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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES  
ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES COURSE 7

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION:  
The Need For a Coherent and Comprehensive Approach**

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## CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The Need For a Coherent and Comprehensive Approach

Military force, as an extension of politics and the imposition of will, helped produce the world as it exists today. Military force was the dominant component in the transition of tribes, to kingdoms and finally to nations. Conflict, as a means of imposing will, was also a key component of empires and imperialism such as the Roman Empire, and European Colonization. The overall use of force may have been a necessary and natural evolution of events to achieve the nation status; however, the imposition of the will of the nations created a significant number of unresolved conflicts that remain the precarious threats of all nations today. The events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have provided us the environment, and surely the desire, responsibility and necessity, and finally the means to transition from the imposition of will in the creation of states, to conflict resolution and the creation of globally unified nations. Canada should acknowledge and embrace its role in the conflict resolution process. The Canadian Military should also adapt to this role, both doctrinally and technologically, to be operationally effective in the future.

The environment of 20<sup>th</sup> century continued to be a time of conflict, but on a global scale, and with increased lethality. The first half saw two bloody world wars that included not only the principal global powers, but also absorbed smaller nations and colonies into the conflict. This period ended with the defeat of Germany and Japan in 1945. The century transitioned to the Cold War with a political ideological and expansionist struggle between NATO, and the Warsaw Pact based on the bi-polar super-powers of the US and USSR. Nations seeking their own self-government, such as Vietnam, Korea, and Afghanistan, became entangled in the global conflict as an extension of their own internal or foreign policy, or as pawns in a much larger game. The respective involvement of US, UN/Chinese, and USSR military forces in these regional conflicts could have resulted in global war. With the collapse of the USSR as a super-power around 1990, and the subsequent dissolution of the Warsaw Pact as a threat,

the global threat was diminished, and the world could focus on national conflict resolution.

The desire and necessity to resolve conflict can be related to the lethality associated with any potential conflict. The Cold War developed a technological capability in Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), principally nuclear weapons, with a capacity to destroy the world. While the Cold War has finished, the mutually destructive technology remains and the capacity either exists, or can be reproduced. More specifically, the capacity exists or will exist in nations that are in conflict today such as Korea, Pakistan, and India. Others, such as terrorist groups, could also develop other forms of WMD. The use of any such weapons would impact not only on the intended target, but would also have a global impact on the environment, and the economy. Subsequently, the threat is a global threat, and the requirement to resolve conflicts is a global responsibility.

The principal global means to assist in the resolution of national and international conflict is the United Nations. In fact, the UN was founded in 1945<sup>1</sup> with an embedded responsibility to address conflict resolution. Initially, while the UN and UN Charter were created, the ultimate power remained with the super powers and their alliances; in particular, the formations of the Warsaw Pact<sup>2</sup> and NATO<sup>3</sup> in 1949. With respect to most conflicts, the main function of the UN during the Cold War was to provide a means to mitigate conflicts and to establish a forum for political communications between the bi-polar powers. While the UN had limited influence in Cold War issues, it was consistently the primary tool, through the acceptance of nations as members of the UN, for the international recognition and the legitimacy of the status of nations. Inherent in UN membership was the acceptance of the UN Charter and the inherent desire for a peaceful world. With the advent of the US uni-polar world, and the general agreement

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, "About the United Nations," <http://www.un.org/aboutun/index.html>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>2</sup> World History.com, "Warsaw Pact," <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/W/Warsaw-Pact.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>3</sup> World History.com, "NATO," <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/N/NATO.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

between the objectives of the UN and those of the US, there became a means and responsibility to resolve conflict. In particular, as stated in the opening words of the UN Charter:

*WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED*

*-to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and*

*-to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and*

*-to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and*

*-to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom<sup>4</sup>*

As we now enter the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the conditions for conflict resolution exist; however the transformation from a global world of conflict, to conflict resolution has only just begun. The concept of conflict resolution is not new, but within a climate of change, the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali entrenched a UN approach in the United Nations Agenda for Peace in 1992. The agenda outlined a plan for global peace as a combination of Preventative Diplomacy, Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, and Peace building<sup>5</sup>. The Secretary General further announced that peacebuilding was to focus on the underlying economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian causes in order to achieve conflict resolution. Unfortunately, the principal UN level of effort in the process has been the military, which may be the most effective tool for peacekeeping, but has been less effective in addressing the underlying causes identified by the Secretary General. To illustrate the level of effort, in 2004 there were 12 UN Peace Building missions that included approximately 1200 personnel in various regions of the world<sup>6</sup>. Concomitantly, there were global recorded expenditures of approximately \$850 billion

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, New York: UN 1946. available from <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). *SIPRI Yearbook 2000*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 143.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations. "United Nations Political and Peace-Building Missions." <http://www.un.org/peace/ppbm.pdf>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004. Missions include Afghanistan, Middle East, Bougainville, Somalia, Central African Republic, Great Lakes, Tajikistan, West Africa, Guatemala, Iraq, Guinea-Buisea, Sudan.

dollars in military expenditures<sup>7</sup> of which the US expended \$399 billion. This was an increase from \$550 billion in 1996<sup>8</sup>. In the absence of any substantial peace building force, the UN end state has, in real terms, relied on a military end state that could typically focus on imposing peace or stabilizing a conflict, but not resolving conflicts.

Canada, as a member of the UN, has a responsibility to support UN objectives, and Canada's international contribution has been exemplary. Canada's contribution, however, has focused on foreign policy interests, and in particular "the protection of Canadian peace and security within a stable global framework"<sup>9</sup>. Security implies that conflicts are lessened, but not necessarily resolved. As well, with global security in mind, the Canadian contribution has principally, but not exclusively, been military force. Finally, while the Canadian commitment to UN Forces has globally been consistently high, the regional commitment has sometimes been limited in time, scope, and responsibility. The result has been an incoherent approach to conflict resolution.

## THESIS

While the 20<sup>th</sup> century may have been a century of conflict, the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs to be a century of conflict resolution. While the UN and the rest of the international community have made strides to improve the process of conflict resolution, the present process is neither comprehensive, not coherent. For the international community, the process can be improved by comprehensively structuring the components of conflict transformation and conflict resolution into a cohesive campaign plan. For Canada, the Canadian contribution can be improved by continuing to develop a coherent foreign policy, and by aligning national interests more closely with global interests. The Canadian Forces can contribute more effectively through an extension of existing campaign planning, and more comprehensive education in conflicts.

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<sup>7</sup> Center for Defence Information, "Last of the Big Time Spenders: U.S. Military Budget Still the World's Largest, and Growing," <http://cdi.org/budget/2004/world-military-spending.cfm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>8</sup>Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). *SIPRI Yearbook 2000*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 66.

<sup>9</sup> Department of National Defence, B-GG-005-004/AF-000 *Canadian Forces Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada,) 1-1.

To demonstrate the thesis, this paper will initially provide an overview of the trends in conflicts, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. This will be followed by an examination of Afghanistan as it relates to these issues, and as it relates to international efforts to resolve the conflict. Finally, there will be an overview of conflict as it relates to Canada and the Canadian Forces.

### SCOPE AND INTENT

Before conducting in depth discussions on the thesis, the scope and intent of the paper need to be clarified.

Firstly, the UN presently provides the foundation for conflict resolution, and reasonably will continue to be the means for addressing conflicts in the future. Nations have various reasons for joining the UN and may not fully embrace the UN Charter, but clearly recognize the UN as a means for addressing some national, and most international issues. In fact, with 191 nation members of the UN<sup>10</sup>, the significant majority of the conflicts are between or within signatories of the charter. There are other regional organizations such as the EU who would no doubt be part of the process and may in fact be the primary means of implementing regional action, however, regional organizations, but definition, do not have the global perspective and participation of the UN. Subsequently, while some unknown event might challenge the credibility of the UN, it is reasonable to assume that the UN will remain a principle means of addressing political issues in the future.

Secondly, while the objective remains conflict resolution, there remains a need for war fighting and war fighting forces. In accordance with the UN Charter, the general right to uphold the law, or to use armed force to assist in the “*pacific settlement of*

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<sup>10</sup> United Nations, “About the United Nations,” <http://www.un.org/aboutun/index.html>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

*disputes*<sup>11</sup>, or “*action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression*”<sup>12</sup>, inherently requires a component of force that can defeat an aggressor. At the same time, the ability to create a credible powerful UN war fighting coalition may be the most effective deterrent to prevent any escalation of force in any particular region. Subsequently, it is not intended that military forces should focus purely on peace support activities. War is a dangerous activity that requires a high level of training and readiness, for which the international community must be ready.

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The study of conflict is a complex issue. There has been a great deal of study on conflict resolution, and there are some generally accepted means for addressing conflicts. Yet, there is no single solution for all conflicts, nor is there an existing solution for some specific conflicts. To put conflict resolution in context requires an overview of conflict, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and, in order to understand the international conflicts, the major causes of international conflict.

Conflict exists when there are unresolved differences between two parties. Conflict in itself can be good, and should be seen as “*essentially a social phenomenon, with both creative and destructive manifestations*”<sup>13</sup>. To eliminate conflict would not only be unachievable, but would be undesirable. “*Conflict, like sex, is an essential creative element in human relationships. It is the means to change, the means by which our social values of welfare, security, justice and opportunities for personal development can be achieved. If suppressed, ... society becomes static...*”<sup>14</sup>. To suppress a conflict or impose a solution, eliminates the debate, and may aggravate the actual conflict. If a conflict is not managed effectively, it may result in war. In this regard, there should not be an attempt to suppress conflict, but to resolve it.

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<sup>11</sup> United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, New York: UN 1946. available from <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html>: Internet accessed 15 November 2004, Chapter VI.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, New York: UN 1946. available from <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html>: Internet accessed 15 November 2004, Chapter VII.

<sup>13</sup> Hill, Barbara J, “An Analysis of Conflict Resolution Techniques: From Problem Solving Workshops to Theory,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol 26, No 1 March 1982: 113.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, 113.



Conflict resolution “*resolves the conflict to the satisfaction of both parties, and, to the greatest extent possible, by the parties themselves*”<sup>15</sup>. Conflict resolution may not be conflict elimination, nor should it be suppression or the imposition of will. Conflict resolution should be a desirable end state. Unfortunately, it is an end state, and not a solution in itself, and there is no clear unified understanding of how conflict resolution should be achieved<sup>16</sup>. There are no quick solutions, nor are there any proven processes for arriving at solutions. Conceptual processes that have been applied in all cases of conflict (personal or otherwise) have the same potential to work at the national and international level. These processes may include mediation, negotiation, and facilitation<sup>17</sup>.

There are five generally recognized components of a conflict resolution process<sup>18</sup>. First, there should be a comprehensive understanding that the solution will take time. Second, there should be, (in perception and reality), a neutral party who is in a position to mediate, negotiate, or facilitate. Third, there should be a comprehensive education plan to debate and understand the issues of both parties. Fourth, the conflicting parties must be ready to solve the issue themselves. Finally, there should be a positive environment for success. While stated in moderate terms, the further the components drift from the recognized components, the less likely the process will succeed in resolving complex and contentious conflicts. Unfortunately, some conflicts are so intense that even absolute adherence to the components might not resolve the conflict.

Conflict transformation addresses conflict from the *irresolvable* perspective. While conflict resolution presumes there is a solution and focuses directly on the means of resolving the conflict, conflict transformation assumes that there is not always a solution, and the process focuses on creating an environment in which conflicts can be managed peacefully. In particular, conflict transformation is “*the reshaping of*

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid*, 115.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*, 109.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, 110.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 113.

*international relations in a way which will imbue conflicts with a character which frees them from violence and makes them entirely suitable for management by legal means*<sup>19</sup>. The components for conflict transformation include<sup>20</sup>: a legitimate rule of law; control under the rule of law; affect control (positive environment); democratic participation; and continual efforts to ensure social justice. Conflict transformation and conflict resolution are not divergent. In fact, for complex and contentious conflicts both processes would most likely be required. So what are the complex and contentious conflicts?

All nations have some level of conflict. As has already been discussed, conflict can be good and most conflict can be managed with no intervention. Of international interest are the root cause of conflicts that are difficult to resolve, may require assistance to resolve or manage, and may result in threats to international security. Firstly, there are conflicts at the national level. A detailed but preliminary study of trends in conflicts<sup>21</sup> has determined that poor economic conditions is the most important long-term cause of intra-state armed conflicts, followed by repressive political systems predominantly in periods of transition. Surprisingly, ethnic diversity was often a means of defining the parties to the conflict, but was not the principal root cause. Secondly, there are conflicts at the international level. Although not all-inclusive, one of the most significant international threats is terrorism. Terrorism is predominantly based on religious fundamentalism. As stated by Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, a Professor of Psychology of Religion at the University of Haifa, Israel:

*“Fundamentalists are commonly individuals who feel threatened by urbanization, industrialization, and modern secular values. Their ideology may have little substantial social or political consequences as long as it remains within the religious realm and is limited to a relatively small group. Typically, fundamentalist beliefs are tied to political conservatism, authoritarianism, and*

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<sup>19</sup> Senghaas, Dieter, “The Civilization of Conflict: Constructive Pacifism as a Guiding Notion for Conflict Transformation,” *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation*; Available from [The Civilisation of Conflict: Constructive Pacifism as a Guiding Notion for Conflict Transformation](#); Internet accessed 15 November 2004, 2.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, Dan, “Trends and Causes of Armed Conflict,” *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management*; Available from [The Civilisation of Conflict: Constructive Pacifism as a Guiding Notion for Conflict Transformation](#); Internet accessed 15 November 2004, 19.

*prejudice. Fundamentalist ideology thus reflects a hostile confrontation with modern society. The fundamentalist strategy not only rejects any accommodation, but also contains a utopian vision for reconstructing society.”*<sup>22</sup>

Professor Benjamin Biet-Hallahmi goes on to say that “...fundamentalism thrives in conditions of economic and social crisis. In countries of the periphery in particular, fundamentalism has often arisen where secular, authoritarian governments have held power and failed.”<sup>23</sup>

Overall, it would be apparent that the root causes of national conflicts could be addressed, over time, through a combination of conflict transformation and conflict resolution. The principle requirement would be to address the economic and political situation as well as any other effects. It would also appear that there is no conflict resolution to fundamentalism, but through conflict transformation, the environment should cease to fuel the ideology. While presented in simplistic terms, the application is much more complex.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

In practical terms, the world is rife with conflict that may require international intervention to ensure international security. In the 1990's there were 118 armed conflicts, of which 100 were intra-state<sup>24</sup>. Most causes for these armed conflicts still exist and the potential still exists for further armed conflict ranging from low to high intensity conflicts. Some could escalate to include other nations, and some may include WMD. Other potential interstate conflicts exist, such as between Pakistan and India, Israel and Palestine, China and Taiwan, almost all of which have, or are developing a nuclear weapons capability<sup>25</sup>. The risk to global security continues as long as these

<sup>22</sup> Beit-Hallahmi, Benjamin, “Fundamentalism,” *The Global Policy Forum Website*; available from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/wtc/fundamentalism/0501def.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004, 1.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, Dan, “Trends and Causes of Armed Conflict,” *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management*; Available from [The Civilisation of Conflict: Constructive Pacifism as a Guiding Notion for Conflict Transformation](#); Internet accessed 15 November 2004, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Nuclear Threat Initiative, “Country Profiles,” [http://www.nti.org/e\\_research/profiles/index.html](http://www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/index.html); Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

conflicts exist, and there should be a concerted effort to pursue conflict transformation and conflict resolution to mitigate these risks.

There have been global efforts to address the majority of these conflicts, although the threats still remain. While notable achievements have been made, the progress that has been achieved has been dissipated by the incoherent approach by the UN and the international community in addressing the conflicts. This paper intends to use Afghanistan as a case study to highlight some of the main reasons for the incoherence. There were a number of reasons for selecting Afghanistan. Firstly, the UN and international approach to conflict resolution has developed extensively since the early 1990s, and the approach within Afghanistan represents, for the most part, the most current approach. Secondly, while Iraq is a more dominating operation, UN involvement in the transition to post-armed conflict activity is more advanced, and some valuable lessons can be learned from the progress to date. Finally, as will be seen, Afghanistan represents a nation that has very few of the components necessary to transform and to resolve conflict.

## AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan today is a representative example of a low intensity (relative term) conflict between both state and non-state aggressors. Understanding the conflict, and the solution to the conflict, requires a general understanding of Afghanistan history.

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has remained a collection of tightly bonded tribes with a solid foundation of Islam both in religion and law, loosely coordinated as a nation depending on the periodic appearance of charismatic strong and understanding leaders. Ahmad Shad<sup>26</sup> a Pahstun ruler of the Abdali tribe, and the recognized father of Afghanistan, was the first real successful ruler to unite the tribes in the region of Afghanistan around 1747. Although the family continued to partially rule Afghanistan

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<sup>26</sup> Nyrop, Richard F, *Afghanistan : A Country Study*. (Washington, D.C. : The Studies : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. 1986), 13.

until 1978, the country had been dominated by British and Soviet foreign policy since 1838.

Britain effectively controlled Afghanistan foreign policy from 1838 until 1919<sup>27</sup> as a means to ensure separation between British-India and Russia. Britain achieved this dominance through three Britain-Afghanistan wars (1838<sup>28</sup>, 1848<sup>29</sup>, 1878). During this period Britain defined the territorial borders between Afghanistan and the nations of Iraq, Russia, China, and India. Although an element of independence existed from 1919, Afghanistan lost part of its territory in 1947<sup>30</sup> when Britain formed the nation of Pakistan from both Afghanistan and Indian territory.

Pakistan and Afghanistan continued to dispute the borders established by Britain. Effectively, the established borders divided the Pashun tribes that should have formed Afghanistan. As a result of the conflict, Pakistan frequently closed its borders to Afghanistan and the most viable means of external trade. This forced Afghanistan to develop closer economic ties with the Soviets. These ties facilitated the development of a communist party in Afghanistan that had Soviet support. Following an ineffective coup by the Afghanistan communist party, the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan from December 1979 until February 1989<sup>31</sup>.

The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan could reasonably be assessed as a national power projection of force that, like Vietnam, failed. Unfortunately, the occupation had a profound impact on the present state of the country. The most significant impact on Afghanistan was the displacement of 3 million<sup>32</sup> refugees to Iran and Pakistan. This was followed by the destruction of an already struggling nationally controlled government

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<sup>27</sup> World History.com, "History of Afghanistan," <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/H/History-of-Afghanistan-since-1992.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Nyrop, Richard F, *Afghanistan : A Country Study*. (Washington, D.C. : The Studies : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. 1986), 27.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*, 30.

<sup>30</sup> World History.com, "Pakistan," <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/P/Pakistan.htm>; Internet accessed 2004.

<sup>31</sup> World History.com, "History of Afghanistan," <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/H/History-of-Afghanistan-since-1992.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*.

and economy. Finally, while the occupation consolidated the will of the Afghan people through tribal and Islamic support for a holy war against a common enemy of the nation, it fuelled fundamentalism that still exists today. Islam has been, and will no doubt continue to be the cornerstone of religion and law in Afghanistan for the foreseeable future.

*“The multifaceted phenomenon of Islam in Afghanistan is rich in meaning and plays multiple roles in the society. It lends meaning to the lives of individuals, comforts and channels the ire of the deprived, forms a structure for political coalitions, is inseparable for some from tribal identity, and is included in all Muslim Afghan’s most basic personal identity.”<sup>33</sup>*

The years that followed the Soviet occupation were fraught with civil disorder and economic depression as the Afghanistan people struggled to develop as a nation. As a result, the Taliban, an Islamic Fundamentalist movement, was controlling 90% of the country by 1998<sup>34</sup>. The Taliban were never recognized within the UN as the national leaders and were sanctioned by the UN on numerous occasions for human rights abuses. The Taliban were also providing sanctuary for Osama Bin Ladin and elements of his fundamentalist terrorist organization. Osama Bin Ladin, a Saudi national, was linked to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on 9 September 2001. This event precipitated direct military action by a US lead coalition into Afghanistan on 7 October 2001.

While a Security Council Resolution did not initially support armed intervention in Afghanistan, it was nevertheless an authorized action in response to a nations right to self-defence. In December 2001, the UN officially authorized ISAF to assist the Afghanistan Interim Authority in maintaining security, including the establishment and training of an Afghanistan military, in UNSCR 1386<sup>35</sup>. International activity was occurring on other fronts as well; however the UN *authorized boots on the ground* were

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<sup>33</sup> Nyrop, Richard F, *Afghanistan : A Country Study*. (Washington, D.C. : The Studies : For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. 1986), 103.

<sup>34</sup> World History.com, “History of Afghanistan,” <http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/H/History-of-Afghanistan-since-1992.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386*, New York, NY: December 20, 2001.

the predominant means for achieving any local success. While security was the major UNSCR concern, the intervention fostered the opportunity to directly resolve the root causes of the instability in Afghanistan; namely, the economy, governance, the human environment, and the fundamentalist movement. The overall situation in Afghanistan provides an opportunity to analyze the overall effectiveness of international and national support.

### UN AND INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

*There are, in my view, three main reasons for the failure of prevention when prevention so clearly is possible. First, the reluctance of one or more of the parties to a conflict to accept external intervention of any kind. Second, the lack of political will at the highest levels of the international community. Third, a lack of integrated conflict-prevention strategies within the UN system and the international community.*

*Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General<sup>36</sup>*

The UN is a complex organization with 191 member states in the General Assembly. Understandably, there would be bureaucracy that would generate inefficiencies. That said, preventing and resolving conflicts is a complex issue that should be streamlined as much as possible if violent conflicts are to be mitigated or prevented. Kofi Annan has clearly stated his perception of the problem in the quote above. It could be added that the UN can not approach conflict resolution coherently because there is no UN coherent structure to develop the strategy, or to implement the strategy. Although the UN has demonstrated some success in reorganization, the UN does not have the resources to implement a coherent strategy and must rely on nations to do so. The nation in conflict may have the ultimate responsibility, but in cases where military forces are deployed, the nation is often not functioning well, or functioning at all. When this occurs, the military forces sometimes assume some level of responsibility to develop a semblance of a plan that includes agencies outside of the control of the military force, but necessary to meet the limited military mandate. This provides a well-coordinated plan for security, but does

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<sup>36</sup> Annan, Kofi, "Preventing Conflict in the Next Century: The World in 2000," *The Global Policy Forum Website*; Available from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/secgen/sg0609.htm>; Internet Accessed 15 Nov 2004.

not necessarily extend to the end of the conflict, and a desirable end state of conflict resolution. Each of these elements will be looked in greater depth.

A coherent strategy requires a coherent plan. Using the Operational Planning Process (OPP) as an example, the plan starts with a mission analysis that delivers a mission statement. A statement that is reasonably recognized by all, understood by all, and implemented by all. Within the UN, there is no single process by which a regional or national conflict is coherently or authoritatively addressed and resolved as a single issue. As indicated above for Afghanistan, the international security issues were initiated outside the UN to address immediate US national interests; yet, security was only one component of the Afghanistan solution. The authoritative UNSCR issued by the Security Council for the security component followed for ISAF in December 2001. UNSCR 1386 specifically addressed security as a stovepipe issue but was less authoritative for other issues. In particular UNSCR<sup>37</sup> 1386 “*calls upon*” ISAF to “*cooperate*” with the Transitional Administration and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General. UNSCR 1401<sup>38</sup> established UNAMA to support the broader range of necessary support activities and *requested* ISAF to cooperate with UNAMA as part of their mandate. Recognizably, the Transitional Administration would be the responsible national Afghanistan authority and, although there would be no superior/subordinate relationship with ISAF, there would be cooperation and coordination. Similarly, ISAF would coordinate with other agencies, but these would be operatin



addresses regional instability and addresses conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution; yet, when security forces are deployed, they are functionally authorized by the Security Council and managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). DPA and DPKO, both part of the Secretariat, report to the Secretary General. The situation is clearly more complex than presented here, which should indicate that the unified approach is more complex as well. Functionally, from within the UN alone, one could consider the necessary organs of the International Court of Justice, the Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly as adjuncts to the solution, and as a broader perspective of the stovepipes. Intuitively, it is easy to see how these organs need to contribute to conflict transformation and conflict resolution in Afghanistan. At the same time, it becomes very clear that the present structure of the UN makes it very difficult to develop, let alone execute, a comprehensive unified and coherent plan that could successfully achieve conflict resolution.

While the grand plan may be difficult to achieve in the short term, the UN has continued to reform, and has achieved some success in consolidating some of the more diverse processes. A good example of improvement would be the reformation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA<sup>39</sup>) in 1998. While OCHA only has a *coordination* function, it also controls a good portion of donor funds to the UN for the humanitarian aid. The funding provides a level of authority over a large number of NGOs that would previously not have existed, not only through direct contracts, but also through the improved relationship with the NGOs. Subsequently, there should be recognition that the UN is improving its ability to deal with some specific issues.

The UN, however, is only part of the solution. The UN has limited resources and must rely on nations to provide support; yet nations do so for their own national interests, and often in their own perception of how those interests should be achieved. In Afghanistan, the US lead the coalition as part of OP APOLLO to attack terrorism. Having

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<sup>39</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "A brief history of OCHA," [http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Nav=\\_about\\_en&Site=\\_about&Lang=en](http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Nav=_about_en&Site=_about&Lang=en); Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

opened the Pandora's box in Afghanistan, there were some concerns that the US did not have the resolve to leave security forces in Afghanistan to provide the security element that would allow the rest of the elements of conflict transformation and conflict resolution to progress. In fact in March 2002<sup>40</sup>, the *National Post* suggested that President Bush would not provide Peacekeeping troops for the conflict. European countries also contributed military and other resources to the Afghanistan problem although the philosophical approach was different. As stated by Rob de Wijk, Director of Strategic Studies in the Netherlands<sup>41</sup>, "Europe highly values soft security, that is, diplomacy, incentives such as economic aid, and peace support operations. The United States, on the other hand, prioritizes hard security – limited wars of intervention to defend interests and promote regional security". Canada was and remains involved in Afghanistan. Canada has its own national interests at stake. In particular<sup>42</sup>, "the protection of Canadian peace and security within a stable global framework". Collectively, there is a wide range of nations serving national interests in potentially unique manners. While the individual intentions may support the objectives of conflict transformation and resolution in Afghanistan, the diversity does not necessarily contribute to a cohesive approach.

The requirement to develop a more comprehensive plan often falls to the military forces on the ground. In Afghanistan, It should be the transitional government, however it presently does not have the capacity or capability to develop a credible plan. Given that the most comprehensive organizations on the ground are the military forces of the US, and ISAF, the task often falls in that direction. Canadian experience with SFOR and other peace support operations, has demonstrated that the security mission is almost always inextricably linked to the successes of a much larger campaign, and the specific needs of the much broader framework must be met. SFOR<sup>43</sup> developed the Multi Year Road Map,

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<sup>40</sup> Wilson, George C, "Peacekeeping Saves Cents, Makes Sense," *National Post*, 30 March 2002; available from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/peacekpg/us/>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>41</sup>De Wijk Rob, "European Military Reform for a Global Partnership," *The Washington Quarterly*, January 27 2003, 201.

<sup>42</sup>, Department of National Defence, B-GG-005-004/AF-000 *Canadian Forces Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada,) 1-1.

<sup>43</sup> Hardy, Sgt. Kerensa, "Multi-Year Road Map tracks SFOR progress". *SFOR Informer*. #112, May 3, 2001: Available from <http://www.nato.int/sfor/indexinf/112/s112p03a/t0105033a.htm>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

to track progress in accordance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina for all lines of operation, not just security. Although development of the Road Map began in July 2000, it took until February 2001 before other agencies adopted the Road Map as a means of coordinating efforts in a more comprehensive manner. The military presence in ISAF includes the experience of individuals from SFOR, and these lessons are being developed in Afghanistan. It may not be a military task, but the military force has been the predominant force in Afghanistan, and the task needs to be done. In the end, at least a better form of cohesion and coherence may exist while the military remains the predominant force.

Collectively, the issues associated with complex peace support operations like Afghanistan impose a potentially unacceptable level of risk. While the UN continues to transform, the requirement to implement a cohesive strategy to resolve conflicts in failed or failing states must be addressed to ensure there is effective ownership of a conflict resolution end state. No doubt SFOR, in Bosnia, will continue to support the Multi Year Road Map concept which will coordinate efforts towards a secure environment, and which concurrent supports conflict resolution. But, in real terms, the military force should be supporting a coherent organization aiming to resolve the conflict, rather than being the supported organization pursuing limited objectives. Conflict resolution is the end state, and there needs to be a directed comprehensive and coherent effort other than the supporting military force to develop the plan.

Overall, there needs to be one comprehensive and coherent UN Campaign Plan which embodies the military end state, but focuses on conflict resolution as the end-state. Unless there is a more coherent organization and plan, then the risk of failure, in an already tenuous and imprecise environment, will remain high.

#### CANADA AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

International change has been slow. Canada, as an individual nation, has the potential to move much more rapidly, and has initiated action to be more progressive in

the international region within its capabilities. Canada has been extensively involved with UN Operations since the UN was formed, and has made some significant contributions, although there is scope to progress further to support conflict resolution more directly and coherently. Within the Canadian military there have also been notable contributions, with detailed Peace Support Operations experience and doctrine. Within the military, there is also scope to improve in respect to command and control, campaign planning, as well as education and training.

*“Let us all recognise, from now on – in each of our capitals, in every nation, large and small – that the global interest is our national interest.”*

*Secretary-General Kofi Annan<sup>44</sup>*

Within Canada the focus on conflict resolution has been good, but it has also been unfocused and subsequently incoherent in a global context. As indicated in the previous section, one of Canada’s national interests is to protect Canadian peace and security within a stable global framework. At first glance, the Canadian national interest would appear to be in synchronization with the global interest suggested by Kofi Annan, but this would not be the case. First, when you consider the Canadian national interest in Afghanistan, with those of the nations involved in ISAF, UNAMA, and the US Coalition, then the collective national interests distort the coherence of the global interest. Second, if the national interest focuses on national security, there may be no national will to resolve issues beyond the immediate security concerns, and to take a conflict to the necessary end state of resolution. Understandably, a longer commitment might require additional resources and perhaps more risk, however, a global interest of conflict resolution would be a more palatable long-term solution.

Canadian participation in global conflict resolution has also been unfocused at the national level, although that is changing. Conflict resolution and complex peace support operations are long-term issues. Canada has participated in some long-term

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<sup>44</sup> Annan, Kofi, “Secretary-General Address to the General Assembly 12 September 2002,” *The Global Policy Forum Website*; available from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/secgen/annan/2002/0912ga.html>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

peacekeeping operations such as Cyprus and the Golan; however participation in the some operations might be perceived as participation to maintain diplomatic relations with allies, more so than direct interest in any specific conflict. The perception has been supported in the absence of any widely acknowledged coherent Canadian strategy to address any specific conflict area. There are two issues that now support a strong and more coherent approach. Firstly, CIDA has a revised policy that allows a more coherent approach. Initially, CIDA provided minimum investments that only allowed Canada to contribute, but would not allow Canada to influence development. With limited funds, it was necessary to focus the funds to ensure a threshold could be maintained, and allow CIDA to be more directly involved in the types of development that might occur. The new CIDA policy<sup>45</sup> presented in September 2002 clearly recognized the need for Canada to focus resources to achieve real success, and to credibly participate in development projects. Secondly, the Governments Throne Speech on<sup>46</sup> 25 October 2004 clearly indicated that the Canadian approach to global concerns would be a coordinated Defence, Diplomacy, Development, and Trade (DDDT) concept. Within the proposed concept, it would be necessary to coordinate the annual efforts of DND, the Solicitor General, DFAIT and CIDA, which would almost necessitate a less reactive and a more coherent focus. Overall, however, any solution that focuses all the DDDT elements should result in a more focused and coherent approach to conflict resolution end states.

Within the military, one of the first issues that should to be understood is the command and control relationships that will exist with a view to implementing the end state. Within a UN operation, there will no doubt continue to be a deployed robust military command and control structure; however, as already indicated, there is unlikely to be a cohesive unity of command within the complete campaign. As indicated in the Canadian peace support doctrine<sup>47</sup>, there will be a Head of Mission (HOM) who could

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<sup>45</sup> Canadian International Development Agency Website, 'Policy Statement on Aide Effectiveness,' <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/aideffectiveness#02>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>46</sup>Office of the Prime Minister, "Speech from the Throne to open the First Session of the Thirty-Eighth Parliament of Canada, October 5, 2004,"; Available from <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/sft-ddt.asp>; Internet accessed 15 November 2004.

<sup>47</sup> Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030 *Peace Support Operations*,(Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002) paragraph 706.

either be a Special Representative of the Secretary General, or could be the Force Commander. Either way, it is unlikely the command and control of non-military components would be as effectively established as within the military. In almost all cases where military forces are employed, there would be International Organizations, NGOs, and other nations with varying levels of control. Canada may continue to develop the DDDT approach for a cohesive approach, and may have assumed a regional responsibility that might provide a higher unity of effort; however, other agencies would still be represented in the region with the same difficulties. In such as diverse environment, the command and control would likely be tenuous at best. Leadership would be necessary to ensure the Canadian Military focuses on conflict resolution as an end state, and leadership would also be necessary to coordinate others to focus on the same end state.

Campaign planning is the second aspect that must be addressed. The Operational Planning Process is a robust planning tool that would exist in most military headquarters with a robust planning staff. The process is not restricted to military planning. The Multi Year Road Map developed by SFOR was no doubt developed using the Operational Planning Process. Expanding the process from a purely military perspective, to an all-encompassing campaign plan is not difficult. The plan would need to transition from a typical “secure environment that supports conflict resolution” end state to “conflict resolution” as an end state. Lines of operation would need to transition from pure military lines of operation with other supporting lines of operation that meet the military end state, to more all encompassing lines of operation that support conflict transformation through the campaign, and all lead to an all-encompassing campaign end state. Such lines of operation might include: negotiations, law and order, economic development, political development, and social development. Depending on the input from non-military sources, the plan might not be complete, but the benefits nevertheless, could be significant.

The most immediate benefit of a comprehensive campaign plan would be the holistic view of the situation for the Commander. Additionally, as a coordination tool, as was used by the Multi Year Road Map, it would capture efforts that need to be

coordinated. This would be especially true for external agencies that should have the opportunity to input to the process, and subsequently educate all agencies on their specific needs and requirements. Further, for everyone, it would provide a focus and understanding of the ultimate end state, versus intermediate, or individual objectives. Finally, given that most lines of operation would not be dissimilar, in the long term, it would provide a credible footprint for future operations. Overall, regardless of whether the military is the lead agency or not, there are significant advantages for taking the lead in developing a comprehensive campaign plan, and that plan should reflect a conflict resolution end state.

Education and training are the last aspects that will be addressed. The Peace Support Operations manual<sup>48</sup> provides a broad assessment for the necessary CF training, both in routine training, and specifically prior to an operational deployment. While the manual is extensive, the manual focuses on the key aspects of the process including the key tasks that the military might need to support. The manual does not address the educational aspects that should also be addressed. In particular, the manual supports an impartial military force, which must provide a secure environment, so that negotiations could occur. It also acknowledges that there would be concurrent activity by other UN agencies such as UNCIVPOL, UNDP, the ICT, and that the UN Operation might also include democratic elections. Intuitively, it might be understood that these activities and agencies would be necessary to assist the nation to develop. Pessimistically, it might be assessed that the UN would be shaping the nation along Western ideologies and imposing our standards on others. Educationally, through an understanding of the root causes of conflict, conflict transformation, and conflict resolution, it would be apparent that these are actually the recognized components for lasting peace. Overall, the training is necessary for everyone, and education would be desirable for everyone in order to understand the conflict environment.

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<sup>48</sup> Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030 *Peace Support Operations*, (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), overview.

## CONCLUSION

There remain significant global threats in the world that could result in conflicts that have the potential to employ conventional or nuclear weapons, or weapons of mass destruction. Until such time as the issues are resolved between countries such as Korea and South Korea, and Pakistan and India, there will remain a requirement for combat capable forces to either deter, stop, or fight intense large-scale wars.

Resolving conflicts requires an understanding of the causes, the conditions, and the processes necessary to resolve conflicts. In particular, Smith's research on trends in conflict have recognized that poor economic conditions, and political instability are the main causes of conflict in the world. Additionally, the conditions that develop in these conflicts generally provide the conditions for fundamentalist movements, and the potential for terrorist extremists. Studies in conflict transformation have identified the conditions that need to be developed in conflict nations to allow them to resolve their own conflicts as: a legitimate rule of law; control under the rule of law; affect control (positive environment); democratic participation; and continual efforts to ensure social justice. Further studies have recognized that similar conditions need to be established to participate in conflict resolution which include: an understanding the extensive time dimension of the problem; participation of a neutral party; education of the issues; the requirement for the parties to resolve the conflict; and a positive environment for success. Various organs within the UN represent these components; however the UN, has not necessarily approached conflicts with a unified approach to conflict resolution.

Within the UN, although improvements have been made, the overall structure is incoherent and can not cohesively address conflict resolution. Organs in the UN, for the most part, operate along stovepipes, with a requirement to coordinate and cooperate, rather than to direct specific operations. The international participation in UN mandated operations further dilutes the unification with a variety of national interests, and national approaches to the solution. NGOs further complicate the operations as they would operate within the same region, with various levels of cooperation with UN components.



The military operates within this framework to achieve primarily a security mandate, but as demonstrated in SFOR, and is being further developed in Afghanistan, has often assumed the role to develop a semblance of a comprehensive campaign plan that allows all parties to focus on the same end state. Overall, to improve on the probability of success, the UN and the international community need to structure and execute peace support operations in a more comprehensive and cohesive manner.

Within Canada, the Government is developing a more comprehensive Defence, Diplomacy, Development, and Trade (DDDT) strategy that should at least allow a more comprehensive and unified national approach. The Canadian Forces should subsequently be deployed into theatres of operation as part of a more comprehensive plan, however, with the various other national and international agencies that will no doubt be part of a mission, the military should be ready to pursue a comprehensive campaign plan. To be more comprehensive in the planning and execution of a mission, the military should be ready, not only from a peace support training perspective, but from a conflict transformation, and conflict resolution educational perspective.

Overall, with evolving UN and international experience in national conflicts and, from a Canadian perspective, our own development in peace support operations, the opportunity exists to be more effective and unified in resolving national conflicts. As conflicts are resolved, and nations become self-sustaining in resolving their own conflicts, global security should improve, and the risk of a severe global conflict should be reduced.

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