

INTRODUCTION

It is commonplace now to observe that in the late 20th century war is more often than not being waged against civilians. How appropriate, then, that civilians are beginning to play a predominant role in United Nations' peace support operations (PSOs) intended to bring an end to war and a beginning of peace.

Clearly, civilians have a large stake in the outcome of such undertakings. But civilian participation in peace support operations is more than a reflection of their interest. It is the result, instead, of three closely related developments: the end of the Cold War, the prominence of intra-state conflict, and the resort to peacebuilding as a method for addressing these post-cold war conflicts.

PSOs have responded to these developments by becoming a multi-disciplinary art to a far greater degree than they were in the first 45 years of United Nations (UN) peace missions. As such, they represent the international community's struggle to come to grips with conflict and its resolution on the doorstep of the new millennium. Front and centre in that struggle is the effort to promote peacebuilding. Indeed, PSOs are often the entry point for a longer term UN bid to build peace in recently war-torn societies.

In this study, I will examine how civilian peacebuilding is being integrated into UN mandated PSOs. While the focus will be on some of the more recent or ongoing missions -- MINURCA in the Central African Republic, UNOMSIL in Sierra Leone, UNTAES in Eastern Slavonia, MINURSO in Western Sahara, and UNOMIL in Liberia -- reference will also be made to some earlier missions.

The purpose of the study is to identify some of the issues that Canada and the United Nations will likely be grappling with as they engage in new and future PSOs. What types of PSOs can we expect? Does Canada have the appropriate tools to contribute to them? What progress is being made toward better coordination among UN departments and agencies and how can it be improved, if at all? What gaps in policy and doctrine exist? These are some of the