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CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION
(CIMIC):
A FOREIGN AND DEFENCE
POLICY TOOL

A Foreign Policy Paper
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CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC): A FOREIGN AND DEFENCE POLICY TOOL

INTRODUCTION

As advocated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), within the larger context of foreign policy resides the Human Security Agenda. As the then Minister of Foreign Affairs stated, “Canada’s human security agenda responds to new global realities. Its goal is to ensure that people can live in freedom from fear.”¹ In an effort to make the concept a reality, within the overall context of the Human Security Agenda, a key component is Canada’s involvement in peace support operations (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Human Security Agenda



Source: DFAIT

Both Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and military organizations had already recognized this need for decades, both had previously during peacekeeping and peace support operations become involved in the processes of post-conflict reconstruction and the rehabilitation of failed states. Also, an awareness arose of the interdependence between civilian and military actors in the peace process. By the nature of their respective cultures, in the peacekeeping milieu, the military became involved on a more ad-hoc basis, while the NGOs were more structured and

better organized to meet the needs of the aforementioned scenarios.

The end of the Cold War and the subsequent multi-lateral involvement of United Nations (UN) and non-UN actors in the peacekeeping, peace support and peace enforcement environments compelled western military establishments to formalize the ad-hoc nature of the support given during these types of operations. This support became known as Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), or as it is referred to by the British, Australian and New Zealand military establishments, Civil Military Affairs (CMA). CIMIC had by the late 1990s evolved into a doctrine advocated by most Western militaries. As the British Department of Defence noted, the end of the Cold War brought about a renaissance in the world of CIMIC, “[and] it became a central feature of British Peace Support Operations...,”² as is has in most other Western militaries. By the late 1990s the Canadian Forces (CF) had developed its own CIMIC doctrine *Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace, Emergencies, Crisis and War*.

OBJECTIVE

CIMIC offers the government of Canada a mechanism to further its foreign policy objectives vis-a-vis the Human Security Agenda. By default, it also offers the Department of National Defence (DND) a clear policy mandate for the CF. For CIMIC to function as an effective policy tool for both the military and the government, three paradigms— that of the military, Government agencies, and non-Governmental actors— must be addressed and co-ordinated to make CIMIC function as outlined in this paper.

While there will be a review of each paradigm, the emphasis will be on the military as CIMIC is clearly a military doctrine, and by this fact CIMIC is operationally the bailiwick of the military. It is hoped that by showing the existing flaws inherent in the present CIMIC ideal, solutions can be offered to enhance CIMIC, specifically as a powerful policy tool that can be used

to enhance Canada's foreign policy objectives as outlined in various government documents and statements over the past decade and-a-half.

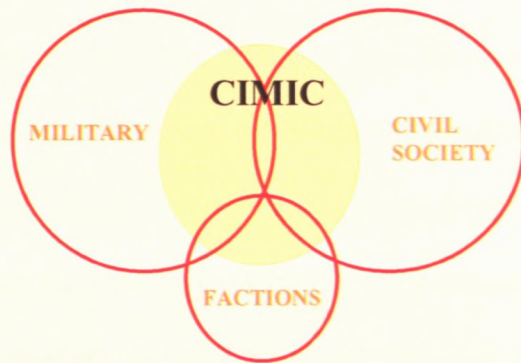
WHAT IS CIMIC?

CIMIC is not to be confused (though it is in Canada—an issue to be discussed later) with civil-military relations. Therefore, before any discussion on CIMIC as a policy tool occurs, there must be a clarification of the two terms. Although there are numerous models, definitions and theories of what the concept of civil-military relations is and how it works, Douglas Bland has offered the best explanation to date: "*civil control of the military is managed and maintained through the sharing of responsibility for control between civilian leaders and military officers.*"³ CIMIC, on the other hand, is supposed to be the relationship that is developed between militaries, GOs, NGOs and other agencies involved in peace-support, humanitarian, and aid to civil power operations at both the domestic and international level. The Canadian Army Lessons Learned Centre notes that "*CIMIC has generally the same meaning for both international and domestic operations. It includes the resources and the arrangements that support the relationship between commanders and non-military agencies.*"⁴ Clearly, CIMIC is not civil-military relations, nor is it intended to be.

The following figures (see figures 2 and 3) offer some basic conceptualizations of the role of CIMIC as it is presently perceived by most western military organizations. Figure 2 depicts CIMIC as a tactical activity that overlaps into various operational spheres. On the other hand, Figure 3 offers a view at the strategic level, where CIMIC can be perceived as an all encompassing activity.

Figure 2: Overlapping CIMIC activities

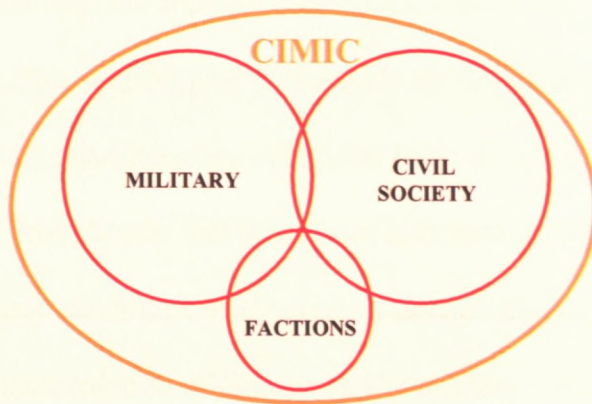
Civil-Military Co-operation



Source: MULTINATIONAL COMPLEX
CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS
Cdr Nick Spence Royal Navy
Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre

Figure 3: All Encompassing CIMIC Activities

Civil-Military Co-operation



Source: MULTINATIONAL COMPLEX
CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS
Cdr Nick Spence Royal Navy
Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre

Key policy issues that must be addressed in regards to both of the perspectives offered above are definition of roles (who is doing what?), terms of reference (who is supporting whom?), and jointness (can one support the other?). These questions can be addressed in some part by the

context of an operation, thus we must have a clear context of CIMIC.

THE CONTEXT OF CIMIC

The use of CIMIC falls into two categories, first—that of national emergencies and aid to civil-power operations and second—that of international crises. For the purpose of a foreign policy tool, this discussion will only focus on the international aspects of CIMIC. When a crisis occurs somewhere, there is a high probability that at some level there are national or international NGOs, private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and other agencies already in place working on development and/or aid related issues. As the crisis develops and security becomes an issue, some agencies withdraw completely from the region while others cut-back on long-term initiatives or move towards relief efforts.

Should the situation deteriorate completely and the national government asks for outside support, this support generally entails the intervention of security forces in the form of some sort of military peacekeeping or observer force. In general, the military is the last actor to come on the ground, and the one that is the least informed of the general situation. Given that each operation has unique conditions which create unforeseen problems in planning, coordination, communication and implementation of objectives, the military will always be at a disadvantage at the beginning and possibly throughout the operation. Under these types of circumstances, though the objectives of the military and the NGO organizations are the same—stabilization of the situation—both have different reasons for becoming involved (see Table 1).

Table 1: Different Perspectives on Complex Humanitarian Emergencies

| <i>Situation stabilizing is the common goal, but for different reasons</i> | | |
|--|--|--|
| | THROUGH THE EYES OF THE MILITARY | THROUGH THE EYES OF THE NGOs |
| A | | -NGOs conduct field operations in accordance with organizational objectives |
| B | -A deteriorating situation warrants monitoring -Situation deteriorates further. Public pressure for international response. Political authority determines to commit forces | -A deteriorating situation prevents normal field operations, but work continues within the unstable environment -The situation deteriorates to point that conditions prevent operations- international assistance desired |
| C | -Military deploys in force to "create a secure environment" -Military priority: security/force protection -Military seeks to co-ordinate NGOs to more effectively carry out missions | -NGO priority: continue operations, maintain independence -NGO concerned that military wants to "take charge" and control NGOs: perception that military footprint too large |
| D | -Military assists in reconstruction- conscious that it must prevent civil sector from becoming dependent on the military -Relative stability achieved, military withdraws | -NGOs resume operations under more secure conditions created by the military. Take advantage of unique military assets |
| E | | -The NGO mission continues |

Source: Command and Control Research Program (CCRP), US DOD. Witzig-Davidson, Lisa et al, Humanitarian and Peace Operations: NGOs and the Military in the Interagency process, NDU Press, 1996, Chap 4, p. 7.

The above scenario and the inherently different nature of NGO and military culture has led to confusion, suspicion and sometimes conflict over their respective roles and purposes during peace support operations. This in turn has led to an ongoing tension between the military and civilian entities involved in related activities. Part of this tension arises from the fact that the NGO community has generally been involved in relief and development activities long before the military showed up for support, but with military involvement, the latter is seen as taking over the mission. As noted during the Kosovo operations in 1999, "the view of many aid agencies [was] that the 'seepage' of NATO military forces into the humanitarian sphere represented a major problem."⁵

It has also been argued that the military is not even “an appropriate and legitimate humanitarian actor.”⁶ This has especially become true when dealing with CIMIC doctrines, which are clearly militarily driven concepts. To better understand this context, we must review the military origins of CIMIC in order to grasp the broader policy landscape in which it operates.

CIMIC: THE MILITARY DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVE

When it comes to peacekeeping, the successful management of the operation requires “clear political objectives, a unified command structure and firm political control of the military.”⁷ This ideal by default applies to CIMIC related activities and operations, hence the advent of CIMIC doctrine.

The origin of the CF’s CIMIC doctrine is “primarily based on NATO CIMIC doctrine, but also relies on U.S. Civil Affairs doctrine and UK experiences, CF lessons learned and a wide source of reference material.”⁸ The main document that defines CIMIC doctrine is written at an operational level and “constitutes an amplifying doctrinal publication to Chapter 30 of B-GG-005-004/AF-000, CANADIAN FORCES OPERATIONS Manual.”⁹ This means that CIMIC doctrine is an extension of the written ‘guidance and direction’ given to the military commanders and organizers of the CF’s international operations.¹⁰ It is relevant to note that the operational aspect is of importance here, that it is the ‘doing’ rather than the larger strategic picture, the ‘thinking.’ So before a serious discussion of the place that CIMIC doctrine has in the larger scope of public policy in Canada, we must focus on the importance of the concept of ‘doctrine’ in terms of the military definition.

WHAT IS DOCTRINE?

The CF defines military doctrine as “the fundamental tenants for the employment of military forces to translate the CF mission and strategic objectives into action.”¹¹ The Canadian Air

Force defines doctrine more specifically:

Simply stated, military doctrine is comprised of principles, theories and policies, accepted as valid and reliable, which offer military forces good chances for success when applied in periods of tension, crisis or war. Military doctrine explains in broad terms how operations should be conducted so that operational objectives can be realized. Doctrine is, in essence, "that which is taught." It is an accumulation of knowledge which is gained primarily from the study and analysis of experience. As such, doctrine reflects what works best.¹²

Given that CIMIC doctrine is based on NATO and US doctrines, these respective definitions should also be considered. The US military defines doctrine as the "Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application."¹³ While NATO, on the other hand, defines doctrine as the "fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application."¹⁴ As we can see they are essentially the same idea.

In light of these definitions, it is important to note that military doctrine is neither mandatory nor is it meant to be dogmatic. However, this latter point can become the reality of military doctrine, as noted during the Proceedings of the Conference on Ethics in Canadian Defence:

This system of military doctrine serves a useful purpose in that it provides a framework for the initial education of neophyte military thinkers, but may make it difficult to change our organization. After this initial introduction reliance on a doctrinal system hinders the building of an intellectually strong, powerful, creative, and ethical officer corps.¹⁵

The problem with military doctrines of any kind is that they attempt to influence the thinking of military personnel into an accepted and established framework "*within which military operations can be understood.*"¹⁶ The problem stems from the fact that the framework offered by a doctrine can, over time, become the accepted mode of operating, and in fact can become a

de facto procedure where one does not actually exist. Thus, something may become mandatory and is enforced with a dogmatic zeal.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Recommend that CF review CIMIC doctrine every five years to keep it updated and to confirm that it has not become entrenched dogma

THE DOCTRINAL POLICY CONTEXT

Two key aspects of doctrine, in terms of the Canadian usage, come to light from the framework that has been defined above: (1) that there are strategic objectives; and (2) that these are defined by policy. And it is, theoretically, in this context that CIMIC operates, as noted by DND:

Canadian foreign policy is an external dimension of domestic policy, seen as a continuum, concerned with three dominant questions of high politics: international order, peace and war. Foreign policy decisions are the outcome of governmental politics influenced by international and domestic concerns as well as policy constraints. Civil-military cooperation reflects this dynamic and ideally seeks to create an environment conducive to stable and harmonious human relations where all levels of society can benefit from economic prosperity and development. The end state of civil-military cooperation is to achieve a sustainable peace and quality of life; a mirror image of Canadian beliefs, values and interests in the world.¹⁷

Clearly, the authors of CIMIC doctrine see it in the larger context of Canadian public policy, more specifically in the fields of foreign, defence and security policy.¹⁸ In addition, as DND notes "Canada's defence policy, defence objectives, strategy and vision are all linked."¹⁹ Further to this, DND points out that "CIMIC is an important aspect of the Defence Team mission statement reflected in Defence 2000 and DPG 99: **The mission of DND and the CF is to defend Canada and Canadian interests and values while contributing to international peace and security.**"²⁰ However, as noted previously, there seems to be a disconnect between the defined role and the policy context of CIMIC. Namely, that CIMIC for all intents and purposes remains only

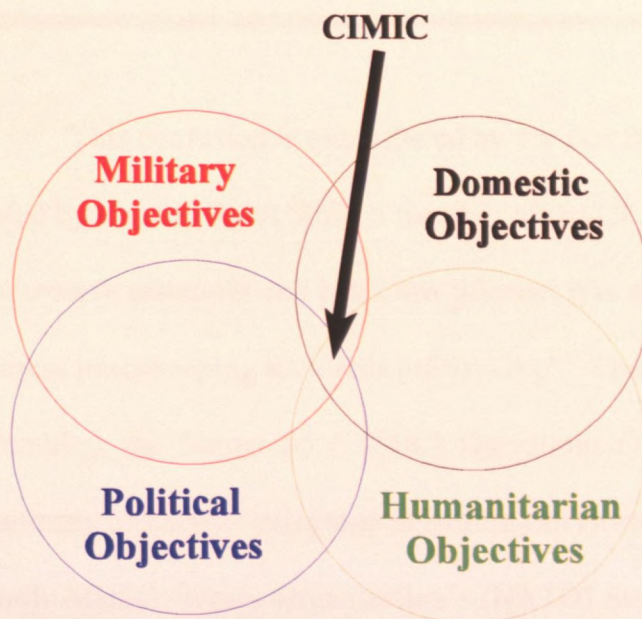
functional at the operational (tactical) level. Beyond the above statement on the role of CIMIC, there is little evidence to show any substantive linkage to policy implementation or liaison with other government departments.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Clarify the operational and strategic role of CIMIC within DND documents and articulate the linkages in regards to policy statements.

Given the above policy, it is not surprising that CIMIC, at least on paper, is designed to play a major part in the projection of Canadian policy goals. However, the doctrinal document does not offer clarity, but rather confuses the role of CIMIC. For greater clarity, as illustrated in Figure 4 below, CIMIC can, under the appropriate policy environment, be centred in the conjunction of the four major policy fields that encompass governmental objectives in the formulation of foreign policy. Hence, the need to look more closely at CIMIC as a policy tool.

Figure 4: CIMIC in Context of the Larger Policy Environment.



Source: Sunil Ram 2002

THE POLICY CONTEXT

The complex policy environment, as presented in Figure 4, illustrates how CIMIC can be designed to extend the objectives of the government through the auspices of the Human Security Agenda²¹ by forming a comprehensive CIMIC policy that can function in the four policy fields of military, domestic, political and humanitarian policy objectives. If CIMIC can be accepted, as depicted by figure 3, as an all encompassing activity, then Figure 4 provides the policy framework with which to develop a policy document.

There has been a subtle movement towards this goal, but it has proven to be problematic. The term CIMIC has now officially replaced the term civil-military relations.²² Given the previous discussion on the definition of CIMIC and civil-military relations, the change in definition creates a serious policy contradiction. At best this situation causes confusion as to the actual purpose of CIMIC, at worst it reduces Canada's foreign policy goals to a state of confusion.

RECOMMENDATION 3

- (a) Disconnect the term CIMIC from the term Civil-Military Relations. Clarify the definition of both terms.
 - (b) Include CIMIC directly in foreign policy documents, clarify its role in the larger policy context.
-

This confusion is exacerbated by the fact that CIMIC has a low priority within DND. As noted by Captain Ryan Smid, a member of the CF JHQ CIMIC J9 (CIMIC Plans), "CIMIC does not receive resources and has a low priority; it is almost an afterthought and is not related to the present peacekeeping standards [of the CF]."²³ This view was further reinforced by Captain Dean Trembley, the former S5 (CIMIC) Operations Officer for the 3rd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment (3 RCR) Battlegroup in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He noted that during his tour with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Stabilization Force (SFOR), there was a lack of

understanding and education amongst CF personnel regarding what CIMIC was and what role it played in operations. This lack of education and training extended “from the non-commissioned personnel to the highest commanders.” CIMIC only saw support in the field when an officer or commander had a vested interest in the doctrine.²⁴

This lack of communication extends to the highest levels in National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ). As noted by one military writer, “the small size of the CIMIC staff [in the CF as a whole] and their lack of contact with NDHQ is disturbing from an operational perspective.”²⁵ Captain Trembley observed that during his pre-deployment training and time-in-theatre there was a “lack of interest at higher levels.” He went on to say that there was no validation of the CIMIC role and “nothing from NDHQ, Brigade, or lower command, in terms of guidance.”²⁶ This can be reflected by the way co-operation between the CF and civilian agents occurs. It was noted during Operation Kinetic that “co-operation between Canadian Forces, Canadian NGO’s and CIDA happened more by accident than by design.”²⁷ It is also interesting to note that CIDA does not specifically mention CIMIC in its policy framework, but looks at the broader ideal of human security.²⁸

At least on paper, there seems to be a clear linkage of the military’s CIMIC doctrine and foreign policy, but there is little evidence that the civilian or senior military components of the civil-military relationship are aware of CIMIC and its associated policy linkages.

RECOMMENDATION 4

- (a) Institute an awareness program about CIMIC throughout all government departments and agencies.
 - (b) Recommend that senior CF and DND personnel review CIMIC doctrine and the policy role it plays.
-

By changing the terminology from civil-military relations to CIMIC, the CF has possibly lost sight of the larger policy context, and by default confused the role of CIMIC at higher

governmental levels. The new definition, as follows, has broken down the traditional civil-military relationship into two separate and defined categories, neither of which have anything to do with the traditional concept of civil-military relations:

(1) **CIMIC in a Domestic Environment.** In peace, emergencies or crisis, the resources and arrangements which support the relationship between CF commanders and Canadian federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, and civil populations in an area where CF elements are stationed, or plan to be deployed, employed and supported. Such measures could include cooperation and coordination of activities between CF commanders and non-governmental, national or international agencies, organizations and civil authorities; and

(2) **CIMIC in an International Environment.** In peace, emergencies, crisis or war, the resources and arrangements which support the relationship between TFCs [Task Force Commanders] and foreign national authorities, military, paramilitary, as well as civil populations and foreign national governments in an area where TF [Task Force] elements are or plan to be deployed, employed and supported. Such measures would also include cooperation and coordination of activities and operations between TFCs and non-governmental and international agencies, organizations and civil authorities.²⁹

There is an inherent complication in the definition as outlined by the above categories. The problem lies in the fact that civil-military relations have always been perceived at a strategic level, as outlined previously. The present definition of CIMIC doctrine tries to re-define the traditional macro civil-military relationship, while it functions solely at the micro level. There is no realistic political milieu, hence no real strategic thinking. Ultimately, CIMIC is a doctrine. So how can it re-define what the civil-military relationship is?

As noted previously, given that the CF's CIMIC doctrine is primarily based on NATO CIMIC doctrine, it is important to note that NATO observed that "the CIMIC concept is ambiguous. In the sense in which it is normally used by the military it falls short of covering the entire field of civil-military co-operation [relations]."³⁰ This redefinition of what the CF sees as the civil-military relationship is a situation in which:

CIMIC, whether domestic or international, deals with assistance to governments and civil populations in a geographic area where logistics and social services have been destroyed or rendered ineffective as a result of a crisis or conflict. This assistance may take the form of economic recovery, rebuilding civil infrastructure or passing information to a local population on the purpose and objectives of the programmed assistance programs.³¹

The latter definition, has nothing to do with civil control of the military. This flaw aside, from a policy perspective, the lack of a larger strategic goal is reflected in the reality that the CF has no dedicated troops to CIMIC operations.³² Moreover, to quote the doctrine document itself, there is no “formalized CF CIMIC structure at the strategic, operational or tactical levels beyond a limited organizational capability known as J5 Branch.” The J5 Branch is an organic element of the Joint Headquarters (JHQ) in CFB (Canadian Forces Base) Kingston, but its structure is task dependent at the operational level.³³

At the ground level CIMIC is clearly ad-hoc in nature. As Olivia Ward, the European Bureau Chief of the Toronto Star, observed of CF troops in the Balkans, “few groups [local populations] dislike the CF as it is associated with peacekeeping operations and small projects initiated by individual units [or personnel].”³⁴ This ad-hoc nature of operations also extends right down to the personnel requirements. In the case of Operation “Kinetic” in Kosovo, it was noted that “no position in the CIMIC cell is reflected in the Table of Organization and Equipment [TO&E] for the Battle Group.”³⁵ Captain Dean Trembley noted that the CIMIC section positions had to be filled within his Battle Group in Bosnia in an ad-hoc manner. Given the low priority of CIMIC, the CIMIC section was used in many cases as “dumping area for non-effective personnel,” those who were incapable of fulfilling their actual role in theatre due to lack of pre-deployment training or a lack of appropriate military skills.³⁶

RECOMMENDATION 5

Have dedicated CIMIC military personnel, thereby displaying DND's and the CF's policy priority to other departments.

Another major concern of the way CIMIC doctrine has been implemented is the clear evidence that few personnel are actually formally trained in the doctrine. This harkens back to the accepted "ad-hoc" nature of CIMIC operations as defined by the CF. Captain Dean Trembley noted that there was "no formal [CIMIC] course within the CF (this was done at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre) and that CIMIC cell members were unaware of the larger policy goals [inherent in the formal doctrine]."³⁷ This is even more problematic when the Army Lessons Learned Unit (ALLU) noted that CIMIC training for CF personnel is conducted at the U.S. Army's John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Centre and School, in Fort Bragg, NC. The course that is taught is the U.S. Civil Affairs Course. Further training is conducted under the auspicious of NATO and UK military CIMIC courses. The only training conducted in Canada is that at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, and this training is not specific to the needs of the CF. The ALLU also acknowledges that all of this training is expensive and does not offer "a uniquely Canadian military perspective."³⁸ This has resulted in potentially hundreds of CF personnel with CIMIC experience, but none with formal training as recognized by the CF. As a result, there is a lack of tracking of these personnel by the CF, should they be needed again in the CIMIC role.³⁹ This rather flies in the face of Canada's foreign policy goals.

RECOMMENDATION 6

- (a) Implement a comprehensive and standardized Canadian CIMIC training program for the military. This must include a trade qualification or certification.
 - (b) A similar course must be developed for non-military personnel. This course must also have some sort of formal certification, to give it value outside of Canada.
-

The impact within the CF is a general lack of knowledge about and understanding of CIMIC amongst all layers of CF personnel. Captain Ryan Smid, J9 Plans- JHQ, Kingston, is succinct on the matter. He observed that “there is generally a negative view of CIMIC amongst those NCMs [non-commissioned members] and Officers who even know it exists, this is due in part to a lack of formal training in the system presently.”⁴⁰ The newest nuance to this situation is that the Reserves are taking over the primary CIMIC roles. The logic is that there is a more diverse background within the reserve membership that better suits the CIMIC role.⁴¹ The CIMIC doctrine manual notes that the Civilian-Military Co-ordination Centre (CMCC)/Civil-Military Co-operation Centres (CIMIC Centres) “would rely on a minimal number of regular cadre and on the Primary Reserve to man, augment and sustain its operational readiness.”⁴²

RECOMMENDATION 7

- (a) Develop a CIMIC personnel database that extends to military, NGO and government personnel with CIMIC experience.
 - (b) Create a larger public awareness campaign for the general public on the role of CIMIC in terms of public policy
 - (c) Formalize the CIMIC organizational structure within DND and the CF— remove the existing ad hoc nature of deployments.
-

Yet, the Reserves are hardly in position to take over the CIMIC role due to the abysmal condition of the Reserve force as a whole. Given the present condition of CIMIC operational practice and the general lack of knowledge and education within the CF, it is clear that there is a ‘capacity-capability’ gap. The idea is sound on paper, but the reality of the CF does not allow for easy implementation of CIMIC goals. By default, this extends to the higher policy environment, in that if CIMIC as a policy tool is not functional at the operational level then the larger policy goals of the government are not being fulfilled.

It should be noted that the doctrinal cell (J7) of the CF has been re-writing the basic content of CIMIC doctrine⁴³ to address some of the issues discussed previously. But, the major issues have not been addressed regarding definitions and roles. The document, however, is very clear that CIMIC is a policy tool for the government and its various departments.⁴⁴ This is clearly a move in the right direction.

CIMIC could become a cornerstone of foreign and by default defence policy, but in its present state, it becomes apparent that the theoretical doctrine of CIMIC and the operational reality are divergent. Furthermore, if there is support for CIMIC outside of the military, there is virtually no direct evidence to indicate this. As a policy tool it is left wanting.

THE NGO PERSPECTIVE

As noted in Table 1, the general objectives of both NGOs and militaries in peace support operations are the same. However, the respective reasoning behind achieving these goals diverge. This scenario has led to antagonism between NGOs and the military at the ideological and operational level. With some success, the military through CIMIC doctrine, has tried to bridge this gap. Nevertheless, there is still much ground to be covered by the larger policy objectives of governments.

What is clear from the extraordinary proliferation of NGOs since the end of the Cold War is that the global aid and development environment has dramatically changed. What is also apparent is that the NGO/PVO community is very diverse, with differences that include organizational structures, size, national ties, quantity and origin of resources, focus of activities, availability of technology, and skill and training of personnel. These issues aside, NGOs can clearly bring their strengths to bear in the peace making process through mediation, humanitarian assistance and peace-building initiatives during peace support operations. However, there is a

caveat to these strengths, as noted by Sir Alan Munro, the Vice-Chairman of the British Red Cross, in a recent address at Oxford University: "*all in all it is difficult to see NGO's playing a significant primary role in the resolution of factional strife.*"⁴⁵ In this scenario and given the absence of a formal governmental organizational or international organizational identity, or military protection, there are four fundamental problems that confront NGOs when operating in the field:

First, there is the disadvantage that an NGO can lack influence, which causes it to have the inability to gain firm commitments from belligerents whom it might be trying to aid or support. Unlike, GOs, IOs or the military, NGOs cannot use economic, political or military sanctions to cause agreements to be made or honoured.

Second, many NGO personnel may lack formal diplomatic and mediation skills possessed by their IO or GO counterparts. This situation may be compounded by a lack of adequate physical resources such as administration and infrastructure— things that IOs and GOs take for granted.

Third, personnel working for NGOs as non-governmental actors are subject to personal danger, risk and manipulation as they lack the usual diplomatic immunity and privileges granted to representatives of GOs and IOs. Conversely, NGO personnel may also face pressure from their own governments, further denying them international protection while conducting their operations.

Fourth, and finally, NGOs have no material means of protecting themselves while conducting operations, and are thus subject to blackmail, banditry, and ransom of their personnel as well as their aid support.

Given the above issues facing NGOs, it is inherently in their own self-interest (regardless of ideological imperatives) to work under the umbrella of IOs, GOs or the military. Clearly, under the latter premise the concept of CIMIC can be adapted as a policy tool at the highest levels of government to enhance and ease the relationship between NGOs and non-NGO actors involved in peace support operations.

However, in regards to government involvement, NGOs have raised some serious concerns. One of which is the sense that a relationship with a military establishment undercuts their non-governmental status, especially "when NGOs become extensions of government policy and

power.”⁴⁶ This by default, leads to the issue of “politicization” of humanitarian actions, which in theory, can reduce the effectiveness of NGOs.

What is interesting to note is that this line of reasoning is an issue of optics based on the ideological perspective of the NGO. There is little substantive evidence that points to either of these issues as actually being a realistic perspective, although there are individual cases that are exceptions. There certainly have been cases where NGOs have been perceived as “taking sides.” Yet, on the other hand, as evidenced during the Kosovo Crisis, some NGOs clearly aligned themselves with national military contingents of NATO.⁴⁷

Another and more important factor in terms of Canadian NGOs and Grassroots Organizations (GROs) is the matter of funding. A vast amount of NGO funding comes directly from CIDA, some estimates are as high as 70%.⁴⁸ This scenario has developed as funding from private sources has peaked in Canada,⁴⁹ consequently NGOs have little choice but to gain government funding to remain active. This financial reality facing Canadian NGOs clearly undermines the ideological dogma that many of these organizations perpetuate amongst their members, namely that of neutrality and non-governmental influence.

Another problem that faces NGOs in the larger aid scenario is a general lack of awareness of the political, economic and social effects of their presence and activities. In fact, some observers have noted that “even the most experienced of such organizations are often unaware of key issues in these three areas.”⁵⁰ Thus, the much hallowed neutrality argument of the NGOs is very much a straw man.

RECOMMENDATION 8

- (a) Government departments and agencies must clearly indicate in their documentation that CIMIC is a part of their mandate.
 - (b) Support the creation of a formal dialogue between NGOs and government regarding the CIMIC paradigm for Canada.
-

To put the latter point into perspective, one only has to review NGO actions in the field. In many cases NGOs have, either through dogmatic zeal, conscious choice or ignorance, chosen to disregard humanitarian issues in the name of staying neutral, as evidenced by the Red Cross not reporting concentration camps in the Balkans during the early 1990s. In many of the conflicts since the end of the Cold War, there is no perceptible neutral ground for NGOs or the military. This point has been made clear by the numerous re-definitions of peacekeeping in such documents as the UNs *Brahimi Report*, *An Agenda for Peace*, *An Agenda for Peace II* and the advent of Human Security. All of which have played a substantial role in changing peacekeeping policy and doctrine around the world.

Government policy can go a long way to dealing with the NGO neutrality dilemma through the use of a formalized policy in regards to CIMIC operations. With a transparent and cohesive policy towards the role of NGOs, there would be no issues as to the role and objectives of the government and support from government. It would be up to the NGO to then decide where its organizational priorities lie, (ie. aid and support or ideological goals). This option is more desirable given the problems surrounding the coordination of the profusion of the many small independent NGOs that have come into being since the end of the Cold War. As was noted by the military in regards to operations during the Kosovo Crisis, "smaller agencies tend to assume that international military forces will protect them, but their large number and random behavior present[s] a nightmare for the military."⁵¹

This last point, raises the issue of the massive profusion of NGOs since the end of the Cold War. The smaller NGOs suffer the most from the four problems mentioned earlier, consequently many look towards the military during peace support operations for support and protection. This factor requires a comprehensive policy, on the part of the government, to deal with national and foreign NGOs in such situations. A definitive policy towards CIMIC would clarify this and many of the aforementioned issues in regards to the role of NGOs within the context of Canadian foreign policy.

RECOMMENDATION 9

- (a) Within CIMIC policy clearly define the role of NGOs
 - (b) Make the support of NGOs transparent to the aid recipients
-

THE GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

The greatest incongruity in this discussion is that there is little to no perception of CIMIC within the ranks of other government departments other than DND. At the very least, there is no clear indication that senior bureaucrats and Ministers are fully aware of the potential CIMIC holds. Certainly there are references to CIMIC by DFAIT, CIDA and a few other departments, however, this acknowledgment is generally unrelated to policy, but rather consists of passing statements or commentary.⁵² It should be noted that the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD), within DFAIT, has some useful material regarding policy and roles for CIMIC, but it is unclear if this data has been fully understood or acknowledge by elected officials or policy makers in Canada. As Wayne Nelles, the 2002 DFAIT Human Security Fellow, the Canadian Consortium on Human Security noted, “[Human Security] initiatives are still minor, piecemeal, and ad hoc responses to major, fundamental structural challenges [for government].”⁵³ Nelles, does point out that DND through NATO, vis-a-vis concepts like CIMIC, is leading the way in laying

a foundation for a solid policy in regards to Human security.⁵⁴

Clearly, for CIMIC to be of any real use, there must be awareness of the tool within all departments and government agencies, from the top down. In addition, given that CIMIC is perceived as a military doctrine, there must be an effort to clearly show the linkages between CIMIC doctrine, the Human Security Agenda, and foreign policy. At present, these are at best unclear, ambiguous, and contradictory.

As noted previously, most NGOs in Canada have some level of government based funding. Therefore, there is an imperative for both government and NGOs to engage in dialogue in regards to policy formulation of CIMIC and its role. However, there is one major caveat to this, NGOs must respect the reality that they must remain subordinate to government and military dictates, given the policy implications of multiple and differentiated NGO mandates and roles.

RECOMMENDATION 10

- (a) Other government departments and agencies must work with DND and DFAIT to explicitly show the linkage between CIMIC doctrine, the Human Security Agenda and foreign policy as a whole.
 - (b) Government through policy initiatives and public awareness campaigns must include NGOs in this process.
-

CONCLUSION

For CIMIC to work as a policy tool, the following steps must be taken. First DND and the CF must clarify the definition and doctrinal basis of CIMIC. This then provides a coherent basis for DFAIT to develop a clear foreign policy role for CIMIC within the context of the larger Canadian foreign policy environment, and more specifically within the scope of the Human Security Agenda. Based on this premise, other government departments can clarify their roles within the CIMIC paradigm to allow for a comprehensive and cohesive policy that can operate

relatively seamlessly within government. Finally, the NGO community must be brought in on this process, as it is the entity that will ultimately project this policy tool over the long-term.

There is no question that CIMIC will remain predominantly a military oriented activity. However, by clearly making the doctrine a policy tool, it will become more transparent for both government and NGOs, thus allowing for a more cohesive, comprehensive and cooperative process that benefits those peoples and nations that require Canada's support in troubled times. As the former Minister of Foreign Affairs stated, "to better advance human security, we need to develop innovative global partnerships linking governments, churches, human rights agencies, the private sector and educational groups."⁵⁵ Clearly CIMIC, if applied properly, can be one of the tools used to fulfil this goal.

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