ARTICLE

Peacekeeping: A Civilian Perspective?*

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■ Abstract

How effective are peacekeeping operations in preventing and stopping violence? Is there an alternative to UN and regional peacekeeping operations? Would civilian unarmed peace operations be the best alternative? These and similar questions are fed into the ongoing debate on peace operations and the possibility of civilian alternatives to current peace operations. This article presents an analysis of the development of civilian peacekeeping, its relevance in the field of conflict resolution and its autonomy from multidimensional peacekeeping, championed by the UN and regional organizations. Written by a scholar of Peace and Conflict Research with practical experience in both UN Peacekeeping Operations and "civilian peacekeeping" missions, it gives practical and theoretical insights into traditional, multidimensional and civilian peacekeeping.

■ Keywords

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been increasing debate about the efficiency and the relevance of costly and complex peace operations and the "little progress" observed to this effect. The criticism of traditional and multidimensional peacekeeping relates to their capacity to maintain fragile ceasefires, sustain and support the consolidation of peace beyond political transactions and, most of all, protect civilians. United Nations peacekeeping operations have faced many challenges since their inception, ranging from critiques of the very essence of peacekeeping to secondary or tertiary aspects not directly related to operations. Concomitantly, the concept of "civilian peacekeeping" is increasingly being evoked as an alternative to the current peace support operations.

These alternative peacekeeping operations are envisaged as non-military or unarmed peace operations, strictly civilian and outside the UN system. "Civilian peacekeeping" is being touted as the next generation of peacekeeping, and its advocates argue it is more effective than the current militarized framework developed by the UN. This article examines the perspectives of peacekeeping operations involving unarmed civilians outside the UN or regional organizations. To be able to understand "civilian peacekeeping" and determine whether or not it can develop as an independent field of research, it is important to compare and contrast it with traditional/multidimensional peacekeeping.

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2. PEACEKEEPING

Peacekeeping is generally described as a UN invention and is often associated with two names: Dag Hammarskjöld and Lester B. Pearson. These two eminent figures set forth principles that defined what is referred to as peacekeeping (Woodhouse and Duffey, 2000). The United Nations Organisation was created in order to "save the succeeding generations from another scourge of war" (UN, 2008, p. 8), but its charter does not expressly mention or contain provisions for peacekeeping operations (Carrière, 2010, Liu ,1999, Woodhouse and Duffey, 2000). Despite this, UN peacekeeping has become a critical tool in the maintenance of international stability and conflict management in war-torn countries.

The UN traditionally defined peacekeeping missions as those "involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, undertaken by the United Nations to help maintain or restore international peace and security in areas of conflict" (UN, 1990, p. 4). Peacekeeping is also understood to involve actions to stop war, stabilize the environment and begin the peace processes during periods of fragile ceasefires (Carrière, 2010). UN peacekeeping was conceived as a purely military affair, armed or unarmed. The term peacekeeping is generally used as an alternative to peace operations, resulting in confusion. Today's definition of peacekeeping has evolved over time and is the result of flexibility and improvisation (Findlay, 2002, p. 4). It has not been easy to define peacekeeping, as every attempt would limit the scope and flexibility which characterized it from its inception (Findlay, 2002, p. 4). As the term has evolved, so have peacekeeping operations, from strictly military to include multi-dimensional operations involving military, police and civilians. From this perspective, the United Nations define peacekeeping as:

> "[…] a technique designed to preserve the peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing ceasefires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars, to incorporate a complex model of many elements – military, police and civilian – working together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace." (UN, 2008, p. 18)

Peacekeeping has also been defined as the prevention, containment, moderation and termination of hostilities, through peaceful third party intervention, organized and directed internationally, using multinational forces of soldiers, police, and civilians to restore and maintain peace (Diehl, 1993, p. 5). From this definition, peacekeeping can be understood as a strategy used in conflict management, rather than conflict resolution. It aims to maintain the stability obtained through peacemaking and prevent the escalation or new outbreaks of violence, thus creating an environment conducive to peacebuilding. Peacekeeping has evolved from a token presence of observers to a range of highly complex activities and functions that support peace in conflict-torn countries and help maintain international peace and stability.

Peacekeeping has thus evolved from activities that simply monitored the implementation of fragile peace deals in the hope of creating conditions conducive to addressing the roots of a conflict, to include activities such as the protection of civilians, administration of humanitarian assistance and the re-establishment of the rule of law. A peacekeeping operation is referred to as multidimensional when its scope of operations goes beyond the military to include police and civilians, working together but each having specific functions. Although peacekeeping is time- limited, it paves the way to address deeper issues related to the conflict. Technically, peacekeeping should be distinguished from peacebuilding, peacemaking and peace enforcement. In this paper, the terms peace support operations and peace operations will be used alternately for multidimensional and UN and regional peacekeeping.

Peacebuilding aims to transform a conflict by addressing its root causes (Carrière, 2010), and to overcome the contradictions which lie at the root of a conflict (Galtung, 1996 p. 112). It underpins the work of peacemaking and peacekeeping. While peacemaking is a political process involving diplomatic negotiations and mediation leading to peace agreements (Carrière, 2010), peacebuilding addresses structural issues and the long-term relations between conflicting parties (Ramsbotham et al., 2005, p. 30). It presupposes the existence of an agreement between conflicting parties and a base of peace (Darby et al., 2003, p. 195). Tim Wallis (2010), using Galtung's Conflict Triangle, noted that peacemaking addresses attitudes (A), peacekeeping addresses behaviour (B) and peacebuilding addresses what he calls 'conditions', represented in Galtung's triangle by contradictions (C).

Peace enforcement can be simply understood as a form of imposed settlement by a powerful third party (Woodhouse and Duffey, 2000). Peace enforcement operations are established under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. They tend to forcibly implement the mandate through coercion, either by force or the threat of force, should parties not comply with the agreed or imposed path. Within the UN, the Security Council is the only organ that can authorize such operations. The first was established at the height of the Cold War in the Congo, with the ONUC[1]. The ONUC

1　ONUC : Opérations des Nations Unies au Congo.

was, in effect, the first UN peace enforcement mission (Liu, 1999; Findlay, 2002, p. 51-123). The UN (2008) describes peace enforcement as follows:

"It involves the application, with the authorization of the Security Council, of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force. Such actions are authorized to restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has determined the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. The Security Council may utilize, where appropriate, regional organizations and agencies for enforcement action under its authority."

Peacekeeping and peace enforcement belong to what is being called peace operations or peace support operations. Although tempting, this article does not use the generational classification of peacekeeping. It does, however, consider functional activities of multidimensional peacekeeping and examine their applicability in "civilian peacekeeping."

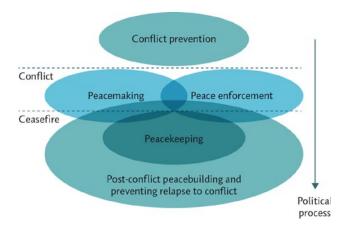**Figure 1.** Linkages and grey areas (Source: UN, 2008, p. 19)

Figure 1 shows how the components of a peace operation – peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding – interact and connect with each other. The grey areas are where these components cannot be easily discerned. This confusion is particularly important between peacekeeping and peace enforcement, and peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Despite difficulties in categorising them, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peace building are technically separate, although complementary, components of peace operations. While the political transactions of peacemaking are meant to secure peace agreements, peacekeeping and peace enforcement create a safer environment by limiting violence, paving the way for peace building activities aimed at tackling deep-rooted is-

sues, and act as a deterrent for those trying to disrupt peace, the 'spoilers'. All four activities converge to secure sustainable peace.

3. CIVILIAN PEACEKEEPING

The term civilian peacekeeper is not new in the field of peace support operations. It has been widely used to describe civilians working in UN peacekeeping missions (Carrière, 2010). The UN first employed civilians and military in their peacekeeping mission in the Congo, known by its French acronym, ONUC (Liu, 1999). Apart from being the most controversial UN peacekeeping mission, due to its use of force and being the largest ever deployed, ONUC set a precedent for multidimensional peacekeeping operations, combining traditional peacekeeping tasks with political and humanitarian activities handled by civilians (Liu, 1999; Findlay, 2002, p. 51-86). Civilians working in ONUC and other missions deployed by the UN were described as civilian peacekeepers, although the term is not commonly used outside the UN system.

Civilian Peacekeeping, also referred to as unarmed peacekeeping (Schirch, 2006, p. 16), is a new term, and involves unarmed individuals placing themselves in conflict situations in an attempt to reduce inter-group violence (Schirch, 2006, p. 16). The term is largely associated with or used in comparison to the UN model of peacekeeping. Advocates of civilian peacekeeping argue that the first observers' missions deployed by the UN involved unarmed military observers (Wallis, 2010). The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Peace (2009) states:

"Since international observer missions have no military forces to back them up, the deterrent value of such missions (as well as of the more classical peacekeeping operations that did not have a mandate to use force) comes very simply from the fact that they are international and have some authority through their association with the UN (or some other authority), rather than from the fact that they are military per se or have military muscle behind them to force the parties to comply when persuasion fails. In such situations it is clear that (non-uniformed) civilians can play just as valuable a role as do serving military officers or police."

Civilian peacekeeping works at the grassroots level, offering the possibility of reducing conflict and preventing violence through engagement with communities (Wallis, 2010). The work is undertaken by communities themselves rather than by international peacekeepers, self-proclaimed leaders or government authorities. The aim is to provide open space for local civil society to act (Schirch, 2006,

p. 22). One of the key principles is the 'primacy of those involved'. This principle relegates the role of the international civilian peacekeeper to a supportive one while the lead is taken by communities. It also opens the door to empowerment and building capability of local communities and civil society activists, to enable them to take their destiny in their own hands.

Civilian peacekeeping involves a range of tasks, including:

- Proactive presence (accompaniment and protection);
- Monitoring the compliance to human rights/IHL standards in conflict-affected or vulnerable areas and supporting local human rights groups (civilian protection);
- Monitoring the security situation through community-based early warning mechanisms and conflict prevention; and
- Cross-community dialogue.

The primary objective of civilian peacekeeping is to reduce the incidence and effects of violence on civilians. By placing internationals where violence is likely to occur, providing protective accompaniment[2] to local human rights activists and other targeted individuals and groups, the safety of these individuals and groups is enhanced, and violence reduced. The presence of foreign observers is a form of silent international pressure to parties involved. To achieve its objectives, civilian peacekeeping uses relationships and communication skills (Schirch, 2006, p. 16). Using relationships implies that civilian peacekeepers use the influence of some individuals and networks to secure and enhance acceptance of their mission. Once their mission is accepted, their safety and that of the communities they intend to protect is enhanced as well. As peacekeepers secure relationships and tap into those of partners, they need to clearly explain the objectives of their mission, mandate and limitations. They are also expected to use diplomacy to persuade and convince all parties concerned to adopt non-violent means of settling disputes and, most of all, to protect civilians in case of escalation of violence. It is believed that the mere fact that internationals are present, visible and actively engaging actors involved, encourages compliance by the abusive parties (Mahony 2006, p. 41). However, international civilian presence can provide protection only if the parties concerned have, or are seeking, legitimacy and recognition. Legitimate actors and those seeking legitimacy do not want to be depicted negatively for noncompliance with international standards or target-

ing civilians. International presence may not always be successful in the presence of radical groups and spoilers. Spoilers and those determined actors who want to carry on fighting, cannot be deterred by unarmed civilian peacekeepers (Wallis, 2010).

Other tasks carried out in civilian peacekeeping are:

- election monitoring;
- ceasefire monitoring;
- establishment and monitoring of peace zones;
- humanitarian and relief assistance; and
- the re-establishment of the rule of law.

All these functions have been undertaken by UN and regional peacekeepers, both civilian and uniformed.

A major drawback to the developing field of civilian peacekeeping is that it defines itself negatively vis-à-vis UN and regional peacekeeping operations. Many of those promoting civilian peacekeeping[3] linked its emergence to 'failures' of multidimensional peace operations conducted by the UN and regional organizations. A logical consequence of this is its attachment to perceived failures of a widely used form of peacekeeping. Whether or not UN and regional peace operations have failed is disputable and will not be discussed here. Carrière (2010) pointed out the need for another peacekeeping, referring to peacekeeping operations other than those conducted by the UN and regional organizations. Unfortunately, the negative allusion made to UN peacekeeping in the definition of civilian peacekeeping hinders its development as an independent field of research, as wished by its advocates. Documentaries and articles promoting civilian peacekeeping portrayed UN and regional peacekeeping negatively before promoting unarmed peacekeeping as the best alternative.[4]
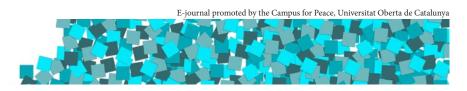
4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND CIVILIAN PEACEKEEPING

Since comparison has been used to promote civilian or unarmed peacekeeping (as being advocated), it is essential to examine points of convergence and divergence between it and peacekeeping in its original framework. This section explores principles, functional activities and characteristics that define both forms of peacekeeping.

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2 Protective accompaniment involves literally walking or travelling with a threatened individual, living in threatened communities, or being based at the location of a threatened activity or organizational office (Mahony, 2006, p. 68).

3 Ralph Corriere, Tim Wallis and Lisa Schirch: see references.

4 Report on UN peacekeeping published on PBS on May 15, 2009 available at http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/520/index.html

4.1. Principles of peacekeeping

Peacekeeping principles were developed in a context of threat to international peace and security which the United Nations vowed to preserve. Traditional principles of UN peacekeeping were originally enunciated with the deployment of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in Sinai in response to the Suez crisis. The crisis pitted Egypt against France, the UK and Israel, whose forces invaded the canal. UNEF was dispatched to observe the withdrawal of French, British and Israeli forces. It was not the first UN peacekeeping mission to be deployed, but was the first that involved armed peacekeepers and openly invoked the question of the use of force (Findlay, 2002, p. 20). Key guiding principles for UNEF, which also became the basis for future UN peacekeeping missions, were:

a)   The consent of all parties involved;
b)   Impartiality;
c)   Force is to be used only as the last resort in case of self-defence.

The principle of general consent of parties involved lost its initial importance. Whereas the legitimacy of deployment was justified by the consent of all concerned parties and the resolution of the UN General Assembly or Security Council, current peace operations focus more on impartiality. Thus, the consent of belligerents for the deployment of an operation ceased to be an unconditional requirement (MOD, 1999). Nor is this principle of consent a requirement for the deployment of a civilian peacekeeping mission. Many of these are deployed by invitation, through working with local civil society organizations (Carrière, 2010). Actors may be consulted and may give their endorsement, but they may not be involved until the peacekeepers are operational.

Consent may be compared to acceptance in civilian peacekeeping. The only difference is that consent is obtained from parties to the conflict and acceptance is gained from a range of stakeholders from the community to actors or parties in the conflict. Traditional peacekeeping operates in a top-down framework whereas civilian peacekeeping engages a range of stakeholders and actors at various levels of society, from the grass-roots to top policy-making spheres. To gain acceptance, a mission or project has to win the trust and credibility of the local community and other stakeholders (Schweitzer, 2010). Acceptance not only provides legitimacy to peacekeepers and their mission, but also increases the security for teams on the ground, and the presence of the latter enhances safety for communities threatened by attack. While the notion of consent is diminishing in UN and regional peace operations, the principle of acceptance remains fundamental in civilian peacekeeping: nothing is possible without it.
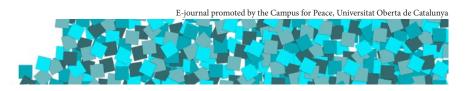
Another key principle of traditional peacekeeping is impartiality. Peacekeeping forces were to avoid taking sides in the conflict, being dragged into the conflict, by maintaining the fine line of impartiality. Impartiality represents a pillar for consent (Hansen et al., 2004) and has been called the 'oxygen' of peacekeeping (Findlay, 2002, p. 4). There was a general assumption that maintaining impartiality was the only way peacekeepers could deliver their mandate. Tharoor (1995/96) stated: "The only way peacekeepers can work is by being trusted by both sides, being clear and transparent in their dealings, and keeping lines of communication open". Failing to maintain impartiality may turn peacekeepers into an enemy force, leading to attacks from one or more conflicting parties (Findlay, 2002, p. 4).

The principle of impartiality can equate to non-partisanship in civilian peacekeeping missions. Peacekeepers are expected to treat information with equal thoroughness and not to adopt political or ideological views of either of the parties. The close ties with local activism and local civil society organizations make the maintenance of non-partisanship a major challenge. Many activists have strong opinions and might, to a certain extent, be the political or activist wing of one of the parties in the conflict. Working closely with them might be perceived by the opposing party as siding with the enemy, which may affect the mission's credibility and acceptance.

The use of force is not part of civilian peacekeeping but is an essential part of UN and regional peace operations. Initially, the principle was limited to a very strict concept of self-defence. Peacekeepers were lightly armed to protect themselves in the case of attack or imminent attack. It was more a personalized self-defence rather than a general concept (Findlay, 2002, p. 4). The original concept provided grounds for peacekeepers to use force only when their personal safety was directly threatened; later it expanded to include the protection of civilian populations.

Consent and impartiality confer a sense of security that precludes the use of force. Sir Urquhart maintained that the real strength of a peacekeeping force is not in its capacity to use force, but to *not* use force, thereby remaining above the conflict and preserving its unique position and prestige (Urquhart, 1987, p. 178-9). The principal tools of the peacekeeper are negotiation and persuasion, not the use of force (Findlay, 2002, p. 14). These assumptions were justified in UNEF and other missions until the end of the Cold War, with the exception of ONUC.

The use of force in UN peace operations goes back to the ONUC. The controversy surrounding ONUC stemmed from a debate over the interpretation of the mandate, especially regarding the use of force (Abi-Saab, 1978, p. 39-44). The first interpretation held that peacekeeping forces should stick to using force only as a last resort in self-defence (Tshiband, 2009). The other approach sought to ex-

tend the use of force beyond self-defence or to expand the concept of self-defence itself. Traditionally, self-defence was intended to protect peacekeepers and their colleagues if they were confronted by hostile action (Findlay 2002, p. 14). Since ONUC, self-defence was expanded to allow peacekeepers to use force to frustrate attempts to disarm them; to defend their posts, vehicles and equipment against seizure or armed attack; and to support UN troops from other contingents (Findlay, 2002, p. 15, 60). It later covered the protection of civilian personnel as well as civilians under protection. Self-defence is integral to the concept of peacekeeping as originally conceived (Ibid.). Thus, it would not be an overstatement to say that the use of force is linked to the very essence of peacekeeping as it is known today.

Using syllogism, one can say that civilian peacekeeping is not peacekeeping, since it does not use force (unarmed peacekeeping). However, Sir Urquhart's conclusion that the strength of peacekeeping lies in not using force, although it [peacekeeping] possesses the capacity (Urquhart, 1978, p. 39-44), downplays the assertion that the use of force is at the heart of peacekeeping: the essence of peacekeeping is, instead, in the capacity of peacekeepers to create conditions for peace initiatives and efforts through persuasion and negotiation. This is what civilian peacekeeping is all about: creating space for local peace initiatives.

Besides negotiation, persuasion and their international presence, the dissuasive and deterrent effect of armed peacekeepers is due to the fact that spoilers and parties to the conflict are aware of their power and capacity to use force to impose a mandate if required. Once parties to the conflict and spoilers realize that peacekeepers are poorly or not at all equipped to face or stop attacks, and that there is no military power to back them up, they, the parties and spoiler, may be encouraged to carry out attacks against civilian populations or even peacekeepers. Peacekeepers were even branded as toy soldiers because they were not able to dissuade militiamen to stop attacking populations in Rwanda (Prunier, 1995, p. 274). The same happened in the former Yugoslavia. Peacekeepers became part of the conflict background, powerless, as they watched horrible atrocities being committed against civilians rather than using dissuasive force against the perpetrators to protect civilians – the very civilians they were deployed to secure. This situation is more likely to occur with those who are less concerned with international recognition and unaccountable to any formally recognized authority (as with organized criminal groups who kidnap for ransom). The threat of the use of force from multinational forces seems to be the dissuasive element.

Things are even more complicated in civilian peacekeeping missions where peacekeepers face a multitude of security challenges, from petty crimes to kidnappings and armed or targeted attacks. The lack of force to support civilian peacekeepers can be a crippling factor for the successful delivery of their mandate. However, in some cases, parties to the conflict tend to fill this gap by providing a safe environment for peacekeepers to work. In Mindanao, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front provide security for foreign military observers deployed for the International Monitoring Team (IMT). They also create a secure environment in which civilian peacekeepers from the Nonviolent Peaceforce, an international non-governmental organization, to work. It is a great challenge for peacekeepers to depend on parties to the conflict for security. Since they are unarmed, civilian peacekeepers do not have the capacity to stop armed encounters. In fact, they are even restricted in their movement in times of encounters, except in some exceptional cases when accompanied by parties to the conflict and, sometimes, uniformed international observers.

4.2. Characteristics and special functionalities of Peacekeeping Operations

The United Nations Operations in the Congo played a critical role in the evolution of UN peacekeeping operations. It was the first UNPKO to have been established by the Security Council and the first multidimensional operation ever established by the UN, beyond the traditional peacekeeping framework. After this mission, UN peace support operations were not only deployed to secure ceasefire agreements, but to take responsibility for a whole range of activities not envisioned in previous peacekeeping operations. Current peace operations are characterized by the following qualities:

- multidimensional and multifunctional;
- multilateral;
- multinational;
- multicultural.

a) Multidimensional and multifunctional

ONUC was the only multidimensional UN operation during the Cold War. With the end of the Cold War, the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia opened the door to subsequent operations. Multidimensional operations involve civilian, military and police components fulfilling distinct functions (Hansen et al. 2004; Ramsbotham et al. 2006, p. 135-36). Peace operations evolved from a ceasefire maintenance function to a multiplicity of tasks involving security, humanitarian and political objectives (Ramsbotham et al. 2006, p. 135-36). Every component has specific functions and sub-functions created to suit particular needs arising from the context. The political function would combine early warning monitoring, political and governance reforms, electoral assistance (not

election observation), good offices, etc. The table below synthesizes component and associated functions.

Table 1. Functions of multidimensional peacekeeping operations

Component	Function
Military Component	• monitoring and verification of ceasefires • cantonment • disarmament and demobilisation of combatants • overseeing the withdrawal of foreign forces • mine-awareness education and mine-clearance • providing security for UN and other international activities in support of the peace process
Civilian police component	• crowd control • establishing and maintaining a judicial system • law enforcement • monitoring training and advising local law enforcement authorities on organisational, administrative and human rights issues
Civilian component	*Political element*: • political guidance of the overall process • assisting in the rehabilitation of existing political institutions • promoting national reconciliation *Electoral element*: • monitoring and verification of all aspects and stages of the electoral process; co-ordination of technical assistance • educating the public on electoral processes and helping in the development of grass-roots democratic institutions *Human rights element*: • monitoring human rights • investigating specific cases of alleged human rights violations • promoting human rights *Humanitarian element*: • delivering humanitarian aid (food and other emergency relief supplies) • implementing refugee repatriation programmes • resettling displaced persons • reintegrating ex-combatants

Source: Hansen et al., 2004

Although civilian peacekeeping embraces many functions, its focus remains on civilian functions, mostly creating space for local peace initiatives at the community level, shielding targeted or at-risk groups, linking grassroots with service providers and the policy-making level. It might deliver some of the functions devoted to the civilian component of multidimensional peacekeeping operations, but its scope remains very limited in the absence of supranational mandate.

Civilian peacekeeping, in its current form, is derived from civil society (Schweitzer, 2009). As such, it can only play roles limited to civil society organizations. Reminding the government of its roles in the protection and delivery of basic services as well as channelling some form of assistance and support to vulnerable and conflict-affected populations, civil society peacekeepers cannot access critical governmental functions such as re-establishing the rule of law and law enforcement, cantonment, DDR, SSR,[5] etc. These roles remain the responsibility of the military, the police or diplomatic and not civil society.

b) Multilateralism and multinational

There are many definitions for multilateralism. However, only a few that are closer to the objective pursued in this article will be referred to. John Ruggie states that: "multilateralism refers to coordinating relations among three or more states in accordance with certain principles" (Ruggie, 1992). Caporaso (1992) in turn explains:

> "As an organizing principle, the institution of multilateralism is distinguished from other forms by three properties: indivisibility, generalized principles of conduct, and diffuse reciprocity. Indivisibility can be thought of as the scope (both geographic and functional) over which costs and benefits are spread… Generalized principles of conduct usually come in the form of norms exhorting general if not universal modes of relating to other states, rather than differentiating relations case-by-case on the basis of individual preferences, situational exigencies, or a priori particularistic grounds. Diffuse reciprocity adjusts the utilitarian lenses for the long view, emphasizing that actors expect to benefit in the long run and over many issues, rather than every time on every issue."

Ramsbotham et al. summarize that multilateralism implies the involvement of several levels of actors in an operation: these could be two or more conflicting parties, as well as the UN and other international actors (Ramsbotham et al. 2006, p. 136). A logical consequence of multilateralism, which can also be mentioned as a principle, is collective responsibility. Any action conducted within a multilateral framework engages the responsibility of all involved parties. The UN, NATO and regional organizations represent multilateralism in their functionality. Peace operations initiated by these organizations engage state parties individually and collectively. By having many states and nations involved, either at the mandating body (Security Council, intergovernmental and regional councils), at the troop contributing level or at the operational level (DPKO, etc.),

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5   DDR: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion; SSR: Security Sector Reform.

the responsibility for operations is shared by states, both individually and collectively. Multilateral peace operations are also multinational: they involve many countries. Multilateralism in peace operations creates a supra-governmental sense and provides greater diplomatic weight and credibility than an NGO-led operation. The credibility of the operation is based on the moral capital of the multilateral engagement between international, regional and national actors. The UN represents multilateralism and the international community.

UN and regional peace operations present both the multilateral and multinational characteristics, but civilian peacekeeping operations do not reflect either. They are international in their composition, but not multinational, since members of the projects are selected individually and not nominated by their respective government. As a result, actions involving civilian peacekeepers do not engage the responsibility of their respective governments, but their employer. Most civilian peacekeeping organizations are private. They therefore fail to be multinational and multilateral, if these references are attributed with their technical meaning as used in international relations. They also have less diplomatic weight than the UN and regional organizations.

5. THE PEACEBUILDING EDGE

The orthodoxy in peace and conflict research presupposes that peacebuilding is the last link in the chain of peace operations after peacemaking and peacekeeping (or peace enforcement). However, peacebuilding can take place at any stage in a peace process (Darby et al. 2003, p. 195). A range of activities can be performed to augment the potential of success of peace efforts and reduce the likelihood of violence at any stage. While peacekeeping is limited in time, peacebuilding requires a lot of time to address deep-rooted issues and bridge the gap between conflicting parties.

In the list of tasks devoted to civilian peacekeeping, a great deal are in fact peacebuilding activities. Empowering local communities, for example, is a critical function. In essence, capacity building and confidence building aim to empower local communities to take their fate into their own hands. These are long term goals and are addressed by peacebuilding; peacekeeping only creates an environment conducive for these activities to take place.

6. CONCLUSION

Having compared and contrasted peacekeeping and civilian peacekeeping, the time has come to answer some critical questions stemming from this article:

- Can civilian peacekeeping be a peacekeeping operation?
- Can it be an alternative to multidimensional peacekeeping?
- Can it be envisaged separately from multidimensional peace operations?

In light of the analysis, it appears that peacekeeping is not limited to stopping or preventing violence. Law enforcement and armed force, as well as other groups, regularly stop and prevent violence from happening and yet they fail to be peacekeepers. As there are different forms of violence there are different means and methods to stop it. Stopping criminal and targeted violence is different from preventing the escalation of war and related violence. Peacekeeping is a conflict management activity, i.e. there should be an open or pending conflict before making any reference to peacekeeping.

The theory upon which civilian peacekeeping is built is borrowed from peacekeeping and peacebuilding, making it an excellent match to address conflict, reducing the level of violence and addressing deep-rooted issues of conflict-affected societies. Creating space for local initiatives, empowering civil society members and providing international presence to shield targeted groups and individuals is what could be called a magic combination for successful conflict transformation. This combination is unique because it does not incorporate force to support peacekeepers, but relies on the acceptance of all stakeholders, and expects them to take ownership of the concept.

As effective as it looks, civilian peacekeeping has some weaknesses. It is vulnerable to spoilers and determined actors (Wallis, 2010). The lack of dissuasive power exposes peacekeepers to a range of potential malicious and criminal acts, unlike armed peacekeepers and civilians backed by forces. Another drawback is the likely lack of understanding of military strategy. Lacking military experience and military personnel sometimes works against peacekeepers when they are dealing with military and armed groups. *A military man obeys a military man*. The military is often hesitant to receive remarks or advice from civilians, but respect is needed to enable peacekeepers to collaborate effectively with military and armed groups. Additionally, peacekeepers, except former military, would not easily understand security dynamics and essential strategies to control escalation and, consequently, reduce violence. Finally, the military is noted for discipline. This is not the case for civilian operations. Military structures are tight and adhere to strict rules. The observance of these rules is necessary for the successful completion of their mission, whatever it may be. All these weaknesses may affect the effectiveness of operations deployed within the unarmed civilian peacekeeping framework.

This paper does not conclude whether or not civilian peacekeeping, as described here, is a peacekeeping operation.

It is premature to draw conclusions about its status vis-à-vis peace and conflict studies as the concept is still developing and has not yet been clearly defined. Civilian peacekeeping has existed since the UN adopted multidimensional peacekeeping operations. The operations may benefit from closer relationships to the communities they are there to protect rather than with policy-makers. The framework of UN and regional peace operations would have been more effective had they adopted a horizontal rather than a hierarchical structure. Civilian peacekeeping, in general, is not a new concept. It has been part of UN and regional operations.

It would be difficult to say that civilian peacekeeping is the best alternative to current UN and regional peacekeeping. The most judicious thing is to conduct real life experiments, as in Sri Lanka and the Philippines at the moment, and previously Guatemala, where civilian peacekeeping programmes have been conducted or are ongoing. Results of these experiments will determine the path this merging discipline will follow in the future. They will be determined by the operations' capacity (a) to sensibly affect the escalation among warring groups, (b) to protect civilians and (c) to pave the way for longer reconciliation endeavours. However, evaluation will have to be done in consideration of the political, social and security environment, the support received and the resources available. ■

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Recommended citation

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