

A Decade of U.S. Military Humanitarianism:

Its Effect On International
Non-Governmental Organizations
and Civilian Populations

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List of Abbreviations

CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CENTCOM	Central Command (of U.S. military)
CJCMOTF	Coalition Joint Civil-Military Task Force
CMO	Civil-Military Operation
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OPR	Operation Provide Relief
ORH	Operation Restore Hope
PRT	Provincial (or Provisional) Reconstruction Team
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan

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Introduction

On Wednesday, November 5th, 2003, the Art and History Foundation in Geneva, Switzerland held a forum in which experts spoke about situations in Iraq before and after Saddam Hussein's rule. One of the event's three experts was Antonella Notari, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, headquartered in Geneva. Ms. Notari discussed Red Cross involvement in Iraq over the past 23 years and also spoke of the recent October 27th bombing of the ICRC in Baghdad. Following her presentation, time was taken for audience questions. The last comment came from a young, Iraqi woman who attacked the work of the ICRC and said that their employees were the same as soldiers and could not be separated from the U.S. and Allied military presence currently occupying Iraq. With limited time to respond, the ICRC spokeswoman ended her presentation with "*Nous ne sommes pas de soldats*" (We are not soldiers) and tried to emphasize the independent, neutral mission of the ICRC to the young woman.¹

The International Committee of the Red Cross, one of the world's leading humanitarian organizations, has provided assistance in Iraq since 1980. During this time, the people of Iraq have experienced three wars, internal conflict, 12 years of sanctions, an occupation, and now an interim government. The ICRC has tried to alleviate suffering during these conflicts, yet there continues to be controversy over their presence in Iraq, as

¹ Notari, Antonella. Spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross. Colloque de la Fondation Art et Histoire. Uni-Bastions, Geneva. November 5, 2003.

demonstrated by the audience member's opinion of the ICRC and the October 27th attack. Maintaining neutrality, independence, and impartiality at all times, the International Committee of the Red Cross works hard to provide assistance that is not associated with politics and/or militaries. As expressed by the young woman's negative opinion, however, the ICRC image is not always conveyed correctly to the recipient communities. Today, confusion clouds the work of humanitarian organizations, leaving the sector in need of a clear definition of what it means to provide "humanitarian assistance".

The audience member's misunderstanding of the ICRC and its mandate of neutrality is not surprising, as the past decade has witnessed a massive increase in the number of actors participating in "humanitarianism." The *Humanitarian Accountability Project*, a non-governmental organization based in Geneva, claims that participation in humanitarian work has expanded to include "governmental departments, local public authorities, multilateral agencies, the Red Cross Movement, national and international NGOs, grassroots organizations, civil defence forces, military contingents and private for-profit companies."² Increased attention for humanitarian affairs can act as a positive force for success in the field. Multiple actors, though, each with different goals and mandates can bring confusion to the field as well, as "not all of these [actors] are driven by a 'humanitarian' ethic and humanitarian action may be politicized, militarized and commercialized."³

Mirroring the international trend of Western militaries, the United States armed forces have carried out numerous interventions over the past decade in the name of

²"Threats to Humanitarian Aid & Accountability. " The Humanitarian Accountability Project. www.hapgeneva.org. Geneva, Switzerland. November 14, 2003.

³ "Threats to Humanitarian Aid & Accountability. " The Humanitarian Accountability Project. www.hapgeneva.org. Geneva, Switzerland. November 14, 2003.

humanitarianism, most notably in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, and Afghanistan, as well as Haiti and Liberia. Equipped with greater resources and funding than most international NGOs, the U.S. military has flown supplies and food into areas of conflict, provided security for aid workers, and has more recently involved itself in the building of schools and clinics. Unilateral military involvement in humanitarianism, however, is often considered a violation of the core humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence, as militaries cannot separate themselves from the politically-driven, self-interested governments which they represent.

Dedicated to fighting the war on terror, America currently seeks to improve its image around the world, and the U.S. military therefore recognizes the importance of participating in humanitarian projects. Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International prefaces the organization's 2004 Annual Report by noting,

The global security agenda promoted by the US Administration is bankrupt of vision and bereft of principle. Violating rights at home, turning a blind eye to abuses abroad and using preemptive military force where and when it chooses has damaged justice and freedom, and made the world a more dangerous place.⁴

In combating terrorism, the United States has neither respected international law nor the general opinions represented by many UN member countries. Thus, military humanitarianism may allow America to redeem itself within the international community. Military humanitarianism, however, does not receive automatic approval and has not always been regarded as beneficial to civilian populations or helpful to international non-governmental organizations, which are considered the real experts in the humanitarian field.

⁴ "Amnesty International Report 2004." Amnesty International. Message from the Secretary General. www.amnesty.org. May 2004.

This research paper seeks to explore the effect U.S. military humanitarianism has had on international non-governmental organizations when the two groups are working simultaneously in areas of conflict, as well as to examine civilian benefits and/or losses resulting directly from U.S. military humanitarianism. To discover these effects, case studies in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq will be examined. U.S. military humanitarianism does not appear to be a short-lived phenomenon, thus, researching the relationship between U.S. armed forces and international non-governmental organizations is significant. After occupying Iraq for a year, the United States has left the country weak, divided, and in need of tremendous reconstruction. The U.S. military and international NGOs hoping to work in Iraq will need to draw on past experiences, as well as the current process of reconstruction in Afghanistan, in order to approach the humanitarian situation in Iraq as effectively as possible. Similar to the armed forces, most NGO employees are foreigners in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and the security of everyone must be taken into consideration. A British Civil Affairs Officer working in Afghanistan explained,

There is a clear need to identify and safeguard the principles of protection, both for the local populations and for the NGOs. Being “tainted” by the military can permanently undermine the NGOs’ options for working within a local community and lead to reprisal attacks...If they want to strike foreigners why should they bother to differentiate?⁵

In keeping the safety of military personnel, NGO personnel, and civilians in mind, non-governmental organizations will need to clearly define the relationship between themselves and the U.S. military, as well as decide if cooperation, or even coordination, is possible and/or needed between these two groups. Currently, “cooperation or even

⁵ Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004.

interaction between the two is...not always self-evident...there is a lack of applied research and policy making in this field, which creates awkwardness and uncertainty for all of the parties active in humanitarian action.”⁶ Each humanitarian organization must decide what kind of relationship to have with the military, as “soldiers will continue to assume responsibility for performing humanitarian missions.”⁷ Military humanitarianism is a phenomenon which is quickly becoming a norm in international relations, thus examining its effect on international NGOs and civilian populations is vital for successful operations.

⁶ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Disability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March 2003. p.5.

⁷ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Disability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March 2003. p.5.

Context

Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, the roles of the U.S. military, as well as UN peacekeeping and NATO forces, have become more and more unclear. After World War II, the U.S. military focused almost all of its efforts preventing the victory of an ideological enemy. Since 1991, though, the world has moved on from a polarized struggle between communism and capitalism into a phase full of intra-state conflicts tearing apart nations and neighbors from one another. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan explains,

State sovereignty in its most basic sense is being redefined by the forces of globalization and international cooperation...Just as we have learned that the world cannot stand aside when gross and systemic violations of human rights are taking place, so we have also learned that intervention must be based on legitimate and universal principles if it is to enjoy the sustained support of the world's peoples.⁸

The militaries of the West have experienced a great change in their missions, objectives, and identities since the end of the Cold War.⁹ Thomas Weiss explains that, “The end of the Cold War removed the *raison d'être* for the bulk of military spending in the West, which in turn provided an occasion for the military to become more heavily engaged in humanitarian action.”¹⁰ The recent phenomena of conflict occurring more often within a state's borders than between nation-states have left the international military powers confused and unsure of their future purpose. Should the U.S. military or UN peacekeeping operations act as international police forces, and if so, how does a nation's sovereignty affect a military's right to intervene in an intra-state conflict without blatantly

⁸ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.100.

⁹ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.7.

¹⁰ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.17.

violating international law? Or, rather, as the report “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies” explains, “ultimately, everything is summed up in the question of whether soldiers should indeed perform humanitarian missions (with as a sub-question, what should we regard as a humanitarian mission)?”¹¹

Military involvement in international humanitarian work over the past ten years has become a crucial topic of debate among military personnel, as well as those employed by international organizations. The mission of soldiers has expanded to include, “protecting relief transports and providing assistance to the population (by)...repairing infrastructure, reconstructing houses, distributing food, setting up tent camps, giving medical assistance...tasks which earlier belonged exclusively within the domain of international organisations and non-governmental relief organisations”¹²

Military humanitarianism has existed for centuries, “in fact, there is an almost automatic association in most of the public’s minds between the military and disaster relief... The earliest recorded instances [of military humanitarianism] predate Alexander the Great.”¹³

In times of natural disaster or complex emergency, militaries have historically been the only group with the resources to offer assistance to civilian populations. In their article “Can Military Intervention be Humanitarian?” Alex de Waal and Rakiya Omaar explain,

The classic examples of 19th-century military “humanitarian intervention” occurred when Britain, France and Russia cited persecution of Christians in Muslim-ruled territories of the Ottoman Empire. Britain intervened in Greece in 1830; France sent a military expedition to Syria and Lebanon in

¹¹ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.9.

¹² “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium, March, 2003. p.5.

¹³ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.15.

1860...The motives of European rulers were influenced by public opinion at home, but strategic interests also played a crucial role.¹⁴

Colonization carried out by European countries in the hopes of “spreading civilization” could even be considered a form of military humanitarianism. “The alleged abuses suffered by ethnic Germans were cited as a reason for the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia,” indicating that political agendas have at times been masked by humanitarian “concerns,” legitimate or otherwise.¹⁵ National governments have been responsible for humanitarian crises for centuries, as they have traditionally been the only qualified group able to make a difference. Prior to the creation of the IMF, World Bank, and United Nations, “development activity was the monopoly of the state.”¹⁶

Since the end of the Cold War, the United Nations has been able to develop more effective programs which address gross violations of human rights and threats to human security, allowing resolutions to experience greater success. During the Cold War, the polarization which occurred between the Soviet Union and the United States prevented any significant action from being approved by the UN Security Council. The United States was usually unwilling to intervene in times of humanitarian crises if the country in need was within the Soviet bloc; likewise, the Soviet Union was uninterested in aiding countries siding with the U.S. and its capitalist policies. The past decade, however, has seen remarkable accomplishments made by the United Nations in the field of humanitarianism, namely through peacekeeping operations and the establishment of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), formerly the Department

¹⁴ De Waal, Alex and Omaar, Rakiya. “Can Military Intervention be Humanitarian?” Middle East Report. No. 187/188. Middle East Research and Information Project. March-June 1994. p.4.

¹⁵ De Waal, Alex and Omaar, Rakiya . “Can Military Intervention be Humanitarian?” Middle East Report. No. 187/188. Middle East Research and Information Project. March-June 1994. p.4.

¹⁶ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.9.

of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). Without an official United Nations' military force, peacekeeping operations have been developed by relying on a multitude of international armed forces. The phenomenon of UN peacekeeping operations “not only answer(s) the questions of how to reorient the military as an institution, but also responds to public demands to ‘do something’ about the new manifestations of violence, i.e. intrastate conflicts.”¹⁷ In his book, Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises, Thomas Weiss notes,

An ethos is evolving in which the contribution of military resources to major humanitarian crises is coming to represent a key element in the exercise of global stewardship. The commitment of troops is becoming the new “currency of the realm.”... Governments who in earlier years provided humanitarian assistance now offer military assets... Governments that had previously welcomed the established aid agencies now receive foreign troops as well.¹⁸

The United Nations' peacekeeping forces, known as “blue helmets,” have offered assistance in times of natural disaster, political oppression, and genocide. Currently, the United Nations has sixteen PKOs with 55,457 troops deployed around the world [see Appendix 1].¹⁹ These soldiers are unarmed or lightly armed and may only use force in self-defense. For the purpose of this study, however, UN military humanitarianism will not be examined, as “the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces can usually be classified as diplomatic, rather than military, intervention. Peacekeepers are deployed with the consent of the combatant parties as part of a diplomatic process.”²⁰ This consent separates UN peacekeeping operations from military humanitarianism as carried out by

¹⁷ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium, March, 2003. p.8.

¹⁸ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.18.

¹⁹ “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.” Background Note. <http://www.un.org/peace/bnote010101.pdf>. June 1, 2004.

²⁰ De Waal, Alex and Omaar, Rakiya . “Can Military Intervention be Humanitarian?” Middle East Report. No. 187/188. Middle East Research and Information Project. March-June 1994. p.6.

the United States, or any other unilateral force which intervenes without the approval of all combatant parties involved in the crises.

As an increase in the number of peacekeeping operations and military humanitarianism has occurred, so has an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations, whose growth has been a phenomenon on its own. “Estimates for the number of international NGOs (operating in more than three countries) hover around 20,000, a figure that represents a doubling in the last half decade and an explosion over the last half century—there were only 700 in 1939.”²¹ Thomas Weiss, co-director of the Humanitarianism and War Project at Brown University, explains,

It is fair to say that the hallmark of NGOs is their link to the grass roots and their action orientation. They are normally reputed to be more nonbureaucratic, flexible, and creative than their governmental or intergovernmental counterparts; and they are certainly less constrained by legal formalities and diplomatic niceties. NGOs have assumed an increasing importance in the last decade and can no longer be dismissed as “do-gooders.”²²

Non-governmental organizations have established themselves within the international community and have become “essential players in the international response to humanitarian emergencies, human rights abuses, physical and societal reconstruction needs, and reconciliation challenges resulting from conflict, natural disasters, and other major upheavals.”²³ Involving militaries in humanitarian work has without a doubt encouraged humanitarian NGOs to establish a clear relationship (or separation) between

²¹ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.28.

²² Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.11.

²³ Aall, Pamela, Miltenberger, Lt. Col. Daniel T., Weiss, Thomas G. Guide to IGOs, NGOs, and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations. United States Institute of Peace Press. Washington, DC. 2000. p.87.

themselves and the military. Currently, no clear cut distinction indicating the appropriate realm of soldiers' work exists. Within the humanitarian sector, a consensus regarding the military's role in humanitarian affairs cannot be reached. Humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), and the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) have responded to the recent increase in military humanitarianism by each developing an official strategy adopted to fit their own organizational needs.

The relationship between international organizations and those militaries involved in humanitarian assistance is unclear and for the most part, undeveloped. NGOs have undoubtedly benefited at times from the humanitarian assistance provided by military operations when the two sectors have encountered one another in the field. The U.S. military, for example, has resources humanitarian organizations may not be able to obtain and can transport large amounts of food and medical supplies quickly into an area of high conflict and little or no security. Charles Bierbauer of CNN describes military humanitarian assistance as "plight and might," indicating that "No matter how desperate the indigenous situation, the story gets better when the troops arrive."²⁴ Often, the presence of troops also leads to greater U.S. media coverage, which in turn leads to greater funding for the area facing serious conflict (i.e. the CNN effect). Thus, one would think at first glance, that the expansion of the humanitarian sector to include military work would result in greater benefits for those in desperate need of assistance from the international community. But how does the United States decide which countries or communities should benefit from U.S. military intervention? Unfortunately,

²⁴ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.107.

the international community “is not inclined to undertake effective action with regard to these intrastate conflicts unless there exists a political and financial link with the North. If there is an involvement, it is usually based on material rather than on ethical considerations.”²⁵ For example, the U.S. military is willing to save the Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein, but the U.S. media (and military) continue to ignore the ever-growing humanitarian crisis in the Sudan.

Amnesty International’s 2004 Annual Report acknowledges a positive correlation between military abuses and military humanitarianism, in that both have increased over the past decade. Amnesty International also reports that “violence by armed groups and increasing violations by governments have combined to produce the most sustained attack on human rights and international humanitarian law in 50 years.”²⁶ This information encourages the closer study of the effect of military humanitarianism, and in the case of this research, U.S. military humanitarianism, as the United States is the global superpower and is currently the greatest unilateral force involved in military humanitarianism around the world.

The scope of U.S. military operations involving humanitarian assistance is wide, and to include all of them would confuse this research. The United States Army Civil Affairs Unit, for example, works with “civil authorities and civilian populations in the commander’s area of operations to lessen the impact of military operations on them during peace, contingency operations and declared war.”²⁷ This unit has worked in over

²⁵ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.13.

²⁶ “Amnesty International Annual Report 2004.” Amnesty International. Message from the Secretary General. www.amnesty.org. May, 2004.

²⁷ United States Army Civil Affairs Unit. Fact Sheet. http://www.soc.mil/usacapoc/capoc_default.htm. April 10, 2004.

40 countries since its creation under four specific groups: (1) Foreign Disaster Relief and Emergency Response, (2) Humanitarian Assistance Program, (3) Humanitarian Civic Assistance, and (4) Humanitarian Mine Action (see Appendix 2). These actions fall under the realm of military humanitarianism, but are not as significant for this research as U.S. military operations which support the use of force while simultaneously offering humanitarian assistance. Currently, the United States is involved in two major combat and humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Analysis of U.S. military humanitarianism, therefore, can provide the international community with a better understanding of the positive and negative aspects of this recent U.S. military practice.

Literature Review

General Perspectives of Military Humanitarianism

Perspectives on military humanitarianism range from an all-out rejection of the military's legitimacy or right to participate in providing assistance to an acceptance of the military's interest and a call for cooperation between the humanitarian and military sectors. To begin, realist theory argues that "foreign policy should not place the promotion of human rights overseas at its core because states should only be concerned with pursuing their own material interests."²⁸ The recent interest in military humanitarianism does not coincide with the "self-interest" priority, as emphasized by realist theory. As the dominant international relations theory, realism offers interesting insight on this topic, as it almost implies that if military humanitarianism does exist, it is simply an additional way for a nation-state to pursue its own interests. This theory does not explain the operations of UN peacekeepers, though, as they are not a typical nation-state, and therefore are not necessarily pursuing their own material interests. In his article, "What's so wrong with Human Rights?" Alex Bellamy explains that, "socialists and critics sympathetic to a critical agenda in international relations have argued that interventionist acts and the new rhetoric of human rights sponsored by Western states mask a neo-imperialist politics of denomination."²⁹ In the study, "Humanitarian Intervention and Just War," humanitarian intervention is considered "one of the primary international security problems of today...it sits at the intersection of the realist and

²⁸ Bellamy, Alex. "What's So Wrong with Human Rights?" *International Journal of Human Rights*. Vol. 6, No. 4. 2002.

²⁹ Bellamy, Alex. "What's So Wrong with Human Rights?" *International Journal of Human Rights*. Vol. 6, No. 4. 2002.

idealist traditions in the study of international relations.”³⁰ Since the end of the Cold War, military humanitarianism has not yet been fully understood, let alone defined in a manner agreed upon by international relations’ experts.

In Larry Minear’s book, The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries, he explains,

These concepts [of military humanitarianism and military intervention] have placed on the defensive people who have sought to take a more principled approach to charting their operational courses of action. Used loosely, the terms have confused rather than clarified the debate about the essentials of humanitarian action and the role of the military in it.³¹

Many experts claim that the term “humanitarian intervention” is an oxymoron, “since humanitarian assistance as framed by the Geneva Conventions and Protocols is a matter of consent.”³² Whether or not this term is an oxymoron, however, becomes irrelevant, because humanitarian intervention has frequently occurred over the past decade, and will most likely continue to occur in the future. Thus, the real question becomes how to integrate military humanitarianism with the rest of the humanitarian sector, made up mostly of international organizations (both governmental and non-governmental). At the end of the 20th century, many international relations’ experts suspected that the new military humanitarianism was a phenomenon of the 1990s, but the past few years have indicated that military involvement in humanitarian work will continue, and possibly become even more frequent, with soldiers participating in a wide range of humanitarian

³⁰ Fixdal, Mona and Smith, Dan. “Humanitarian Intervention and Just War.” *Mershon International Studies Review*, 1998. p.1.

³¹ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.116-117.

³² Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.101.

positions. U.S. Ambassador Richard H. Solomon, who serves as President of the United States Institute of Peace, believes,

The sheer number of these peacemaking efforts has provoked a sharp debate about the international community's obligation to respond to every conflict. It seems, however, that as long as these conflicts target civilians and result in gross violations of human rights and humanitarian disaster, the international community will continue to intervene.³³

But how thinly can a nation's military be spread across the world saving civilians from intra-state conflicts? And, as a follow-up question, how successful is military humanitarianism in assisting the affected communities? "Outside military intervention can improve access and help move relief goods and contribute to an environment in which human rights abuses become less frequent... But the presence of outside military forces in and of itself cannot be expected to end war."³⁴ Similarly, authors Alex de Waal and Omaar Rakiya believe "Military humanitarian intervention has its own logic, which is difficult to reconcile with the demands of peacekeeping and reconstruction. It is never 'clean' nor quick. It cannot solve humanitarian crises; it can only alter them."³⁵

When examining the issue of security in the humanitarian field, the relationship between militaries (from both inside and outside countries where aid is provided) and humanitarian organizations is important to consider. In defending the importance of this relationship, Hugo Slim claims,

³³ Aall, Pamela, Miltenberger, Lt. Col. Daniel T., Weiss, Thomas G. Guide to IGOs, NGOs, and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations. United States Institute of Peace Press. Washington, DC. 2000. p.x-xi.

³⁴ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.37-38.

³⁵ De Waal, Alex and Omaar, Rakiya. "Can Military Intervention be 'Humanitarian?'" Middle East Report. No.187/188. Middle East Research and Information Project. March-June 1994. p.2.

In their anxiety about soldiers being humanitarians, are some NGO humanitarians paradoxically suggesting that “even humanitarianism has limits” while they are also arguing that it is a universal ethic and duty? NGOs can operate the humanitarian ethic *sans frontieres* but others cannot.³⁶

Though humanitarian organizations have faults and do not provide assistance perfectly, their concern about military actions carried out in the name of “humanitarian interventions” is valid, as this terminology can often be used as a mask, covering hidden agendas. Hugo Slim suggests that militaries should not be automatically excluded by NGOs from the field of humanitarianism, which is an important argument to consider. However, when humanitarian organizations are working in the field and are trying to establish a neutral position, military presence could create an even more challenging environment.

There is a difficult relationship between impartiality and security, for example, a strict adherence to the definition of impartiality, and a resultant willingness to be associated with security forces, may lead agencies to abandon populations when there is no secure access to them...the implications of impartiality need to be reconsidered in light of the need to recognize that, in practice, humanitarian assistance cannot be considered in isolation from the provision of security.³⁷

One of the humanitarian sector’s greatest threats to security occurs when the local populations observe multiple groups doing the same work, and it is not clear in their minds as to who is the military target, whether legitimate or not, and who is not. ICRC Security Delegate Mick Greenwood suggests that the blur between military action and humanitarian action becomes more confused, which in turn causes the civilian community to have a hard time distinguishing between “relief” organizations and

³⁶ Slim, Hugo. « Humanitarianism with Borders? NGOs, Belligerent Military Forces and Humanitarian Action. » *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*. March 31, 2003. p 2.

³⁷ Hybertsen, Bente and Suhrke, Astri and Tjore, Gro. « Humanitarian Assistance & Conflict: A-State-of-the-Art Report. » 1998. p 23.

national militaries.³⁸ If the civilians cannot distinguish between the two groups, then both groups become targets. Agnes Callamard et.al note,

an uneasy relationship exists between aid and politics—in particular the politicization and militarisation of humanitarian aid... (which) include the blurring between military and humanitarian operations, the selective funding of humanitarian crises, or the use of humanitarian assistance as a conflict management tool.³⁹

Military presence, therefore, can endanger humanitarian staff who may be mistaken for military personnel when working in the field.

Hugo Slim goes on to explain,

The root of NGO resistance to military kindness is, therefore, not about the impossibility that soldiers can be kind but about the political and military interest behind such kindness. It is the problem of belligerent interests and enemy perception of these interests that I assume to be at the heart of NGO anxiety about soldiers being humanitarian.⁴⁰

These “belligerent interests” can create more risks for humanitarian organizations providing assistance, as military action carried out in the name of “humanitarian intervention” can give valid humanitarian work a bad reputation and can carry out military agendas that are hidden behind humanitarian efforts. The use of force, however, must be recognized in this debate as a tool which the military possesses and the humanitarian sector does not. Deadly force may not always be the answer, but in today’s international system, it is used often by militaries to bring about change. If militaries will continue to use force in their operations, should not the reason behind this force at least have a humanitarian component? Humanitarian organizations are vital to alleviating the

³⁸ Greenwood, Mick. Security Delegate. International Committee of the Red Cross. Interview. Geneva, Switzerland. November 19, 2003.

³⁹ Callamard, Agnes and Van Brabant, Koenraad. “Reclaiming humanitarianism? The necessity of accountability.” *Insights: Development Research*, issue 39. www.id21.org. January, 2002. p 1.

⁴⁰ Slim, Hugo. « Humanitarianism with Borders? NGOs, Belligerent Military Forces and Humanitarian Action. » *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*. March 31, 2003. p 3.

suffering in the midst of complex emergencies, but these organizations lack the power used by militaries to stop conflict. Larry Minear insists that “two lessons have emerged from the decade: that military force may be needed to protect vulnerable civilian populations and humanitarian personnel, and that its application may have deleterious effects on civilians and humanitarian operations.”⁴¹

Humanitarian organizations are more often able to successfully help those who have already been affected by conflict, but the military can be used to protect vulnerable civilian populations before the conflict will reach them. Both the military and humanitarian organizations must accept the fact that each group can offer something beneficial which the other group simply cannot. But how much assistance should each group accept from one another? Ted van Baarda explains,

If the humanitarian community does not accept any protection, it might on occasion, find itself in a situation where it can deliver no assistance at all. If, on the other hand, the humanitarian community accepts military protection whole-heartedly and unreservedly, the warring parties will distrust humanitarian organizations and not allow them to pass. Somewhere along this line a modus vivendi may have to be found and a decision has to be made about the price, in political currency, humanitarian organizations are willing to pay.⁴²

Some organizations, however, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, refuse to accept any kind of protection from armed forces, as it goes against their mandates. Exceptions have been made, though, if accepting security from armed forces is absolutely the only way to operate within a certain area. For example, the ICRC refuses all military protection, except when working in Chechnya, where, as Security

⁴¹ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.115.

⁴² Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.115.

Delegate Mick Greenwood explains that the organization would simply be unable to operate without security forces protecting employees.⁴³ As each organization must decide for itself how it will interact with actions of military humanitarianism, there is no clear-cut understanding of the relationship that should exist between these groups.

Thomas Weiss notes,

The growing conventional wisdom is that humanitarian intervention—or coercive measures by outside military forces to ensure access to civilians or the protection of rights without the consent of local political authorities—is infeasible and unsustainable. Moreover, many civilian humanitarians argue that military force complicates their work because, in the short run, it works against the impartiality, neutrality, and consent that have traditionally underpinned their work; and in the long run, it addresses none of the structural problems or root causes that had led to the eruption of violence. In fact, the increasing number of attacks on NGO and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) staff indicate that even without military forces the traditional principles of humanitarian aid workers are no shield against violence and even death.⁴⁴

The greatest amount of humanitarian assistance will occur if the military and the humanitarian sector agree that “cooperation and a multi agency approach are needed before hostilities begin, with coordinated contingency planning that does not compromise the assistance community’s neutrality or independence of action.”⁴⁵

The best example of this type of coordination first occurred in the Balkans in the mid-1990s, where,

Both communities made a concerted effort to participate in joint training and planning efforts. In the field, both communities gained considerable practical experience working with, and around, one another in the Balkans – first in Bosnia, then in Kosovo. This shared experience in the Balkans

⁴³ Greenwood, Mick. Security Delegate. International Committee of the Red Cross. Interview. Geneva, Switzerland. November 19, 2003.

⁴⁴ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.3-4.

⁴⁵ Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.3.

allowed the civil and military communities to establish a basic understanding of respective roles and responsibilities during complex emergency operations.⁴⁶

In April 1999, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, said the military objective was to “degrade and damage the military and security structure that President Milosevic has used to depopulate and destroy the Albanian majority in Kosovo.”⁴⁷ The bombing campaign carried out by NATO forces, including 31,600 U.S. troops, is believed to have brought an earlier end to the genocide being carried out by Milosevic and his followers. This was an objective which clearly could not be accomplished by the humanitarian organizations operating in the Balkans, which dealt mostly with the massive refugee crisis.

Not all civilian humanitarians considered the military humanitarian action to be successful. The chief of UNHCR operations for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993 claimed that “...any attempt to use force has a whiplash effect throughout the entire operation. The minute you use force, you make the entire [humanitarian] operation untenable.”⁴⁸ Most experts working in the field at that time, however, believe that “military assets used during the Kosovo crisis played an important surge protector function at a time when humanitarian organizations were overwhelmed by the scale of the refugee crisis,” but also hope to see the “future role of the military in the humanitarian arena as exceptional rather than routine.”⁴⁹ Though many civilian humanitarians would like to continue to exclude the military from humanitarian work,

⁴⁶ Devendorf, George. “Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

⁴⁷ NATO Operation Allied Force: Mission. <http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/kosovo/>. April 9, 2004.

⁴⁸ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.102.

⁴⁹ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.105.

acceptance, in general, “is growing of the legitimacy and appropriateness of using military force in support of humanitarian values and of having military assets play a contributing role in broader relief and rights activities.”⁵⁰ One of the most insightful opinions on this topic comes from the Belgium Minister of Defense Andre Flahaut, who maintains “it is about time that certain military and humanitarian circles, which employ philosophical, administrative, or bureaucratic hairsplitting to avoid changing their views, instead learn to adopt a more pragmatic approach to solving the problems of people who are in urgent need of assistance.”⁵¹ Though humanitarian organizations have a valid concern regarding military humanitarianism, organizations should be encouraged to think more seriously of the military’s affect on civilian populations, and less about the military’s affect on their own organizations.

⁵⁰ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.100.

⁵¹ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.10.

U.S. Military Humanitarianism

In 1994, amidst NATO's humanitarian intervention in the Balkans, U.S. Secretary of Defense William I. Perry announced, "We field an army, not a Salvation Army. Generally the military is not the right tool to meet humanitarian concerns."⁵² Seven years later, President Bush "promised to reconstruct Afghanistan," where, "in view of severe security threats it [had] apparently fallen to the US military to implement a system whereby reconstruction projects can be carried out while still protecting personnel."⁵³ Historically, U.S. Civil Affairs soldiers have provided humanitarian assistance to communities in need, but the past decade has witnessed a greater number of U.S. soldiers working to achieve a humanitarian goal.

The most noticeable difference over the past decade, however, is the simultaneity of U.S. military humanitarianism with U.S. military combat activity. While Civil Affairs officers reconstruct areas after combat has ended, U.S. soldiers today are carrying out reconstruction projects almost as soon as combat activity begins. Why has this change taken place? Central Command Combatant Commander, General Tommy Franks indicated "the key to success in Afghanistan was two-pillared: 1) kill the bad guys; and 2) demonstrate to the Afghan people that they had the support of the international community."⁵⁴ In the midst of U.S. military combat operations, the U.S. military also

...performs two sets of functions in the humanitarian arena: logistics (relief activities and support for civilian relief agencies) and security. Inevitably, physical succor to victims jumps to the imagination in thinking

⁵² Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.103.

⁵³ "The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction." www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.1.

⁵⁴ Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

about the impact of fulfilling both logistics and security functions; but the armed forces also protect the human rights of victims.⁵⁵

This simultaneity of U.S. military missions has caused a large amount of controversy within the field. In a presentation focused on current U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan at Harvard University's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, George Devendorf explained,

At the heart of this matter is the mixed mandate of being pursued by the U.S. military – an approach that has troops engaging simultaneously in both offensive combat operations and aid efforts. To the humanitarian community, such a mixed mandate – at turns ferocious and magnanimous – threatens to undermine the trust aid agencies have worked hard to establish with local Afghan communities during the past two decades.⁵⁶

It is important to note that U.S. military humanitarianism is not a new phenomenon, as U.S. forces have often participated in humanitarian operations. The U.S. military, for example, “has rushed to the scene of Hurricane Andrew in Florida, helped Bangladesh when monsoons struck (troops happened to be in the area on the way back from Somalia), and aided the Philippines (where there was a U.S. base) when a volcano erupted.”⁵⁷ The more recent, and extremely noteworthy, component of U.S. military humanitarianism is that, now, it is being employed in areas where U.S. troops are continuing to use deadly force to achieve a military goal.

The United States military now places greater emphasis on human security and reconstruction.

⁵⁵ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.14-15.

⁵⁶ Devendorf, George. “Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

⁵⁷ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.17.

As conflicts down grade from high intensity conflict to persistent low level fighting, humanitarian agencies are not guaranteed safety. The merging of development and security therefore is becoming a more critical necessity. By comparison, prior military interventions included the use of Civil Affairs soldiers in reconstruction and humanitarian activities, and assisting in supporting the work of others. Even while “inadvertently” overlooking aid to Afghanistan in the latest national budget, in 2002 the US did devote the largest share of its Afghan spending on humanitarian aid signaling a shift in its focus from conflict to reconstruction.⁵⁸

This “shift,” which has provided reconstruction efforts with greater resources and funding, has also expanded to include the U.S. military, which has become more concerned with security issues over the past few years. The military wants to offer protection to civilian humanitarians providing assistance in the field, but also wants to improve its own level of security by involving itself in projects deemed “humanitarian.” The most notable example of this recent U.S. military agenda occurred,

When planning at the Central Command (CENTCOM) in Tampa, Florida began shortly after the attacks of September 11th, Coalition members were joined by representatives of the World Food Program, InterAction, and the United Nations Joint Logistics Center, among others. While these organizations remained in trailers in the CENTCOM parking lot and would not join in actual planning efforts, they were present from the beginning to ensure that the civil aspect was synchronized with the military to the extent that different mandates and missions would allow. They were also there to assure the military that the civilian relief community had the humanitarian situation under control.⁵⁹

Though not involved in actual planning efforts, the presence of these organizations at the CENTCOM meeting reveals the U.S. military interest in playing a greater role within the humanitarian sector.

⁵⁸ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.7.

⁵⁹ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

With UN peacekeeping forces and more than 20,000 NGOs operating in three or more countries, U.S. military involvement in humanitarianism may, at first, seem unnecessary. Thomas Weiss defines military humanitarianism as “the application of deadly force without the consent of a sovereign state to sustain human values,” and defines militarized humanitarian intervention as “an indication that the community of states is finally getting serious about assisting and protecting vulnerable civilian populations.”⁶⁰ When defined by these terms, military humanitarianism embraces humanitarian action in a way in which non-governmental organizations cannot: by using deadly force. Currently, however, U.S. military humanitarianism includes much more than mere intervention, which has typically involved a bombing campaign and possibly light combat activity on the ground. Today, American soldiers are working to build schools and hospitals, jobs which can be, and frequently are, accomplished by non-military groups. A reporter in Afghanistan noted “by all accounts, a situation where the US military is rebuilding kindergartens while the UN engages in disarmament and demobilization would indeed appear to be an exchange of mandates.”⁶¹ The most controversial issue surrounding this type of U.S. military work has occurred over the U.S. soldiers’ uniforms. While working on humanitarian projects, U.S. soldiers have been permitted to wear civilian clothing, which has caused quite a stir within the humanitarian community [see case study for Afghanistan].

Unlike Thomas Weiss, Larry Minear, who has researched the effects of military humanitarianism on numerous conflicts over the past decade, considers military

⁶⁰ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.104.

⁶¹ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.8.

humanitarianism to “represent negative developments that cast a serious cloud over the effectiveness of the humanitarian enterprise itself. In fact, much of the data accumulated by [his] project and reflected in many of its publications caution against an embrace by humanitarian organizations of the military as a partner.”⁶² The U.S. military, however, is eager to increase its humanitarian projects and is willing to provide security in the field to the organizations which are the true humanitarian experts. It is important to consider that “...such [military] forces can gain access to suffering civilians, when insecurity makes it impossible or highly dangerous, and foster a secure enough environment to permit succor and protection for civilians.”⁶³ Ideally, the U.S. military could provide humanitarian organizations with a more suitable working environment, enabling these organizations to provide greater assistance to civilian populations. The positive and negative effects of this type of military security, however, have yet to be fully understood, which in turn makes completely supporting or disapproving of U.S. military humanitarianism almost impossible for the international community.

⁶² Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.104.

⁶³ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.19.

NGO Perspectives of Military Humanitarianism

In his article “Law and Military Interventions: Preserving Humanitarian Values in the 21st Century”, U.S. Colonel Charles J. Dunlap Jr. wrote that non-governmental organizations “purport to speak-literally-for the ‘world’ on political issues.” He continued by stating that “NGOs are not political entities equivalent to sovereign nations; rather, they are no more than self-selected, idiosyncratic interest groups that are not accountable to any ballot box.”⁶⁴ Clearly, non-governmental organizations do not carry the same leverage as sovereign states in the current political system, but Colonel Dunlap must also recognize that through the accomplishments of these organizations over the past 50 years, they have gained the respect from the majority of the international community. By not being associated with national governments, NGOs play a unique role and have become vital international actors. As Ted van Baarda explains,

...acting as neutrals, humanitarian organizations can achieve the necessary degree of trust in order to have access to all victims of armed conflict...in order to operate on both sides of the frontline, humanitarian organizations have to stay out of the merits of the conflicts as such.⁶⁵

Upholding values of neutrality and impartiality, humanitarian organizations have become affected by national militaries which engage in humanitarian activity, yet are unable to uphold the same values which have been so crucial to success of the humanitarian sector.

Currently, not much data exists indicating how U.S. military humanitarianism has positively or negatively affected humanitarian NGOs when both are present in areas of conflict. Namely, whether or not U.S. military humanitarianism is cost-effective cannot

⁶⁴ Dunlap, Colonel Charles J. “Law and Military Interventions: Preserving Humanitarian Values in 21st Century Conflicts.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.8.

⁶⁵ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.102.

be determined due to blurred budget reports from the Pentagon. As Thomas Weiss explains, “exact costs are virtually impossible to establish for a variety of reasons. The U.S. military is often the primary intervening military actor, but its accounting techniques have numerous problems.”⁶⁶ Thus, most research regarding this relationship comes from the actual experiences of humanitarian NGO employees, who have shared their stories during or after the conflict has occurred. Drawing from these experiences enables the international community to get a better understanding of when the U.S. military helped, as well as when they hurt, the non-governmental organizations and the local communities. Also, as these organizations decide how they will interact with the U.S. military in the future, they rely on the past experiences of their employees [see Box 1: Examples from Rwanda].⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.36.

⁶⁷ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.106.

Box 1

Examples from Rwanda

In one instance, Oxfam-UK and Ireland sought to arrange transport on ideally suited large-payload U.S. military jumbo jets for bulky piping needed to bring potable water to refugee camps in Goma, Zaire. A combination of bureaucratic delays and aircraft diversions and repairs caused the critical shipment to arrive more than two weeks later than would be the case had the NGO chartered commercial space. “The whole thing was a disaster,” commented Oxfam’s emergencies director, who accepted some of the blame himself for not pursuing the commercial option. As a result, he said, his NGO would be less willing to cooperate with the military in the future.

WFP [World Food Program] has extensive experience moving large quantities of food and vehicle fleets into fast-onset disasters, some of them remotely located. “In most cases we can probably arrange airlifts far quicker than the military can into places they wouldn’t be prepared to go at a fraction of the cost,” observed one WFP manager. Yet he took care not to rule the use of military logistics in certain circumstances: for example, in areas served by secure and accessible airports in the early stages of crises when the scale of resources needed may require transport beyond what aid agencies can quickly provide or charter. The numerous provisos, however, confirm our view that the utilization of military logistics capacity should be the exception rather than the rule.

In retrospect, however, the troops’ direct assistance was less pivotal than it appeared at the time. Epidemiological data showed death rates in Goma already beginning to decrease by the time U.S. troops arrived. The military also proved expensive, although differences in accounting practices and a lack of transparency in military accounting make the comparative cost-effectiveness of military and civilian options impossible to establish. In some instances, the aid agencies of donor governments reimbursed their militaries for services provided; in others, the services were contributed by defense ministries at no cost to the aid effort.

Examples taken from Larry Minear’s The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas & Discoveries.

Today, humanitarian organizations remain divided when considering a relationship with the military. Each organization decides for itself the best policy to maintain, but even disagreement within the organization can occur. For example, Médecins sans Frontières, as explained by Dr. Reuben Brigety, “will not be in the same

room with the military.”⁶⁸ However, Eric Dachi, an experienced MSF staff member, who has been working with the organization for years, wants MSF to be more willing to work with the military in times of conflict. Larry Minear writes,

The humanitarian enterprise is divided in its appraisal of the new visibility of humanitarian action. Some relief and rights organizations welcome the expressed intentions of applying military and economic coercion to improve the humanitarian situation of the civilian populations with which they work. They encourage the use of military force in particular, stressing only that force be more consistently applied from crisis to crisis. Other organizations look askance at the human fallout from those policies and keep their distance from association with them.⁶⁹

U.S. military humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan have been widely criticized by many humanitarian organizations. Referencing the military situation in Afghanistan on April 1, 2003, George Ruppe, the president of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) was quoted in the New York Times as saying that a “military-led relief effort would ‘jeopardize all burden-sharing by UN agencies and other governments. It would also compromise the independence and safety of humanitarian aid workers around the world.’”⁷⁰ Regarding the same issue, Sally Austin, who works for CARE International, said, “our security is being put at risk...their [the U.S. military] understanding of neutrality and humanitarian principles is pretty weak.”⁷¹ CARE International has also criticized “...the military for lack of experience in such projects and that NGOs and

⁶⁸ Brigety, Dr. Reuben. Professor, American University. Interview. Washington, DC. May 6, 2004.

⁶⁹ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.115.

⁷⁰ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.8.

⁷¹ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.8.

locals are a cheaper solution to reconstruction.”⁷² Although, many “...civilian agencies freely admit that initial combat operations had the greatest humanitarian effect,” NGOs working in the field generally want to maintain a separation between themselves and military forces. Even with serious security concerns in Afghanistan, the NGO community remains hesitant to embrace the PRTs.

Since the initial proposal of the reconstruction teams, there has been severe criticism from the NGO community. Foremost has been the claim that an occupation force cannot be simultaneously engaged in military operations and assistance without violating the core humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence.⁷³

The U.S. military, however, has continued to involve itself in an increasing number of humanitarian projects in Afghanistan, leaving the humanitarian community, in the opinion of many organizations, at a level of lowered security.

There is a handful of civilian humanitarians who are calling for at least some support of military humanitarianism. Roy Williams, the president of the Center for Humanitarian Cooperation, believes “...in order to close the gap even a little, NGOS (as a community, not as individuals) need to shed the arrogance that lays sole claim to all expertise on humanitarian affairs.”⁷⁴ The international community has respected the work of humanitarian organizations and has permitted these non-state actors to offer assistance frequently in area of conflict over the past 20 years. The humanitarian sector may need to allow the military to enter into this field with a similar understanding.

⁷² “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.5.

⁷³ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.4. “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.”

www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.5.

⁷⁴ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.3.

Annabel Taylor, in her presentation on Civil-Military Coordination at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, offered this insight: “We would be arrogant to turn down military resources, but the military could also be accused of arrogance if they did not recognize existing long-term developmental programmes and coordination mechanisms.”⁷⁵ Success within the humanitarian field may be maximized if both the humanitarian and military sectors take the time to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, and then cooperate, or even coordinate, accordingly.

⁷⁵ Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

The ICRC Perspective

Within the international community, the ICRC falls into its own category of humanitarian organization, separate from other non-governmental organizations. The International Committee of the Red Cross holds observer status during meetings at the United Nations and has expanded to include multiple organizations around the world, which make up the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The organization has published extensive amounts of information debating the humanitarian-military relationship. In the opinion of the International Committee of the Red Cross, a separation between military and humanitarian work must exist, but, at the same, there should be communication between organizations and all warring parties involved in the conflict. The “Security in ICRC Field Operations” report indicates,

No security rule and no protective measures can replace the establishment of a network of contacts among the parties to a conflict so as to convince them of the ICRC’s neutrality, impartiality and independence. For if those in charge of fighting troops see the organization as biased, it will be a potential target. On the other hand, neutrality, and above all the combatant’s perception of that neutrality...is the best guarantee for the warring parties that the ICRC does not constitute a threat.⁷⁶

Neutrality thus becomes a measure for security, as well as an organizational mandate, as the ICRC has “persuasion and influence (as) its only weapons.”⁷⁷

When working in the field, humanitarian organizations must establish relationships with all parties existing within that area. Organizational missions should be made clear and carried out only after being accepted by those controlling the areas. This task can be hard to accomplish, as employees may often find themselves negotiating with

⁷⁶ Dind, Philippe. « Security in ICRC Field Operations. » International Review of the Red Cross, no 323, June 1998. p 2.

⁷⁷ Dind, Philippe. « Security in ICRC Field Operations. » International Review of the Red Cross, no 323, June 1998. p 4.

people who are directly part of the conflict and who have not responded on their own to the needs of the people living in their area.

Aid from the outside is potentially a major source of power for the combatants in achieving control over populations and territory. As a result, the parties have a desire to see assistance coming in, but also a direct interest in its allocation. While this favored easier access for the aid organizations, it also allowed for a more politicized delivery process.⁷⁸

Without neutrality, these types of humanitarian organizations would never be able to enter into areas and provide life-saving assistance. Even the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs negotiates agreements with warring parties, as it is currently the only way to gain safe and legal access into an area where assistance is desperately needed.

Interestingly, the mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross does not include an anti-war component. Obviously, ICRC staff promotes peace and non-violence, but the organization takes on a very realist perspective in that it recognizes that war between and within nations will always occur. Thus, the ICRC calls for “rules of war” to be upheld so that civilian suffering, as well as the suffering of the armed forces, may at least be minimized. Larry Minear points out,

The ICRC seeks to delink issues related to the use of military force from the humanitarian activities that the organization carries out. In its view, while is a legitimate tool of international diplomacy and while peacekeeping operations can “provide greater security and avoid more deaths,” the delivery of humanitarian assistance cannot be sustained at the point of the gun.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Hybertsen, Bente and Suhrke, Astri and Tjore, Gro. « Humanitarian Assistance & Conflict: A-State-of-the-Art Report. » 1998. p 20.

⁷⁹ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.102.

The International Committee of the Red Cross recognizes the benefits of military humanitarian intervention, but will not associate itself with the armed forces, as the organization believes that “authentic humanitarian action may be incompatible with military coercion.”⁸⁰ The ICRC has survived in areas of complex political emergencies by upholding its mandate of neutrality and impartiality.

⁸⁰ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.101.

Case Study: Somalia

The situation in Somalia is one of the earliest examples of a post-Cold War intra-state conflict. Multiple warring factions were vying for power, and the majority of the international community did not fully understand the political conditions within the country. By the fall of 1992, the conflict in Somalia had left 500,000 dead with another 1.5 million refugees or displaced people. As the situation continued to deteriorate, the humanitarian organizations were left confused and divided as to what should be the next step. Larry Minear explains,

CARE and the International Rescue Committee wanted to see additional UN troops committed to Somalia in an effort to reduce the violence. Oxfam and MSF feared that a larger contingent would lead to an escalation of the strife and make aid operations more vulnerable. On December 19, the professional association InterAction sent a letter on behalf of a number of NGO signatories to the U.S. national security advisor, General Brent Scowcroft. Observing that “humanitarian agencies cannot work effectively in Somalia without greater security,” the group urged the deployment of “appropriately armed UN security forces tasked with protecting emergency supplies and staff.” In December, a U.S. military contingent landed in Mogadishu.⁸¹

The majority of the humanitarian sector realized in 1992 that they could not be as successful without the protection of an armed military force.

The U.S. military’s Operation Provide Relief flew 28,000 tons of food into Somalia. With a UN mandate, just fewer than 4,000 U.S. troops served in the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), which was deployed to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia. Realizing that more was needed than humanitarian assistance, UNITAF became the UN Operation for Somalia (UNOSOM1 & UNOSOM2) in May of 1993, with a new mandate to act as peace enforcement in Somalia. The entire UN

⁸¹ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.103.

peacekeeping force was made up of 20,000 troops and 8,000 staff, with the United States contributing more soldiers than any other country. On December 11, 1992, the U.S. forces established a Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) in Mogadishu, which became the “national focus point for NGOs/U.S. military coordination.”⁸² The United Nations Office for Humanitarian Coordination also resided at the U.S. CMOC.

From December 3, 1992 until May 4, 1993, the UN authorized Operation Restore Hope (ORH), a U.S.-led intervention, which was encouraged to “use all necessary means to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia as soon as possible.”⁸³ Providing food to hundreds of thousands of Somalis and rebuilding infrastructure (including over 2,000 kilometers of roads), Operation Restore Hope “demonstrated the usefulness of engineers in operations other than war.”⁸⁴ The U.S. forces experienced failures as well because the intervention force “was experienced as an occupier in that they were *de facto* peace enforcement operations, in which the intervention force used force. Naturally, peace enforcement operations always run counter to the interest of at least one of the warring factions.”⁸⁵ As stated by U.S. Special Envoy Robert Oakley, the troops needed to understand that “...any move to disarm the ‘warlords’ would be ‘too imperialistic.’”⁸⁶ During that time, “...the international forces were routinely referred to as ‘the Americans’ by both Somalis and foreigners. This confusion is dangerous.”⁸⁷ U.S. troops did encounter hostility from the Somali

⁸² “Operation Restore Hope.” www.globalsecurity.org. June, 2004. p.1.

⁸³ “Operation Restore Hope.” www.globalsecurity.org. June, 2004. p.1.

⁸⁴ “Operation Restore Hope.” www.globalsecurity.org. June, 2004. p.1.

⁸⁵ “Civil and Military Humanitarianism in Complex Political Emergencies: Desirability and Possibilities of a Cooperation.” Belgium. March, 2003. p.82.

⁸⁶ Gilkes, Patrick. “From Peace-keeping to Peace-enforcement: The Somalia Precedent.” Middle East Report. November 12, 1993.

⁸⁷ De Waal, Alex and Omaar, Rakiya. “Can Military Intervention be ‘Humanitarian?’” Middle East Report. No.187/188. Middle East Research and Information Project. March-June 1994. p.5.

community, which brought about decreased American support for the U.S. military operations.

Unfortunately, the U.S. and UN humanitarian interventions did not last long enough to sustain the support so desperately needed in Somalia. The U.S. and the UN, as well as the humanitarian organizations made mistakes in Somalia. Namely,

Aid agencies – and, for that matter, even the UN peacekeeping force itself – contracted with “technicals,” armed personnel deployed to protect staff and to guard compounds and supplies. The experience failed to provide the security needed, since the technicals brought to their duties the clan rivalries implicated in the country’s civil strife. Their contract fees undoubtedly fueled the war, and some technicals were implicated in the theft of the very humanitarian assets they were paid to protect.⁸⁸

An article in *The Washington Post* during the conflict tried to explain the reason for the failures in Somalia and reported, “. . .it is important to know how Somalis are divided into tribal groups as a way of understanding how they make decisions. The divisions, the clans, the groupings, are less determined by ethnicity, language, or anthropology than by economic and ecological conditions.”⁸⁹ The U.S. and UN forces did not understand the history and complexities confusing the situation in Somalia at this time. In explaining why the military force in Somalia was counterproductive, Mohammed Sahnoun believes

You cannot move 30,000 soldiers and then say, “We are only here to protect humanitarian assistance.” You may think, “Why not use this military intervention to solve the whole political problem?” Such a mind-set takes on a life of its own, and the chance for balance and equilibrium is lost. Of the 2 billion US dollar investments in the intervention in Somalia, a very small amount, less than 10 percent, went toward assisting the

⁸⁸ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.110.

⁸⁹ Moore, Jonathan. *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Oxford. 1998. p.88-89.

Somalis in institution building and social and economic reconstruction; everything was really spent on the military operation.⁹⁰

As for the non-governmental organizations who called for military intervention in Somalia, they did not experience, for the most part, successful coordination with the U.S.-led military forces. Major Kimberly Fields explains,

It is hard for the military to understand that neutrality is an NGO's fundamental security premise, which ensures its longevity, long after the military leaves. A recent example is that the only agencies still operating in Somalia are those that stuck rigidly and stubbornly to their neutrality, and survived the military and humanitarian assistance failures.⁹¹

The U.S. military, as well as aid agencies, learned much about the effects of military humanitarianism while serving in Somalia. In the ten years since the conflict, U.S. military humanitarianism has undergone many changes, in the hopes of experiencing greater success.

⁹⁰ Moore, Jonathan. Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Oxford. 1998. p.96.

⁹¹ Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.3.

Case Study: Afghanistan

Humanitarian assistance has been at the forefront of the U.S. military's agenda since combat activity began in 2001 in Afghanistan. When General Tommy Franks said the U.S. and Coalition forces needed to "kill the bad guys" and "demonstrate to the Afghan people that they had the support of the international community," the U.S. military became more dedicated to humanitarian than ever before.⁹² To help show support for the people of Afghanistan, General Tommy Franks called for the creation of a Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF). Major Kimberly Fields explains, at first, "...guidance was sparse. We were to take our lead from the experts – civilian relief agencies. We were to stay out of the "retail relief" business." The new task force, however, did not experience success immediately. Fields goes on to explain, "The civilian agencies asked only for strategic lift and for security on the ground. To both, the military's answer was no."⁹³ Interestingly, "Humanitarian officials from both the United Nations and U.S. government discouraged U.S. military forces from engaging in civic action work in Afghanistan in 2001-2."⁹⁴ Even a U.S. military official noted, "...most of us would agree...that the military is not the right individuals to execute reconstruction-type activities. There are NGOs and IOs out there that are better at doing it, that's what they're supposed to do."⁹⁵

The U.S. military, however, was determined to play a great role in Afghanistan's reconstruction, both to help the Afghan people and improve the level of security

⁹² Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

⁹³ Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

⁹⁴ Minear, Larry. *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.108.

⁹⁵ "The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction." www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.5.

throughout the country. Since U.S. soldiers would be involved in combat and humanitarian action at the same time, a military group other than the Civil Affairs Officers was needed. Towards the end of 2002, Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill, who served as the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, initiated the U.S. military humanitarian group called the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) (Note: PRT has also been referred to as Provisional Reconstruction Team). Army Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, McNeill's predecessor in Afghanistan, called the PRTs a "...stroke of near genius and said they are delivering services that directly affect the welfare, income and quality of life of the Afghan people. In many cases, the PRTs are providing services never before provided by the central government." Vines went on to say that the PRTs are "...something the Taliban recognizes they can't compete with."⁹⁶

The first Provincial Reconstruction Team was set up in Gardez, Afghanistan on December 31, 2002. PRTs are composed of "...civil affairs soldiers trained in medicine, psychology, engineering, and law as well as Special Forces and regular Army units, the teams will always maintain a 'robust' capacity to defend themselves as they are being purposely deployed in hostile territory."⁹⁷ A number of USAID and U.S. Department of State officers have also been asked to join the PRTs from time to time. Today, twelve PRT teams operate throughout Afghanistan, nine of which are led by the United States, with the remaining three led by forces from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and NATO.

⁹⁶ Miles, Donna. "Terrorists Can't Compete with Provincial Reconstruction Teams." American Forces Press Service. www.defenselink.mil. Washington, DC. April 21, 2004. p.1.

⁹⁷ "The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction." www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.2.

Teams have set out to build schools and clinics and repave roads, though U.S. officials insist that the PRTs are not going to replace the work of NGOs and UN organizations in Afghanistan. It is important to note that “PRTs are designed to operate in remote areas where other non-governmental organizations traditionally have no presence, creating a safer environment that encourages the NGOs to expand their operations-extending the reach of the national government and directly benefiting local populations.”⁹⁸ The PRTs also hire local laborers when possible to assist in rebuilding Afghanistan’s infrastructure. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which have been referred to as the “military NGO,” stress “One of the criteria from which [they] never deviated was the necessity of the Afghan people to prioritize and approve all projects; the number one priority was, almost without exception, schools.”⁹⁹ In his Opening Remarks at a Provincial Reconstruction Team Ceremony, former Ambassador to Afghanistan Dr. Robert P. Finn, reported,

In Gardez alone, since August of [2003], 3 schools totaling \$25,000 were completed. In Paktia Province, 4 other schools totaling \$120,000 are under construction. Already in the works are new projects for 10 schools, 3 wells and 1 clinic totaling more than \$350,000.¹⁰⁰

Ambassador Finn went on to say that the PRTs operate in order to aid the Afghan government and aid organizations “so that the reconstruction of this region can

⁹⁸ Sater, Maj. Richard C. “Provisional Reconstruction Team Begins Work in Heart.” Army News Service. www.globalsecurity.org. Herat, Afghanistan. December 4, 2003. p.1.

⁹⁹ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

¹⁰⁰ Finn, Dr. Robert P., Ambassador to Afghanistan. “Opening Remarks at Provisional Reconstruction Team Stand-Up Ceremony.” U.S. Department of State. www.state.gov. Kabul, Afghanistan. February 1, 2003. p.1.

accelerate. [The PRTs} are not here to replace the efforts of the Afghan government or of independent donors, but to support them in any constructive way we can.”¹⁰¹

Some Coalition forces do not support the PRTs because combat has not yet ended, but the Provincial Reconstruction Teams have enjoyed the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Assistance (UNAMA). When Lakhdar Brahimi served as the head of UNAMA, he indicated that the United Nations “...will welcome any additional assets to the reconstruction effort.”¹⁰² Though it supports the PRTs, however, UNAMA

Is trying to steer the PRTs away from traditional “hearts and minds” projects (such as schools and clinics) into projects which they can use their comparative advantage and resources, e.g. security sector reform projects (such as police stations, revenue collection, law courts) and national impact projects (such as bridges, canals, culverts, and communication centres). Security should be the priority of the military, since violent crime and banditry are rising weekly, with no national law enforcement bodies in place yet.¹⁰³

U.S. Major Kimberly Fields, who served in the Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF), indicated that a component of the Provincial Reconstruction Team was to win over the “hearts and minds” of the Afghan people. She reports,

The CJCMOTF quickly realized that whatever we could do would have to be explained, justified and otherwise rationalized to all audiences – the Afghan people, the civilian relief community, the military itself, and the interagency to a lesser extent. To do that we knew that our mission would include:

- 1) assistance in the aftermath of unconventional warfare in order to “win hearts and minds” and prevent a recurrence of hostilities;
- 2) through good works across the country, including areas in which we had Coalition bases, show the benign face of the Coalition and international community at large;

¹⁰¹ Finn, Dr. Robert P., Ambassador to Afghanistan. “Opening Remarks at Provisional Reconstruction Team Stand-Up Ceremony.” U.S. Department of State. www.state.gov. Kabul, Afghanistan. February 1, 2003. p.1.

¹⁰² Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

¹⁰³ Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

- 3) access to relief and reconstruction resources for those local officials who supported the Afghan Interim Administration; and
- 4) a jumpstart for reconstruction efforts in the gap between the cessation of conflict (localized in this case) and the influx of reconstruction and development funds and agencies.¹⁰⁴

The CJCMOTF strategy, therefore, makes up one component used by the U.S. military to win the war in Afghanistan, as well as makes progress on the larger war on terror.

U.S. military officials view the Provincial Reconstruction Teams as helpful for those NGOs and IOs working in Afghanistan. U.S. Army Major David Bernacki, the officer at the Civil Military Operations Center in Gardez, said, “What I see the PRTs bringing to the table is the assessment of areas which have not been touched by the international community because of security concerns.”¹⁰⁵ The PRTs, therefore, are not replacing the work done by NGOs, but rather, are working in areas where most humanitarian organizations have not felt secure enough to work, in the hopes that these organizations may return and work while experiencing greater security.

The PRTs offer a compromise. While their coordinators acknowledge that they are not experts and that they are not attempting to usurp the acknowledged responsibilities of humanitarian experts, they are simultaneously working with the people of Afghanistan to reconstruct their country and protecting their personnel. In a situation of devolving security such as Afghanistan, it should be recognized that military presence is required in order to at least begin to make an imprint on the immense devastation inflicted upon Afghanistan. It also behooves the Coalition forces to heed the expertise and immense reservoirs of knowledge accumulated amongst NGOs in order to best benefit the people of Afghanistan.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

¹⁰⁵ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.3.

¹⁰⁶ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.9.

Though areas where PRTs operate have generally been areas of low security, U.S. Capt. Billie Cartwright has found, “One of the gratifying aspects of working in [a PRT district] is that the residents are overwhelmingly pro-American, which makes working there easier for the team.” Another military representative confirmed Cartwright’s opinion, noting, “When there’s no fighting going on, the military, NGOs and IOs are welcomed.”¹⁰⁷

U.S. Reconstruction Coordinator Bill Taylor reported, “NGOs in the field are finding PRTs a big plus.”¹⁰⁸ Many NGOs working in Afghanistan, however, have been hesitant to associate with or support the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force has tried to coordinate efforts with humanitarian organizations, but have been unsuccessful in forming truly joint Civil-Military Operations (CMO). In her experience, Major Kimberly Fields found that NGOs “...felt threatened despite invitations from the CJCMOTF to attend weekly coordination meetings, requests to conduct joint planning, and requests for them to guide us in selecting projects.”¹⁰⁹ Fields believes at least part of the reasoning for this is the permission of U.S. soldiers to dress as civilian when working in the Provincial Reconstruction Team.

The issue that has received the most attention in rehashing civil-military relations in the initial stages of the Afghanistan operation is the wearing of civilian clothes by the military. While there were a handful of NGO workers in Kabul who passionately objected, the heat of the issue was primarily felt in New York and Washington.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.4.

¹⁰⁸ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.5.

¹⁰⁹ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.3.

¹¹⁰ Fields, Major Kimberly. “Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.3.

In the minds of humanitarian organizations, soldiers dressing as civilians and participating in humanitarian efforts creates greater confusion for the local population. George Devendorf explains that the “Afghan experience has represented a significant shift...the use of both “carrot” and “stick” approaches by U.S. forces in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) has, in the minds of most humanitarians, blurred the lines of distinction between appropriate civil and military roles.”¹¹¹

Analyzing U.S. military humanitarianism in Afghanistan is vital, according to Annabel Taylor who points out, “The civil-military relationship in Afghanistan is setting a precedent that will fundamentally change the relationship of the military and the assistance community for the future.”¹¹² The Provincial Reconstruction Teams may be allowing the United States to achieve its own strategic goals within Afghanistan, but they have not provided humanitarian organizations with the increased security for which they had hoped. At first, PRT presence was decreasing the number of incidents which fell from “thirty in December 2002 to one in January 2003. However, since the recent conflict in Iraq there has been an escalation of fighting throughout Afghanistan, and an alarming regrouping of the Taliban in Gardez and Shkin.”¹¹³

MercyCorps International announced on the 19th of February [2003] that it had to suspend operations in some parts of Afghanistan due to a deteriorating situation in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan. In March, the IOM (put in full name) was the target of a bomb explosion in Kunduz.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Devendorf, George. “Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

¹¹² Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1.

¹¹³ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.2.

¹¹⁴ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.4.

UN Offices were also targeted multiple times by the end of 2003. The United States' military, though, has been able to make advances in its own strategy through the work of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. For example, Lt. Gen. John R. Vines explains,

Complicating the work of the teams and the coalition in Afghanistan is “a primitive road network and...the fact that many of the citizens of Afghanistan and Pakistan don't view the international border as a border all...It's an area not fundamentally governed by the government of Pakistan. It's run by tribal leaders, and so consequently, they make decisions about who to support and who to harbor.”¹¹⁵

Thus, as the PRTs work to improve Afghanistan's infrastructure, they are simultaneously working to prevent terrorists or Taliban members to cross the border into Pakistan. U.S. officials continue to stress the role of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in saying “...the military cautions: The PRTs are not peacekeeping forces...Their mission in this sphere is limited: It is to assist—that is, to assist others—in the removal of instability.”¹¹⁶

Are the PRTs, though, maximizing the amount of assistance the U.S. and Coalition forces could be offering to Afghanistan?

Both [Afghan] President Karzai and the UN Secretary General have often called for an extension to improve security throughout the country. However, the force barely numbers 4,800 troops from 22 nations. The general opinion is that this is an insufficient number to maintain the peace. A true peacekeeping force would need to be closer to 30,000 troops. In contrast, the U.S. continues to maintain 8,000 troops in the area.¹¹⁷

With only about one-third of the military presence required to “maintain the peace,” should U.S. soldiers be constructing schools when there continue to be major threats to

¹¹⁵ Miles, Donna. “Terrorists Can't Compete with Provincial Reconstruction Teams.” American Forces Press Service. www.defenselink.mil. Washington, DC. April 21, 2004. p.2.

¹¹⁶ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.8.

¹¹⁷ “The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and its Role in Reconstruction.” www.afgha.com. May 27, 2003. p.6.

security? Within the United States, there has been “groundbreaking cooperation between U.S. Central Command and NGOs and InterAction,”¹¹⁸ but the international NGOs present in Afghanistan have had little contact in the field with the PRTs. The greatest success, therefore, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams are experiencing is “winning over” the Afghan civilian population through offering assistance. As commander Brig. Gen. Lloyd Austin explains, “Combat operations are necessary to defeat our common enemy, but reconstruction and development are necessary to win the battle for a better future.”¹¹⁹ Through the PRTs, U.S. military forces in Afghanistan have created a new and innovative way to provide assistance to areas in great need.

¹¹⁸ Taylor, Annabel. “Civil-Military Coordination: Perspective from Afghanistan.” Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

¹¹⁹ Sater, Maj. Richard C. “Provisional Reconstruction Team Begins Work in Herat.” Army News Service. www.globalsecurity.org. Herat, Afghanistan. December 4, 2003. p.1.

Case Study: Iraq

During the first Gulf War of 1991, the U.S. military presence was criticized by the humanitarian organizations which had been working in Iraq before the war began.

Médecins sans Frontières criticized the U.S. military's humanitarian actions in Iraq during the first Gulf War and claimed, "Threatened, harassed and attacked by the Iraqi government, humanitarian organizations have had to reduce their personnel and, in some cases, leave the area" as a result of U.S. military presence.¹²⁰ The U.S. troops, fighting with its Allied forces, however, were able to deliver assistance in amounts well beyond the organizations' capacities. Thomas Weiss points out,

The extent, strength, and rapidity of the Allied Coalition's Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) were impressive from April to July 1991. Over 12,000 American and Allied troops were deployed on the basis of authorizations from the Security Council. They delivered more than 25 million pounds of food, water, medical supplies, clothing, and shelter.¹²¹

Unfortunately, the initial assistance offered by the United States and Allied forces, and the reconstruction period which followed combat activity did not balance out the damage which had occurred in Iraq. Weiss goes on to explain,

The cost of reconstruction was nonetheless estimated to be some \$111-200 billions. The gross domestic product (GDP) decreased from a prewar \$66 billion to \$245 million in 1991. Disputed estimates on those killed directly from the conflict range from 56,000 to 120,000 soldiers and 3,000 to 3,500 civilians...Additional suffering resulted from the destruction of infrastructure, and the humanitarian impact of economic sanctions was dramatic.¹²²

¹²⁰ Populations in Danger: Médecins Sans Frontières. Jean, François. John Libbey & Co. London, England. 1992. p.6.

¹²¹ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.44-45.

¹²² Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.48.

Iraq was in a mess financially following the Gulf War. Important infrastructure, such as electrical plants had been ruined during U.S.-led air campaigns, and the Iraqi civilian population continued to suffer, possibly even more so than before the war began. During this time, the group INTERTECT collected the most thorough data exhibiting the Iraqis' situation. This group found,

...22 percent of the refugees were malnourished (4 percent severely), and 70 percent of all hospital cases had diarrhea...Some idea of the seriousness of this phase can be gauged from an early measurement effort: "infant mortality rates (IMR) over the first month of the crisis [were] approximately 18-29 times the IMR in Iraq in the late 1980s."¹²³

The people of Iraq were left with little or no security, as well as little or no access to the resources they so desperately needed. In fact, "in April 1991, when the Coalition was intent on withdrawing from northern Iraq, the prospect of arranging access for a UN peacekeeping force or observer mission to provide security for ongoing UN aid operations and resident personnel seemed dim."¹²⁴ In the early 1990s, humanitarian organizations found it difficult, and at times impossible, to work safely in Iraq. Today, following the U.S. and Coalition war against Iraq, the situation has not improved.

On October 27, 2003, the ICRC headquarters in Baghdad were attacked by a suicide bomber, leaving 12 dead, many wounded, and the office destroyed. This attack was the third time since the U.S.-led War on Iraq began that ICRC staff members were targeted and killed, which has caused the organization to be made "...painfully aware that for a certain group of people being a major humanitarian organization makes the ICRC a

¹²³ Weiss, Thomas G. Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Lanham, Maryland. 1999. p.50.

¹²⁴ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.109.

target.”¹²⁵ As a result of this attack and the others carried out earlier in the year, the ICRC has closed its offices in Baghdad and Basra and will continue to work only in northern Iraq. Following this attack, the Red Cross was still unable to accept protection from the Allied Forces, as such acceptance violates their mission of neutrality. Referencing the ICRC strategy in Iraq, President Jakob Kellenberger explained that the ICRC “...will not operate from buildings secured by military personnel and we will not use military escorts. Either measure would be incompatible with independent humanitarian work as we understand it.”¹²⁶ The risks in Iraq have become greater for the ICRC during the past year and a half, however, and much of the staff has had to leave the country and certain offices have been closed within the country. When describing the ICRC situation in Iraq, Antonella Notari of the ICRC, explained that humanitarianism has become the designated weapon of the U.S. “occupiers.”¹²⁷ Clearly, the Red Cross is not interested in having a connection with military forces considered to be using humanitarianism as a weapon.

In “Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns,” George Devendorf explained,

The existing humanitarian capacity in Iraq, and in the region in general, is modest at best. Unlike the Balkans, Kosovo or Afghanistan, where aid agencies had years of experience, well established programs with large numbers of capable national staff, and strong working relations with various factions, local authorities, and even neighboring states, the current aid infrastructure in and around Iraq is underdeveloped. In addition, the

¹²⁵ “A Before and an After in Iraq.” Interview with ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger. Tages-Anzeiger. www.icrc.org. 8.11.03. p 1.

¹²⁶ “A Before and an After in Iraq.” .” Interview with ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger. Tages-Anzeiger. www.icrc.org. November 8, 2003. p 1.

¹²⁷ Notari, Antonella. Porte-parole for the International Committee of the Red Cross. Colloque de la Fondation Art et Histoire. Uni-Bastions, Geneva. November 5, 2003.

policies of neighboring states regarding accepting refugees and facilitating the work of humanitarian agencies are ambiguous at best.¹²⁸

Referring to Iraq's current situation, Mr. Devendorf went on to say,

Given the lack of a robust humanitarian infrastructure in Iraq, the ability of humanitarian organizations to respond quickly and effectively to a large-scale emergency in that country is quite limited... With very few exceptions, humanitarian agencies have effectively been stonewalled from conducting assessments and operations in Iraq where US-sourced funding or personnel are involved.¹²⁹

Prior to major combat activity in Iraq, MercyCorps, a not-for-profit organization which has "provided over \$830 million in assistance to people in 80 nations"¹³⁰, came "to the general conclusion that [they were] simply not able to provide meaningful assistance in contaminated areas," after a MercyCorps employee discovered that "40 percent of the Kuwait trucking fleet [had] already been contracted by the U.S. military. This includes both hauling trucks and water tankers, both of which will be critical to military and aid operations"¹³¹. In areas of complex political emergencies, aid agencies need to be able to coordinate their own efforts and have plenty of access to the types of resources, like the Kuwait trucking fleet.

Within the humanitarian sector, NGOs want to know if Iraq will enter into types of reconstruction similar to Afghanistan, with PRTs building schools and not wearing uniforms.

The role of the military in providing humanitarian assistance is a particularly contentious subject in light of the current experience in

¹²⁸ Devendorf, George. "Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.2.

¹²⁹ Devendorf, George. "Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.1-3.

¹³⁰ "MercyCorps: At a Glance." MercyCorps International. www.mercycorps.org. June, 2004. p.1.

¹³¹ Devendorf, George. "Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.4,5.

Afghanistan. While the PRTs may in some cases be effective in focusing resources in designated areas, they have served to undercut the traditional – and ultimately necessary – roles of UN and non-governmental agencies to safely and effectively conduct and coordinate humanitarian assistance efforts. While DOD officials have been quick to point out that they intend to apply lessons learned from the Afghan experience to potential operations in Iraq, DOD and humanitarian agencies need to establish a common understanding of what those lessons are.¹³²

Unable to work efficiently in Iraq for almost a decade, humanitarian organizations hope to witness improvements in Iraq's security, as well as increased opportunities following the U.S. occupation.

¹³² Devendorf, George. "Operations in Iraq: Humanitarian Issues and Concerns." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.6.

Conclusion

Each conflict where U.S. military forces are involved in humanitarian efforts is unique and offers greater understanding of the military's future role in humanitarian affairs. The U.S. Department of Defense has more resources than any other armed force in the world. To truly be effective in the humanitarian field, therefore, the U.S. military must commit its resources and its money for a longer period of time, enabling a better chance of sustainability. According to Major Kimberly Fields, following the initial stages of combat,

The military needs to make significant changes in the way we approach post-conflict situations. For one, we must put our money where our mouth is; we cannot claim the importance of humanitarian action and then not resource it. Civil-military operations (CMOs) are a commander's responsibility and should encompass all staff sections. Senior military leaders have developed an instinctive sense that the civil-military relationship is a critical one and that planning and resourcing the post-conflict phase should start almost immediately.¹³³

Long-term reconstruction simply cannot occur with short-term support from the United States. Though coordination between the military and non-governmental organizations may never occur, the U.S. military may be able to gain the respect, and possibly even the cooperation, of humanitarian organizations once the United States' military begins involving themselves in tasks which can only be successfully completed by them (i.e. tasks which address the need for increased security).

If the mainstream military invested energy in gaining a degree of comfort with CMO issues and in building relationships with civilian partners, real coordination and power sharing could result in targeted (perhaps the military should focus on assistance in areas of public security and rule of

¹³³ Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.8.

law), efficient, and short-term humanitarian and reconstruction interventions by the military.¹³⁴

Mr. Ed Schenkenberg, coordinator of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, puts it best by saying, "...if the military wants to have a meaningful role in future civil-military cooperation, it should fill the gap that it, and not humanitarian organizations, can fill."¹³⁵ While the U.S. military continues large-scale humanitarian work in Afghanistan and Iraq, the international community must pay close attention to the evolving operations of U.S. military humanitarianism.

¹³⁴ Fields, Major Kimberly. "Civil-Military Relations: A Military Civil Affairs Perspective." Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Harvard University. Cambridge, Massachusetts. May 6, 2004. p.9.

¹³⁵ Minear, Larry. The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries. Kumarian Press, Inc. Bloomfield, CT. 2002. p.108.

Appendix 1

Current United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
(Obtained from the United Nations Department of Public Information)
<http://www.un.org/peace/bnote010101.pdf>

Operation:	Beginning Date:
UNTSO (UN Truce Supervision Organization) Military Strength: 153 Appropriations (2004): \$27.69 million (gross)	May 1948
UNMOGIP (UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan) Military Strength: 44 Appropriations (2004): \$7.25 million (gross)	January 1949
UNFICYP (UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus) Military Strength: 1,202 (w/ 45 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$45.77 million (gross)	March 1964
UNDOF (UN Disengagement Observer Force) Military Strength: 1,029 Appropriations (2004): \$41.81 million (gross)	June 1974
UNIFIL (UN Interim Force in Lebanon) Military Strength: 1,994 Appropriations (2004): \$94.06 million (gross)	March 1978
MINURSO (UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara) Military Strength: 230(w/ 4 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$43.40 million (gross)	April 1991
UNOMIG (UN Observer Mission in Georgia) Military Strength: 118 Appropriations (2004): \$32.10 million (gross)	August 1993
UNMIK (UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) Military Strength: 36 (w/ 3,510 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$329.74 million (gross)	June 1999
UNAMSIL (UN Mission in Sierra Leone) Military Strength: 11,539 (w/ 116 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$543.49 million (gross)	October 1999

MONUC (UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) Military Strength: 10,576 (w/ 139 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$667.27 million (gross)	November 1999
UNMEE (UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea) Military Strength: 4,006 Appropriations (2004): \$196.89 million (gross)	July 2000
UNMISET (UN Mission of Support in East Timor) Military Strength: 1,609 (w/ 129 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$217.16 million (gross)	May 2002
UNMIL (UN Mission in Liberia) Military Strength: 14,883 (w/ 791 civilian police) Appropriations (2004): \$564.49 million (gross)	September 2003
UNOCI (UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire) Authorized Military Strength: 6,240 military personnel including 200 military observers and 350 civilian police Current Military Strength: 3,036 (w/ 60 civilian police) Proposed Budget (2004-2005): \$502.35 million	April 2004
MINUSTAH (UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti) Authorized Military Strength: 6,700 (w/1,622 civilian police) Current Military Strength: 240 (w/ 7 civilian police) Budget under preparation	June 2004
ONUB (UN Operation in Burundi) Authorized Military Strength: 5,650 (w/ 120 civilian police) Budget under preparation	June 2004

Appendix 2

Countries who Have Received Assistance from one of the United States Army Civil Affairs Units

Data taken from the Humanitarian Assistance and Mine Action Office
Of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency
http://www.dsca.mil/hama_cd/overview/default.htm

Foreign Disaster Relief and Emergency Response

Afghanistan	Bosnia	Cambodia	Chad
Costa Rica	Croatia	East Timor	Ecuador
Egypt	Estonia	Greece	Guatemala
Honduras	Jordan	Kenya	Kosovo
Laos	Lebanon	Mauritania	Moldova
Mozambique	Namibia	Nicaragua	Oman
Philippines	Russia	Rwanda	Swaziland
Taiwan	Tanzania	Thailand	Turkey
Venezuela	Vietnam	Yemen	Zimbabwe

Humanitarian Assistance Program

Afghanistan	Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Azores	Belarus	Bosnia	Botswana
Bulgaria	Cambodia	Cameroon	Cape Verde
Chad	Cote d'Ivoire	Croatia	Djibouti
Eritrea	Estonia	Ethiopia	Gabon
Georgia	Ghana	Guinea	Hungary
Iceland	Jordan	Kenya	Laos
Lebanon	Lesotho	Lithuania	Malawi
Mali	Moldova	Morocco	Namibia
Oman	Romania	Russia	Sao Tome
Senegal	Seychelles	Slovakia	South Africa
Swaziland	Tanzania	Tunisia	Turkey
Turkmenistan	Ukraine	Vietnam	Zambia
Zimbabwe			

Humanitarian and Civic Assistance

Afghanistan	Bahamas	Bangladesh	Belize
Bolivia	Botswana	Colombia	Costa Rica
Djibouti	Dominica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador
Grenada	Guyana	Guatemala	Haiti
Honduras	Indonesia	Jordan	Kazakhstan
Kenya	Kosovo	Laos	Latvia
Marshall Islands	Maldives	Malaysia	Mongolia
Malawi	Nicaragua	Oman	Peru
Philippines	St Kitts-Nevis	Seychelles	Tanzania
Tunisia	Yemen		

Humanitarian Mine Action

Azerbaijan	Armenia	Bosnia	Cambodia
Chad	Costa Rica	Croatia	Djibouti
Estonia	Egypt	Ecuador	Guatemala
Honduras	Jordan	Laos	Lebanon
Mauritania	Moldova	Mozambique	Namibia
Nicaragua	Oman	Peru	Rwanda
Sri Lanka	Swaziland	Thailand	Vietnam
Yemen	Zambia	Zimbabwe	

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