

OSCE has experience in areas such, for instance: election observation, human rights monitoring, the promotion of free media, and border monitoring. In some ways, this new era of peace-support operations was ushered in with the Kosovo Verification Mission – an unarmed civilian mission in which the OSCE was mandated with monitoring a cease-fire between the Yugoslav forces and the Kosovars, monitoring human rights, helping to establish democratic structures, and preparing for an eventual vote on Kosovo's future status. *Despite the fact that the mission ended in an evacuation, the lessons learned from the experience were crucial in developing an understanding of the needs and dynamics of today's peace-support operations.* The OSCE has moved away from its earlier, *ad hoc* methods of staffing missions and is developing a mechanism known as REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams). It is streamlining its staffing processes and introducing new information technology to be able to field missions more effectively.

Some of the general characteristics which distinguish peace-support operations from peacebuilding, technical and other initiatives are:

- extremely short response time
- optimal skill set includes: previous experience in a conflict (immediate) post-conflict mission, personal security training, first aid, stress management, etc.
- mission-oriented rather than objective-driven tasks
- short-term nature.

Much of the current mission mandates are echoed in Canada's human security policies. Among the Canadian mechanisms for peace-support operations is the Canadian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (CANADEM). Established in 1997, CANADEM operates at arm's length from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and maintains rosters of Canadians available for international service. However, CANADEM is not a deployment agency. In the case of Kosovo, CARE Canada provided deployment services for Canadians. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has also been intimately involved in peace-support operations, providing funding and programming insights, as well as its network of partners. The RCMP and Correction Services Canada have also contributed.

Weaknesses of the Canadian mechanism include :

- unclear lines of responsibility
- holes in the rostering system
- lack of a flexible, quick disbursing funding mechanism
- uneven vetting of candidates
- questions about appropriate training
- differing legal status of those deployed
- little systematic co-ordination among Canadian deployment (and deployment-related) organisations, leading to overlapping mandates and gaps in deployment.

To address especially the last weakness, DFAIT established a Deployment Coordination Unit. While the Unit is still in formative stages, its primary role would be to identify gaps in