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Peace Support operations and whole of government education and Training

Brigadier-General (Ret'd) Gregory B. Mitchell

Modern UN Peace Support Operations (PSO) have a high degree of operational complexity, and most are conducted in austere, post-conflict, and often hostile environments. Mission integration amongst various UN organizations and contributing nations is an essential element of success, because different PSO actors have different roles, deployment time-lines, procedures, budgetary pressures and supervising authorities. Therefore, it is only by pursuing an integrated approach that short-term, political or security gains can be balanced against the longer term developmental, humanitarian, and social objectives needed to create sustainable peace.

As many like-minded nations have done, Canada has formally adopted a whole-of-government approach to its foreign policy PSO activities. Coherence amongst defence, diplomacy, aid, and trade, should be a priority to help achieve Canada's strategic objectives. When the Government of Canada (GoC) deploys Canadians to participate in a UN Peace Support Operation, the primary objective should be to contribute to the achievement of mission success. The best way to do that is the provision of appropriate education and training for the military, police and civilian personnel it intends to deploy.

Modern complex, multidimensional PSOs require a comprehensive approach to education and training. If the whole-of-government approach to operations is to gain traction, an integrated approach to training and education must first be adopted, and should be targeted at all levels - strategic, operational and tactical. When Canadian involvement in a new PSO is being considered, departmental staffs conducting the strategic level policy analysis require levels of expertise, knowledge and skills that are quite different from those of the staffs that go on to develop the operational level campaign plan. In turn, their levels of expertise, knowledge and skills are different from those tacticians tasked with implementing the plans on the ground.

Training in some of the more complex, cross-cutting issues should be provided in a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach. The three major components – diplomacy, defence and development - should be trained to work together in an integrated fashion to foster understanding of the others' roles and responsibilities, to facilitate communication and synergy, to achieve unity of effort, to develop mutually supporting plans and activities, and to bridge cultural differences and achieve levels of cooperation seldom found even at UN headquarters or in most national capitals.

Organizational strategic objectives and policies should be taught, including introductions to the range of UN mission objectives. Also, the necessary psychological preparation for difficult, morally ambiguous, and potentially dangerous situations should be included (confronting armed child soldiers is one clear example). Training on these and other evolving

issues requires personnel with considerable international expertise and experience, informed by a high degree of theoretical and practical research, coordinated within a clear, centrally directed and seamless program of training.

Such a comprehensive approach was previously provided by the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC) that, for over a decade, provided the capacity and network of experts to offer a full range of PSO research, education, training and international capacity building. PPC was the world's first, civilian-managed, peacekeeping training centre, and was one of only a handful conducting training, capacity development, public education and research that reflected the multidisciplinary realities of contemporary peace operations. By actively pursuing the development of capacity with civilian, military and police institutions engaged in and/or supporting international peace operations, PPC contributed directly to Canada achieving some of its international objectives: exporting Canadian values; enhancing Canadian leadership on peace and security issues; and increasing the quantity, quality and effectiveness of Canadian military, police and civilians in peace operations.

It is therefore proposed that a new institution be established – the Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre (CIPTC) – with capabilities similar in nature to the former PPC.

The following specific recommendations are proposed:

1. The Government of Canada should establish the Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre, an institution to replace the capabilities provided by the former Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.
2. The institution should be fully funded and supported by the Government of Canada.
3. The institution should partner with other Canadian organizations involved in research, development, education and training of PSO-related subjects.
4. Canada should consider offering its enhanced education and training capabilities, along with other areas of peacekeeping expertise, to assist in international capacity-building ventures.

Given its leadership role on the international stage and its intent to reclaim a prominent position with the UN, Canada should seek to develop state-of-the-art education and training, both for its own use and for its efforts towards international capacity building. It should embrace a system that can meet the diverse education and training requirements of all three components - military, police and civilian. To ensure Canadian personnel are effective in achieving PSO success, the Government of Canada should address the issue of training and education as a matter of priority.