

Non-Military Crisis Management as a Part of Foreign & Security Policy

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This Seminar on Non-Military Crisis Management comes at a very timely juncture. First, the next European Council will convene in Gothenburg in two months' time, and the preparations for the Presidency Report are well under way. The military aspects of EU crisis management are proceeding fast and the civilian side has to keep up with the pace.

Second, the challenges of non-military crisis management will remain on the international agenda for a longer time than some of us might have initially thought. My recent visit to Kosovo convinced me that this is not a passing issue. The international community has a huge amount of work ahead before it can argue that it has done everything in its power to help establish an effective civil society in a failed state.

Third and last, this discussion is also timely because the Finnish Government is currently preparing a new Government Report to Parliament on Security and Defence Policy where civilian crisis management will be dealt with for the first time. It is, therefore, the right time to establish closer ties between scholars and those in charge of practical implementation, that is, between those who observe, analyse and criticize and those who formulate the political will, implement it and try to learn from past lessons and mistakes.

Crises of the 1990s, in particular in the Balkans, brought about a new type of internal and complex crisis in which the international community had to cope with failed states. Traditional forms of peacekeeping as such did not provide adequate tools for handling the new challenges. Military presence could help to create a secure environment, but the military could not build a society, with its infrastructure, basic services and administration. Therefore, coordinated civilian action had to be introduced as a way to alleviate human emergencies and stabilize the situation in crisis areas. This kind of civilian assistance from outside a crisis area is now referred to as non-military or civilian crisis management.

The incapacity of international organizations to face such challenges led them to review their roles and tasks. The UN developed a new concept - peace operations - to cover both traditional military peacekeeping operations and other operations, such as various civilian police operations. The OSCE identified its role in the area as "the primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation." NATO included crisis management in its Washington Charter, together with closely related conflict prevention.

Based on a Finnish-Swedish initiative, the new Treaty of European Union from 1999 contains Article 17 which enables the Union to take concerted action in "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in

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crisis management.” These so-called Petersberg tasks are now understood to cover not only the military component - which the Union is building with its new politico-military structures - but also civilian aspects.

Having the ability and the option to draw on the Member States' assets and capabilities in respect of both aspects of crisis management, the Union has a unique possibility to develop crisis management to cover both the military and civilian aspects, as well as their interfaces, in a balanced way. In order to achieve this, the Union has to develop its civilian and military capacities in parallel and in close cooperation. The assets are complementary and their sufficient interoperability should be ensured. The challenges are great for the Union itself and for its Member States, too. The developing common foreign and security policy provides a framework for EU action, which incorporates crisis management as one of its essential elements.

Military and civilian crisis management are different issues but, should the occasion arise, seamless cooperation has to be possible. Finland's experience of peacekeeping operations serves as a case in point in this respect. Finnish peacekeepers are reservists from a variety of civilian occupations, carrying with them wide experience and expertise acquired in the civilian world and able to take full advantage of their backgrounds, no matter whether the skills of a carpenter or a basketball coach are required. Whereas the peacekeepers of a superpower army prefer to stay heavily armed in their vehicles, without any dialogue with the locals other than that which is based on orders, Finnish peacekeepers try, whenever possible and without compromising their military capability, to build up cooperation with the local inhabitants, based on confidence, and to establish bridges - sometimes literally - between mutually suspicious, mutually hostile and sulky population groups. In this kind of peacebuilding, the boundary between military and civilian crisis management is at times as indistinct as a line drawn in water.

Civilian crisis management is an important part of foreign and security policy. The international community has decided to improve its capability to take joint action and cooperate in a more coordinated manner in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict management. We are doing this in order to help solve international conflicts, but also because it is in our own interests. We want problems related to ethnic conflicts, local warfare and collapsed states to be addressed in an appropriate manner, trying to resolve the difficulties before they escalate and have a direct impact on our own societies. We want to unite our efforts in order to limit any possible damage to our own societies. Therefore, we shall use all the means at our disposal to ensure that the root causes of such conflicts are dealt with early enough and at their source.

As was noted before, civilian crisis management is one of the European Union's main foreign and security policy instruments. We should apply the tools at our disposal in this domain to every party's advantage and develop them further when needed. In order to succeed, we need to cooperate and try to contribute to the development of democratic societies with a sound economic foundation and based on respect for human rights. Assistance and expertise have to be sent to nations in crisis situations. The EU has undertaken to do everything in its power. It has promised to use all the tools at its disposal within the framework of the various EU pillars. That is why an EU committee was established as a cross-pillar Council working group to deal with the civilian aspects of crisis management.

In the Feira European Council of June 2000, the EU decided to address four priority areas, namely the police, strengthening the rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection. Experiences from the Balkans and East Timor as well as from the rescue operations in Turkey and Mozambique had proved that there is an urgent need to increase the EU's capability in these fields. A progress report to the Nice European Council gave Sweden the mandate to launch an ambitious Presidency programme that has met with broad appreciation.

The main event during the Swedish Presidency is the first EU Police Capacity Conference convening in May. The Conference was to assess the Member States' preparedness, by which I refer to their capacity to send police officers to crisis operations and to decide on follow-up measures that would ensure that necessary progress is made in time. The Feira targets to be met by 2003 are ambitious: the EU has made a commitment to engage a total of 5,000 police officers, out of whom 1,000 would be deployable at a month's notice. In March, the EU sent as many as 3,600 police officers to such operations. Preliminary enquiries among the Member States have shown that countries without a central police organisation find it very difficult to increase their contributions. The enquiries have also revealed a clear political will to adhere to the joint commitments and to develop national resources accordingly.

One of the guiding principles governing the EU's priorities has been to bring added value to the international efforts in areas where the need is greatest. Law and order are the fundamental prerequisites of effective societies, but no society or community can implement law and order without the supporting judicial chain of judges, prosecutors and prisons, of which none is able to do a meaningful job without an adequate legal base. Therefore, it is of utmost practical importance to strengthen the rule of law. We hope that, by the Gothenburg Council, the EU will be able to agree on concrete targets in respect of both strengthening the rule of law and consolidating civilian administration.

In the fourth priority field - civil protection - the EU is ready to establish, in Gothenburg, quantitative targets to be met by 2003. The main challenge in this field is not lack of human resources, but lack of coordination, common financing and transport. The Member States can send large rescue teams at very short notice. However, the interoperability of these teams should be improved, and that calls for more common training. Even though the Commission has budgetary means which it can use to assist NGOs in their rescue operations, costs arising from the acquisition of any required rescue equipment and its transport to a catastrophe area will be borne by the Member States.

Civilian crisis management as such is not new but the term has now acquired a specific political sense. What is new is the focus on efforts to improve capabilities and coordination as well as the comprehensive approach with regard to crisis management. Similar expertise has been sent for years to developing countries by the UN and its specialized agencies, as well as by donor countries. The OSCE has also gained vast experience of field operations. Therefore, different organizations - both IGOs and NGOs - should engage in closer cooperation and agree on a possible division of labour and specialization in the future as well as share the field experience that they have accumulated over the years.

Conflict prevention is closely linked with crisis management - it both precedes and follows it. This was recognized in the Finnish Government's report on comprehensive development and organization of humanitarian and civil assets in 1997. Civilian crisis management is often considered to be a short-term activity.

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However, we should also call attention to the root causes of eventual crisis situations and act at the right time to prevent the escalation of crises. Therefore, one of the principal goals of Finnish international development assistance is conflict prevention. It is important to react to early warning signals immediately and to gather relevant information in a systematic and organized manner. The first signals are often given by local and international NGOs.

Civil-military cooperation is another closely related subject on the EU agenda. Militaries have developed special CIMIC concepts on that. It is a complicated task, although we have gained good experience of such practical cooperation and coordination during the fifty years that we have participated in UN-led peacekeeping operations.

In Kosovo, there is one military operation and hundreds of civilian players. Instead of looking at the weaknesses of the civilian side, a better starting point for more coordinated efforts might be to see how the military side could, by collecting information and intelligence, help the civilian side to get their activities started. Another task could be to ensure that national differences over CIMIC concepts do not lead to unfortunate local developmental differences, as has happened in Kosovo. Since the main goal of any crisis management operation is to create a secure environment for the local population to live in and become economically self-sufficient, it should be possible for civilian and military experts to interact whenever a crisis operation is planned. As far as I know, this has not been done so far but I do not see any obstacle to it. It might be worthwhile to study the possibilities arising from improved cooperation in the field of transport logistics.

Crisis management operations take many forms and change over time. This applies to both military and civilian crisis management. The right timing of activities is even more important on the civilian side. For example, international police forces might be in charge of police tasks at the beginning - and have an executive mandate - and later, after the local police have been trained, the latter will take on responsibility and monitor and advise the local authorities. In order to address such changeable challenges, more knowledge needs to be acquired, inter alia, of small arms and light weapons and of border control.

The main deficit in the field of civilian crisis management concerns the lack of human resources. These activities are run in crisis areas by the same specialists as are usually responsible for the normal functioning of society. No country has highly qualified experts in reserve, waiting to be sent abroad on international missions for lengthy periods of time without any effect on domestic services. What can be done?

In order to make the most of our scarce resources, more attention could and should be devoted to the appropriate planning of civilian operations. To this end, we should not accept the prevailing situation where all international organisations lack planning capacity. This is true of both the UN and its agencies - in spite of their long experience in the field - and it is particularly true of the EU. Both the EU Council Secretariat and the Commission are understaffed. It is a matter of great concern that the civilian planning capacity has not been developed to match the military staff, whose numbers have been on the increase within the EU since March of last year.

These are my thoughts and concerns on a few topical aspects of civilian crisis management. I would very much appreciate it if we could analyse not only the shortcomings of civilian crisis management, but also highlight aspects that might

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have contributed to positive results. We certainly learn from common lessons but we should also try to encourage each other by taking note of the best practices. It is hard to keep people motivated to pursue a policy in the long run, if it appears to be in vain. It is important to cultivate hope and encouragement in order to meet the great challenges.

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