be particularly sophisticated. The situation often requires a delicate mix of warfighting, diplomacy and humanitarian efforts in a hostile environment. Military commanders must understand the

complete political-strategic nature of their tactical and operational actions; they must understand ways by which force can be employed to achieve political and psychological ends; they must understand ways political considerations affect the use of force; they must understand how to communicate and deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures; and, they must understand how to co-operatively plan and implement interagency<sup>18</sup>, international non-governmental, and combined military operations.<sup>19</sup>

The large number of independent external actors – NGOs, UN agencies, ICRC, donor aid agencies, and military forces – working in complex environments, increases significantly the difficulty of designing and implementing a comprehensive concept of operations. When a large number of participants have a veto power, as in the UN context, or even appreciable influence over the design and implementation, then any one participant can slow or stop the process, forcing endless compromises to the point where the plan represents the lowest common denominator.

Of course no amount of structured, rigorous planning can compensate for poor strategic direction. Incoherent, vague, unachievable or misguided mandates have spelled doom for peace operations before the first unit was deployed. This does not undermine the argument for pursuing a wider application of campaign planning, but rather, as discussed later in this paper, it reinforces the case for action.

### *Unity of Command/Effort*

Conflict resolution is not the exclusive domain of the military, as several disciplines, professions or communities of interest must become involved in all or some aspects of the operation. In fact the military is not, or should not be, the primary player in certain phases of the resolution process. The increased complexity of operations in the past decade has led to the involvement of a much greater number of international

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<sup>18</sup>Although in the U.S. context “agency” refers to a specific type of government organization the term “interagency” is used throughout the paper in the general sense (i.e. between organizations).

organizations and disciplines. Unity of command is simply not a realistic goal; hence, the focus must be on unity of effort. The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre has coined the phrase “the New Peacekeeping Partnership” to describe the players that work to improve the effectiveness of modern missions. Although the list is not exhaustive, the New Peacekeeping Partners are defined as:

- The military
- Civilian police
- Humanitarian agencies
- Politicians and diplomats
- Human Rights Agencies
- Democratization organizations
- Development agencies
- The media; and
- The UN<sup>20</sup>

Cooperation among these partners is crucial to successful intervention and resolution of a conflict. Yet events in recent years have shown that tensions between the players, differences in organizational cultures and mandates, poor communications, and ineffective co-ordination of efforts have undermined the effectiveness of the response. Andrew Natsios believes that the international response system is on the verge of breakdown, largely due to the conflicting strategies and objectives of donor governments, NGOs, the ICRC and UN agencies. He states that “if one were present at the creation of this Byzantine system, one could not have created a more complex and convoluted structure.”<sup>21</sup> In many cases, fragmented actions cancel each other out, while a single

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<sup>19</sup> Max G. Manwaring and Kimbra L. Fishel, “Lessons that Should Have Been learned: Toward a Theory of Engagement for ‘The Savage Wars of Peace,’” in *The Savage Wars of Peace*, ed. John T. Fishel (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998) p. 204.

<sup>20</sup> Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, “The New Peacekeeping Partnership: The Multi-Disciplinary Dimension of Modern Peacekeeping,” in *Advanced Military Studies Course 3 Programme*, Annex A to A/AS/JCO/DOC/PD-4 (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, 2000) p.2.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Natsios, “NGOs and the UN system in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Conflict or Cooperation,” *Third World Quarterly* 16:3 (September 1995) p. 417-418.

coherent strategy would allow aggregation of sufficient resources to change the course of a conflict.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is perhaps the most important UN agency in terms of civil-military cooperation because it often takes the lead during humanitarian emergencies. As a result of friction between UNHCR and UNPROFOR in Bosnia in 1992-93, a Civil-Military Operations Centre (CMOC) was established to share information and make co-ordination with other agencies, including NGOs, easier.<sup>22</sup> The Centre was to prove a major innovation and was copied in subsequent peace support operations, including UNOSOM II in Somalia.

To further complicate the multi-player environment, many NGOs regard the military as out of touch with the values of the members of the society they seek to protect.<sup>23</sup> These organizations form the nucleus of an international civil society who generally distrust national military structure. Furthermore, many see military involvement in humanitarian crises as counterproductive because it robs the assistance they provide its political neutrality. Linking the military with humanitarian operations can compromise aid workers' impartiality and, in some cases, hinder their access to local populations and to endanger them. Conversely, others argue that the neutrality of humanitarian assistance is not realistic in many cases and that NGOs can sometimes, unintentionally, have an adverse impact in that "...introducing resources into a resource-scarce environment where there is conflict usually increases competition and suspicion among warring parties."<sup>24</sup> The military, on the other hand, tend to see the NGOs as undisciplined, non-accountable, anti-military "do gooders" out to save the world, who show up without the requisite capabilities and are an impediment to their work.<sup>25</sup> However, NGOs are by nature flexible and anti-bureaucratic, strengths that enable them to undertake work that others cannot. The proliferation of NGOs in the

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<sup>22</sup> Michael C. Williams, "Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping"...p.37.

<sup>23</sup> Michael C. Williams, "Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping"...p.40.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Natsios, "An NGO Perspective" in Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques, William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen, eds.,(Washington: US Institute of Peace Press, 1997) p. 340.

1990s have made their impact an essential contribution to conflict resolution. In the 1960s, no NGOs were allowed to enter Congo without UN permission and the ONUC commander closely supervised the four NGOs that operated in the country.<sup>26</sup> Such control over NGOs would be unthinkable in today's context where there are hundreds of NGOs operating in areas of conflict, often well before military intervention is even contemplated.

For UN operations, the Senior Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) is, in theory, uniquely placed to pull a mission's political, civil and military elements into a common approach at the operational level. However, the SRSG does not have the powers necessary to achieve the required co-ordination. This has resulted in friction between the various players. Lessons learned reflect the need to establish, at least for the UN players, a unified, cohesive structure under the SRSG.<sup>27</sup>

As if command and control is not challenging enough, national interference provides another complication that undermines unity of command/effort. There is a tendency for national governments to interfere in peacekeeping operations even though there is recognition that confusion and serious problems could occur when forces act on national command.<sup>28</sup> The reluctance of participating countries to delegate full authority over their national contingents to the UN is one of the greatest command and control problems within multinational peacekeeping forces. The US is particularly guilty of this as evidenced by the reluctance to surrender full control of its forces in Somalia. This eventually resulted in the appointment of Retired Admiral Howe as the SRSG and an American Deputy Force Commander for UNOSOM, which effectively created an U.S. command and control structure in all but name.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Shira K. Salteer, "Relief Agencies and the US Military," *Marine Corps Gazette* Vol. 78, March 1994, p. 43.

<sup>26</sup> Michael C. Williams, "Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping"...p. 38.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, "Multidisciplinary Peacekeeping: Lessons From Recent Experience," [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/handbuk.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/handbuk.htm), p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> NATO, *Lessons Learned in Peacekeeping Operations*, Report of the Ad Hoc Group on Cooperation in Peacekeeping, (Bruxelles, November 1997) p 10.

<sup>29</sup> John T. Fishel, *Civil Military Operations in the New World* (Westport: Praeger, 1997) p. 197.



In his examination of conflict management, John Fishel has shown that “...achieving unity of effort is often elusive and that the premier pitfall is in the failure to reach agreement on the desired end state or strategic objective. If there is no agreement on the range of outcomes that can be defined as acceptable end states, then there will be no effective unity of effort. Lack of an agreed upon end state clearly dooms any effort to failure.”<sup>30</sup> Hence, the fundamental requirement for unity of effort is clear definition of the end state. This is a key product of the operational planning process and an essential component of the campaign plan.

### *Organizational Structure/ Planning Process*

The inadequacies of the Security Council decision-making process are the subject of much discussion and commentary. The apparent paralysis in 1999, when attempting to deal with the Kosovo situation resulted in a NATO-led intervention to Serbian aggression. Even when action was taken, the UNSC decisions often lacked vision and understanding of the situation. In commenting on the UNSC Resolution relating to the creation of ‘safe areas’ in Bosnia during 1993, which resulted in the fall of Srebrenica in July 1995 and the single worst war crime in Europe since the Second World War, Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) in the former Yugoslavia stated at the time: “I think that the Council’s approach, no matter how well-meaning it might have been, has been an instinctive, ad-hoc reaction to events rather than the consequences of a long-term, well thought out peace strategy.”<sup>31</sup>

The UN’s 15-member Security Council is a diverse body that arrives at decisions only after considerable compromise. NATO, by contrast, is a security organization whose members have a common purpose and culture, and where the command and control structure allows for greater military input for decision-making. In both IFOR and SFOR the North Atlantic Council (NAC), NATO’s highest governing body, provided

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<sup>30</sup> John T. Fishel, “The Principle of Unity of Effort: A Strategy for Conflict Management,” in Managing Contemporary Conflict: Pillars of Success, eds. Max G Manwaring and Wm J. Olson (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996) p. 178.

comprehensive political guidance from the outset, with substantial authority delegated to the theatre commander. In addition, a Policy Co-ordination Group was established that assisted the Council in linking political and military aspects by developing policy guidance for the SFOR operation. This allowed for much clearer mandates than those produced by the UN.<sup>32</sup>

As the more complex and assertive second-generation peacekeeping has evolved from the relatively benign traditional peacekeeping of the Cold War era, the capability of the UN to manage such operations has been seriously questioned. Some argue that the UN simply has not had the institutional competence to manage “dangerous and complex tasks.” Others believe that we are at a critical juncture, one at which the promise of collective security, working through the mechanism of the United Nations, might be at last realized. The Secretary-General’s *An Agenda for Peace* championed reform of the institutional structures needed to manage more complex intervention operations. However, following the failures of UNPROFOR and UNOSOM II, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a 1995 supplement to *An Agenda for Peace*, downplayed the central role that the UN could play in managing large and ambitious military efforts.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, two years after he argued that the UN should assume a greater role in conflict resolution, scholar Thomas Weiss admitted: “The means to plan, support, and command peacekeeping, let alone enforcement, is scarcely greater now than during the Cold War. Modest progress in establishing a situation room in New York and some consolidation in the UN administrative services are hardly sufficient to make the militaries of the major or middle powers feel at ease about placing the UN in charge of combat missions.”<sup>34</sup>

The recent UN report on Peacekeeping recognizes severe limitations by stating that “there is currently no integrated planning or support cell in the DPKO [Department

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<sup>31</sup>Yasushi Akashi, “The Dilemmas of Peacekeeping”, *Brown Journal of World Affairs* vol. 3, no.1, Winter/Spring 1996, p. 80.

<sup>32</sup>Michael C. Williams, “Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping”...p. 30.

<sup>33</sup>John Hillen, *Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations* ... p. 239-240.

of Peacekeeping Operations] in which those responsible for political analysis, military operations, civilian police, electoral assistance, human rights, development, humanitarian assistance, refugees and displaced persons, public information, logistics, finance...DPKO have no more than a handful of officers dedicated full-time to planning and supporting even the large complex operations..."<sup>35</sup> Even Dewey recognizes that the strongest criticism of the concept is the perceived lack of competence within the UN to develop, let alone implement, something as rigorous and organized as a Comprehensive Campaign Plan.<sup>36</sup> However, there is cause for some optimism. In the UN Resolution 1327 adopted on 13 November 2000<sup>37</sup>, the Security Council endorsed many of the recommendations made in the Brahimi report on United Nations Peace Operations. In particular, the Brahimi report recommended that in support of the Secretary-General and the members of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, an Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat "...be established to plan and support the set up of peace operations, and continue to provide analyses and manage the information flow between the mission and [the] Task Force once the mission has been established."<sup>38</sup> The Resolution also endorsed the creation of Integrated Mission Task Forces to conduct mission-specific planning and urged the Secretary-General to pursue any other related capabilities that would improve United Nations planning and support capabilities.<sup>39</sup> While this may provide increased understanding and a core of knowledgeable planners, the real challenge will be to convince key civilian and political leaders of the imperative for increased precision and discipline. This may prove particularly elusive at the political levels where ambiguity is often equated to flexibility or, more cynically, protection from clear accountability.

For all its shortcomings, the UN has a structure for civil-military relations that NATO and other regional organizations, which rely on ad hoc arrangements, lack. However, coalitions of the willing, led by a powerful nation state, or credible military

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<sup>34</sup> Thomas G. Wiess, "The United Nations at Fifty: Recent Lessons," *Current History*, May 1995, p.225.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations...* p.34.

<sup>36</sup> Arthur E. (Gene) Dewey and Margaret M. Zeigler, "*The Comprehensive Campaign Plan*"... p. 14.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations, *Security Council Resolution 1327 (2000)*, S/RES/1327 (2000), 13 November 2000, pp. 1-5.

<sup>38</sup> United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations...*p.13.

alliances with a clearly defined unity of command and effort, may be the best equipped to provide a framework to mobilize the great resources needed for large and complex operations.

As John Hillen concludes in his study of UN military operations, “there are many different ways in which to approach these challenges that satisfy the basic purpose of the UN idea and the Charter.” He points out that the spirit of the Charter does not require that the UN provide the organizational core of every political and military effort associated with collective response. Hence, he suggests that, “a co-operative approach that respects the immutable and profound military impact of sovereignty, and at the same time seeks to take advantage of the institutional strengths of the many entities that make up international society, is likely to be more successful in the difficult missions.”<sup>40</sup>

Regardless of the structure – UN, established alliance like NATO, or ad hoc coalition of the willing – the principles are equally valid and the need for campaign planning remains an imperative. In fact, the more diverse the players involved, the more valuable the operational planning process can be, albeit more difficult to execute. The diversity of players may also expose cultural or philosophical differences in how formal planning is viewed and accepted. In Western organizations, especially within the military and government, plans and policy documents are generally regarded as authoritative and are viewed as important tools in providing direction within or between organizations. The importance or status of a campaign plan be not be viewed in the same manner by other cultures or governments. In such cases, the rigour of the formal planning process may have to be compromised and alternative means found to apply the principles of campaign planning.

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<sup>39</sup> United Nations, Security Council Resolution 1327 (2000), S/RES/1327 (2000), 13 November 2000, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> John Hillen, Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations ... p. 248.

## **Need for a Champion: Why the military should promote Campaign Planning.**

Although there is currently no robust international institution to facilitate a wider application of campaign planning, the military should promote and champion the idea in order to: enhance understanding of the military role and military end state within a larger strategic end state; and provide a more robust framework for planning/synchronization of military, civilian and indigenous efforts.

### *Linkage of Operational Objectives to Strategic Intent: Establishing a clear mandate*

The campaign plan should describe, to subordinates and superiors alike, the intent for the conduct of the campaign that blends the various efforts into a single over-arching concept that will achieve the desired end state and result in achievement of the defined strategic objectives. While the initial phases of the campaign should be described with some certainty, subsequent phases may become increasingly general as the uncertainty grows and situation becomes unpredictable. However, for the final phase, where decisive actions or specific end state conditions toward which the entire campaign builds, must be clearly envisioned and described. Unlike most military campaigns, the final phase (i.e. peacebuilding) in the conflict resolution will likely be protracted.

Even if properly formulated, implementation of strategic guidance must be equally disciplined. During UNOSOM II, the political staff produced a guidance paper that had been forwarded to Force Command. Rather than being seen simply as one logical course of action for a unified effort by all the agencies, the document became an implementation policy for the political staff and SRSG. Plans for a methodical, controlled build-up of forces gave way to guidance as to how soon a deployment could be

made to Central Region. Expansion of forces became a time driven process rather than being driven by events or capabilities.<sup>41</sup>

As stated previously, no amount of skill and rigour in operational-level planning can compensate for inadequate or poor strategic guidance. Many of the peace support operations in the last decade have suffered from a gap in strategic clarity. In attempting to obtain clarity of purpose, General Cot, Force Commander of UNPROFOR, pressed for clear political oversight and guidance so that he, in turn, could develop a unified operational strategy. The best advice he could obtain from the SRSB's staff was to read the UNSC Resolutions.<sup>42</sup> During the first two years of UNPROFOR, the mandate was enlarged over a dozen times.<sup>43</sup>

Decisions are often made during grave humanitarian emergencies or crises and amid mounting public pressure to 'do something'. As Woodhouse and Ramsbotham conclude in their study of post-Cold War interventions, "...conceptually, the decision to deploy peacekeeping forces cannot, as in the case of Yugoslavia, be divorced from considerations of the long-term political and administrative arrangements which UN involvement is designed to promote within fractured societies. The corollary to this is that the UN must be prepared to withdraw or abstain from intervening in conflicts where peacekeeping does not reinforce a broader political process for the resolution of conflict."<sup>44</sup>

Romeo Dallaire came to a similar conclusion based on his painful experience of Rwanda. "I am adamant that conflict resolution must not be attempted unless we are willing to address all the dimensions of a problem (this is political, humanitarian, security, and economic factors) and to do so over the long term - for decades if

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<sup>41</sup> Thomas J. Daze and John T. Fishel, "Peace Enforcement in Somalia," in The Savage Wars of Peace: Toward a New Paradigm of Peace Operations, ed. John T. Fishel, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998) p. 171.

<sup>42</sup> John A. MacInnis, "Piecemeal Peacekeeping" ... p. 123.

<sup>43</sup> John Hillen, Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations ... p. 169.

<sup>44</sup> Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham, "Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention in Post-Cold War Conflict" in Peacekeeping and Peacemaking: Towards Effective Intervention in Post-War Conflicts eds. Tom Woodhouse et al. (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997) p. 67.

necessary.”<sup>45</sup> The implications of doing all or nothing may be unacceptable; hence, rigid adherence to this ideal is probably not realistic. However, from a planning perspective, his assertion was supported by the independent inquiry that concluded,

The decisions taken with respect to the scope of the initial mandate of UNAMIR were an underlying factor in the failure of the mission to prevent or stop the genocide in Rwanda. The planning process failed to take into account remaining serious tensions which had been solved in the agreement between the parties. The United Nations mission was predicated on the success of the peace process. There was no fall-back, no contingency planning for the eventuality that the peace process did succeed.<sup>46</sup>

In attempting to adopt a holistic approach, the military profession is faced with the limitation that “...field commanders carry out political decisions; they do not make them.”<sup>47</sup> The reality has, however, fallen short of this ideal, as weak political leadership has forced officers to effectively make policy by interpreting their mandate. Perhaps military leadership has been equally weak in failing to challenge ambiguous or unrealistic mandates. The obedience of the military to political control is an unquestionable tenet of Western democracies; however, senior military officers have a responsibility to their country, to their profession and perhaps most important, to their troops who will bear the consequences of flawed strategic mandates. In this regard, the mission analysis phase of the campaign plan development provides the rigour and structure to critically examine the strategic guidance and determine if the objectives can be achieved within the explicit and implicit constraints, including limitations of the resources provided to undertake the campaign.

If this analysis is not conducted at the higher level, as proposed by the Dewey’s CCP, military commanders have an obligation to conduct their own analysis to “expose” gaps. Military leaders must insist that mission analysis be conducted for at least the military (sub-campaign), if not the full scope of the intervention, prior to committing

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<sup>45</sup> LGen R. A. Dallaire, “Command Experiences in Rwanda”... p. 45.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations, Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda 15 December 1999, part III, para 2.

<sup>47</sup> Michael C. Williams, “Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping”...p. 76.

forces. Even if these gaps are not directly and immediately addressed, it will stimulate debate and provide the commander with a firm basis from which to argue for additional resources, more time or a clarification of the assigned or implied mandate. It is also possible that the ambiguity in a mandate is deliberate as politicians often see this as flexibility or a pragmatic approach to achieving consensus in the political environment. While military leaders must remain obedient and loyal to political authority, they have a professional and ethical responsibility, indeed duty, to identify gaps and risks of a flawed strategy or ambiguous mandate. This responsibility was reinforced by the findings of the Somalia Commission report:

Another mitigating circumstance is the fact that these individuals [military commanders] can be seen as products of a system that has set great store by the can-do attitude. The reflex to say ‘yes sir’ rather than question the appropriateness of a command or policy obviously runs against the grain of free and open discussion, but is ingrained in military discipline and culture. However, leaders properly exercising command responsibility must recognize and ‘assert not only their right but their duty to advise against improper actions,’ for failing to do so means that professionalism is lost.<sup>48</sup>

In other words, military leaders must be prepared to temper the noble attitude of “can-do” to one that stops at “what is realistically possible”. In some cases, the wisest mission mandate is no mandate, and the best exit strategy is not to enter in the first place.<sup>49</sup> The operational planning process and the campaign plan provides a mechanism for meeting this challenge. In particular, mission analysis is crucial to systematically analyzing whether the military mission is feasible, supportive of the strategic objectives, achievable within the resource constraints and justifiable given the risks.

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<sup>48</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, A Commitment to Change, Report on the Recommendations of the Somalia Commission Inquiry - Executive Summary (Ottawa: DND Canada, October 1997) p. ES-15.

<sup>49</sup> Michael O’Hanlon, Saving Lives with Force: Military Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), p. 49. The author outlines five conditions under which interventions should not be attempted.



## *Defining the Military Role and Decisive Points*

While the specific tasks may vary from conflict to conflict, the key role of the military “will be to create the conditions for others to succeed.” As Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham point out, the employment of forces does not necessarily dictate the means. Somalia demonstrated that the use of overwhelming force did not work under the prevailing conditions and the success of peacekeeping as a humanitarian objective depended on fostering local cooperation.<sup>50</sup>

The distinction between military and civilian roles creates specific problems: when an international body such as the UN Secretariat takes strategic decisions, it does so with insufficient input from the military; in the field, there are clashes of culture, confusion over C<sup>2</sup> arrangements and insufficient operational co-ordination. The awkward management of operations and varying levels of success in Angola, Cambodia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia have, since 1994, led to a decline in the number of UN operations and total troops deployed.<sup>51</sup>

Managing a military operation successfully requires clear political objectives, a unified command structure and firm political control of the military. When sovereign states make decisions regarding their defence, their national military institutions play a central role in shaping the outcome and the responsibilities of politicians and military leaders are clearly demarcated. Civil-military relations in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace-building operations are fundamentally different from those that required in normal conditions of peace or war. In contemporary peacekeeping, the military has taken on new and significant political roles. The balance between civilian and military advice at all levels of a peacekeeping mission – strategic, operational, and tactical – need to be reassessed in light of the changing nature of conflict resolution. The NATO-led IFOR

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<sup>50</sup> Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham, “Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention in Post-Cold War Conflict”...p. 69.

<sup>51</sup> Michael C. Williams, “Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping”...pp. 15-16. In 1994, deployed troops reached a peak of over 70,000 and then declined to under 12,000 in 1998.

operations in Bosnia showed that the planners' ability to influence events during the preparation of the mission, through direct contacts with negotiators involved in the Peace Plan process, helped to avoid problems encountered by UNPROFOR and to ensure a clear definition of military tasks under a unified chain of command.<sup>52</sup>

In the transition from peacemaking, peacekeeping and, finally, peacebuilding, the role of the military in conflict resolution changes dramatically. Military campaign planning offers the potential to provide clear decisive points to indicate when conditions have been achieved to signal transition to the next phase. David Last highlights this requirement in his examination of the peace-building gaps that exist.

A holistic approach to peacebuilding cannot focus just on controlling violence by organized military forces. Nor can soldiers perform most of the necessary peacebuilding functions. When organized military formations have been brought under control, police and community security must be addressed. This is tied inextricably to rebuilding the legal and social institutions that permit civilian policing to be effective. Thus, when military peacekeeping forces become involved by default in the civilian tasks of humanitarian relief, development, democratization, and so on, their objective should be to unload those tasks as quickly as possible. The torch is passed both from military to international civilian missions, and from international missions to local authorities, appropriately prepared for the task.<sup>53</sup>

In fact, as Last goes on to argue, failure to transfer the tasks can have a detrimental affect since excessive, or the wrong type of security presence, can be dangerous and provocative.<sup>54</sup> In cases where the role of the military changes with a new phase of the operation, new forces should be generated, trained and deployed to ensure that the transition is clear and visible.

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<sup>52</sup> NATO, Lessons Learned in Peacekeeping Operations, Report of the Ad Hoc Group on Cooperation in Peacekeeping, (Bruxelles, November 1997).

<sup>53</sup> David Last, "Organizing for Effective Peacebuilding," International Peacekeeping 7:1 (Spring, 2000) pp. 82-83.

<sup>54</sup> David Last, "Organizing for Effective Peacebuilding,"... p. 83.

### *Establishing Complementary Interests and Potential for Synergy*

The UNHCR has gained the respect and trust of both the military and civilian communities and, therefore, can play an important role in mediating between them. Closer co-ordination could be achieved by agreeing on areas of responsibility, establishing compatible communications, co-location and ensuring effective liaison. A clear Concept of Operations would help each community to view the other as equally professional and committed to common humanitarian objectives. All players have expertise and experience to bring to the table; in fact, some NGO relief workers have more battlefield experience than most military personnel.<sup>55</sup>

The campaign plan can provide the synchronization of major tasks that would facilitate closer cooperation of civilians, government agencies, and NGOs with the military forces. In unstable environments, these groups have relied on the military for their security. The military's ability to protect movement, communications and logistics should encourage more active partnerships to strengthen humanitarian and post-conflict operations. However, in order to foster cooperation vice attempts to control respective actions, the military and civilian communities must have a common basis and understanding of operational objectives, desired end-states and concept of operations. To the extent these are not unanimously agreed upon, differences can be clearly identified and workaround solutions can be developed. Common "ends" should provide opportunities for mutual support of providing the "means". In cases where close integration of activities is not mutually desired, such as NGOs concern regarding loss of impartiality in being closely associated with military forces, complementary independent courses of action can be developed and synchronized.

Although the UNHCR may be a logical focal point for military civilian co-ordination this does not obviate the need for a single, accountable point for the development and execution of an overarching campaign plan. In his proposed,

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<sup>55</sup> Michael C. Williams, "Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping"...p.41.

Comprehensive Campaign Plan, Dewey sees the UN Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) as being responsible for this function as the prime co-ordinator of the UN Headquarters Triad (Humanitarian, Political and Security Departments).<sup>56</sup> For non-UN interventions, particularly in the case of ad hoc coalitions of the willing, the focal point or lead for campaign planning will have to be determined as the coalition is formed. However, the need for such planning remains valid, perhaps even more crucial, given the lack of a common planning process.

In his study of de-escalation in peacekeeping operations, Last highlights the imperative for tying the resolution of individual incidents into a large pattern of compliance with agreements into which the belligerents have entered. He examines the various factors for planning and orchestrating a de-escalation campaign and ways in which the context, conflict and parties involved influence the intervention strategy.<sup>57</sup> Although Last focuses on phases, or what could be considered sub-campaigns of a larger campaign, his argument for a holistic approach supports the argument for a well-thought out series of operations for achieving the desired end state – long-term peace and security.

This is not to say that all aspects of the campaign plan have to be completed prior to initiation of action, or should the plan be inflexible over the course of a long-term strategy to resolve a complex conflict. But rather, the planning process forces critical aspects, such as mission analysis, up front to ensure that the mandate is clear and realistic. Furthermore, the process is iterative, both up and down the organizational hierarchy - strategic, operational and tactical levels in the military context - and over time as the situation evolves or changes as a result of the intervention. This provides coherence and validation of the objectives between and within the levels of the participating organizations. Although branch and sequel planning have not been emphasized in this paper, they are valuable components of the operational planning process. The disciplined approach of military campaign planning forces those in position

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<sup>56</sup> Arthur E. (Gene) Dewey and Margaret M. Zeigler, The Comprehensive Campaign Plan... p.19

of authority to examine possible courses of action in the context of the strategic mandate and desired outcomes. Employed properly, it provides rationale analysis of the mission and guards against the near sighted reaction to events that does not contribute to, or worse detracts from, the resolution of the conflict.

## **Conclusions**

Modern conflict resolution missions are complex, multifaceted operations. Closer co-ordination between their civilian and military elements is vital if they are to succeed. There is increasing recognition that cooperation among mandating organizations, regional and civilian groups, contributing organizations, military forces and NGOs should be initiated as early as possible in the planning stage and maintained throughout the mission.

Successful military campaigns are characterized by a unity of effort throughout the strategic, operational and tactical levels. In order to operate effectively, commanders at all levels must understand both the intentions of their superiors and what role they play in the achievement of the desired end state. This imperative is equally applicable to conflict resolution interventions that are, by nature, more complex with multiple civilian and military players. Moreover, successful civil-military relations in second-generation peacekeeping require continuous dialogue between the two sides. While significant organizational obstacles exist and a cultural gap will always be present between the military and civilians, increased cooperation is possible through better planning, clearer mandates and active attempts by the military, civilian and humanitarian communities to achieve greater mutual understanding.

The wider application of campaign planning offers the best assurance that participants will mutually reinforce each other, minimize the risk that any single player can seriously let down the team or worse be an impediment, and the greatest potential to achieve synergy (whole greater than the sum of parts) in meeting the challenges of

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<sup>57</sup> David Last, Theory, Doctrine and Practice of Conflict De-escalation in Peacekeeping Operations, (Clementsport: The Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1997), pp. 90-130.

conflict resolution. From a military-centric perspective, the continued fragmenting of effort will likely result in the military being expected to “do something.” In many cases, as a direct result of not utilizing a campaign planning-type process, the international political authority has called upon the military, almost instinctively to act without a clear mission or adequate means. Even in cases where it is not appropriate to use military force, the military becomes the default solution as the only organization which has the capability to plan, generate and rapidly employ major resources in complex environments. Yet, without a proper mission analysis and the other critical aspects of the operational planning process, this trend will continue unabated.

As a professional military organization, we must practice what we preach. This includes the discipline to apply the operational planning process rigorously to the military sub-campaign, even if the principles of campaign planning have not been adhered to at higher levels or in the wider civilian aspects of a conflict resolution mission. “ We must not risk the lives of our personnel in poorly conceived, guilt-driven humanitarian operations that are predominantly vehicles for political posturing by corrupt leaders who, in the end, have only a superficial concern for the real situation.”<sup>58</sup> The principles and discipline of campaign planning must be applied rigorously prior to committing military forces. In the end, political authority may compel commitment of forces without the requisite clarity of purpose; however, senior military leaders have a professional and ethical obligation to identify the gaps and clearly articulate the risks of ambiguity. We owe it to the military field commanders and the troops who are otherwise faced with impossible situations that unnecessarily risk both civilian and military lives.

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<sup>58</sup> LGen R. A. Dallaire, “ Command Experiences in Rwanda”... p. 45.

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