From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding[1]

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I will begin with the central issue that confronts both the perpetrators and the victims of international peacekeeping. This is, "why?" Why do troop-contributing nations get involved and why do belligerents let them? Do they do so only to serve their own strategic interests, or do they have altruistic intentions to resolve a conflict in the interest of all the parties?

My conclusion is that while peacekeeping is most frequently used as a strategic tool, peacekeeping without conflict resolution is a dead end. Using peacekeeping to impose a solution not acceptable to the parties results in either escalation, enforcement, and war, or in perpetual imperial policing in a stagnant conflict with periodic eruptions.

My argument is in four parts. I will begin with the nature of peacekeeping, and then describe the contribution of grass-roots peacebuilding, which is a relatively recent development. This leads to questions about the roles of local, regional, and international contributors to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Finally, I will highlight some of the problems and dilemmas of a host nation – sometimes victim and sometimes beneficiary.

To avoid confusion, I use the word peacekeeping simply to refer to third party intervention to control and prevent violence. Peacebuilding is work to remove the causes of violence and build relationships that will make its recurrence unlikely.

What is Peacekeeping?

Peacekeeping is not a 20th century phenomenon. The word has religious origins and associations, and appears first in written English in the 16th century. Religious scholars and anthropologists will tell you that the nature of peace and ways to achieve it vary in different cultures. This is an important consideration in protracted conflicts across cultural lines and implies that broad cultural or social change towards accommodation may be a prerequisite for peace, as it was after the 30 years war in 17th century Europe.

The word peacekeeper enters modern political discourse in 1886, when the London Times Berlin correspondent wrote that, “Germany is the peacemaker and peacekeeper of Europe.” This clearly meant imperial policing, imposing order in the interests of the strong. The League of Nations engaged in similar collective activities. But it was with the UN that the notions of peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding became entrenched and differentiated, particularly since the end of the

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Cold War, with the publication of *Agenda for Peace* in 1992, the supplement in 1995, and the Brahimi Report in 1999, amongst other documents.

I am cautious about accepting the notion of "generations" of peacekeeping. "Generation" implies stages of development, usually with some improvement. The concept of generations does not help us to describe what has happened to peacekeeping. Air strikes and coercion by the RRF in 1995 looked a lot like the Congo operations in the 1960s. The Inter-communal violence in Bosnia and area deployments to maintain control looked like Cyprus in 1964. The most recent development of transitional administrations, with civilian police, NGO, and humanitarian operations, is that they today look like Western New Guinea in 1963. The concept of generations can blind us to useful precedents.

As an alternative heuristic device to understand peacekeeping changes, I would offer three perspectives. Each perspective offers an answer to the question, "why peacekeeping?" We find all three intermixed as long as we have third party interventions to manage violence.

The first is the strategic perspective. "We" get involved in peacekeeping to pursue "our" interests, with little concern for the parties to the conflict. In this perspective, it is a dog-eat-dog, Hobbesian world ideal for Henry Kissingers.

The second perspective comes from a rejection of violence as a legitimate tool of state – the peace studies perspective. This perspective shares the humanitarian sensibilities of Henri Dunant, the pacifism of the first Hague conference, and some elements of the Grotian tradition of international law. The focus is still on our values and us – we get involved to avoid bloodshed, which offends us, even if "they" think the cause is worth it.

The third perspective owes something to the Kantian tradition of universal community, which entered the League Associations and then permeated the liberal internationalism of the 1920s. This is the idea that it is in all our interests to resolve conflict in cooperation with the belligerents, taking their interests into account.

We can see combinations of these three motivations in third party efforts to control violence from the colonial era forward. It has often been combinations of strategic interest, aversion to war, and consideration for the parties that have led to new innovations in peacekeeping at transition points.

The dangers of the Cold War in 1947 led to the resurrection of observer missions, with UNSCOP, UNSCOB, and UNMOGIP. Observer missions have three characteristics that help them control outbursts of violence. First, they have diplomatic status, which allows them free movement and wide powers of enquiry. Second, they are deployed in multinational teams, which removes the perception of national bias and helps their information to build toward an international consensus on action. Most important perhaps, observer missions typically have a dual mandate, to monitor and assist. Monitoring implies passing information up to allow for top-down diplomatic intervention

or pressure on the parties. Assisting implies intercession directly with the parties at the lowest appropriate level to help find immediate solutions.

The Suez crisis represented a North-South conflict with East-West overtones. It resulted in another evolution in peacekeeping – the innovation of UN inter-positional forces and buffer-zone operations. The characteristics of buffer-zone peacekeeping made it useful for conflict management in the high-risk Cold War years, but also prone to stagnation. As a footnote, one might add that buffer-zones are typically viewed as "traditional" peacekeeping, although relatively few missions actually fit this pattern. Inter-positional or buffer-zone operations require the consent of the parties to the conflict, do not directly involve the superpowers, use force only in self defence, and are under the control of the Secretary General, reporting to the Security Council. Perhaps most importantly, their mandates typically involve maintaining the military status quo, pending diplomatic resolution. This reduces the risk inherent in a fluid situation, but missions like UNFICYP, MFO, and UNDOF have not contributed to resolution of conflict, merely to freezing it.

Transition missions stand in contrast to status-quo buffer zone missions, but are not a new phenomenon. The League of Nations was involved in trusteeship missions that ostensibly included nation building, and conducted plebiscite missions in Europe between the wars. Earlier examples of nation-building mandates include the four powers in Crete, 1896-1908. League trusteeships drew on the familiar model of colonial administrations. The first UN transition mission in West Irian, with UNTEA and UNSF in 1963, followed the same pattern. It included a civilian administration, civilian police, election monitoring, humanitarian, and security components. UNTAG, UNTAC, UNMIK, and UNMIBH have since followed the same pattern.

The first UN Chapter VII mandate within a failed state was UNITAF in Somalia, but the distinction between Chapter IV and Chapter VII may be less significant for operations than military capability and the determination to use it. In a similar deployment within a weak and failing state, ONUC achieved an enforcement effect through a broad interpretation of the mandate and the permissibility of self defence while undertaking actions in support of the mandate. From Somalia we get the expression "Mogadishu line" implying that a force cannot go further than a host nation will permit it to, unless it is prepared to go to war.

This brings us back to the concept of strategic peacekeeping and the extent to which the actions of peacekeepers reflect the interests of belligerents, especially the stronger parties.

From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding

Before extolling the potential and benefits of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, I should answer a question that students often ask. Are there any examples of successful post-conflict reconciliation and lasting peace? I think there are. After fighting a war every generation since the treaty of Westphalia, France and Germany appear unlikely to do so again; they share common institutions and soldiers serve

together in multinational brigades. The generosity and vision of the US Marshall Plan was one important contribution to this happy outcome. Grassroots, people-to-people connections through organizations like Moral Rearmament also played a role. I think the jury is still out for more recent innovations like the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa and Central America, or war crimes trials for Bosnia and Rwanda, but there is some evidence that they are helping to move these regions beyond the shadow of war.

Perhaps it is not surprising that conflict resolution and peacebuilding do not have many successes yet. Conflict resolution as a social science began to emerge in 1956, with the foundation of the Journal of Conflict Resolution, not coincidentally the same year as the first peacekeeping force. Peacekeeping as a military activity and the understanding of conflict resolution as an academic problem have evolved largely in isolation. It is only recently that we have begun to put them together.

In the 1950s, Kenneth Boulding and Anatol Rapoport applied game theory to conflict resolution, but throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the threat of superpower nuclear confrontation was the main concern for academics and soldiers alike.

In the 1970s Edward Azar began collecting data and plotting the dynamics of protracted social conflict, drawing on the Arab-Israeli experiences among others. Also in the 1970s, diplomat John Burton was working on ideas about the frustration of basic human needs as a source of conflict. In the 1980s, Louise Diamond and Ambassador John Macdonald of the Institute for Multitrack Diplomacy, and Canadian psychologist Ron Fisher did work with the Inter-communal Conflict Resolution Steering Committee in Cyprus. Ron Fisher subsequently elaborated a contingency approach to third party intervention in conflict, which suggested the type of intervention should be tailored to the level of escalation in the conflict. In the 1990s, Fen Osler Hampson described the concept of “ripeness” for successful intervention, and some of the types of support that were necessary to continue a peace process. Sociologist Louis Kriesberg described the potential contribution of escalation to conflict resolution and peace activist John Paul Lederach of the Eastern Mennonite University reported on the successes of elicitive conflict resolution techniques, drawing on indigenous models in Central America. Also in the 1990s, the World Bank sponsored research on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), and on the economic correlates of conflict. Nat Coletta’s book *Privatizing Peace* is one of the capstones of this work, suggesting an important role for the international business community under a peace implementation council, providing the economic conditions for lasting peace.

As a professional officer, I find it remarkable that military planners have remained largely unaware of the parallel evolution of conflict resolution as field of inquiry, while they have tried to adapt peacekeeping to more difficult social conflicts after the strategic certainties of the Cold War. We owe it at least partly to our Balkan experiences for bringing peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution together.

At least three developments can be traced to the “Balkan crucible.” Rather than focus on European dithering and inaction, we can see the period 1992 to 1995 as a period

when Europe developed observer missions to collect information and institutions to use that information to build a consensus for action.

Secondly, rather than focus on NATO military action, we should look at the important work of thousands of NGOs. NGOs have developed new tactics, techniques, and procedures for changing the dynamics of violence at the community level. These include problem-solving workshops, hate-reduction strategies, consensus building, and communications mechanisms that help cut across communal boundaries.

The third development is that we have seen progress linking top-down strategies for peace building with bottom-up tactics. Examples are:

- the WHO funding linked to Health Bridges for Peace;
- the National Democratic Institute's work with building civil-society groups linking across the Inter-entity Boundary Line (IEBL); and
- the witness and accompaniment projects Peace Brigades International (PBI) linked to the international presence of police and NATO security forces, and international pressures for the parties to observe human rights.

All this sounds very promising, but my experiences with an experiment called the Neighbourhood Facilitation Project in Bosnia in 1997-98 and our failure to take advantage of opportunities presented by the Kosovo crisis in 1999-2000 suggest that the glass is still half empty.

Faced with the problem of implementing the civil aspects of the Dayton accords in 1996 and recognizing the limitations of the military component, the NFP experiment was intended to help identify the elements of a "peacebuilding platoon." Twenty Bosnian Muslim, Serb, and Croat facilitators were trained in interpersonal and communications skills in September 1997, with USAID and USIP funding. Nineteen international facilitators were trained in organization and communications skills in December 1997, and five of them were selected for deployment. Five international and 15 local facilitators with translators and administrative support were brought together in Banja Luka, Northwest Bosnia, to establish a community center. Mixed ethnic and international teams worked out of the community center from February to June 1998. The operating concept was to facilitate local solutions. Teams helped people to generate small-business proposals, to qualify for peer-guaranteed loans, and to establish interest-based associations to deal with authorities on return issues, among other cases.

The project collapsed for lack of funding in June 1998. The international community was unwilling to fund salaries and office rent – the two major expenses of the NFP. One deduction from the NFP was that educated refugees and displaced people are leadership resources for rebuilding communities. In 1999, 5000 Kosovars came to Canada. Although many returned to Kosovo, we did not take advantage of the opportunity to develop community leaders among the refugees to facilitate peacebuilding in the Canadian area of operations upon their return.

This brings me to the contribution that can be made by local, regional, and international actors to peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Local, Regional, and International Contributions

Despite progress and promising advances in conflict resolution tactics, techniques, and procedures, we still have not overcome much of the inherent friction in multinational peace support operations. This is partly because we still face mixed motives for intervention and probably always will. Do we strive to protect and reconcile local interests and meet basic needs? Or do we pursue our image of a solution and our own strategic interests? For example, the technology of democracy is value-neutral; if we encourage democratic choice, then reject the leaders and policies that represent the will of the parties, this sustains a subculture of violent resistance arising from frustration. Similarly, the rhetoric of democracy combined with propping up convenient leaders can do the same. We see this in Bosnia, where each community continues to support hard-liners that respond to fundamental and justifiable fears. So how should we characterise the appropriate roles for local, regional, and international actors in the peace building process?

Beginning with local roles, Lederach has described the importance of mid-level leaders in developing a climate for peace. Without some moderate leaders among the parties to the conflict, peacebuilding has no foundation. They must be prepared to deal honestly with both international agents and their counterparts in the opposing camp. Visionary statesmen like Mandela make the process easier, but even Mandela had to rely on a lot of pragmatic community leaders prepared to compromise for the next generation to help return life to normal and give adolescent males hope for useful lives.

Unfortunately it is often dangerous to be a moderate. Extremists may choose to kill their own moderates. Hard-liners will resent and marginalize them as long as there is potential for return to violence, moderates will often be reluctant to expose themselves.

This is why security is so important. Security is the first commodity that the international community must provide, which is why peacekeeping is often a necessary but not sufficient condition for peacebuilding. A peace settlement like the Dayton accord will also provide a framework for governance that must extend down to community level (e.g. municipal councils) and needs to include a mechanism for legitimizing it (e.g. constitutional conventions, elections, referenda). Economic aid through international financial institutions will probably be part of the package, but regional organizations may lead. In the Balkans it is the EU that as taken the lead in economic development, and in Sierra Leone ECOWAS has played an important though not leading role.

The fourth peacebuilding role for the international community is to assist in reconciliation. Overseeing mass media to prevent its use to inflame hate is central. Sponsorship of war-crimes trials or truth and reconciliation commissions strives to reconcile the needs for truth, mercy, and justice.

As regions go, Europe is a special case. No other region has such a dense network of inter-connected institutions. The growing roles of the EU and OSCE in the Balkans leave a gap in regions less well endowed. The international community cannot provide what a region like Europe can. Two main regional responsibilities in peacebuilding remain. The first is to offer incorporation into a secure and prosperous region – a prospect that NATO and EU membership holds out to Croatia and the other survivors of the Balkan wars. The second is to restrain their instincts to take advantage of the war-affected countries. Commercial exploitation is probably the most common form that this takes in Europe's hinterland, but exploitation by neighbours takes other forms in Africa and the Western Hemisphere.

The European model of regional organizations is problematic for the Middle East, no less than for other regions.

Dilemmas of a Host Nation

This brings me to the final issue – what do peacekeeping and peacebuilding offer to a state in conflict that might host an international mission? I think there are five principal dangers posed by peacekeeping missions, most of them associated with strategic pursuit of interests in a conflict.

The first problem is that the weaker party will try to manipulate the international community through the international force. Issues of legitimacy and international perception are related to this danger.

The second risk is a creeping loss of freedom of action for the host nation. From one perspective, NATO sneaked into Bosnia, beginning with international observers, followed by a humanitarian mission, and finishing with full-blown military occupation, with each mission preparing the way for the next.

A third problem is the lack of accountability of the international force. The stronger the force, the harder it is for a host nation to withhold its consent or hold it accountable. Conversely, the stronger the institutions of a host, the less incentive it has to welcome a peacekeeping force.

The fourth risk concerns international visibility and the perceptions of the international community. The greater the international presence, particularly with freedom of movement at the tactical level, the less control the host nation will have over the way the world sees the conflict. This will often rebound to the advantage of the weaker party, which may have contested legitimacy.

Finally, a large international presence can distort the economy and damage society. Large numbers of foreign troops with different values, lots of cash, and special status have an impact. The quality of the troops is variable. Wage distortion is likely, and corruption, prostitution, drug-abuse, AIDS, and other problems may accompany a deployment. It is also possible that these problems may be exaggerated for political purposes.

These problems must be set against the expectations that the international presence will help solve problems, and there is some evidence to support this view. World Bank studies show that the international community can help to fix collapsing economies that are related to conflict. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding may not work perfectly, but they may be the only alternatives to protracted social conflicts cycling through generations with the ever-present threat of recurring war.

Conclusion

To conclude, peacekeeping can take many forms. The current fashion of peace enforcement can be seen partly as a return to 19th century imperial policing in the interests of big powers. But the evolution of peacebuilding and conflict resolution tactics, techniques, and procedures gives us potentially more durable ways to manage conflict. Ultimately, only the parties to the conflict can resolve it. Resolution may involve new institutions and broad social and educational changes, supported by the international community, with the belligerents' interests in mind. Unfortunately, many third parties are still focused on strategic peacekeeping in their own interests, and peacekeeping without conflict resolution is a dead end.

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