



Mary Martin

With Friends Like These, Who Needs Enemies?

Human Security and the Challenge of Effective Multilateralism

- Although multilateralism is a key norm of crisis management, many multilateral missions are dysfunctional and ineffective. At the operating level there is poor co-ordination and little sense of shared understandings about the nature and objectives of external interventions.
- Rather than focussing only on institutional reform, effective multilateralism needs to develop better mechanisms to overcome the diverse agendas, capabilities and operating methods of the many actors needed to tackle complex crisis situations.
- A new approach to multilateralism would also engage local civil society in conflict and post-conflict zones as active multilateral partners, not passive beneficiaries.
- Although human security is a contested and poorly systematised approach to crisis management, it could provide the basis for multilateralism to regain effectiveness. By adopting a rigorous proprietary definition of human security and using it as an organising framework, the European Union could drive consensus among multilateral partners, including beneficiary populations, regarding situation analysis, mission objectives and methodologies.

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Introduction

Late 2008 saw a surge in support for multilateralism. As financial markets descended into chaos and economies faltered, states turned to each other for help, reviving the promise of multilateral solutions and new institutions to deal with problems which spill over national borders and are global in reach and effect.

»New multilateralism« focuses on stimulating a greater sense of shared responsibility and willingness to co-operate among nation states, as well as reform of the institutions designed to manage that co-operation (Zoellick, 2008). Although hardly that new, as it has been proposed at various times in the post-Cold war era, particularly after 9/11, the label has been dusted off and re-examined amid a sense of institutional failure to deal with the challenges which confront twenty-first century societies. The election of a new US president in November 2008 prompted the UN Secretary General to hope that a »new multilateralism« would take shape in the areas of diplomacy, development and peace (Ban Ki-moon, 2008). However, collaborative approaches to crisis management and political violence require new thinking and organisation which goes beyond institutional reform. At the operational level multilateralism is in disarray, leading to confusion and competition among actors. Examples from conflicts such as Afghanistan and post-conflict environments in the Balkans suggest that the management of pluralism in outside intervention is far from »effective«.

Multilateralism is a bulwark against the overweening ambition of single states, offering some reassurance about benign motives and sound methods, particularly in relation to the use of force in external interventions. States acting together raise less suspicions about their reasons for intervening outside of their own territory. A group of states is regarded as better able to tackle the complex demands of international security and peacebuilding. The attraction of multilateralism is also that co-operation is likely to produce better outcomes, as these are beyond the reach of single actors, even of powerful states. Multilateralism leverages the credibility of international organisations such as the UN whose perceived neutrality and universal ownership affords other actors improved access into conflict environments and allows them to work in sensitive areas of governance and reconstruction. On the other hand, there is evidence that multilateralism may also be a messy way of dealing with conflict, producing interventions that are chaotic, wasteful, inconclusive and lacking real, as opposed to token, legitimacy.

On the crowded terrain of peacebuilding, multiple

actors are tasked and self-appointed to cement peace agreements, guard cease-fires and mend broken societies. This is no longer the preserve of one or a few powerful nation states, but requires a complicated jigsaw of political will, resources and professional capabilities, drawn from a wide range of public and private sources. Here, multilateralism is not just about states banding together to address an issue of concern to them, but about creating and managing networks of action, which extend from strategic decision-making to tactics on the ground. A key feature of »new multilateralism« in peacebuilding is that it includes civil society, most obviously in the form of organised groups of citizens, operating internationally and locally, and creating partnerships with ordinary individuals and communities who are affected by conflict.

In the European Security Strategy of 2003, the EU declared its commitment to external policies based on »effective« multilateralism. But what does this mean and how difficult is it to achieve in practice at the operational as well as the institutional level? This paper examines the challenge of effective multilateralism, and the problem of »dysfunctional« multilateralism in as far as it applies to EU crisis management and conflict prevention and resolution, using ESDP and Community instruments.¹ It takes a tactical and operational view of multilateralism, nested within an international architecture of co-operative organisations and programmes, and uses examples from Afghanistan and Kosovo drawn from interviews and questionnaires involving both military and civilians in the field.

Effective multilateralism is also one of the six principles of a human security doctrine, proposed by the Barcelona and Madrid Reports of the Human Security Study Group on European security capabilities (2004 and 2007). Working with others rather than unilaterally distinguishes interventions from neo-imperialist interference. Yet critics of a human security approach cite the need to work in a multilateral dimension as a reason why it is not feasible for the European Union.

Human security is criticised as posing a core dilemma involving a choice between policies that are either narrow and operable, or broad and idealistic, and that part of its impracticality is its incompatibility with EU member states' alliance commitments within NATO. EU member states are particularly nervous that human security is somehow too different and radical, and that by adopting such a specific normative approach to crisis management, »interoperability« with

¹ For proposals on how effective multilateralism fits into EU security strategy, see European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (2008).

organisations such as NATO or nation states such as the United States will be put at risk.

The adoption of such an approach is believed to jeopardise alliance relationships because it would conflict with the priorities and methodologies of the EU's partners. Rather than promoting effective multilateralism, a human security approach is criticised as undermining it.

Thus there are two concerns to be considered here: firstly the critical view that a human security approach cannot be squared with the EU's commitment to multilateralism, and secondly the advocates' view that in order to operationalise a human security approach, effective multilateralism is an important principle which must be made to work. This paper sets out to tackle these twin challenges. The first part examines the concept of effective multilateralism, its role in contemporary crisis management, and why it is problematic. The second part focuses on how to address these difficulties, and investigates whether a human security approach and the principle of effective multilateralism can be mutually reinforcing.

The paper argues that a framework approach of human security could crystallise and enhance the ideal of multilateral crisis management, and assist in carving out better collective responses to security challenges. Contrary to criticism, human security principles could provide a better basis for strategic and tactical co-operation by raising the importance of conceptual and strategic analysis, insisting on greater clarity and transparency to multilateral missions and mainstreaming the participation of local constituencies who are often marginalised by the proliferation of international actors. A human security approach could be one way in which a »new multilateralism« which is more efficient could emerge in the field of crisis management and peacebuilding.

1 What is Effective about Multilateralism?

Kosovo's capital Pristina is typical in hosting an alphabet soup of international organisations, focused on post-conflict reconstruction and assistance, whose density is particularly noticeable in a small city, in a small state. Between 2000 and 2007, the European Union alone accounted for six different offices, representing different aspects of its support. As well as the continued presence of NATO troops, the UNMIK administration, several other United Nations agencies, the World Bank and OSCE, there are an estimated five thousand NGOs and INGOs, compared with twelve the year after the 1999 NATO air campaign.

It is difficult to make this diverse universe of interests work. Institutions are unwilling to »integrate« or »synthesise« their agendas, objectives, methodologies, let alone their staff and resources. Synchronising their inputs across a time horizon which varies from emergency and rapid response to sustained post-conflict reconstruction is also problematic. Viewed in operational rather than political or institutional terms, multilateralism in crisis management risks producing competition and turf wars as well as unintended adverse consequences. In the words of Sir Jeremy Greenstock, former UK ambassador to the UN and special representative to Iraq: »What you have is parts that add up to less than the sum. It's very disappointing how skills are not shared and there is no co-ordination. The implementation is going badly wrong and not achieving a multiplier return« (Greenstock, 2008).

»Effective multilateralism« is a core principle of the European Union's crisis management capabilities and its foreign policy profile, yet the term has lost the sharp edges of its meaning and become a concept which is apparently well understood but never interrogated. It is a key theme of the European Security Strategy, but is used in the text variously to mean support for the United Nations, adherence to treaty regimes, membership of international organisations and efforts to promote international law among dysfunctional states (Lucarelli and Menotti, 2006).

John Ruggie defined multilateralism as having both an institutional and a behavioural aspect. On his definition, multilateralism consists of action among three or more states on the basis of generalised rules of conduct (Ruggie, 1993). Multilateralism is the antidote to imperial ambition, based on the presumption that if several states agree to collective action and also institutionalise their joint efforts in a way that it conforms to certain rules and promotes certain ethical goals, then this offers some guarantee that their action is normatively and sociologically legitimate. Robert Keohane questions this assumption and points out the limitations of multilateralism as a twentieth century model now in need of modernisation: he challenges the presumption that multilateralism is only about states and the idea that it is a limited »add-on« to security, designed to supplement interstate relations when these were insufficient or unavailable (Keohane, 2006).

Effective multilateralism must function as an enabler, allowing the international community of states to resolve problems, and it is about ensuring that forms of collaborative action such as international organisations, regimes and treaties are themselves up to the job of confronting threats to peace and able to defend breaches of rules (de Vasconcelos, 2008).

Yet the most common usage and context for effective multilateralism is the co-ordination and co-operation of multiple actors to deliver peace and security, taking place at the grass roots, operational level.

The growing number of multilateral interventions since the end of the Cold War raise issues to do with the increased complexity of associative proliferation and the sheer surge in collective power represented by greater interaction between more actors. Or as McRae and Hubert put it: »[There has been a] shift from lofty global issues to pragmatic deliverables down to quotidian practices« (McRae and Hubert, 2001). The EU is a multilateral actor: it undertakes crisis management, often as part of ad hoc coalitions through the United Nations, such as in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. It works alongside NATO in the Balkans and Afghanistan, with individual nation states and regional organisations such as the African Union. It also embodies an internal multilateralism by acting collectively between its own member states.

Not only does the ESS commit the EU to pursue effective multilateralism, but the concept was highlighted in the Human Security doctrine as meaning a commitment to work in the framework of international law, alongside other international and regional agencies, individual states and non-state actors. »Effective multilateralism is what distinguishes a Human Security approach from neo-imperialism. It also means a better division of tasks and greater coherence solving problems through rules and co-operation, and creating common policies and norms« (Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities, 2004).

2 Collaboration or Confusion – A Bottom-up View of Multilateralism

Ask most personnel working at grass-roots level what they understand by effective multilateralism and they will tell you that it is about communication, co-operation and co-ordination, but that in practice it does not happen. A cross-section of civilian and military respondents working in Kosovo and Afghanistan, interviewed for this paper, said that their main partners in the field were civil society, local government institutions and international organisations. In Afghanistan's Helmand province, this circle was extended to include both military and private sector security firms, while there was almost no interaction with NGOs. In Kosovo there was extensive NGO interaction, but less active engagement with the international security forces, or private sector security.

What they described is missing was a *functioning*

culture of co-operation« (my emphasis) in these relationships, rather than an absence of formal structures, which may already exist at the strategic institutional level, but which do not translate into effective co-operation on the ground.

The barriers which inhibit effective multilateralism work in the field may be categorised as

1. Conceptual
2. Institutional and legal
3. Process related.

Conceptual issues refer to understandings among the different actors of the nature of the task, and agreed methodologies for tackling it. Conceptual co-ordination requires collective analysis of the context for assistance, an assessment of risks and benefits, and decisions about how different professional competences can be brought together. An important corollary is that multilateral actors should be able to talk each other's language, both literally and in being able to communicate effectively within agreed programme frameworks. As Sven Biscop points out, actors may take different views of what constitutes an otherwise common concept such as conditionality, thereby either intentionally or accidentally preventing the development of integrated strategies (Biscop, 2006). Goals and objectives are often not set out clearly, other than in the legal jargon of official mandates, or made the subject of an explicit shared understanding. They will probably not be shared openly with civilian populations, NGOs or government officials. Practitioners agree that it is a mistake not to set out and explain strategic objectives, yet in the rush to deploy, this basic prerequisite for multilateral action is frequently overlooked. One acute example of this is the NATO engagement in Afghanistan, where the Alliance deployed troops ahead of a fully worked-out joint strategy. It was five years before a joint NATO strategy for Afghanistan was developed, leading each Alliance member to generate its own analysis and approach to both security and development issues, without reference to an overall set of goals, targets and operating methods (Shea, 2008).

NATO staff admit there was »too much information and not enough analysis«, and that the Comprehensive Approach failed to connect a strategic plan with operational requirements. Instead the CA represents a »wish-list« of long-term outcomes which itself has been given different headings over time, including »democratisation« and »self-sustaining development«. It is also regarded as overly military by NATO's civilian partners, thus limiting its possibilities as a developmental tool.

Another example of conceptual fragmentation is the philosophy towards police reform in Afghanistan.

The US, within the frame of the War on Terrorism, have sought to develop local police capacity as an anti-terror device to capture terrorists. The EU's EUPOL mission emphasises capacity building in terms of domestic policing functions, while UNDP also contributes to police reform through paying police salaries.

The UK presence in Afghanistan's Helmand province has benefitted from the Helmand Road Map, which came into operation on 1 April 2008 and provides a common framework for defining and measuring UK civilian and military roles, extending from providing physical security to governance and development issues. However, it is a classified document, off limits to both Afghan civilians who are meant to be partners in peacebuilding, as well as public audiences in the UK who might use it to gauge the effectiveness of the mission. Individual personnel use their own organising principles such as the statebuilding model which includes a survival function to satisfy basic needs, a political settlement and expected functions such as education and healthcare. Another saw his mission in terms of a methodology akin to political campaigning, which seeks to win local support for a reconstruction process, prior to implementing concrete proposals.

In Kosovo the conceptual framework for reconstruction is a source of active disagreement. The International Civilian Office, one manifestation of the EU presence in Kosovo, is geared to implementing the Ahtissari plan for decentralisation, which is rejected by Serbia and the Serb enclaves within Kosovo. It also uses the Kosovo constitution as a framework for its governance assistance. Other actors such as UNMIK, OSCE, the European Commission and the EU rule of law mission EULEX operate a »status neutral« policy, which ignores Kosovo Albanians' declaration of independence in February 2008, and reflects the failure of the UN Security Council to agree on the state/province's status. Future accession to EU membership, provides another organising principle for multilateral assistance, but while it is a prospect which EU delegates within Kosovo may encourage as a medium term possibility, it is a more distant reality seen from Brussels where commissioners speak of merely giving Kosovo a »European perspective« (Rehn, 2008). A further fragmentation arises because five EU member states including Spain and Slovakia have refused to recognise Kosovo independence and therefore reject either the Ahtissari plan or the Stabilisation and Association Process as a framework for EU intervention in Kosovo. This mismatch between different understandings of what different actors are able and prepared to do in Kosovo is a critical barrier to both

co-ordination and achieving results on the ground. The exasperated response from locals to this kind of institutional bloc is summed up by an NGO representative in Kosovo: »Let us not waste any more time, but see how we can close this complex circle of conversations between different actors« (FIQ, 2008).

The second type of barrier to effective multilateralism is institutional and legal. Each organisation has rules and procedures which may preclude intense forms of co-operation, as well as ad hoc collaboration. Individual mandates create parallel rather than overlapping terms of engagement, and are intended as restrictive as much as permissive documents. Within multilateral military engagements, the notorious problem of national caveats which restrict what troops from individual alliance members can do, plagues multilateral physical security in Afghanistan. Less obvious is that every single donor or actor is under a different duty of care and security procedure for civilian personnel, provided by private security guards as well as national military. This in turn limits freedom of movement and physical interaction with Afghans and with other members of the international community. In Afghanistan, unlike Kosovo, the co-existence of two different military campaigns – one under NATO and the other, Operation Enduring Freedom, run by the US with different objectives – means that in the words of one international representative: »this muddies the waters and means you don't always know why something happens«.

Institutional pluralism creates distinct and exclusive chains of command into which it can be difficult to insert civilian representatives, or which creates confusions about hierarchy and status when civilians work alongside military, particularly in leadership roles. Military commanders need to be confident in their own positions and abilities to handle the possibility of being »outranked« by civilian representatives. Different financing arrangements drive a further wedge between multilateral efforts as donor demands formulated at national level may not fit into a comprehensive plan.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan are an example of how organisational structure affects multilateral efforts. The PRT concept has been interpreted in at least 14 different ways in different parts of the country. This diversity reflects top-down decisions by participating governments rather than variations in conditions and tasks. In some cases this has caused PRTs to become bogged down in an out-of-date operational mode – the lack of bottom-up approach means that they are focussing on tasks which were more relevant in 2002-4, when they were established, than today (Eronen, 2008). Instead of cultivat-

ing flexibility and adaptability, their structure can make them rigid and unresponsive to a changing environment. PRT's are also predominantly military vehicles with civilian components bolted on. Civilians are embedded rather in the way that journalists are attached to military units in combat, not an organic part of the structure, and this too may limit their effectiveness in governance or development operations.

In both Afghanistan and Kosovo new types of structures are being created to counter such drawbacks. Smaller teams allow members to work closely together and interact with the local population, autonomously from the larger unit. In Kosovo, the ICO has initiated smaller field offices outside of Pristina and in Afghanistan the UK military have introduced forward operating bases (FOBs) in four districts of Helmand, which bring together members of the local Shura (council) with Military Support Stabilisation Teams (MSSTs) which are civilian led and include members of the Royal Engineers Civil Military Co-ordination teams rather than forward combat troops.

Reducing the gap between international actors and local citizens allows missions to deal with restrictive mandates and implement rules of engagement constructively. Where local partners are placed at the apex of a triangle of relationships comprising military, civilians and locals – a typical triptych in Afghanistan – or which might include those providing governance assistance and economic reconstruction, it appears easier to create an effective division of labour as well as sustainable results. Most of those interviewed for this paper believed that standing aloof from civil society, even where it is poorly organised with poor capacities, meant that international efforts, however rich in diversity and intensity, were likely to end in misunderstandings, duplication and unintended outcomes.

The third category of challenge to effective multilateralism is process, which deals with the way different multilateral partners deploy resources and implement their mandates. Process driven factors include communications which cause particular difficulties in Afghanistan where geographic constraints on movement, coupled with security risks in travelling, mean that face-to-face meetings are often not possible, and mobile phone or internet connections are poor or non-existent. This reinforces the silo mentality of operating units, limits co-ordination and distorts the flow of information or creates uneven access to it. While there are technology issues which make communications networks difficult, a bigger barrier which also affects an area like Kosovo which has relatively good connectivity, is the reluctance to share information. EU institutions for example each develop action

plans based on their own information resources and information exchange across non-EU networks of partners may be even thinner.

Successful multilateral partnerships also require strong leadership, and the absence of clear direction, either from the strategic and political level or weak leadership on the ground is a reason behind multilateral dysfunction. NATO's Afghanistan engagement has suffered from having no-one who is prepared to assume political responsibility for heading stabilisation and reconstruction efforts. Without this the military dimension has dominated, placing excessive reliance on military instruments and strategy. A philosophical issue the EU will have to tackle as it increases its military capabilities for crisis management is the chronic imbalance between civilian and military resourcefulness. Military's superior organisational skills coupled with systematic training and logistics capabilities, for example in transporting people in dangerous terrain, mean that they tend to dominate multilateral deployments, squeezing out civilian space and the roles of other actors.

The political row in the international community over Kosovo's status has fragmented leadership of the post-conflict process. The EU-led International Civilian Office has significant political powers, the Albanian Kosovo government and constitution have strong local legitimacy, and key executive functions such as courts and aspects of the judiciary are still in the hands of UNMIK. No-one has an overall co-ordinating role.

Ensuring that actors work together is partly an institutional issue as described above, but also a function of individual personalities. Weak or abrasive leaders, or those who fail to communicate with actors from different professional and national backgrounds jeopardise processes of co-operation. The European Union has not yet made effective multilateralism a systematic part of its foreign policy behaviour, developing processes such as reporting requirements, but also through training and lessons learned, which can offset the vagaries of individual performance. Missions are highly dependent on the choice of commanders and key civilian personnel and how they implement their mandates. Training for ESDP missions for example fails to integrate civilian and military personnel and there is no holistic system which ensures a connection between training, deployment, future recruitment and lessons learned (Martin, 2006)? »Micro« training on the ground of units who work together, rather than relying on pre-deployment train-

2 The Crisis Management Centre of Finland conducted its first integrated crisis management course for civilian and military personnel in November 2008.

ing within individual institutions could be one way forward. Deployment periods for multilateral missions are also problematic, with military forces usually rotating every six months, forcing shorter time horizons on planning and implementation than many civilian representatives adopt. The result is »too much improvisation« according to one senior NATO official, too many strategic revisions at the expense of continuity and a focus on quick results within the timescale of a tour of duty leading to the prevalence of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) now dropped in Helmand province which frequently produce unsuitable and unsustainable development assistance. Rapid turnover of international staff alienates local civil society and reduces incentives for co-operation. The disjuncture in operational time-scales between military and civilian partners is also reflected in a culture of frequent military briefings – for example twice daily on the ground and once weekly at strategic level – which does not reflect the slower maturation of political developments.

3 Human Security and Effective Multilateralism

Conceptual, institutional and process issues are more than just barriers to civil-military co-ordination and integration. They represent a deeper crisis about the nature of multilateralism in peacebuilding. How can a human security unclutter and refocus the efforts of different partners rather than adding an unwanted additional layer to this complicated mix? Criticism of human security typically dwells on the problem that it is a contested concept, too vague to be operationally useful and only adding confusion to a ground already littered with policy labels and programme rubrics. How can human security and effective multilateralism be mutually reinforcing?

The first proviso is that a human security approach for the European Union should be seen as a specific, coherent set of principles which structure and anchor external intervention. It is not only about a desired end-state of human well-being, but an integrated methodology for delivering objectives summarised as freedom from fear, freedom from want, and personal dignity. The principles are: the primacy of human rights, legitimate political authority, a bottom-up approach, effective multilateralism, a regional focus and transparent strategic direction.

The second proviso is that each of these principles matter and should work together. They are a coherent framework, not an a la carte list of things to choose from.

3.1 Clearer Sense of Agreed Goals

The first way in which human security would make multilateralism effective is to develop a common concept and analysis of the nature of the conflict and identification of drivers of peace. Individual organisations will continue to use their own planning tools, but within a shared reference point which would help to create a clearer sense of goals and provide the basis for discussion and review of objectives.

3.2 The Local Lateral

Secondly, human security would aid conceptual coherence among multilateral partners in defining priorities and projects which also command the support and respect of local civilian population. Locals have to be seen as multilateral partners too. Where the Ahtisari plan has been both divisive among international partners and separatist in its implications for Kosovo, a human security approach would have specified goals in relation to the six human security principles. It would frame the most contentious issue of Kosovo's status, in terms of a broader legitimacy than Security Council agreements, paid greater attention to the regional impact of independence, and placed a more explicit emphasis on consulting local constituencies about the interpretation of »security for all« (Kostovicova, 2008). In the absence of political consensus among nation states about Kosovo's future, a human security approach could establish achievable goals for multilateral partners on the ground to improve the daily lives of Kosovo citizens.

In Afghanistan, assistance has switched from concrete physical reconstruction schemes to targeting support more towards governance. While this is needed, it can make it harder to have a clear sense among many different partners of what are appropriate projects, and how they constitute progress. Governance issues are less visible than new schools. Yet a human security approach which insists on strong local ownership and ensures not just the support of Afghans but their active management and commitment has been shown to work where it is applied. One example is a capacity building (CAP) programme which provides mentors/coaches from civil services in the region, including India and Sri Lanka, assigned to institutions such as the Ministry of Finance and provincial governments. The programme is administered by UNDP, with financial support from governments such as Canada and India. The choice of institutions is made by the Karzai government and funding goes not to paying local civil servants unsustainably high

international salaries, but in temporary payments to regional mentors. The project is successful because it frames assistance within a context of specific Afghan institutions, it matches mentors who have similar cultural approaches and interests, with Afghans who are likely to find common ground with their advisors and with whom they can build a sustainable regional social/professional network in the longer run, and it places Afghans in positions of responsibility.

In the second example a PRT project in Helmand made local elders responsible for reconstruction projects, funded by outside donor money. PRT officials restricted their role to delivering funds, and they provided locals with a camera to take pictures proving that the work was being done to an acceptable standard. A bottom-up approach, which went beyond just capacity building initiatives, also avoided problems of corrupt contractors by placing the elders at the centre of the co-ordination process.

In contrast, institutional confusion in Kosovo has eroded a clear sense of the priorities of external assistance. The internal security sector review of 2006 showed that the main security concerns of people were unemployment, petty crime and corruption, yet there is no sense among NGOs or the wider population that the international community is targeting these core areas adequately (FIQ and Saferworld, 2007). There is disillusion that, despite the EU's emphasis on technical assistance which has absorbed over three quarters of its donations since 1999, Kosovans are still dependent on the international community nine years later, and still deemed in need of internationally imported capacity building.

An agreed framework among multilateral partners needs to include an exit strategy for international intervention, which substitutes local responsibility for »capacity building« and focuses efforts on a real transfer of power and expertise.

3.3 Civilian Direction not Military Domination

Recent initiatives in Afghanistan reflect a move towards deploying military as a limited and surgical support function rather than as a blanket weapon, even under conditions of open and persistent violent conflict. This is consistent with a human security approach which envisages the need for using force as part of a hard security policy, but which defines conditions for the use of force and which makes military instruments subordinate to a politically driven peacebuilding process.

3.4 Transparency and Accountability

Principles such as legitimate political authority, bottom-up and transparent strategic direction insist on the accountability of intervention and justification of multilateral presence. A human security approach would help to close the information deficit which typically attaches to pluralist external assistance. Efforts to explain and justify the international presence to local constituencies would aid a culture of openness and communication and would help to silence the »Chinese whispers« about which organisation or mission is doing what and with which motives, which muddy productive co-operation between international partners and lead to a blame game between internationals and locals in Kosovo about who is responsible for policy failures. Decisions about information exchange should be part of planning processes, and networks configured to improve communications between partners and between locals and internationals. Experiments with local radio in Kosovo and »radio in a box« in Afghanistan show this is being done, but they need to be given greater priority in the initial stages of multilateral interventions.

The EULEX mission in Kosovo has attempted to improve dialogue with civil society, and bring together multiple participants in the mission's task, while providing channels for redress by local citizens where necessary. A series of regular meetings between civil society and EULEX staff up to the level of head of mission in Kosovo is designed to provide a forum for ongoing interaction.

Responsiveness has to reflect the fact that the EU mission is the most visible representation of the international community in Kosovo, and that in practice, if not in law, EULEX will be answerable for the actions of a range of multilateral partners. A meeting in Brussels to discuss the mission registered 74 participants, including 27 representatives of 18 NGO/CSO organisations and 17 Member States.

As a key actor in Kosovo, the European Union is well placed to institute good practices of this type and use them to forge better co-ordination. In regions such as Afghanistan, it could take a lead by making its own missions open to dialogue with local civil society and by encouraging members of other multilateral partners to participate in open fora.

Transparency and accountability need to operate within the international community as well, with public audiences informed about why and how their military forces, civilian personnel and financial resources are deployed. The crisis within NATO members about the Afghan engagement, which erupted at the beginning of 2008 as countries such as Canada, Germany

and the Netherlands threatened to block contributions to the multinational force, showed the impact of a failure of public diplomacy to explain the nature and goals of international assistance to Afghanistan (The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, 2008). Human security principles offer a basis for a more active public debate about why missions are needed and their progress towards understood goals.

4 Human Security in a Multilateral Framework

The potential benefit of a human security approach is that it can fill the conceptual and organisational gaps which currently weaken multilateral operations and render them dysfunctional. Is the doctrine as set out in the Barcelona and Madrid Reports sufficiently robust for that task? Some practitioners questioned for this paper suggested that the term human security is still too poorly understood or supported to act as a collective glue in multilateral peacebuilding environments. However they felt that if short-term difficulties could be overcome it would enhance efforts in the longer run.

The proliferation of definitions and applications of human security make it harder for the term to embody the precision needed to streamline the methodologies of multiple actors. In this case, more effort is required by the European Union to specify what it means by human security, and how to operationalise a human security approach which distinguishes it from other uses of the term. The principles of the human security doctrine represent such a precise framework, but need to be seen as an integrated operational plan: currently the EU operationalises human security more as an objective than a means of intervention and assistance. (Aren't the principles a comprehensive framework for such a definition of the EU? They offer the methodology to make the approach precise (clearer sense of agreed goals) and contextualised (the local lateral)). In situations like Kosovo, where the EU has a clear leadership role through the ICO and the EULEX mission, it could take the lead in forging consensus among multilateral partners using this framework to create shared but quite specific understandings relating to situation analysis, clear objectives for co-operation and common methodologies, including how to jointly evaluate multilateral initiatives. To counter criticisms of fuzziness, a human security approach has to be contextualised to the locality of operations, and give rise to a clear methodology.

A second criticism is that human security ideals

could be corrupted, and applying multilateralism helps to legitimise a cloak of liberal intervention, and do nothing to prevent militarist hegemony. It could be seen as multiplying not minimising the dangers of interventionism. In order to create and protect discreet spaces for humanitarian actors and for civilian politics, multilateral rules must respect all the principles and make them work in an integrated way. The principles of the human security approach ensure that it is more than a fancy label. Firstly, they condition the use of military force, they also imply an ethical code for all external partners, so that multilateralism itself is bound by a transparent framework which can be enforced as part of the conditions of joint projects.

A further difficulty may arise in applying the principles. Operational dilemmas between, for example, the primacy of human rights and principles such as a bottom-up approach or legitimate political authority, will require tough decisions about how to balance conflicting demands. In Afghanistan, empowering locals to create grass roots forms of democratic representation means dealing with men rather than women, and deciding whether to sanction forms of Sharia law which may impinge upon civil and political rights. In a multilateral context, different partners such as humanitarian NGOs or military may take opposing views about trade-offs between principles. Would human security principles be seen as a permissive, enabling framework or a rigid strait-jacket for operations? In this case communication and information are essential elements to make the approach work. Human security can be seen as a dialogic as well as an operating framework: not only does it alter traditional terms of communication between external forces and local populations, but multilateral partners should also have the chance to participate in an open dialogue about the principles and operational choices about how to respect them.

The advantages of a shared conceptual and operational framework have been demonstrated in Afghanistan where common strategies such as the statebuilding model or the UK Helmand Roadmap have been applied. Human security could add value to multilateral engagements provided it is clearly defined as a set of operating principles, and a methodological framework. The principles should be used systematically to analyse, structure and evaluate actions on the ground.

5 Conclusion

The European Union has signalled that effective multilateralism is central to its ambitions and nature as an international actor. While multilateralism may represent the best normative and pragmatic option for tackling conflict it is also a dysfunctional mechanism. Multilateral actors are failing to leverage their combined resource power and potential legitimacy. Alliance relationships, civilian military co-ordination and private-public partnerships are strained by the challenges of complex crisis situations, even while there are plenty of examples of pragmatic co-operation and shared goodwill at grass roots level.

Far from being incompatible with effective multilateralism and a risk to alliance relationships, a human security approach can provide important correctives to external intervention. It has unifying potential, setting out objectives and methodologies as well as aggregating civilian and military language. It seeks to reframe the bottom-up imperative away from the top-down perspective of »winning hearts and minds« to one in which locals are an integral part of decision-making.

Lastly it could help rebuild public perceptions of multilateralism which have been damaged by arguments over NATO contributions in Afghanistan, and chronic differences between the United States and Europe over »burden sharing« and international responsibilities. A focus on human security would define a European approach and its contribution to ad hoc multilateral coalitions and could provide a more compelling contemporary rationale for external engagements.

6 Policy Recommendations

1. Effective multilateralism requires partners to develop new operational frameworks which accommodate institutional differences, but at the same time bind partners to a common methodology based on observing human security principles. Where it is a significant donor or political actor, the European Union should take the lead in proposing specific shared objectives, and fostering prior agreement on operating methods among multilateral partners. A common operating framework should begin at the planning stage with joint situation and mission analysis.
2. The European Union should also take a lead in insisting on the human security principle of clear and transparent direction under a civilian commander. In order to counter the asymmetry between mili-

tary and civilian logistics and capabilities on the ground, strategic command for multilateral engagements should be clearly placed in civilian hands.

3. Local populations should be regarded as integral partners in multilateral engagements, and given responsibility for the success of joint initiatives. This would depart from current approaches which regard civil society as targets for »hearts and minds« operations to gain force acceptance, or passive beneficiaries. More fundamentally, an approach is required which does not assume that external intervention is intrinsically the answer to ending conflicts or that multilateralism offers its own guarantee of legitimacy or success.
4. Multilateral engagements need to give priority to providing partners with tailored support systems which encourage co-ordination. These include a common system or means of communication, however basic, to promote the sharing of information and feedback. Joint EU and national training of civilians and military should be standard, and where possible multilateral engagements should endeavour to provide »micro« field training for project or unit partners.

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Abbreviations

ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission
ICO	International Civilian Office
MSST	Multi
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo

List of respondents and interviewees

- Shpend Ahmeti, GAP Institute for Advanced Studies
- Johan Axander, ICO
- David Ennis, Stabilisation Unit
- Dugagjin Gorani, Office of the Prime Minister Kosovo
- Sir Jeremy Greenstock
- Astrit Istrefi, Saferworld
- Sinno Kaldoun, European Commission
- Iain King, Stabilisation Unit
- Laura Mazell, Stabilisation Unit
- Andrew Michaels, ICO
- John Moffatt, Stabilisation Unit
- Raphael Naegeli, ICO
- Paivi Nikander, OSCE
- Ferdinand Nikolla, Forum for Civic Initiatives
- Rajeev Pillay, UNDP
- Christophe Pradier, ICO
- Jamie Shea, NATO
- David Slinn, ICO
- Musa Vezgishi
- Tanja Vikki, EULEX
- Members of the CMC Finland Integrated Crisis Management Course, November 2008
- Members of the CMC Human Security Pilot Training Course, February 2008.



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Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
International Policy Analysis
Nora Neye
D-10785 Berlin

E-Mail: info.ipa@fes.de
Fax: +49 (30) 2 69 35-92 48

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