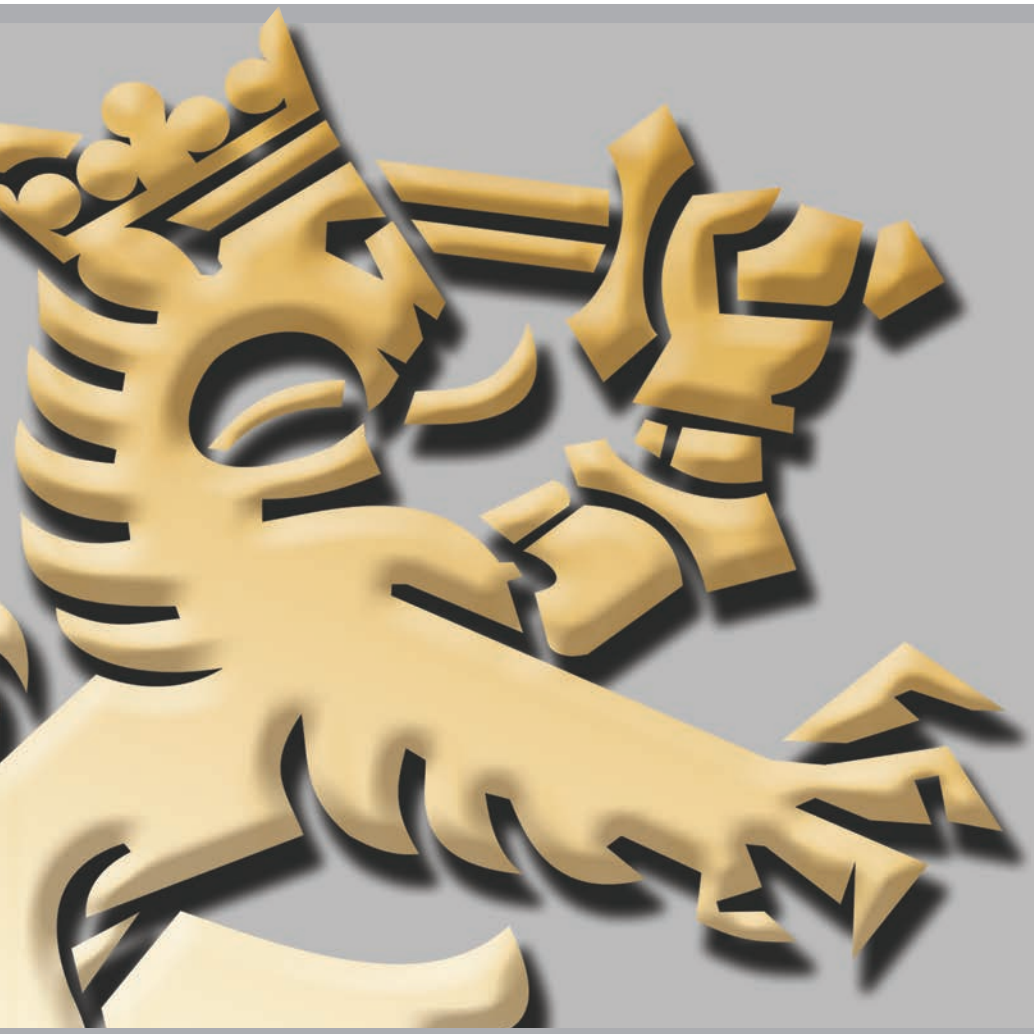
Expecting the Unexpected: Experiences of Leadership Challenges in Crisis Management



Finnish Defence Forces International Centre

Edited by Susanne Ådahl

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EDITED BY SUSANNE ÅDAHL

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PREFACE

Timo Hämäläinen

In the last few years global crises have arisen fairly rapidly and sometimes even on an unpredictable scale. A very good example of this is the Arab Spring and its impact on the neighbouring region. Due to political interests, when crises occur in the future, it may be difficult to get UN Security Council resolutions in place for the initiation of possible peace support operations with mandates that are clear and strong enough. The dilemma is that although the capability and willingness to intervene of the international community has increased, real actions are missing in most of the cases. On the other hand, we still face the same old local and regional long-term crisis scenarios where it seems to be impossible to reach a permanent solution for stabilisation and finally peace.

In crisis areas the violence perpetrated is becoming more inhumane and it targets the most vulnerable people, innocent civilians, mainly women and children. At the same time, for example the International Red Cross and other voluntary humanitarian organizations are also being targeted. There is a lack of respect for the immunity of these organisations and rules of honour seem to no longer exist.

Modern crises are multi-dimensional and multi-complex. In order to find solutions to these crises one must use a comprehensive approach and all the tools in the toolbox. A strong political will needs to be present, as well as a sufficient amount of capable civilian and military actors in the crisis area that act according to agreed common goals. This should include all internal or international parties involved in the crisis and it requires information sharing, mutual trust and cooperation with leaders in the field. Personal leadership skills play an important role in recognising the challenges mentioned above and in estimating what information can be released and to whom. International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations also play a vital role in this puzzle.

Training is still a key element in preparing individuals to confront future crises bravely and confidently. Safety issues will become increasingly important during peace support activities. The cohesion of troop contributing countries must survive both at political and operational level. It is important to recognise that working alone will not lead to long-lasting solutions. Through its training and courses FINCENT focuses on these vital factors, not forgetting the leadership aspect.

FINCENT trains individuals, observers, experts, advisers, liaison officers and other personnel to cope with demanding crisis environments. Future PSO tasks for these groups mean being involved in decision-making in a single moment, alone and on a very fast timeline. Faulty or bad decisions can lead to a dramatic worsening of the situation and even hamper the success of a whole operation. A comprehensive approach and situational awareness is needed. Leaders and other personnel must have an overall knowledge and understanding of how their decisions and actions impact the capability of other actors to achieve common goals in the operation area. Military, civilian and police components can no longer be separated as we consider comprehensive results. It is essential to understand how decisions made affect other friendly forces and their ability to succeed in an operational environment.

This publication is the sixth and final one in the FINCENT publication series on the theme of crisis management. Leadership and personal experiences relating to leadership in various scenarios and from the viewpoint of various positions and operations is the theme chosen this year. Through these personal stories we can hopefully better understand the complex world of crisis management, gain some food for thought, and finally, learn how to plan, support and conduct future operations.

I hope that this publication attracts various readers at all levels whether they be civilian, police or military personnel. Learning is a life-long process. Younger people may find some useful practices that may help them to avoid repeating mistakes already made, or find useful tools and solutions for their daily work. Senior, experienced players and high-level decision-makers may find new ideas and methods for planning and supporting operations in a more efficient and safe way. A critical assessment of the situation on the ground should be permitted without it leading to assigning blame and guilt if the end state of an operation is less than satisfactory.

As a result of the reform of the Finnish Defence Forces, FINCENT will move under the command of the National Defence University at the beginning of 2015. This transfer will definitely strengthen our capabilities in crisis management training and education by giving our trainers access to the worldwide university network, pool of professional personnel and the high-quality teaching methods used, including e-learning. On the other hand, we at FINCENT will bring our best practices and crisis management expertise to their disposal. I am sure it will be a win-win situation. Teaching young cadets the basic skills of peace support operations and the international environment provides a great opportunity for interactively moving forward in the field of leadership. Moreover, conducting more demanding training and exercises for senior officers provides us with the opportunity to improve our training methods, knowledge and mission-essential subject matter. Only expertise counts.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the writers of this publication who have shared and contributed their valuable experiences in the field of leadership and taken the time to write these thoughts down. Your voluntary contribution has been enormous and essential. Lastly, I would also like to thank the editor of this publication, Susanne Ådahl, for a job well done!

Timo Hämäläinen
Lieutenant Colonel
Commandant FINCENT

INTRODUCTION

Susanne Ådahl

Leading others is a challenge and many factors play a role in what the outcome of leadership is. In a mission context, characterised by constantly changing and volatile situations, the resources that personnel possess when leading others can make all the difference. These resources are both professional and personal in nature. How we lead others is a product of who we are and the knowledge we have been given, both theoretical and practical. What makes it all the more precarious is that leaders in crisis management missions are responsible for others; they need to protect both the men and women they work with in dire field conditions and the civilian populations they are there to serve. Also of importance is allowing for human features to emerge from behind the professional roles and tasks described. In the end we are first and foremost humans regardless of how much training or experience we have as professional persons.

This volume seeks to address the question of how leaders, working in the field of crisis management, act when "expecting the unexpected" in mission specific situations. The aim has been to collect personal accounts of leadership situations when the professional skills, knowledge and practice of leaders have been put to the test. It seeks to provide a picture of how these leadership challenges have been faced, how strategies of action have been developed and solutions identified, and how relational and emotional aspects have played a role in the coping strategies employed. It also seeks to answer the question: what have the writers learned about leadership from being in the field? What particular aspects of situations have become etched in their minds? The writers represent a cross-section of experiences of Finnish officers, soldiers and civilian personnel involved in missions abroad. They are tactical level actors such as group leaders, operational-political level actors working as commanders and political advisors in international mission contexts, or strategic-political level actors involved at the level of diplomatic negotiations.

In the training of military personnel, theoretical leadership models are presented and the meaning and import of these models become manifest first in actual situations on the ground. It is important to ponder how these leadership theories tally with the reality of leadership experiences that crisis management professionals have at various levels of the operational context. Stories from the field need to be told in order to inform theory and hopefully revise and improve theory so that future batches of mission personnel may fare better when facing the unexpected.

The various experiences narrated by the authors of this publication illustrate the multifaceted aspects of leadership. Many central terms linked to leadership saturate these stories: professionalism, competence, courage, humility, empathy, tolerance, equality, caring, respect, cultural awareness, cooperation. Each experience is unique, but at the same time they communicate some vital, universal messages on the professionalism of Finnish crisis management personnel and the soldiering involved. What prominently emerges is the centrality of a kind of Finnish leadership culture in the context of military and civil-military operations where the shared values and notions on what a professional soldier is in the

context of Finnish military training takes centre stage. It means speaking the same language on many levels.

Experience based writing

There is an added benefit in engaging in straight talk about actual experiences, writing in the first person and of reflecting on one's own role and input into a mission specific situation. Writers of this volume were asked to identify specific situations where their skills as leaders were challenged, to provide detailed descriptions of these situations and to ponder what kind of previous learning they applied and what they learned from these experiences. There are few opportunities to write about experiences of this nature, but writing, and the reflection on experiences that it requires of the author, is a de-briefing process in itself. The emergence of the person in the text makes for a more engaging reading of experiences by livening up the text and bringing us closer to the real life experiences of others. For the writer it initiates a process of self-reflection because when one writes, one to some degree re-lives, but also re-narrates a situation. The story may change, nuances may differ depending on how much time has lapsed, but most importantly, experiences may through writing become a resource that others can use and reflect on. Stories from the field have an instructive value; personal experiences can have a general value to individuals and professional groups about to experience something similar. The sharing of experiences from the field through a narrative approach and reflecting on these experiences can, thus, contribute to bringing about better crisis management.

Emergent themes and concerns

In the texts presented in this volume a number of common themes emerge and similar issues of importance are stressed. There are also, of course, individual features described as each situation is unique in a mission, country and person-specific sense. The experiences of leadership that the authors present can be grouped under three broad headings; the effect of external assets and environments; the effects of your own behaviour and coping; and being part of a team. In the section below these expressed concerns and issues have been combined and summarised to provide an overview to the reader.

The effect of assets and the external environment

It goes without saying that the environments where crisis management personnel work pose a security risk, with some environments being more risky than others. What has complicated the work of international peace support actors is that the immunity of these actors (organisations, troops, contingencies) is no longer respected, so time and effort that could be spent on protecting civilians has to be spent on protecting personnel instead. New problems that these actors must deal with may arise due to how the political situation develops, such as dealing with masses of displaced persons.

Some of the writers mention how red tape, bureaucracy and rigid sticking to the book slow down processes while, simultaneously, the situations out there in the field are changing rapidly. This leads to the need to spend a lot of time on negotiation with other members of the organisation or other national contingencies. Personal rivalries, feelings and power struggles do jeopardise the work of troops and teams.

Often decisions have to be made on the basis of limited and false information, which points to the need to check up on information coming in before it is dispatched onwards to others. Having too little or incorrect information, a lack of capacity in intelligence, can have devastating effects on security and aggravate already politically instable environments. Other aspects of communication that are equally important are how one communicates: using clear and simple orders in English[1]. It is vital that all mission personnel have adequate skills in English, because if lacking it can aggravate communication with colleagues and negatively affect the unit cohesion.

Finnish officers are trained to solve different kinds of problems and the training provides them with tools to act, but this has to be coupled with adequate experience in actual mission situations; the real test of leadership is when theoretical models are put to the test in practice. The general opinion expressed is that training is well-designed and suitable for the field situations these leaders have faced, but more pre-deployment and in-mission training could be conducted, for example, in relation to contingency plans.

The lack of adequate troop levels that are adequately trained and equipped poses a challenge for leaders. Sometimes the equipment is not suited for the situation at hand, i.e. when one is actually acting in a situation of war, rather than the expected situation of reconstruction or peace support activities. Leaders are resourceful in setting up temporary systems to ensure the safety of personnel and smooth functioning of operations. Knowledge of assets such as medical assets makes it easier to face risks involved and also boosts morale.

Cross cultural communication skills (negotiation and interpersonal) are crucial for crisis management personnel to possess. This includes an awareness of the culture and history of the mission country and some basic command of the local language. Cultural awareness also means having a broad-based knowledge of power struggles, local networks, and understanding the intents and working style of those one is cooperating with. The approach to leadership and management should be country-centred and not based on Western concepts of working culture in order to ensure sustainability and continuity of leadership and management capabilities in the mission country.

The effects of your own behaviour and coping

Most of the writers in this publication will agree with the statement that the role of the leader is more demanding in a mental rather than physical sense: it can be a lonely endeavour shouldering responsibility and taking decisions that will affect the lives of many people. It is important to devise ways of taking care of yourself by, for e.g., exercising, resting, or talking to a friend. The availability of peer support is particularly central for leaders high

[1] This principle should also apply to native English speakers who may have tendency to use over complicated language and jargon that non-native English speakers may have difficulties comprehending.

up in the hierarchy or with a specialist role because it may be hard to find a person to get advice and support from. Receiving advice on particular issues is complicated further by the confidential nature of information in missions.

A leader should possess an open mind towards the context of leadership, the people he or she works with and the limits of his or her own knowledge. This requires having an open mind and a willingness to learn and revise one's own knowledge. An effective way of gaining the respect of those one works with and to increase one's credibility as a leader is to engage in activities in the field, being close to the grassroots reality of the work of troops by taking on the same tasks as one's subordinates and making sure the burden of tasks is equally shared between the members of the team. It is also a good way of increasing one's own situational awareness. Setting a good example and admitting one's shortcomings is a way of earning the respect of one's subordinates.

Leading others is a life-long process that demands that leaders not only receive training and have solid experience from previous missions, but also possess the specific human properties of caring, respect and humility. Many of the writers stated that their experiences will remain with them for the rest of their life and it will be something they will reflect on years later. To them, learning how to lead in challenging situations is seen as a resource and a strength they can use later in life, in both a professional and a personal sense. Going through dramatic experiences has helped them gain self-confidence, trust their own experience and to get to know themselves better.

Being part of a team

Although individual qualities and skills are essential to good leadership, it is important to remember the inter-personal nature of leadership; that it is something done together in cooperation with others. When interpersonal relations do not work due to hierarchy, power struggles or politics, the safety of personnel and civilians are jeopardised, as leaders cannot carry out the tasks assigned to them in the best possible manner. A leader can also more confidently and smoothly lead others that he or she trusts possess sufficient experience and relevant background training. Trusting one's subordinates and their skills is essential.

As a leader, one can use various techniques to nurture a culture of trust and initiative and the building of team spirit. The writers list several ways of achieving this; sharing the burden of tasks with team or troop members; putting one's personnel first and ensuring that their wellbeing is being cared for; listening to one's subordinates and demonstrating confidence in their abilities; giving subordinates clear tasks and the independence to get on with the job; and engaging in de-briefing sessions by spending free time discussing and relaxing together. It means exercising basic human features; caring, showing empathy and truly listening to others. When you have a good, solid team behind you, it increases the overall confidence of the team and facilitates acting in precarious and dramatic situations. It builds trust and a constructive team spirit. In a mission situation colleagues are more than work mates; they are friends, confidantes and an important moral and emotional support. Working closely with others contributes to personal growth when one comes to learn more about oneself, one's limitations and strengths.

To sum up, crisis management personnel need to demonstrate professional competence, have confidence in their own knowledge and have extensive experience, enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Effective cooperation in the field is based on building relationships of mutual trust, loyalty and fidelity. Fit-for-purpose equipment and training are important assets, but so is the use of common sense.

Structure of the publication

This publication is divided into three sections where the first and most extensive section is dedicated to descriptions of specific leadership experiences in a field context. These experiences take place in a range of geographical locations: Afghanistan (Lindeman, Pollock & Uitto), Syria (Kullberg), Georgia (Lehtonen), Kosovo (Holopainen), Pakistan & India (Lehtonen). Section two is dedicated to the experiences of advisors whose leadership is conducted through the practice of advising others in the context of a mission in Chad (Metsavainio) and Afghanistan (Sainio). These texts provide many useful, additional perspectives to leadership and the issue of control. In the third and last section of the publication the authors present issues that are based on personal experiences of working in peace support missions in Lebanon (Valli), Indonesia, former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Liberia (Liesinen), but that focus more on recommendations. The outsider-insider view that these authors have is instructive because it allows them to step back, pay attention to processes and suggest improvements to strategies of action. More often than not, practitioners are too busy and close to the reality of their work to see what needs to be changed so that smoother operating is ensured in the future. They may also not be in a position to bring about changes.

For the future

Having an understanding of the big picture of crisis management is useful and, to quote one of the authors, a crisis management leader must understand the role of his organisation in the overall effort of the international community, "He must be able to extend his thinking to a multi-dimensional world and adopt the needs of other actors outside his own comfort zone." The complexity of the reality on the ground is evident. When different organisations in different phases of development work together, adopting a comprehensive approach to crisis management makes sense.

As regards training, the use of personal narratives as a pedagogical tool should be considered when planning and developing educational inputs. Providing detailed descriptions of specific situations is, though, more than listing lessons learnt. It is contextually based information that reflects the human experience and the application of professional skills in ever-changing and volatile situations. The nature of Finnish leadership culture in the context of military and civil-military operations would merit further investigation. An equally important issue to stress both in the post- and pre-deployment period is the importance of de-briefing. Authors were asked whether de-briefing had been part of their mission experience and how useful it had been to them in terms of coping. No one can deny the mental strains that mission personnel are exposed to and, all the more so when unexpected situations unfold. Having

the space and opportunity to go through these experiences from a personal, psychological point of view is essential.

On a more personal note; I congratulate all the writers of this volume who have given thought and time to telling their story and to bringing a human and personal touch to the experience of crisis management from a leadership perspective. Your dedication to and interest in this issue is greatly appreciated.

SECTION ONE
– Leadership Experiences From the Field

Facing the Unforeseen: Kosovo's Spring of 2004

Pekka Holopainen

Let us imagine a racing stable owner who wants to win a horse race to be run in the future, with a horse not yet born, and on a track not yet built. There is also the possibility that the rules may have been changed, the track altered and the horses replaced by greyhounds. Well, planning a crisis management mission might not be quite this problematic, as E. Quade and W. Boucher have illustrated military planning[1]. However, this example popped into my mind when rioting broke out in Kosovo in March 2004.

I started my six month tour as Chief J9 (Civilian-Military Cooperation Division) at HQ Kosovo Force at the beginning of February 2004. In February 2004, KFOR's strength comprised four multinational brigades and 17,500 troops. Around the time of my arrival there had been talk of downsizing KFOR due to the long reasonably calm situation. The new estimated strength was far below 10,000 troops and the withdrawal was estimated to start in the spring.

J9 was responsible for civil-military cooperation coordination within KFOR's Area of Responsibility in Kosovo. All four multinational brigades independently took care of civil-military actions. Later, this lack of a clear chain of command turned out to be a serious flaw. J9's strength was ten senior staff officers from six countries. The majority of them were very seasoned and had broad-based experience from crisis management operations. In February 2004, J9's main activities consisted of a variety of routinely held meetings mainly focusing on internally displaced persons (IDP) and different human relief issues. SASE (Safe and Secure Environment) was a slogan of the day at that time. All of KFOR seemed to float in lukewarm water…

All hell breaks loose

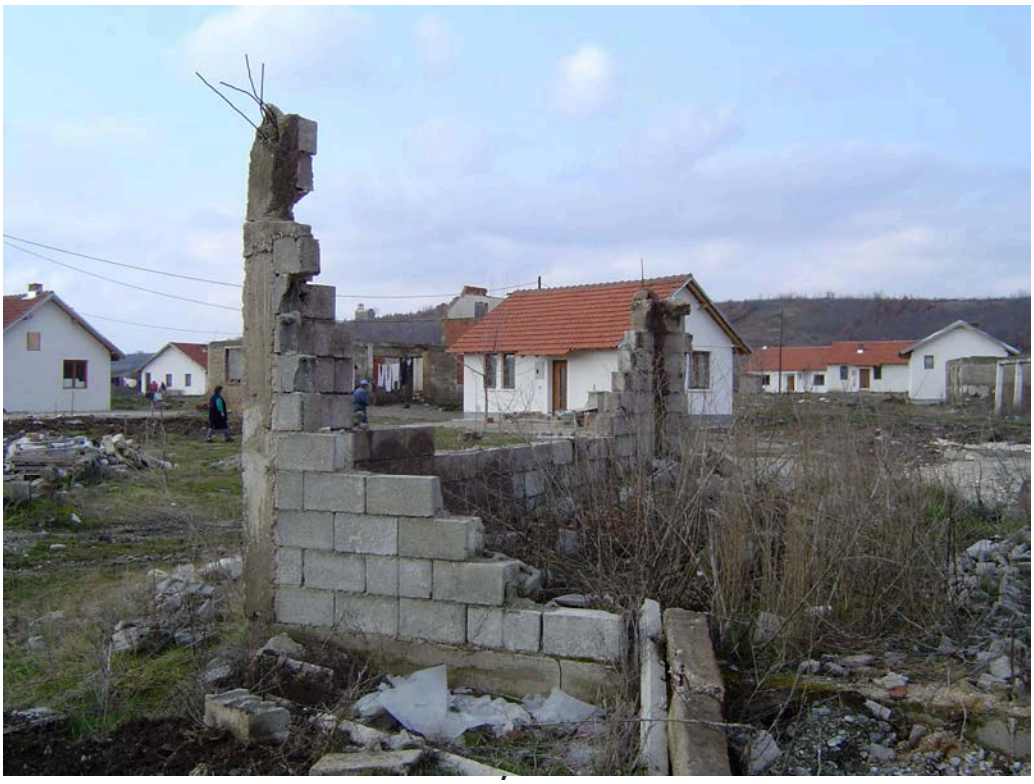
Unexpected violence broke out in Kosovo in March 2004. The spark that set off the resulting riots was an incident that took place on March 16 where three young Albanian children drowned in the Ibar River. At the outset, the ethnic Albanian media began broadcasting reports that the children had been chased into the river by Serbs. Thus, the ethnic Albanian media played an irresponsible role in broadcasting information that was yet to be confirmed. The interpretation that it was Serbs that chased the boys into the river came from other sources, such as ethnic Albanian individuals.

The riots that ensued involved more than 50,000 rioters, and international officials quickly explained that they were organised by ethnic extremists. UNMIK described the acts of violence as having a degree of organisation behind them. Similar kinds of statements were soon given by the NATO Secretary-General, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Policy and the Commander of AFSOUTH, a command that included the NATO-led KFOR troops in Kosovo.

[1] Quade & Boucher, 1968 cited in Kennedy 1983, 71.

The violence in Kosovo in March was both spontaneous and organised. A major reason why the demonstrations increased so quickly and became so violent was that many Kosovar Albanians, especially young people, were frustrated. The main component of most of the crowds were young ethnic Albanians, many of whom came of age after the 1999 conflict, and who felt deeply marginalised and frustrated by the lack of opportunities provided by Kosovo's stagnating economy. The fact that many ordinary ethnic Albanians rapidly went out in the streets and joined in spontaneous violence against their ethnic Serb and Roma neighbours presented an even greater challenge for the possibility of a multi-ethnic Kosovo than the alternative scenario of ethnic violence organised by a minority of ethnic Albanian extremists. The 1999 conflict had left behind a large number of individuals deeply familiar with ethnic violence, both as victims and perpetrators. In other words, all too many individuals in Kosovo knew very well how to burn down their neighbour's house - with or without organisation. Yet while the majority of the ethnic Albanian rioters probably came to join the protests spontaneously, there is little doubt that some ethnic Albanian extremist elements worked to organize and accelerate the violence.

Ethnic Serbs were not the only victims of the March violence. In many areas of Kosovo, Roma, Ashkali, and other non-Albanian minorities also faced violence. Both the spontaneous and organised elements behind the violence acted with a common purpose: to get rid of remaining ethnic Serb and other minority communities in Kosovo. Once the violence began, it swept through Kosovo with almost clinical precision: after two days of rioting, every single Serb, Roma, or Ashkali home had been burned in most of the communities affected by the violence, while neighbouring ethnic Albanian homes were left untouched.



A new village built by German KFOR troops, soon to be destroyed by rioters. Photo: HQ KFOR J9

The violence in Kosovo started, as it had many times before, at the Mitrovica Bridge, which divides the ethnic Serb north of the town from the ethnic Albanian south. Although violence was a predictable outcome of the preceding events, KFOR and UNMIK seemed to have been caught with their pants down on the morning of the 17th.

The Serb blockade of the Caglavica road was the next flashpoint, as Albanians from the central region of Kosovo reacted to the news of the fighting and deaths in Mitrovica. Students from the University of Pristina received flyers encouraging them to join the protests in Caglavica. Some of the heaviest clashes between Albanian crowds and international KFOR and UNMIK troops took place at Caglavica, as KFOR and UNMIK tried to keep thousands of ethnic Albanians from entering the village and the large Serb enclave around it. On the main highway, a battle continued from early afternoon until late evening, and the international troops took a significant amount of fire from the Albanian side.

The heavy fighting at Caglavica continued the next day. Albanian militants continued to clash throughout the day with the reinforced KFOR troops – who had now barred the road with razor wire. KFOR troops were regularly fired upon, and four Albanians were shot dead by the KFOR troops. In the evening, Prime Minister Rexhepi and several of his cabinet ministers went to meet with the crowd, appealing to them to stop, and the crowd dispersed just minutes later. The fighting in Mitrovica and Caglavica received significant media attention, creating the impression that most of the fighting in Kosovo was between ethnic Albanians and international UNMIK and KFOR troops and that the international community had responded robustly to the violence. However, at the same time, a massive wave of violence was sweeping across Kosovo, targeting Serb and other non-Albanian communities. Unlike in Caglavica where the international troops mounted a sustained defence, ethnic Albanians often left non-Albanian minorities throughout Kosovo at the mercy of the attacks, and without significant protection from KFOR or UNMIK troops.

Personally, I got a taste of this general unrest en route to Lipljan, in the Magru village in the morning of 17 March. My protection officer and I drove through a roadblock manned by five ten-year-old children (this was in order to avoid actions against the roadblockers…). Behind this blockade, and soon all around us, were hundreds of angry and volatile adult Kosovar Albanians shouting fiercely. I was unable to understand the Albanian language (shqip), but I immediately got the feeling that the language was not very pleasant. We succeeded in getting out of the blockade in the evening. During our drive back to the HQ in Pristina our car was stoned a couple of times by Kosovar Albanian rioters.

The score

All in all, the violence in March left nineteen persons dead, 954 wounded, 4,100 persons displaced, 550 homes destroyed, and twenty-seven Orthodox churches and monasteries burned. An additional 182 homes and two Orthodox churches or monasteries were seriously damaged. An overwhelming number of the displaced Serbs and other non-Albanians were elderly and impoverished. They remained behind in Kosovo despite earlier violence because they were too poor or too old to leave.

More than 2,000 persons remained displaced and were often living in miserable and overcrowded conditions. Many of the families burned out of their homes in Svinjare and Obilic were living in unheated, unfinished apartment buildings without access to water and electricity in Mitrovica and Zvecan. Human Rights Watch also found displaced Serbs living in metal trucking containers in Gracanica and Ugljare. Hundreds of displaced persons were also housed in school buildings in Gracanica and Mitrovica, in crowded conditions that provided no privacy and inadequate sanitation. Displaced Serbs from Prizren were located at a gymnasium on the German KFOR base, displaced Serbs from Belo Polje were located at the Italian "Villagio Italio" KFOR base, while hundreds of displaced Ashkali from Vucitrn were living in a muddy and crowded tent camp inside the French KFOR base at Novo Selo. The historic monasteries of Gracanica and Decani also housed displaced Serbs.

What went wrong?

Firstly, the violence in Kosovo took KFOR and other security institutions by surprise: There is no doubt that Kosovo's security institutions were unprepared to deal with such massive violence. While no one predicted the violence in Kosovo, KFOR and UNMIK should have been able to better predict how the violence would develop: most international journalists, for example, were anticipating violence in Mitrovica on March 17, but French KFOR had not deployed at the obvious flashpoint – the bridge between the two communities. Generally it was stated that the lack of preparedness by UNMIK and KFOR was a consequence of a lack of capacity in intelligence and analysis capacities. Actually, in 2004, the problem was the lack of simple human intelligence, namely boots on the ground (in the name of force protection). Satellites and drones are OK, but they cannot see inside the cafes, houses and other places where people gather in order to exchange information. Constant visits to such places could have given hints to experienced military personnel on what was going to happen.

Secondly, UNMIK and KFOR had insufficient capacity to respond effectively to the violence: troop levels were inadequate to deal with the widespread attacks that were taking place all over Kosovo, and which called for an increase in troop and officer levels.

Thirdly, the majority of KFOR and UNMIK troops were inadequately trained and equipped to deal with riot situations: A major problem particularly with KFOR troops in Kosovo was that the troops tended to have limited or no riot control experience, and thus did not know how to effectively respond to riot situations. Troops did not need tanks but rather riot gear and shields, and soldiers trained in dealing with public disorder. Different Rules of Engagement also caused problems, as well as so called "National Caveats" (national restrictions concerning troop duties that were dictated by the national governments).

A KFOR Base camp somewhere in Kosovo. Photo: HQ KFOR J9

Fourthly, there was a lack of a coordinated response from KFOR, UNMIK, and KPS that hampered control of the situation. It is well known that tensions existed between the various security organisations in Kosovo, and that coordination between KFOR, UNMIK, and KPS was everything but good. As stated before, within KFOR, the command structure between the multinational brigades and COMKFOR was not unified. Yes, KFOR had proper command and control structures, but daily decisions were made by the national contingents that received instructions from their national governments, and COMKFOR's instructions were considered secondary.

Finally, Kosovo's international institutions themselves were under attack and needed protection, drawing resources away from protecting the minorities. UNMIK and KFOR also had to divert resources towards protecting themselves because UNMIK offices throughout Kosovo were targeted for attack. More than one hundred UNMIK vehicles were burned or seriously damaged during the violence. Among the wounded were a significant number of security officers: sixty-five UNMIK international police, fifty-eight KPS police officers, and sixty-one KFOR soldiers suffered injuries.

J9 faces the unforeseen

That the agenda of J9 changed after 17 March is an understatement. All ongoing human relief projects were put on ice. Practically speaking, J9 turned into a small-scale UNHCR-office; placement and housing for hundreds of new Internally Displaced Persons became the main duty of the unit – in addition to those who were IPDs as a consequence of the war in 1999. Soon it became clear that the Ashkali problem in Novo Selo would be the heritage of my replacement; so painful and slow was the progress.

It is quite difficult to describe the amount and level of frustration that my officers and I personally felt during those months following the riots; we attended meeting after meeting with NGOs and IGOs in order to solve the new IDP problem, with little or no progress. Just one detail, for example the decision concerning the provisional settlement site of the Vushtri Ashkalis who had lost their homes, took three (3) months!

Once, an NGO that intended to arrive in Kosovo to restore destroyed monasteries and other Orthodox holy sites wanted KFOR to provide their convoys with an armed escort without saying when and where they would be entering Kosovo. When J9 insisted on receiving this information well in advance, the only answer was that we (KFOR) were not authorised to request such information due to the integrity of the organisation…Point taken!

One feature became virtually endemic: an already agreed upon common opinion between J9 and its equivalent in one of the multinational brigades was suddenly changed. Maybe this was a consequence of new guidance received from the respective capital, who knows. However, this kind of rapid change of opinion did not make J9's job any easier. Even the historical backgrounds (read: burdens) of the troop contributing countries had their own impact on the decision-making of the multinational brigades.

As a result, it soon became apparent to us all that a multinational force, such as KFOR, is definitely not an army – it is a coalition in a mission where negotiating is everything, and where courses of action are not easily "subject to change", and where everything is done by the book regardless of the situation. This was a fact that just had to be accepted and action taken accordingly. I am sure that this observation does not come as a surprise to a sophisticated reader.

I left Kosovo in August 2004. As predicted, I left the IDP-problem to my successor. Later I followed the Kosovo situation randomly just to realise that the progress is painstakingly slow: steps are taken, with a long way ahead. Today, a heavily cut KFOR is still in Kosovo.

This article is based on its author's personal notes and diaries from the period February – August 2004, as well as on contemporary internal KFOR reports.

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Mission Impossible – Reflections on the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria

Rolf Kullberg

Preparations

I was making preparations for the first UNMO Course of the year at the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre in April 2012 when I received a phone call from the Pori Brigade. The Chief of Personnel asked if I would be willing to participate in a UN observer mission to be established in Syria during the coming weeks. I was given two hours to decide - the departure was planned to take place within the next few days. I got a green light from my family and the following weekend I received a call to report at the Pori Brigade on Monday 23 April 2012.

Finland had decided to participate in the mission in Syria with ten military observers. The Pori Brigade had called in 11 observers for training. This caused a bit of confusion because it was already known that two Finnish observers would be transferred to this new operation directly from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) mission. The training in Säkylä included of a traditional Cooper test, medical check-ups, a vaccination program, some emergency first aid and mine awareness training, and some briefing on the mission area. Finnish observers were equipped with the normal observer equipment, which was modified and supplemented according to the estimated needs. Already at the outset we decided not to send any material via the UN cargo system. Instead we brought everything to the operation site as accompanied luggage. By doing this we were self-sustained and ready to start immediately after arrival. Some nations waited for weeks for their material to arrive in Damascus. The pre-deployment training lasted five days. And finally (as always) we were not in a hurry at all. A delay was caused by the UN HQ in New York.

The UN HQ in New York informed Finland that only six Finnish observers were approved for the mission. This naturally caused some more confusion among us. Later on, the number was increased by two more observers. This meant that three observers who had finalized their training and were fully equipped and ready were dropped from the mission. The disappointment was huge. The Pori Brigade did a great job, however, and arranged the possibility for them to join other existing missions at a later stage. The eight selected observers were sent home to wait for flight details from New York.

Background and mission setup

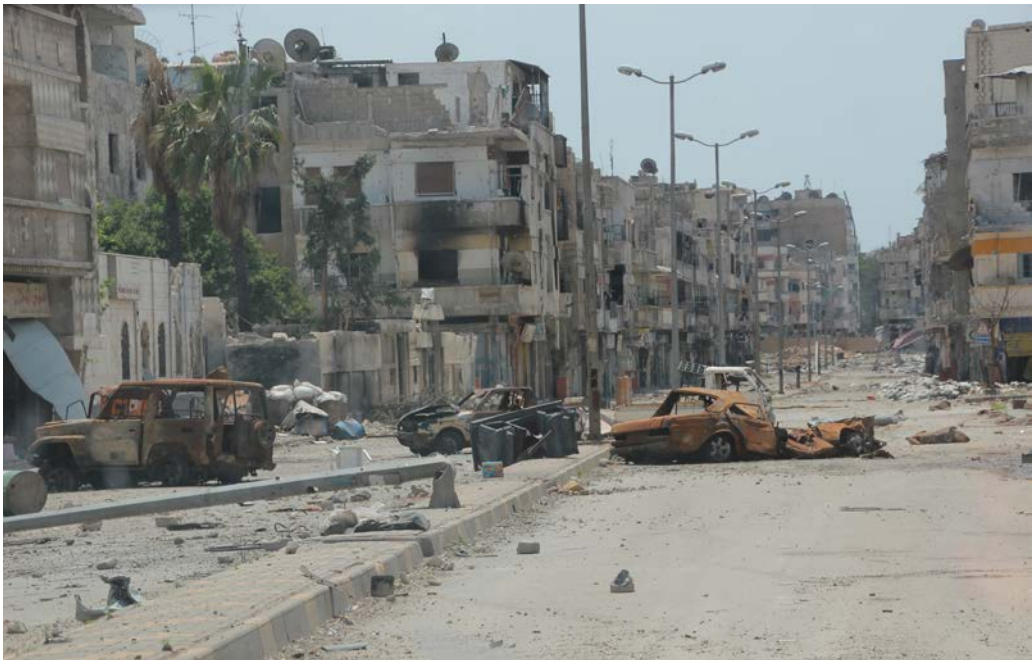
The UNSMIS operation (United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria) was established by Security Council Resolution 2043 on 21 April 2012 when the Syrian uprising (and later civil war) had lasted for more than 13 months. According to the mandate, the mission for the operation was to monitor the cessation of all armed violence and to monitor and support the full implementation of the Six Point Plan created by Special Envoy Kofi Annan. The mandate was limited to 90 days and the strength was not to exceed 300 military observers.

A civilian component was included in the mission organization. Norwegian Major General Robert Mood was nominated as Head of Mission (HoM).

Based on Security Council Resolution 2042, the operational activities in Syria started already before the actual establishment of UNSMIS, when six officers from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in New York arrived in Damascus in the middle of April to form a so-called Advance Team. This team included one Finnish lieutenant colonel. The Advance Team started patrolling in Damascus and its surroundings immediately after its arrival. Later on, patrolling covered also the cities of Homs, Hama and Daraa.

After the arrival of the Advance Team observers, officers transferred from other UN Missions (UNTSO, United Nations Mission In Liberia- UNMIL and United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in Democratic Rebublic of Congo – MONUSCO) started to reach Damascus. These officers joined the Advance Team, and permanent Team Sites were established in Aleppo, Idlib, Hama, Homs and Daraa. Officers from DPKO ran a small core headquarters. Two Finnish observers were transferred to UNSMIS from the UNTSO mission.

Observers sent from troop contributing nations started to arrive in Damascus during the first week of May. A short induction training course was conducted for all incoming officers. After being trained they were sent directly to Team Sites for operational duties. Even though the risks were high, UNSMIS was one of the most rapidly deployed missions in UN peacekeeping history. There was no ceasefire in place, fighting was going on all over the country, no security guarantees had been granted and there was no proper communications network in place. As soon as new observers had finalized their induction training they were given car keys and a UN cell phone and off they went! New Team Sites were established in Damascus and in Deir Ez Zur.



The centre of Homs ravaged by the war. Photo: Rolf Kullberg

Finnish deployment

We Finns arrived in Damascus on 9 May via London. We were lucky with our luggage and that time there were no major problems with the Syrian customs. All satellite phones and GPSs were allowed to enter the country. We were accommodated in a UN-contracted hotel and the next morning we started our induction training, which consisted of one administrative day, three training days covering basic lectures on observer duties and the UN driving test. At the end of the training period we were informed of our duty stations as follows: Damascus 3, Hama 2, Deir Ez Zur 2, Idlib 1. Two Finnish observers were already stationed in the country.

The UNSMIS HQ was established in Damascus in a five star hotel called Dama Rose (former Meridien). Two full floors were reserved for UNSMIS only. The military component of the HQ consisted of 50 observers and the strength of the civilian component was 90 persons. UNSMIS used the UN Integrated Mission Concept, where all components (military, police and civilian) are integrated up to regional level. UNSMIS did not have a police component and integration worked partly. No shared facilities were used, but the most important occasions for information exchange, meetings and planning sessions were conducted in full cooperation with the components. Civilian officials were also deployed to Team Site level (i.e. Regional Admin Officer, Security Officer and Civil Affairs and Human Rights personnel).

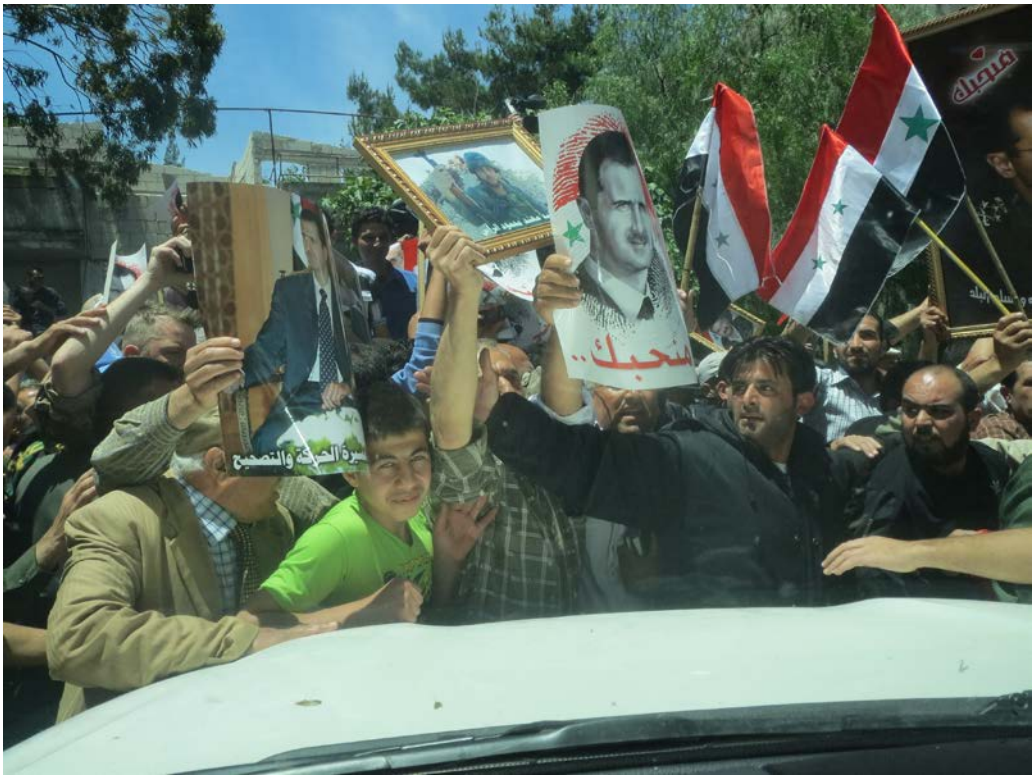
Operations

The Team Sites were located amongst the local population in the major cities. Team Sites were not like traditional UN compounds with accommodation containers, fences, radio masts and water and diesel tanks. UNSMIS Team Sites were located in hotels, where observers had their sleeping quarters and all the necessary facilities needed for operations and briefings etc., were built or modified within the hotel buildings. The strength of the Team Sites varied from 25 to 40 observers. The Syrian governmental security forces were responsible for ensuring the observers' security. From mid-May UNSMIS manned seven Team Sites. There was normally a security forces post or local police station or some kind of check point located in the vicinity of the Team Site. This posed a continuous security risk for the observers with regard to possible collateral damage.

The main tasks of the Team Site patrols were to liaise with the parties involved, patrol and monitor the ceasefire and report any kind of violation. When patrolling in the regime-controlled areas each patrol was followed by a security forces patrol called Protocol. Protocol was supposed to guarantee the security of the observers during patrolling. Naturally though, Protocol did not follow patrols to the opposition's side. All patrols were conducted using armoured cars. Soft-skinned vehicles were only used in the centre of Damascus. At the beginning of June, a new Team Site was established in the coastal city of Tartus.

When the patrolling started in the different provinces it seemed to calm the situation. UNSMIS was even able to negotiate local ceasefires. However, the situation soon changed as the population in the areas controlled by the opposition became frustrated when the

UN was unable to achieve anything concrete with regard to security and humanitarian needs. The crowds started to surround the patrol cars, ripping off antennas and mirrors, and damaging them by hitting them with iron bars and painting political slogans on them. This was followed by direct acts against the UN with small arms fire and IEDs. One time twenty-seven bullet hits were counted on one of the UNSMIS patrol cars after a day of patrolling.



Observers surrounded by Syrian demonstrators. Photo: Rolf Kullberg

After the security situation changed and became extremely threatening to the UNSMIS patrols, the Head of Mission decided to suspend active operational activities on 15 June. None of the actions taken by the international community had any effect on stopping the expanding violence in the country. The government started to isolate and pound the opposition-controlled villages with artillery, mortars and main battle tanks. This was followed by search and kill operations leading to massacres in places like Al Houla, Al Haffa and Tremseh.

The mission closes down

UNSMIS never reached its 300-observer limit. In mid-July the strength was at its highest with 286 observers from 48 troop contributing nations.

When the mandate neared its end, the UN ordered UNSMIS to decrease the number of observers to 150 for a possible new mandate. This meant approximately a 50 percent reduction for each of the troop contributors. Finland repatriated its first five observers

according to plan on 25 July. At the same time, the number of Team Sites was reduced from eight to four. The remaining regional Team Sites were located in Aleppo, Deir Ez Zur, Homs and Damascus.

The UN Security Council did not reach consensus on a new mandate, nor on extending the UNSMIS mandate. The operation was given a 30-day technical extension for a proper closedown of the mission. The UNSMIS operation ended on 19 August 2012. Finnish observers were repatriated in three phases using the supply flight arrangement of the Finnish contingent in the UNIFIL operation.

Lessons learned

The situation in Syria was erratic and extremely hostile all the time. The only thing one could expect was the unexpected. My main concern as national senior officer was the security and wellbeing of the Finnish observers. Luckily this was not the first time that I faced these kinds of conditions. During my tour as Chief Observer Group Lebanon in 2005–2006, I experienced even more traumatic situations during the Second Lebanon War in July – August 2006. That experience helped me a lot in acting as national senior, as well as in carrying out my duties in the Mission HQ.

One problematic area was media relations. The Head of Mission had stated clearly that in this mission there is only one voice; his. It was strictly forbidden to give any kind of statement or interview to the local or international media. The Finnish national media was very interested in our situation. I received several phone calls on a daily basis and had to find a balance between following the orders given and satisfying the national media.

We created a system where all the Finnish observers deployed in Team Sites would call me on a cell phone every evening before 2100 hrs. After confirming that everything was OK among us Finns, I dispatched a daily report to the Pori Brigade by phone. The national command and control and reporting system worked well throughout our whole stay in mission. Operating in harsh conditions is extremely exhausting. We had no regulated working hours in the HQ or at the Team Sites. Daily working hours were up to 14–18 with no break during the weekends. The UN leave system was set into process during the first month. This enabled the possibility for a short break outside the mission area.

When Finnish observers went on leave they visited or stayed overnight in my apartment (which I shared with two other Finnish observers working in the HQ) for a short debriefing session consisting of discussions and looking at photos and just spending some time together. This reduced the stress level and one did not have to carry all the "shit" back home to one's family. A proper debriefing process was conducted by the Pori Brigade in Säkylä after we were repatriated from the mission. UNSMIS Finnish Military Observers have already had three reunions, the cohesion and team spirit within this group is great. The next meeting will be held in Lapland in 2014.

It was once again confirmed that deploying to a new mission in uncertain conditions is not something for newcomers. Some seniority and previous mission experience must be part of

the recruiting requirements. Lessons identified and learned must be used when planning future training activities.

Conclusions

The Finnish military observers managed well under the harsh conditions they met. Previous experience, proper training and good equipment paved the way for operations. All the Finns manned leading positions at their Team Sites.

The variety of different personalities with different backgrounds among the different nationalities was huge in this operation. The same goes for basic observer skills. The biggest gaps in training were found in the areas of driving skills, language skills, map reading, communication and reporting. Some of the observers did not speak a word of English. All of this led to an imbalance in the work load, which caused serious exhaustion in some of the personnel.

Serving as an unarmed military observer in wartime conditions, in the midst of continuous firing, sometimes as the target, in a operation where nothing worked properly left us Finnish military observers with a set of experiences that we deal with in different ways. Unarmed military observers should not be deployed if there is no ceasefire to be observed. In earlier days the UN was respected as a peacemaker. The UN flag and white patrol car were considered a calming factor. This has not been the case for a while. The UN can easily be picked out as a target just like any other actor in the area. In UNSMIS we experienced this several times. Only good luck prevented major casualties.

Only the strongest rule in war. Civil wars are extremely brutal and those who suffer are always the innocent ones, women and children. This was the case also in Syria. The humanitarian situation in the country was really deplorable. Because of the security situation, there were only a very limited number of humanitarian actors operating in the country. People lacked almost everything: food, water, medical supplies, gas etc.. What did I gain from this short term operation? – Frustration? Being a pawn on the chess board of international politics did not make you feel good. The most difficult thing was meeting the distress of the local population when your own personal means for helping them were minimal.

Georgian Challenges – Leadership in a Monitoring Mission

Heikki Lehtonen

Background of the situation and my role

I served altogether three times in the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Mission to Georgia, thereby having a very good opportunity to observe the situation and its development from more or less friendly coexistence to full scale war. My first tour of duty in the Mission was from September 2003 until May 2004 as a Monitoring Officer, a.k.a. Military Observer. At that time both sides lived relatively happily together and there were no visible disputes in the field of operation, mainly only on the political side. However, the co-operation between the sides of the conflict was pragmatic and everyday issues could be solved at political level.

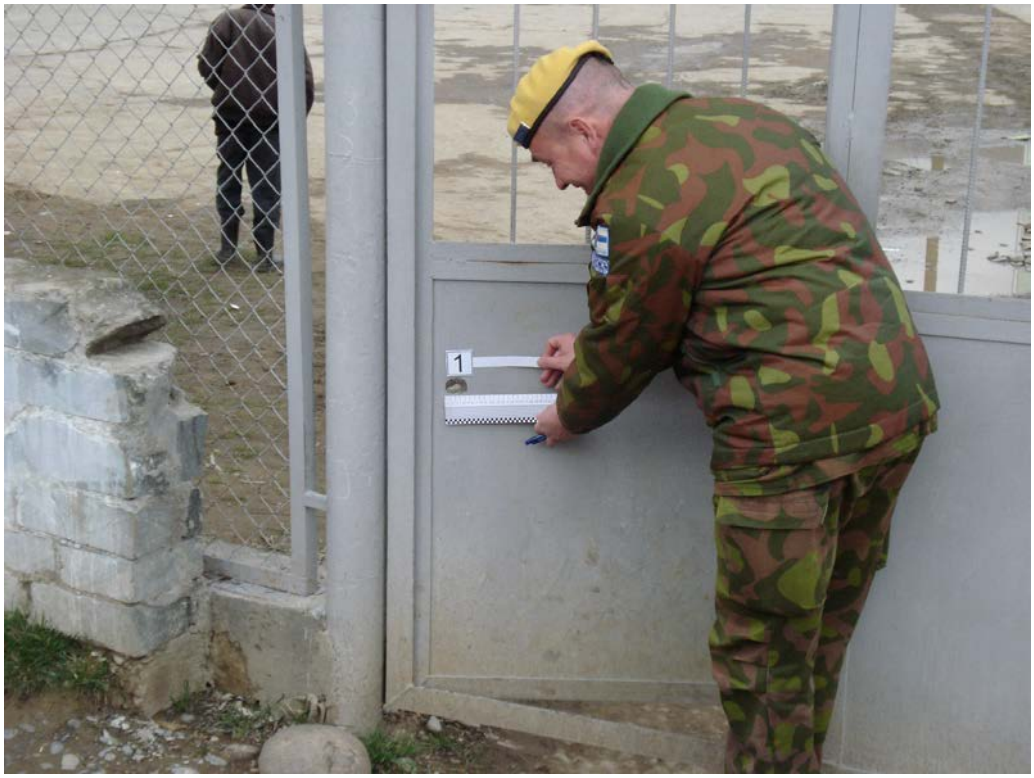
My second tour was from July 2005 to July 2007. This time the situation was already different in South Ossetia. After the Rose Revolution, the new regime in Tbilisi had successfully returned the control of Adjara back to Tbilisi, and had tried to do the same in South Ossetia, but failed to reach this goal. This led to quite a significant deterioration of the situation, and it was visible both at political level and in operations on the ground. It affected the operations of the multinational Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF), dividing them to serve two opposite sides, with both sides trying to use the OSCE to their own advantage. The OSCE's capability to operate was hampered by the lack of will of the JPKF to support the OSCE mission in fulfilling its mandate, as well as their own mandate.

I served on my third tour from January 2008 to January 2009, seeing how all parties of the original conflict pushed the situation to such a point of deterioration that war broke out. The lack of political will to solve the crisis was clearly visible. The peacekeepers were even more divided into two camps and, because of the rising tension and increase in violations of the cease fire agreement, the OSCE's monitoring activities were to an increasing degree only reactive rather than proactive.

The first challenge – taking and earning leadership

During my first tour of duty I was located in Tbilisi. The situation was calm, and the OSCE military team was mainly based in Tbilisi. The mission deployed the Chief Military Officer (CMO) and two monitoring officers in Tbilisi and one monitoring officer in Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, Georgia. Operations were conducted in such a way that the monitoring officer in Tskhinvali was responsible for liaison with the JPKF, and all three OSCE monitoring officers conducted joint monitoring activities together with the JPKF once a week. These monitoring activities were carried out according to a plan and only in the JPKF bases. Other tasks that the monitoring officers were responsible for were of an analytical and administrative nature.

This period of relative calm and quiet lasted until the end of my tour and actually created the challenges I faced during my next tour. Quite soon after my return to Finland the situation in South Ossetia deteriorated significantly. The regime in Tbilisi was confident of its ability to restore the territorial integrity of Georgia after it regained the Adjara region to once again place it under the authority of Tbilisi without firing a single shot. The same kind of operation was tried in South Ossetia, but it led to an exchange of fire, including artillery, and to a worsening of the situation on all fronts.



Investigating bullet holes in a Georgian school. Photo: Heikki Lehtonen

Because of this deterioration, the OSCE had to change its manner of carrying out military monitoring in order to fulfil its mandate. Hence the number of monitoring officers was increased to eight, of which seven were deployed at the OSCE Field Office in Tskhinvali, and only one monitoring officer and the CMO were in Tbilisi. Even the monitoring itself was affected. Now there were two daily monitoring events, conducted either by the OSCE monitoring officers or together with the JPKF; the monitoring routes were changed to cover the whole of the Zone of Conflict (ZoC) rather than only the JPKF bases. This mode of operation started in May 2004. When I returned to the mission in July 2005, my previous Tbilisi-based colleague had been nominated team leader of the military team in Tskhinvali, and my replacement was now the deputy team leader.

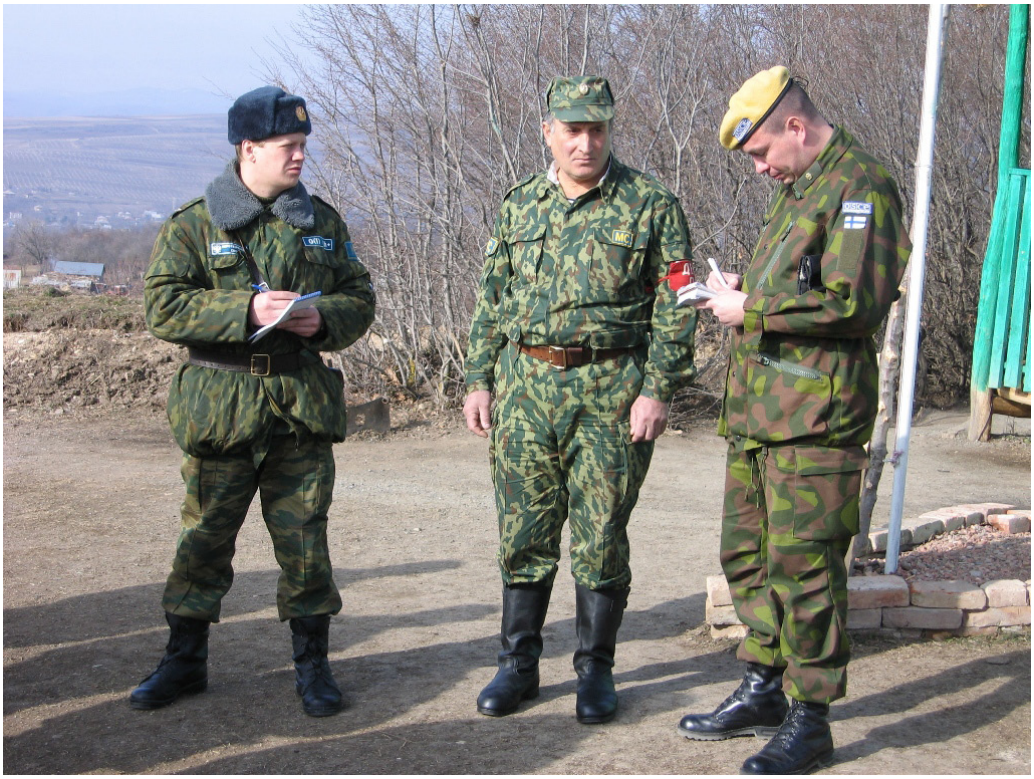
Tricky initiation of leadership

The CMO was still the same and he decided, based on my performance during my first tour of duty, that I would take over as team leader when the current team leader left the mission in September 2005. When this was announced to the team before my arrival it caused a great deal of dissatisfaction, and almost a mutiny, at least on a mental level. The team resisted an outsider unfamiliar with the situation, the area, the way of operating or the relevant actors in the area being made the leader. An additional negative factor was that my rank at that time was Major, while some of my future subordinates were Lieutenant Colonels; in other words, some of my subordinates were higher up in the hierarchy than I was.

However, I was fortunate enough to have a group of professional officers working on the team, who could work in a true military manner obeying orders given rather than showing their distrust and dismay. This point of discomfort was brought to my attention only later, when I nominated a new deputy team leader after the repatriation of the previous one.

Building rapport

When I started my second tour, I was just a new team member, an ordinary monitoring officer. I was, however, aware that I would be taking over the team within a few months. I stated right away that as a new officer in the team, knowing that the situation had changed drastically, I would like to volunteer to do a lot of monitoring just to get to know the locations and ways of operating. I knew that my Russian language skill was inferior compared to that of the other team members. I had been instructed by the CMO to speak English to the team. Their first foreign language was Russian and they spoke Russian amongst themselves. This had led to the deterioration of their English language skill. Knowing that my English skill was better than theirs, I also volunteered to proofread all the reports before they were sent to the head office in Tbilisi. I sensed that the situation could be difficult; therefore I decided to make a humble start in the team, not showing that I was to be the next team leader and their boss, but just doing my job normally without demanding any perks. When I later took over as team leader, I had a long discussion with my deputy about the situation and the team. I did not apologize for the uncomfortable situation, but I wanted to hear his opinion on what we could do better, where improvements were needed and also how we could share our work. This seemed to work. I took his advice seriously and put a lot of weight on his opinions, thus valuing him personally and professionally. At the same time he managed not to lose face as I publicly endorsed his opinions and recommendations, and sometimes even asked for his opinion as a more experienced officer, on various specific situations. Also, before any major changes in the ways we operated were initiated, I consulted him and we discussed the pros and cons of the current way and of the new idea.



The author engaged in joint monitoring with Russian and North Ossetian colleagues. Photo: Heikki Lehtonen

Initiating changes

Once I took over the responsibilities of team leader, I immediately started to initiate some changes to the team leader role. I told my team, that now that I had taken over, I would very much like to get to know them better. I let them know that contrary to the practices of my predecessor, I wanted to take part in the monitoring activities myself, and whenever there was a difficult situation where a joint patrol with the JPKF was needed, I would join it rather than send other people to do the most important and difficult tasks.

Other changes I introduced were rescheduling the rotation plan, which I did by holding a meeting with the whole team. In the meeting I said that together with my deputy, I have made the observation that the current rotation plan of three weeks of work and one week of rest is not the best possible. Keeping in mind the hardship of living together in two-men bedrooms in a hostile environment, my suggestion was to shorten the time in Tskhinvali to be, on average, between five and ten days, and the rest and recuperation time in Tbilisi would be three days. Everyone accepted this, and it turned out that it was also what they had wanted. They had only lacked the courage to suggest it to the head office themselves. I mentioned that the rotation period is not stipulated by the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and if we were all in agreement, I could determine it myself. Another important change was to have a meeting every morning, so that everyone was aware of the team's

planned activities as well as their personal involvement – who would conduct monitoring that day, and who would be on stand-by. This helped them plan their own activities, for example when would be a good time to Skype home or do physical exercise, rather than just having been randomly picked to do monitoring. This also guaranteed that the monitoring activities were shared equally between the team members.

Related to this, I introduced daily de-briefings with the team, where all the teams involved in monitoring during the day debriefed the others on where they had been and what they had observed. This was done to distribute information about the current situation between the members in order for them to remember what had happened in a specific area before they were dispatched there the next time. It also helped to make the monitoring officers a real team, and not just a bunch of officers living and occasionally working together with no responsibility whatsoever towards the team or contributing to the general awareness of the existing situation.

Caring for the wellbeing of the team

Another way of earning respect was setting a good example. I did this by taking on my share of the work, particularly the most difficult and demanding tasks. Keeping in mind that my colleagues were from former Warsaw Pact countries, where leadership is sometimes considered to be something other than setting a good example, I earned a lot of respect by acting the way I did. When our first female monitoring officer joined the team in Tskhinvali the building we lived in only had three bedrooms with either two or three beds, depending on the size of the room. This meant that the lady in our team occupied one bedroom and one of the male monitoring officers had to change bed and bedroom depending on the rotation. This was first done so that the person returning from Tbilisi would have to occupy the only vacant bed available and move his personal belongings to that room. The situation was inconvenient and started to irritate the male officers, and also to create unjustified anger against the female officer. I decided that as long as we didn't have enough space for permanent beds and bedrooms, I would be the one doing the moving around, thus giving my team a stable situation and their "own space" in our building.

A subordinate of mine from the area of the former Soviet Union asked me why I did this. I stated that as team leader and their supervisor one of my most important duties was to look after the wellbeing of my team. As I had realized that this issue was causing irritation and anger within the team I had to rectify the situation in order to ensure the wellbeing of the team and keep up the team spirit. He was really puzzled and told me that in his country, whoever gets to be the boss reaps all the benefits and enjoys better living conditions than his subordinates. I told him that already during my conscript service when I was on the NCO course, we were told that at mealtimes, the team leader should be the last one to get his meal because it is his task to make sure that his group gets something to eat before he does.

Before he was repatriated, I had a long conversation with one of my next deputies who had been in Tskhinvali since my arrival in the summer of 2005. He told me, that there was a lot of dismay in the group when my nomination was announced, and that there were even plans to disregard my leadership or retire from the mission. Especially the then

deputy team leader had very much regarded himself as the next team leader and was looking forward to being in that position. However, they decided to see how things would develop, and, according to him, my behaviour and attitude brought about a huge change in their sentiment. The main things that made a difference were the very same things that are taught in the Finnish Defence Forces regarding leadership; these are taking responsibility, listening to one's subordinates and respecting them, setting a good example and also admitting one's own shortcomings. He confessed to thinking that everything would be worse after my nomination, but instead it turned out to be much better than it had been, just because of these few basic leadership skills.

The second challenge – should one contradict one's supervisor?

When I started my third tour of duty in January 2008, the situation had deteriorated even further and as is well known, it gradually led to war between Georgia and Russia. Analysing this development now, it was obvious that it would end in war; either a civil war between Georgia and South Ossetia, or a war between Georgia and Russia – all the signs were there. It was more a question of when it would happen rather than if it would happen. However, the OSCE monitoring operations continued to be the same, because the de facto South Ossetian authorities stated that keeping five monitoring officers overnight in Tskhinvali at any given time is more than enough to monitor the situation in the Zone of Conflict. There was an urgent need to increase the number of monitoring officers, but the South Ossetian side consistently refused to accept this, mainly because it wanted to hide the peace agreement violations it was involved in.

I started my third tour as a deputy team leader, but was soon nominated team leader when the previous team leader's tour of duty was finished. When I left the mission in July 2007, a new CMO was nominated, and this person was my deputy from that time. My previous subordinate was now my supervisor. When the selection process was already ongoing, I knew that I would be finishing my mission and that he would have a good chance of being selected. We discussed a lot of things that needed to be improved if he were nominated for that position. When I returned to the mission, it turned out that things in the field are seen in a very different way when one is working in the head office. Unfortunately, many of the proposed changes had not been implemented, either because there had not been enough time or resources to do it, or because when one is no longer involved in field operations, the needs of the personnel working there no longer seem so acute. Even though having done field work gives one a good amount of experience and knowledge, sometimes when working in the head office one no longer reflects on or understands the realities in the field correctly. As these conditions change constantly, it can be detrimental to leadership to rely on previous, now outdated knowledge regarding these working conditions.

To stay or to leave?

When the war broke out, two monitoring officers and one civilian became trapped in Tskhinvali, even though on the day it started I had suggested that the Field Office in Tskhinvali should be evacuated. Before this tragic evening, there had been several incidents indicating that the next could mean the war would break out.

On 3 July 2008, the Ossetian Chief of Militia of the Dmanisi village was murdered using two remote controlled explosives. After that there was an attempt to kill the local head of the Georgian enclave, who was an ethnic Ossetian and actually an Ossetian war hero from the first war against Georgia. Due to these murders, the Georgian peacekeepers left their office at the JPKF headquarters in Tskhinvali that evening. During the night, the Georgian side bombed Tskhinvali with mortar fire, targeting the illegal South Ossetian military installation in the city. After that the situation continued to deteriorate, and the OSCE had to carry out joint monitoring with the JPKF in order to react to the peace agreement violations carried out by both sides; there was no time to be proactive anymore, because all the resources were tied to investigations and monitoring the on-going situation. This was followed by the evacuation of the civilian population of both sides, and finally on 7 August 2008, the Georgian side shelled some Ossetian villages and explosions could be heard all along the ethnic lines of the ZoC. In the afternoon of that day, during a joint monitoring with the JPKF, the Georgian military observer who was with me registering the events received a phone call. He told the joint team that he had received an order to withdraw from the joint monitoring and asked us to stop the car so that he could leave. When he was asked the reason for this he only said that he had received an order. At the same time we noticed that all Georgian observers at different JPKF posts and bases had received a similar order. I reported this to the head office, but because my supervisor was in a meeting I reported the information to the Chief Security Officer (CSO). He asked me what my recommendation and assessment of the situation was. I answered that based on the fact that the Field Office was shelled the last time the Georgians left Tskhinvali, I thought that the Field Office personnel should be evacuated. I said that we could expect the same result this time around, that it was meaningless to endanger the lives of the OSCE people and that if nothing happens the OSCE personnel can return the next day, even early in the morning without being noticed. The CSO supported my recommendation and stated that the OSCE crisis management team would meet at the earliest convenient time to make a decision.

Because of an internal personal rift between certain crisis management team members it was decided that an evacuation was not necessary and I was personally reprimanded by my supervisor for giving such a recommendation and not informing him first of the situation and my opinion. After a long discussion with my boss, I managed to have two of my monitoring officers evacuated to Tbilisi, at least for one night, and only two of us and the head of the Field Office stayed in Tskhinvali that night. During the night the war broke out, and the three of us were left there against my advice and warning without any proper shelter. We stayed in the basement, which was only a quarter floor below ground level, without any real protection. Even though it had been previously agreed that the Russian peacekeepers would help us to evacuate if the war began, it turned out that they were too busy and couldn't help us. I couldn't reach the Georgian peacekeepers to find out what the situation outside the

office was, so I decided that we would have to stay, because trying to escape in the middle of a war would have put us all in danger.

We therefore stayed in the basement hearing only the sounds of exchange of fire by handguns and different kinds of weapons of indirect fire, mainly artillery and mortars. During the night our yard and half of the house was hit by a salvo of rockets from a multiple rocket launcher system. Fortunately, we survived, even though part of the house was destroyed together with some vehicles next to our Field Office. It was not until the Russian peacekeepers arrived at our office and said that they would evacuate the guards they had posted in our office because it had become too dangerous to stay there, that I decided that we would also leave Tskhinvali. After a short brief with the peacekeepers I decided on the route of evacuation, ordering the head of the Field Office and my monitoring officer to use the better-protected armoured vehicle while I would follow them in another armoured vehicle that had a lower level of protection. We drove through the almost empty streets of Tskhinvali seeing only some burning houses and destroyed armoured vehicles and managed to escape to the Georgian-controlled side and eventually to Tbilisi.

Leadership: making the right decision

The big question that I am still thinking about today is: would it have been a correct call to leave Tskhinvali, thus ignoring the decision made in Tbilisi? There are several arguments that support this. One is that, first and foremost, even though we wore uniforms, our operation was not a military one, but one of a purely civilian nature. The military chain of command did not exist, even though it was practiced. This would also mean that disobeying orders could not be considered a mutiny or breaking the military code of conduct, but rather any civilian's right to protect themself. There could have been disciplinary consequences if the war had not started, but because it had, the decision would have been justified. Other arguments supporting not following the head office's decision are that because the very nature of the mission was to monitor the situation, the monitoring officers were not armed. In fact this meant that they did not have any chance of either defending themselves or affecting the development or outcome of the situation, especially within the Caucasus area.

Other factors are that it was obvious that the decision was based on an internal power struggle between two members of the crisis management team and the fact that the Head of Mission was on leave at that time. Had the Head of Mission been there, the decision would have been different. This time, personal feelings created a situation where those involved in the power struggle had to be of opposing opinion, because otherwise the one agreeing with the other would have had to admit that the other was right, hence giving that person an upper hand in the future. Other, more minor factors are that the Head Office was already distanced from the reality of the operational area and therefore did not trust opinions expressed in the field. Another factor that affected the situation was the overall human way of thinking that at the end of the day common sense will win and nobody wants a war to break out.

Following the decision to stay in Tskhinvali can be justified by the military way of doing things and one's military education, according to which tasks are carried out as ordered. However, analysing the situation now, in hindsight, it is obvious that the war was going to start, but at that time the words of the local decision makers were believed when they stated that they did not want war. One important thing to learn is that actions must matter more than words, and one must take into account the local way of living.

Conclusions and lessons learned

Knowing what I know today, it is easy to say that I would have told the personnel to leave Tskhinvali. And at the same time, when thinking what my thoughts and the situation were at that time, I most probably would have stayed there. In a way it is futile to think what my decision would have been, because it has already been carried out. The result might have been different and some casualties might have been suffered among our personnel. One thing I learned from this last episode is, that being the one with the longest experience in the military team, and having observed the development of the situation for more than three years, next time I will trust my own experience and do more to convince the decision making body to accept the reality and to see it the way it really is.

This kind of unexpected situation is a good opportunity to get to know oneself better. It is a totally different thing to think about how one would act in a war and how one really acts in the actual situation. One of the most important things was being familiar with the area and understanding what possible options one had on where to go or what to do. Even though we did not have any real picture of the situation, we could hear where the fighting was going on and how things were developing. This helped me to remain firm in my decision to stay in Tskhinvali rather than to try to escape and possibly end up in a worse situation, even though this is what was suggested during some of the calmer periods during the night and the following day. Only when the situation changed and there was clear evidence that it was different, was there enough reason to make an alternative decision and escape. The main logic followed was that of two bad alternatives I had to choose the lesser one, even if it was not a good one. Also remaining calm and thinking clearly are things that helped. Another factor that supported me in this situation was that my colleagues trusted my abilities and in doing this they did not want to challenge my decisions.

Taking the leader's role was not difficult. First of all, it is something that Finnish officers are trained to do. Secondly, being a leader had been my role in the mission the whole time I had been posted there. The experience gained during the time I served in the mission also helped me to grow into the position and take on the responsibility required of me. One important thing that officers are taught is that one has to take on responsibility if the deterioration of the situation so demands, and that one should not take on the leader's role if one is not ready for it, even when faced with difficult situations.

Taking the Lead in a Changed Situation – Personal Experiences from the 2005 Earthquake in Pakistan and India

Janne Lehtonen

Introduction

Finland has participated in the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) with 5 military observers for several years. The mission itself is quite small, and in 2005 the number of personnel was 45 military observers and approximately 70 international and national civilian workers. In short, the mandate of the mission is to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in the Jammu and Kashmir areas of the region.

On the 8th of October 2005 a massive earthquake hit Pakistan and India causing the loss of more than 74,000 lives and leaving the infrastructure totally destroyed in large parts of the region. The epicentre of the earthquake was in the vicinity of Muzaffarabad, approximately 100 km northwest of the Pakistani capital Islamabad and thus UNMOGIP was also affected by the earthquake.

This article will cover my personal experiences during the time of the earthquake especially from a leadership point of view and also in relation to training I have received. Since my tour of duty ended very soon after the earthquake, I can only cover the actions taken at the time of the earthquake and a few days after it. I was not there anymore when the organisation started to return to its normal routines.

The mission is and was very small, and many officers had several different hats to wear. I also wore four different hats at the time of the earthquake. My primary role at that time was Military Training Officer (MTO), being mainly in charge of induction training for incoming military observers. My second responsibility was to be OIC (Officer in Charge) of the rear headquarters in Rawalpindi. The main headquarters was located in Srinagar on the Indian side and most of the military staff was working there during the time around the earthquake. My third role was to be the Finnish Senior Officer, which meant I had responsibilities towards Finland. My fourth and most important role, when the earthquake occurred, was that of Duty Officer. I will analyse these different roles from a leadership point of view and look at what kind of readiness my training gave me to handle this kind of situation as a leader.

The earthquake – action taken in different roles

UNMOGIP is in many regards a very special mission. One of its specialities is that, for political reasons, the HQ is divided so that half of the year it is located on the Pakistani side and during the other half on the Indian side. For security-related reasons on the Indian

side of Jammu and Kashmir, however, the civilian part was on the Pakistani side all the time and only the military part of the HQ moved between the two countries. At the time of the earthquake, the main part of the military HQ was situated in Srinagar, India and the only permanent military person located in the rear HQ in Rawalpindi on the Pakistani side was the Military Training Officer (MTO) / OIC of the rear HQ.

I arrived at UNMOGIP HQ in Rawalpindi, Pakistan early on the 8th of October 2005. As OIC of the rear HQ I carried out the normal morning routines such as doing a radio check with the main HQ and taking a quick look at the HQ to make sure that everything was as it should be. Some officers were supposed to return from leave and some officers were supposed to go on leave. Two officers had joined the mission a couple of days earlier and we were meant to continue their induction training later that day. Everything looked like routine work for me as I had been in the area for more than 11 months and I was just about the start my out-processing and the handing over of my tasks to the next MTO and to the new Finnish Senior Officer.

A couple of minutes before 9 in the morning I was sitting outside of the cafeteria with my two colleagues waiting for a morning coffee. Suddenly, everything started to shake heavily and for a while we were all really confused until we realized that we had just experienced an earthquake. None of us had experienced an earthquake before, so we really didn't know how to react in the beginning. Everything seemed to be ok in the Headquarters area and I think we even made some jokes about it.

As Duty Officer I had my duty phone in my pocket and after some minutes it started to ring. The UNMOGIP Security Officer was the first to call and during her phone call the magnitude of the disaster slowly started to dawn on me. Her first comment was that one of the multi-storey buildings in Islamabad had collapsed. Several UNMOGIP civilian and military staff members and their families lived in that building. The next phone call came from one of my colleagues, telling me that he and his family, as well as several others, had managed to escape from the collapsed building. Most of them were wearing only their underwear as they had to leave their homes so quickly. All their belongings, money and documents were inside the building. The first thing I had to do as Duty Officer was to arrange to have them picked up and brought to the HQ area.

At the same time, the Security Officer arrived in the office and we sat down for a short situation update and made a plan on how to proceed. The scale of the earthquake started to be known at that time and the first priority was to get in touch with all of our personnel and find out what their status was. The epicentre of the earthquake was exactly in the region where most of our observers were working. The Security Officer started checking up on the status of the civilian staff and their families and my responsibility was to contact all the military personnel. In less than an hour we had the result and it was devastating. A total of eight persons were missing and we were pretty sure that they had been inside the multi-storey building when it collapsed. After some days the rescue workers managed to rescue two of them, but unfortunately six of them had been killed. Luckily, all the military observers at the field stations were unharmed. We were lucky in the sense that the earthquake happened before nine o'clock in the morning. Several patrols were supposed to start at nine and head

towards the most damaged areas. If the earthquake had happened two hours later, the situation might have been much worse than it was now.

All planned field activities were cancelled and we tasked all field stations to be on stand by, and made sure that they were safe all the time. When we knew that everything was ok with the people in the field we could concentrate our efforts on the missing people in Islamabad. The hardest part for me as Duty Officer was to contact my colleague whose family was also missing. I had to inform him of the situation and ask him to return to the HQ immediately. He was serving on the Indian side and it took him 12 hours to travel back to Islamabad.

Because the main HQ was located in India and the biggest effects on the operation were on the Pakistani side, the rear HQ was given the main responsibility of leading the current situation in Islamabad. We organised ourselves so that I sat in the Duty Officer's office and worked more or less as a coordinator between civilian and military staff on the Indian side. The Security Officer was the overall leader of the situation and my role was to assist her, provide support, coordinate resources and update military staff as much as possible. This task was very demanding. Information was constantly coming in from different sources and at the same time there were a number of information requests coming from other places. Due to the long distance and bad travelling connections it took 2–3 days before we were able to receive some reinforcements from the main HQ. The Acting Chief Military Observer was also stationed at the main HQ in the beginning and my role was to update him all the time in order to aid him in reporting to the UN HQ in New York. On a few occasions I updated the UN HQ directly when they called.

After the first hours the situation calmed down a little and it was possible for us to sit down again and analyse the situation and update our plan. The rescue work at the site of the collapsed building was initiated by the Pakistani authorities and later the international rescue teams continued the work. The situation in Islamabad was chaotic as a huge amount of injured people started to arrive at the hospitals there and soon they were full of people.

Suddenly there were rumours that a Western woman with children had been seen at a certain hospital. We decided to build up a network to keep track of the overall situation. Both civilian staff and available military personnel were used in this task. Also the newcomers were given a crash course on the most important topics and we sent them out also to do the work. We sent some officers to the rescue site and some officers to the different hospitals to be able to check all the information we received and check the arrivals at the hospital, to be able know if any of our missing persons showed up. Another pertinent issue was to avoid the spreading of rumours. We realized very soon that false hope was the worst thing for the next of kin, and in order to try to avoid this we needed to confirm all information before dispatching it from the HQ.

As Finnish Senior Officer I also had responsibilities towards Finland, and as soon as I had confirmation that my Finnish colleagues were ok, I made a call to the Duty Officer at the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) and told him about the situation and the status of the Finnish Observers. Later on I reported to Finland daily on how the situation was developing. Also the Finnish media started to be interested in the earthquake quite soon after it happened. Through FINCENT I received requests for interviews from all

the main TV channels and the main newspapers in Finland and as Finnish Senior Officer one of my tasks was to respond to these requests. The cooperation with the media was really good. They respected our work and waited until I had the possibility to contact them and be interviewed. Due to the nature of the situation the questions were predictable and easy to answer.

Just to highlight the variety of the tasks, I will also mention that I received some information requirements concerning humanitarian aid delivery. Finland for example, was willing to send military tents to ease the situation in the most affected areas and my role was to link people mainly in logistic and administrative matters. I have mentioned only some of the major tasks we had to accomplish during the first hours and days after the earthquake. There were also a number of other tasks to accomplish, but I hope my description of the crisis has provided a good enough picture of how complicated the situation was at the time.

The earthquake from a leadership point of view

A situation like the earthquake in Pakistan is really challenging for everybody and especially for the person in charge. There are a number of tasks you should be able to handle and in many cases you have to make decisions based on very little information. Sometimes, as time goes by, you might realize that all decisions taken at the time were not the best ones, but they were based on the situational awareness one had then. In any case, decisions had to be made.

The fact that the HQ was divided during the earthquake made things even more difficult than they would have been if the whole HQ had been located on the Pakistani side. We had to create temporary organizations to be able to face all the tasks and especially to stay on track with the information we received at the rear HQ.

Some of the tasks we had to solve were very basic such as movement control tasks, but some of them were the most difficult tasks I have had in my life. such as calling my colleague and telling him that his family is missing as well as meeting him at the HQ when he arrived from the field station.

During the time after the earthquake I learned how important it is to be able to communicate with your colleagues. Language skills are really important from a leader's and Duty Officer's point of view. Of particular importance is making sure that the order given is understood at the other end and that you understand what other people are trying to tell you. It is also important that you follow the voice procedures when communicating through different channels. You need to keep your messages simple and think about what you want to say before you start talking. This might sound like a basic thing, but sometimes in a calm situation you tend to forget it and it takes a while to remember this important point when the situation escalates.

The most critical issue, which I came to realise based on my experience, is related to situational awareness. You must have all the necessary information to be able to make decisions and if it is lacking you still have to get it somehow. It is also important to share the information within the organization and with your counterparts outside of your own organization. I

mentioned rumours earlier; for a while we had a situation where we started to follow up on all of them, until we realized that we must check all the information and nip the rumours in the bud before they start to spread.

Nowadays, when thinking back on the situation and how we managed to handle it, I have come to the conclusion that somehow the situation was easy to lead. Even though we had challenges, which I mentioned earlier, most of the people involved were really great. They were really focused and they really concentrated on handling the situation in the best possible way, without questioning why things were being done in a certain way.

Pre-mission training and preparedness for the situation

The ability to handle these kinds of situations is of course very individual. Some people are born to lead in crisis situations and some people are not ready for it even if they have been given extensive training. I will not evaluate myself, nor ponder whether I managed to be a good leader or not in this situation, but I will analyse the basic military and mission training I have received and how it prepared me to handle the situation. I will try to highlight some key issues that prepared me and which I was able to use during the situation in Pakistan.

My background is that I graduated from the Military Academy in 1998. During my four years of officers' training we had a lot of exercises that prepared me for this kind of situation. I can mention for example case studies where our instructors put us in unexpected situations. We had to analyse the situation, make a decision and act based on that decision. This kind of training improves your ability to analyse the information you receive and makes you able to make a decision. Most of the time during the training the information was not complete, but this is also the case in real life. The only difference between real life and training is, that in the real life situation I received a lot of false information, which made decision making more demanding. One of these case studies also gave me some backup when I had to make the difficult phone call to the colleague whose family was missing.

We also had many exercises where we were posted in different leading roles and had an opportunity to practice our leadership skills. One important lesson learned in those exercises was how to be able to work 24/7 and still be able to analyse and make good decisions. Another lesson learned from officers' training was how to give orders. I can't even remember how many times during the training I heard my instructors saying that a good order is short, simple, readable and understandable. This was a key issue in leading the situation in Pakistan. It becomes even more important when you are giving orders in a foreign language and, as was the case in Pakistan, most of the communication we carried out and the orders we gave were given over the radio or phone.

I have already mentioned the importance of good language skills and in my opinion it should be mandatory to participate in language training before deployment. The UN demands a minimum level of English skills, but I think this is not enough. In a peaceful and calm situation you can manage with lesser skills in English, but in a crisis situation you don't have the time to start to explaining things many times. I have to admit that if the situation had occurred at the beginning of my deployment, I would have had big problems – not because

of a lack of knowledge, but because of a lack of English language skill. This is one of the reasons I want to highlight this matter so many times in my text.

Before actual deployment to an operation, all military observers have to go through the United Nations Military Observer Course (UNMOC). This was also the case for me and I attended the course five months prior to my deployment. During the three-week course we went through different case studies and exercises and once again, during these case studies and exercises, we were confronted with unknown situations that we had to analyse, make decisions on and act according to these decisions. The cases we had to solve were really realistic and complex, which forced us to analyse the situation carefully before making a decision. What was once again characteristic of these cases and exercises was that the information we received was not complete and we had to make the best of what we were told.

On repeated occasions during the course, our instructors highlighted the importance of communication skills. They underlined that you should think before sending a message, use short sentences and keep it simple. This is vital in a situation like the one in Pakistan, which was highly complex with many different nations participating in the mission and each having nation-specific ways of handling a situation of this nature. I also remember one phrase our instructors repeated to us all the time. "Always expect the unexpected". I still remember this from my UNMOC, even though my course took place nine years ago. Courses attended and any other training received is not directly able to train you for handling disasters of the scale of the earthquake in Pakistan, but it gives you tools to use and apply in different situations.

In addition to the training and courses, I would like to highlight the role of personal experiences gained earlier in life and that you should not forget. I, for example, have a long history in team sports as a player and as a coach, and I have gained a lot of experience in leadership and team building from these activities. Don't be afraid to show your human side as situations can be very emotional in many ways.

Debriefing

After an experience like the Pakistan earthquake debriefing is important. We all know that these kinds of experiences can have very long lasting effects if you do not go through them with professional people. I am not the right person to say how it should be done, but I will mention briefly how it was done in our situation.

When the first days and the biggest confusion was over and we managed to establish some kind of routine again in the mission, some professional people from UN HQ arrived, and started to go through the situation with them. We had group discussions and personal discussions with these professionals. We also gathered together the core people involved in the situation and analysed our actions during the process.

After returning home I went through a routine medical examination and once again I had the possibility to talk through the situation with a professional. We spent a lot of time

talking about the people who were killed and how I felt about that. We also talked about the whole process and how I thought we managed to handle the situation and how I had performed. One big question the doctor posed was whether I felt I did enough. I have come to the conclusion that I did. We might have worked ten times more, but the end result would have been the same.

These kinds of experiences will follow you through your life. It is now almost nine years since it happened and I have to admit that I still think about it quite often. Of course I will always remember the loss of those six persons, but I also remember the good cooperation amongst those of us who worked closely together in the HQ. I have tried to see it as strength from my own perspective, and I think I learned a lot not only about how to lead, but also about myself as a person. The biggest thing for me was to notice that I can work in a calm and organised manner in a stressful and complex situation. It also gave me a lot of self-confidence that has been useful in everyday life and work.

Conclusions and lessons learned

I have been thinking about the situation in Pakistan quite a lot and have tried to identify and analyse our actions and especially my own actions during the first hours and first days after the earthquake. The biggest lesson I have identified was that our preparedness for this kind of situation was not at the level it should have been and this includes the organisation's preparedness as well as my own. This brings me to the conclusion that planning in advance is very important and not only the planning itself, but also the implementation of the plan. Some kind of emergency or contingency plan should be prepared. Everyone must be aware of the plan and training must be carried out regularly. I have to say that the civilians in the operation were much better organised right after the earthquake than we soldiers were. As I described earlier, we had to improvise and create temporary solutions to be able to carry out our tasks. When something like this happens everybody should be clear about what to do and where to go.

Another lesson identified is linked with the organisation. The UNMOGIP HQ was divided when the earthquake took place and the main HQ was located on the Indian side. This created a situation where the resources and the civilian part of the HQ were on the Pakistani side and military staff was on the Indian side. Most of the actions during these first hours and days were carried out in Pakistan, where the manning was very limited and we again had to create temporary arrangements to be able to function 24/7. This division of the HQ is a political issue, but in this case it really was a weakness for the organisation.

Information sharing is one of the key elements in a situation like this. To be able to lead, you must have as much information as possible before making a decision and, if possible, all the information should somehow be confirmed. During these few days I experienced how strong an effect rumours can have. We heard a lot of rumours concerning missing people and in the beginning we started to follow up on them. Based on these rumours, we also made the mistake of giving false hope to the next of kin and this had a very negative impact on them. We identified this mistake, and the lesson learned was that we have to confirm all the information before we let it leave the HQ.

Linked with information sharing and especially tasking, I identified how important is to be able to communicate in straightforward English. When the situation is tense and people are stressed it is even more important that you follow voice procedures. Keep your sentences short, simple and understandable, and most importantly: Think about what you want to say before you pick up the phone or send your message over the radio.

All these conclusions and lessons learned are also somehow linked to training. It is true that it is almost impossible to train for everything before you are deployed to a mission, but you should think about and be prepared for the fact that something like this might happen. During the training that I went through before my deployment, a lot of attention was paid to solving different kinds of problems. This kind of training teaches you to analyse the situation and the information available, and to make a decision based on that analysis. Based on my personal experience, this helped me a lot during those few days in Pakistan and it also provided me with good guidelines for how to communicate with the media. Training in the mission area is also important. You might have perfect plans for emergency situations, but if people do not know how to execute them they are useless, and the situation is even worse if you have no plan to begin with.

In a situation like this, you have to remember that you are leading people who might be affected by the disaster, and that everybody processes the situation in different ways. You have to be able to adapt to the situation and to handle different cases. Sometimes you have to be firm and concrete and sometimes you have to show your feelings and try to step into the shoes of the person in front of you.

After this kind of experience, it is also good to remember debriefing and the importance of going through the situation afterwards with your colleagues and a professional. The experience will follow you through your life, but you have to try to make the best of it and to learn from it.

And finally – always expect the unexpected – be prepared before it happens.

Commanding Finnish Soldiers in Afghanistan – Professionalism in a Demanding Peace Support Operation

Joni Lindeman

I acted as Finnish Contingent Commander and Deputy Task Force Commander in Afghanistan for ten months. Circumstances were quite demanding not only because of the terrain and the climate, but also due to the general political situation. In the following text my aim is to describe some of my experiences and feelings related to these experiences in Afghanistan.

Departure

My departure to Afghanistan was quite rapid, at least if you compare it to the normal Finnish Defence Forces procedure. In the autumn of 2011, the officer appointed to do the job was not able to take over due to an unfortunate accident. The Contingent Commander who was already there received a three-month extension of his tour of duty. By doing this the Defence Forces gained some extra time for finding a new Commander. One morning in October 2011, for some reason that I do not know, the DACOS G1 came into my office at the Army Command and asked if I was willing to go to Afghanistan as Contingent Commander and Deputy Commander of what at that time was Provincial Reconstruction Team Mazar-e Sharif. He told me that departure would be within one month at the end of November, the tour of duty would last for ten months and that he would need to receive my final answer by the next morning. I received "permission" to call my wife before making my final decision. I told my wife how long the trip would last, when the departure would take place and also gave her some information about the salary. After the first two facts had been stated her voice was something between very cold and freezing, but after the third fact – the salary – was mentioned, she said: "Please go and stay as long as possible". So after the approval from my Home Troops Commander, one week of rotation training, a running test and several vaccinations I was sitting in an aeroplane on my way to the big unknown.

Professionalism of the Finnish soldier

The first thing I noticed was the professionalism and very professional outlook of the Finnish soldiers in Afghanistan. All soldiers, no matter what their rank or position in the organization, were good examples of the high quality of Finnish military education and training. Everybody had understood that implementing the basic skills of a soldier, especially the safe weapons handling and basic tactics, techniques and procedures, is the best way to conduct safe and secure actions in an unstable operation area. They knew that out there on the road, opposing forces or Improvised Explosives Devices don't differentiate between an infantry foot soldier or an advisor. Everyone is a target when a dangerous situation unfolds.

Finnish soldiers can often look like members of a peasant army with regard to how they are dressed. Quite often their clothing and equipment can be old and composed of whatever is available. In an international working environment the first impression is often made on the basis of looks and soldiers who look like peasants or mercenaries are often judged to be poor soldiers. However, although the Finnish soldiers' manner of dressing was motley, their behaviour was thoroughly professional. My predecessor had done a very good job in consolidating this perception and I followed the same path. During my tour of duty I was praised several times by my foreign colleagues on how professional my soldiers looked. The standard clothing and equipment given to soldiers by the Finnish Defence Forces is very good and suitable nowadays. And my soldiers followed the directives given on how to wear these clothes and equipment without using any of their own applications. So the Finnish Peacekeepers' saying "Look Good, Do Good" is true.

Language skills

In Afghanistan the international community's language of command is English, or actually one of its most common dialects – bad English. Command and control of one's own troops, verbal and written orders, plans and all documents are in English. The importance of proper language skills increases as you move higher up in the organisation. That's why there are both international and national minimum English skills requirements. It is a safety issue. If you don't understand what is written in an order, or you don't understand what is said in a communications network when there is an on-going situation, you might place your unit at risk or you might, for example, violate the operation's operating procedures or mandate. When something bad happens the explanation; "Sorry, I didn't understand what was going on", is not good enough. That's why it is my personal opinion that language requirements should definitely be followed when recruiting personnel to participate in missions abroad.

The commander's role

First of all, the commander must take care of his troops. In a Peace Support Operation (PSO) this doesn't mean that you do your best to get safe and nice tasks for your troops and leave the riskier tasks for others to handle. In an international environment it means, for example, that limited common resources are used equally when operating, or that your troops are not guarding the base camp all the time. In order to earn respect from other nationalities, you should take care that your troops share the burden of taking on challenging and risky tasks. You can't keep your soldiers inside the base camp with the attitude; if you don't do anything, nothing bad will happen. Unfortunately in a PSO there are sometimes dangerous situations; that is why soldiers are there in the first place. For the soldiers themselves, it is also motivating to be able to put their skills to use.

A commander must also be seen with the troops. Of course he or she cannot carry out "the final assault" side by side with the foot soldiers, but every now and then the commander must be in the field when troops are conducting operations. It is very refreshing and also

educative to participate in a foot patrol or attend a Shura[1] with a platoon leader. These experiences give you a better understanding of the basic work of the troops; it makes it easier for you to write orders or give tasks to your soldiers when you know what it means for the individual soldier. In addition, your soldiers respect you when you are sweating with them and tasting the same dust as them.

Foot patrols in the villages were routine activities in order to maintain and enhance contacts with ordinary people. Photo: Joni Lindeman

The on-scene commander knows what he is doing; Meanwhile in the headquarters...

The Commander is not always where the action is, which is why you need to trust your subordinate leaders. You have to trust that the on-scene commander knows what he is doing and you have to let him concentrate on the situation at hand and not to disturb him with questions on what is happening. The on-scene commander knows what situational information needs to be sent to Headquarters and he will send it when he is able to do so.

Sometimes in the HQs there is an urgent need to “help” the on-scene commander by sending additional resources and troops to the spot without request. The on-scene commander knows what support is available and he will ask for more support if and when it is needed. It is likely that he is so occupied with the situation, that the arrival of additional troops or capabilities may do more harm than good. Of course you can for example increase the

[1] Is an A rabic word for "consultation". In Afghanistan this word is usually used as an alternative term for meeting or conference.

readiness of the reserves or even move them closer, but sending them to the spot should be done only if the on-scene commander requests additional support.

Loneliness and taking care of yourself

The commander is alone out there. Of course there are lots of your own soldiers and soldiers from other nations, but still there is no peer to air your inner feelings and thoughts with when you are experiencing a mentally heavy day. Working days are long and in the operation area there are no holidays or days off. Days are full of meetings, operational planning, decisions, taking care of your troops and preparing for "what if" situations. That's why you have to take some time off for yourself.

My way of taking care of myself was by engaging in sports and taking a siesta break. Those who know me might be surprised, when they read that sporting was one of my ways of relaxing, but it is true. In our base camp there were well-equipped fitness facilities and a one kilometre track, if you followed the outer wall of the camp. Of course during the summer it was quite exhausting to run or go to the gym during the day when the temperature outside was 44 degrees in the shade. That's why you saw and heard people running around the camp at quite peculiar times of the day like before 0600 hrs or after 2300 hrs.

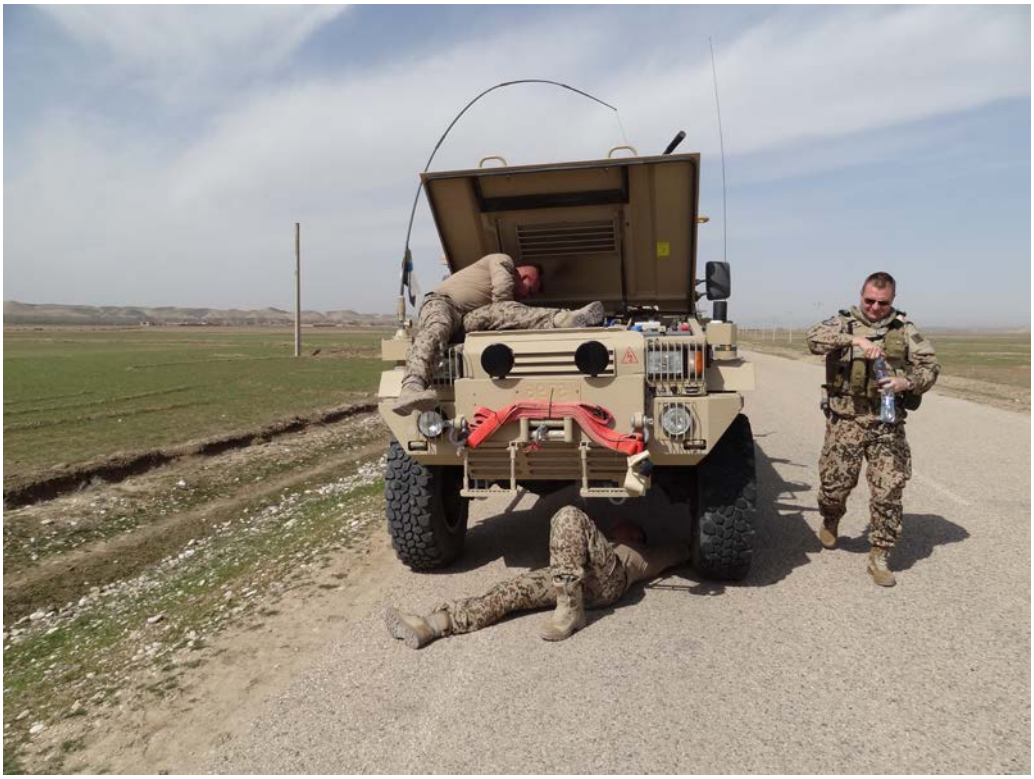
Usually, when I was in Camp and there was no official activity, I took a siesta break after lunch. When you put earplugs in and started to read an interesting book, you could put normal routines and worries out of mind and recharge your "batteries" for an hour or two. That gave me the strength and ability to get in the saddle even during the middle of the night if needed.

Sometimes there is still a need to talk to someone. In a way the Commander is a lonely rider, because you have no soldier of equal rank to contact in the same way as squad leaders, platoon leaders and ordinary soldiers do. In my case, I was lucky enough to have a Close Protection Team (CPT) leader with some experience who was "forced" to listen to me when I wanted to air my thoughts and concerns. This lieutenant had ten years of experience from the Finnish Navy, he was a trained paramedic and now he served in the Finnish Police Forces. So we sat quite frequently in the parking lot of the CPT or in my office and discussed various things. This lieutenant was also my military assistant in arranging different trips around the area and meeting with different local actors. He was also my barber and of course he perfectly fulfilled the promise given to my wife; he kept me out of trouble and brought me back home safe and sound.

Responsibility 24/7

You can't share your commander's responsibility with anyone else. Although there are not so many ways to affect what is happening in the field when you are at headquarters and your troops are out there, the responsibility lies entirely on your shoulders. That's why you need to be ready to act 24/7 if something unexpected happens. In my opinion the commander's job is more demanding from a mental than from a physical perspective. Of course it is

physically exhausting when you are wearing protective gear and carrying heavy weapons out in the field and the temperature is above 40 degrees Celsius in the shade. But I would still say it is harder in a mental sense. Not unbearable, but harder. I trusted my subordinate leaders to one hundred percent, but still you needed to be ready to support them no matter what time it was, report back to Finland about a possible incident and in the worst case go to the Role 3 hospital to locate one of your soldiers that has been wounded or injured in some manner. At no time could you lower this kind of readiness level. Even when you were on leave back in Finland, for the first week your thoughts were still in Afghanistan and during the second week you started to orientate yourself so that you were ready to take charge right after the plane landed . Of course there was an update briefing for me when I returned from my leave. It was divided into two parts; Task Force (TF) briefing given by the TF commander and key leaders in the headquarters and contingent briefing which was given by my second-in-command. It is a good way to be updated, because from my perspective both briefings support each other.



Sometimes you needed to do maintenance of your equipment on the road in order to continue working. Photo: Joni Lindeman

Case study: Supporting Afghan National Security Forces in the Samangan Province

One week, the Finnish Company together with the Finnish Advisory Team supported an operation in the central part of the Samangan province. When planning this operation we noticed that the action would take place outside of the so called “Golden Hour Circle”. This

is a circle within which helicopters can make medical evacuations where the patient is in the Role 3[2] hospital within one hour after the evacuation request is received. We discussed this with the TF commander and decided to take the risk for two reasons; our unit had a Mobile Medical Team with a doctor and the operation took place only around 5 kilometres outside of the circle. Our unit went out and everything went smoothly until the higher command's Chief of Operations found out that our guys were outside of the circle. I tried to explain that we had calculated the risks, done risk mitigation and that the risk was at an acceptable level. He didn't accept my explanation and ordered me to move our troops, so that they would be within the circle. I refused to follow the order because it was almost dark and our unit was operating in an area that was not familiar to them. I promised that the unit will move inside the circle first thing in the morning. For some reason, however, his order was given directly to our advisory team and they started to move in the dark. Around 2200 hrs we received information that one of the advisory teams 4x4 armoured vehicle had overturned and that there were two category C[3] injured. At Headquarters we were wondering what had happened and we were given the explanation; the team was moving inside the Golden Hour Circle because the higher command had ordered them to do so. After a while and after we had already reported back to Finland about this minor incident, we got some serious news from the scene. Our doctor had arrived at the scene, made an evaluation of the patients and requested helicopter medical evacuation for one category A patient and one category B patient[4]. This information changed the whole set-up. We immediately sent a new report to Finland and I ordered my CPT leader to get ready to take me to the neighbouring camp where the Role 3 hospital was located. I got to the hospital in record time and I was there when my soldiers were brought in. Luckily our doctor's judgement of the injuries was overestimated; the injuries were not so serious, but there had been elements that might have led to very serious casualties. All this just because our unit had been a few minutes outside of the Golden Hour Circle! Using common sense is very useful in a combat situation and quite often it will diminish one's own casualties.

Conclusion

To wrap up my experiences as Contingent Commander in Afghanistan, I would say that it was the best thing that a military leader can do with his pants on. Despite the fact that this opportunity came to me quite suddenly, I am very thankful I took this tour of duty. One might say that Finnish reservists who participate in these kinds of operations are specially selected and all are volunteers; and that is why they are slightly "better" soldiers than normal reservists. Although they were specially selected, I still want to praise the professional way in which my soldiers worked in a demanding environment and operation. This experience strengthens my faith in the Finnish conscript and military training and education system. Every now and then I said to my soldiers that they should not trust only in luck. The basic pillars for working successfully and safely in a peace support operation are professionalism, good equipment, discipline and good leadership. When these pillars are solid, luck is there as a bonus. As a leader you should take care that the pillars mentioned first are in good shape. When formulating and fixing the pillars and, of course, when leading soldiers in demanding situations the use of common sense is the most important pillar on which the leader should

[2] A hospital which has surgical capabilities and intensive care unit to treat seriously injured patients.
[3] Category C means that injuries are not serious. Typical Cat C injuries are bruises and small cuts.
[4] Category A means that injuries are very serious and life threatening. Category B injuries are serious, but not life threatening.

base his/her leadership. Naturally you can read about different ways of fixing situations, but manuals just give guidelines that you should adapt using common sense and all the available information that you have on the situation you are handling. I am not the right person to judge my own leadership skills, but it is my opinion that during my time in Afghanistan the pillars were working perfectly and I was able to serve my tour of duty without any serious casualties occurring within my contingent.

Improvise, Adapt, Overcome – A Jaeger Company in Combat

Toivo Pollock and Kai Uitto

The purpose of this article is to share the authors' thoughts on various leadership factors affecting the morale and fighting capability of an infantry company. These factors are often overlooked in the hectic pace of pre-deployment training. Functioning effectively in a fluid COIN-environment requires that the infantry force has the ability to rapidly adapt to changing circumstances and trust its chain of command. This is because ad hoc modifications to tasks given to subordinates and the order of battle are often necessary to meet the demands of fast-pace operations or to spread a force thin in order to cover a wide area of operations or to complete a wide array of tasks. Additionally, the role medical assets play as morale amplifiers is discussed. The article is based on the authors' own experiences, and builds on an earlier article published in the Infantry Journal[1], which discussed the role of an infantry company in a crisis management operation.

A jaeger company in Afghanistan

In 2011 Finland deployed a jaeger (light infantry) company to the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. The company fell under the military component of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Mazar-e Sharif (PRT MeS), later called the Transition Support Team Mazar-e Sharif (TST MeS). The TST's area of operations consisted of four provinces in northern Afghanistan: Samangan, Balkh, Jowzan and Sar-e Pol. The company operated mainly in Balkh province, especially in the Pushtun areas west of Mazar-e-Sharif, called "West of MeS" or simply "WoM". The company was part of a multinational task force called Task Force Northern Lights (TFNL) which in turn fell under the civilian-led Transition Support Team (TST).

The company had been preceded by Finnish platoon-size units which were attached to Swedish infantry companies. Once the company was deployed, Finland now had a force in theatre which could plan, prepare and execute operations independently. This ability was reinforced by the company's robust combat service support (CSS) element, and the ability to effectively command and control numerous combat support elements and attachments.

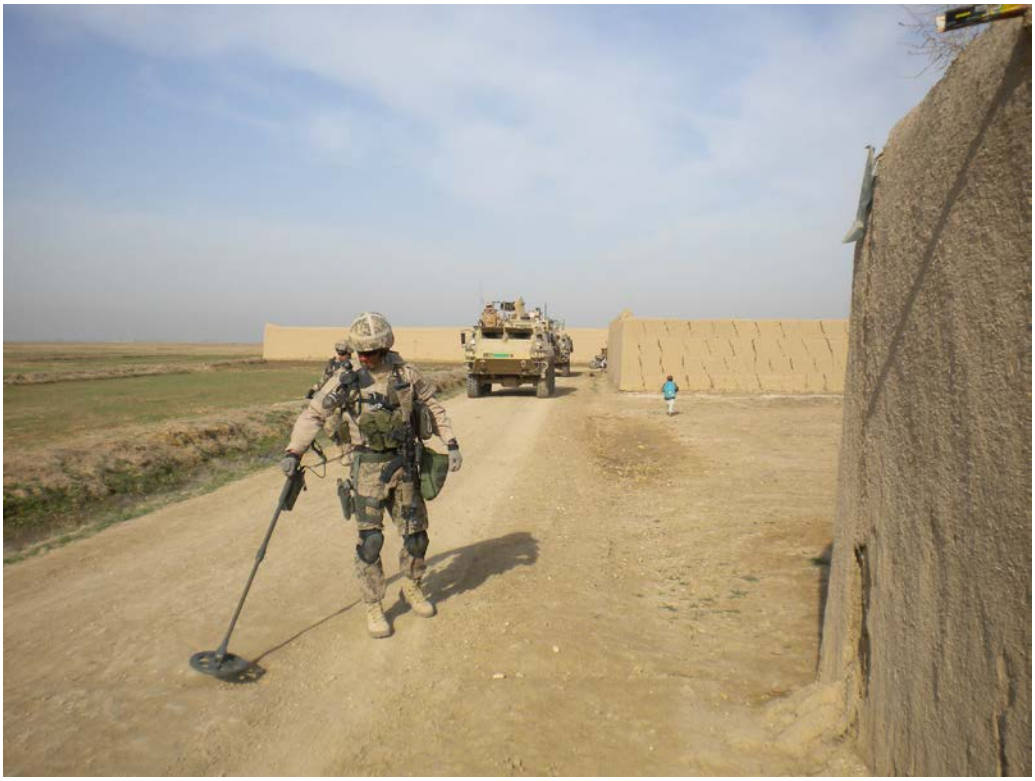
The jaeger company consisted of a command element, a combat support platoon, an infantry platoon and a CSS-platoon, altogether 77 soldiers. The command element consisted of the company commander, the second in command, a fire support officer (FSO) and a company sergeant major. All were regular Defence Forces' personnel. The combat support (CS) platoon consisted of a command squad which was tasked with maintaining the company command post and acting as the FSO's forward observer squad. Additionally the CS-platoon included a mortar section equipped with two 81mm light mortars. The infantry platoon consisted of three ten-man infantry squads and a five-man command element. The CSS-platoon consisted of a logistics squad and a squad-sized mobile medical team (MMT) which had its own doctor. The company was supported by a two-man intelligence section

[1] Uitto & Pollock 2013.

which was tasked with maintaining situational awareness through liaison with the TF's G2 (intelligence) office and making preparations for future operations.

The platoon and squad leaders were mainly regular Defence Forces' personnel. The vehicle commanders and squad second-in-commands were reservists with prior deployments. The CSS personnel were mainly reservists with corresponding civilian occupations. The rank-and-file infantry soldiers were mainly 20-year-old reservists who had recently completed their military service in the Finnish Rapid Deployment Force. The only female soldier was the company doctor.

The company's main vehicles were the Patria XA-203 armoured personnel carrier (APC) and the BAE Systems RG-32M patrol vehicle. One of the greatest concerns while planning operations was the XA's inability to manoeuvre on the bad or non-existent Afghan roads and the tightly built villages. Especially during the spring months the APCs regularly got stuck on the bad roads. The other option was to not move into areas where the road conditions were bad. Getting recovery assets to the scene could take up to 48 hours, so pushing the APCs onto the bad roads was seldom worth the risk. The time waiting for the recovery assets to arrive was sometimes spent immobile in high-risk areas. Additionally rescue efforts would tie up a disproportionate amount of the company's resources and hinder the completion of its mission, or cause it to be cancelled altogether.



Clearing the road. Photo: Kai Uitto

On the other hand, the APSs offered two distinct advantages: armoured protection and firepower. In combat the APC offered excellent protection from the insurgents' small arms

and most of the improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In one instance an IED immobilized an APC, but the crew escaped without a scratch. As a consequence, in areas with a high IED-threat the point vehicle was generally one of the infantry platoon's APC equipped with several electronic countermeasures devices. The APCs' 12.7mm heavy machine gun also proved useful. It made it possible to engage the enemy from beyond the effective range of its weapons.

The lighter RG-32Ms suited the company's needs superbly. The more mobile RGs could often utilize roads and move into villages that the APCs could not. In addition to increased mobility, the RGs also offered adequate protection against most enemy weapon systems and firepower that was almost on par with that of the heavier APCs. The RGs were generally mounted with 40mm automatic grenade launchers. Some of the vehicles were equipped with 7.62mm machine guns to be effective also on shorter ranges.

The greater mobility of the RGs also facilitated combined foot- and vehicle-patrols. Having the RGs trailing just behind, or being escorted by dismounted infantry made it possible to load most of the heavy equipment onto the vehicles instead of having it carried by individual soldiers. This considerably lessened the physical demand placed on soldiers, and facilitated foot patrols of considerable length in temperatures well over 40 degrees in mountainous temperatures. All in all experience showed that the XA-203 was ill-suited to the terrain of the AOR and the tasks of the jaeger company. In contrast the RG-32M represented an ideal balance of protection, firepower and mobility.

The ability to adapt: a key resource

The jaeger company received its tasks directly from the TFNL G3 (operations) office, which also planned for extended support and contingencies. Planning, preparing, and executing the actual missions was entirely up to the company. The commander's intent for most operations was to support the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). "Support" usually meant joining the ANSF in their own Afghan-led operations, or reinforcing the permanent ANSF checkpoints or firebases in a given area. The goal was to support the ANSFs' role as a credible security provider, and offer them capabilities that they themselves did not have. More often than not the ANSF insisted that a coalition IED-team search the roads ahead of the main ANSF advance. Another typical objective for an operation was to increase situational awareness, gather intelligence and engage key leaders.

Diversity, flexibility and in-field training

One of the strengths of any deployed Finnish unit is that it incorporates a wide variety of skills and backgrounds. Made up of a mix of reservists and active duty personnel, diversity is a source of its strength. When given the latitude to do so, most soldiers are independent, self-reliant and demonstrate initiative. This prevailing attribute makes for a very adaptable force. Thus, when authority is pushed to a low enough level, a unit will begin to automatically adjust to rapidly changing situations.

This trait however requires nurturing and training. Initially subordinate leaders must be given clear tasks, and the authority to see them through. Micromanaging will quickly snuff out all initiative. Secondly, it takes training. Unfortunately the tight schedule for pre-deployment training did not allow any time for the jaeger company to train on its own according to its own plans. Therefore, the company could only be considered more or less combat ready after it had spent six weeks operating in theatre – nearly the entire time between arriving in the country and going off on the first leave. An increase in pre-deployment training time is urgently needed. Even a single additional week of training would offer immense improvements.

To allow the company to quickly react to rapidly changing circumstances, several battle drills were devised and rehearsed. Thus, with just a few words over the command net, the entire company could be functioning as a whole with subordinate leaders aware of their respective tasks. Well- rehearsed battle drills are not, however a replacement for actual orders.

The fluid nature of orders

More often than not the nature of any operation would change several times during its course. Basically plans would have to be altered dramatically, and the order of battle tweaked very soon after driving out the front gate of the forward operating base. In such situations it was not enough to rely on battle drills. New orders would have to be issued.

Typically the actual nature of any operation would be revealed only after linking up with our Afghan counterparts, and several rounds of tea and slow-paced but sometimes heated discussions. Often the Afghan leaders operating in the field would want to launch patrols into completely different areas than were originally agreed upon on at higher levels. This was the result of competition between the different ANSF organizations or lack of coordination between them, usually both. The ANSFs' leadership style was very leader-centric and linear. Usually the "plan" for an operation was just an agreement on who was nominally in charge and the marching order of the different contingents. After these were agreed upon, the ANSF would start moving almost immediately. Often time simply was not available to gather subordinate leaders and issue a proper five paragraph order. The company had to initiate movement immediately and instructions had to be given over the radio. Once the objective area was reached, the ANSF might start another round of discussions on what should be done. Additionally, different ANSF organizations might have varying degrees of enthusiasm for any given operation. Some ANSF leaders displayed a great amount of aggressiveness and initiative while others might flat out refuse to perform the tasks given to them. Naturally, saving face was always a factor in inter-ANSF politics.

Latitude from above

This fluid nature of operations forced leaders on all levels to constantly adapt to the situation. The sanctity of the mission statement was partially called into question. While a desired end state and commander's intent were always issued by G3, the commanders in the field were given wide latitude to operate in and if necessary, even to cancel a non-critical mission. The

on-the-scene commander's assessment of the situation was rarely called into question. This essentially made the company more effective. The company could rapidly adapt to changing situations. Without this latitude it would have been impossible to effectively support the sometimes fickle ANSF.

While being given leeway from above, it was also necessary to extend this to subordinate leaders. This way they could quickly react to changes, without having to stop and ask for instructions. A vehicle patrol will turn into a foot patrol in a matter of seconds if a road is unusable or a village street is too narrow. If a vehicle is stuck, a patrol might have to be cancelled and a perimeter secured. A tip from a local might mean additional targets on a search operation and so on. If subordinate leaders are not given enough authority to act according to their best judgment, precious time, and possibly the initiative, is lost.

Often the changing situation, varying terrain or enemy action would force the company leadership to make changes in the order of battle. On some occasions this meant going into high-risk areas with a multi-lingual ad hoc force, or even worse, making changes to the company's organization, even at squad level. This is of course very problematic since unit cohesion is considered to be the strongest at squad level.

The answer to countering the negative effects of organizational adjustments seems to be twofold: First, don't perform them, second, train for them. Optimizing the organization of a unit for each mission before it ventures beyond the wire may seem tempting, but can easily do more harm than good. While a squad may lack all the assets, or a specific vehicle type, it is nonetheless a family, and most effectively fights as such. Moving snipers or machine gunners to form a support by fire element may sound like a good idea, but could wreak havoc on unit cohesion. Inevitably there are instances in which a leader has no choice but to break up squads and sections. The negative effects this has can be countered through training. It would prove fruitful to practice operating in ad hoc organizations already during pre-deployment training. Once again it must be stressed that the current time frame is much too tight.

On medical support

Operating in a high-risk environment causes soldiers to take a keen interest in the availability of medical assets. The medical evacuation chain was operated as follows. A soldier's buddy would pull him to cover and administer initial first aid. As soon as the situation allows for it, the squad's combat life saver or the platoon medic would arrive and continue administering life-saving first aid. The platoon would then move the wounded soldier to a secure location from which he could be transported to the mobile medical team or, if the situation allowed for it, he would be directly transported to the MMT. So far the focus of the care given to the patient was to keep airways open, and stop catastrophic bleeding.

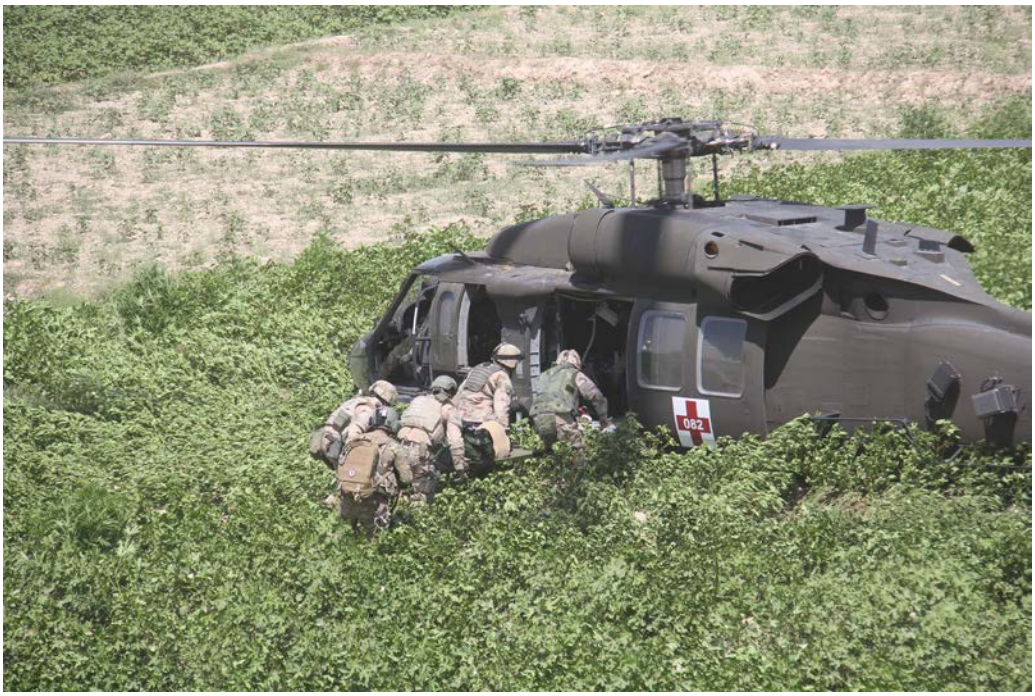
Once the patient arrived at its location, the MMT would work to stabilize him for transportation to a medical facility. Time permitting the MMT would continue working on the patient. The MMT was a coherent specialist squad made up entirely of medical professionals. It had trained together and operated most effectively as a whole. Removing

even a single soldier from this squad would considerably decrease its ability to treat other patients and evacuate them.

The cornerstone of tactical combat casualty care is the first aid given to the patients by the soldiers from his squad and platoon. Attaching one of the MMT's medics to a platoon does not markedly improve the level of medical care. The medic from the MMT may have a higher proficiency in first aid, but can still only perform the same functions as the squads' combat life savers or the platoon medic. The exception being a situation in which evacuation is delayed, for example in mountainous terrain. In such a situation he may be able to keep the patient stable for a longer period of time.

Notwithstanding the negative effects it has on the performance of the MMT, attaching an extra medic to a squad or platoon has a very positive effect on moral. It would seem that the mere presence of a full medical professional will boost the morale of an infantry soldier. This seems to be regardless of the fact that his presence does not markedly improve the level of care available and that it may in fact end up decreasing the effectiveness of the medical evacuation system. This morale boosting effect must of course be weighed against the effects such an organizational change will have on the MMT.

Another medical matter with considerable effects on morale is the availability of helicopter evacuation. The so-called MEDEVAC status describes the effects the current weather or other factors have on the evacuation helicopters' ability to fly. The MEDEVAC status is essentially a colour code, with green meaning unrestricted flight, yellow meaning that some restrictions exist and red meaning severe restrictions exist. Naturally the MEDEVAC status is just an estimate based on certain parameters, not an order not to fly. Basically as long as a helicopter can take off and fly, it will.



The MEDEVAC company in operation. Photo: Kai Uitto

Naturally in areas where the weather varies greatly on a local scale, a certain MEDEVAC status does not necessarily mean the same conditions exist throughout the TF's area of operations. Thus the MEDEVAC status must be seen more as a decision making tool for troop leaders, rather than an accurate description of the prevailing circumstances. Interestingly the colour in force for the MEDEVAC status became a constant point of interest throughout the company. Subordinate leaders would often ask about the current colour of the MEDEVAC status, even though the weather had not changed. It is possible that the colour being pronounced green might have given some soldiers a false sense of security, or the colour being anything other than green made them unnecessarily concerned/anxious. Of course, if the MEDEVAC status was not green almost always the company would halt operations if possible. On other occasions movement into high-risk areas was postponed until the MEDEVAC status changed back to green.

In our experience the soldiers' *feeling* that they are being provided adequate medical care is just as, or even more, important than the actual level of available care. The same goes for evacuation assets. This leads to the conclusion that leaders on all levels must strive to have as many medical assets available as possible, and be brutally honest about the level of medical support available. Surely any large discrepancy between the *perceived* level of medical support and that which *actually* materializes in the hour of need will have grave effects on leadership and morale.

On attachments

One of the main strengths of the jaeger company was its ability to operate independently and to receive, lead and sustain several combat support assets. Often specialist assets would be temporarily attached to the company for the duration of an operation. These assets might include an improvised explosive device disposal squad, a tactical air control party, a canine squad, a psychological operations team, extra medical teams, a weapons intelligence team and the like. Many of these specialist teams were critical to mission success.

The flip side of having a large number of assets was that the small, agile company was no longer that nimble. As numbers grew, so did the company's reaction time to any given situation. This effect diminished over time as the leaders of different units came to know and trust each other, and learned each others' tactics, techniques and procedures. This however took time, and was not always completed due to varying deployment schedules.

As discussed above, receiving attachments will change the order of battle, thus making it harder for leaders to do their job. This underlines the need to train operating with ad hoc organizations. Basic tactical manoeuvres need to be simple so that they can be adapted by outsiders. A jaeger company must be comfortable with receiving attachments and working in English instead of using their native language. This applies not just at company level, but also at platoon level.

It seems the current trend is to constantly add new elements to existing units, the goal being a fully independent unit capable of a wide variety of specialized tasks. This causes the unit to become slow and cumbersome. A more productive company-level unit would be one

capable of basic tasks, with organic CSS, and the ability to receive attachments temporarily when necessary. Simply adding numbers will not necessarily increase effectiveness.

In closing

To succeed in the current operational environment the infantry leader must be adaptable. He must also continually strive to train his soldiers and junior leaders to do the same. Confident in their abilities, he must nurture a culture of trust and initiative. Ultimately this will lead to a relationship in which he can trust his subordinates to take action when provided with a mission, commander's intent and purpose, even without constant supervision and guidance. Naturally this is not easily achieved, but, nonetheless, remains the ideal. Empowering junior leaders is his road to success. Trying to control everything himself will end in disaster.

The effects of a leader's actions on the performance of his soldiers can be manifold. Different factors can affect the morale of a unit in unexpected ways. A prime example is medical support, as discussed above. Modern soldiers being perceptive and intelligent, the best course of action seems to be to consciously strive to keep them informed.

The experience gained in deployments is an important element in learning to be a leader. This is especially so for young soldiers in active service. Learning can only go so far in the classroom or in training. Taking action and making decisions in real life operations is the ultimate test for a leader. It will teach the leader the pressure and demands of being in command, but most importantly, it will teach the leader a lot about himself.

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SECTION TWO – Advisory Aspects of Leadership

Expecting the Unexpected: Experiences of Leadership Challenges in Crisis Management – EUFOR Chad/CAR from the LEGAD Perspective

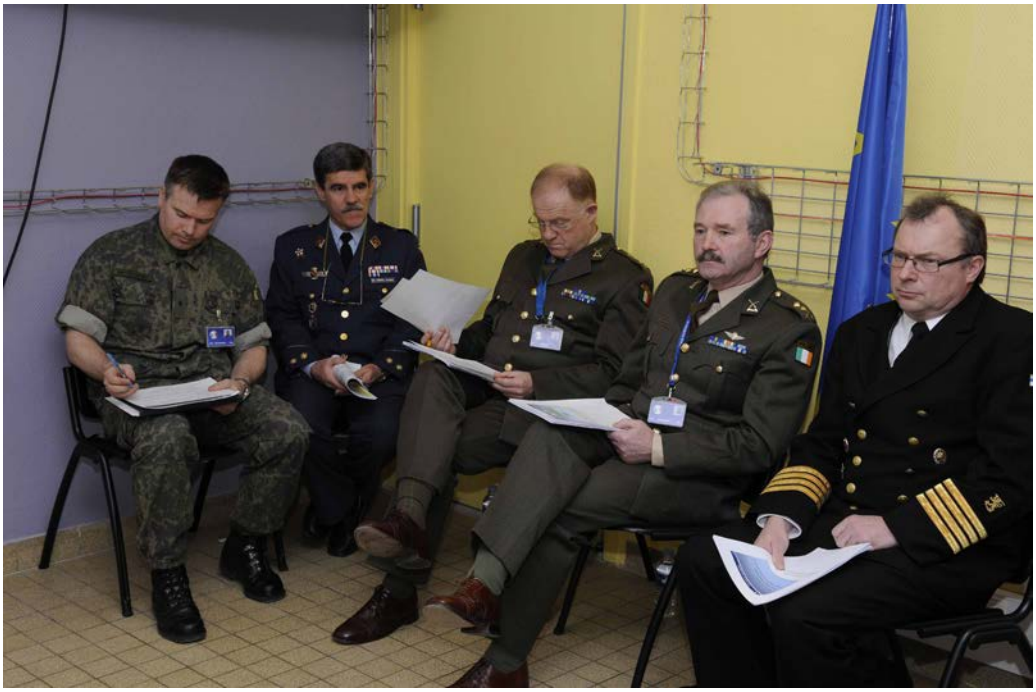
Jarmo Metsävainio

I will be approaching the topic from my perspective as the Legal Adviser (LEGAD) for the Operation Commander (OPCDR) Lt. General Patrick Nash and that of a member of the Command Group of the Operational Headquarters (OHQ).

The EU approved the Crisis Management Concept for the mission on 12 September 2007 and subsequently the mission OHQ activities were closed around June 2009. The Mission's LEGAD started to work in OHQ even before the OPCDR arrived to the OHQ for the preparation phase in support of the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) negotiations and left the OHQ at the same time with the OPCDR in June 2009. The OHQ was located in Mont Valérien, Paris.

For a limited time, the EUFOR Chad/RCA[1] was bridging the operation from an EU mission to a UN mission (MINURCAT). The EUFOR Chad/CAR got its mandate from the UN Security Council Resolution 1778 (S/RES/1778 (2007)). Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN, the mission was authorized to take *all necessary measures* in its area of operations in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic to fulfil its mandated tasks as specified in UNSCR 1778. This meant mainly contributing to the protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons, and to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel by helping to improve security in the area of operations. Deployment to the area of responsibility (AOR), namely to Abeche (FHQ main), Iriba, Forchana, Goz Beida and Birao was very challenging, as it involved the massive transportation of troops and their equipment by sea, land and air. This logistical deployment effort included 21 train convoys through Cameroon, 140 road convoys, 538 strategic airlifts with Antonov 124, C-130/160 and passenger planes. The total number of troops was 3,628 from 26 different countries, including Russia, Albania and Croatia.

[1] On 15 October 2007, the Council adopted Joint Action 2007/677/CFSP on the European Union military operation in the Republic of Chad and in the Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA). The official name of the operation established by Joint Action was EUFOR Tchad/RCA.



EU military committee visit in OHQ in Mont-Valérien, Paris. The author is the first officer on the left. Photo: OHQ EUFOR Tchad/RCA, Mont-Valérien, Paris

As a point of clarification I want to mention that all the final decisions were made solely by the OPCDR, hence during his decision making process the OPCDR will have considered advice provided by several officers assisting him. The LEGAD works directly for the OPCDR.

My method of addressing the topic is to highlight some of the leadership challenges of a different nature in a multinational military operation by providing real life examples and in the end sharing my own conclusion and thoughts. The following examples are based on personal experiences on how to effectively cope in challenging situations where many different opinions with alternative motivations are present. The effective solutions in these situations were based on applying a normative approach.

Application of the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA)

The SOFA is a legally binding international agreement which provides privileges and immunity to the mission. The negotiations are only supported by the OHQ and it is approved by the council in accordance with the required procedure. The OPCDR is only authorised to make subsequent technical arrangements with the host state which cannot contradict the wording of the SOMA.

In order to give a fair chance to the reader of this article to objectively assess the substance of my following statements, I will quote the relevant SOMA articles 4.7, 5.6 and 5.7:

> 4.7. For the purpose of the operation, EUFOR may use public roads, bridges, ferries and airports without the payment of duties, fees, tolls, taxes and similar charges. EUFOR shall not be exempt from reasonable charges for services requested and received, under the conditions that apply to those provided for the Host State's armed forces.
>
> 5.6. In respect of purchased or imported goods, services provided and facilities used by EUFOR for the purposes of the operation, EUFOR, as well as its providers or contractors, as long as they are not nationals of the Host State, shall be exempt from all national, regional and communal dues, taxes and other charges of a similar nature. EUFOR shall not be exempt from dues, taxes or other charges that represent payment for services rendered.
>
> 5.7. The Host State shall permit the entry of articles, military vehicles, military equipment and products intended exclusively for the operation and grant them exemption from all customs duties, fees, tolls, taxes and similar charges, other than charges for storage, cartage and charges that represent payment for other services rendered.

During the deployment and logistical support of the mission, the mission encountered serious challenges in terms of Chadians demanding royalties, taxes and custom fees (claiming them as service fees etc.) from EUFOR Chad/CAR Troop Contributing Nations (TCN) for bringing their assets and/or logistical support to Chad. Each TCN was responsible for the expenditure of their troop and equipment transportation to the AOR. The mission LEGADs were trying to solve all legal challenges facing the operations.

The president of Chad Mr Idriss Deby Itno had established a coordination element between Chadian authorities and EUFOR Chad/CAR called Coordination Nationale d'Appui au Déploiement de la Force Internationale à l'Est du Tchad (CONAFIT). The Mission organised meetings with CONAFIT in order to solve the dispute in relation to Chadians demanding significant amounts of money in tax/custom fees. Chadians were not willing to give up their demands and insisted on their claims despite the explicit wording of the SOFA that granted exemption for EUFOR from all taxes and custom fees. In addition, SOFA granted free use of airports for EUFOR. I will share interesting details from the meeting with CONAFIT, in order to demonstrate the desperate negotiation position the mission was in. I recall a comment from our counterpart from the other side of the table, after I had given a five minute monologue about how SOFA is legally binding and should be respected by the Chadians. The response comment was simply: "I have not signed the SOFA and it does not concern me". It was obvious that the negotiations with CONAFIT would not lead to any amicable solution of the dispute and the OPCDR sent a letter to the prime minister of Chad without any positive result. The mission requested even political intervention by Mr Javier Solana (at the time he was the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy). This did not have any effect on the Chadian demands either.

It can be stated that in an international military operation some TCNs may have a strong national interest in the host state and they may pursue their national agendas even in an inappropriate or, to say the least, questionable way. In the given situation there was an

attempt to influence or convince the OHQ LEGAD to adopt an alternative interpretation of the SOFA which would enable the Chadians to charge taxes or fees from the EUFOR TCNs. This kind of contact was made by one major TCN's LEGAD from the ministry level. In spite of different contradicting legal opinions and pressure, I did not change my view and only confirmed my previous legal opinion to the OPCDR.

The situation escalated with the Chadian airport authorities to such a point that they did not allow an Austrian contracted cargo plane to leave from the airport until demands of the Chadian authorities were met. Obviously, Austrian military authorities were very concerned about the situation since they had to pay all the extra days the cargo plane was stuck at N'Djamena airport. I explained to the Austrian senior national representative (SNR) in the OHQ that it would be very important that Austria would not respond to the demands of the Chadian airport authorities and pay the fees, since if one TCN would pay, that would create a precedent for Chadians and all the TCNs would have to pay in the future. The Austrians demonstrated nerves of steel and an understanding of the need for common efforts vis-à-vis the Chadian authorities and they did not fold. After approximately one week the Austrian contracted plane was allowed to leave the airport. However, the Austrian military had to pay hundreds of thousands of euros as penalties for the time the cargo plane was stuck at N'Djamena airport.

Interestingly enough, and only to demonstrate that some TCNs have more influence in Chad than others, the strained cargo plane and tax issue was only solved to some extent after the French intervened at the political level with the Chadians. In the end, the mission was able to recover the troops from Chad without paying any royalties, taxes or custom fees to Chadian authorities.

The above example demonstrates that a normative approach and non-compromising application of the agreements/rules is the only way for a LEGAD to operate in an environment where contradicting legal opinions may be politically motivated.

Drafting and applying Rules of Engagements (ROE) / Use of Force

When establishing any military operation or mission, the question of adequate ROEs will arise and EUFOR Chad/CAR was no exception. EUFOR Chad/CAR had a very robust set of ROEs, including even three different attack ROEs. When the mission was being planned and the OPLAN and ROE drafted, some EU Military Committee (EUMC) members criticized and questioned why the mission should have such a robust set of ROEs, including even attack ROEs which are unusual in a CSDP mission. During the planning process the CJ5/CJ3 and LEGAD(s) staged several scenarios to assess the different use of force situations the mission might encounter in relation to the operations in the AOR. In addition, the deployment of the troops and sustaining essential logistical support to the AOR in the west of Chad next to the Sudanese border should be secured under all circumstances.

In conclusion, in spite of some differing opinions, I decided from a legal point of view (also supported by CJ5/CJ3) to recommend the option of using robust ROEs to the OPCDR.

My justification was based on the possible need to be legally covered in case even the worst operational scenarios unfolded. From the legal perspective, I wanted to ensure that the OPCDR had as much freedom of movement as possible when considering his operational options in case exceptional circumstances took place. I did not like to see the OPCDR faced with an operational situation where he might have only limited options in relation to ROEs. In the end, every foreseen operational scenario(s) should be covered with adequate and necessary ROEs. Furthermore, my recommendation was influenced by the fact that additional, more robust ROEs could be requested from Brussels later on but that this would not be an operationally effective option, since the approval process would take a lot of time.

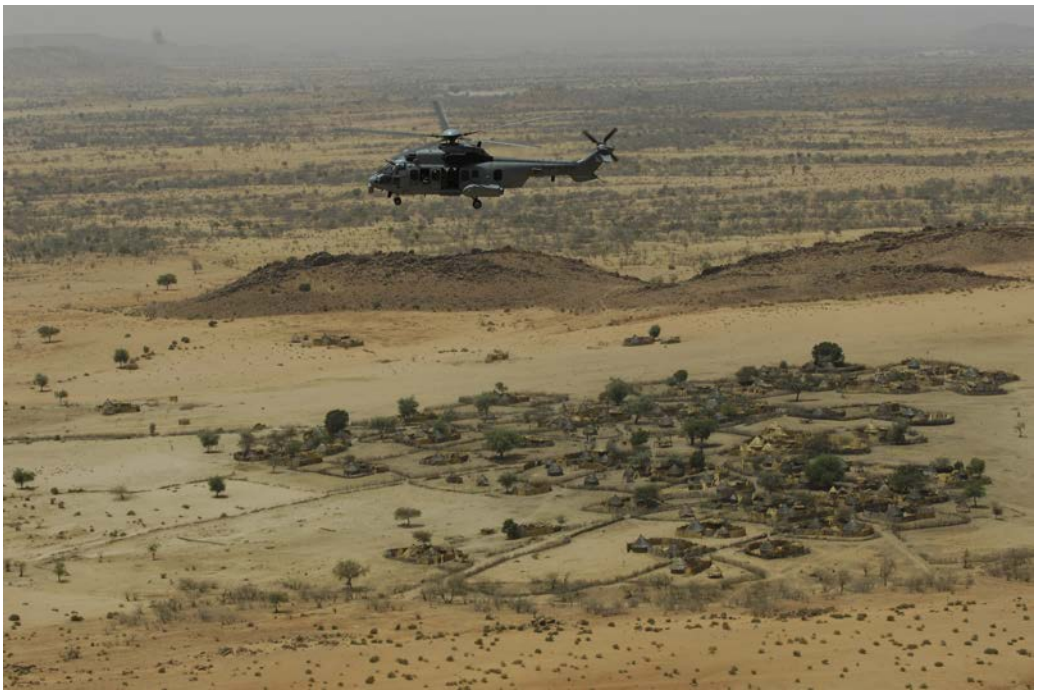
In order to clarify any possible misunderstanding, I would like to point out that even though robust ROEs were approved for the operation, the OPCDR retained some ROEs at his or FCDR level and one ROE was never implemented. Obviously, the most robust ROEs were to be used only in exceptional circumstances. Ultimately, the use of force situation may end up being litigated in some TCN's court where a judge will decide if it was legitimate or not.

My previous experience of working in the Finnish Defence Forces' International Centre (which at the time was responsible for all Finnish military missions abroad), in two previous military missions in KFOR (Kosovo) / EUFOR RD Congo and as a judge at the first instance and appellate court level was essential for me to comprehend the use of force/ detention policies and the importance of the robust ROEs in order to provide commanders and soldiers on the ground with adequate tools to fulfil any task at hand. Moreover, robust ROEs would protect the commanders and ultimately the soldiers from possible legal liabilities. At least I felt comfortable that with our ROEs; I could justify any use of force scenario we had during the planning phase of the mission. For example, soldiers may use force authorised by the Mission ROEs (without caveats) in accordance with current Finnish legislation, within the limitations of proportionality and necessity.

When it is a question of use of force and applicability of some ROEs during exceptional and rapidly developing operational circumstances, the provision of timely and correct legal advice is an essential element of the decision making process.

To conclude the issue of ROEs, I would like to share with you an incident where the intervention of the LEGAD was needed and the legal advice not to engage was not well received by some staff members. It was the only correct decision at the time, even if the decision to engage would have been well understood from an emotional or humane perspective. Without going into too much detail, on one occasion spoilers attacked the premises of an aid organisation within our AOR and one employee of the aid organisation was killed. An additional essential piece of information was that the mission did not have accurate information on the whereabouts of the spoilers who committed the killing. As an immediate response to the situation, some of our planning/operational officers considered sending a helicopter in "hot pursuit" of the perpetrators. My legal advice was not to engage, because as some time had already elapsed, we did not know the exact location of the spoilers (even if just to detain them for further investigation) and we did not have the ROE to support such a "hot pursuit" (that specific ROE was not implemented by the OPCDR and the location of the spoilers was unknown). In that given situation, engagement/"hot pursuit" would have been mere retaliation and the possible use of force (including possibly

deadly force) could have been directed at a random target looking like a spoiler or rebel vehicle in the desert.



EUFOR helicopter patrolling Area Of Responsibility in Chadian desert. Photo: OHQ EUFOR Tchad/RCA, Mont-Valérien, Paris

Concluding commercial agreements

The EUFOR Chad/CAR had a large budget for mission use. Primarily the budget was to cover extensive infrastructure work for mission purposes, such as a 24.5 million euro contract for construction work to build an apron and logistical platform at N'Djamena airport (Chad), an extension of an apron and logistical platform at Abeche airport, camp constructions in N'Djamena and other troop deployment locations. Due to the fact that reliable and large commercial companies were limited in Chad and operational timelines were very tight, the mission requested many times that an exception be made to standard procurement procedures. The ATHENA mechanism[2] approved our requests.

Since the mission as such was not a legal entity, the OPCDR was expected to sign for all the legally binding commercial contracts on his own behalf. Obviously, this was a legal/personal risk for the OPCDR. The mission budget did not even include a budget line for the OPCDRs' possible financial liability insurance. The OPCDR signed for all the contracts/agreement as expected, luckily everything went fine and no serious commercial disputes or litigations occurred.

[2] ATHENA is a mechanism which administers the financing of common costs of EU operations having military or defence implications. It does so on behalf of EU member states contributing to the financing of EU military operations. ATHENA was set up by the Council of the European Union on 1 March 2004. ATHENA manages the financing of common costs for these operations, which can include transport, infrastructure and medical services, as well as the nation-borne costs, which include lodging, fuel and similar costs linked to the national contingents.

This legal oversight is actually due to the EU member states unwillingness to establish correct and legally sound mission status, hence this legal question is recognized but an amicable solution would require political consent at the EU member state level. As of today, there are initiatives to correct the legal status of the EU missions, but it is yet to be seen how it will materialize.

The level of contractual issues in a military mission was a bit surprising, but my previous experience in a private law firm specialising in contractual law and corporate law proved to be an asset in providing comments / corrections to the draft contract and advising OPCDR on contractual issues.

Conclusion – lessons learned

One of the many things I have learned over the years in two EU military missions working directly for the OPCDR (s) as a LEGAD (currently 4 years in EU civilian mission) is that it is a very lonely post. Your legal opinions are challenged on a daily basis by others, since at OHQ-level there are always diverse differently motivated opinions and interests floating around. The OPCDRs do not need people around them who pose problems; they need clear advice on how to solve a problem or to be given alternative options on how to solve the problem at hand. Most importantly, I never gave advice to the OPCDR that I was not certain of. When faced with a shotgun question from the OPCDR to which I did not have a certain answer, I simply explained that I needed to study the issue in detail and that I would get back to him as soon as possible. The above principle has proven to be very important, since it takes a very long time to earn the trust of your commanding officer and one could, hence, lose it very easily by providing one piece of careless advice. I have also noticed over the years that generals are unforgiving personalities and I would say there is good reason for it. Generals make difficult and important decisions concerning money and at times putting soldiers in harm's way, therefore there is very little room for bad advice. I have seen officers giving bad or confusing advice to the OPCDR and after that they were never again involved in the decision making process.

Like in any other organization, the LEGAD must earn the trust of his/her fellow officers in the military OHQ. I consider that the most important element of your legal opinion is the reasoning and argumentation behind your advice. In principle, a legal opinion A or B could be taken in any given situation. The legitimacy and relevance of your advice is therefore justified and the personnel around you will only be convinced by a solid and coherent argumentation in support of your legal opinion. I personally believe that the reason why the OPCDR always followed my legal advice was the simple fact that I was able to provide him with solid reasoning to back up my opinions. Many times, the most effective approach was the normative one.

Naturally, on some occasions when I was facing very difficult legal questions and sometimes encountering significant resistance and pressure from other ACOS(s) or sometimes even the TCN's ministry, I questioned or needed reassurance for my own legal opinion before finally advising the OPCDR. Due to the fact that we were in a military mission and all the issues on my table were at some level confidential, it was extremely difficult to find a person

whom I could trust and share confidential material with. In addition, the person should be reliable, should have adequate and extensive experience or rather, be even more experienced than I was. External brainstorming, support from academic discussions or simply pretesting my legal argumentation was needed on many occasions. Even though the OHQ LEGAD is not under the chain of command of the council legal service or in any way responsible for reporting to them, I found it extremely useful and at times even essential to receive support and have an exchange of thoughts with the council legal service. Many times, especially during the drafting of the OPLAN/ROE, complicated legal issues were discussed and solved in advance before sending the draft up through the chain of command. At the time, the council legal service was also providing legal advice to the EU Military Staff and to the chairman of the EU Military Committee.

Based on my personal experiences, working in a multinational OHQ where hidden national interests (sometimes not so hidden) are present, is a challenging environment. Nevertheless, when you achieve the tasks you have been given, it is also very rewarding. My own lessons learned would be that it is indubitably important that at the strategic level the OHQ political advisors (POLADs) and LEGADs are from different nations. One of them should come from another country than the biggest TCN. The LEGAD's advice should be based only on norms (UNSCR, SOFA, TA, LOAC, OPLAN, ROE etc.), or if no clear rule is available, on the principle of law. Under no circumstances should the legal advice be politically motivated and/or given under pressure from the nation the adviser is a citizen of. In the OHQ/Command Group structure established during EUFOR RD Congo and EUFOR Chad/CAR, it was of the utmost importance/extremely important that there were two different LEGADs (EU LEGAD and National LEGAD) to ensure that timely and correct advice was given to the OPCDR. During the planning phase of the operation the selection of a LEGAD(s) with relevant and prominent experience is important, due to the fact that he/she will have direct access to the OPCDR and therefore will be able to influence the whole operation from planning to execution and the closing phase of the operation. During my own missions the LEGAD(s) were the first augmentees[3] to arrive at the OHQ and they were the last ones to leave the OHQ at the same time as the OPCDR.

Because legal issues at OHQ-level vary widely and are often complicated, it is essential that the LEGADs have extensive previous experience. It is also recommended that they have attended several related courses, such as LOAC, NATO school etc. Operational law issues are not standard courses in law schools. Therefore, to some extent the new young LEGADs must learn by doing, which is why the OHQ is not the place to start one's LEGAD career. Having extensive experience and confidence in your own knowledge are essential elements because at the OHQ level the personnel you work with are most likely colonels or generals. There is thus no room for hesitation or incompetence.

Personally, over the years, during missions I have spent many sleepless nights even in my office in order to meet the tight deadlines of the OPLAN/ROE comments or some operational challenge. Some of my hair turned grey because of the stress, but I have also gained enough experience to last me a lifetime.

[3] Augmentees: EU member states have pre-identified and agreed on a group of national augmentees to be deployed to OHQ when the decision to establish an OHQ is made. They are the key staff members of the OHQ.

Even though the final decision is always the OPCDR's alone, they do consider the advice they get from DOPCDR, COS, LEGAD, POLAD etc. I believe I have supported OPCDRs in their everyday leadership and decision making challenges and ultimately even vis-à-vis OPCDR's higher echelon member states/PSC and EU Military Committee to the extent that the OPCDRs were confident when reporting to them that we have made reasonable and correct decisions. In the end, I can only thank the OPCDRs that I have worked with for the fact that they have fully trusted me and, when needed, have given me unconditional support.

Practicing Leadership through Advising in Afghanistan

Kari Sainio

*"An **advisor** is normally a person with more and deeper knowledge in a specific area and usually also includes persons with cross functional and multidisciplinary expertise. An advisor's role is that of a mentor or guide and differs categorically from that of a task specific consultant. An advisor is typically **part of the leadership**, where as consultants fulfil functional roles."*[1]

The evolution of the ISAF mission

NATO's primary objective in Afghanistan is to enable the Afghan government to provide effective security across the country in order to ensure that Afghanistan can never again become a haven for terrorists. As responsibility for security is gradually transitioned to the Afghans, ISAF's mission is shifting progressively from a combat-centric role to a more enabling role focusing on training, advising and assisting.

An important milestone was reached in June 2013 when the last tranche (Tranche 5) of transition was announced and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) will assume leadership of the security situation across the whole country. This means the ISAF forces will move from partnering to supporting through small purpose-built advisory teams. This will be a critical step in the transition towards full Afghan security responsibility by the end of 2014. While the ISAF combat mission will be completed at the end of 2014, NATO will continue its commitment to Afghanistan under a new mission called the Resolute Support Mission. The Resolute Support Mission will be a non-combat and significantly smaller mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces. This means that the ISAF mission is being refocused.[2]

The Security Force Assistance concept (SFA)

ISAF started to implement the Security Force Assistance (SFA) model in spring 2012. This new concept replaced the previous Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) Concept which had provided training, support and mentoring to the Afghan National Army (ANA) since 2008. In line with what the OMLTs did, also the new Advisory Teams (AT) were to advise and serve as a liaison capability between the ANA and the ISAF forces, coordinating the planning of operations and ensuring that the ANA units receive necessary enabling support (e.g. close air support, casualty evacuation and medical evacuation).

The SFA Concept is the way in which the ISAF supports the ANSF – armed forces and police – to deliver security. It is the type of assistance that will generate, employ and sustain the Afghan security forces so that they can support the government and people of Afghanistan throughout the transition process until the end of 2014. The SFA concept

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advisor, 15.7.2013
[2] www.isaf.nato.int/, 16.7.2013

includes partnering and advising the Afghans, as well as providing combat support as required. The SFA ATs are also able to provide access to coalition 'enabling' capabilities such as air support, medical evacuation, intelligence, surveillance, engineer support and logistics support as necessary.

As mentors in the OMLTs, also the advisors within ATs serve as subject-matter experts to advise, assist and counsel their counterparts in the ANSF. Additionally, they observe, evaluate and report on the performance of their assigned unit. In their role as liaison officers, they communicate between their ISAF superiors and the ANSF counterparts to resolve problems and gain confidence. The primary purpose is to create a professional relationship based on trust that will inspire and influence their counterpart to engage in effective action.

The SFA ATs are a capability that consists of leadership and subject-matter experts, co-located with or in close proximity to an ANSF unit at any level of effectiveness. Advisor teams operate under operational control of the ISAF Regional Commands (RC) structure and have the capability to provide direct access to the ISAF capabilities which are assets and effects that the ANA do not possess to lead operations, but are required to give them superiority over the threat. [3]

Towards new personal challenges

I served thirteen months as an advisor to the Chief of Staff (COS) of the 209th ANA Corps (Shaheen Corps), Major General Jamaludin Saied. The HQ of the 209th Corps was organized according to "Western standards" including branches from G1 to G7. It also had cimic, fire support and engineering functions.

The 209th ANA Corps was one of the six corps of the ANA. Its area of responsibility (AOR) concurred with the AOR of the ISAF Regional Command North (RC N). The HQ and some of its units were located in Camp Shaheen about 15 kilometres west of Mazar-e-Sharif. The 209th Corps had three brigades – the 1st one in the western AOR, the 2nd in the eastern AOR and the 3rd in the middle of the AOR. The corps also had an intelligence battalion and was about to get an engineering battalion and a signal battalion. The total strength was about 14,000. The main task of the corps was to provide a secure and safe environment in northern Afghanistan and fight against insurgents together with the Afghan Police Force.

When I was deployed to the ISAF in April 2012, the transition from the OMLT concept to the SFA concept was already ongoing. I started my tour in the German-led multinational OMLT of the 209th ANA Corps in RC N. As the new SFA concept was adopted, the OMLT of the 209th ANA Corps became a Partnering Advisory Task Group North (PATG N). PATG N was a "tailored AT" according to the SFA concept. It was located in Camp Mike Spann, inside Camp Shaheen, in the immediate proximity of the HQ of the 209th Corps. Despite the change in concept and name, the basic tasks and duties remained the same. The change from an OMLT to an AT was de facto, it was not that dramatic at "ground level". Maybe the most visible change was the renaming of "mentor" to "advisor" and "mentee" to "partner".

[3] www.isaf.nato.int, 16.7.2013

Before my deployment I went through four weeks of national training in the Pori Brigade and two weeks of special mentor/advisor training in NATO's Joint Forces Training Centre (JFTC) in Poland. Although the training in Pori Brigade was very well structured and organized, it gave me only a little insight into my incoming mission as an advisor. The training mainly focused on the military skills needed in an operation, on cultural awareness and on the general orientation of the situation in Afghanistan. The main benefit of the training at the JFTC was to meet Afghan officers and to be familiarised with their mindset, get acquainted with my future advisor colleagues and to receive a situational update about ISAF and especially about RC N.

After the training I had learned, in theory, that "a good advisor" is a subject-matter expert who serves with the ANSF to advise, assist and counsel their counterparts. Additionally, advisors observe, evaluate and report on the performance of their assigned unit – in my case the HQ of the 209th ANA Corps. I had also learned that in their role as liaison officers, advisors communicate between their ISAF superiors – in my case HQ RC N – and the Afghan counterparts to resolve problems and gain confidence. I was also told that the advisor's primary purpose is to create a professional relationship based on trust that will inspire and influence the counterpart to engage in effective action.

For me personally this was a totally new crisis management environment compared with what I had experienced during my previous deployments. Based on the experience and knowledge gained from my four previous missions – UNDOF, twice in KFOR and EUFOR – I was prepared to "expect the unexpected". However, in my previous posts, for example as a battalion commander or a branch head in a multinational HQ, my leadership and management actions have more or less had a straight and immediate effect and the "target audience" has been my own troops or subordinates. Now I was in a situation where I had to advise my partner to lead and manage his HQ and troops, in other words, I was facing a "Leading through a Partner" situation.

Very soon after deployment I learned – sometimes the hard way and from experience – that a so-called "good advisor" has to be able to see solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems. He has to be able to work on the basis of his commander's (senior advisor) intent and guidance and orchestrate events to ensure success from behind the scenes (focus on the mission versus personal credit). I also learned that a "good advisor" must be part diplomat, part warrior. I had to stay aware of local power struggles and "local networks" and understand how they will affect my partner's organization. Moreover, I had to attempt to influence the partner and the HQ of the 209th Corps according to long-term interests rather than short-term gains. Sometimes I felt that instead of being part of a "crisis management" mission, I was part of an "internal conflict management" mission. I had to remember all of the aforementioned factors when advising my partner in his efforts to lead and manage the HQ of the 209th Corps.

Main effort in leadership and management

Since the HQ of the 209th ANA Corps had been mentored/advised since 2008, one of the main efforts of advisors in the PATG N was to develop and enhance the leadership,

management and planning capabilities of the 209th Corps Command Group (corps commander, deputy commander and chief of staff) and branch heads.

The commander of the PATG N was also the Senior Advisor (SA) advising the corps commander. The HQ of the 209th Corps was advised by a total of 25 officers and NCO advisors from eight different nations. All the main functions of the HQ (G1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, Legad, Medical, Fire Support, Info Ops, and Cimic) were advised.

According to the senior advisor's mission statement, the main focus was to enhance/advise planning, leadership and management capabilities (i.e. info exchange and delegation, planning tools, supervision and tracking) within the 209th Corps command group and branch heads. One aim was also to formalize a standard feedback system to assess the operational effectiveness and progress/development of the 209th Corps.

To reach the above-mentioned goals in the HQ of the 209th Corps, the operational planning, leadership and management capabilities of the PATG N had a Strategic Partnering Advisory Plan 2012–2014 (SPA plan) to follow. The SPA plan was reviewed and updated regularly based on the assessed progress of the HQ of the 209th Corps. Each advisor had his personal plan for his respective function.

Based on the senior advisor's intent and jointly agreed SPA plan, I drafted my personal advisory plan for the COS. The main focus of my plan was to enhance and develop the capabilities of the HQ of the 209th Corps through the COS´s leadership and management skills. I had four main advisory efforts of which the first and second were directly related to the planning, leadership and management capabilities of my partner and via him with the whole of the HQ of the 209th Corps. The third and fourth advisory efforts indirectly supported the previously mentioned efforts one and two.

Main Effort 1 ("HQ Internal"):

1. Enable / advise COS 209th ANA Corps to "understand" lead and manage / coordinate his staff / Staff Functions.
2. Functioning Weekly meeting between COS – branch heads'("The heart" of the corps staff").
3. Make the HQ 209th Corps work as "one team" ("team building").
4. Establish a productive and trustful cooperation between COS and branch heads.

Main Effort 2 ("HQ External"):

1. Establish productive cooperation between 209th ANA Corps COM, DCOM and COS (Command Group)

Main Effort 3 ("HQ Internal"):

1. Staff training.
2. Staff SOP and job descriptions (draft) for HQ 209th ANA Corps.

Main Effort 4 ("HQ External"):

1. Establish a relationship/information flow between COS 209th ANA Corps and brigade XOs.
2. Enhance cooperation between COS RC N and COS 209th ANA Corps.

As a COS advisor, I coordinated the execution of the SPA plan in the weekly meetings. The PATG N functioned as a "shadow HQ" to the HQ of the 209th Corps. This was an extremely effective tool to focus on leadership and operational planning capabilities in the HQ 209th Corps. I informed branch advisors about the intent and ideas of the COS and the advisors kept me up-to-date on the situation, spirit and progress in their respective branches. This approach enabled our team to advise the HQ of the 209th Corps on how to become an "institution".

Expect the unexpected

My partner was an experienced and well-educated officer. Before this post in the 209th Corps he had been a brigade commander in the 205th Corps. However, he did not have a lot of experience and knowledge about the COS post and the responsibilities it entailed. His strength was combat experience, integrity, commitment and loyalty. Maybe his slight deficiency was that he sometimes tried to lead and manage the HQ as a combat unit and "by the book" in accordance with so-called "NATO standards".

From a "Western" military (staff) training point of view, the main advisory efforts 1 and 2 in my plan seem to be very basic and simple to execute. However, I soon learned that the "Western" style of conducting staff work and its complex and sometimes overlapping information sharing (e.g. regular meetings in different specialized groups, creating/providing unit-specific orders, regulations and decrees in addition to official papers etc.) are not compatible with the Afghan culture and are difficult to mediate. The other factor was the almost total disregard for time that Afghans have versus the ISAF or "Western" approach. Furthermore, the advisors and the ISAF forces too often impose their own systems on the Afghans; e.g. operational planning (Military Decision Making Process, MDMP) rather than considering an "Afghan-centred" or "Afghan-sustainable" approach.

As an advisor, if you lack awareness of the above-mentioned factors, your advisory efforts will not create sustainable development and the final goal – Afghan leadership of the security situation in the country by the end of 2014 – will not be met. We should advise and not just provide our partners with something that they are "willing to buy and willing to use". Especially we have to remember this fact when advising Afghan's leadership and management capabilities. Our partners will remain and continue to work and fight long after our tour is over. Sustainability and continuity are thus the key words.

When I implemented my advisory plan I also noticed that the ethnic and religious background of the counterparts, their social networks, previous Afghan wars (who fought on which side), internal power struggles and sometimes even corruption negatively influenced team work. It especially had an impact on the cooperation within the 209th Corps Command Group and

the relationship between the COS and branch heads. Too often these factors annihilated my partner's good efforts and ideas to lead and develop his HQ. They sometimes caused a lot of frustration and delayed the progress in my partner's leadership capabilities and, by extension the capabilities of the HQ of the 209th Corps. On the other hand, advisors lack the means to influence these factors. In fact, it is not even their task.

Towards a close relationship and trust

A couple of months after the beginning of my tour, the relationship between me and my partner moved from an "advisor-to-partner" situation to a "workmate-with-workmate" situation. Our interaction was more like a dialogue than an "official" advisory relationship. My partner asked my opinion about ongoing issues and topics and I served and proposed to him possible options and solutions based on my knowledge, experience, training and advisory plan. However, I realized that there is a danger or risk in this kind of process if you are not careful. If the advisor tries too much to push and force his own ideas and if he tries to change his partner's mindset, you may very soon have the situation where the advisor becomes the actual leader. On the other hand, if you get "too close" to your partner there is a risk that the roles change and the advisor cannot see the forest from the trees; one may lose sight of the overall aim to develop the partner and the leadership capabilities of his unit may be lost.

Advising "Shona-ba-Shona" on a high level. Chief of Staff of the 209 ANA Corps, Major General Jamaludin Saied and the author. Photo: SKJA Archive

In advising the fundamental principle is that the final choice or decision is always made by the partner – either based on the option(s) given by the advisor or based on his own thinking, assessment and judgment after discussions with his partner. This principle is of utmost importance especially when we talk about operational planning, tasking the subunits and leadership actions.

The other fundamental principle is that you have to be well prepared for every advisory interaction that you face with your partner. You have to know the overall operational situation and the decided course of action, and based on these you have to have an advisory plan to follow (e.g. PATG N's SPA plan). Also you have to know your partner's background and his strengths and deficiencies. If do not come to the meeting prepared, if you do not know your partner and you do not have a "key message" in your daily or long-term advisory relationship, your partner will notice this sooner or later. If this happens, you will not get a second chance to create a professional relationship based on trust that will inspire and influence your partner to engage in effective action.

You may meet "mental" challenges especially when advising leadership and management actions related to operational planning and orders. Maybe the most stressful advisory situations in "leadership through advising" are when you realize your opinion or advice may lead to casualties or you see that your partner himself makes a decision which is "not correct" and may have dramatic consequences. Therefore, the advisor must always assess and consider the consequences of his advice.

When the SPA plan in PATG N for the HQ of the 209th Corps was reviewed, we found some lessons learned when involved in advising "leadership through advising" situations:

- The proximity with your partner is essential to success; a process the Afghans call "Shona-ba-Shona" (*Shoulder-to-Shoulder in Dari*)
- Every advisory situation depends on the willingness of the partner
- You cannot change the mindset – do not even try
- The interpreter is your most important colleague. However, the abilities of interpreters vary considerable and will impact on the depth of the substantive discussions that can occur.
- "Western" style staff work and complex information sharing (e.g. regular meetings in different specialized groups, creating/providing unit-specific orders, regulations and decrees in addition to official papers etc.) do not fit the Afghan culture and are difficult to mediate.
- The high level of illiteracy presents a challenge for advisory activities.
- Be aware of the Afghans' (total) disregard for time versus the ISAF time-driven approach.
- The Coalition Forces too often impose their own systems on the Afghans, for e.g. operational planning (MDMP), rather than considering an "Afghan-centred" approach.
- Advisory activities should focus on functions and processes, not individuals, in order to support the development of a self-sufficient, competent and professional ANA as an institution.

Conclusions

Based on my thirteen months of experience as an advisor, some of the major reasons why an advisor may fail when implementing "leadership trough advising" are:

- "Trying to reinvent the wheel again" – not realising that there have been mentors/advisors for a long time before your own entry on the scene
- Frustration which leads to the inability to maintain a good and productive working relationship with the partner
- Failure to understand the Afghan mindset and how it impacts on why counterparts do not feel the "sense of urgency" that you may feel
- Lack of situational awareness and understanding of the "big picture"
- Attempting to build a replica of your own armed forces
- Unable to realise that your partner and his unit will remain and continue to lead the unit and to fight against the enemy long after your own tour is over.

Based on my own observations and discussions with colleagues and the partners I was advising, some characteristics of a good advisor are:

- Mature and professional
- Patient, yet relentless enforcer of standards
- Knowledgeable and confident
- Culturally aware
- Has a situational awareness and understanding of the "big picture"
- Has a sense of humour
- Makes his opinions valuable.

Being a successful advisor when engaged in "leadership through advising" is based on the advisor's ability to:

- Establish *credibility*
- Provide *value*
- Develop *relationships*.

Coupled with demonstrated cultural awareness, professional competence is the most effective means to establish and maintain credibility with your partner. You have to have technical and tactical proficiency to contribute to, support and enhance your partner's leadership capabilities. To maintain credibility you have to share the risks with you partner and you have to "act under fire" the way you demand your partner to do.

As an advisor you can give much value to your partner to develop and support his leadership. This value is based on the ability to deliver capabilities and effects as well as the provision of sound advice that yields tangible results. Such factors are funding and equipment (lethal and non-lethal), intelligence, effects (lethal and non-lethal), training and operational and tactical advice. These factors not only contribute to credibility but also offer the advisor some leverage with his counterparts.

In your relationship with the partner you need to balance security and synchronization. The Afghans should to be included in the planning and learning process and the "ANA in lead" principle should be followed. The advisor has to know the basics of local languages, culture and history. To have a good relationship with the counterpart, the advisor needs to have cross-cultural communication skills, the ability to use an interpreter, and respect for a partner's rank, age, status and experience. Furthermore, he has to have negotiation skills, interpersonal skills, enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

SECTION THREE – Leadership Beyond the Field

Extended Dimensions of Crisis Management Leadership

Kalle Liesinen

I was lucky enough to get an easy introduction to crisis management in Lebanon 1984–1985 as a deputy company commander in the Finnish battalion. Certainly, it was the time of the Sabra – Sahtila massacres. Of course, we found ourselves in the middle of small-arms fire several times, and sure, we had casualties; one of my men received a permanent injury due to RPG-fire. The easiness resulted from the solid support of the familiar military system that helped us all cope with the strange elements. Those dangerous but well-endured challenges were an excellent way to grow up as a young tactical leader for operational and strategic tasks to come.

My next assignment in Iran added a degree of difficulty by acquainting me with a totalitarian theocracy and the multicultural UN organisation. Some years later my commander tasks in the Balkans were as such challenging enough, but the most salient lessons everybody learned in the former Yugoslavia were about the dangers of the inadequate use of force and about the fury and extremity prevailing in civil wars. The Yugoslavian experience shook the foundations of crisis management and brought peace operations to a new era.

In Sri Lanka and in Indonesia I worked in civilian crisis management missions. My most recent position was the deputy head of the combined ASEAN and EU mission. Serving later as the executive director of CMI, President Martti Ahtisaari's Crisis Management Initiative allowed me to see the importance of comprehensive crisis management and the necessity to interconnect the efforts of the international community. This position also showed me how success in official and semi-official diplomacy seldom gets all the credit it actually deserves. Extensive international persuasion and pressure to support the peaceful development in Myanmar/Burma was an excellent example of that.[1]

Because I have been involved in military and civilian missions and worked in official and non-governmental positions, I would like to look back and sum up my experiences of crisis management leadership. I will discuss strategic and operational leadership in the field. I refer to a high position in the organisation but still there is always a higher strategic echelon creating missions but not participating in the actual work. The highest echelon will be judged only by the generations to come. The leaders in the field experience the burden much closer and they are surrounded by expectations coming from all directions. The most challenging voice, however, is deep in the leader's mind asking: "What is the real purpose?"

Culture, communication and trust

During my thirty years of crisis management I have often detected the urgent need to learn, improve and revise our efforts in crisis management but, over time, a certain wariness has

[1] EU assigned in 2008 Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) to map the challenges and opportunities for dialogue and reconciliation in Burma / Myanmar. The successful recommendations are still confidential, but the public report can be found as a CMI publication.

developed in me. I am in favour of benchmarking reasonably similar organisations and situations. However, my background makes me hesitate when somebody wishes to replicate good practices and use them in another kind of situation. On the one hand, there are always issues that remain the same from a tactical leadership point of view - from the Middle East to strategic supervision in Asia. My number one reflection is the importance of understanding culture, our own as well as the culture in which we operate.

Not only the mission area and people there bring in new cultural factors, but also your own crisis management organisation and your closest cooperation partners are multinational in nature and represent unique organisational cultures. Consequently, communication skills gain additional value. It is important to remember that only received, understood and accepted communication counts. The third consequential factor is mutual trust. Lines of loyalty in crisis management missions are complicated for obvious reasons: the crisis management mission leader seldom is the actual employer. Also the foundation of staff motivation may vary from one individual to another and hidden agendas are common. Those dependencies can only be surmounted by a mutual obligation of loyalty and fidelity. I find there are three decisive aspects to successful leadership in crisis management missions: culture, communication and trust.

I assume that the position of a strategic or operational leader in any crisis management mission can be gained only with fundamental knowledge of leadership and management theory and not without reasonable leader experience in less demanding surroundings. In real life also other examples can unfortunately be found. Sometimes an individual's status as a member of the national leading social class is inherited from the family and what is based on formal prestige only collapses in international surroundings. Sometimes a skilled expert is forced to accept or, sadly, is avid enough to claim a leader position without having a realistic vision of the competences needed. Regardless of what a person's starting point is, all leaders in crisis management need to deepen their cultural understanding, verify concession after communication and improve their personal capacity to build up trust within their inner organisational circle.

Cage

Dimensions in crisis management leadership can be illustrated as restrictions of possibilities, as space for activities or as a "multiverse" of alternative realities. Often there is no choice between these interpretations. However, just as often the leader may extend her or his potential within the predicted role.

Time trap

The most common way to extend binding dimensions is to play with time. The very first thing is to understand how much time is needed to achieve fundamental strategic changes. In some parts of the world we want to jump directly from ancient social systems to the digital era. It may be possible, but not without the development of all aspects of life. This point may cause disappointment as it is difficult to accept how slowly cross-generational change becomes rooted.[2]

The time dimension exists also in short-term projects and then it is a loose bar in the restricting cage and can easily be manipulated. The general presumption is to prefer delays and extensions in time management rather than slavish sticking to the planned schedule. It is however worthwhile to remember that time can be manipulated in two directions. In the case of the European Union mission in Aceh, Indonesia, (AMM) time was used against the general assumption. The time dimension did speed up the local process when AMM created a convincing exit programme and followed it firmly and accurately.[3]

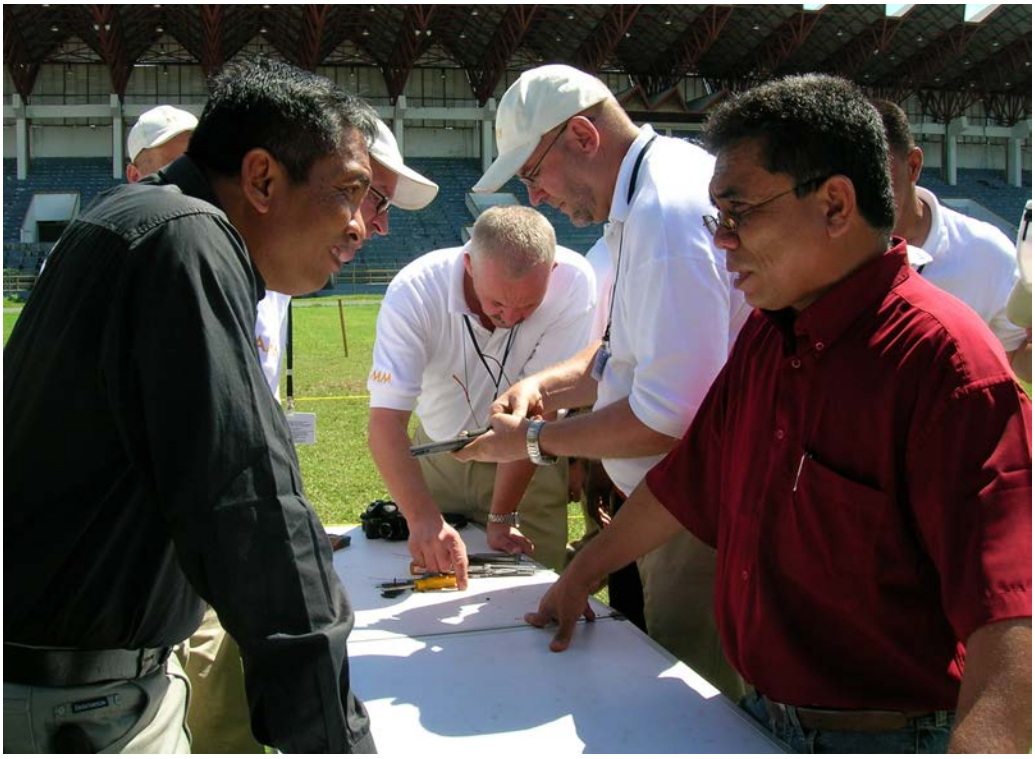
Given limitations

Understandably, the mandate restricts possibilities by dictating what to do and where to do it. At best the mandate should, rather, create resilient working conditions that solidify the initial conditions. Too often mandates are interpreted only as a collection of bureaucratic orders but not as what they primarily should be – a vision of the overall goal. The Aceh Monitoring Mission got into trouble when sending a rescue team to assist Indonesian authorities in the Yogyakarta earthquake for a few days. The catastrophe took place outside the mandated mission area and only the gained good saved the mission head from personal liability for the costs.[4]

[2] Women's voting rights offers an example of the time perspective necessary for change. Finland was the first European country to give voting rights to women in 1906 and Liechtenstein the last, in 1984. Thus, it took 78 years in Europe to assimilate the issue and, even then, some cantons in Switzerland hesitated to put the voting right into action.

[3] As usual, loud criticism for withdrawal came from mission staff that had to leave their dispensable but well paid positions.

[4] The May 2006 Java earthquake occurred on 27th May close to Yogyakarta city and caused 5,782 deaths, while 36,299 people were injured, 135,000 houses damaged, and an estimated 1.5 million left homeless. The Aceh Monitoring Mission's humanitarian gesture was positively recognised in Indonesian media.



Disarmament in practice in ACEH, Indonesia. Handing over the last weapon, government representative Lieutenant General Bambang Darmono, to the right representative of the guerillas Urwandi Yussuf and in the middle the author Kalle Liesinen. Photo: Kalle Liesinen

Fundamental documents include the Status of Force Agreements and some other comparable documents. The European Union has a habit of controlling mission operations by using detailed operational guidelines. When the Aceh mission was established, I was responsible for the disarmament of rebel troops. I came to Sumatra a fortnight before the peace agreement was actually signed and I was busy negotiating against time with the parties how to implement the Ahtisaari-brokered agreement[5]. At the same time, Brussels needed to draft their future guidelines to AMM and me. Understandably, guerrilla leaders and the Indonesian Government had no interest in sorting out any "administrivia" with the European Union. They only worked with us to find acceptable, executable and practical arrangements to carry out the peace plan. It took time to convince EU planners that our role was only to assist and implement what Indonesians needed and requested and not contrariwise. After some delays a convincing but insignificant formulation of the EU guidelines were established and we could continue.[6] The feeling of incompetence was probably reciprocal.

I fully accept the need to formulate prerequisites and describe the desired end state for a crisis management mission, but I see a danger in the eagerness to cover everything from above. Too effective, too young and too many staff officers can always create an excellent out of theatre paper that causes more harm than good. Senior leaders tend to respect their diligence and let the long documents roll forgetting that the mandate and organisational

[5] The Memorandum of Understanding between the former Acehnese rebel movement GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka) and the Government of Indonesia signed on 15 August 2005.
[6] Council Joint Action 2005/643/CFSP on the establishing of the EU-led Monitoring Mission in Aceh (Indonesia).

guidelines should not try to regulate uncertainties but rather create necessary clearance when volatile situations arise.

Acquired restrictions

Restrictions of possibilities can be more or less forced by the situation or the involved parties. A sad example is the United Nations' Protection Force in former Yugoslavia. I remember well how Yasushi Akashi, the secretary-general's personal representative for the war in the former Yugoslavia, visited the Nordic Battalion in 1995. He had ordered a standard procedure that a specialised camera crew must constantly document his waking life. The idea with continuous documentation was to prevent the development of false accusations about his doings and sensitive statements. He inspected the honour guard, was briefed about the situation and made some questions that debunked our wish that high ranking leaders would have a proactive vision of the situation on the ground in Yugoslavia.

Shortly after Akashi's visit, the United Nations allowed the Bosnian Muslim ''safe area'' of Srebrenica to be overrun by Bosnian Serbs, who then systematically killed thousands of the town's men and boys.[7] Later Secretary General Kofi Annan laid out a sober, self-critical report of how military necessities were undermined by political considerations. The report concludes: ''The tragedy of Srebrenica will haunt our history forever.''

Even though the blame is diplomatically diluted in the Annan report, the United Nations' own self-examination condemned the organization's tendency to try to retain purist neutrality in a civil conflict. I have had an opportunity to get first-hand reports from experiences of the Arab spring and Syrian war. It is obvious that due to the new technical possibilities Yasushi Akashi's passive idea of using a documenting film crew is totally outdated. Mobile phone videos, immediate distribution of sound and picture coupled with easy ways of fabricating images have opened a new battlefield for provocations. Nobody really cares about the real truth that can only be verified afterwards while the effects of incitement are immediate and masses can be rapidly manipulated.

Old spy and new odour

All foreign nationals are nowadays under constant surveillance and pose a possible source of media material to be distorted for agitation campaigns. We old timers understood well that invisible eyes and ears spied on our doings. This official espionage and surveillance was however different in nature. It was always controlled and usually not aimed to ruin your mission entirely but to divert it for some benefits. The worst that could happen to you was getting blackmailed if you were stupid enough to fall in honey traps or expose yourself to alcohol, drugs or corruption. With common sense you could easily cope with those threats and sometimes even send out sensitive messages by thinking out loud in your lavatory.

[7] The fall of Srebrenica and other safe areas that the Security Council had identified, but left without enough troops to defend, led in November 1995 to the American-sponsored Dayton peace agreement and the introduction of a NATO-led international military force in Bosnia (United Nations 1999).

There is no reason to trust that old methods are forgotten, but the hostile social media that is echoed in biased official media adds a visible and dangerous supplementary phenomenon to the old game. Social media helps spoilers stay at the cutting edge of propaganda campaigns. The spoiler can be anywhere and anybody – even a tiny group of nerdy independent lunatics is enough. Misled mobs in their hands can be an effective weapon against peace work. This situation of lost initiative and forced defensive position in communication is not acceptable to crisis management missions. My guess is that the importance and number of people working with social media, public relations and communications in peace operations will increase. At the same time all crisis management leaders must to an increasing degree be able to act with openness, honesty and rapid reactions. No comment is a comment of a game looser.

Web

The leader may visualize the dimensions of leadership as a cage of restrictions but he can also position himself somewhere in the air inside the cage like a spider in its web. The strings of silk form a continuum where he can move, but he cannot leave the web. One typical line where the leader has to balance is human resource management. To a certain extent he can choose personnel according to proficiency and professional ability, but very soon the leader faces the demands of the infamous "national balance".

Demands of corrupted organisations

Respecting the national balance is a must in big international organisations. Normally leaders without international experience are not used to coping with these convenience factors, if not familiar with political designations. Sometimes the needs of the national balance have been answered in organisations with additional artificial jobs and building separate core organisations inside the official one. This process can be a reaction to incompetent nominees or a part of the nations' power play. In the course of years the old UNIFIL HQ had become oversized. When General Gustav Hägglund started as the commander in 1986, the previous composition forced him to put together his own inner circle to get into real business. The method may function until a side-lined and trivial post is filled with somebody who wants to have real influence. Or, like in Hägglund's case, until someone feels insulted and starts stirring things up[8].

Another usual method is to add the number of deputies into the organisation chart and call for collegiate work wishing that some of the leaders are up to the tasks. These tricks typically generate decay in official organisations. There are better means to fight against inefficiency. Firstly, the national balance does not force you to accept incompetence. No nation wants to disgrace themselves by nominating incompetent individuals. In addition, I have noticed that people are even happy when they get clear instructions, training and suitable feedback for their work. What you see as inefficiency in a person's behaviour may only be lack of proper supervision on your part. It is always good to look in the mirror first.

[8] A routine incident occurred in the UNIFIL area whilst Gustav Hägglund visited his home country. The responsible deputy on the spot used the media to accuse the Force Commander of leaving the area of operation during a critical time.

Secondly, the senior leader has much influence on the organisational structure if he only dares to use his powers. I claim that the national balance is not the main cause of top-heavy, lazy and fat organisations. The real reason is choosing the easiest way of doing things case after case and year after year. If it has happened for a long time the organisation probably needs to be restructured. It means noise but is actually easily done as long as the postings are provisional, salaries are not touched and operational reasons motivate reorganisation. It is your task to clarify the operational reasons. If you cannot, you should probably resign. A leader must create a vision, believe in it and be ready to use all the powers he has to achieve the results.

Dangers of security

Particularly in EU organisations the security branch has a remarkable amount of authority. It may be the second nuisance after human resources management issues as nobody dares to question arguments that rest on real or illusive security concerns. At the end of the day, no one can give an absolute guarantee that the sky will not fall down on the head of chief Vitalstatix.[9] This may lead to interesting and extravagant decisions: When the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) was established following the August 2008 conflict it was equipped with armoured vehicles. As a result, untrained and unarmed civilians were equipped like soldiers going into battle and the mission has suffered ever since from the expensive and inconvenient cars they have to use. Nobody marvelled at the idea of deploying civilians into armoured duty that is not included in their expertise. With the vehicles a few old monitors with a military past then took their young civilian colleagues to the front line. Thus the security measures resulted in dangerous monitoring activities of an on-going military situation by unqualified personnel that had little means of understanding of what was going on.[10]

The security argument can be used in an impractical way, but it can also be misused. In the Aceh mission many of the decommissioning staff lived in cheap hotels as it was convenient due to the short duration of the disarmament process. The long-term monitors however wanted to establish better and more home-like living conditions for themselves and get financial support from the European Union for that purpose. The request had few chances of getting approved as long as the hotels were also used. Conveniently, the security sector then decided that the hotels in Banda Aceh were too dangerous for AMM staff to stay in as the buildings had been damaged during the earthquake and tsunami. As the four-story hotel buildings would not be able to withstand another similar quake, the monitors were ordered to leave the still working hotels. This convinced bureaucrats in Brussels to accept that the mission was obliged to cover the costs of upmarket houses rented for the whole mission HQ staff.

What kind of stance should a leader take in regards to security arguments? Probably a not too restrictive stance. As long as somebody else covers the costs and no harm is done to the

[9] In the French comic book series Asterix, written by René Goscinny and illustrated by Albert Uderzo, the village chief is Vitalstatix (note the name) who is a daredevil but is afraid on one thing: that the sky will fall down on his head one day. That is why he always travels in his official 'vehicle', a shield carried by two men.

10 In real life EUMM did good work due to the intelligent monitors, civilians and former military. In strategic planning one however should not count on surviving individuals or adding security measures instead of a realistic appraisal of the situation.

operation, all the security measures are acceptable. The leader must, however, supervise that the risk analysis detects the real risks and covers also the existential ramifications of planned security measures. A leader must have the nerve to put first things first also inside the risk management field and, as always, accept only thorough, open and matter-of-fact reasoning. Generally the high leadership must understand that the sector leaders – security included – think only in terms of their limited remit while the operational and strategic actors have to keep the core purpose in mind and consolidate different aspects so that the organisation has a reason to exist.

Advising the advisers

Similar awareness is needed with the other supporting staff except for legal advisers who normally are used to considering topics from all aspects. In the position of mission head you will have all kinds of experts surrounding you. Your political advisors have often very good connections to their own embassies. In this respect the big nations like France and the UK are excellent assets as they often have access to confidential intelligence information. Of course that access is a two-way road. The alternative is a political advisor without connections. They are recruited from for instance Finland and other small countries without global interests and in the best case they know something about the local conditions or at least are fast learners. I have received my best political advice from a Finnish anthropologist. Also political scientists are useful if they are specialised in the mission area.

In mission situations you are also supported by gender advisers and human rights specialists. The Nordic gender advisers will tell you that 40% of the leaders must be female in spite of what competences they have and how large a percentage of the whole staff are female. It is called positive discrimination. The best of the gender advisers talk about the roles of boys and girls, but are seldom specialists in child matters. The human rights specialists will advise you that human rights must be safeguarded and all people respected. If the human rights and gender advisers are Finnish they will also tell you that special attention must be paid to women, children, sick and old people as this is what Finland's 1325 Strategy Paper says. The only ones that do not need special attention are healthy men between 18–60 years of age. You will not get a clear answer when asking what special attention means in practice.

Unfortunately this – with some stretch – has been my experience. I personally stand up for democracy, human rights, women's rights and I do acknowledge the significant role of gender issues in cultural understanding. I have always stressed that women are needed in crisis management missions already for the simple reason that without them you practically loose contact with half of the population. I want the best consultants helping me in inspecting and reporting insights of the human rights procedures in refugee camps, police stations and local prisons. All the same, I need real expertise, people who know how theory is correctly put into practice; I want to make these topics a serious business.

Maybe my list of questions to the advisory group may illustrate how to expand the conception of the advisory role. From my political advisers I would like to know who to contact in the host nation ministries and what is boiling in New York or respectively in Brussels – wherever power is located. My human rights adviser could begin with the list of public international

law that the host nation is obliged to abide by after entering into legal commitments. I do not expect that I have to give a lesson about the differences between the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam[11]. My gender adviser could first answer whether her work focuses on the organisation's internal issues or on all the aspects of the peace operation. If the own organisation is in focus, the adviser should work in personnel administration. In case the mission head is to be advised we could start by studying the important aspects of gender roles like children establishing a majority in the local culture[12] as it has an impact on operational practices.

Consulting with the authority

You may notice that my attitude is demanding, but there are reasons: a mission's success depends on the ability to understand the context in which the mission is operating. Conflict-sensitive operators realise the interaction between their mission's intervention and the context. Based on this understanding, the mission can avoid negative effects and maximize positive impacts on the conflict. The mission advisers are respected individuals, authorities, and they must be able to generate added operational value to meet the expectations. If not, these important and advancing portfolios will lose their momentum.

It would not be right to end the chapter by describing the strategic leaders' complicated web of activities without mentioning the national contingents. I have been in missions that have tried – without success – to deny the existence of national groupings. Understandably, the national sub organisations add burden to the already complicated and heavy load that crisis management leaders must deal with. Contingents however remain as de facto organisations because only they have the powers of national discipline and almost always they represent the vicarious liability. In addition, the national networks, during this age of internet and SMSs, are as fast as the operational net but more flexible in handling sensitive internal matters. Contingent commanders are not political watchdogs and do not normally rock the boat or mix with daily matters, but as they are the senior member of the contingent what they say counts and any negative reporting by them will be taken seriously. A wise leader always keeps the door open to contingent commanders and listens carefully to their worries, as they often give the best advance warnings of organisational problems beneath the surface.

[11] The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (CDHRI) is an Islamic response to the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It affirms Islamic Sharia as its sole source (http://www.oic-oci.org/english/article/human.htm, accessed 9.8.2013).

[12] For instance in Islamic law the physical maturity in either sex establishes majority (bulugh). Before reaching majority, a minor is not legally recognized, does not have social responsibilities, and is under the care of a parent or guardian. Depending on the legal schools the exact age varies from nine for girls to eighteen for boys, although for girls the age of menstruation is generally acceptable. This is general information, but the gender advisor hopefully knows more.

The graveyard of the Black Tigers suicide bomber group in Sri Lanka. Photo: Kalle Liesinen

Alternative realities

I have now painted a picture of the crisis management leader as a spider in a web that is contained inside a cage. A desolate picture, I admit, but there are also alternative realities. We can make the cage move and release the leader "out of the box"[13]. We are not alone in that effort: the international community has constantly been frustrated with the achievements of peace operations. It has resulted in a mushrooming field of new ideas and concepts on how to improve. Depending on the source, approximately a quarter of all peace agreements fail in the first five years after they have been signed. About half of the agreements either fail or come close to failing. There are many reasons why some peace processes are not sustainable. Some relate to the role of spoilers and the dynamics of post-conflict settlements whilst others are associated with shortcomings in the support provided by the international community. Maybe our "sustainable" is too hard to achieve and too fragile; should we rather aim at reaching a resilient outcome?

Root causes and comprehensive strategy

One of the key ideas is seeking the root causes in order to select the correct and desired impacts for intervention planning. The military might talk about the centre of gravity and decisive points. Actually the root cause means an initiating cause of a causal chain which leads

[13] Out-of-the-box thinking is a metaphor that refers to unconventional ideas that move away in diverging directions involving a variety of aspects, new perspectives and which sometimes lead to novel solutions. I believe that locally there is always enough space for creative conclusions.

to the outcome. In the crisis management discourse the expression is misused to describe the depth in the causal chain where an intervention could reasonably be implemented to change the situation. Although being one of those slightly hazy terms in crisis management, the root causes are important in helping to bring about clear and soundness of thinking in intervention planning. Namely they often expose complicated causal chains that no organisation can cope with alone and without other actors. This brings us into the out-of -the-box thinking: Make crisis management an integrated effort and consider it a long process where timely inputs from several organisations, from military to civilian, from humanitarian aid to development cooperation, form a planned continuum.

All peace building agents are interdependent of each other and they cannot individually achieve the goal of the overall peace process. Pursuing coherence helps to manage the interdependencies that crisis management leaders meet. Coordination is the means through which individual peace building agents can ensure that they are connected to the strategic framework – a process that binds the entire peace building system together. A crisis management leader must understand the role of his organisation in the overall effort of the international community. He does not only have neighbours on the left and the right, but figuratively speaking, someone works also above and beneath him. He must be able to extend his thinking to a multidimensional world and adopt the needs of other actors outside his own comfort zone.

The military is used to securing border areas between neighbouring units. In integrated crisis management, coherence does the same. It can be improved particularly in two areas. The first is the need to generate a clearly articulated overall peace building strategy. The second is the need to operationalize the principle of local ownership and implement it case by case. The term local ownership is frequently used in debates on development support and peace building. What local ownership exactly means in a crisis management context has yet to be defined. In their book "Politics of Crisis Management" Arjen Boin, Paul ´t Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius describe the dilemmas of political leadership and public administration in encountering and solving crises14. The term however serves as concrete a project objective for foreign involvement in peace projects. It underlines locally steered development and better partnership in interventions and foreign-funded projects.

Foreign nationals and local ownership

The efforts of the international community include both the official and the private. Civil society actors offer a quick and efficient way of connecting with the local population and targeting the roots of the conflict. For the most part, private organisations in peace projects are funded at least partially by official sources. Since the end of the cold war there has been a remarkable increase in the number of both international and national NGOs in peace operations. These non-state and non-profit organizations cover an inclusive list of functions needed in crises management and reconstruction.

Foreign nationals, be they official or private, need local partners to increase political support for peace processes. Financial assistance helps the international NGOs to create and sustain

[14] Boin et al. 2006.

national organisations in war-torn countries. This is why some local inhabitants have benefited enormously if they have been able to convince foreigners that their interests match. Local populations must respond appropriately and introduce their projects in academic English, and, above all, report in a way that satisfies the international donors. In many cases the result is only lip service and there are noticeable gaps between what they really need and want, what the donors want, and what the funded organisations are truly doing. Often the reasons are as simple as international hidden agendas and double standards. We are so sure of the superiority of our values that we seldom consider them as a prerequisite or extra load.

Typically there is a huge NGO boom when the conflict is visible in the international media. The resources are then available and hundreds of organisations pour in. Many of them are on the scene even before a conflict really ends and gain a privileged position in funding and negotiating with the local population. They can even have a say in which domestic actors and activities should be supported and how the peace building agenda ought to be composed.

When media visibility eventually decreases, many international organisations simply leave. After the supporting organisations have withdrawn, local people notice that foreign funding runs dry and they have no essential domestic funding sources to compensate the gap. This means that in the mid and long term the wishfully and pretentiously started activities and projects begin to vanish. With only little indigenous support, national civil society organisations also start to disintegrate and turn out to be short-lived and not capable of carrying on long-term peace building. This causes lots of frustration and it is not rare that some of the most vocal criticism comes from local persons who were working in development or peace projects[15]. In the developing world the general attitude towards both official development aid and private help is much more one of suspicion and annoyance than I used to think it was.

This has motivated me to repeat a message during my training tours particularly in Africa: in addition to official aid, international and local NGOs are a huge resource that are available also for crisis management and peace support purposes. It would be stupid not to utilise their possibilities whenever they exist. Problems in the structural environment, created by international peace building, can be settled by responding to local interests and organizational needs. International personnel may attenuate their preconditions when the locals reciprocally are convincing and clear in specifying their priorities and explaining their cultural and infrastructural limitations. Most international organisations are, first and foremost, service providers that do not engage in an inappropriate manner in transforming political and social environments. The relevant policies are those of the national governments and so it must be.

[15] This observation is based on my experiences in Indonesia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sudan and Sri Lanka. In Africa also the differences between Western and Chinese aid are a hot topic. Dambisa Mayo's books, "Dead Aid" (2010), "How the West Was Lost" (2012) and "Winner Take All: China's Race for Resources and What It Means for the World" (2013) seem to be well known among practitioners. An additional source of inspiration is James Robinson's and Daron Acemoglu's book "Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty" (2013).

Demanding but rewarding leadership

Normal management and leadership dimensions are extended in crisis management missions. Volatile circumstances add to the burden of the leaders who are used to working in stable and non-hostile national surroundings. Strange views of life and organisational diversities in the mission areas call for deeper understanding. The wrong decision may backfire in a tragic way.

I have focused on strategic and operational leadership in the field, reminding that each organisation is only a tool to gain the ultimate goal. This essential truth is often forgotten in field duties as all organisations have a tendency to come to life and start struggling for their own survival. The purpose must however come first and the purpose cannot be a never-ending crisis management mission.

Strategic and operational leaders in crisis management missions have a challenging task. They must adopt the overall goal set by the international community; they have to follow guidelines that sometimes, for political reasons, are hazy on purpose; they have to use their organisation in an efficient way and keep the personnel happy despite the fact that mission success means the end of the journey. They balance between the parties and struggle with the spoilers. They are busy people.

The years have proven that there must be a clearly defined ultimate goal to make crisis management meaningful. The modern comprehensive approach has been to study the whole instead of separating the crisis management efforts into parts. It has created promising operational modes like the Security Sector Reform (SSR) and the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Process (DDR). It also combines military, civilian, humanitarian and development efforts under one common goal. The implementation of a comprehensive theory is still in an early stage and more is to come: one function and one organisation are not capable of creating a resilient peace. Leaders in crisis management must increasingly perceive their functions as a part of an extremely complicated project that involves different organisations in different phases; a project that is, so far, more or less self-guided.

Global development has decreased the number of wars but complicated the remaining crises. Worldwide interdependences motivate the international community to intervene in very difficult and unclear situations. A lot has been learned in crisis management but, as soon as we learn more about it, the level of difficulty will increase. So leadership in crisis management is also in a constant state of learning. I started this article by mentioning the little inner voice calling out in the leader's mind for the purpose of crisis management. I will sleep well as long as I know that leaders in crisis management missions wake up to that troublesome but truly fundamental question. I would not call it uncertainty or the leader's frustration; it is quality control.

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Leading the Start-up – Challenges of Military Leadership in the Initial Phases of a New Operation

Laura Valli

A year away from routines and one's homeland always has its special characteristics. This short article tries to raise discussion on resources and evaluation needed in a special phase of every operation: the starting year. The materiel and logistical part of building up different operations is well-managed at national level in Finland. We seem to have excellent teams of support element specialists serving within our forces. The materiel part, which is crucial in every start-up, is evaluated throughout the project process. Nevertheless, one factor seems to be slightly neglected: leadership and its effects on a contingent's crisis management capabilities. The evaluation of leadership is part of more or less every military organization. Leadership and the leadership coaching discussed in this article are seen as support tools for human resources management.

Introduction

The data presented in this article concerning the activities of the Finnish Contingent in the Irish-Finnish Battalion in UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) has been collected during the years 2012–2013. It is based on a case study on the UNIFIL operation in southern Lebanon with the Finnish Defence Forces as the sending contributor. A point of special interest is the interaction between different actors within the contingent. Finland's role was that of partner nation, whereas Ireland held the position of lead nation. Reflections regarding organization are based on the organizational structure of the Finnish Contingent with an approximate strength of 170 soldiers. The start-up contingent consisted of headquarters staff, one mechanized company and a battalion support group.

Efforts put into a project, like the operation's start-up phase, always affect and give signals to other actors and nations. Crisis management actions are part of national strategies that have certain desired and undesired messages[1]. On the other hand, it can be discussed how cost-effective it is to send relatively small units to different operations. It has been claimed that sending troops with less than 1,000 soldiers in total is a strategic level effort that provides only tactical level military capability[2]. The reason for using multinational cooperation is that it is cost-effective. And yet, again, this brings its own challenges.

The main concern of this article is to analyse and examine three dimensions of leadership challenges that emerged in the ethnographic data. This article does not aim to provide an overall evaluation of the Finnish Contingent's start-up as part of the Irish-Finnish Battalion. The particular focus is on presenting an ethnographically informed examination of experiences of the different leadership approaches and reflections from the field. The data has been analysed from the theoretical perspective of the deep leadership model, which will be discussed further in the next section[3]. Secondly, the aim is to present examples of how

[1] Salonius-Pasternak & Kerttunen 2007, 4.
[2] Raitasalo 2008, 9.
[3] Nissinen 2000.

to improve the start-up phase of an operation and how these examples could be used in future training and project management. The opinions presented in this article are those of its writer.

Methodological approach

The context of deep leadership (DL) is a theoretical approach used by the Finnish Defence Forces. It has its roots in the transformational leadership model.[4] The basic idea of DL is to divide the behaviouralistic learning process into three phases or circles that are then divided into ten smaller units: potential (professional skills), behaviour (building trust, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, control, passivity), and outcomes (satisfaction, efficiency, extra effort).[5] In this article, special attention is paid to the dimension of behaviour within the DL approach as a result of findings in the ethnographic data.

Defence can be studied in various ways. Nevertheless, defence arrangements are linked, not only by organizational interaction and cooperation, but also by cultures, routines and normative/regulative structures[6]. The qualitative approach to studying a society of peacekeepers is based on an interest in hermeneutical knowledge production. Defence organisations are often evaluated through quantitative measures, which aids in effectively making comparisons. However, deeper knowledge of situations and practices may be overlooked.

By being present and systematically recording dilemmas and problematic relationships related to leadership aspects in the starting-up phase of an operation, I became aware of which issues may be a hindrance to successfully dealing with this operational phase. Use of the ethnographic method allows the researcher to unearth and bring to light taken-for-granted practices and tacit knowledge[7]. By observing how people acted, I was able to gather knowledge that would not necessarily emerge in speech; in other words, those matters that are not explicitly expressed. In addition it allows an understanding of how space (the environment) and time influence practices and behaviour. Ethnography[8], which has its roots in anthropological and sociological research, offers a method for gaining a deeper understanding of the defence society. Simply defined, ethnography is based on the notions of writing (*graphe*) about what people of a certain community or social group do and of these people sharing a culture (*ethnos*). The sum of these is the description of a community; the ethnography. The main data collection methods were participant observation and discursively-led discussions. Moreover, the aim is to gather reflective conclusions for further discussion on future action plans .

[4] Burns 1978; Nissinen 2000; Ladkin 2010.
[5] Nissinen & Pentti 2004, 40. For further discussion, see Kinnunen 2011.
[6] Tallberg 2009, 6.
[7] Polanyi 1983 [1966].
[8] Ethnography has several definitions all the way from being held as a narrative approach to fieldwork activity. Its characteristics can be found in technique, methodology and epistemology. (See for example Clifford & Marcus 1986; Tallberg 2009)

What is so special about the start-up phase?

Starting something new is always a kind of a crisis. From the operational environment's point of view, in this article, starting a new operation means sending troops to an operation that already exists. The organizational environment during start-up is complex. In addition, the start-up phase has been researched relatively little. Finland withdrew its troops from Lebanon in 2007. Five years made a difference in the operational environment; both the internal and external side of the peacekeeping operation had changed.

In a multinational environment, the cooperational battalion poses challenges to leadership due to the idea of shared leadership discussed further in the section entitled "The Third Dimension". At the start-up, the leaders' focus is more on following overall guidelines than on attending to details. Getting operationally ready is their main concern. Nevertheless, the challenges do not end at the point when operational readiness is gained. The routines need minor and major adjustment even after this. The culture of a bi-national battalion is always a mixture of two approaches, which needs special attention.

Logistics and support are often in the spotlight when starting up something new. It is no wonder; troops need food and sleep to be able to carry out their tasks. Overall, examining how the context of leadership coaching, the culture of the military organization and individual needs interact with each other has not received much interest. Soldiers, and especially senior officers, are used to being leaders. Thus, do we really know how leadership works or do we even evaluate leadership during or after an operation's start-up phase?

The United Nation's internet-based information site describes the start-up phase of a new operation as a number of steps that have to take place before the decision to join an operation is reached .[9] Yet there is no one-size-fits-all model.[10] These ideas can also be carried out from a national perspective. When dealing with the decision to start up at national level, choosing the right operation to participate in is a politically cumbersome and delicate task[11]. Finally, the decision to send troops to a new location is also discussed in the on-going debate about to what end crisis management capabilities should be developed[12].

The challenges of the start-up phase often consist of a lack of time, knowledge and resources, high expectations and pressure to get troops operationally ready to fulfil their tasks. The politically-based will and the military organization can sometimes proceed along parallel paths and according to different time-spans. Reparatory work carried out to deal with crises is not something you learn at school[13]. At the start-up, main concerns include getting the routines rolling and a roof over the heads of the operating troops.

It is only human that the most crucial factor, the leadership itself, is being put aside while observing and evaluating the start-up. As one individual involved in the start-up phase exaggeratedly described it: "There are other things to deal with than to think about how to lead". The organizational environment may not be as expected – not to mention the

[9] http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/newoperation.shtml, 13.7.2013
[10] Handbook on UN PKO's 2003, 16.
[11] Salonius-Pasternak & Kerttunen 2007, 2.
[12] Eronen & Mustonen & Peltola 2011, 76.
[13] Häikiö 2011, 20.

operational tasks themselves. Through the use of careful evaluation and strategic level action plans some obstacles could be more smoothly overcome.

The first dimension: The idea of continuous improvement

During the start-up phase of an operation a lot of pressure is put on two individuals: the commanding officer and the chief logistics officer. This reflects the duality of the organizational culture that we seem to have at national level: materiel factors are separated from everything else. This duality will be discussed further in the next section.

Building up the materiel environment is the priority at the start-up. Getting the personnel to the operational area is among the priorities that follow. Nevertheless, the challenges do not end when the contingent's operational force is operationally ready. After the routines start working the need for continuous improvement becomes clear . It is something that has been discussed for instance within the deep leadership coaching model[14] and in the context of professional learning[15] . In the same way as mentors are expected to be professional in their mentoring appointments[16], contingent commanders are expected to know how to lead professionals from a variety of branches .

However, there are certain limits as to how much the actions of the personnel can be improved. After the routines start rolling, the idea of continuous improvement becomes a crucial strategy for the management of personnel action competence. It is, indeed, a question of culture and moreover of leadership culture. On the one hand, it is common in our national defence culture to try to improve every day. On the other hand, however, the question of effectiveness does not always go hand in hand with constant development and prolonged working hours.

The second dimension: crucial actors and interaction pairs

In this section I will examine the crucial actors and interactional relationships involved in the start-up year of a new operation in the contingent context . I will identify what is problematic with these interactions and what we should pay attention to if we want to improve leadership in this phase of an operation.

1. Contingent Commander and closest supporting officers

The commanding officer faces the greatest degree of pressure to succeed during the start-up of an operation. Continuing to fulfil the task after the start-up can, however, become even more challenging. The start-up can be seen as a muddling-through phase where the general idea is to get the everyday life of the operational troops rolling and to adjust the operational

[14] Nissinen 2000; Kinnunen 2003
[15] Dufour et al. 2006, 152–158.
[16] Leino 2011, 45.

capability to the right level. The mobility of personnel during rotation often affects and transforms the strategies that have been selected at the start-up phase.

Another phase starts when the routines settle in. If rotation takes place in between the "settled-in phase" and a new leader takes over, for the leader, this means acting according to a plan one has not developed oneself. This places the commanding senior officer under a lot of pressure and it may challenge his or her leadership capacity. Therefore, it would be advisable to select special staff for a longer term than just one rotation. It could also be fruitful to create a supporting leadership coaching program for senior officers. Soldiers are generally known to be ready to lead. Nevertheless, it is too widely accepted that senior-level officers are ready as leaders and that they are not in need of any help.

The crucial notion in this interaction-pair is that the commanding officer often provides or should provide a supporting team around him/her. This special staff may not be the one from the organizational/human resorces plan but more of the team that supports the everyday challenges. Secondly, this team can also consist of persons from outside the operational organization.

2. Contingent Commander and Company Commander

Two actors are crucial to the contingent's functions: the contingent commander and the company commander. Together they lead the troops in the contingent. Moreover, this pair can take advantage of silent knowledge on military leadership. This relationship can be described as a Master-Apprentice interaction that works both ways: from master to apprentice and back. What is often neglected is that the apprentice has fresh and useful experience from operational grass-root level. It is not unusual that the most recent working experience of the commanding officer is from headquarters level. Managing documents and administrative duties is another side of a commanding officer's tasks also in a crisis management operation. Once again, the assumption is that the senior officer knows how to lead both troops and administration, and is thus expected to do both things. The pressure is high, as are the demands.

As for the company commander level, the officers chosen for this task often have good working experience in leading at basic unit level. Nevertheless, leading an operating unit at operational level can turn out to be challenging and vastly different from what one has previously experienced. The path is instructive . Once again, implementing a leadership coaching program could have a lot of positive effects at company commander level. Actors involved at this level are young, talented and specially selected to be able to fulfil their tasks, but they do need support and guidance. Putting emphasis on, and providing support for this group could also affect junior level officers, such as platoon leaders, in a positive way.

A very interesting detail from the previously discussed interaction pair's point of view is a notion presented already in 2008: there is a lack of leadership studies in the Department of Tactics and Operational Art of the Finnish National Defence University[17]. Organizational

[17] Kesseli 2008.

changes have since been carried out, but in spite of the reorganisation, young officers serving in leading appointments in crisis management operations have received their theoretical tactical competence from a rather narrow point of view. They have been taught tactics without it being linked to leadership studies .

3. Platoon Commanders and Group Leaders

Junior officers are one of the most crucial target groups in need of leadership coaching. The challenge often lies in the question of experience: group leaders are often more experienced than platoon leaders. This may result in a challenging situation with regard to the leading of the platoon. Although it may seem nonsensical to officers higher up in the hierarchy, it really is a challenge at operational level .

Platoon leaders are in an actual leadership position although they may have less experience in terms of how to act in a given situation. This kind of situation is one of the interests of the deep leadership model: in a crisis situation discipline is based on trust, and depending on the level of transformability of the leader, the subordinates either do or do not trust their leader.[18] The actual operational troops consist of young soldiers, who may have completed and ended their conscript service not more than a year or two ago. They have learned to obey a certain organizational culture and a certain leadership model.

The third dimension: Shared leadership

Shared leadership is one of the most challenging questions in the context of military leadership. This has to do with the organizational structure and the culture of one man's responsibility where there is a clear chain of command in use both in a horizontal and vertical sense. Relations and leadership appointments often seem to be very clear in the defence organization, but in reality and in practice these relationships are less clear. Bi-national cooperation in crisis management operations creates challenges regarding the roles of leaders. As one nation holds the position of lead nation, the co-acting nation still has its independent role on a larger scale among the other troop contributing nations.

This interactive link between the two nations can be found in miniature in the commanding officer (CO) – deputy commanding officer (DCO) relationship. Ireland held the position of lead nation while Finland was the co-acting nation. From the UNIFIL operation's point of view the battalion CO had the last word in battalion-related discussions. Nevertheless, the additional role of contingent commander made the cooperational relationship of CO-DCO even more complex; the Finnish DCO held the position of both contingent commander of the Finnish Contingent and deputy commanding officer of the Irish-Finnish Battalion. The Irish CO did not have this duality in his appointment, as the senior officer appointment was directed to an officer working in a higher headquarters.

[18] Nissinen 2000.

Recommendations for the future

In this article I have examined the special challenges of leadership during the start-up year of a new operation. Additionally, the aim has been to provide ideas for further discussion regarding leadership and project management skills.

Firstly, special effort should be placed on the start-up phase, not only regarding materiel issues, but also in relation to the provision of leadership coaching. Materiel project management skills used during the operational start-up phase are of a high standard. Yet, again, more effort should be allocated to bring about both the desired context of leadership and desired leadership skills . The paradigm and the reality should be somewhat balanced. Using specialists from outside of the defence community in training and in building up best practises tools could bring some new insights. Leadership should be evaluated as part of the art of war capability. At national level, the art of war is based on experience[19]. If nationally used methods for leadership coaching do not meet the needs of the field in the crisis management context, the paradigm of military leadership might need to be re-defined. The organizational culture does not necessarily reflect the deep leadership model that is taught in theory in the education of Finnish soldiers.

Secondly, a desired acceptable level of effort should be demonstrated to the troops; it is crucial to eventually know how much is enough. As one commander describes it; "There have to be some resources in reserve in case of emergency." Continuous improvement is part of the national organizational culture and the deep leadership paradigm has been chosen as the theoretical leadership model to be followed and/or implemented. The operational environment changes constantly. Effectiveness is not always something to be measured in quantitative terms. There is a lot to be gained from the use of qualitative approaches, also in combination with quantitative ones.

Experiences from the start-up phase of an operation have a remarkable effect on the morale and motivation of the personnel serving in the operation. The experiences are shared, not only with the personnel of one's own rotation, but with a wider community back home in the national environment. This may have a positive or negative effect on the future recruitment process and the ability to find personnel that meet the set standards. The power of positive or negative signals sent from the acting troops should not be neglected in the field of project management in crisis management operations.

From the organizational point of view, one way of supporting the project management skills of crucial interaction pairs could be the following: providing project and human resources management training during rotation training. Moreover, this training would target especially personnel working in the start-up rotation. Training could, at least partly, be given by specialists from outside the organization to ensure that brainstorming and outside-the-box-thinking are part of the process[20]. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the sending organization alone carries the responsibility of training the leaders. The leaders have to be ready to learn and seek information by themselves, too.

[19] Rantapelkonen 2006, 121.
[20] For wider discussion, see Kurkinen 2011.

Concluding comments

In this article I have examined leadership challenges faced during the start-up year of a new operation. The aim has also been to present an ethnographically informed perspective of different leadership approaches and reflections from the field. Thirdly, the aim has been to gather reflective conclusions for further discussion on future action plans. Based on the ethnographic approach and the behavioural side of the DL model, three dimensions based on the deep leadership context were introduced in this article. The idea of continuous improvement, crucial interaction pairs and lastly the idea of shared leadership offer a basis for future evaluation discussion.

Putting resources into leadership coaching during the start-up phase provides great opportunities. It should be widely discussed whether leadership should be evaluated as part of every operation's building-up phase, in the same way as the materiel part is evaluated. Moreover, certain interaction relationships between crucial actors among the contingent's personnel should be further examined. The interaction between junior and senior officers could offer even more opportunities for continuous learning among personnel. On the other hand, considering the constantly changing environment and the everyday challenges faced, leaders would need special guidance and tools for leadership from a project management-based point of view. An additional idea that would deserve further discussion and research is that of how the demand for individuality in leadership contexts differs between leaders and subordinates. These ideas have changed during the past decades[21] and should therefore be taken into consideration also in the field of defence studies.

The context of deep leadership is based on potential, behaviour and outcomes. Willingness and the decision to apply for crisis management tasks are the basis for peacekeeping deployment. The potential is there. Outcomes depend on the behaviour of the personnel. Therefore, putting extra effort into providing tools for behavioural adjustment may help leaders to easily affect the effectiveness of their troops.

Lastly, the ideas presented in this article are connected to a particular kind of context and a certain duration of time. Although tied to a particular context, the insights gained can be applied on a more general level. These ideas may work as the basis for further evaluation discussions. The particular phase of operation start-up needs both special attention and resources. New methodological approaches, such as ethnography, used in parallel with quantitative analysis could give birth to some fresh ideas on how to develop both the national defence organisation and the evaluation of crisis management operations. The field of crisis management changes constantly, as does the context of leadership that leaders follow. All in all, the leader always carries the responsibility. Lastly, there will always be start-up phases within the defence organization.

[21] For further information on this matter see Ropo & Sauer 2003.

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Abstracts

Facing the Unforeseen: Kosovo's Spring of 2004

Pekka Holopainen

On 17 March 2004, sudden and unpredicted violent incidents took NATO and UNMIK by surprise. Within hours anti-Serb and anti-UN rioting gained levels of violence not seen since 1999. During the next few days the violence escalated into open ethnic cleansing of entire minority villages and neighbourhoods. Albanian youths, extremists and criminals challenged the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the NATO-led peacekeeping force (KFOR). Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government (PISG), media and civilian society turned a blind eye to the violence and overall mayhem. Because of national caveats and limited skills in riot control, KFOR was not able to mount a sufficient and effective response.

Mission Impossible – Reflections on the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria

Rolf Kullberg

This article discusses the problems of deploying unarmed UN Military Observers in war-like conditions in the middle of a war zone. It aims to point out the dilemma between rapid deployment and security. The article presents the experiences and observations of military observers working on the ground in conditions that unarmed UN personnel are not supposed to meet. A weak mandate, the wrong type of force for this kind of mission and the lack of logistical resources threatened the everyday life of the personnel. The article also describes the problems and challenges I met as the commander of the national military observer contingent.

Georgian Challenges – Leadership in a Monitoring Mission

Heikki Lehtonen

During my three tours as a monitoring officer in the OSCE Mission to Georgia I observed how a situation can develop through deterioration and provocations from relatively peaceful coexistence to full scale war within a few years. The biggest problem during that time was taking command of a multinational team of more experienced, and sometimes more senior officers and, as a newcomer, earning their respect and approval. Another problem discussed concerns the correct way of action in a situation where decision-makers at the headquarters are distanced from the real situation and interpersonal conflict starts to play a more important role than the wellbeing of one's subordinates. What are the right reasons for contradicting one's supervisor, or are there any?

Taking the Lead in a Changed Situation – Personal Experiences from the 2005 Earthquake in Pakistan and India

Janne Lehtonen

The main objective of this article is to look at the earthquake in Pakistan and India in 2005 from the point of view of leadership. What were the actions that had to be taken and what kinds of challenges were faced? Situations that change very rapidly are normally very challenging for everyone involved and especially for those in leadership roles. In just a couple of minutes, the earthquake of 8 October 2005 changed a situation of calm everyday routines into a crisis where 24/7 duty was required. In this article I analyse mainly my own actions as a leader immediately after the earthquake, aiming to highlight some lessons learned from the situation, as well as analysing the training I received before deployment and how it prepared me, as a leader, for the situation that unfolded.

Commanding Finnish Soldiers in Afghanistan – Professionalism in a Demanding Peace Support Operation

Joni Lindeman

In this article the writer relates his feelings on leading troops in a demanding operational environment. Circumstances were quite demanding not only because of the terrain and climate, but also due to the general political situation. The writer's aim is to describe some of his experiences and feelings related to experiences in Afghanistan. His conclusions drawn from this mission are that the leader is always responsible even though he may not be on the spot where the action is taking place, a leader without good language skills poses a huge security risk for his/her troops, and common sense is the most important tool of a leader when planning and leading operations. Sometimes it is said that Finnish troops abroad operate under lucky stars, but luck should not be the foundation for a unit's actions. The bases for successful and safe work in a peace support operation are professionalism, good equipment, discipline and good leadership. When these pillars are in sound shape luck is there as a bonus.

Improvise, Adapt, Overcome – A Jaeger Company in Combat

Toivo Pollock and Kai Uitto

The Finnish light infantry formations in Afghanistan, the jaeger companies, operated in a complex and continually shifting operational environment. This effect was aggravated by the seemingly arbitrary nature of ANSF operations. This called for a jaeger company to become an organization that was able to quickly adapt to changing situations. This ability was made possible by two factors. First, the company in question was made up of a mix of personnel from a wide variety of different backgrounds. Second the company leadership was given wide latitude by its higher echelon. These two factors do not, however, spell success. A culture of initiative must be established, and authority pushed as low as possible,

and training must push units out of their comfort zones. This is not always easy to do, but should remain a primary goal. A high-risk environment will understandably make soldiers, consciously or instinctively, place a focus on the level of medical support they are provided. Soldiers understandably prefer medical assets near their positions, even if this might decrease their effectiveness. Provided situational awareness and proper medical support, soldiers will perform admirably.

Expecting the Unexpected: Experiences of Leadership Challenges in Crisis Management in Chad from a LEGAD Perspective

Jarmo Metsävainio

Leadership challenges vary depending of the type of operation and position one holds in the organization. This topic is approached from the perspective of Legal Adviser (LEGAD) to EUFOR Chad/RCA Operation Commander (OPCDR) LTG Patrick Nash and member of the OHQ Command Group. Advisers and HQ staff are key elements that support the OPCDR's planning and decision-making, even though final decisions are made by the OPCDR alone. Leadership challenges and the method for solving them are elaborated by providing three different types of real life examples in a multinational military operation, sharing personal experiences and lessons learned. In a multinational OHQ environment where diverse differently motivated opinions and interests are floating around, it is concluded that the best way of tackling the challenges from the LEGAD perspective is always the normative approach, combined with solid coherent reasoning in support of legal opinions.

Practicing Leadership Through Advising in Afghanistan

Kari Sainio

ISAF's (International Security Assistance Force) mission is shifting progressively from a combat-centric role to a more enabling role focusing on training, advising and assisting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The author served in the Partnering Advisory Task Group North (PATG N) from April 2012 to May 2013 as an Advisor to the Chief of Staff (COS) of the 209th ANA Corps. The main efforts of advisors in the PATG N was to develop and enhance the leadership, management and planning capabilities of the 209th Corps Command Group (corps commander, deputy commander and chief of staff) and branch heads. Based on author's experience it seems that, when advising "leadership through partner", staff work and overlapping information sharing according a Western understanding (e.g. regular meetings in different specialized groups, creating/providing of unit-specialized orders, regulations and decrees in addition to official papers etc.) are not compatible with the Afghan culture and are difficult to mediate. Furthermore the advisors too often impose their own systems on the Afghans e.g. operational planning, rather than considering an "Afghan-centered" or "Afghan sustainable" approach. In advising the fundamental principle is that the final choice, decision or action is always made by the partner – either based on the option(s) given by the advisor or based on the partner's own thinking, assessment and judgment after discussion with his partner. In the "leadership through partner" advisory

process success is based on the advisor's ability to establish credibility, provide value and develop relationships.

Extended Dimensions of Crisis Management Leadership

Kalle Liesinen

This article concentrates on strategic and operational leadership. Volatile circumstances add to the burden of all leaders who are used to working in stable and non-hostile surroundings. However, crisis management leadership calls for much more ability than the volatile situation alone does. The number one conclusion is the importance of understanding culture. According to the author's experience, international crisis management missions underscore three decisive aspects needed for successful leadership: culture, communication and trust. There are always issues that remain the same from tactical leadership to strategic supervision, but all bits and pieces do not match from one culture or organisation to another. Common features can be found in crisis management mission leadership practices and headquarters routines. The author illustrates crisis management leadership dimensions as restrictions of possibilities, as space for activities and as a "multiverse" of alternative realities. Often there is no choice between these interpretations. However, just as often the leader may extend her or his potential within the predicted role. This framework is illuminated by practical experiences and examples. The perspective is that of a mission head. It gives the author refreshing possibilities to weigh also often untouchable sectors like the advisory cluster. The author's criticism is directed at unprofessionalism that may undermine important subjects, discusses the root causes and sees the interdependency of crisis management organisations. His vision is clear: Integrate crisis management and consider it as a long process where timely input from several organisations form a planned continuum. The relevant policies are those of the national governments.

Leading the Start-up – Challenges of Military Leadership in the Initial Phases of a New Operation

Laura Valli

From the national perspective, a variety of resource management tools are available when building up a new operation. Project management often includes evaluation of several, more or less materiel-based factors. Nevertheless, military personnel around the world often have their own leadership programs and paradigms that they follow. One factor, however, seems to be taken for granted in the military context; that soldiers know how to lead in every phase of a project. In this article I examine the special characteristics of the operation start-up phase in partly familiar operational environments and the challenges that the leadership faces. In addition, this article provides ideas for further discussion concerning leadership and project management skills. The keywords are leadership and project management skills in operation start-up.

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Experiences of Leadership Challenges in Crisis Management

In the last few years global crises have arisen fairly rapidly and sometimes even on an unpredictable scale. In order to find solutions to these crises one must use a comprehensive approach and all the tools in the toolbox. A strong political will needs to be present, as well as a sufficient amount of capable civilian and military actors in the crisis area that act according to agreed common goals. This should include all internal or international parties involved in the crisis and it requires information sharing, mutual trust and cooperation with leaders in the field. Personal leadership skills play an important role in recognising the challenges of these present day multi-dimensional and multi-complex crisis management contexts.

This volume seeks to address the question of how leaders, working in the field of crisis management, in various positions and operations, act when "expecting the unexpected". The aim has been to collect personal accounts of leadership situations when the professional skills, knowledge and practice of leaders have been put to the test. It seeks to provide a picture of how these leadership challenges have been faced, how strategies of action have been developed and solutions identified, and how relational and emotional aspects have played a role in the coping strategies employed. These stories from the field have an instructive value; they can aid us in better understanding the complex world of crisis management, gain some food for thought, and finally, learn how to plan, support and conduct future operations.

This publication is the sixth and final one in the FINCENT publication series on the theme of crisis management.

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