

# Designing Comprehensive Approaches through a Multi-Actor Security Framework: CA from the Bottom-Up

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper responds to the goal of formulating “key principles for harmonizing comprehensive approaches” by using a multiple actor security framework intertwined with the concepts of legitimacy, authority and obligation, to assess the ways in which the comprehensive approach has been operationalized in recent operations (Afghanistan). The framework prioritizes a “bottom-up” approach to security by examining the security standpoints of various actors, and thereafter works “upwards” towards strategic/political levels of organizations and agencies to inform the development of comprehensive approaches across the strategic/political platform. This security framework exposes any mutual as well as conflicting security perspectives operating during a conflict. The framework is sensitive to context (differing operations and conflict settings, ranging from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement strategies), and reveals synergies and gaps in mandates and activities amongst and between actors, which can further inform a particular comprehensive approach strategy for that given context, addressing the additional goal in generating “solution approaches on how to improve the realization of the comprehensive approach”. The argument of this paper is that one, overarching universalized comprehensive approach that reflects the ideal goals of organizations, agencies and ministries is often inflexible and does not function well on the ground in different contexts. A move towards finding synergies in comprehensive approaches rooted in mutual principles but based on how these approaches are practiced on the ground can be achieved when analysed through a multiple actor security framework.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

It has been frequently acknowledged that complex emergencies or conflicts cannot be solved by the military alone. It is clear that many non-military actors, ranging from governmental/diplomatic/ministerial actors both host-nation and international, as well as international organizations, international and local humanitarian and development non-governmental organizations, private security organizations, and not least local populations, are involved and active on-the-ground throughout varying phases of the conflict. Military actors (host nation as well as international) are often additionally deployed and employed at some point during a conflict. It is equally often assumed that most if not all these actors are engaged with an interest to bring knowledge and expertise to the environment, encouraging negotiation and cessation of conflict. Despite an overall desire by most actors to see a cessation of hostility, the mandates of many of these actors often conflict with each other, creating significant challenges to any “Comprehensive Approach” intention. More specifically, the more highly politicized the conflict, the less likely that all the actors on the ground are operating towards the same goal, classically illustrated in the clash between humanitarian and military goals, for example. As well, while there has been significant work done on examining the lateral synergies between comprehensive approach strategies across organizations (such as NATO, the UN and the EU) and agencies and government ministries, little has been done to examine vertical synergies between the strategic plans of an interagency

comprehensive approach, and the operationalization of such strategies on the ground (by military and non-military personnel).

## **1.1 Background**

It was clear during the Balkans crisis that security involved much more than a use of force by the military to create a safe and secure environment, and that an adequate response to the crisis “exceeds the coping capacity of any single agent or institution” (Rietjens and Bollen 2008). The notion of “civil-military *interaction*” (or “cooperation”) was therefore re-born in Europe during the Balkans crisis, and it was here in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina that the importance of a civilian role, in combination with the military, once again came to the fore (Pugh 2000). What this meant however, both conceptually and practically, remained in many ways unclear. Civil-military *relations* refers primarily to the relations between militaries and the citizenry of the same state itself, whereas civil-military *interaction* refers primarily to those relations between a “foreign” military and a “local host population” and civilian institutions (local and international), all of whom are relevant to international peace operations and complex emergencies. There has been a well established tradition of theorization of civil military relations, focusing on the democratic control of armed forces as an aspect of security sector development and reform (Huntington 1967; Bland 1999; Bland 2001). Only more recently is work being done regarding the civil-military relationship between foreign militaries, humanitarian agencies, and the local populations to whom they are ideally meant to provide security. Michael Pugh (Pugh 2001: 109) defines this approach of civil-military interaction broadly, stating that it consists of “relations between external military forces and internal civilian authorities or society; between internal regular or irregular forces and external civilian agencies; and between the external military and civilian components of interventions.” These multiple relationships are not uncontroversial. Relations between different actors in complex emergencies are characterized by structural discontinuities and “based upon the parties’ different roles in society, normative values, resources, authority positions and social interests...they have turned civil-military cooperative relations into multi-level, highly complex dynamics on their own” (Rietjens and Bollen 2008). At the same time, all of these actors are crucial to security (from state-based and international to human security) and require a carefully negotiated balance to ensure that the needs of multiple actors are heard (democracy) and provided (security). What makes these relationships all the more complex is their employment by institutions such as NATO, the UN or the EU, where the institutions themselves have different mandates, but are dependent upon many of the same national militaries working together with many civilian organizations and populations.

Concerns have been raised regarding, not least, military incursions upon areas that are considered civilian domain, highlighting the “divisions of labour” between militaries and civilian organizations, the use of humanitarianism to justify military action, the relationship between a military presence and attacks on civilian organizations, distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, how to share information between civilian organizations and military, and armed escorts of civilians (Winslow 2002; Damen and Orlislagers 2004; Mockaitis 2004; Donini 2007). Additional concerns include the balance between local ownership of security production and the imposition of external forces and/or military forces, the ability of external forces to support local efforts in meaningful and productive ways, and the extent to which external forces further disrupt patterns of social cohesion within and between local communities and civilian organizations in times of crisis (Donini 2007; de Coning 2013).

## **2.0 CONTEXT**

“...one of the challenges with peacebuilding is both understanding context and measuring impact”  
(Harborne 2012:50)

The concerns of the previous section often reflect the particular dynamics of the crisis situation/context in question, ranging from natural disasters such as earthquakes, tidal waves or hurricanes, to man-made crises

including large-scale conflict and war. Civil-military interaction becomes more controversial the more “political” the situation is (efforts to save people from a tidal wave are perceived as less politically motivated by intervening actors than complex emergencies that embody one or more political dimensions). A model of civil-military interaction needs to address the challenges that arise between actors of different and often unequal power in an environment that is characterized by extensive loss of life and violence, massive displacement of people, damaged and/or dysfunctional economies, and where there is a clear and large-scale need for humanitarian assistance but it is hindered by political and military “constraints” as well as by “significant security risks” (Keen 2008). The latter characteristics (political and military constraints coupled with security risks) largely distinguish natural catastrophes from crises of conflict or complex emergencies. UN organizations and NGOs have also been increasingly employed in these crisis situations as primary relief providers (Harris and Dombrowski 2002). Mary Kaldor refers to these complex emergencies as “new wars”, where there exists a blurring of distinctions between war, organized crime and large-scale violations of human rights (Kaldor 2007). The trend therefore has been a focus, by combatants, on “population control or even elimination as a strategic objective” (Harris and Dombrowski 2002). The apparent focus on populations and population control by combatants/insurgents, the intervention of multiple actors such as donor/troop contributing nations, militaries and aid organizations, and the impacts on and reactions by local populations living in war-torn and aid dependent societies (Hughes 2009), have made civil-military interaction blurry, confusing, and all the more relevant and important to understand how it functions according to the specific context.

The ways in which donor/troop-contributing nations characterize the conflict or post-conflict settings they engage in can either help or hinder when attempting to determine, and better yet understand, contexts. Defining context from the position of an international organization or a donor/troop-contributing country is an important place to start, because it explains the thinking behind strategies applied by these actors to the specific situation. These definitions do little to acknowledge host-nation, local actors and their perceptions of the context. As a donor/troop-contributing country, we can look to the characterization of the conflict in Afghanistan by the Norwegian government, whereby the activities in Afghanistan have mostly been characterized as a “peace operation.” Counterinsurgency doctrine also characterizes operations such as in Afghanistan as stability operations, equates this with “peace support” operations (Army 2007), which are in turn equated largely with low-intensity operations. Already in the Afghan case, as well as Iraq, such assumptions (peace operations=stability=low intensity) have been challenged, as the context often changes rapidly from low to high intensity, and the needs of the civil-military relationship shift accordingly. Though it is arguably the case that peace is the end goal, and therefore the operation can be characterized as such, this characterization is very general and vague, and often unhelpful when determining context and understanding needs on the ground. It implies that peace and security is provided by an external actor (those conducting the operation), indicating little about the roles of local actors (de Coning 2013).

Peace operations (in this case drawing from the definition used by the Norwegian government) are defined as those operations which contribute to international stability and security, in solidarity with the international community and in accord with the obligations of membership in the UN and NATO.<sup>1</sup> This definition allows for a wide mandate, but not necessarily the consent of the host nation, and renders passive local actors. Thus cases like Afghanistan, the air strikes of Libya, and even to some degree Iraq, would qualify though all three are considerably different interventions. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, is not considered a UN force, but has a “peace enforcement” mandate through Chapter VII of the UN Charter.<sup>2</sup> The Norwegian government refers to the conflict in Afghanistan as a “peace operation,” but does little to go further regarding in what way this is a peace operation and how the term “peace” is used when endorsing the use of force, particularly when that use of force is supporting one particular warring party.

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<sup>1</sup> See the government of Norway website on peace operations (fredsoperasjoner): <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/tema/sikkerhetspolitikk/fredsbevarende-operasjoner.html?id=441848> (accessed April 2011).

<sup>2</sup> See: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-FAB4AC4D-B7B4C844/natolive/topics\\_69366.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-FAB4AC4D-B7B4C844/natolive/topics_69366.htm). (accessed April 2011).

Such details toward characterizing the context are very important to better understand the demands placed on the civil-military interface.

Variable, acceptable uses of force follow from different approaches from peacekeeping to peacemaking, peacebuilding and peace enforcement. These are distinct activities, assumed by distinct actors (ideally) (DPKO 2008). Peacemaking and peace enforcement generally take place when conflict is still active, or rather, when things are still unstable enough that conflict flares up quite easily (ibid). Peacemaking employs diplomatic action to bring the parties of a conflict to the negotiating table and eventually to a peace agreement. This activity relies largely on government, ministry, IO officials, NGOs and/or other independent officials. Peace enforcement allows for coercive measures including the use of force (often via the military). Peace enforcement is generally (but not always) authorized by the Security Council, at times employing other regional organizations (such as NATO) which operationalize the enforcement of peace (ibid). Peacekeeping on the other hand is designed to preserve a peace that is already established, albeit possibly weakly established. At times force is applied in peacekeeping, often referred to as “robust” peacekeeping. However this is force applied usually as self-defence measures and with “the consent of the host authorities and/or the main parties to the conflict” (ibid: 19). Peacebuilding is the long-term and complex process of providing stabilization through strengthening national capacities and addressing the root causes of conflict in that society (ibid). Thus far, all of these approaches assume a semblance of consent by most parties, but today’s operations are, of course, more “complex”.

The United Nations refers also to “multi-dimensional” peacekeeping operations employing multiple actors and relevant to a wide variety of scenarios, including falling back into violent conflict. As such, peace operations are increasingly complicated and blurred as they are composed of all of these different activities, which do not occur in a linear fashion and can often fluctuate repeatedly between activities and stages of conflict. What it also means is that peace enforcement, although potentially mandated by the United Nations Security Council in the name of international peace and security, can nevertheless resemble taking sides in a conflict, either the side of the governing body which requires support to gain control and establish governance, or on the side of group(s) fighting against repressive regimes that are a threat to international peace and security. IN the UN context however, all of these activities presuppose an assumption of a post-conflict status (even if violence still erupts on occasion) (ibid). Multi-dimensional operations are also acknowledged to be considerably more political than so-called traditional peacekeeping consisting of observation and supervision of cease-fires and acting as a buffer between parties (ibid). This also affects the perception of the United Nations and actors acting on its behalf, at least amongst the conflicting parties. All of these activities will affect the ways in which actors can interact with each other, how they will be perceived by other actors, and their room to maneuver. These activities also raise the question regarding how we interpret the notion of “peace” and what activities can be related to it.

NATO refers to these activities under a more broad category called “crisis management operations” which they claim are also “loosely” referred to as peacekeeping operations.<sup>3</sup> Under the heading of “peace support operations” NATO includes peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peacemaking, peace building, and other concepts. The definitions are similar, but here NATO is more explicit under “peace enforcement”, whereby it is explicitly acknowledged that consent amongst all of the conflicting parties has *not* been established or at least remains uncertain. This makes peace enforcement even more political as it implies establishing peace with the use of force against the will of at least one warring party (or at least without the consent of that party). In looking for recent examples, this most resembles the situation in Afghanistan, as well as in Libya.

Terminology in this sense is important. “Peace operation” is extremely vague, and it is difficult to establish what is meant, and if consent has been given by all parties. If the end goal is “peace”, does that make *any use of force* a “peace” operation? The complications of civil-military interaction as experienced by various

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<sup>3</sup> See the NATO website “Crisis Management” for definitions:  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49192.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49192.htm?selectedLocale=en) (accessed September 2011).

Norwegian actors in Afghanistan will demonstrate a need for clarity of context to understand how the use of force is to be applied (if at all) and what this implies. Despite the “peace enforcement” mandate, ISAF refers to their operation in Afghanistan as a military operation, not a peace operation. These distinctions are important, as they determine the nature of the civil-military interaction that will or could take place in a given context. It also means it is not possible to have a “one-size-fits-all” approach to civil-military interaction. Questions of trust, legitimacy, authority, and obligation arise and operate differently in fluctuating contexts of security. It also means that key actors in the civil-military interface require enough training and competence to be able to understand the differences and operate accordingly.

### 3.0 MULTI-ACTOR SECURITY FRAMEWORK

Civil military interaction is often perceived instrumentally, as a feature of complex emergencies which require a variety of techniques, practices and approaches to allow cooperation or coordination to go as smoothly as possible between actors (Rietjens 2006; Coning 2007; de Coning 2007; Rietjens and Bollen 2008). Such approaches to civil-military interaction are necessary as they have a practical utility for those operating in the field, as well as insights for those interested in the dynamics of complex emergencies. Often these analyses focus on the role of the military function CIMIC (NATO Civil-Military Cooperation) as it is a key tool with which to operationalize civil-military interaction. It is also valuable to take a step back from the field and discuss the broader implications of civil-military interaction and what it means to the overall operation, the strategic goals of nations, and not least, its relevance to the people most affected in complex emergencies.

Civil-military interaction has been analysed in particular in relation to performance measurement, complexity and coherence (ibid). Links to security theory have also been made, in particular human security, and positive security (Knight 2008; Hoogensen Gjörv 2012). Using the notions of positive and negative security helps us to reflect upon the human security distinction between “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” whereby the latter relies considerably upon state actors and use of force, and the former upon non-violent measures, and to theorize what this distinction might imply for civil-military interaction (UNDP 1994; Knight 2008; Hoogensen Gjörv 2012). Positive and negative security reflect the tensions within the ways security has been conceptualized, who provides security and how, and how scholars and practitioners themselves place a “value” on security. Negative security relates to the treatment of security as a concept we wish to avoid, one that should be invoked as little as possible. We value it negatively because it represents the use of force. On the other hand, the concept of security has also been known to represent something that is positively valued, or as something that is good or desired, providing a foundation to pursue our needs and interests and enjoy a full life (Hoogensen Gjörv 2012).

Negative security thus can be understood as “security from” (a threat) and positive security as “security to” or enabling. Negative security is often associated with what is often called traditional security that assumes a universally defined state with state-centric security issues, addressed by a universally agreed upon tool of security- the military. The focus upon identification of threats and the use of violence affects the way we understand and practice security. The identification of danger and enemies legitimizes or justifies the use of force. It reduces the possibilities for recognizing multiple actors because we do not *want* multiple actors employing violence. Thus negative security has been dominated by a “uni-actor” approach, whereby the term “security” ought to be a limited, one-actor, state-centric concept as it invokes the deployment of the most extreme measures (usually the military) to address issues of immediate and existential danger. When the state invokes security-producing measures to protect the state however, these same measures may or do have a deleterious affect on other actors, like individuals and communities, who may feel inclined to respond to ensure their own security.

Positive security reflects a central foundation for enabling, the foundation of trust. Andrew H. Kydd defines trust simply as “a belief that the other side is trustworthy, that is, willing to reciprocate cooperation, and

mistrust as a belief that the other side is untrustworthy, or prefers to exploit one's cooperation" (Kydd 2005: 3). Trust is also linked to uncertainty and the ways in which we manage uncertainty (Booth and Wheeler 2008). Trust is established more easily through non-violence means, through negotiation, compromise, and dialogue. "Everyday" security, which reflects positive security, assumes the existence of trust created through good governance, respect for the law, cooperation, and an open society. Positive security asks how, for whom, and by whom, security is produced, exposing the values and contexts behind practices of security. It makes visible and prioritizes non-state actors, attempting to "know" security that affects of individuals everyday. Positive security therefore has much in common with some of the human security literature that recognizes individuals and communities as security actors (Hoogensen and Stuvøy 2006; Stern 2006; Scharffscher 2011). These actors endeavour to seek security, not just in relation to avoiding threats, but also to building their capacities. Many of the practices to avoid threats and build capacities are non-violent in character, including measures ranging from humanitarian and development aid, to economic, education, environmental, and other social network supports. Even when the state disappoints, individuals and communities often employ their own non-violent practices to ensure security, building upon whatever resources they might have at their disposal at the time. In this respect, where the practices of negative security are predominantly associated with force, the practices of positive security are dominated by non-violent means.

Understanding the core assumptions within positive and negative security allows us to observe and assess the field where multiple actors play a role in conflict and post-conflict settings. Although insurgencies, and guerrilla warfare has been present throughout history, state-based perceptions involving large scale, professional armies have dominated. This dominate view has waned considerably however as we have moved from large armies fighting against each other to a complex combination of a variety of actors vying to gain control (host nation military, intervention militaries, combating political opponents, criminals), while other "civilian" or non-combatant actors are more actively engaging within the same area of operations (Kaldor 2007). The increase of actors as well as the complexities behind interventions (consent-based or support to one "side") also affects the ways in which third parties or international organizations are able to interact with other actors as well as how they are perceived, rendering now classical notions such as "peacekeeping" as less relevant (Soderlund, Briggs et al. 2008). In many instances combatants have no intention of responding to diplomatic efforts or laying down arms at the behest of international actors which claim a moral authority on behalf of the international community (ibid).

The politics of multiple actors in a complex emergency has affected the nature and development of civil-military interaction, and these politics play a central role in the analysis of how civil-military interaction is understood or operationalized. In fact, the politics of the intervening actors themselves has become a source of conflict. Even if the international community attempts to move towards a dominant state-on-state warfare focus again, it will be impossible to ignore the ever-present complexity of these multiple actors.

The relationship between the political and military machinery cannot be underestimated, as it has been a constant factor in the development of conflict. The "political", however, refers not only to state-based bodies and actors, but includes the political goals of non-state actors vying for power (Smith 2005). In a complex emergency the host-nation and local non-state actors use the conflict to achieve political goals, as do international intervening actors, such as troop-contributing nations, using military strategy and tactics to achieve these political goals. Not all actors involved in the complex emergency are politicized in the same way, whereby, for example, development NGOs may reflect political agendas without overtly "choosing sides" as combatants or intervening states necessarily do. Media (print, radio, television, internet) also reflect political biases in their reporting of the crises, having the capacity to influence their public (local actors or international actors) to varying degrees. Then there are those whose politics are impartial or neutral, at least, where the warring parties (combatants) are concerned. Humanitarian NGOs, which are distinct from development or other more directly politically inclined NGOs, struggle particularly to maintain a necessary political distance from other actors in order to have better access to those they deem most vulnerable. Lastly, but not least, are the people (local populations) themselves, who are often the subjects of focus of all of these

actors, either as beneficiaries of humanitarian or development aid, or as citizens/subjects who are convinced, influenced, coerced, or forced to be a part of the political agendas that play a role in the conflict. This does not mean that the local population is a passive recipient of such influence, or are apolitical –members of a population can and do play central roles in providing a sense of security, stability, and direction for a community.

All of these actors embody a set of values that they prioritize and which informs their vision of the political, or rather their perception of security (Wibben 2011). Some actors, both military and civilian, engage in positive-security oriented projects or activities that attempt to bring a semblance of security back to the situation so that the people subject to the insecurity have the capacity to build and stabilize their lives once again. Others create insecurity (political and military actors with regime-changing or state-building goals) with a purpose to generate a new system that prioritizes their own values and political projects, creating a different vision of the political, a different framework for security. Thus security depends upon the political agenda or political vision of each action.

Civil-military interaction is about operationalizing a multi-actor security perspective, by including if not prioritizing the roles of citizens. Civilians across the political spectrum (from humanitarian to government to local populations) are also security actors, and function along side the “traditional” (read: dominant) tool of security; the military. We see the operationalization of negative security, or in/security which expresses vulnerabilities and sources of fear, as well as positive security focusing on capabilities and enabling whereby people, societies, groups have been able to ensure their security by a variety of means, to ensure that life continues, and make sure a good life can be found (CHS 2003; Bajpai 2004; Hoogensen 2005; Hoogensen Gjørsv 2012). Using the following actor-based security framework, various actors, from communities and individuals to researchers, policy makers, state-based security practitioners (military and police actors) and private security agencies/NGOs/industry participate and express their perceptions of threats and assess their capacity to cope address these threats, in concert with others. In other words, the state and the military are no longer the only “security” actors, particularly where human security is concerned (Hasegawa 2007). Government, military and policy makers are neither always the leading actors of providing or identifying security, nor need to intervene at all levels of identified human in/security, however they can act as important conduits for the facilitation of knowledge between communities and actors, as well as respond to human in/securities when communities can no longer effectively respond to threats (UNDP 1994). These “rough” categories of actors are also just that, rough. This model reveals the complexity of different actor categories in relation to each other (military category as opposed to local communities, and so forth), but there is also diversity *within* each category, where national and international leadership in ministries and international organizations might be distinguished from ground-level operators such as UN office personnel, development advisers, PRT commanders or Mobile Observation Team (MOT) members. There is not always agreement between these different levels of actors, within the different actor “categories”.

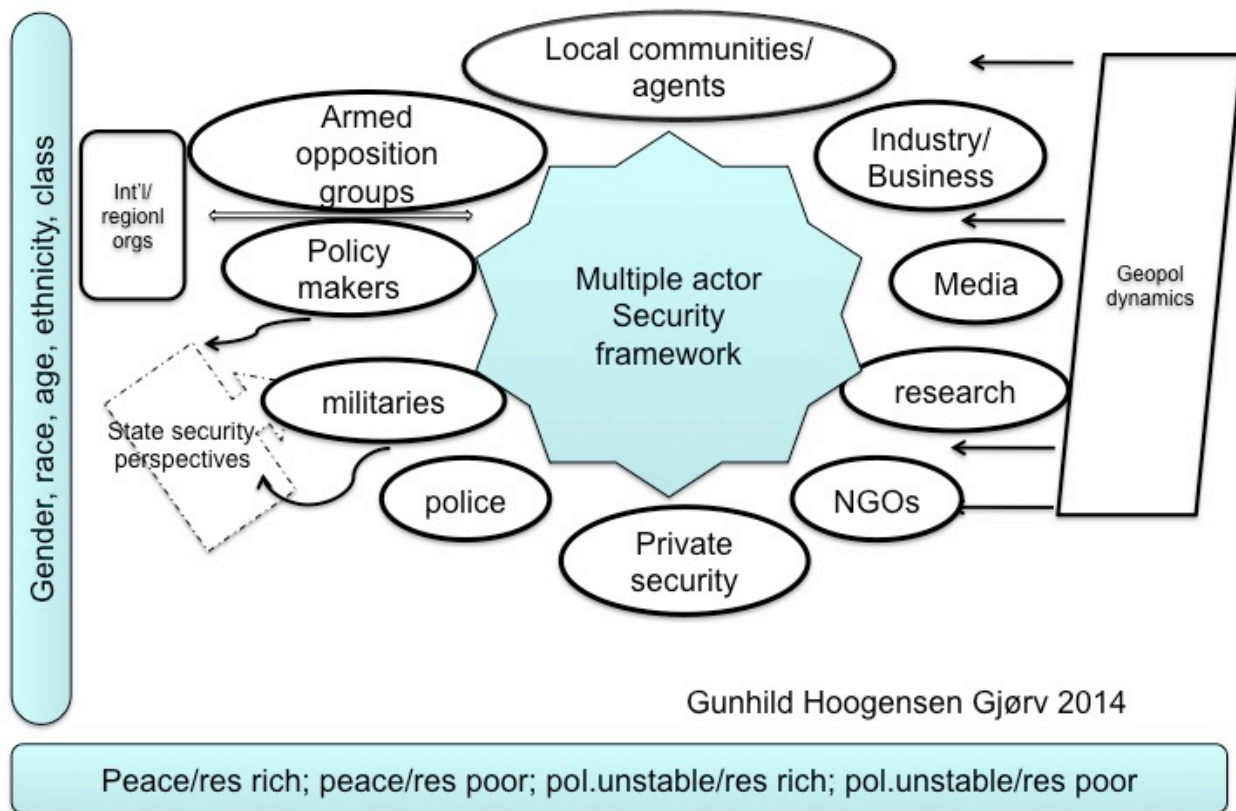


Figure 5-1: Multi-actor security framework.

A multi-actor security approach tries to reflect an image of security that includes non-state or sub-state actors where the state is not THE dominating factor. This human/citizen-dominated approach is what can then enter into dialogue with the supranational and global levels. This also allows us to more explicitly recognize the relationship between non-state actors and regional/global geopolitics (in the case of Afghanistan, the influences and maneuverings of Pakistan and India, Iran, and the United States, among others and their impacts on human security). One consequence of allowing a multiple actor, as opposed to a solely state actor, conception of security to “dominate” is that it appears to ask for the impossible – to confer with various relevant actors in the determination of security in a given context. However, as civil-military interaction already demonstrates, conferring with various actors already takes place. It is required and necessary that these different actors, despite their power differences, will interact, and without doing so, security will be far more difficult to achieve, particularly if we rely on the military alone. State-building and “local ownership”, cooperation between military and civilian actors, all demonstrates that this is reality (Milliken and Krause 2002; Krause and Jütersonke 2005).

Civil-military interaction in practice is additionally dependent upon the nature of the crisis itself, or rather, the *context*, as well as upon the capabilities of the actors themselves. If the crisis is a natural disaster where the primary objective is to take people out of immediate danger and provide them with basic security in the form of first aid, food, clothing and shelter (the March 2011 tsunami and earthquake in Japan serves as a recent example), the reaction to a civil-military response is often considerably different than if the crisis involved competing political agendas, by both those who shaped the crisis (war) as well as those who are



intervening. The context determines the extent to which actors can effect change or provide support in the area of operation. The context plays a significant role in determining the legitimacy, authority and obligations of multiple actors.

#### 4.0 LEGITIMACY, AUTHORITY AND OBLIGATION

NATO has political legitimacy, military strength and logistic capabilities, but it has to accomplish its missions within timeframes that are sometimes comparatively short. NGOs have ethical legitimacy, greater freedom of action in the medium and long term and are often familiar with local cultures and contexts, but in an insecure situation they may be unable to act effectively (Borgomano-Loup 2007: 19.).

Civil-military interaction is therefore relevant to understanding and establishing legitimacy amongst actors, and their authority to act. In other words, who has the authority to act, how, and on what basis. Thus legitimacy and authority are both context dependent and role dependent. Civil-military interaction reflects a level of transparency and reciprocity between actors, where there is a certain understanding/comprehension by civilian actors for the role of the military in a given context (and for some civilians a level of responsibility for the military mandate), and where the military (to establish legitimacy and authority with civilian actors) operate with as much openness as possible about how they will operate within that context. In other words, civil-military interaction does not easily refer to military actions couched in secrecy (like intelligence) even though a certain amount of “interaction” obviously would take place. Legitimacy, authority and obligation imply therefore transparency and reciprocity.

Legitimacy refers to the general consent and approval of the target group (local populations, constituencies, etc) where authority is to be exercised. Legitimacy is central to control and power either over, shared with, or supporting, for populations. Authority can be defined as legitimized power, acknowledging that legitimacy is often fluid, and authority is sometimes wielded without wide spread or popular acceptance (Hurd 1999). There are different forms of authority, depending upon the “source” of legitimacy. These include political authority (“a fusion of power with a legitimate social purpose” (Hurd 1999)), moral authority (power combined with a philosophical, religious, metaphysical, natural or any other value-based set of principles or foundation), and legal authority (power established by law).

The different actors of the security framework are endowed with differing forms of legitimacy and authority according to their roles, sometimes with multiple foundations for authority. Questions about the legitimacy and authority of the host nation (questioned either by the host population and/or external actors) are used to justify/legitimate decisions to intervene in a complex emergency, at which time political and/or legal legitimacy and authority are conferred to external actors, including both military and civilian. This however can create relationships of dependency by local populations upon external actors (where external actors become service providers from everything to schooling and medical aid, to veterinary care), particularly upon long-term actors such as NGOs and IOs, and sometimes militaries. Over time, external actors working in the host nation might still have authority, but their legitimacy reduced if the popular feeling is that there is not a timely transfer of authority to “more legitimate” institutions such as the host government, or if host populations do not see an increase or an improvement in their own security. In other words, legitimacy and authority are not static, and change over time depending on the circumstances.

Today’s conflicts are characterized by a focus on populations, in particular population control (Harris and Dombrowski 2002). Ian Hurd examines control in terms of currencies of power, identifying three broad categories, *coercion*, *self-interest*, and *legitimacy* (Hurd 1999). Thus control can be exercised through use of force (to the point of eliminating populations), intimidation with the threat of use of force, and/or influence through a range of tactics or approaches, including meeting the needs of local/host populations. Coercion relates to the various uses (including threats) of force, whereas meeting the needs of the local population can

be construed as either self-interest (prevent insecurity “spill over” like terrorism, or generate “hearts-and-minds” benefits for military and donor/troop contributing nations), or legitimacy (often perceived as the domain of NGOs which help vulnerable populations). All of these currencies of power are forms of control, which either occur in combination with each other, or where one dominates over the others in specific contexts (ibid). Some actors wish to have control without necessarily having legitimacy (ibid), whereas other actors are concerned about levels of legitimacy that inform the extent of authority and power that they can wield. Control in the civil-military setting is complex, as it is spread unevenly amongst the different actors in the security dynamic. All actors, from military, to government/ministerial to NGO and local community leaders, attempt to exercise forms of control over populations, either to win them over or to protect them or both. This is particularly the case in the civil-military relationship, where different actors vie for control through the use of force (military) or use of claims to competence (various civilian organizations) to argue for the legitimacy and authority of their roles in relation to civilian populations. Sometimes competing claims for control over populations (between militaries and NGOs, for examples) will work to disenfranchise or depower local populations, even if that is not the intended consequence. The legitimacy of the control debates between external actors like militaries and NGOs/IOs need to constantly be vigilant over how their own legitimacy functions in relation to other actors, and that determination over legitimacy and authority ought to rest, ultimately, in the hands of local populations.

Thus, civil-military interaction is often characterized by a mix of moral, political and legal authority. Militaries are endowed with the political and legal authority to act, but sometimes due to a lack of moral authority and legitimacy amongst affected constituents (local populations), they might meet with resistance. Often NGOs are considered to have a legal (IHL) and moral authority, particularly when acting on the basis of a humanitarian mandate to help people in need, but may also suffer legitimacy issues if they have not convinced their potential beneficiaries of their merit (Hilhorst 2003), or regarding their relationships with donor countries and the challenges of national/international aid systems (Tvedt 2007). Governments, both host nation and donor/troop contributing nation, employ political and legal authority, but also to some degree moral authority when making claims and pronouncements regarding the need (their perceived responsibility) to protect civilians from harm and suffering. The extent of authority is connected to legitimacy with the local population, but is not always dependent upon it. At times, the political authority of the host government, despite its weaknesses, might hold more weight with communities than does the moral authority of NGOs, if in the end the host nation government means greater long-term stability and independence. Thus legitimacy and authority to act are important components of the civil-military relationship and depend greatly upon the context of the crisis situation.

An example of how legitimacy and authority function in the civil-military interactive sphere is with regard to the notion of “competence”. The type of authority an actor has says a great deal about the alleged competence that actor has in a given situation. During a natural disaster, for example, where the military is not identified as having a partisan or highly political role (combatant), the military may be seen as having considerable competence to assist in humanitarian efforts in rescuing vulnerable populations. Rapid mobilization, logistical and organizational skills, manpower, available emergency supplies, and the ability to evaluate the security of a situation may all be very welcome military assets in such a humanitarian operation. However, the same skills are not always applauded in a context where the military are additionally combatants in a complex emergency. In the latter context militaries have been accused of not having the competence to carry out humanitarian efforts, both for lack of a capacity to determine needs, as well as for blurring a combat role with a humanitarian role. This critique of competence often has less to do with the actual capability of doing the work, than it has to do with the legitimacy of the particular actor in question doing the work. Thus legitimacy plays a very large role in assessments of competence and how different actors can wield authority.

Lastly I would like to address one of the more challenging factors that also play a role in civil-military interaction, that of “obligation”. Ideally actors will be able to carry out their duties prescribed by the mandates, resolutions and principles that are meant to guide their actions. Even when doing so however,

tensions can arise between actors given conflicting mandates and perceptions of what is needed in the operations area. But complex operations are not black and white processes. There are a lot of grey zones, and though it is important to keep close to clear operating procedures and well-defined principles, it is not always possible. Complex emergencies are rife with compromise, due to the unpredictable and insecure nature of the situation. Less than ideal solutions may have to replace ideal plans that are not possible. It may mean that a military temporarily provides humanitarian support although they are by no means the ideal actor to do so; it may mean that a humanitarian NGO compromises its principles of neutrality and independence to ensure that it reaches the vulnerable population that needs help; it may mean that donor/troop contributing nations must make hard choices between supporting NGO efforts or supporting military efforts when these actors come into conflict. There will be occasions where actors, and more to the point, individuals within a particular organization or actor community, will have to rely on a sense of obligation, or action prescribed by a set of values, when legitimacy or authority are not enough to guide action.

To support actors who are confronted with grey zone problems in complex emergencies and are confronted with difficult decisions where legitimacy and authority seem unclear, they may end up relying on gut instinct, rooted in a value system or institutional culture that they have been exposed to and/or followed for an extended period of time. Education and training thus play a crucial role in supporting decisions that are necessary when individual judgment is necessary.

### 5.0 THE ACTORS

As will be discussed, despite the differences found between different national militaries, there are still many shared features that characterize military as being “military”, enabling one to identify features of a military culture that in turn has influenced perceptions about the military. This is far less the case for the category “civilian”. The common characteristic shared by civilians is that they are “not military”. Otherwise, civilian actors have diverse goals and mandates that are difficult to subsume within one vague category called “civilian”. A model that purposefully distinguishes between only two actors such as military and civilian, necessarily begs the question of who these categories must include.

Civilian actors are very diverse, and represent diverse interests. The term “civilian” should not be understood as synonymous with “humanitarian”, although these two terms are all too often conflated. Civil-military interaction includes interaction between militaries and humanitarian actors, as well as with development actors, civilian government (ministerial) actors, and not least, civilians in the community in which the military is deployed. The role of private militarized security companies (PMSCs) add another, very complex dimension as these are not military actors, might technically still qualify as civilians just because they are not military (illustrating the problem with a simplistic duality), but they have the mandate to use force. In an attempt to get a sense of the similarities and differences amongst civilian actors I have divided them into rough categories: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), International Organizations (IOs),<sup>4</sup> states (government policy makers, government-based development agencies - DA, police (Pol), and the military (Mil) which is tightly linked to these other state actors as it is equally an apparatus of the state), and communities (general population). NGOs can be further distinguished between non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) and non-governmental humanitarian agencies (NGHAs) (IFRC/ICRC 1994, O'Dwyer and Unerman 2007).<sup>5</sup> Private militarized security companies are a distinctive category of

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<sup>4</sup> The ICRC includes International Organizations (IOs) within the category Inter-governmental Organizations (IGOs), perhaps to directly compare with NGOs (non-governmental organizations). However, IO is a very familiar concept and to prevent any confusion I choose to use the term international organization and/or IO in this book..

<sup>5</sup> More details of these distinctions can be found in section 5.3. Otherwise, the categories I have chosen are those employed by the ICRC. I have not chosen to investigate the ICRC distinction between their use of the words “organizations” and “agencies” as employed in the terms NGHA, and NGDO, but instead focus on the content of these concepts.

actor that are difficult to call “civilian” because of their use of force, but are not military either. They are also becoming an increasingly large presence in a number of complex emergencies (Higate 2012).

The purpose of these categories is to be able to organize the discussions in the following chapters, but it should not be understood as the only way to organize and understand the diversity within the civilian or “non-military” sphere. My focus in this section is largely the military and the NGO/IO sector as these actors are most often referred to when discussing civil-military interaction and the Norwegian model. Government actors and local populations are also mentioned here, but more briefly. I likewise will include a brief description about the police and PMSCs, but both of these are highly complex actors requiring a more in depth focus, which I take up later in a future publication. More, however, will be said about the Norwegian government’s role as an example of a government involved in a conflict, its humanitarian policy, and the Norwegian model in Chapter 4. Civilian governmental actors, both in the host country as well as from the donor/troop contributing countries, represent governments that have deployed these very militaries that are central to the civil-military conundrum. Embassy and other ministerial actors from donor/troop contributing nations share the political goals of their military counterparts, though clearly their methods are significantly different.

This last point, that the militaries are explicitly linked to key civilian actors is no doubt pointing out the obvious. But this point is also grossly neglected and under-discussed in debates about civil-military relationships, and is lacking in any debate about the Norwegian model. This is because these debates do not adequately examine what “civilian” really means, and just which civilian actors can indeed claim the title humanitarian with all that implies (abiding by humanitarian principles), which actors play a more significantly political role, which politically motivated civilian actors might also negatively impact humanitarian space, and how these different civilian actors can cause significant confusion for local populations in determining who is “neutral” and who may include extra social/political agendas. The term “civilian” is taken for granted by most parties; by NATO where the complicated and controversial connection between civilian and military actors is often to easily disregarded, and by those civilians who wish to take on the mantle of humanitarian principles and the advantages this implies, regardless of their actual role.

The above distinction between NGHAs and NGDOs is not an easy one, as many NGOs have been known to assume both humanitarian and development profiles simultaneously. The process of providing aid follows a slippery slope ranging from core, emergency needs (that are provided regardless of political or other affiliation of beneficiary) to development aid that might link basic needs to political agendas of human rights, sometimes more specifically women’s rights, or other social or economic development agendas that could be interpreted politically. Thus, the combination of humanitarian and development aid approaches blurs lines between activities which might be perceived as politically neutral and those which are more politically loaded, as development aid tends to be.

The following section will focus upon four of the above actors in broad terms; the citizens of the host nation, the NGOs and IOs, the donor/troop contributing nations and finally the military.

## **5.1 Host nation civilians**

Although I focus primarily the international actors involved in civil-military operations, and in particular the military, my departure point is the claim that the most important actors “on the ground” are the people who live in the so-called “host” nation, or that nation where international actors deploy to provide assistance and establish security (be it for host nation populations or for the intervening national interests, or both). In today’s complex operations, troop-contributing/donor nations and NGOs share a common interest in the welfare of “host nation” civilians where the complex emergency is occurring. The protection of the host-nation civilians may not be always the primary reason for an intervention (at least by foreign governments), but often their security and well-being, their human security, is invoked by donor/troop-contributing nations

as a key concern by those who chose to engage themselves in complex emergencies. Civilians of the host nations are often used as the *raison d'être* behind ethical foreign policies and principles such as Responsibility to Protect (R2P). These are the people who become the “beneficiaries” of NGOs, or are the “local population” with whom militaries will interact. Not all civilians are beneficiaries of course, nor will all civilians have direct contact with governmental or military personnel. However, many if not most might be impacted in either direct or indirect ways.

Often the civilians of the host nation are portrayed as those who need help or protection: we can draw from the Norwegian government itself for evidence of this concern, in the government explanation as to why Norway has been in Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> What is important to remember first and foremost is that these civilians are the frontline of effort and support for their own communities when crisis arises, as they themselves must find ways to cope and survive, sometimes with little to no resources and supplies, before any NGO, military, or official presence arrives in their area. These civilians are by far the best “experts” on their culture and customs, and while foreigners (militaries and NGOs) may compete about “who has been in the area the longest” or who can best identify local population needs when making claims about competency and expertise, these civilians have been onsite and aware of their own needs for generations. These same civilians are a mix (as any population) of people who are biased, politically motivated, restricted/influenced/coloured by the knowledge-base and skills available to, and developed by, their communities and cultures, and play roles in complex power arrangements based on gender, class, ethnicity and other social classifications.

Thus it was not surprising that even amongst the few Afghan citizens I spoke with, I was met with a wide range of opinions and thoughts about the future of their families, their communities, and of Afghanistan. To even write about “civilians” in this sense, the people living in and amongst complex emergencies (in Afghanistan or otherwise), is extremely difficult. There are no unified principled or political positions here as people’s expectations for the future, their sense of security, vary according to the diverse values they hold. There may be some uniformity of values along religious and/or ethnic lines (though not always), and education access and levels can also play a significant role (and cause simplistic divides between the “educated” and “non-educated”). It is thus difficult to try to capture the “civilian position” in a complex emergency, but this group of civilians have the most to gain or lose in the civil-military interface, and play a crucial role, if not the most crucial role, in a multi-actor security dynamic.

Certain questions need to be raised when assessing the potential impacts of, and consequences for, local civilians as a result of contact between various actors, including between militaries and host nation civilians. Not all civilians will initiate or react to contact with different actors in the same way. In interviews with numerous international NGOs (in particular those associated with Norway), it became clear that pretty much is any contact between military and civilians was contentious and it was claimed that contact between militaries and local civilians posed security problems for the civilian population. Though there was evidence of such threats (that contact between militaries and local civilians resulted in decreased security for civilians as they were targeted by opposing warring parties), the perception that contact with militaries was always negative was not confirmed by civilian respondents. Some civilians indeed confirmed that their security could be compromised through contact with militaries, however, others made explicit choices to have contact with the military given their (the civilian’s) own personal political interests and assessment of what was safe for them at a given time. As well, it is very difficult for militaries to avoid civilians, and many cases it would be inappropriate for them to do so (avoid civilians) as they need to be knowledgeable about the civilian environment and security to be able to do their job, aware of how their actions impact the civilian environment, and rely on such knowledge to effect as little negative consequences (collateral damage) as possible.

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<sup>6</sup> Norway cites three priorities: preventing the growth of international terrorism, secure peace and stability, and contributing to development and prevention of suffering. Two of the three have civilian needs in focus. Please see: [http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/kampanjer/bistand\\_afghanistan/situasjonen.html?id=573476](http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/kampanjer/bistand_afghanistan/situasjonen.html?id=573476) accessed 23 April 2011 (there is no English translation of this webpage).

## 5.2 Local non-governmental organizations

A general definition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can be found in the next section on international civilians, however there are also non-governmental organizations and various movements present in a host-nation that are indigenous, or rather, founded by and grounded in local efforts. In contrast to many international NGOs (usually based in more prosperous countries that are generally conflict free),<sup>7</sup> local organizations are often very specifically designed for and by the local context, they may be less bound to notions of general guidelines between humanitarian, development, political, and social organizations and more focused on one or more key issues that might embody perspectives and principles from any or all such organizations. Probably one of the most important features about locally originated NGOs is that they (ideally) represent local people supporting their own communities. Such support may not always be the result however, as corruption and manipulation can affect home-grown organizations just as they might international ones, maybe at times even more so. However, even in the presence of corruption and manipulation there are nevertheless locally-driven groups and organizations that make efforts to build and support their own communities, and these efforts should not be negated. A good recent example of local organizations attempting to gain recognition for their efforts is during the so-called “Kony 2012” campaign and “viral” video where an American-based organization called Invisible Children tried to raise awareness about child soldiers in Uganda and the abuses of Joseph Kony, the militant leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). A very complex round of responses to this campaign ensued, not least from Ugandan organizations that emphasized that they had been working for years on many of the issues highlighted by the American group (an equally viral video was sent by Ugandan journalist Rosebell Kagumire arguing for Ugandan efforts.<sup>8</sup> Local organizations have the potential to mobilize local individuals towards supporting their own communities, which has the further potential to create increased trust between local actors as they have a personal investment in the security of the community.

Since the living situations for civilians living within complex emergencies can be so diverse, and their individual roles so different, it can be a great challenge to assess the ways in which civil-military interaction can, will and should take place. Protecting civilians should not necessarily mean depoliticizing civilians, and nor can we ignore the possibility that the political interests of many civilians can cause challenges and problems for both militaries and NGOs in fulfilling their respective mandates.

What is clear, however, is that the complexity of the military and diverse civilian roles needs discussion. Few actors are able to operate in a complex emergency in a completely uncontroversial way. The more we understand the implications of various actions, military and civilian (and all that the word “civilian” entails), the better we can determine how to make each role more effective.

Despite a clear recognition about the confusion that can arise regarding the diverse roles and mandates of and between civilian actors, the debate that was called for in the above quote on Norwegian humanitarian policy has never adequately surfaced. As will be discussed in Part II, not only is there no debate about these different roles, there is little possibility for engaging such a debate. Determining who among civilian actors have the right to invoke humanitarian principles is crucial towards moving towards concrete, respectful

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<sup>7</sup> For example, *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) has its international office in Geneva, Switzerland, *Oxfam* has its head office in Oxford, UK, the *Norwegian Refugee Council* has its headquarters in Oslo, Norway, and the international organization, the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) has its head office in Geneva, Switzerland. This is not always the case of course, as there are also international NGOs that are based within countries experiencing conflict and economic challenges, for example *Church World Service* located in Pakistan. But a quick review of NGOs operating in Afghanistan, for example, shows that most of the internationals are located in less conflictual and more affluent parts of the world (see *The Afghan Analyst*: <http://afghanistan-analyst.org/ngos/> (Accessed 17 June 2013). This is not necessarily an exhaustive list, but does provide a good idea over the number of NGOs active in Afghanistan and where they are based).

<sup>8</sup> See “My response to KONY2012” at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLVY5jBnD-E>, Accessed 3 June 2013.

practices that allows actors on all sides to more effectively do their jobs under extremely challenging circumstances. In Chapter 8 I will discuss some of the challenges associated with a “blanket” use of the humanitarian space arguments for NGOs and civilians more generally.

### **5.3 International Civilians**

The need to differentiate civil from military efforts is often in focus for this discussion in, among others, Afghanistan. But the grey zones between humanitarian aid, development aid, political and diplomatic work, and other forms of civil efforts do not make it any easier to ensure clear boundaries for humanitarian space on the civil side (Utenriksdepartement 2009: 20)

The following section briefly explores some key differences between civilian “international” actors, examining terms that are often used without clarification, and which can be problematic in different contexts. The “international” civilians are those who belong to organizations of various types, non-governmental to international organization (like the UN) but are not organizations that are based/founded within the host-nation. Local civilians are often hired within these organizations at the local level or maybe national (host-nation) level, but represent the mandates of their international employers. The following definitions are general and may not reflect some of the specific characteristics of specific NGOs or international organizations.

#### **5.3.1 Non-governmental organizations**

Non-governmental organization, or NGO, is a generic terms that refers to organizations which are constituted independently from government (or rather, have no government status). NGOs funded partially or fully by governments nevertheless retain non-governmental status as governmental representatives are assumed not to be members, or influential in these organizations. NGOs are often otherwise referred to as civil-society organizations. NGOs have been subject to various perceptions or images. This world of NGOs is often perceived as the arena of the “do-gooders”, where in the face of weak, failing or failed governments, “NGOs are the only source of relief for the common people” (Biswas 25 December 1996). NGOs have had a tradition for working from the “bottom-up” or grassroots, working closely with communities and meeting local needs, therefore being “most accountable to the poor” (Kamat 2003). Additionally, the NGO “culture” is a culture that can draw upon backgrounds in the peace-movement, where solutions should not be found in violence but in cooperation, support, and empowerment. The NGO focus on the vulnerable often reflects (either purposefully or not) a critical, gender-aware approach to security, which exposes power dynamics between groups and individuals, and which attempts to make space for the voices of marginalized (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). It is not uncommon to be greeted with generally negative views about the military, or an outright anti-militarism, within NGO communities (although this is not always the case) (Hoogensen Gjørsv 2007-2010c). NGOs can at the same time suffer from stereotypes as disorganized hippie peaceniks, including “ descriptions such as ill-disciplined, unfocused, poorly led, inefficient, overly subject to the whims of donors, and media driven” (Watkins 2003). In general however, NGOs have had the ability to play the “do-gooder” card, and often for good reason, as many civilian organizations have stepped up to the plate when governments or other official structures have not supported their populations adequately (or even threatened them). NGOs often gain their legitimacy through a moral authority generated through their mandates to provide support to vulnerable groups.

Although it is important to distinguish between the different mandates of NGOs (as will be discussed below), it is equally important to mention a principle that is relevant to all NGOs (and in fact, all who intervene in some way, shape, or form in the affairs of another country and/or population), that is the principle of “do no harm.” The importance of this principle to NGO work was highlighted to me in my research almost immediately by a number of NGO respondents. The principle "do no harm" acknowledges that aid (humanitarian or development) is not neutral in conflict, and can either exacerbate hostilities or mitigate against violent escalation. In other words, aid can support peace, but it can equally support war (Anderson

1999). One of the greatest challenges to aid workers, according to author Mary B. Anderson, is to do good without "inadvertently undermining local strengths, promoting dependency, and allowing aid resources to be misused in the pursuit of war" (ibid: 2). It is a principle rooted in self-awareness and self-criticism, whereby NGOs need to be constantly vigilant about their actions and activities in conflict zones, and how these activities can be perceived and used by warring parties, as well as by the very people they intend to help. The "do no harm" principle does not distinguish between NGO mandates (humanitarian and development assistance can both do their share of harm or good), but it does distinguish between contexts, whereby the harm caused or harm prevented has direct and indirect effects upon violent conflict. In other words, the principle is less invoked in contexts of natural disasters where there are no warring parties or contending political factions to negotiate between. It demonstrates that context needs to be addressed specifically, and that the effects of aid are far less neutral in contexts of conflict. I will come back to this principle in a later section when examining some of the dynamics of civil-military interaction in the case of Afghanistan.

### **5.3.2 Non-governmental humanitarian organizations**

Humanitarian aid actors, or NGHAs, and the assistance they provide play a central and very specific role within a complex emergency. Humanitarian work must be quite specific to limit the possible confusion about how this aid is to be interpreted by others, and to ensure the freedom and security to deliver such aid even in politically volatile circumstances, referred to as "humanitarian space" (see more on humanitarian space below). Humanitarian actors provide critical and immediate aid. Humanitarian assistance is defined as: "aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis-affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality" (OCHA 2007). These principles (core to such humanitarian agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) need clarification as they play a significant if not primary role in the argument for distinctions between civil and military work in a complex emergency.

*Humanity* pertains to the purpose of protecting and respecting human life. It further attempts to engender "mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples" (ICRC 1996). *Impartiality* ensures that assistance is provided to affected populations without prejudice, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, nationality and political affiliation and/or opinion. The primary focus is the alleviation of suffering, guided solely by the needs of those suffering (and not by politically determined needs). *Neutrality* means that the humanitarian agency does not take sides in hostilities or engage in any controversies of a political, religious, racial or ideological nature, to build trust and confidence between themselves and other actors on the ground (ibid). Assistance must also be seen as *independent*. This means that the humanitarian organization, although subject to national laws, is beholden first and foremost to the principles of humanitarianism, and is not swayed by the political agendas of its national homebase/country, nor public opinion (ibid).

Just as humanitarian aid actors cannot distinguish between "beneficiaries" (people receiving aid), so must humanitarians be perceived as apolitical by their beneficiaries as well as by other actors in the operational area. As such, the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence are primary defining principles guiding how humanitarian actors must operate. These principles are invoked in the interest of creating and maintaining humanitarian space, and in providing security.

The concept of humanitarian space, crucial to the work of NGHAs, requires some attention here also, as it plays a pivotal role in the debate over civil-military interaction. There is no agreed-upon definition for humanitarian space, as different humanitarian actors focus upon different priorities according to their own mandates or principles (Hubert and Brassard-Boudreau 2010). Rony Brauman, former president of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), has been credited with coining the phrase "humanitarian space" stating that it is "a space of freedom in which we are free to evaluate needs, free to monitor the distribution and use of relief goods, and free to have a dialogue with the people" (Grombach Wagner 2005). Generally speaking however,



humanitarian space pertains to at least three expectations: respect for international humanitarian law (IHL), the safety of humanitarian workers, and access to vulnerable populations (Hubert and Brassard-Boudreau 2010). It is expected that all parties to a conflict will respect IHL and therefore will avoid civilian casualties as much as possible, as well as ensure that humanitarian aid can reach vulnerable populations without hindrance. The safety of the humanitarian workers themselves, as well as their ability to access populations in need, are indeed connected to respect for IHL, but are highlighted specifically over concerns that humanitarian workers are increasingly targeted by warring parties. Additionally it is claimed that civilian populations themselves are targeted if they are perceived to have any sympathy for one warring party over another. For this reason, it is argued, warring parties should have as much distance as possible from humanitarian workers and civilians in need so as to ensure their safety and access to aid.

A distinction between civilian and military functions is often cited in reference to humanitarian space, whereby a fear over military actors performing "humanitarian" work plays a central role in determining whether or not such space is protected: "Consequently, maintaining a clear distinction between the role and function of humanitarian actors from that of the military is *the* determining factor in creating an operating environment in which humanitarian organizations can discharge their responsibilities both effectively and safely" (emphasis mine) (Grombach Wagner 2005, citing OHCA Glossary of Humanitarian Terms).

#### **5.3.4 Non-governmental development organizations**

Development aid actors, or NGOs, in many respects mirror some of the work conducted by humanitarian aid actors by providing relief, but often this aid has either direct or indirect political overtones or goals. For example, assistance can include "health, education, agriculture, or industrial sectors, or they may be concerned with wider human rights, gender or environmental issues" (O'Dwyer and Unerman 2007: p.446). Such activities imply a positioning as to what sort of health, education, agricultural or industrial development, gender or environmental issues, and the accompanying values that underlie these issues, are prioritized and desired. A good example can be found in gender issues, where women's rights and human security are tied to laws against violence against women (including rape as a war crime), equal treatment under the law (where women are recognized as equal persons and not property), and women's participation in political processes including peace negotiations (see for example unwomen.org for one such overview of such initiatives). These processes imply an empowerment of women which is not welcome in all cultures and societies, and can be construed as attempts to change such cultures and their respective laws. Thus these processes can be highly politicized, and potentially controversial in settings where different political agendas are competing with one another. These goals may or may not be always consistent with the political agendas of combatant actors, or those attempting to gain power in contested areas.

Since NGOs consist of unarmed civilians, there is often an assumption that they would not be considered a threat to combatants despite their politicized undertones. This is not always the case though. NGOs can be associated with platforms that do not sit well with local populations, as illustrated by a demonstration in 2010 where Afghans protested against organizations that they believed were active in proselytizing or attempting to convert people to another opinion or belief (Dagbladet 2010). The NGO Norwegian Church Aid (Kirkens Nødhjelp) has periodically been confronted with such accusations (ibid). In response however, the leadership of the NGO noted that their own view of the demonstration was more so a protest against Western intervention, including that of the USA, Great Britain, and Norway. Either way, it is important to note that many NGOs can be easily interpreted as being a part of a political agenda, particularly if the scope of the work moves beyond the immediate alleviation of suffering provided by humanitarian aid.

#### **5.3.5 International Organizations**

Added to the mix are the civilians representing international organizations (IOs), such as the United Nations, all of its agencies, and regional organizations (IFRC/ICRC 1994). It is not uncommon to see these organizations, not least the UN, playing an important coordination role between the various actors present in

a complex emergency (ibid). NGHAs consider the coordination efforts of IOs to be acceptable as long as they comply with international humanitarian law, respecting the independence and integrity of their NGHAs partners. Often the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) assumes this coordination role. If it does not or cannot, other UN bodies (mission offices such as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as an example) may play a similar role, particularly if they have regionally or municipally located offices. At the same time however, IOs are not necessarily impartial or neutral actors in all emergency situations. Whereas organizations like the UN play a more neutral role in providing peacekeepers under the core principles of consent, impartiality and minimum use of force (Coning 2007), their position changes when involved in an on-going conflict where the UN supports one of the warring parties (for example, the Government of Afghanistan), as well as the international forces (ISAF) mandated to "reduce the capability and will of the insurgency" (UNSC 2007, UNSC 2011). Although not directly combatants themselves and even when the focus is protecting civilians, international organizations that play an explicit role in recognizing one warring party over another are politically implicated in a conflict setting. Thus it is important to examine the claims of IOs in relation to the host country and host populations. There is no possibility to claim neutrality, but at times "impartiality" is invoked. The claimed impartiality of international organizations such as the UN needs to be carefully balanced with stated preferences for one of the warring parties:

Stressing the central and impartial role that the United Nations continues to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan by leading the efforts of the international community, including, jointly with the Government of Afghanistan, the coordination and monitoring of efforts in implementing the Afghanistan Compact... (UNSC 2007)<sup>9</sup>

In the case of Afghanistan, it is clearly difficult for the UN to achieve a balance between a desire to be a coordinating and peace-supporting organization for all parties (impartial) while clearly supporting one of the competing (combatant) parties (in this case, the Government of Afghanistan). Maintaining distance from militaries who are deployed as a part of the broader UN mandate to reduce the insurgency in Afghanistan may appear to be important for UN impartiality, but also seem contrived given that there are unavoidable linkages between them. There are other difficulties as well. In discussions with OCHA, there was considerable mention about trying to keep a distance from military actors. However, there was also the reality of logistics in cases where NGOs just were not capable of reaching some people in need (for example, in cases of natural disasters like landslides occurring within a conflict area), and where OCHA was soliciting the help of military actors to provide access.

### **5.3.6 Troop-contributing/donor nation**

In discussions about civil-military engagement and interaction, one of the lesser addressed roles is that of those civilians representing either the host government or troop-contributing governments. These civilians are arguably the most politically implicated in complex emergencies, and those who are most tightly connected to the deployed military efforts. The civilians working on behalf of governments represent the political agendas of their governments. This is no easy task, both for those representing host governments, but also for those representing the nations that have decided to intervene/support/assist the host government. These "assisting nations" often play a dual role by contributing to NGO activity as donor nations, as well as to military activity given that these are the very governments that have deployed militaries to the conflict in question. This challenging role requires both an understanding for the complexity of the role as well clear guidelines as to how government representatives will deal with the often difficult task of having to prioritize needs on the ground. The weight of responsibility associated with the decision to deploy a military to a foreign setting necessarily influences the perceptions of other actors (including combatants) towards civilian

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<sup>9</sup> The Afghanistan Compact is a product of the 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan (31 January-1 February 2006) and outlines the priorities of the Afghan government (GIROA) in relation to security (including support by ISAF), governance and human rights, and economic and social development. A copy can be found at: [http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/afghanistan\\_compact.pdf](http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/afghanistan_compact.pdf) (accessed on 15 April 2010).

government actors, as well as their capacity to act in relation to other actors. Government actors might, by association with their militaries (either direct, visible association or just by virtue of representing the same politics), be labelled as threats or compromising the security of NGO actors in the same way that militaries have been. For example, American government representatives (as well as American aid organizations such as USAID), although civilian actors, have been heavily criticized for their close cooperation with their military counterparts. Problems cited include the possible confusion for local populations in differentiating NGO civilians from government civilians, or American NGOs from Norwegian NGOs, and who amongst them seem willing to support military efforts (Staveland and Akerhaug 2010a). More on the government role, and more specifically that of the Norwegian government, will be covered in section 5.3.

The balancing act between being a donor nation and a troop-contributing nation looks difficult from one looking at it from the outside, a viewpoint that was largely confirmed during interviews. It was clear when speaking with the civilians that must represent national viewpoints and goals (both in the foreign affairs as well as defence departments), often of an idealistic and/or principled nature, in a setting that is long from idealistic. Donor/troop contributing nations experience complications right from the start, within and between different departments, organizational structure and cultures of government ministries and how they are formally related to one another, and how these ministries are formally represented both within and outside of the home nation. The inter-departmental relations alone exacerbate and complicate the power and maneuverability of representatives abroad, requiring an additional analysis of inter-departmental relations that cannot be covered here. However there are a number of assumptions about the role of government representatives that should be made clear. First and foremost the government ministry civilians represent the same political goals, and though they may at times disagree on method (inter-departmental discrepancies), they all have a relationship to their national militaries deployed to the region in question. Coordination between the civilian and military components coming from the same deploying nation is crucial, which includes the clarification of shared political goals and the methods employed to achieve these goals. Further, the civilians who represent donor/troop contributing nations in host countries, usually working within their national embassies (but not exclusively), can (and should) play an important connector/coordinator/interlocutor role between other civilians (NGOs, IOs, etc), and their own national militaries when possible or if necessary. By so doing however, the political position of these governmental actors must be clear to the other civilian actors with whom they are interacting. In this respect, the divide between political and apolitical/neutral actors must also be made clear.

The role of government actors is to mediate between contending actors when necessary, and to make the hard decisions about what is to be prioritized when actors cannot or do not agree. It is all fine and well for the Norwegian government to support the Norwegian model in a context where all parties to a conflict agree on how to treat both the military and humanitarians as neutral actors (where militaries act as peacekeepers with consent of all parties), but what sort of decisions should be made when they are not? It is the difficult but important decision to take a stand – in this case it might be that humanitarian actors would distance themselves in some areas from both military and government actors, where politicized civilians take on civilian tasks that are important for the overall mission to which they belong.

Of interest here is the politics represented by government actors (in particular the role of donor/troop contributing nations), and how the government actor affects civil-military interaction. Norway provides a very interesting and special example. Although many nations have been supportive of humanitarian and development efforts, and have reflected this support within their foreign policies to a degree, Norway has played a particularly significant role in emphasizing and prioritizing humanitarian work. Should the Norwegian government be seen to be so closely aligned to NGOs, particularly those that espouse humanitarian principles? Or is the best support for humanitarian organizations to ensure a distance from the political machinery of the donor nation?

Lastly, and on a practical note, the actual mobility (or lack thereof) of government actors in a theatre of operations needs to be acknowledged. Depending on the crisis in question, the ability of government actors

to in fact have a clear and detailed overview of events and activities in their region of responsibility can be quite limited. Again taking Afghanistan as a case, the abilities for government officials to move around was limited, much more so than for their military counterparts, as well as the NGOs that operated in the region. Governmental actors were often dependent upon the insights of others to report back and provide situation reports when the security-risk was determined too high for them to actually go out themselves. Depending on the situation, government officials might end up being the “middleman” with the least information.

### **5.3.7 The military**

The military constitute a specifically defined group, distinct from other possible combatants in a conflict situation. The military actor, and in particular “regular forces”: “refers to official military forces, i.e., military forces of a state or regional-/inter-governmental organisation that are subject to a hierarchical chain of command, be they armed or unarmed, governmental or intergovernmental. This may include a wide spectrum of actors such as the local or national military, multi-national forces, UN peacekeeping troops, international military observers, foreign occupying forces, regional troops or other officially organized troops” (OCHA 2008). To try to meet the unpredictability and complexity of potential operation environments, militaries are divided between land, air and naval forces (with a fourth distinction being “special operations forces”) (Berli 2012). It is this actor that is relevant to the discussion of civil-military interaction, although the military is not the only the only potential combatant actor in an operations area.

“Irregular forces”, or rather other armed groups, “armed opposition groups” (AOGs) or insurgents, are those that are party to an armed conflict but are not part of the government forces. These can include militias, resistance movements, terrorists, and criminal groups who take advantage of conflict, who will also influence the security of other actors on the ground (Forsvarets stabskole 2007). The debates about civil-military interaction generally do not include the actions or responsibilities of these other combatants, even though they play a significant role in complex emergencies. The distinction between “military” and “AOG” or insurgent is thus relevant. This distinction plays a significant role in determining who is expected to adhere to models or principles of civil-military interaction, and who is not. Not all parties to a conflict, such as AOGs, are represented in all models of civil-military interaction, and in particular are not included in the Norwegian model.

The militaries involved in NATO and/or UN complex operations are very diverse, and reflect as much their own national, subnational and ethnic cultures as they do a military culture. At the same time, militaries tend to share features that distinguish them as “military” as opposed to “civilian”. One of the most significant features is the ability and occasional necessity of militaries to use force to effect their goals. At its most base, the military exists to kill people and destroy things (Braudy 2003, Smith 2005). This has been the core feature of militaries throughout history, and despite expanding mandates, including humanitarian to some degree, this core has not changed (ibid). It is also this *raison d’être* which has played a central role in the development of military culture, the concept of militarization, and not least, civilian responses to military actors (Schofield 2007). With the use of force as its purpose, discipline, physical strength and perseverance are the values that make up the bedrock of most military cultures.

The military create security and/or threats in the name of the state that has chosen to apply this tool. It is an occupation that is veiled in a degree of secrecy and beyond the reach of civilian culture and norms (Durant 2007), as it is charged with the defence of the nation and to that end, will engage in activities not normally condoned by civilian cultures. Those employed or recruited and trained as part of the military machine are sometimes regarded with a degree of suspicion or allure as they are “of a world apart, a very ancient world, which exists in parallel with the everyday world but does not belong to it . . . The culture of the warrior can never be that of civilization itself” (Keegan 1993). The range of perceptions about the military are often linked to the qualities embedded within the idealized and hegemonic masculinities of the military, which in turn create competing images of the military institution. Images of courage, strength, protection, responsibility, professionalism and discipline compete with other images of aggression, dominance,

violence, and a lack of vulnerability, sympathy and grief (Whitworth 2004, Fierke 2007). Though these masculinities exist within civilian cultures as well, they differ from the military, as civilian boys and men need to undergo a new socialization through training to change them from boys to trained killers (Burke 2004, Whitworth 2004, Smith 2005, Skarpskyttene 2010). The recruitment of women into the military has been fraught with challenges not least because of images of what a soldier is supposed to be and do (Burke 2004). Thus a different culture develops beyond civilian norms. How do the people who become the soldiers embedded in this culture, move “in and out” of such a powerful structure, into civilian life but also in regard to civil-military interaction?

This range of images, with all their nuances in between, often play a role in how the military can successfully or unsuccessfully interact with other actors. It should be noted that these images and perceptions are generally associated with the institution rather than individuals per se. Many (though not all) of the civilian respondents for the CREN project which informs the empirical basis of this book, both NGO and from government ministries, found that they did not have difficulty working directly with specific individuals in the military, while at the same time expressed stereotypical impressions of the institution as a whole (Hoogensen Gjørv 2007-2010b, Hoogensen Gjørv 2007-2010c). Nevertheless, NGO/IO and government ministerial responses included impressions of military personnel as being stubborn, lacking understanding or interest about NGO/IO mandates, authoritative, arrogant, and inflexible (ibid). These impressions and images did not enhance trust between military and civilian actors. Assumptions about the military, accurate or not, often take their departure point from what the military appears to represent, value and embody. This is particularly the case by those outside of the system, but was somewhat surprisingly the case also by those “inside”. Military respondents themselves expressed assumptions about other units or branches in their own armed forces in terms of who was “military enough” or “essential”, whereby those with well honed kinetic skills (“sharp”, or those highly capable with a weapon) were more valued and praised over those who focused on non-kinetic (non-force based) skills. This also applied to assumptions about other NATO militaries and their capabilities (Americans were often portrayed as culturally unintelligent and thuggish; Germans were often characterized as do-gooders and development officers, Dutch and Norwegian soldiers were characterized somewhat in between these two poles, etc) (Hoogensen Gjørv 2007-2010a).

Representations of the military are usually a mix of stereotypes, ideals, and examples of behaviour. Confusion and uncertainty about the nature and role of military culture in Norway was apparent as recently as the fall of 2010 when statements by individual soldiers were published comparing war to sex and demonstrating the military’s course and uncivilized ways (“ukultur”), which reportedly “shocked” the then Norwegian Defence Minister Grete Faremo (Heyerdahl and Akerhaug 2010, Akerhaug 2010c). Other reports revealed that some military units employed symbols such as viking helmets and skull and crossbones, which were argued as reflecting a negative culture in the military (Berg Bentzrød 2010, Akerhaug 2010b). Major Rune Wennerberg became the “poster boy” for negative military culture as a facebook picture showing him in sunglasses, battle fatigues, and a viking helmet was splashed across Norwegian newspapers (ibid). Wennerberg stated: “...there are two debates taking place. How we are perceived – and what we actually need to change regarding our attitudes and values” (Berg Bentzrød 2010). Wennerberg was correct in identifying the two separate themes of perceptions of the military (images) and the values that the military ought to represent (culture). What is unfortunate is that contrary to what Wennerberg suggests, little debate has ensued. This lack of debate causes confusion, creates unrealistic if not irrelevant expectations, and ignores the different roles of militaries in different conflict contexts, not least when peacekeepers in blue berets (UN missions) are expected to become warriors (NATO/ISAF mission).

The legitimacy of military activity is under constant surveillance, by NGOs and media as well as donor/troop contributing nations. There are two main arguments as to why the military is considered ill-suited for providing *emergency relief* or *humanitarian aid*, which is perceived to be activities for the civilian domain. Militaries partake in the following: 1. They kill/harm and/or destroy, and 2. They represent a political agenda (against the other warring party). An additional argument against the military pertains to development aid, such as building wells, schools, hospitals and the like, and that is that they are not competent to do so, which

also undermines their legitimacy. Thus the military are perceived as illegitimate actors with regard to many activities taking place within complex operations due to what the military represents.

#### *5.3.7.1 Breadth of military functions*

The primary object of the military is to fight, and this is the core feature that differentiates it from civilian organizations. Not all military functions are strictly combat functions however, and some functions have potentially “civilian”-related, non-combat (non-kinetic) tasks/services and consequences. Different national militaries are organized in different ways, in part dependent upon the size of the forces as well as the national priorities. Not unlike the roles found amongst civilian actors, it is also difficult to place military actors into cookie-cutter categories. However, for my purposes here, I will use one broad approach to try to illustrate in any case the breadth of military functions, and how this breadth does imply a differentiation of the ways in which “being a soldier” can be understood, and the ways in which these roles impact the civilian environment.

The different forces (land, air, sea) will all have contact with, or impact upon, civilians although to varying degrees, through different means, both kinetic and non-kinetic. It can be argued that land forces, however, have the most considerable contact with civilians and they have been the most forward thinking in ensuring that there are specific functions designed for contact with civilians (such as CIMIC). In general, most land forces are further divided into the categories of “combat forces,” “combat support,” “combat service support,” and “command and control” (ibid). However military forces are not combined in precisely the same way in all countries, therefore it is difficult to generalize the ways in which militaries are specifically structured. Since the ways in which these categories are further organized can differ according to country, I draw on the Norwegian case as an example. “Combat forces” include those functions that engage in direct combat such as infantry and cavalry forces (armoured vehicles) and those battalions designed with the primary assignment to go into battle (in Norway this includes Telemark Battalion and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion). These battalions are nevertheless combined units with both kinetic and non-kinetic skills, able to function as a fully functioning and independent unit with information collection, logistics and medical support. “Combat support” includes artillery, engineers, and air defence. “Combat service support” includes logistics, medical support, transportation, while command and control includes the military staff and leadership, communications, intelligence, military police, CIMIC, and psychological operations (PSYOPS). It is difficult to distinguish the kinetic from the non-kinetic within these categories, as the kinetic and non-kinetic are tightly linked. But whereas operations conducted by these different units often require a combination of the kinetic and non-kinetic (kinetic tasks cannot be conducted without some sort of non-kinetic support, not least information collection/intelligence), some operations can be purely non-kinetic, such as many forms for information operations (Forsvarets stabskole 2007). The combination of kinetic and non-kinetic efforts therefore depends upon the operative approach or method taken, ranging from combat to attrition (no longer extensively applied, if at all) to stabilization (ibid).

The difficulty of distinguishing military roles, and of stereotyping such roles within a narrow, solely combat figure, comes to light, for example, with the role of military medical personnel. This role complicates the attempt to make a clear distinction between civilian and military, particularly for those in these roles themselves. Military doctors and nurses have mandates to save lives and provide assistance where needed. Many are recruited from civil society and though they have some training, may never have had combat experience at all, nor desire it. Being employed in the military, their first obligation is to provide for the healing and health of military personnel, but there are many examples in Afghanistan where military medical personnel have provided their skills and services to the local populations in addition.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The German-run military hospital at Regional Command (RC) North in Mazar e Sharif provides one example of such interaction between military and civilians, where civilians have been able to access the hospital services there when the hospital is not busy with military patients (as I understood it, the hospital was not often busy with military needs). Military medical personnel have also gone to civilian hospitals to share skills and expertise

Military functions related to civil-military interaction fall under core non-kinetic competencies. A fundamental issue with civil-military interaction is the legitimacy of the military actor engaging in non-kinetic activities, and determining what these activities can and should include. What activities are legitimate and appropriate to assist the mission and gain victory, and which constitute illegitimate or inappropriate activity and contact with civilian actors? When an activity does not include the use of a weapon or physical force, does that make it a civilian activity? Some non-kinetic activities and functions might mirror some civilian activities but will have a different purpose – that is, to assist the military itself (logistics, situational awareness, etc), protection and security for locals, and/or influence the population that is the target. The tactics used to address these purposes are in part defined by the nature of the conflict and the military role. A peacekeeper that is assigned a neutral role between conflicting parties will not interact with local populations the same way as a soldier that is mandated to engage in offensive, kinetic operations against an enemy.

Non-kinetic skills, in particular CIMIC, have not been prioritized in the Norwegian contribution to the civil-military operation taking place in Afghanistan.<sup>11</sup> This was evident particularly in discussions with both the Provincial Reconstruction team (PRT)<sup>12</sup> commanders as well as respondents from the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. A small number of these respondents indicated that CIMIC was an unwanted function in the PRT. The majority of these respondents stated however that CIMIC would have been an asset, but could not be prioritized as there were only a limited number of positions at the PRT, and they needed enough positions for kinetic-oriented functions (combat). However, amongst those commanders who would have included CIMIC if there was a designated position to be found, few were actually familiar with CIMIC doctrine and what CIMIC offered to the operation, assuming largely that CIMIC would focus almost solely on quick-impact projects or QIPs.

A core challenge in the civil-military interface is then image versus reality, where a “divide” between civilians and militaries are perceived as being between two poles: apolitical humanitarians and combat-ready military forces. These images appear to have more influence on perceptions about civilian and military rather than the more complex, gray-zone realities that exist, where civilians can and do include very politicized actors who make the decision to employ force and who carry out activities with a clear political goal (to support the host-government (Afghanistan), or to support opposition groups (Libya), etc), and military includes civilian-oriented/educated actors who nevertheless are part of the military framework (such as medical or legal personnel). The diversity of military roles in civil-military interaction should be explored more fully.

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(for example, Norwegian medical personnel have engaged in sharing of knowledge and training in anesthesiology at Balkh hospital in Mazar e Sharif, as well as at Faryab Provincial Hospital in Maimana). These interactions between civilian and military have been by and large successful, at least insofar as some extra help is provided to the local community. Like in any case however, there are abusive stories along with the success stories (take for example the report regarding an American military hospital that has been abusive of its civilian patients (Mulrine, A. (25 July 2012). Afghan war: Did US Commanders cover up 'horrific' conditions at hospital? . The Christian Science Monitor. Washington, Cristian Science Monitor. <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2012/0725/Afghan-war-Did-US-commanders-cover-up-horrific-conditions-at-hospital.>)

<sup>11</sup> The function of “Intelligence” is often not included in discussions about civil-military interaction, largely due to problems with transparency and reciprocity with civilian actors. Intelligence is a function that provides the background/justification for operations. Intelligence is an enormous and complicated field in and of itself, but briefly, it combines both information collection and information analysis about other nations, about enemies or potential enemies, or about potential operations areas Forsvarets stabskole (2007). Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine. Forsvaret. Oslo, Forsvarsstaben..

<sup>12</sup> The Provincial Reconstruction Team is a civil-military structure designed to assist in stabilization operations in particular in Iraq and Afganistan.

## **6.0 DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE AND FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK**

Why do we even need a comprehensive approach? A comprehensive approach to what? What is the end goal? I argue in this paper that the end goal is a holistic and comprehensive security that has its roots in the needs, interests and values of the most affected local communities. A comprehensive approach, at least those developed thus far by various international organizations, project certain assumptions about what sort of efforts are needed and why. First of all, we usually speak about a comprehensive approach with regard to unstable situations. *Unstable* usually implies that security on multiple levels and across multiple sectors may be in jeopardy. It roots itself simultaneously in national and international security concerns as well as in local community security, all of which require different measures and/or efforts.

A comprehensive approach to civil-military interaction must take into account different actor needs in different contexts. This requires flexibility, and also implies that approaches will logically be different dependent upon context. In other words, we cannot speak about *a* comprehensive approach, but must refer to comprehensive approaches, and which would be most relevant at a given time. In a natural catastrophe context, the different actors relevant to providing security – largely physical security through removing people from the insecure situation, providing lifesaving measures for those requiring it, and providing temporary care (shelter) while those responsible for long term services (usually governments at the local, regional and/or national levels) ensure that the entirety of services becomes available during the shortest period of intervening time. In “purely” natural catastrophe cases – those cases that are not additionally burdened with political tensions occurring in the same area – the interaction between military, non-governmental (humanitarian and development) and governmental actors may be tightly coordinated resulting in close cooperation so that rescue efforts are quickly and effectively mobilized. Such close cooperation may not be desirable or possible in circumstances where political tensions are relevant, not least in large scale conflict situations. In this case we find a number of actors that by virtue of their own security interests and needs will not and cannot cooperate with other actors in the region.

A comprehensive approach framework that bases itself in articulations of security within a given context provides the flexibility needed to better understand who is able to provide what sort of guidance and support and at what time during a complex operation and a period of instability. Such an approach contests claims to an overarching, dominant approach that may not be suitable to all situations. It is not assumed that all actors involved in a complex operation (by choice or by default) have equal power to influence others in the system or framework. However the framework makes visible those actors who are crucial to security but who have traditionally gone unnoticed, not least the affected populations themselves. Generic, one-solution, comprehensive approaches have acknowledged at least that security and stability cannot be reached through the efforts of militaries alone, but little has been done to actually understand what and how other actors contribute to security. It is often implicitly assumed that political actors (government officials/policy makers in host nations as well as donor/troop contributing nations) play a significant if not the most important role, but little about how that manifests itself in different situations. NGOs are recognized as providing significant support and effort, particularly at local levels, but little is problematized about their differing perceptions of security, and at times completely different mandates, that makes any sort of inclusion in a comprehensive approach extremely difficult if not impossible (and in this case we need to be more critical looking at why this is the case). Local communities are often represented in ways that suggest that they are passive recipients of action and efforts (whether these efforts be from military, when indeed they are often the first actors to respond to any insecurity using whatever means they have available. In addition, media and information actors (ranging from traditional media – newspapers, radio, television, to information transmitted through community organizations, religious organizations, etc) have a powerful impact regarding how security is perceived by different actors and in transmitting concerns (and in possibly influencing security perceptions in favour of some actors over others). Research-based actors located both within the region in question (local or indigenous) as well as external research actors provide continuous analyses that speak to the ways in which security is being constructed and by whom and/or ways in which security could/should be constructed for long term viability. Industry/business, to the degree that they are able to be



active (depending on the levels of potential violence/disruption) will also be relevant actors particularly as physical security is more established, providing the potential for long-term economic stability for local communities as well as the region and nation at large.

Using a multiple actor security framework, one is forced to examine/listen to community needs in relation to broader political goals, and is regularly adjusting focus and strategies to account for needs on the ground. Understanding how “comprehensive approaches” in fact work on the ground – for and amongst the people who are operationalizing the approach, is crucial to understanding how a comprehensive approach can and should be understood strategically. A multi-actor security framework takes its departure point from the actors on the ground or those who have to implement activities or work on coordination activities. Even the notion of “coordination” changes according to context, where in certain circumstances a coordinated effort must allow for “co-existence” and nothing more, or even allow for blind spots of activity where some actors refuse to provide information about what they are doing so as to not be associated with a “comprehensive” approach at all. These relationships or rejection of relationships are very much contingent upon the perceptions of security (personal, physical) of the relevant actors in question. Who is or can coordinate with whom again depends on the actor and the context. Working from the ground up, but always with a mind towards the overarching political goal that is desirable (this would also adjust as different actors gain more power and influence in the security dynamic).

This framework then acknowledges that different actors at different times will participate in a comprehensive approach. As such, it becomes incumbent upon the political actors that are driving the initiative (NATO, member states, other international organizations) to be acutely aware of how different actors will respond within the given context and why. It also may demand decision making where, given the security needs and perceptions of some actors, that they are acknowledged, respected, but not included in a comprehensive approach at all (for example, humanitarian actors). At the same time, it will also be necessary to examine the ways in which non-complying actors may influence the political arena in ways that are beneficial or detrimental to the overarching goals and intentions of an intervention. The security needs of some actors may indeed jeopardize the security goals of the overarching mission. By understanding the positionings and strategies of different actors based on their perceptions of security, are we able to design flexible comprehensive approaches that respond to the needs of local communities and host nations alike, reducing the possibility of increased instability (or renewed instability) and further local, regional, national and global insecurity.

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