

# **THE PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS IN AFGHANISTAN – A MODEL FOR FUTURE NATION BUILDING OPERATIONS**

**A Monograph  
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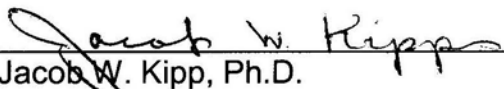
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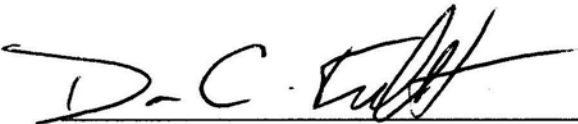
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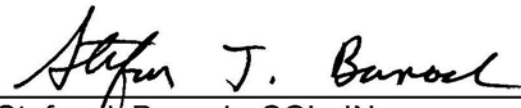
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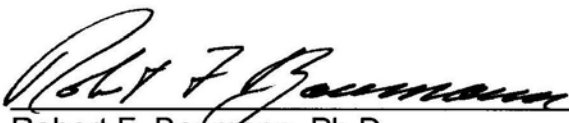
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## **Abstract**

### THE PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS IN AFGHANISTAN – A MODEL FOR FUTURE NATION BUILDING OPERATIONS

A Monograph by Colonel Michael A. Hochwart, German Army, 61 pages

Since the end of Cold War in 1989, international crisis and conflict management have gained considerable importance. Worldwide soldiers have served together with civilian agencies in order to guarantee security, to develop economy, and to facilitate good governance. In Afghanistan, the experience of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) raises the question of whether they might be a model for a new concept to deal with future security challenges in a “whole-of-government” approach.

Using Afghanistan as a model, this monograph provides general information on the PRT model, its history and development and then compares the US, UK, and German execution of their PRTs in theater.

The author compares several nation-building operations since 1945, the number of troops involved and operational duration, against the experience in Afghanistan.

Further on, the author focuses on the following aspects: NATO has chosen to address the PRT concept as an innovative approach to building peace and security. It views itself as the organization to design a new strategy in nation building and as the forum to bring together governmental and nongovernmental players in an early stage of the crisis and conflict management. This view raises the question of whether this approach could lead the way towards a “Joint Transatlantic Nation-Building Task-Force”.

## **The German PRT's in Afghanistan – the Concept for the Future?**

After 8 years of military and civil operations in Afghanistan, the situation seems to be getting worse. The U.S. military commander in the region General David Petraeus, referring to a "downward spiral in security" in Afghanistan, explained his counter-insurgency plan at the 2009 Munich Security Conference in terms of tenacity in a protracted struggle: "We must pursue the enemy tenaciously," he said. "Afghanistan likely will get harder before it gets easier."<sup>1</sup> The German chancellor Angela Merkel, on the other hand, sees Afghanistan still on a promising path. In a keynote speech she gave on Afghanistan in mid-November, Merkel said that although "sufficient stabilization" has yet to be achieved, "significant progress" has been made. "I do not believe that we need a new concept," the chancellor added.<sup>2</sup>

Are there two different Afghanistans? The first one has spun out of control and requires more combat troops to solve a military problem and the second one is on its way to success and proves a civil approach - like that applied through the German PRT concept - to be the right way. This monograph will not follow the black and white view as currently discussed in the media. Those who have been on the ground across the complex Afghan landscape know the situation defies simple categorization. Instead, this study will look at the larger Afghan problem from a particular perspective of an informed observer.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen David Petraeus at the 2009 Munich security conference, cited in <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,612258,00.html> (03/18/2009)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

From November 2007 until May 2008, the author of this monograph served as Commander Provincial Reconstruction Team Feyzabad, northern Afghanistan. Thus, he will bring his own experience to the table in dealing with the German PRT concept and the situation.

On the basis of that experience, the author would wager that the subject of the monograph will remain relevant for the years to come. Since the end of Cold War in 1989, international crisis and conflict management have gained considerable importance as a recognized part of system maintenance. In Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Congo, soldiers have served together with civilian agencies and in more operations worldwide in order to guarantee security, to develop economy, to facilitate good governance, and, as former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice observed, “it is absolutely clear that we [the United States] will be involved in nation building for years to come.”<sup>3</sup> This observation counts not only for the U.S. but also for all so-called Western states. In this regard, the experience of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan raises the question of whether they might be a model for a new concept to deal with future security challenges in a “whole-of-government” approach - not only national but also within multinational structures.<sup>4</sup>

Using Afghanistan as a model, the author provides general information on the PRT model, its history and development and then compares the US, UK, and German execution of their PRTs in theater. At first glance, the PRTs’ non-standardized structure and command and control seems to stand

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Secretary of State C. Rice in FOREIGN AFFAIRS Vol. 87, #4, Washington, DC, 2008 p.24, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080701faessay87401-p0/condoleezza-rice/rethinking-the-national-interest.html> (01/19/2009)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

in the way of an overall comparison of the concepts utility for a strategy of nation-building. However, from another perspective this approach provides room to maneuver and opportunities for various western democracies to contribute to international crisis management in a fast, flexible, and sustainable manner. Germany, for example, had “expressed a more decisive commitment to securing stability in Afghanistan and now [01/2009] has 4000 troops trained for stability operation but not for combat in the northern part of the country”. Some have suggested that the German PRT model is only an excuse to “rebuild but avoid combat.”<sup>5</sup> But such a perspective misses the adaptability of the model to divergent conditions across the theater of operations.

In the monograph, the author compares several nation-building operations since 1945, the number of troops involved and operational duration, against the experience in Afghanistan. Experience suggests that nation-building has not been a straight-line development of unfolding progress. Instead, most cases have shown a pattern of complex development where elements of progress and emerging crisis coexist. Since 2007, violent insurgency, opium harvesting, drug trafficking, as well as the influence of the Taliban have increased.<sup>6</sup> A linear model of nation-building would suggest these emergences make the PRT concept a failure. Nevertheless, there is also compelling evidence that the PRT concept in Afghanistan has been an innovative instrument of crisis management. Whether it emerged as only a stopgap due to a lack of troops in large areas or out of perceived difference in the security situation in different parts of Afghanistan is a topic of some debate. If it is something more than a makeshift answer to a lack of troops, the question remains: Under what conditions should a PRT be established and how might its success be defined?

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Gallis, *NATO in Afghanistan*, CRS Report for Congress, May 6, 2008, p. 13, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33627.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>6</sup> See the for 2009 data monthly updated Brookings Afghanistan Index <http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009),

Further on, the author focuses on the following aspects: NATO has chosen to address the PRT concept as an innovative approach to building peace and security. The PRTs in Afghanistan are seen as very much a response to unanticipated circumstances. They were largely new in structure, although elements of the PRT model were earlier seen in conflicts such as Vietnam, known as CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support).<sup>7</sup> In this context, NATO has raised the question of whether it can be the organization to design a new strategy in nation building. Moreover, NATO sees itself as the forum to bring together governmental and nongovernmental players in an early stage of the crisis and conflict management. This view raises the question of whether this approach could lead the way towards a “Joint Transatlantic Nation-Building Task-Force”.<sup>8</sup>

The methodology applied to answer these questions has been mainly desk research. However, the author also received a briefing at United States African Command (AFRICOM), a U.S. regional combatant command, which is structured along interagency lines and conducted an interview with an USAID agent.<sup>9</sup> The author also posted his experience as a former commander of PRT Feyzabad, Badakhshan Province, Afghanistan.

The author conducted research on this topic, including a review of German, U.S. and NATO contemporary literature on Security Policy and Strategy. He made special use of the

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<sup>7</sup> William Maley, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan – how they arrived and where they are going*, NATO Review, autumn 2007 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2007/issue3/english/art2.html> (01/28/2009)

<sup>8</sup> Michael Schmunk, *Afghanistan: Elements of a Transatlantic Nation-Building Strategy*, in Ivo Daalder et al. (eds.), *Crescent of Crisis. U.S.-European Strategy for the greater Middle East*, Brookings, Washington, D.C. 2005, p. 163 ff

<sup>9</sup> USAID agent Bob L. has served for several years in different countries in Africa, his last assignment was at U.S. AFRICOM. He is a SAMS AOASF 08/09 fellow.



*Afghanistan Konzept der Bundesregierung*. The Combined Arms Research Library, the German *Fachinformationszentrum Bundeswehr*, the ZIF (Center for International Peace Operations) in Berlin, the German *Bundestagsbibliothek*, and the Internet have been the main sources. New Strategies in nation-building and the PRT concept are broadly discussed at the *Landesverteidigungsakademie* in Vienna and the institute for *Sozial - Wissenschaften und Politik* (SWP) in Berlin, as well as at the *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (CSIS) in Washington.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Results of workshops held at these institutes are available in the internet or published as books, for example in Peter Schmidt (ed.) *Internationale Sicherheit Bd.7*, Verlag Peter Lang, Frankfurt a.M., 2008

## **The Provincial Reconstruction Teams**

### **The Relevance of Civil-Military Cooperation**

Since the international military engagement of the early 1990, especially in the Balkans, additional risks occurred besides the conventional threats; thus, security policy has become a complex challenge. Security is no longer a national only responsibility; it will be only available based on multilateral cooperation. Purely military means are not sufficient to contain current transnational threats, for example terrorist training camps in the uncontrollable regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The same counts in order to reach a minimum of security and stability. Crisis management has to act more and more multidimensional in the sense of a comprehensive approach: to provide security alone is not sufficient to keep or to reinforce peace. In fact, social and economic development, as well as to establishing the rule of law and good governance, are important.

The so called “Soft Power” European Union (in contrast to the USA as “Hard Power”) has its focus on the reforms in the security sector (e.g. the buildup of the armed forces and the police, the EU police mission in Afghanistan), the execution of disarmament programs ( e.g. Afghanistan, Cambodia), the development of institutions and rule of law missions (e.g. EUJUST LEX in Iraq), development cooperation or rather development policy and the therefore necessary canalization of subsidies.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Walter Feichtinger et al. *Zivil-Militärische Zusammenarbeit am Beispiel Afghanistan*, Schriftenreihe der Landesverteidigungsakademie, ReproZ, Wien 2008, p.11

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, this “State-Building-Approach” led to an intensified civil military cooperation (CIMIC). Military and civil instruments and methods for conflict prevention, stabilization, and reconstruction came to a closer cooperation.<sup>12</sup> New instruments for crisis management like the PRT’s evolved, but also new interfaces between civil and military organizations, as seen in several crisis regions. In Afghanistan, a civil-military gray area exists within the tasks of civil and military organizations. Gaustner calls it “blurring the lines” with “interlocking-situations” in the cooperation of the actors.<sup>13</sup>

### **The PRTs as an Instrument**

PRTs are civil-military units able to act more or less self-sustained. They are under the control of a so-called lead nation, with the Ministry of Defense responsible for security issues. The civil ministries (Interior, Development, and Foreign) are embedded in the PRTs. They have different degrees of authorization and provide additional expertise. PRTs follow a three-dimensional approach: the implementation of security, institution building, and the enabling of reconstruction. In Afghanistan, it will probably take generations to accomplish these objectives, a fact which opposes the politically motivated short-term goals of the PRT-lead nations. Nevertheless, progress has been made in all three areas despite some deficiencies. The

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<sup>12</sup> Several terms, such as stability operations, peace-building, state-building, complex peace operations, and nation-building are used to describe these activities. For example, see, R. Paris, *At War’s End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, New York 2004, p. 38; K. Zisk Marten, *Enforcing the Peace: Learning from the Imperial Past*, New York 2004, p.4; Dobbins et al., *The UN’s Role in Nation-Building*, pp. 1-2

<sup>13</sup> Markus Gaustner in Feichtinger, l.c., p. 12. Gaustner is working at the Landesverteidigungsakademie in Vienna and for the U.S. Marshall Center in Garmisch-Partenkirchen as an expert in civil-military relationship.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Program (DDR), the facilitating of free elections of a new founded Afghan parliament, or infrastructure development, to which PRTs have contributed directly or indirectly, are some examples.<sup>14</sup>

From a western point of view, PRTs are an “international offer of support for a limited period of time”. After almost seven years of experience with PRTs in Afghanistan, it has become obvious, that they have to hold their position for at least another 10 to 20 years. The Afghan population looks at them the same way and views PRTs as permanently installed international institutions, using them as job centers. The long term objective of PRTs is to contribute to a credible and self-sustaining Government of Afghanistan until the Afghan authorities themselves are able to take over full responsibility.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Task of PRTs**

Since December 2004, a United Nations PRT Executive Steering Committee provides guidance, to PRTs’ efforts across Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> The Members of this Committee are all Ambassadors of PRT contributing countries and potential contributing nations, the Afghan Ministry of Finance and several deputy ministries, the Commander U.S. Forces Afghanistan,

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<sup>14</sup> Markus Gaustner, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan. Ein innovatives Instrument des internationalen Krisenmanagements auf dem Prüfstand*, Schriftenreihe der Landesverteidigungsakademie, Reproz, Wien 2006, p.10

<sup>15</sup> Die Bundesregierung, *Afghanistankonzept der Bundesregierung*, 9. September 2008, p.2  
[http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/\\_Anlagen/2008/09/2008-09-08-afghanistan-konzept,property=publicationFile.pdf](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/2008/09/2008-09-08-afghanistan-konzept,property=publicationFile.pdf) (01/27/2009)

<sup>16</sup> Charter of the PRT Executive Steering Committee, 2004 (revised 2006),  
<http://www.unamagroups.org/PRTESCCCharterandPRTWGCharter3Aug06en.pdf> (01/23/2009)

European Union Special Representative, Head of EUPOL, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission and a World Bank representative. Thus, this committee is the board, to give the overall mandate to the PRTs, upon which every participating nation or organization has agreed. The Charter defines PRTs as “civil-military entities mandated to enable the extension of the reach and influence of the Afghan authorities on a country-wide basis.” Their task is to “assist in promoting and consolidating security, stabilization, reconstruction, development, good governance, and security sector reform efforts”. Therefore, “PRTs operate in an integrated approach, through interaction with Afghan central and sub-national officials.”<sup>17</sup>

### **The Capacities of PRTs**

The above-mentioned three-dimensional approach by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)-PRTs is mainly executed through patrolling (“showing the flag”) and should produce quick results by implementing Quick Impact Projects. PRTs have limited capacities and depend on the cooperation and goodwill of the local decision makers. When the PRT has to deal with local insurrection or outbreaks of violence, PRTs depend on reinforcements since their own military capacities are limited.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Charter of the PRT Executive Steering Committee, l.c., p.2

<sup>18</sup> Gaustner, l.c., p.11; Schmunk, Michael, *Die deutschen Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Ein neues Instrument zum Nation-Building*, SWP, Berlin 2005, p. 30 ff  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/produkte/swp\\_studie.php?id=5171&PHPSESSID=f0f74](http://www.swp-berlin.org/produkte/swp_studie.php?id=5171&PHPSESSID=f0f74) (02/08/2009)

PRT tasks include patrolling, mediation, setting up networks to the local population, running reconstruction projects, training and supervising armed forces and police personnel, demobilization and disarming, as well as intelligence. Due to the permanent change of loyalties in its area of responsibility (AOR), a PRT depends on high quality intelligence. In working close together with Government of Afghanistan representatives, a PRT can reward positive attitudes shown by local decision makers, but is hardly able to punish a negative one. PRTs have also supported President Hamid Karzai's strategic decision to replace non-loyal provincial administrations and have successfully mediated during power struggles between old and new police chiefs.<sup>19</sup>

The deployment of European, and especially German Armed Forces, to Afghanistan requires political justification concerning the public at home. In the case of Germany, restrictions and tight rules of engagements (RoE) are the political solution. Using PRTs can make the justification of deployments easier for politicians; the realization of an inter-ministerial approach in PRTs makes it not only cost-effective, but also creates a common mindset within the different ministries. This could be the crucial factor in a coalition government, such as the current German administration. Every improvement in the coordination between the PRT-contributing ministries will improve the PRTs' cost-benefit calculation.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Gaustner, l.c., p.11

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

## **The Inadequacies of PRTs**

PRTs are not suitable to fight the dominant drug economy in a direct way. This means they cannot destroy poppy fields, or fight directly a war against the drug lords and their private armies. The approach is a subtle and indirect one, such as contributing to the setup of a loyal police force, which, in turn, should enforce the rule of law.<sup>21</sup>

The fact that German ISAF deployments last only four to six months – even for key personnel – leads directly to the sustainability dilemma of the PRTs. It particularly harms the confidence building measures of these PRTs. To continuously pass on intelligence from rotation to rotation is difficult, for instance on the local power structures.<sup>22</sup> The PRTs have yet to find a balance between give and take in the sense of carrots and sticks. There is no doubt that the combined international (civilian and military) pressure towards the implementation of self-sustaining Afghan structures has to be increased.<sup>23</sup>

PRTs in the south or east of Afghanistan need the constant support of combat troops, a fact which clearly runs counter to the original plan, namely to implement security and to execute reconstruction projects through small, autonomously acting entities like PRTs. They are a suitable device to add stabilization where post-conflict conditions dominate. A PRT-deployment in war zones reduces this innovative concept and the meaning of “reconstruction team” to

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<sup>21</sup> Julia Hett, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan. Das amerikanische, britische und deutsche Modell*, ZiF, Berlin, 2005, p.14

<sup>22</sup> Authors own experience

<sup>23</sup> Gaustner, l.c., p.13

irrationality.<sup>24</sup> Thus, PRT's cannot be used to reduce significantly the amount of forces needed in war. They can be deployed in an early post-conflict stage, but only if they can rely on a sufficient reinforcement when needed.

### **Various PRT Concepts**

PRTs in Afghanistan have a multi-national, civil-military, and multi-functional nature and have to deal with alternating threat levels in the various regions of a country, often in a highly fragmented structure. Therefore, PRTs depend heavily on the framework conditions on the ground. The structurally different and flexible PRT-concepts seem to be an advantage over rigid and standardized rules. Standardization would decrease the PRTs greatest strength: the flexibility to adapt to quickly changing situations that are typical for post-conflict-regions. The PRT-concepts of the lead nations are different, but all PRTs have one thing in common: they represent a hope for a better future for the population.<sup>25</sup>

The US-led PRTs under ISAF command operate in high-risk areas in the south and the east. They provide suitable bases for Afghan National Army (ANA) training and for combined counter-insurgency operations. The US-concept enables the simultaneous execution of combat and reconstruction operations.<sup>26</sup> Even scientific literature highlights this as the fundamental problem of the US-PRTs and argues that the main objectives of the US in Afghanistan are to

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Gaustner, l.c., p.14; Hett, l.c., p. 21; Schmunk, l.c., p. 33

<sup>26</sup> Gaustner, l.c., p.14; Hett, l.c., p. 4



fight the global “war on terror” and to maintain permanent bases in support of their geo-strategic interests. For the Afghan transformation process, the results are counter-productive; for example, the strengthening of local Power Brokers leads to the weakening of the Afghan government.<sup>27</sup> On the positive side, the US-PRTs are managing local, flexible, and situation-based Commanders Emergency Response Projects (CERP) on behalf of the provincial governments. The bad reputation of the US-PRTs seems to be more written theory than felt in real life in the region, where the local population accepts the US-PRTs very much.<sup>28</sup>

The Focus of the UK PRTs is, besides security, on enabling and facilitating reconstruction projects and institution building. The PRT as concrete “reconstruction unit” is very limited, in order to avoid duplicating the efforts of civilian organizations and to strengthen the Afghan ownership principle. Using small patrols in the entire Area of Responsibility (AoR) UK PRTs created a tactic of permanent, but discreet presence. Therefore, they were able to gain high acceptance of the local population, as well as from the NGOs in the region.<sup>29</sup>

The German PRTs’ specialty is the equal integration of the civilian and military elements under one mission and under dual command. This interagency approach seems to be forward-looking, but appears to be very complex and takes more time to affect the situation on the ground. According to United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) the disarmament programs with PRT-support have been running efficiently in both the German and

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Authors own experience as a Cdr PRT FEYZABAD, which has as its right neighbors two US PRTs

<sup>29</sup> Gaustner, l.c., pp. 14,15; Hett, l.c. p.4

British AoR. However, Afghanistan is still packed with illegal weapons, which makes it difficult for the Afghan government to gain substantial influence.<sup>30</sup>

Despite different concepts, armament, and rules of engagement, the PRTs in Afghanistan achieved a similar level of acceptance and largely positive effect between 2003 and 2006. Since 2007, the strategic international efforts in nation-building seem to have reached a dead end concerning the centrally organized government in Afghanistan. As the PRTs are working at an operational/tactical level this is not in their responsibility. To prevent Afghanistan from falling back into a fundamentalist state and being again a safe haven for terrorists, PRTs have the potential to combine global thinking and local acting, but are only one of a variety of components that have to fit together.<sup>31</sup>

### **PRT “Blueprint” for Afghanistan and the German PRT FEYZABAD**

Several studies on the different PRT concepts are available in the literature.<sup>32</sup> Thus, there is no need to focus too much on conceptual issues. In his study in 2006, Andrew M. Roe developed a PRT “Blueprint” for Afghanistan, which, although it does not provide a suggested level of resources, is designed to meet the individual needs of the population and the supported

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<sup>30</sup> Schmunk, I.c., p. 21

<sup>31</sup> Gaustner, I.c., p. 15

<sup>32</sup> See for example Gaustner, I.c.; Hett, I.c.; Schmunk, I.c.; Andrew Roe, *AContemporary “Blueprint” for NATO PRTs in Afghanistan?* SAMS U.S. Army CGSC, Ft. Leavenworth 2006 <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA450610&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf> (02/08/2009)

region.<sup>33</sup> Figure (1) shows Roe's Blueprint, which comes interestingly close to what the German PRT FEYZABAD (FEY) looked like in 2008, when it was commanded by the author. The PRT FEY was (and still is) commanded by an experienced regular army colonel, not only due to the high threat environment as recommended in the "blueprint" but also in order to interact at eye level with the responsible Afghan police and military commanders, in the rank of colonel and brigadier general and the civil province governor. Figure (2) shows the German PRT FEY as structured in 2008.

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<sup>33</sup> Roe, l.c., pp.58,59

Figure 1

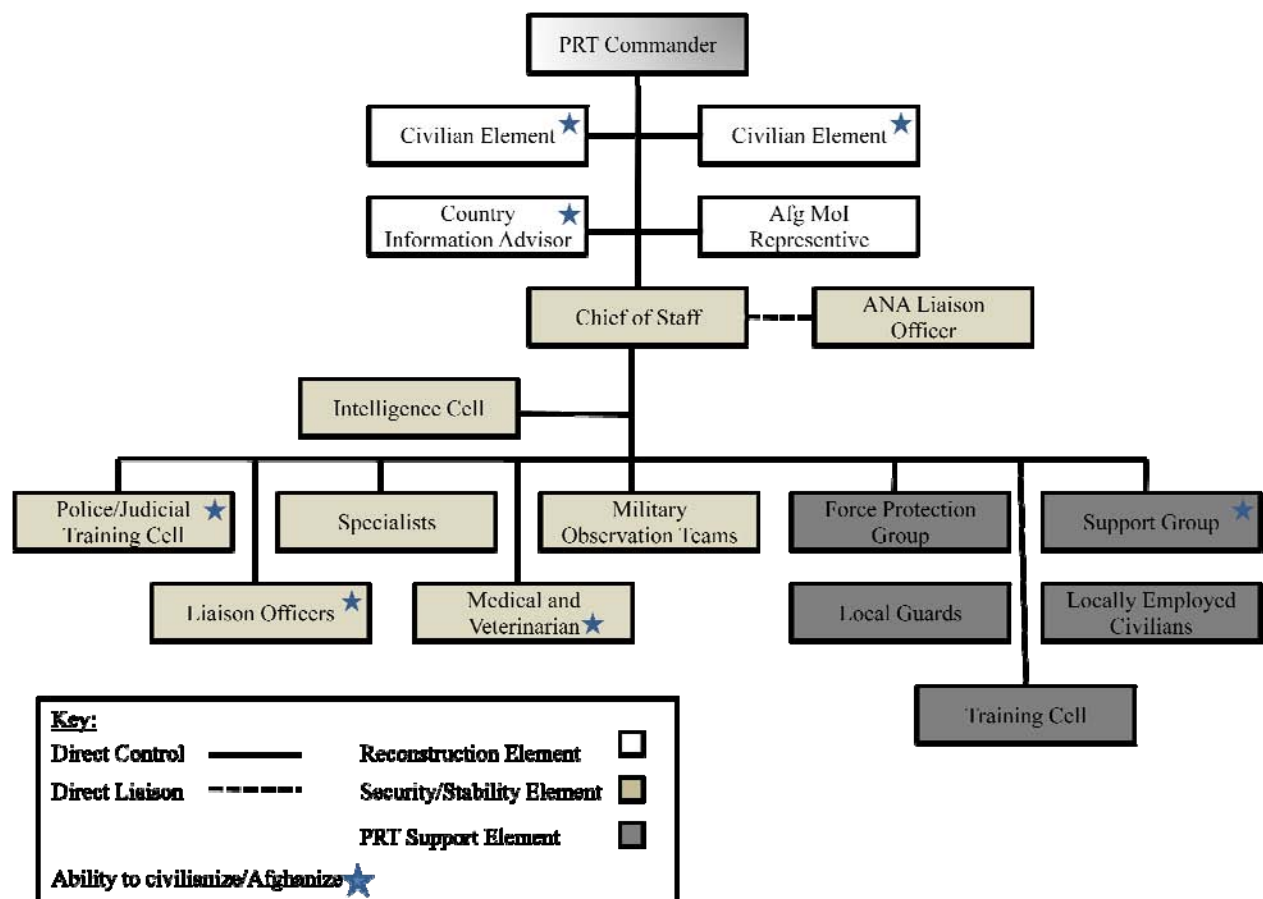
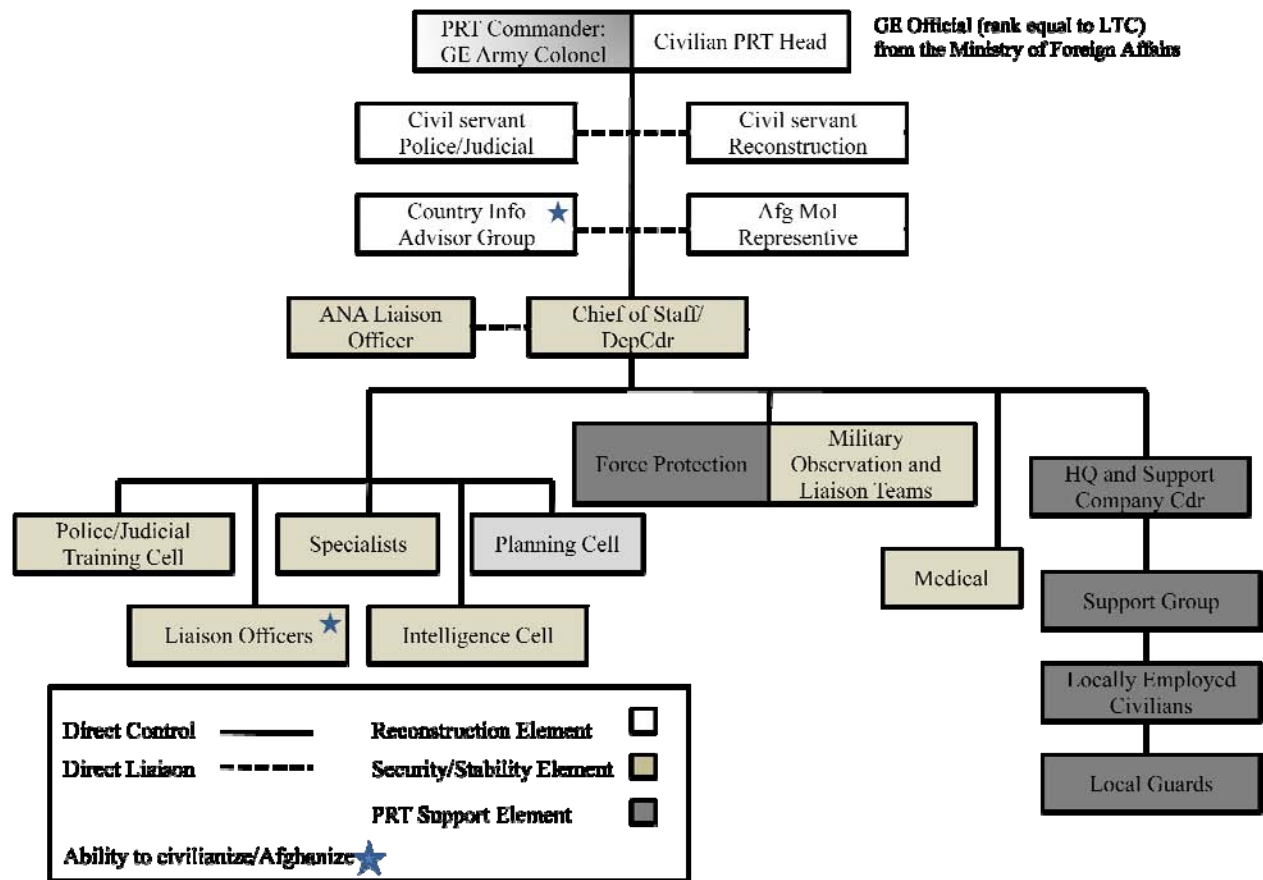
PRT “Blueprint” for Afghanistan<sup>34</sup><sup>34</sup> Roe, l.c., p.57

Figure 2 Structure PRT FEYZABAD<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> PRT FEYZABAD as structured in the first half of 2008, when commanded by the author

Force Protection and Military Observation and Liaison Teams were under the command of company commanders, due to the size of PRT FEY: a German and a Danish Infantry company, and a German Military Police platoon led by a Provost Marshal. The same applies to the Medical Company and the Headquarter and Support Company. Besides these facts, the structure realized almost Roe's recommended blueprint; the military commander had the overall responsibility for maintaining regional stability. Together with his civilian counterpart he had to facilitate the reconstruction and development initiatives and to provide overarching directions for the PRT. In the German PRTs, the civilian element also supports the commander in encouraging regional construction, but a diplomat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) acts as a co-commander; thus, the PRT is dual headed. In Feyzabad, additional civilians from the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (MECD), a senior police officer from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and a senior diplomat from the Czech MFA all contributed to the PRT's effort.

### **The Comprehensive Approach**

Taking PRT FEY as an example, this chapter shows the comprehensive or interagency approach on the tactical level. The main point of both, the German PRT FEY and the theoretical blueprint, seems to be the interagency approach; the blueprint has a Joint Leadership with the civilian elements integrated to a high degree. It comes close to the former British PRT Mazar-e-Sharif where the UK MoD worked closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development. Operationally, the military and civilian elements

worked separately and had a separate method of submitting reports.<sup>36</sup> As mentioned above, PRT FEY has a civil-military double command, with the Foreign Ministry selecting the civilian head. The military commander is not only subordinate to the Bundeswehr Operations Command, but also to the ISAF Regional Command North and therefore to HQ ISAF and NATO. The civilians in the German PRT are therefore only subordinate to the military command in questions of security. In diplomatic questions and questions concerning development aid policy, they get orders from and report directly to their respective departments.

The idea of a comprehensive stabilization and reconstruction plan characterizes this approach, with short, medium, and long-term effectiveness. Hence, the PRT Feyzabad is structured and equipped as a “civilian reconstruction team with a military protection element”.<sup>37</sup> The civilian and military side is working together on the same level, following the political mission. Every ministry implements this mission according to its own ideas. Ideally, the involved ministries would coordinate their plans in an inter-ministerial working group in Germany, in order to produce the highest effect in the Hindukush. However, in daily business, the coordinating efforts had to be made in situ; more than once, the members of the PRT had to convince their ministries at home, in order to reach a comprehensive approach.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Jon Brittain, *Civil Military Interaction: Practical Experiences of a PRT Commander*. In: Feichtinger, I.c., p. 113 ff; Gaustner, I.c., p. 57 ff

<sup>37</sup> Gaustner, I.c., pp. 50,51

<sup>38</sup> Authors own experience as cdr PRT FEY

In literature, three strategic pillars form the heart of a German PRT are mentioned:<sup>39</sup>

- Diplomacy: making contacts, efforts at persuasion, lobbying and diplomacy, as well as strengthening the civil society in cooperation with UNAMA.
- Security: supporting Security Sector Reform by cooperating in setting up the Afghan National Police and in the disarming of the militias and of private persons.
- Development: realization of projects in development cooperation, as well as their coordination with other international and national partners or NGOs.

This coincides with the author's own experience as a Cdr PRT FEY. The following example shows, how the interagency approach under this pillars can work on the tactical level.

### **Varduj Valley<sup>40</sup>**

This example demonstrates how the different departments of the PRT act together in order to conduct a comprehensive operation, which is suitable to gain initially a stronghold, to stabilize the situation stepwise and to reactivate the engagement of Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) to achieve development. The Varduj district is located in the Badakshan province in the AOR of PRT Feyzabad. A small deep valley bearing one of the two main lines of communication (LOC) in the region, and is, therefore, important to every operation. In late 2007,

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<sup>39</sup> Hett, l.c., p.15 f

<sup>40</sup> Authors own experience as cdr PRT FEY. The situation in January 2009, as described here, was briefed by the then CoS PRT FEY LTC Schroeder to the author.



several attacks against PRT forces and civil NGO's by insurgents occurred. After two humanitarian workers of the Aga Khan Foundation were killed, the NGO's stopped their projects and withdrew from the region.

The PRT used a comprehensive approach to bring the international community back into the area. In a joint and combined approach, the PRT commander, the civil head and the responsible Afghan chief of police (CoP) conducted a meeting with the village elders and the district manager in the Varduj main village. The representatives of the district requested a permanently manned checkpoint (CP), which exemplified security in the perception of the people. After a recon mission in early 2008, the final evaluation took place by the PRT and Afghan National Police (ANP) in April. Construction began by end of June 2008. The CP handover to the ANP was conducted October 2008. The CP was reconnoitred jointly with the representatives of the German MFA, MOI, EUPOL, CoP Badakhshan and the commander PRT Feyzabad.

As a result, the MFA was going to fund the CP, the Danish DANIDA contributed to its running expenses, MOI, EUPOL and German Military Police trained the ANP, to enable them to operate it. Long Term Patrols of the PRT used the CP as a Safe House. The MECD using its Association for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) began to fund smaller projects starting in the North and thereby, convinced the International Community to return into the valley to reactivate their halted projects. The development will most possibly lead to a slowly but steadily increasing independence from drug related criminality and LPB's on the long term as a prerequisite for a sustainable security situation in the area. The PRT plans similar projects in the neighbouring

districts and in other critical regions of the province. The two key factors are the interactivity and the comprehensive approach of all departments and secondly, working thru UNAMA with the NGOs.

During the PRT commander's conference at HQ ISAF in February 2008, PRT commanders from all over Afghanistan reported similar projects in their AORs. Nevertheless, Afghanistan in the year 2009 is not a success story.<sup>41</sup> Does that mean the PRT concept is a failure? To answer this question, the next chapter will compare several completed and on-going nation-building and stability operations.

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<sup>41</sup> See the for 2009 data monthly updated Brookings Afghanistan Index <http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009), which shows a high number of violent insurgency, opium growing, and drug trafficking.

## **The Use of Force and the Success of Nation-Building**

This chapter examines the nation building and stability operations since 1945, it defines the concept underneath these operations, explains the dominance of security considerations in this concept and argues for the use of overwhelming force.

### **The Use of Military Means**

On one hand, purely military means are not sufficient to contain current transnational threats, and on the other hand, purely civil means are not ample to reach a minimum of security and stability. If crisis management is to act more and more multidimensionally as the meaning of a comprehensive approach implies, what is the right mixture of civil and military means? Put another way, the most pressing question is the amount of combat forces needed not only to intervene, but also to stabilize in the post-conflict scenario. The corollary to that question is the determination of that point in time during an ongoing operation when the balance of efforts switches to a less military and a more civil approach?

A case in point for both these questions is the recent history of Iraq's struggle for stability. After the coalition victory over Saddam Hussein's regime in April 2003, the occupying powers failed to arrest the slide of Iraq into anarchy. The occupying authorities abolished the old government's security apparatus, creating a climate of anarchy in the streets and generating a rise from petty theft to organized crime. Looters razed museums, public facilities, and ministerial

offices, and stole equipment and arms from Iraqi military installations. Kidnapping and truck hijacking became rampant. By the summer of 2003, in this vacuum, emerging insurgents were conducting an increasingly effective and disruptive campaign of terror and sabotage against coalition and Iraqi forces, government officials, civilian contractors and key infrastructure.<sup>42</sup>

In Afghanistan, after more than 30 years of war, nothing was left for spoilers in 2001. Its cities lay in ruins and its society was fractured and disrupted. However, violent insurgency by forces loyal to the Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, and al Qaeda continued to operate following the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and is still increasing.<sup>43</sup> The cultivation, production, and trafficking of opium poppy, a traditional Afghan product, notably increased after 2001, reaching the highest level in 2007.<sup>44</sup> The Afghan *National Threat Assessment* warned that the drug crime was making “Afghanistan an attractive haven for international terrorist groups, organized crime and other extremists while funding the continued, destabilizing presence of non-statutory armed forces.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, under such conditions the questions of how to conduct nation building operations successfully and how to define secure and stable environment emerge to take on immediate import.

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<sup>42</sup> Larry Diamond, *What Went Wrong in Iraq*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 83, #5, 2004, pp.34-56, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20040901faessay83505/larry-diamond/what-went-wrong-in-iraq.html> (01/13/2009); Clark, W. *Iraq: what went wrong*, The New York Review of Books, Vol. 50, #16, 2003, pp.52-54, [http://mediaprima.com/clark04/Iraq\\_what\\_went\\_wrong.html](http://mediaprima.com/clark04/Iraq_what_went_wrong.html) (01/13/09); Glanz, J. et al. *Looting at Weapons Plants Was Systematic, Iraq Says*, New York Times, 13 March 2005, p.1, [http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/13/international/middleeast/13loot.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=looting+at+weapons+plants&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/13/international/middleeast/13loot.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=looting+at+weapons+plants&st=nyt) (01/13/2009)

<sup>43</sup> Jones Seth, *The Rise of Afghanistan's Insurgency*, p. 9 <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/isec.2008.32.4.7> (01/27/2009)

<sup>44</sup> Brookings Afghanistan Index <http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009)

<sup>45</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, *Afghanistan National DrugThreat Assessment*, 2004, <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs10/10330/> (01/27/2009)

## **Defining Nation Building and its Effectiveness**

Nation-building includes military and civilian efforts to establish security and rebuild institutions, mostly after war. It generally occurs when states endeavor to transition from war to peace in the aftermath of an inter-state or civil war. Nation building includes efforts to rebuild security, economic, political, health, cultural, educational, and other sectors.<sup>46</sup> During war, states often suffer huge destruction and require substantial reconstruction. In the security sector, nation-building operations intend to rebuild police, armed forces, intelligence, and judiciary, but aim also at demilitarizing, demobilizing, and reintegrating former combatants. In the economic sector, they can include establishing a stable currency, creating a regulatory framework, and generating income. In the health sector, they often have to oversee the return of refugees and prevent contagious disease outbreaks, starvation, and other acute health concerns. Nation-building operations also involve setting up political parties, free press, and a legal and constitutional framework for elections. They may also include overseeing infrastructure improvements especially in areas of water and electricity. Operating in the above-mentioned different sectors requires a stable and secure environment; on the long run, all these sectors should work properly, in order to keep a stable and secure environment. Thus, to examine the effectiveness of nation-building operations, their success in establishing security has to be measured.

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<sup>46</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *State-building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2004

This Monograph uses the following criteria for stability and security: A region counts as “insecure” if these conditions are met: (1) fighting takes place (or took place within the last five years) between two or more organized non-state groups, or between agents of a state and organized non-state groups. (2) At least 1000 people have been killed over its course. (3) More than 100 people were killed on each side, including civilians.<sup>47</sup>

The focus is on security because it is generally the overall objective in dealing with nation-building. Other aims, such as democracy, good governance, economic increase are important, but they all require a secure and stable environment as a precondition. To facilitate democratization, outside forces can play a key role in establishing these conditions. The lack of security makes it nearly impossible to rebuild economic, political, health, and other sectors. In developing the health sector, for example, the absence of security hampers progress in hospital and health clinic construction and can disrupt immunization campaigns. Healthcare personnel and patients can be deterred from providing or seeking healthcare because of security concerns.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Kim Duk, *Ending Civil Wars: Evaluating International Peacebuilding Operations* [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p\\_mla\\_apa\\_research\\_citation/1/7/8/9/1/pages178912/p178912-1.php](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/7/8/9/1/pages178912/p178912-1.php) (01/27/2009); Nicholas Sambanis, *What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2004, Vol. 48, # 6, p. 814 ff

<sup>48</sup> Seth G. Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations: The Use of Overwhelming Force* in Peter Schmidt (ed.) *A Hybrid Relationship. Transatlantic Security Cooperation beyond NATO*, Internationale Sicherheit Bd.7, Verlag Peter Lang, Frankfurt a.M., 2008, p. 277

### **Amount of Force, Duration of the Operation, and Assistance**

Troops, money, duration of the operation, and a peace treaty are the four factors to increase the likeliness of establishing security during nation building operations.<sup>49</sup> The historical proof proposes that security is mainly a function of overwhelming force and resources. In a classical state-on-state war, this approach is known as “Weinberger or Powell Doctrine”: one’s own military forces should be overwhelming to the force used by the enemy.<sup>50</sup> In applying this approach to nation-building, operations are more successful the higher the number of troops immediately after the combat phase and the bigger the amount of resources’ for assistance. However, it is not possible to analyze the force ratio as seen in the Military Decision Making Process.<sup>51</sup> Thus, this monograph uses the ratio between soldiers and inhabitants of the region to be stabilized. According to the discussion in literature a ratio of at least 10 troops per 1000 inhabitants may be necessary as long as potential for severe instability exists. In addition, a ratio of at least one police officer per 1000 inhabitants is usually needed in unstable conditions.<sup>52</sup>

These large numbers of troops are critical for security; they can be local, international, or a combination of both. A period of anarchy seems to emerge after civil or interstate wars, in which

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<sup>49</sup> Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations*, l.c., p. 278

<sup>50</sup> Colin L. Powell, *U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, # 5, p. 32 ff  
<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/19921201faessay5851/colin-l-powell/u-s-forces-challenges-ahead.html>  
 (01/28/2009); Caspar W. Weinberger, *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon*, Warner Books, New York 1990

<sup>51</sup> U.S. Army, *FM 5-0*, Washington, DC, 2005, p. 3-31 ff.  
[https://akocomm.us.army.mil/usapa/doctrine/DR\\_pubs/dr\\_aa/pdf/fm5\\_0.pdf](https://akocomm.us.army.mil/usapa/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_aa/pdf/fm5_0.pdf) (01/17/2009)

<sup>52</sup> James, T. Quinlivan, *Force Requirements in Stability Operations*,  
<http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/summer2003/burden.html> (01/28/2009); James Dobbins, *America’s Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2003; Dobbins, James, *UN’s Role in Nation-Building: From Congo to Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2005; Seth G. Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations*, l.c., p. 279

different groups seek to arm themselves. Some may aim for their protection, some may have offensive objectives to impose their ideology on others, some may attempt to seize property of rival groups, and others may have just criminal intents.<sup>53</sup> In order to control and overcome these groups, stability forces are needed to secure roads, patrol borders, fight organized crime, conduct general law enforcement, for instance policing streets. Special trained troops, such as French Gendarmerie, Spanish Guardia Civil, or Italian Carabinieri, are best qualified for crowd control, urban patrols, civil reconstruction, and peace enforcement.<sup>54</sup> Ensuring security becomes more difficult without significant numbers of those troops. Insurgents or organized criminals may be encouraged to use force. Permeable borders facilitate the movement of insurgents, drug trafficking, and other criminal organizations.<sup>55</sup> The situation becomes even more complicated, when one's own forces have to draw on a regional warlord and his organized armed group in order to ensure their own security. This happens regularly in nation building operations, if a sufficient number of trained own troops is not available.<sup>56</sup>

Figure (3) illustrates the number of military forces per capita in nation building operations at the beginning. Their level in the first year ranged from 101 U.S. Soldiers / 1000 inhabitants in Germany 1945 down to 0.1 UN Soldiers in El Salvador. The relationship of 10 / 1000 can be seen as the minimum to ensure security. These numbers were at least deployed to Germany,

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<sup>53</sup> Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations*, l.c., p. 279

<sup>54</sup> Robert, M. Perito, *Where Is the Lone Ranger When We Need Him?* USIP Press, Washington, D.C., 2004, p.38 ff

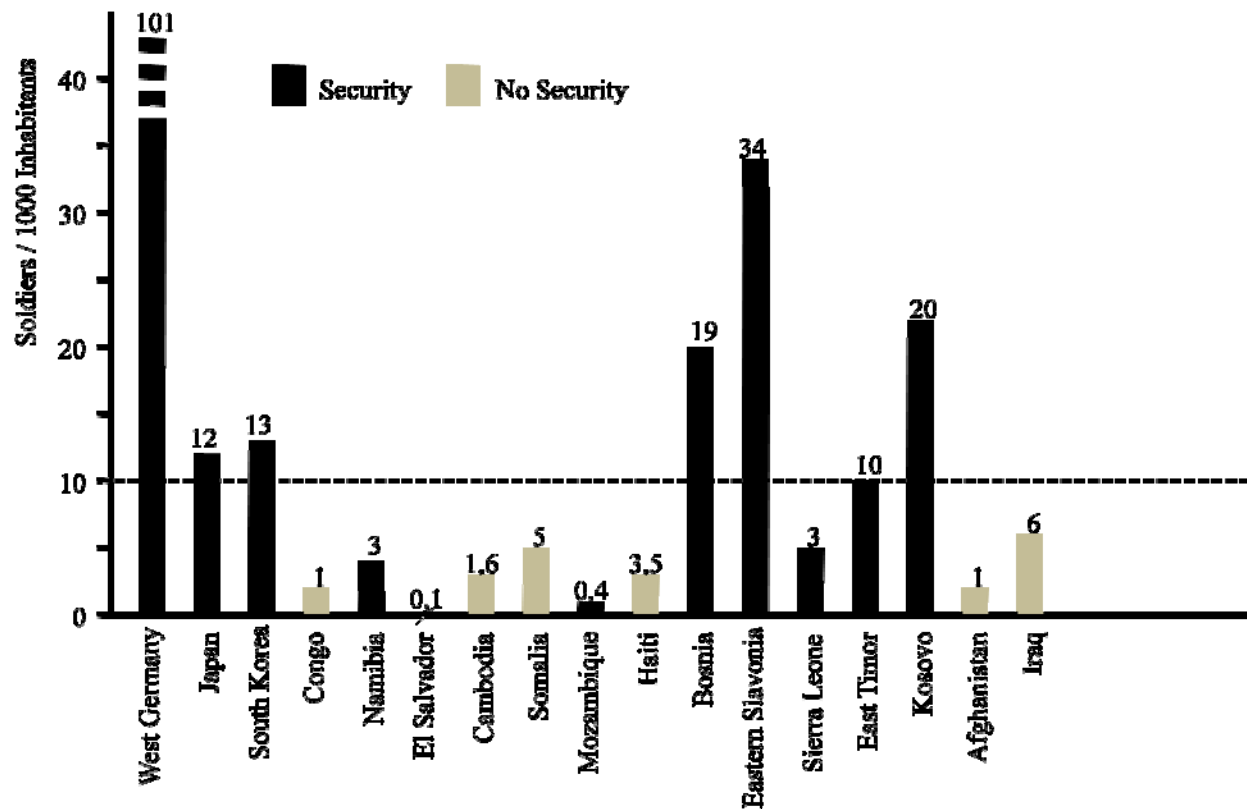
<sup>55</sup> Author's own experience as a PRT Cdr in FEYZABAD, BADAQSHAN Province Afghanistan, with Borders to Tadzhikistan, China, and Pakistan

<sup>56</sup> Author's own experience as a PRT Cdr: A civil guard, for instance, secured PRT FEYZABAD. The Members of this guard were under the control of the regional Warlord Nazir Mohamed. In a Western society, Nazir would be a wanted Mafiosi. Within ISAF Regional Command North this is the common approach to guard the PRTs and the Regional Command itself.



Figure 3

Number of Military Forces per capita<sup>57</sup>



<sup>57</sup> John J. McGrath, *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations*, Global War on Terrorism, Occasional Paper 16, Combat Studies Institute Press, Ft. Leavenworth, 2007, [http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/mcgrath\\_boots.pdf](http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/mcgrath_boots.pdf) (01/17/2009); Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations*, l.c., p. 282

Japan, Korea, Bosnia, Eastern Slavonia, East Timor, and Kosovo. At the end of WW II, for instance, 61 U.S. divisions were deployed in Germany. In the American sector, U.S. Armed Forces conducted patrols, maintained checkpoints, and operated border crossings.<sup>58</sup> The other allies conducted a similar approach in their sectors. As another example, in Bosnia, soldiers of the Implementation Force (IFOR) controlled the separation between former warring parties (Bosnian, Croat, and Serb) and monitored the withdrawing of heavy weapons and equipment into storage areas.<sup>59</sup> A deployment ratio of less than 10 Soldiers per 1000 Inhabitants led in the most cases to an unstable situation and the breakdown of security. In the Belgian Congo, UN troops conducted several offensive operations, but were unable to stop the violence in the Katanga Province with a 1 soldier / 1000 inhabitants ratio.<sup>60</sup> In Somalia, neither UN nor U.S. troops were able to ensure security. A five soldier / 1000 inhabitants ratio was insufficient to control or even deter the Somali warlords.<sup>61</sup> The three exceptions were the UN operations in Sierra Leone, Mozambique, and Namibia, where a small military force achieved security. However, in all three cases a credible peace treaty existed.<sup>62</sup>

Besides the quantity and quality of stability forces, timing is also a critical factor. In literature, the immediate aftermath is called the “golden hour”, that period of the first weeks to

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<sup>58</sup> Peter Blume, *US-Army 1945-1995: "Von der Besatzungstruppe zur verbundeten Armee" : 50 Jahre US Army in Deutschland*, FlugzeugPublikation, Illertissen 1999

<sup>59</sup> See for example on NATO official homepage, <http://www.nato.int/ifor/ifor.htm> (01/19/2009)

<sup>60</sup> Bloomfield, et al., *Cascon Case CON: Congo (Katanga) 1960-63*, [http://web.mit.edu/cascon/cases/case\\_con.html](http://web.mit.edu/cascon/cases/case_con.html) (01/19/2009)

<sup>61</sup> The United States Army in Somalia 1992-1994, <http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/Somalia/Somalia.htm> (01/19/2009)

<sup>62</sup> See for Sierra Leone <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamsil/>, for Mozambique [http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co\\_mission/onumoz.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/onumoz.htm), and for Namibia [http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co\\_mission/untag.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/untag.htm) (01/20/09)

several months where external intervention may enjoy initial popular support and potential spoilers are not yet organized.<sup>63</sup> Within this time frame, a sufficient amount of force can prevent conflicts becoming an insurgency. However, the longer the time that large numbers of troops remain in the region, the more likely they may be seen as occupying force, and resistance or insurgency therefore emerge.<sup>64</sup> Thus, staying for a long time does not guarantee success, but leaving too early leads to failure. It can take years to train, equip, and mentor military and police forces, as well as to reconstruct the necessary infrastructure. To build the judicial system can be very time consuming and extremely difficult, especially in countries like Afghanistan with almost no formal rule of law.<sup>65</sup> A German delegation to Afghanistan concluded in early 2002: “The police force is in a deplorable state just a few months after the dissolution of the Taliban regime. There is a lack of equipment and supplies. No systematic training has been provided for about 20 years. At least one entire generation of trained police officer is missing.”<sup>66</sup>

Figure (4) shows the duration of completed and ongoing nation building operations. With three outliers (Namibia, Mozambique, Eastern Slavonia) seven years was the minimum for establishing a stable and secure environment. Research literature suggests a duration of at least five years for successful stability operations.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations*, I.c., p. 280

<sup>64</sup> David, M. Edelstein, *Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail*, International Security, Vol 29, #1, 2004, <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/edelstein.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>65</sup> Fukuyama, I.c., p.59

<sup>66</sup> Die Bundesregierung: Auswaertiges Amt und Ministerium fuer Inneres, *Assistance in Rebuilding the Police Force in Afghanistan*, Berlin 2004, p.6

<sup>67</sup> Dobbins, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*; Dobbins et al. *UN's Role in Nation-Building*

The third key factor for success is financial assistance. After a civil or interstate war, a country suffers significant damage. In addition to that, countries like Congo, Namibia, Sierra Leone, or Afghanistan have low levels of economic development and deficiencies in central and local administrative capacities. Afghanistan, for instance, historically lacked a strong central government, tribes and local warlords controlled the territory, and the inhabitants were loyal to those with similar kinship ties rather than to the central state.<sup>68</sup> These conditions motivated actors to engage in violence and increase the possibility that organized criminals and terrorist networks operated in ungoverned rooms.<sup>69</sup>

Establishing viable state institutions, building infrastructure, instructing and equipping local police and military, as well as deploying and sustaining the international force generate high costs, especially in states that start from such a low level.<sup>70</sup> According to Dobbins, there is no easy answer to the question how much financial assistance is necessary.<sup>71</sup> However, funding has its limitations, and more does not always help more. Corruption should be a concern and the capacity of institutions and the administration in developing countries to spend large amounts of money.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Dr. Bernhard Chiari, et al. *Wegweiser zur Geschichte: Afghanistan*, Militaergeschichtliches Forschungsamt, Schoeningh, Paderborn et al., 2007, p. 15 ff; Conrad Schetter, *Stammesstrukturen und ethnische Gruppen*, in *ibid.* p. 125 ff

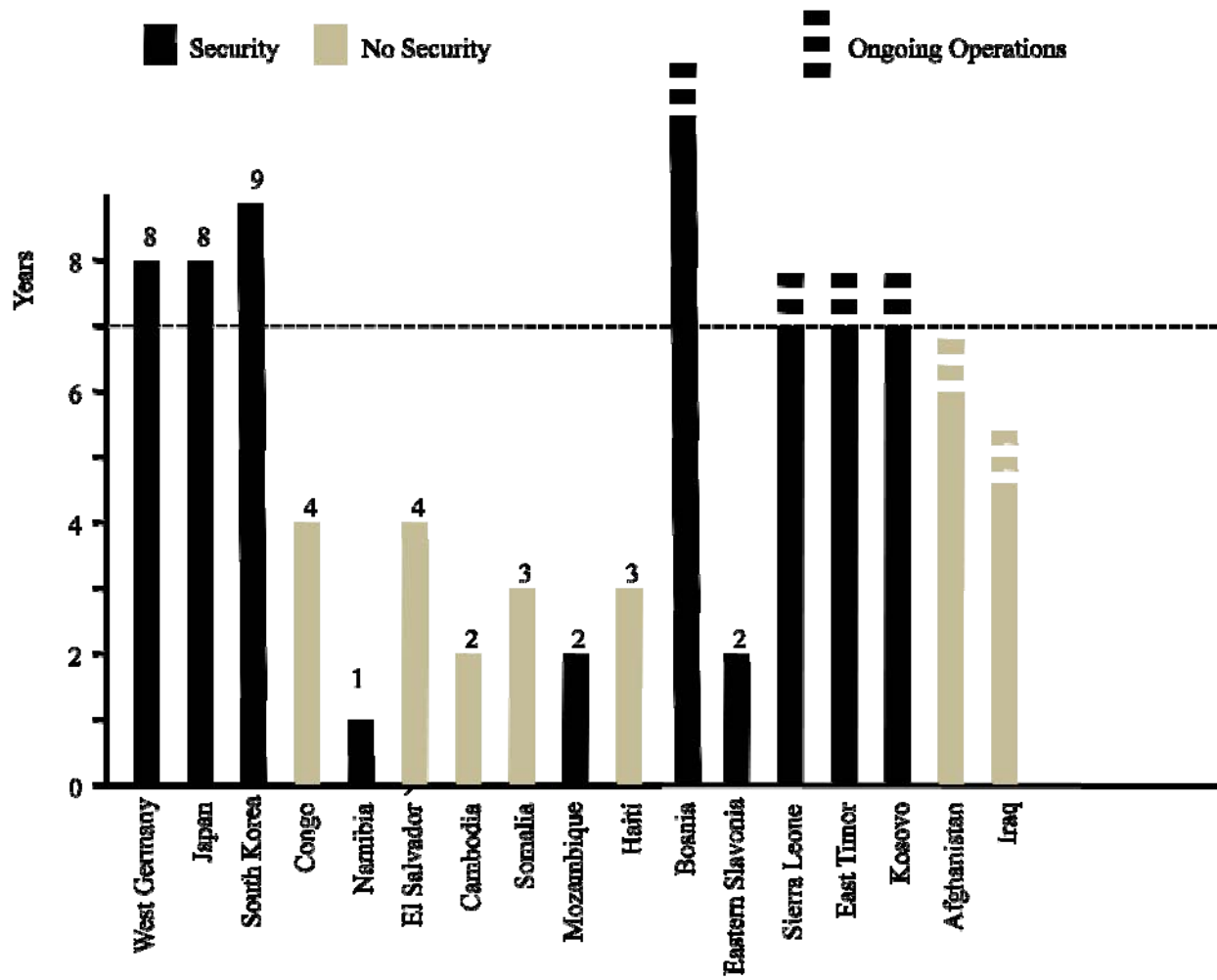
<sup>69</sup> Paul Collier et al. *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, World Bank, Washington, D.C. 2000, <http://oep.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/56/4/563> (01/28/2009)

<sup>70</sup> For the problem of putting Western values on other societies see Fred Rigg's thoughts on the "prismatic effect" <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~fredr/welcome.htm> (03/31/2009)

<sup>71</sup> Dobbins, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*; Dobbins et al. *UN's Role in Nation-Building*

<sup>72</sup> Author's own experience as a PRT Cdr in FEYZABAD, BADA KSHAN Province Afghanistan

Figure 4

Duration in Years of Stability Operations<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations, I.c.*, p. 287

## **Afghanistan: OEF and ISAF**

A closer look towards Afghanistan shows that to the present the United States and NATO failed to establish security. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) used only overwhelming airpower in the early stages of the Afghan campaign while the ISAF engagement was shaped by the UN “light footprint strategy” developed by then Special Adviser of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Lakhdar Brahimi.<sup>74</sup> In response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Afghan campaign started October 7, 2001. The U.S. used a combination of special operations and CIA forces, air power and support from local allies. After airstrikes against the Taliban’s limited communication infrastructure and air defense, Abdul Rashid Dostum’s and Muhammad Atta’s militia forces, the so-called North Alliance, took the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif after 14 days, supported by U.S. special operation forces. The fall of Mazar-e-Sharif caused a rapid collapse of the Taliban across the entire country. Kabul fell on November 13, without fighting, Kunduz surrendered two weeks later and Kandahar fell after another week. Through March 2002, the U.S., Northern Alliance, and coalition forces conducted follow on operations, such as “Anaconda.”<sup>75</sup>

The process of nation-building started in December 2001, immediately after the fall of the Taliban regime. The United States, its European allies, and the United Nations in a comprehensive approach began to rebuild security, economic, health, and education

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<sup>74</sup> Lakhdar Brahimi, *State Building in Crisis and Post-Conflict Countries*, at the 7<sup>th</sup> Global Forum on Reinventing Government Building Trust in Government 26-29 June 2007, Vienna, Austria  
<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN026896.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>75</sup> See for example Time Archive <http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101020318/popup/index.html> (01/28/2009)

infrastructure. However, the nation-building process faced high insecurity across the country: Fighting was ongoing among warlords in the Badghis, Laghman, Logar, Nuristan, Nangarhar, and Herat provinces. In southern and eastern Afghanistan, road travel was extremely hazardous, and criminal activities were widespread.<sup>76</sup> In June 2004, five personnel of “Médecins Sans Frontières” were kidnapped and shot in the head in Badghis Province. The NGO had been active in Afghanistan for almost three decades, but left the country one month later: “We simply cannot sacrifice the security of our volunteers while warring parties seek to target and kill humanitarian workers.”<sup>77</sup>

The violent insurgency began in spring of 2002, when insurgents started offensive operations to topple the Afghan interim administration and compel the U.S. and coalition forces to withdraw. By April, the opposition groups (Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, Al Qaeda) had regrouped and attacked Qandahar, Khost, Jalalabad, Kabul, Farah, and some smaller cities and villages. This was the starting point of an increasingly violent insurgency against coalition forces and the Afghan government.<sup>78</sup> After suffering high losses in a direct attack against the well-equipped coalition forces, the opposition groups changed their tactics to an indirect insurgency approach.

However, the Afghan people viewed the insecure situation as the most important problem facing the country. More than 60% saw it as top priority of the government to deal with security

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<sup>76</sup> See for example Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, AREU Briefing Paper 2004, <http://www.cmi.no/pdf/?file=/afghanistan/doc/AREU-Brief-2004-June-security.pdf> (01/28/2009) or Human Right Watch, 2006 <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11295/section/6> (01/28/2009)

<sup>77</sup> Health Now, 2004 <http://www.health-now.org/site/article.php?articleId=287&menuId=1> (01/28/2009)

<sup>78</sup> Universitaet Kassel *Chronik des Kriegen gegen Afghanistan*, <http://www.uni-kassel.de/fb5/frieden/regionen/Afghanistan/kriegschronik/april02.html> (01/28/2009)

issues, such as removing al Qaeda, eliminating the Taliban, and disarming warlords.<sup>79</sup> Similar polls show, that this numbers are still valid in January 2009.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, increasing opium poppy cultivation strengthened the power of insurgents, warlords and organized drug crime at the cost of the state. The drug trade is not only a source of income for warlords and insurgents, but also for members of the Afghan administration.<sup>81</sup> This aggravates the security problem by empowering non-state actors' opposed to the central government. Poppy cultivation rose from 74,100 hectares in 2002 to its highest level ever in 2007 with 195,000 hectares and 157,000 hectares in 2008.<sup>82</sup> The income of the Afghan drug traffickers and opium farmers accounts for about 40 % of the gross domestic product of the country. Afghanistan still produces almost 90 % of the world total.<sup>83</sup>

Why were neither OEF nor ISAF able to achieve security in Afghanistan? The historical cases of nation-building shown above suggest that the low level of resources was the critical factor. The amount of international forces and economic assistance was one of the lowest of every nation-building mission since the end of WW II.

The number of international troops per inhabitant in Afghanistan was considerably less than in most other cases since 1945, except the outliers El Salvador and Mozambique. In spring

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<sup>79</sup> See for 2005 data <http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/faqs/Afghanistan%20Index.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>80</sup> See the for 2009 data monthly updated Brookings Afghanistan Index  
<http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009)

<sup>81</sup> Author's talks with the commander of the Afghan Border Police Battalion in Eskeshem (Afghan/Tadzhikistan border) and the chief of police Kash (Kash-district, Badakshan-province), spring 2008

<sup>82</sup> See Brookings Institute *Afghanistan Index 2009*, p.21  
<http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/~media/Files/Programs/FP/afghanistan%20index/index.pdf>  
 (01/28/2009)

<sup>83</sup> UN Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2008*,  
[http://www.unodc.org/documents/publications/Afghanistan Opium Survey 2008.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/publications/Afghanistan%20Opium%20Survey%202008.pdf) (01/28/2009)



2002, the small NATO-led ISAF was deployed with 5,000 troops to Kabul in order to secure the capital. Additionally, Combined Forces Command Afghanistan supported with 5,000 for the most part U.S. forces counterterrorist operations throughout the country.<sup>84</sup> By 2006, these numbers increased to 20,000 U.S. soldiers and 10,000 NATO, which led to a ratio of only one soldier per 1000 inhabitants.<sup>85</sup> In January 2009, a total of 34,000 U.S. and 15,000 NATO soldiers are deployed to the country.<sup>86</sup> The U.S. military had adopted Lakdhar Brahimis “light footprint” approach. General Tommy Franks who had developed the operational concept for Afghanistan stated that after the major combat phase “our footprint had to be small, for both military and geopolitical reasons. I envisioned a total of about 10,000 American soldiers, airmen, special operators, and helicopter assault crews, along with robust in-country close air support.”<sup>87</sup>

However, these small numbers of military forces, together with Afghan entirely untrained police and military, was not able to gain security. They could not defeat the insurgents of the Taliban, al Qaeda, or Hezb-i-Islami and did not have sufficient strength to at least monitor Afghanistan’s borders. Especially the porous Afghan – Pakistani border was to the benefit of the insurgents; they could withdraw to the hinterland on the Pakistani side and also ensure their logistics via Pashtun tribesmen. There were no forces available to override both the warlords and to combat the rising opium business. Instead of repelling the influence of the warlords, the

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<sup>84</sup> Brookings Afghanistan Index, 2005, p.4, <http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/faqs/Afghanistan%20Index.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>85</sup> Brookings Afghanistan Index, 2005, p.4, <http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/faqs/Afghanistan%20Index.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>86</sup> See the for 2009 data monthly updated Brookings Afghanistan Index <http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009)

<sup>87</sup> General Tommy Franks, *American Soldier*, Harper Large Print, New York, 2004, p. 502

international forces had to work together with them. Thus, by 2008, the GoA still had little power outside the Kabul region and warlords controlled huge parts of the country.<sup>88</sup>

After the troops per inhabitant ratio, money is the second decisive factor: During the first two years of international nation building engagement in Afghanistan, the financial assistance added up only \$57 / inhabitant, which is one of the lowest of all stability operations since WW II, besides the UN operations in Congo, Cambodia, and Sierra Leone.<sup>89</sup>

Third, the Bonn Agreement signed by Afghan leaders on December 5, 2001 is no peace agreement.<sup>90</sup> It was and still is useful as a timetable for establishing government institutions, rebuilding the country, and gaining peace and security. However, Taliban, al Qaeda, Hezb-i-Islami never agreed to peace nor did the warlords agree to demobilization and disarmament. In order to get the Northern Alliance and some others to sign the Bonn Agreement, the initial text had to be changed. Instead of demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of all non-statutory forces, the final version stated “all mujahidin, Afghan armed forces, and armed groups in the country shall come under the command and control of the Interim authority, and be reorganized according to the requirements of the new Afghan security and armed forces.”<sup>91</sup>

To sum this chapter up: the increase of violent insurgency and combat deaths, concern for security mentioned in public opinion polls, and rising opium cultivation show, that the efforts of

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<sup>88</sup> Authors own experience: during the PRT commander’s conference at HQ ISAF in February 2008 PRT commanders from different regions throughout the country reported from “their” warlord in the PRT AOR

<sup>89</sup> Jones, *Transatlantic Stability Operations, I.c.*, p. 292

<sup>90</sup> The Bonn Agreement, 5 December 2001, <http://www.afghangovernment.com/AfghanAgreementBonn.htm> (01/28/2009)

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. Article V(1); Holger Kulick, *Afghanistan Abkommen*, in Spiegel online, December 2001 <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,171130,00.html> (01/28/2009)

the international community to stabilize Afghanistan were not successful up to the end of 2008.<sup>92</sup> The historical examples since 1945 suggest that the main reason lies in the insufficient number of military and police forces and the small financial assistance in the beginning of the nation building operation.

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<sup>92</sup> See for 2009 data the monthly updated Brookings Afghanistan Index  
<http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx> (01/28/2009)

## **Joint Multinational Nation-Building Task Force**<sup>93</sup>

Thus, the final issue confronting stability in Afghanistan is whether the so-called international community<sup>94</sup> can draw the appropriate lessons from past nation building operations. In this section the author examines institutional deficits, shows first structural answers, in order to gain lessons learned and to apply them in planning and training for future operations.

### **Institutional Deficits**

In the international security-arena after the Cold War period, external peace-, nation-, and state-building operations have become a major priority for Western foreign and security policy.<sup>95</sup> A paradigm shift in the international security agenda led to Bosnia and Herzegovina, East Timor, Kosovo, Macedonia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon, as the most prominent and recent cases. Although each is based on different intervention mandates, the so-called western states feel increasingly responsible and “regard it as their duty” to intervene with their instruments of humanitarian aid, peace building and reconstruction support in order to stabilize these societies

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<sup>93</sup> The idea of such a task force has been first published in Michael Schmunk, *Afghanistan: Elements of a Transatlantik Nation-Building Strategy*, in Daalder, Gnesotto, and Gordon, *Crescent of Crisis. U.S.-European Strategy for the Greater Middle East*, Washington D.C. 2006, pp. 163-183, see also in Peter Schmidt, *A Hybrid Relationship: Transatlantic Security Cooperation beyond NATO*, Frankfurt a.M. 2008, pp. 265-274

<sup>94</sup> Literature uses the vague term “International Community” in international relations to refer to all the countries of the world or to a group of them. The term is used to imply the existence of common duties and obligations between them, frequently in the context of calls for the respect of human rights and for action to be taken against repressive regimes. It is sometimes described as a euphemism used to refer to the West or to the developed world.

<sup>95</sup> Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Weissbuch 2006*, Chapter 2, [http://www.bmvg.de/fileserving/PortalFiles/C1256EF40036B05B/W26UVCCN796INFODE/Weissbuch\\_2006\\_Kapitel\\_2\\_mB\\_sig.pdf?yw\\_repository=youatweb](http://www.bmvg.de/fileserving/PortalFiles/C1256EF40036B05B/W26UVCCN796INFODE/Weissbuch_2006_Kapitel_2_mB_sig.pdf?yw_repository=youatweb) (01/28/2009)

to avoid humanitarian catastrophes.<sup>96</sup> The strategy is to build stable, legitimate, and effective states, based on the rule of law, and, if possible, on a democratic constitution.

The motivation of the West to strive far from home for multinational stability operation is not only altruism; above all, the aim is to safeguard its own security and way of life whenever and wherever threatened. In the “global village”, fragile, weak, failed, and failing states are quite likely to endanger the stronger ones.<sup>97</sup> In Europe, the U.S., and also in the UN, state and nation building has become an integral part of security and foreign policy, as expressed for instance, in the U.S.’ March 2006 *National Security Strategy*, EU’s December 2003 *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, or in the UN’s *High-level Panel Report on Threats, Challenges and Change*.<sup>98</sup>

There should be plenty of lessons learned from almost two decades of practical stability operations and a lot of analytical books and academic case studies providing policy and organizational recommendations.<sup>99</sup> Nevertheless, cases such as Iraq and even Afghanistan have shown that the international community is repeating the mistakes from past operations; national and international interagency cooperation has not been harmonized, instruments and tools have not been improved. In Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia the Transatlantic Partners (NATO and EU) performed much better than other international troop suppliers and donors, but the same partners have huge difficulties in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, certain political and cultural

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<sup>96</sup> Then Bundesausussenminister J. Fischer addressing the German Bundestag before intervening in former Yugoslavia

<sup>97</sup> Michael Schmunk in Peter Schmidt, *A Hybrid Relationship: Transatlantic Security Cooperation beyond NATO*, Frankfurt a.M. 2008, p. 265

<sup>98</sup> EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY Brussels, 2003 <http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>99</sup> See, for example J. Dobbins et al., *The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2007

differences still prevent Western cooperation in stability operations from becoming more efficient and successful. From the very start of the crisis, the most appropriate military and civil approaches still need to be better coordinated.

The international level is in disagreement on the roles of military and civil operations, aggravated by national caveats, and mirrors the lack of coordination between defense, foreign affairs, and governmental and non-governmental agencies. On the tactical level in Afghanistan, this leads to national pet projects and reconstruction beauty contests, with a disproportional high number of nearly identical “women”, “school”, or “healthcare” projects in the same communities, an unacceptable situation.<sup>100</sup> On the strategic-operational level, the underlying principles and intentions of the missions of *Operation Enduring Freedom* (OEF) and *International Security Assistance Force* (ISAF) reflect different, sometimes even contradictory stabilization concepts, while they are operating partly parallel, partly divergent. OEF has fully integrated combat forces, for instance the completely independently and secretly operating U.S. Special Forces, (but also German KSK, or British SAS). These are frequently criticized by NGOs, civil agencies, and partner nations for their aggressive approach for deliberately accepting high numbers of civilian casualties.<sup>101</sup> ISAF on the other hand using a “win the hearts and minds strategy” tried not to be seen as an occupation force. Thus, the partners blame each other for being too aggressive and undermining the overall philosophy of the international community in

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<sup>100</sup> The authors own experience as Cdr PRT FEYZABAD

<sup>101</sup> The Authors own experience out of long discussions in weekly UNAMA meetings. The underlying thinking “good NGOs – bad military” changed meanwhile to “good ISAF – bad OEF”.

the Hindukush or for being not willing to fight the necessary battles in order to ensure the preconditions for nation building at all.<sup>102</sup>

All these factors preclude the optimum of international stabilization and reconstruction assistance that could be available from post conflict societies. In addition, multiple international operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, besides new ones in Darfur, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, and others are ongoing and seem to be open-ended. The high number of engagements leads to a shortage of resources: peacekeepers and combat troops, development experts, diplomats, police and military trainers. Financial aid funds are running out and the political legitimacy becomes more and more difficult; governments need to have their mandates extended by parliaments regularly, in Germany, for example, every 12 to 18 months.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> See for example Michael Pohly, *Losing Afghanistan: The Failure of Petersberg*, or Allard Wagemaker, *Rescuing Afghanistan? Small Western Liberal Democracies and Multinational Intervention*, both in Schriftenreihe Landesverteidigungsakademie, Wien, 3/2008

<sup>103</sup> Michael Schmunk, *Die Deutschen Provincial Reconstruction Teams* SWP Studie Berlin, 2005  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/produkte/swp\\_studie.php?id=5171&PHPSESSID=f0f74](http://www.swp-berlin.org/produkte/swp_studie.php?id=5171&PHPSESSID=f0f74) (01/28/2009)

## Institutional-structural Answers

Meanwhile the participating nations are facing a shortage of resources and the institutional deficits. On the political-strategically level, the following western foreign ministries have already established offices for nation building:

- In Washington: Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization<sup>104</sup>
- In London: Stabilization Unit<sup>105</sup>
- In Ottawa: Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force<sup>106</sup>
- In Berlin: Arbeitsstab des Beauftragten fuer Zivile Krisenpraevention, Konfliktloesung und Friedenskonsolidierung (Office of the Commissioner for Civilian Prevention, Crisis resolution, and Peace Consolidation)<sup>107</sup>

These units act in close cooperation with

- NATO: the crisis management bodies<sup>108</sup>
- EU: Conflict Prevention and Civilian Crisis Management<sup>109</sup>
- UN: Peacebuilding Commission, assisted by the Peacebuilding Support Office, and a Peace building Fund<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/index.htm> (01/28/2009)

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/> (01/28/2009)

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.international.gc.ca/START-GTSR/index.aspx> (01/28/2009)

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Aussenpolitik/Themen/Krisenpraevention/neu/NationaleInstrumente.html> (01/28/2009)

<sup>108</sup> [http://www.nato.int/issues/crisis\\_management/bodies.html](http://www.nato.int/issues/crisis_management/bodies.html) (01/28/2009)

<sup>109</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/cfsp/cpcm/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/cpcm/index.htm) (01/28/2009)

<sup>110</sup> <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/> (01/28/2009)



All of these new structures are different in nature but have in common the lack of personnel and financial resources, bureaucratic impact, and political support.<sup>111</sup> According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a “whole-of-government” concept with integrated strategies on nation-builder’s is hindered by departmental egoism, intergovernmental rivalries, and political shortsightedness. However, these more or less new structures are vital for Western interests and can be seen as a first step into the right direction. If the different actors would be able to learn from each other’s strengths and weakness and from their experiences in the several operations, nation building will become a “classic” tool of foreign and security policy.<sup>112</sup>

The U.S. seems to be the first to draw these conclusions: The inability of departments and agencies to implement security policies in a coordinated and integrated manner has been cited across a wide range of incidents and policy areas. This has led the 9/11 Commission Report, the Iraq Study Group Report, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Peter Pace, as well as other think-tanks and individuals to call for an interagency reform modeled after “Goldwater-Nichols”.<sup>113</sup> On the military strategically level, the U.S. DOD has structured the new regional command AFRICOM jointly. Whose mission is: “United States Africa Command, in concert with other U.S. government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other

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<sup>111</sup> See OECD (ed.), *Whole-of-government Approaches to Fragile States*, Paris 2006, <http://www.eep.ac.uk/DNN2/Portals/0/OECD%20DAC%20Whole%20of%20Government%20Approaches%20to%20fragile%20states.pdf> (01/28/2009)

<sup>112</sup> Michael Schmunk in Peter Schmidt, *A Hybrid Relationship: Transatlantic Security Cooperation beyond NATO*, Frankfurt a.M. 2008, p. 269

<sup>113</sup> Peter Roman, *Can Goldwater-Nichols Reforms for the Interagency Succeed?* STIMSON Center, Washington D.C., 2007 <http://www.stimson.org/pub.cfm?id=431> (01/28/2009)

military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>114</sup> In order to institutionalize this approach, the other agencies are integrated in the staff and command structure. The deputy commander, for instance, is a senior diplomat and former ambassador.<sup>115</sup> However, the command is too new to examine whether and how the interagency approach works.

### **Planning of a Nation-Building Operation**

In Western democracies, nation-building operations are based on a parliamentary resolution and in most cases on a UN mandate. This goes along with general guidance from a central authority, such as national Security Council, state presidency, prime minister’s office, or chancellor’s office.<sup>116</sup> When the decision to intervene is taken, all main government agencies (foreign affairs, defense, interior, and economic cooperation) start their own planning and preparation process. As mentioned above, duplication of structures and projects, resulting in national pet projects and rival efforts, is the consequence. Instead of planning parallel, and even separately, it makes much more sense to establish an integrated, joint planning process from the very beginning. Limited resources could be optimized and more important for the medium and long run of a nation-building operation the “cultural conflict” between the military and the

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<sup>114</sup> AFRICOM Mission statement approved by the SecDef, Washington D.C., May 2008, <http://www.africom.mil/AboutAFRICOM.asp> (01/25/2009)

<sup>115</sup> Staff-Briefing AFRICOM, Stuttgart, October 2008

<sup>116</sup> See for instance, the *Afghanistankonzept der Bundesregierung*, Berlin, [http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/\\_Anlagen/2008/09/2008-09-08-afghanistan-konzept,property=publicationFile.pdf](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/2008/09/2008-09-08-afghanistan-konzept,property=publicationFile.pdf) (02/02/2009)

civilian components would be harmonized. The result can be an increased stabilization and reconstruction output.<sup>117</sup> With the above mentioned interagency reform modeled after "Goldwater-Nichols" the U.S. is starting to go into this direction.<sup>118</sup>

### **Training for a Nation-Building Operation**

The points made on planning apply also for training. Thus, a joint training including the diplomatic leaders and military commanders should be considered. In the case of Germany, even with its double-headed PRT approach, only the military trains in special facilities and training centers.<sup>119</sup> The troops receive detailed briefings and participate in role games close to what they will face in the respective country. For diplomats and other civil experts, no equivalent or a joint training facility exists so far. According to the civilian head of PRT Feyzabad, diplomats and other civil experts are responsible for their own to prepare their concrete involvement in a mission. As a result, military leaders and civilian experts meet for the first time when they arrive on the spot.<sup>120</sup> This lack of prior consultation can end in tensions, misunderstandings, and is counterproductive. To avoid or at least decrease frictions and the loss of productivity in the current joint preparation (or better not – preparation) approach is solely dependent on personality

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<sup>117</sup> Michael Schmunk in Peter Schmidt, l.c., p. 270

<sup>118</sup> See for example Peter Roman, *Can Goldwater-Nichols Reforms for the Interagency Succeed?* STIMSON Center, Washington D.C., 2007 <http://www.stimson.org/pub.cfm?id=431> (01/28/2009)

<sup>119</sup> Authors own experience as chief of staff of 13<sup>th</sup> Panzergrenadierdivision, responsible for the coordination of the training for the German ISAF contingent 2007/2008.

<sup>120</sup> Authors own experience as cdr PRT FEY. The first get together not only with the then civil head Dr. Thomas Zahneisen, but also with the other civilian experts took part in theater.

and personal experience of the acting leaders.<sup>121</sup> Nation Building although complex, costly, and risky, still lacks an institutionalized, systematic approach to educate and train civil servants and military.

### **A Combined Approach**

The main question that needs to be addressed concerns achieving not only a joint, but also combined approach to future nation-building operations. An international academy, run jointly by a senior diplomat and a general officer could offer educational and training initiatives, available jointly to civilian and military personnel.<sup>122</sup> Besides education and training, such an institution should establish a data bank to retain the lessons learned. Returning military officers, diplomats, police trainers, reconstruction experts should contribute their experiences to this data bank. Both, joint and combined education and a consequently filled and used data bank could improve the quality of future missions significantly.

International stabilization and assistance forces are usually composed of several national units. ISAF for example consists of more than 35 national units, most of them from NATO countries.<sup>123</sup> Thus, NATO could be the organization to offer common future training and planning. One of the already existing NATO schools could be transformed into a jointly run and

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<sup>121</sup> Authors own experience as cdr PRT FEY. The author also interviewed USAID Agent Bob Leavitt, who approved this perception.

<sup>122</sup> Michael Schmunk in Peter Schmidt, I.c., p. 271

<sup>123</sup> See for example [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Security\\_Assistance\\_Force#Contributing\\_nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Security_Assistance_Force#Contributing_nations) (02/05/2009) and <http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/040628-factsheet.htm> (02/05/2009)

used international academy, for instance the NATO School in Oberammergau, the US-German Marshall Center in Garmisch, or parts of the NATO Defense College in Rome. Over time, more and more senior military officers and diplomats will be jointly educated and trained, gaining the same experiences and drawing from the same database.

In order to reach not only a common mindset via education, but also a joint multinational planning of new nation-building engagements, the idea of a Joint Multinational Nation Building Task Force is mentioned in Literature.<sup>124</sup> The former German ambassador to Afghanistan, Dr. Michael Schmunk, started projects at the SWP institute in Berlin and at Harvard University to develop such a task force.<sup>125</sup> Again, NATO could be the organization to offer the capacities needed for a multinational, interagency planning. NATO has headquarters and planning boards on tactical, operational, and strategically level on its disposal, with well-rehearsed procedures between the nations.<sup>126</sup> NATO could use the U.S. DOD AFRICOM interagency approach to transform one of its HQ's into a planning HQ for nation-building operations. This would be the nucleus for the above mentioned Joint Multinational Nation Building Task Force.

This planning HQ could develop criteria for and ways of intervention, standardization of rules of engagement and should work on the national caveat problem. When it comes to a new operation, the participating nations should use the HQ to plan the entire operation, including

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<sup>124</sup> The idea of such a task force has been first published in Michael Schmunk, *Afghanistan: Elements of a Transatlantic Nation-Building Strategy*, in Daalder, Gnesotto, and Gordon, *Crescent of Crisis. U.S.-European Strategy for the Greater Middle East*, Washington D.C. 2006, pp. 163-183, see also in Peter Schmidt, *A Hybrid Relationship: Transatlantic Security Cooperation beyond NATO*, Frankfurt a.M. 2008, pp. 265-274

<sup>125</sup> See for example <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/fcia/speakers.html> (02/05/2009)

<sup>126</sup> For the NATO structure see <http://www.nato.int/structur/structure.htm> (02/005/2009)

design and exit strategies and the important “who should be doing what and where?” to avoid duplicities and therefore the waste of resources.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Michael Schmunk, in Peter Schmidt, I.c., p. 274

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan have to deal with future security challenges in a “whole-of-government” approach - not only national but also within multinational structures. Evidence suggests that the PRTs can because that is exactly what the PRTs are doing in their daily work at the tactical level. The Varduj Valley example shows, that a comprehensive approach (German and Danish military together with the German MFA and GTZ as well as EUPOL from the Czech Republic, Afghan Police, governmental agencies like USAID and the Danish DANIDA and UNAMA with its NGOs) can stabilize an unsecure area on the tactical level. Each PRT could provide similar success stories within its area of responsibility.<sup>128</sup>

Although the PRTs in Afghanistan work successfully in their AOR, violent insurgency, opium growing, drug trafficking, as well as the influence of the Taliban have been increasing since 2007. The PRTs work on the tactical level and are therefore not to blame for strategic and operational failures. There is no confirmation whether the PRT concept has been used as a stopgap due to a lack of troops or as a thoughtful light footprint strategy in order to avoid the Russian failure and acting like an occupier.

However, the historical evidence shows, that in most cases, an overwhelming force at the beginning of a nation-building operation leads to success. During the period of the first weeks to several months, external intervention enjoys initial popular support. Later on, before the

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<sup>128</sup> During the PRT commander’s conference at HQ ISAF in February 2008 the PRT commanders briefed similar cases out of their AOR.

international force is in danger to be seen more and more as an occupier, the then trained domestic military and police force can take over responsibility. The PRTs should start their work at the beginning of the nation-building operation, but with the backup of inherent sufficient forces. After the domestic military and police have become responsible for the security, the PRT can start changing their outline towards more civilian and less military.

To use the PRT concept as a model and come to a “whole-of-government” approach on other than the tactical level, it needs to be institutionalized on the different levels. For the U.S., an interagency reform modeled after "Goldwater-Nichols" could lead towards this direction on the political level. On the strategic operational level, U.S. AFRICOM can be seen as the starting point. In order to reach a multinational approach to nation-building, NATO provides well-trained and equipped military headquarters, including the necessary procedures between the nations. It should be easier to reform existing command and planning HQs into interagency structures, instead of building new ones. NATO could also be the organization to offer common future training and education. One of the already existing NATO schools could be transformed into a jointly run and used international academy. Such an institution could also establish a data bank to retain the lessons learned, filled by homecoming officers, diplomats, and other experts, available to the outgoing personnel, to planners and for education.

This monograph took the current operation in Afghanistan as an example to show the PRT concept and its possibilities and limitations. To find the solution for the region was not in the focus. However, the international community missed to use an overwhelming force at the beginning of the nation-building operation in Afghanistan. It should now use this overwhelming



force against the insurgents in the south and east and focus on the training of the AFG Police and Military. If the centralized political structure as it was set up in the Bonn Agreement can provide the long-term solution for Afghanistan at all or if a federal structured state would fit much better to the different regions, nationalities, and tribes is a question for another monograph.

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