



“The Challenge of Stabilization and Reconstruction: How to Improve International Cooperation“

Conference report

The European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung organised in cooperation with the Public Diplomacy Division of NATO a conference on “The Challenge of Stabilization and Reconstruction: How to Improve International Cooperation“. The conference took place on 16&17 October 2006 in the “Cercle Royal Gaulois“ in Brussels.

Responding to the complex challenges of international instability with armed conflicts and failed states, NATO played more and more a central role in international crisis management. Today NATO carries out repacifying and peace supporting actions at the Balkan, in Afghanistan and other regions. In this context the importance of cooperation between civil and military actors becomes apparent. The key to success lays in complement actions of military and civil organisations.

The aim of this conference organised by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in cooperation with NATO’s Public Diplomacy Division und the Permanent Representations of Canada, Denmark and Germany to NATO is to promote and support a closer cooperation between NATO and NGOs.

Afghanistan – Multinational Cooperation in State-Building

The conference was opened by the keynote speech of Dr Jamie **Shea**, Head of Policy Planning, Private Office of the Secretary General NAT. Dr Shea stressed in his speech that security and development have to go hand in hand. The strength and weakness of NATO are to be considered as two sides of the same coin: NATO’s military strength is at the same time its weakness, i.e. NATO has to reinforce its civil strength. NATO has the advantage that its actions are usually well organised and well structured; this advantage should also be used for civil operations. For this reason, NATO should increase its civilian interactions (e.g. by more cooperation with local governments). Furthermore NATO, with its expertise on important issues, should have a stronger voice in future political consultations. Dr Shea highlighted that the EU is as well an actor in stabilization missions. Following this Dr Shea advocates a more intensive dialogue between NATO and EU. The EU has to be considered as a partner. Additionally, training and education for civilian cooperation should be fostered. Dr Shea stressed that a “culture of civilian awareness” has to be more strongly developed within NATO.

Institutional Viewpoints

Jean **Fournet**, Assistant Secretary General, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO, moderated the first part of the first panel.

Dr Sari **Kouvo**, Rule of Law, Human Rights and Gender Adviser, Office of the EU Special Representative for Afghanistan, Kabul, stated that with the EU-Delegation in Kabul, Afghanistan stays on the European Agenda even after the Bonn agreement from 2004. The state building process which followed this agreement is endangered: serious security incidents for instance not only occurred in Kabul but also in other parts of the country, the problem of corruption is still continuing as well as the process of building justice institutions is still lagging behind. Dr Kouvo stressed the need for a clear political strategy (with an emphasis on Afghan leadership), as the existing lead nations have not been able to move the development process forward. One of the problems mentioned by Dr Kouvo is the short mission cycles of international experts sent to the country. Thus, a profound knowledge e.g. of people and institutions, is difficult to gain in such a short time span. Dr Kouvo outlined that international support should not only focus on Kabul but also on other regions of Afghanistan whereas one major issue consists of the security question. Dr Kouvo continued that no long term change of Afghanistan's current situation is possible as long as Afghan citizens are not safe and do not feel safe.

Terence **Jagger**, Political Adviser to the Commander of ISAF IX, NATO, International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, emphasized the problem of implementing a coordination policy for all actors involved. There is definitely a need for a coordinated international effort, but the question arises who should be in charge of the coordination i.e. lead the actions. One focal point to coordinate the actions is the different cultural background of the actors, however, an agreement is required on "what should be done and how it should be done". Mr Jagger pointed out that all discussed issues concerning Afghanistan are linked to security. Consequently, the most important topic is the creation of security. In this respect some steps have been already undertaken (e.g. by the Americans and Canadians) but an integrated plan does not yet exist. Mr Jagger explained, in regard to Pakistan the underlying problems have to be cleared, particularly as the origins and symptoms lay outside the country. In Pakistan as well as in Afghanistan the military relationships need a political dimension, i.e. a coherent political approach in addition to the military approach.

Mr Richard **Ponzio**, Strategic Planning Advisor, UNDP Country Office Afghanistan, stressed that state building and building a nation are two equally important issues. However, central to the "post-Bonn agenda" is nation building by facilitating a cohesive national identity by strengthening the relations between the people and their government and reducing the salience of ethnic, sectarian and other divisions. The local government, and not the international actors, must be seen to be implementing projects to succeed. Mr. Ponzio continued that concerns regarding the state building process consist, for instance, of the limited investments in subnational governance and the need to strengthen legislative-executive relation. Mr

Ponzio outlined the main points of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2006-2010) and the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan 2006-2008. The latter highlights mutual commitments with GoA as UNDP's contribution to the AC, ANDS, and the UN Development Assistance Framework. It groups around 13 key areas, amongst them are building state capacity, deepening democracy, and promoting sustainable livelihoods. The full use of the Afghanistan Compact and interim ANDS as key instruments is essential for the guiding priorities according to Mr Ponzio. The provincial and district-level development committees should be considered as key vehicles for ensuring government-led reconstruction. The international support should promote comprehensive region-wide programmes, in place of *ad hoc* initiatives, that support provincial and/or district planning goals.

In the subsequent discussion the need for an integrated political strategy was stressed by most of the interventions as well as the necessity of transferring more leadership to Afghan institutions. This implies as well that financial contributions should mainly go to Afghan institutions. Furthermore, the JCMB was considered as a "western construction" which is not suitable for Afghanistan's needs. It was stated that the focus should also be drawn to on 1.5 million refugees from Afghanistan in Pakistan. Furthermore, the operational possibilities were questioned, i.e. how to make existing plans work "on the ground". The need for actions with quick impact was expressed during the discussion, that is to say more short-term commitment. Moreover, international actions should increase public awareness of Afghanistan's current situation as well as the awareness of the work carried out by the different actors. Generally it was stated, the more communication between actors the more support can be given to actions in Afghanistan. It has to be ensured that the international community pulls into the same direction and that a quick impact of actions does not disturb long-term goals.

NGO Perspectives

Dr Stefanie **Babst**, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Communication Coordination, Public Diplomatic Division, NATO, moderated the second part of the first panel.

Ms Anja **de Beer**, Director of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief, underscored that core elements of the state building process consist of re-establishing security and the empowerment of civil society. Ms de Beer continued that for these objectives the problem of warlords and the fact that terrorism is embodied in Afghanistan's government structures pose an obstacle. Ms de Beer stated that in the nation-building process in Afghanistan the international community has mostly overlooked the local society so far. Yet, ethnic balance is crucial for any actions undertaken in Afghanistan. For this reason the bottom-top approach has to be brought forward, that is to say a more community based approach, which fosters local initiatives. However, the military interventions are not considered as sufficient, the security conditions in Afghanistan have yet to improve. Ms de Beer noted that the emphasis on the diversity of strategies should be stronger, because community based strategies usually address two different directions: a centralisation in this regard would be counterproductive. Ms de Beer accentuated the necessity for international coordination, but facilitating the

coordination would also be a step forward in order to prevent an overlapping of different programmes.

Diederik **de Boer**, Central Asia Senior Programme Officer, CORDAID, Caritas in the Netherlands, outlined the different motivations and agendas of actors for state building: Firstly, he mentioned the security agenda which is mostly pursued by actors in order to avoid terrorist attacks and to fight against terrorism. The problem is that within this agenda actors often oversee local interests. Secondly, the economic agenda focuses on transnational markets and the exploration of new markets. The third agenda concentrates on the nation: the actors have an interest in a strong (neighbouring) state. The fourth agenda is the interest in keeping the status quo i.e. an interest in having a weak (neighbouring) state. The last agenda consists of the interest of actors in development, which applies for instance to NGOs. In post-war countries like Afghanistan the security agenda usually prevails for the donors or actors. Nevertheless for the state building process all agendas are equally important and all of them are required, apart from the status-quo-agenda. Following this, the actors should also give space to other agendas and not only to the security agenda. Mr de Boer discussed also the possibility of establishing an International Organisation for Reconstruction, for instance within the framework of the United Nations. This International Organisation for Reconstruction would provide expertise in research and context analyses, policy advice, planning and coordination and training.

In the following discussion it was stressed that coordination processes within one institution or organisation always depend on the “leading personality”. As a result there might be the need for a common analysis, common line and common objectives, or even an integrated approach order to “institutionalise” coordination further. It was also highlighted during the discussion that the socio-political situation in Afghanistan has not been sufficiently taken into account. Attention should be paid to the fact that the Afghan population only accepts international presence because they need the help of the international community. The speakers were underlining that coordination is also essential for the Afghan society and not only for international organisations, since people in Afghanistan do not know whom to address when they are in need of help or simply information. It was pointed out that for international organisations humanitarian aid is a question of agenda. This is why as long as organisations have different agendas it is impossible to pursue the same goals. It was underlined that the challenge in Afghanistan now lies more on the provincial and local level; the development agenda should take this more into account.

Pakistan – Civil-Military Cooperation in Natural Disaster

Institutional Viewpoints

The afternoon panel was moderated by Ambassador Maurits **Jochems**, Deputy Assistant Secretary General, Operations Division, NATO.

It started with a short film presented by Humeira **Ahmed**, Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA). The film demonstrated the situation in Pakistan shortly after the earthquake and the ongoing reconstruction process. It brought out the prior aims of ERRA which consist mainly of the reconstruction of buildings, hospitals and schools and the reinstallation of health care and education. Referring to the film Ms Ahmed underlined that the coordination between the actors involved is absolutely necessary and will be more essential in the future.

Dr Jan **Vandermoortele**, UN Relief Coordinator for Pakistan, confirmed that the cooperation between NATO and the NGOs in Pakistan was effective. At the same time the role of domestic actors is becoming more and more central. Dr Vandermoortele presented the cluster approach used during the reconstruction process in Pakistan. The basic principle of the cluster approach brings experts of both NGOs and NATO together who are specialized in important areas of the reconstruction process. Additionally, they had to be endowed with leadership qualities in order to jointly work out solutions and not only exchange information. Dr Vandermoortele stressed that the coordination has to be put in place before a disaster takes place and before crisis management becomes actually necessary.

Air Vice Marshall Andy **Walton**, Former Commander of the NATO Disaster Relief Mission to Pakistan, presented the work and actions of the NATO Response Force (NRF) in the crisis area. The NRF - mission was limited to an earthquake relief operation in order to provide support by NATO. The mission had the aim to stabilize the situation and to winterise the population. Mr Walton emphasized the success of the cluster groups: it was particularly important how they provided NATO with information. Mr Walton outlined probable contributions of NATO to disaster relief for the future such as planning, command and control, liaison and coordination capabilities. Contributions would also include logistics, medical support and engineering. Furthermore Mr Walton accentuated that not only the civil-military-coordination is important but also the civil-civil-coordination, i.e. coordination between the different civil actors. Attention should also be paid to domestic institutions and media since they play an important role in communicating and explaining the mission to the Pakistani people.

NGO Perspectives

Richard **Luff**, Humanitarian Department OXFAM, emphasized the significance of the Red Cross Code of Conduct. OXFAM's work and actions implement this Code of Conduct, in

particular, the independence from the domestic leadership. Mr Luff explained that a comparison between costs of missions could lead to interesting results. In some cases the costs of a military action are much higher than the ones of a civilian action, which is doing the same work. That is why the necessity for military operations needs to be reviewed carefully. Mr Luff pointed out the fear of persons being attacked when working with the military. Mr Luff raised the question whether the security of the population and the civilian staff would be jeopardised during such cooperation. For this reason it should be decided case by case whether cooperation with the military is reasonable.

According to Dr Samina **Ahmed** the legitimization of the NATO assignment in Pakistan is to be considered problematic since the parliament was not involved in the decision making process. Dr Ahmed stressed that this point is essential for the acceptance of the mission by the population. Furthermore, Dr Ahmed highlighted that the military was too much involved in the reconstruction process, actually more civilians should have been involved.

The following discussion emphasised the need for an institutionalisation of cooperation for the future. Furthermore, it was pointed out that, in a first step, cooperation before potential missions needs to be intensified. Interventions clearly stated that cooperation could only be operational in a climate of trust, in which the involved parties need to become partners.

Views on the way ahead

Ambassador Alessandro **Minuto Rizzo**, NATO Deputy Secretary General, stressed again the need for closer cooperation. This would not aim at taking over functions of the partners. Duplications, i.e. overlapping of programmes, should be avoided as well. The Ambassador underscored that NATO should not be in charge of the coordination but should form a part of it.

During his speech Jan **Top Christensen**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark, Head of Department for Humanitarian Assistance and NGO cooperation, highlighted that international cooperation can only be effective when cooperation on national level is already working well. Therefore, the local authorities play an important role. For the military it is as well fundamental to understand and follow the principles, which are guiding the civil society. In Denmark, for example, an initiative for better cooperation of the military and the civil sector has been started by combined security trainings.

Ambassador Friedrich **Däuble**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Germany, Commissioner for Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building, stressed the important role of cooperation and coordination for crisis prevention. For Afghanistan Ambassador Däuble expressed the need for a long-term engagement and a political plan to solve the problems. In the Ambassador's opinion the coordination amongst European actors in Afghanistan needs to be improved. The extraordinary willingness of the population to cooperate should be used to move the development process forward. At the same time the part of the population that is opposing the government should be included in the process as well.

At the end of his speech Ambassador Däuble emphasised that topics such as drugs and refugees should be included in the discussion, too.

Chris Cooter, Canadian Deputy Permanent Representative to NATO, former Director of the Policy Planning Division at the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, explained that the needs of the population have to be taken into account in order to plan a successful mission. The roles of the institutions involved need to be clarified as well, every actor should be integrated in the planning process. As central aims for Afghanistan Mr Cooter named the build-up of a vital economy and a reasonable level of security. Moreover, the development of a constructive relationship with Pakistan and the establishing of a political relationship between the NATO and Afghanistan are of high importance.

Melanie Frank