

rights intelligence. More immediately, they need that same human rights intelligence so as to inform their own tactical decisions. While this task can be carried out by advisers to the SRSG or a Force Commander, there are obvious benefits to having an human rights operation (HRO) that encompasses a wide variety of human rights professionals who can provide a better and more coherent collection and analysis capacity.

7.1 Central Collection and Analysis of Information

The HRO should play the central role in a UN operation in the collection of human rights intelligence from a variety of sources, UN and other. The HRO should also play a large role in the analysis of this information, particularly where it is being used to inform the day-to-day operation of the HRO itself, and the larger UN field operation. However, such activity, particularly the intelligence gathering function, requires extensive staff resources.

Fortunately there are many UN field partners that can play a major information gathering role. UN military and CIVPOL in particular because of their numbers and geographical dispersion, can be key information partners if they are prepared and motivated to do so. UNDP because of its long term presence in most countries, invariably has an extensive network of 'on the ground' informants, and know the country better than any other UN body. As with peacekeepers and CIVPOL, UNDP needs to be motivated and mandated to play a human rights information gathering role, as they have long seen their mandate as limited to traditional development work. Recently as evidenced by their human rights programming in Guatemala and elsewhere, UNDP has begun to broaden its mandate in recognition of the linkages between development and human rights.

Then there are other UN bodies such as UNHCR that already carry out extensive information gathering to inform and direct their own operations, or DHA's Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS). Sharing such human rights information however can be problematic.

Often for good reason, UN sectors and agencies jealously guard their sources of human rights information. At other times, natural bureaucratic divisions within a UN field operation or within the UN proper, militate against the easy sharing of information. To press for formal exchanges of information will not be very successful, although recent moves by DPA-DPKO-DHA in New York to increase and systematize cooperation is heartening. Usually such formal cooperation and sharing, particularly of human rights intelligence, will not be voluntary. Imposed sharing, even by the UN Secretary-General or other senior UN staff, will often only drive human rights information gathering underground. Even more problematic is the exchange of information between UN and non-UN sources such as NGOs or national government agencies. A much more effective strategy is the use of informal links.

HRO staff must be particularly adept in developing and using such informal lines of communication. Accessing the human rights intelligence or potential of other parts of a peacekeeping or humanitarian operation, or non-UN sources, requires a guarantee by the HRO that they will make appropriate use of such information and that they will not 'burn' their sources.