

June, 2005

Revised Concept Note for the Peace Operations Working Group of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee

INTRODUCTION

Around the world, peacekeepers are being deployed in near record numbers, an indication that some of the most intractable conflicts may be coming to an end.

The current surge in UN-mandated peace operations has seen the number of deployed personnel rise to over 65,000. Furthermore, a number of peace operations activities occur outside the scope of United Nations mandates, or are jointly authorized by the UN and regional organizations.

In addition to increases in the numbers of missions and persons deployed, mission mandates have expanded, as have the required skill sets for military, police and civilian personnel.

MISSION

The Peace Operations Working Group (POWG) of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) provides a platform for the engagement of Canadian individuals and civil society organizations in matters of shared concern related to peace operations.

The Working Group addresses numerous types of peace operations activities undertaken in a United Nations context, or through other institutional arrangements:

- those characterized as preventive deployments;
- “traditional peacekeeping,” i.e. stabilizing or monitoring after a ceasefire;
- peace enforcement;
- post-conflict stabilization, peacebuilding, reconstruction and democratic transition.

The Working Group provides a space for sharing lessons learned, innovations and best practices in peace operations and the roles played by various actors.

OBJECTIVES

- Enhance civilian capacity. The WG addresses the imbalance between Canadian civilian peace operations capacity, and Canadian military peace operations capacity; and the resulting need to develop Canadian civilian capacity, inter-operability and cooperation with governmental agencies -- an “all-of-Canada,” not only a “3D” approach. At the same time, the WG addresses appropriate responsibilities and coordination among civilian, military, police and other actors in contemporary complex peace operations.
- Promote timely deployments. The WG addresses the need for international peace operations to be deployed more quickly and in a more consistent and reliable manner.
- Address peace ops governance and legality questions. The WG monitors issues related to whether peace operations are in conformity with international law and are governed and commanded by (in the words of the report, *The Responsibility to Protect*) a “right authority.”

THEMATIC AREAS OF INTEREST

The issues addressed by the Working Group arise in a number of contexts. In Canada, some of the public policy discussions that engage the working group include:

- “Responsibility to Protect” as both an emerging norm and operational framework;
- United Nations reforms that enhance peace operations (e.g. Brahimi, In Larger Freedom, Millennium+5 Declaration);
- Implementation of relevant aspects of Canada’s International Policy Statement.
- Strengthening peace operations capacities of other (including regional) international organizations;
- Considering how peace support operations might link to short term recovery initiatives and longer-term sustainable peacebuilding.

POWG FUNCTIONS

- capacity-building, primarily for Canadian civil society but also for other stakeholders seeking a better understanding of civil society needs, capacity and modus operandi;
- building links with civil society networks in other parts of the world;
- information gathering and distribution to a variety of (primarily Canadian) audiences;
- facilitating policy dialogue;
- monitoring current developments.

STRUCTURE

The POWG is a subsidiary working group of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC, see www.peacebuild.ca). The POWG reports to the Executive Committee and Annual Meeting of the CPCC.

The World Federalist Movement – Canada (WFMC) serves as the “administrative home” for the day-to-day functions of the WG.

The ongoing program of the POWG is determined by a Steering Committee, made up of Canadian CSO representatives. The current Steering Committee includes representatives from WFMC, CPCC (ex-officio), XXX, XXX, XXX, XXX, and XXX.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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