



FUTURE ROLES FOR THE CANADIAN FORCES

MAURICE BARIL

The framers of this workshop have identified conditions impacting Canada's analysis of its foreign and defence policy. Most critical to my topic of the military is the 2011 deadline for the withdrawal of the majority of Canadian Forces (CF) from Afghanistan.

A predominant question centres on "what next?" for these forces who have distinguished themselves in a complex operation that has cost the country the blood and treasure of its finest young men and women.

Three factors frame my analysis, which has a longer-term view:

- Increased emphasis by the Obama administration on multilateralism and the revitalization of US support for United Nations (UN) peacekeeping and peacebuilding;
- The emphasis on "smart power," which "involves the strategic use of diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are cost-effective and have political and social legitimacy."¹ Smart power is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also values and uses partnerships, alliances, and institutions to reach objectives framed in the knowledge that security and development cannot be independent of each other;
- A reassessment of the use of force, or "robust peacekeeping" as defined by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO), in order to better respond to the effects of conflicts on fragile, failing, and failed states;

1 C. Crocker, F. Hampson, P. Aall, *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2007), p. 13.



Underlying these factors are undeniable realities:

- *Security is no longer exclusively measured in geographic borders that are physical.* Maintaining secure borders requires analyses that assess the impact of economic variables, pandemics such as H1N1 and HIV/AIDS, people movement due to climate changes, and the nature of intra-state conflicts. Borders are permeable, and money, disease, migration, ideas, and technology impact on how foreign and defence policy is and will be determined.
- *The nature of conflict has changed.* Responding to conflicts framed by ethnic and religious tensions, as well as by non-state actors who have access to sophisticated weapons systems used in guerrilla-like warfare requires analysis and decision making on the use of force between counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism.
- *The investment by the United States in multilateralism.* The relationship between Canada and the United States means that Canada will have to manage the impacts of a shift in US foreign and defence policy from unilateralism to multilateralism as expressed by the Obama administration and the US Ambassador to the UN, Susan Rice; the fundamental question is whether this shift is a long-term reassessment or short term and specific to the new administration.

From a Canadian military perspective, these factors and realities lead to several questions for consideration:

- What should the CF do post-2011/post-Afghanistan? Is there a moral responsibility for the CF in a "whole of government" environment to use its experiences in stabilization and reconstruction operations to support the continuing development of other militaries who contribute to UN missions and UN-mandated missions? Based on the experiences in Afghanistan, there is a wealth of lessons learned and acquired technologies that would be of value to multiple actors who will continue to contribute to missions similar to Afghanistan.
- How will a multilateral US foreign and defence policy affect the post-2011 determination of Canadian defence, development, and foreign policy?
- Does the role of the CF in international defence diplomacy shift as the evolution from Pearsonian peacekeeping to peace enforcement and robust peacekeeping² continues? Moreover, is this process reinforced by the UN DPKO *Capstone Principles and Guidelines* and the non-paper tabled by DPKO and the Department of Field Support (DFS) entitled *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping*?

2 Robust peacekeeping: "the use of force by a UN peacekeeping operation at the tactical level, with the authorisation of the Security Council, to defend its mandate against spoilers whose activities pose a threat to civilians or risk undermining the peace process." In UN DPKO *Capstone Principles and Guidelines*, 2008, Annex, p. 99.



What Should Canadian Forces Do Post-2011, Post-Afghanistan?

By 2011, approximately 41,000 Canadian forces personnel will have served in the Afghanistan mission; \$7.5 billion will have been spent on combat operations.³ The Afghanistan campaign has been of importance to Canada for several reasons:

- a) it is the first foray into combat since the Korean War;
- b) it reaffirmed that the Canadian Forces were ready, willing, and able to engage in heavy combat vice being seen only as lightly armed peacekeepers; this signalled the willingness of our country to have a substantive role in international security issues;
- c) it re-established that Canada could be counted as a leading troop-contributing country; and
- d) it justified the financial re-investment in defence capabilities after the Forces were savaged during the 1990s.

The experience and lessons learned by the CF as a result of operating in a counter-insurgency environment are critical. It is likely that conflicts will continue to be similar to Afghanistan, but different. Indeed, one can view current conditions in Somalia, Darfur, Sudan, and other regions and predict that counter-insurgency and "whole-of-government" decision making will require re-thinking and "formalizing" the imbedding of civil-military cooperation/coordination into the professional development of the multiple actors who respond to stabilization and reconstruction missions.

The additional assessment that security and development are twinned also suggests that the military will remain a critical stakeholder in post-2011 Afghanistan. Without a secure environment and the protection of civilians working on peacebuilding, there will likely be a return to violence, which will not empower the development of rule of law, good governance, and sustained peace.

Of particular value is the experience gained by the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) as representative of civil-military relationships. The emergence of PRTs is a model that has confirmed the need for a substantive civilian corps who can rapidly respond to peacebuilding requirements. The recent release of *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*⁴ is a response to the lack of guidance to inform planners, decision makers, and/or practitioners who are deployed from civilian institutions to what the missions are all

3 David Perry, "Canada's seven billion dollar war: The cost of Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan," *International Journal* 63, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 703. Additional figures place the price tag of the Afghanistan war at between \$18-22b Canadian dollars.

4 *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press and United States Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, 2009).



about. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent Canadian document to analyze and trace the lessons learned for application in the post-2011 whole-of-government analysis.⁵

Suggesting that the CF return home and retire to mothballs seems a waste of talent, treasure, life, and lessons learned. As noted earlier, peacekeeping is not dead, but has evolved. Having Canada re-engage substantively in UN missions and UN-mandated missions with “boots on the ground” could have significant and positive impact. First, the capacity to share the burden of UN missions through technical expertise, as well as with sophisticated, high-tech equipment would provide support to the current troop and police contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs). Second, participation in stabilization and reconstruction missions would provide support to robust peacekeeping, as it becomes the tool of choice in the protection of civilians, and the defence of the mandate.

Extending the borderless security argument, if the CF were more visible in these operations, their experience and expertise could be very useful in mentoring and supporting those who contribute troops and police to UN missions, in terms of technological support, planning, and human resource capability. A subsidiary benefit would be greater capacity for these forces to defend their own regions and be better able to maintain their own security. By extension, an argument can be made that, when conflict can be contained regionally, Canada's borders are more secure.

How Will the Evolving US Policy towards Multilateralism—Specifically to Its Role with the United Nations—Affect Canadian Forces in a Post-2011 Defence and Foreign Policy?

According to a recent Center for Strategic and International Studies monograph, the Smart Power Initiative identified the United Nations as a force multiplier for US goals and interests and for other countries as well.⁶ Currently, there are nineteen UN peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions at a cost of \$7 billion (2008) in environments that have a direct link to the security of North America. By 2011, Canada will have spent “...an estimated \$7.5 billion on military operations and \$1.2 billion on development assistance”⁷ in Afghanistan; the point is that by 2011, Canada's contribution to Afghanistan will be more than the total cost of UN peace operations. One could make the point that having CF engage in UN operations is not

5 Consultation with DND/MTAP and DFAIT/START, 27 October 2009.

6 Johanna M. Forman, *Investing in a New Multilateralism: A Smart Power Approach to the United Nations* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009).

7 D.S. McDonough, “Afghanistan and Renewing Canadian Leadership: Panacea or Hubris?” in *International Journal*, LXIV, no. 3 (Summer 2009), (Toronto: Canadian International Council), p. 652.



only cost effective, but puts to good use our experiences gained from fighting in stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Canada's return to UN operations and UN-mandated missions could provide benefits in a range of activities that includes exchanges in staff colleges to mentor and support the troop and police contributing countries; sharing equipment and technical support to the TCC/PCCs; providing logistical support; and continuing to support the UN as the force multiplier for Canadian foreign and defence policy objectives.

If UN operations are going to have stronger support from the United States, then how can the Canadian experience in UN peacekeeping and in counter-insurgency be used in mentoring and supporting troop and police contributing countries? Currently, the top troop and police-contributing countries are from the global South,⁸ where Canada's lack of colonial or imperial ambitions/practices provides an opportunity for sharing the experiences in conflict zones like Afghanistan. For many of these countries, having Canada engage with them as partners in peacekeeping missions is desirable.

Given the Shift in the International Peacekeeping from Pearsonian Peacekeeping to Robust Peacekeeping as Part of the New Horizon/New Partnership, Has the Role of the Canadian Forces Changed to Manage the Demands Being Placed on the United Nations?

Contemporary, multi-dimensional peace operations have a multiplicity of actors, roles, responsibilities, and authorities. There is no "one-size fits all" model for complex peace operations. The need is for balancing flexibility and coherence—extracting what works, and tailoring responses to a variety of conflict situations. We know that responses to current day conflicts require a multidimensional, multifunctional, and multifaceted response, of which one tool in the toolkit is robust peacekeeping.

In April 2008, while evaluating the operational readiness of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), I identified issues and made recommendations that could impact Canadian Forces as it considers how to utilize and benefit from the Afghanistan experience. These might be useful as Canada responds to a southern neighbour whose shift to a more multilateral foreign and defence policy could more clearly engage with UN peacekeeping.

8 The top troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations are: Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Ghana, and Jordan; the top police contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations are: Jordan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Senegal, and India. See *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2008* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2008), p.139.



As peacekeeping has evolved to meet the challenges of contemporary conflict, robust peacekeeping is delineated from peace enforcement. Peace enforcement is defined as coercive action authorized by the Security Council to maintain or to restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has identified a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace or an act of aggression. Robust peacekeeping is more tactical in that it is the authorized use of force by a UN peacekeeping force to defend its mandate against spoilers who constitute a threat to civilians, or whose actions risk undermining the peace process. Under the UN mandate, the CF experience in the counter-insurgency in Afghanistan has resulted in military forces whose capacity to engage in either peace enforcement or robust peacekeeping would be valuable to current UN operations. Increased focus on protection of civilians is complementary to the notion of population security noted in General Stanley A. McChrystal's report.⁹

Therefore, what is needed for peace enforcement and/or robust peacekeeping to be successful? The following might be useful in framing the discussions:

- *Member States who contribute their troops and police will need to agree to the concepts and accept the challenges of peace enforcement and /or robust peacekeeping.* This will require a shift from the traditional definition of peacekeeping, which some CF personnel maintain; it will also necessitate a dialogue within the Member State's own political apparatus as to caveats, casualties, and political costs at home.
- *Personnel from TCCs/PCCs will need to be well trained in the concepts, principles/ guidelines, and practices of peace enforcement and robust peacekeeping, and understand both advantages and limitations.* Training provided both at the national level and in the pre-deployment phase will need to reflect the practices required for robust peacekeeping. At the civil-military interface, it will require a fully transparent understanding of roles, responsibilities, and authorities for the multidimensional set of actors who are on the ground in the contemporary conflict environment. Planning for peacebuilding will require closer coordination with development actors, and possibly expansion of the PRT concept. The return of CF to a more active role in UN peace missions would provide a means by which the experiences in Afghanistan could be shared with other troop and police contributing countries.
- *A fully identified and functional command and control and communication system is critical for the success of robust peacekeeping.* A subject of ongoing debates focuses on civil-military coordination (CMCOORD) and civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) at operational and tactical levels. Given the peace process requirements, there is general acceptance that "we cannot shoot our way to peace" and the involvement of a range of civilian actors and the civil-military relationship is critical. The model of the

⁹ Commonly known as The McChrystal Report, it is available at: http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf?hpid=topnews



PRT is noted as being one where the roles and responsibilities of CIMIC/CMCOORD have been refined; the CF experience could be useful in UN missions.

- *The provision of the necessary technology in a timely manner ensures that peace enforcement and robust peacekeeping be proportional in response, timely for effect, and based on proper intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.* Without detailed and accurate information based on more than rumour and assumption, robust peacekeeping could be detrimental to a peace process, particularly when civilian casualties become the headlines on the worldwide news circuit and TCCs/PCCs lose personnel; again, the CF experience in Afghanistan has been valuable in refining the use of technology in conflict situations. Mentoring and supporting troop and police contributions from Member States whose experience is not as recent would be useful to a UN mission.

The Canadian Forces will be impacted by how wars are waged, how multilateralism is structured, and how peace operations, regardless of their nomenclature, are conducted. Peacekeeping in the twenty-first century is framed by “smart power,” which requires the use of well-trained military forces married with diplomacy, development, economics, human rights, and a host of alliances and partnerships that build an environment where the cost of war is more than the price of peace.

The experience of Afghanistan has provided the men and women in the Canadian profession of arms a wealth of lessons learned and best practices that would be invaluable as the international community struggles to protect civilians caught in the crossfire of intra-state conflict and to find a path to sustainable peace.