



Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

Defence Forces Review 2020



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STRENGTHEN
THE NATION



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「**STRENGTHEN
THE NATION**」



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University



Launch of the Defence Forces Review

In conjunction with an Academic Seminar

Dublin City University,
3rd December, 2020



Preface

“Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers.”

(Harry Truman, US President 1945 - '53)

Building on the success of last year’s Review, launch and positive reaction 2020’s Review is themed ‘The global island: Strategic implications for Irish defence planning in the evolving geopolitical landscape.’ This is a pertinent topic in light of the Defence Commission proposed in the 2020 Programme for Government, which is set to look at “the medium- and longer term defence requirements of the State...”

The Defence Forces Review provides a forum in which contributors can present their research and facilitate discussion on a wide range of defence-related matters for the benefit of the wider Defence Community in Ireland and beyond. Sadly, due to Covid 19 restrictions we will be unable to have a normal launch of the Review.

My thanks to the Editor of the Defence Forces Review for 2020, Lieutenant Commander Paul Hegarty. Despite a very heavy schedule working on the staff of the Command and Staff School, he continued this editorial burden with energy and commitment, displaying a commendable level of ambition for this project.

For this year’s edition, he has had the pleasure of working in academic collaboration with the Dublin City University School of Law and Government. A special word of gratitude to his fellow editor, Assistant Professor Caitriona Dowd (Security Studies, DCU) for her expert insights and invaluable contributions in making this collaborative effort a success. Additionally, a team of expert academics from DCU contributed to the peer review process, thus enhancing the academic quality of the publication.

Again, many thanks to all our contributors without whose commitment and generosity the production and publication of this year’s review would not be possible.

Further copies of the Review are available from the Defence Forces Public Relations Branch at info@military.ie or online at <http://www.military.ie/info-centre/publications/defence-forces-review>.

Gavin Young
Lieutenant Colonel
Officer in Charge
Public Relations Branch

Editor's Notes

Resolving the tension between foresight and inherent uncertainty is the holy grail of sound strategy.

Dr Frank Hoffman

As Ireland seeks to expand its role in global affairs, the emergence of complex and challenging issues, coupled with the re-emergence of threats previously believed to have ceased, presents unique challenges. Evolving global trends require countries to stop focussing solely on continuity, as this provided an unrealistically linear and predictable view of the future and risks, missing weak signals of potentially major change. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic highlights the need for astute and adaptive planning, as disruptive events are becoming more prevalent and will have shared international consequences, thus necessitating collective and coordinated action.

Ireland, as a global island, will continue to become more interconnected with the global commons, but inherent in such evolution is risk. A multi-polar world presents significant challenges and opportunities, as the balance of power shifts and states reposition themselves in an as yet uncertain international order. Key trends include accelerating urbanisation and resources in ever-higher demand, set against the backdrop of climate crisis and its associated impact. Concurrently, changes in the patterns and dynamics of violence, and in particular, the targeting and protection of civilians in conflict, present major obstacles to effective and coordinated responses to some of the world's gravest crises. Failure to look beyond our internal bias and self-assured perception of safety must be factored into our future-oriented decision-making processes.

The rise of far-right extremism presents an additional and complex challenge, as governments will have to contend with issues surrounding their credibility, legitimacy and accountability. Coupled with this, is the threat of growing criminalisation and corruption, in a world where the increased trafficking of drugs, weapons and people across porous borders will remain a global security problem. Technology will continue to be a driver of change though developments such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing and robotics, and will challenge society and the rules that govern it, particularly as digitisation fundamentally transforms how people interact. Simultaneously, there is increasing awareness internationally, and nationally, of the important role Ireland can play in peace mediation, fostering dialogue and building consensus in the face of these uncertainties. So too, is there greater appreciation of the vital contribution and leadership that historically more marginalised constituencies, such as women and youth, can make to international peace and security. Therefore, navigating the resulting threats and opportunities will require adaptation and action.

The utility of the military instrument in supporting national foreign policy will be important in the coming decades. Last year's edition of the Defence Forces Review explored some of the themes modern militaries are now considering as they prepare themselves for supporting and contributing to their respective nations shared prosperity and stability through the application of hard and soft power. The global Irish diaspora allows Ireland to have strong cultural and social links across the globe and contributes to the use of soft power as a force multiplier for achieving influence worldwide. International institutions such as the United Nations and European Union will be critical, not least because of Ireland's commitment to multilateralism and to supporting

and building peace globally. So too will the role of the Defence Forces in supporting this national approach through defence engagement and deployment on multi-national operations.

However, military soft power will only be effective if it is underpinned by credibility. The upcoming commission on the Defence Forces must acknowledge the innate need for a state to have a functioning and modern military force. Moreover, the balance of investment needed for each function will inevitably evolve to meet future challenges as the military instrument is likely to change, necessitating new approaches and capabilities. Never in our history has the need for a ‘whole of government’ approach been so necessary and warranted.

This year’s edition of the Defence Forces Review is published in academic collaboration with Dublin City University School of Law and Government. It reflects on the myriad of challenges and opportunities facing Ireland at the national and international level, and their impact on how defence policy and planning is, and will be, conducted in Ireland over the coming decades. This year’s review invited a broad, yet comprehensive critical analysis underpinned by an aspiration to contribute to the national discourse on enhancing our ability to improve foresight on the strategies required for navigating a world that is becoming ever more complex and volatile.

The review concludes with short biographical details of the authors who kindly contributed to this year’s edition. The Editorial team would like to thank the contributors for their enthusiasm and willingness to prepare papers for submission, thereby participating in the important dialogue on what challenges and opportunities exist for a Global Island, domestically, in the EU, and at the UN. We are greatly indebted to our panel of expert external reviewers who took the time to analyse each paper, and the Defence Forces Printing Press (DFPP), in particular, Capt. James Mulderrig, and Pte Shane Curran, for their time, patience and professionalism in delivering a high quality finished product.

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Editor's Biographical Statement



Lt Cdr Paul Hegarty PhD joined the Defence Forces in 2000 as a member of the 40th Naval Cadet Class and currently works as an instructor in the Command and Staff School. He has held several sea-going appointments, and has served in a variety of command, staff and training appointments. He has completed the Royal Navy International Long Navigation Course at HMS Collingwood, holds a BSc in Nautical Science (CIT), a Masters in Project Management (UL) and an H-Dip in Geographical Information Systems (UCC). He is a graduate of the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College and completed the Advanced

Command and Staff Course in 2018 while completing an MA in Defence Studies from King's College London. Paul recently completed his PhD research, which focused on Change Management in military organisations and examined organisational culture and transformation, technology and strategy, and is a graduate of Munster Technological University (MTU).



Dr. Caitriona Dowd is Assistant Professor in Security Studies at Dublin City University. Her research focuses on political violence in sub-Saharan Africa, with particular attention to the targeting of civilians in humanitarian crises, the use of new and emerging methodologies for violence monitoring, and the dynamics of Islamist violence in East and West Africa. At DCU, Dr Dowd teaches in the areas of international security and the quantitative analysis of conflict. She also serves as convenor of the Development Studies of Ireland (DSAI) Humanitarian Action Study Group, and in her previous role as a peace and conflict specialist in the humanitarian sector, Dr Dowd

worked in Central African Republic, South Sudan, Nigeria, Kenya, and Somalia. Dr Dowd holds degrees from the University of Sussex, London School of Economics and Political Science, and Trinity College Dublin.

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Irish Defence Planning and its Guiding Strategy in a Changing Strategic Environment

Comdt Derek McGourty

Abstract

Strategy assumes that while the future cannot be predicted, the strategic environment can be studied, assessed, and, to varying degrees, anticipated and manipulated by what the state chooses to do or not to do. Effective strategy, therefore, is about choices and must adapt to changing circumstances. This paper will explore the context surrounding Ireland's place in the strategic environment and consider the centrality of strategy in facilitating, or indeed constraining, the scope for change in Ireland's military instrument in response to changing strategic circumstances. This discussion is had against the backdrop of an unprecedented opportunity for Irish defence to realign its strategic direction in response to a rapidly evolving threat and security environment. Such a realignment would have significant implications for Irish defence in terms of force design and would signpost for defence planners the adaptations that need to be made to meet the challenges of the next decade.

Introduction

Irish defence is now approaching a critical decision point in respect to its long-term direction of travel. The government's announcement that it is developing the state's first national security strategy, the impending commission on the future of the Defence Forces (DF), and the strategic defence review due to be undertaken in 2021, are all converging to present Irish defence with a unique opportunity. An opportunity to develop a strategy that clearly identifies defence's contribution as part of a whole of government approach. An approach that protects and promotes Ireland's interests in a changing and deeply uncertain strategic environment.¹ Indeed, the aim of defence planning,² at its most fundamental level, is to limit this condition of uncertainty to ensure survival of the state.³ But, as Colin S. Gray cautions, the relevance and suitability of such planning will ultimately rely on the strategy that guides it.⁴

Gray defines strategy as "the direction and use of any or all of the assets of a security community, including its military instrument, for the purposes of policy as decided by politics."⁵ In this way, strategy sets the boundaries for defence planning and provides the guidance that defence planning has to translate into actual forces and capabilities.⁶ This paper will therefore explore the centrality of strategy in facilitating, or indeed constraining, the scope for change in Irish defence in response to a changing strategic environment. First though, it is appropriate to examine why such change may be necessary by discussing how the strategic environment is shifting, whether or not this shift has been recognised, and the implications for Irish defence.

1 The strategic environment is defined by the US Army War College as a world order where threats are both diffuse and uncertain, where conflict is inherent yet unpredictable, and where our capability to defend and promote our national interests may be restricted by materiel and personnel resource constraints. In short, an environment marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).

2 Defence planning is defined by Paul Davis as the deliberate process of planning a nation's future forces, force postures, and force capabilities (as distinct from operations planning on how to employ forces in war). The planning must consider the near-term, mid-term, and long-term.

3 Henrik Breitenbauch and André Jakobsson, "Defence Planning as Strategic Fact," *Defence Studies* 18, no. 3 (2018), p. 255.

4 Colin S. Gray, "Strategy and Defence Planning," in *Strategy in the Contemporary World*, eds. John Baylis and James Wirtz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 167.

5 Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 262.

6 Harry Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport CT: Praeger International, 2008), p. 10.

A Changing Strategic Environment

The 2019 White Paper on Defence Update contributes towards broadening and deepening the discussion on the changing nature of Ireland's strategic environment, acknowledging its widening array of pressures and potential risks. However, the 2019 review also concludes that although the strategic environment has developed and changed in the period since 2015,⁷ the "essential aggregate level of threat facing the state has not altered in a way to justify increasing the overall stated level of threat."⁸ This assessment has consequences for defence planners. Babbage asserts that the logical starting point for any process of coherent defence planning should be to assess the character of current and potential future threats.⁹ But what if there are no threats, or certainly none perceived to represent an existential risk to the state and its national interests?

Gray argues that perceived danger from abroad is vital, if not quite essential, fuel for defence planning but contends that the debate over the probable reality of danger, as well as how best to cope with it, will always be hostage to domestic politics.¹⁰ By this logic, the demand signal for defence preparation will vary depending on the political and general public sentiment regarding how secure a society feels and the anticipation of future menace.¹¹ Of significance then is that Ireland is now considered by many to enjoy favourable geopolitical circumstances as an island nation on the periphery of Western Europe and, in an international context, is seen as comparatively far removed from the sources of potential conflict.¹² According to the Global Peace Index, Ireland is currently among the top 10% of safest countries in the world¹³ and the majority of people in Ireland have become accustomed to peace and prosperity. This does not mean Ireland is immune from the consequences of conflict and instability in an era of increasing globalisation. But it does mean, notwithstanding COVID-19, that it is now largely perceived to exist in a relatively benign strategic environment.¹⁴

This perception of a benign environment is at the root of Ireland's defence planning problem in that Ireland is generally observed to have no pressing defence problem. The work of policy makers, strategists and planners is more straightforward if the threat has been clearly identified and is well understood. This may partly explain Ireland's apparent inertia in responding to threats that are poorly articulated or only imagined and anticipated in the abstract.¹⁵ Elisabeth Braw argues that such perceptions of the threat need to change. She asserts that states located at a distance from potential Cold War conflicts, namely the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and European countries west of the Rhine, must now come to the realisation that for the first time in two generations their homelands face palpable threats.¹⁶ State and non-state actors are seeking to influence below the threshold of 'traditional' armed conflict, but above the level of outright peace, through a combination of activities that aim to target states' vulnerabilities.

7 The last assessment of Ireland's strategic environment prior to the 2019 White Paper Update was carried out as part of the process which led to the publication of the 2015 White Paper on Defence.

8 Department of Defence, White Paper on Defence Update 2019 (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2019), p. 2.

9 Ross Babbage, *Rethinking Australia's Defence* (Queensland: Queensland University Press, 1980), p. 152.

10 Colin S. Gray, *Strategy and Defence Planning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 23.

11 Gray, *Defence Planning*, p. 168.

12 Ben Tonra, "Security, Defence and Neutrality: The Irish Dilemma," in Ben Tonra et al. (Eds.), *Irish Foreign Policy*, (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2012), p. 222.

13 Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Peace Index 2020* (Sydney: IEP, 2020), p. 8, <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports> (accessed 3 August 2020).

14 Tonra, *Security, Defence and Neutrality*, p. 222.

15 Gray, *Strategy and Defence Planning*, p. 24.

16 Elisabeth Braw, "Domestic Pressures: Threats to the Homeland," in Peter Roberts (Ed.), *The Future Conflict Operating Environment Out to 2030* (London: RUSI, 2019), p. 38.

For example, cyber-attacks on critical national infrastructure and the subversion of democratic institutions are now discernible challenges to the national security of Western states.¹⁷

It is the interconnectivity and anonymity afforded by the digital age which has facilitated the proliferation of such non-military threats. But threats such as these do not diminish the importance of conventional military capabilities.¹⁸ This fact has become more than apparent in the short period since the White Paper Update's publication in December 2019. Since then, the environment has undergone further significant change as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. This has provided a welcome opportunity to demonstrate to the Irish public the utility of the military in bolstering national resilience during times of adversity. Conversely, the pandemic has also highlighted some of the DF's deficiencies; such as a lack of deployable medical facilities and strategic airlift.

Moreover, since the White Paper Update's publication, there have been further incursions by Russian military aircraft into Irish airspace and reports of increasing Russian submarine activity in the North Atlantic and Irish Sea, which have added to growing concerns about Ireland's inability to protect its critical national infrastructure including transatlantic fibre-optic cables that lie in Irish coastal waters.¹⁹ The Irish Naval service has no anti-submarine capability and its ability to deter or even detect such maritime intelligence gathering is exceptionally limited. Neither has Ireland got the radar, air defence, and air interdiction capability necessary to deter and monitor Russian or other aircraft entering Irish airspace without permission and instead relies on the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force to carry out this task on its behalf.²⁰ But the pressures Ireland face extend beyond the air and maritime domains with the cyber domain becoming increasingly important to protecting Ireland's national interests.

Ireland is home, according to some estimates, to over 30% of all European Union (EU) data, and to the European headquarters of many of the world's leading technology companies.²¹ The country's economic success is therefore closely tied up with its ability to provide a secure environment for these companies to operate.²² Of growing alarm then is Ireland's lack of capacity in terms of cyber defence, leaving it vulnerable to cyberattack. This sense of vulnerability becomes heightened when one considers that Ireland's rise as a global technology and communications hub has been accompanied by reports of growth in the Russian embassy in Dublin, suggested by some to mean that Ireland is now seen as a growing priority for Moscow.²³

Yet the role of the DF with regard to cyber security is explicitly a supporting one, with its primary responsibility in this area relating to the protection of its own systems.²⁴ This is at a time when many Western democracies are investigating the role of their armed forces in the cyber domain. The Dutch armed forces, for example, are currently in the process of developing their cyber capabilities, to include both offensive and defensive digital weapons systems. Indeed, a former

17 Aaron Edwards, *Strategy in War and Peace* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), p. 203.

18 Ewan Lawson, "Back to the Future? Thresholds, Hybridity and Tolerance Warfare in Russia's Concept of Limited War," in Peter Roberts (Ed.), *The Future Conflict Operating Environment Out to 2030* (London: RUSI, 2019), p. 10.

19 Edward Burke, "What are Russian Bombers doing in Irish Airspace?" *The Irish Times*, 10 March 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/what-are-russian-bombers-doing-in-irish-airspace-1.4197785>, accessed 12 March 2020.

20 A Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Ireland was signed in 2015 to ensure greater defence collaboration between both countries and is understood to have led to a formal agreement to permit RAF identification, pursuit and interdiction of aircraft posing a potential security threat.

21 Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment. *National Cyber Strategy 2019 – 2024* (Dublin: 2019), pp. 8-9.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 9.

23 Burke, "Russian Bombers."

24 Department of Communications, *National Cyber Strategy*, p. 22.

Dutch Minister of Defence is quoted as saying “we have to be able to slam down on our opponent... in the digital sense.”²⁵ Notwithstanding this view, the roles and tasks of all militaries are likely to be ‘in flux’ for some time to come as the field of cyber security and cyber operations is relatively new, with many concepts still lacking clarity and consensus.²⁶ This ambiguity underlines the importance of exploring what the future role of the DF should be within the cyber domain, the digital capabilities it will require, and the place it should take within an emerging network of government and non-government agencies working within the broader field of cyber security.

This is not to overstate the role the DF should play in countering the cyber threat, nor is it the aim of this paper to provide a detailed assessment of the current strategic environment and all its composite parts. Rather, the intent is to underscore the widely held view that the geopolitical landscape is undergoing a period of significant change. Indeed, there is further change and uncertainty on the horizon due to Brexit and the impacts of climate change, the latter now widely accepted as an unprecedented threat to global security. Yet despite official recognition of the change in Ireland’s strategic circumstances, it is difficult to avoid the judgement from the information available on public record that the full implications and ramifications of these changes have not been appreciated. Ireland’s military instrument is simply not responding to the pressures this paper has alluded to in the air, maritime, and cyber domains. If, as Paul Cornish and Andrew Dorman suggest, strategy is the preparedness to use organised, legitimate armed force to protect and promote national interests, then in important respects Ireland’s approach is non-strategic.²⁷ This begs the question what is the political purpose guiding Irish defence, as this should be the first concern of strategy. It is only in understanding the political purpose that the military outputs required to achieve that purpose can be deciphered.²⁸

Strategic Guidance

The first port of call in determining this purpose is the 2015 White Paper on Defence, which specifies that the defence reviews to be carried out every three years are not only to provide an updated assessment of the strategic environment but are also to give fresh consideration to the implications for “policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing.”²⁹ Unfortunately though, despite the 2019 Update investing considerable space to describing the changes in the environment, it limits its outlining of policy implications to two sentences, stating that the implications of the changes would “be considered in the context of overall defence policy requirements.”³⁰ This practice is not unique to Ireland. Mikkel Rasmussen contends that Western democracies are generally strong on the description of the changing environment in their strategic level policy documents, but are often weak on the implications of such changes in terms of capability requirements, and in articulating a strategy as to how these capabilities should be utilised.³¹

The absence of clear strategic guidance has obvious consequences for defence planners. Stephan Fruhling asserts that one of the primary tasks of such policy documents is to provide the

25 Dennis Broeders, *Investigating the Place and Role of the Armed Forces in Dutch Cyber Security Governance* (Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2015), p. 2.

26 *Ibid.*

27 Paul Cornish and Andrew Dorman, “National Defence in an Age of Austerity,” *International Affairs* 85, no. 4 (2009), p. 738.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 739

29 Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence Update*, p. 1.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

31 Mikkel Rasmussen, *The Military’s Business* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 158.

translation of strategic guidance into military requirements, linking those requirements to the political leadership's intent and available resources.³² Therefore, the extent to which a strategy is vague and general, or precise and detailed, has significant consequences for the way defence planning decisions can be framed.³³ But drafting defence policy and articulating strategic guidance is not a practice Ireland has a long history of. Indeed, it says much of Ireland's experience in this area that the first of such documents to be published by government was the White Paper on Defence in 2000.

Prior to this, one could discern a form of defence policy and strategy, albeit not explicitly defined, by observing the approach Ireland took as a small neutral state during the Cold War years. The defence and security policy of neutral states during this time was marked by the impossibility of taking part in any military alliance or collective defence agreement. This was upheld by a neutral strategic culture,³⁴ which was composed of an unmitigated objective to remain in peace and of a general aversion to the use of military force.³⁵ Neutral states, like Ireland, adopted a defensive military policy which justified the use of force only for the preservation of national territory and domestic security.³⁶

Jean-Marc Rickli contends that small states' strategies must now, however, be more cooperative than defensive in an effort to cope with global risks that are more diffuse and uncertain than the clearly identifiable threats that informed defence planning during the Cold War years.³⁷ For example, the policy of preserving Ireland's autonomy and sovereignty through neutrality may not stand up well against state and non-state actors wishing to gain an advantage in an era of hybrid conflict. Yet, the hallmark of Irish defence policy, as espoused in the 2015 White Paper, continues to be "active military neutrality". Importantly though, this headline is accompanied by the stated requirement for a "highly engaged and participative approach internationally, particularly through the UN and EU."³⁸ Indeed, Ireland's participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP) and active EU membership has been described as indicative of a shift in Ireland's traditional policy of neutrality. This tension between neutrality on the one hand and international engagement on the other speaks to what Laurent Goetschel describes as the security dilemma of small states, which consists of two elements: influence and autonomy. Small states employ concurrent strategies to both increase their influence and to maintain their autonomy.³⁹

Anders Wivel argues that in today's environment, a policy favouring autonomy is counterproductive and can be equated with security free-riding. Wivel's argument is that 'opting out' cannot combat global risks and as such small states' security strategies must favour co-operation by joining and

32 Stephan Fruhling, *Defence Planning and Uncertainty: Preparing for the Next Asia-Pacific War* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 33.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

34 Strategic culture, as defined by Ken Booth, is "a nation's traditions, values, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, habits, symbols and achievements and particular way of adapting to the environment and solving problems with respect to the threat and use of force." See Ken Booth, "The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed," in *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 121.

35 Jean-Marc Rickli describes how Ireland and other neutral states such as Austria and Sweden contributed to peacekeeping operations during the Cold War, but they were considered a political practice, rather than a military option, undertaken by the UN as a neutral third party, to prevent conflict escalation. Such operations were seen as enhancing small neutral states' national and international prestige and thus increased the political cost of violating their neutrality, which in turn strengthened their security.

36 Jean-Marc Rickli, "European Small States' Military Policies after the Cold War," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21, no. 3 (2008), p. 312.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 314.

38 Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence Update*, p. 1.

39 Laurent Goetschel quoted in Zivile Vaicekauskaite, "Security Strategies of Small States in a Changing World," *Baltic Security* 3, no. 2 (2017), p. 9.

exerting influence through either institutional membership or participation in coalitions.⁴⁰ Rickli identifies Ireland along with Austria, Finland, and Sweden as neutral states that have since the Cold War abandoned their defensive postures and adopted a more cooperative strategy by streamlining their policies on the requirements of the EU.⁴¹

However, Rickli also identifies Ireland as the country with the lowest strategic ambitions out of this group. In the framework of a cooperative strategy, strategic ambition is defined by the extent of the influence a state would like to exert on an institution or an alliance. But the level of influence a country wishes to exert is largely conditioned by its strategic culture⁴² and Ireland's strategic culture is such that for much of its history it has not been comfortable articulating a clearly stated level of national ambition, or indeed the strategy that would realise that ambition. Notwithstanding this, there is recent evidence to suggest that Ireland's strategic ambitions may becoming more pronounced regarding the level of influence it wishes to exert on the international stage.

A recently published article in the *Economist* described Ireland as having a good claim, on a per-head basis, to being the world's most diplomatically powerful country.⁴³ The article attempts to substantiate this claim by citing Ireland's recent election to the United Nations (UN) Security Council and refers to the positions held by influential appointees such as Paschal Donohoe as president of the Eurogroup; Phil Hogan as the former⁴⁴ EU Trade Commissioner; and Philip Lane,⁴⁵ now in a prominent role with the European Central Bank. But diplomacy is but one of the instruments of national power⁴⁶ and an opportunity now exists to define a clearer, more ambitious vision for Ireland's military instrument in protecting and promoting national interests. This vision must form part of a wider national strategy that draws on and integrates all the levers of power at Ireland's disposal. Indeed, there are lessons to be learned from other small states in this regard. The Nordic and Baltic states, but also countries such as a Singapore, are now employing models of total defence. Total defence planning, as led by government, aims to use all available means to bolster the resilience of society in defending the state and its national interests.⁴⁷

For example, Denmark's 2017 Foreign and Security Policy Strategy states that the Danish government should "reach out and strengthen Denmark in collaboration with civil society organisations, the business community, universities and think tanks."⁴⁸ Ewan Lawson argues that in such a model the key decision for defence is identifying the military's contribution to countering threats such as sub threshold warfare. While this will inevitably include conventional military capabilities, Lawson contends that the deployment of military assets in support of civilian authorities may well become increasingly important.⁴⁹ Regardless of the model adopted, a clear articulation of the role defence should play as part of a wider government strategy is imperative to adapt to changes in the strategic environment. A realignment of Ireland's strategy to such changes would have significant implications for the Irish military in terms of force design and

40 Anders Wivel, "Security Challenges of Small EU Member States," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 43, no. 2 (2005), p. 407.

41 Rickli, *European Small States*, p. 320.

42 *Ibid.*

43 Charlemagne, "How Ireland Gets its Way: An Unlikely Diplomatic Superpower," *The Economist*, 18 July 2020, <https://www.economist.com>, accessed 29 July 2020.

44 Since this article's publication in the *Economist*, Philip Hogan has resigned his position as EU Trade Commissioner and has been replaced in the European Commission by Mairead McGuinness as Commissioner for Financial Services.

45 Philip Lane is the former head of Ireland's central bank.

46 The instruments of national power are Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic (DIME).

47 Lawson, *Thresholds, Hybridity and Tolerance Warfare*, p. 11.

48 Braw, *Domestic Pressures*, p. 40.

49 Lawson, *Thresholds, Hybridity and Tolerance Warfare*, p. 11.

would signpost for defence planners the adaptations that need to be made to meet the challenges of the next decade.

Conclusion

As Ireland's military instrument approaches a critical juncture in deciding its long-term direction of travel, there is a need to be ruthlessly honest about the state of Irish defence and the evolving nature of the strategic environment within which it must operate. This approach necessarily facilitates a broader discussion on Irish defence policy and associated strategies, which undoubtedly must inform any process of coherent planning. Ultimately, defence's ability to adapt to changes in the strategic environment and its widening array of potential risks and threats may largely be predicated on the government's capacity to provide a clear iterative process of strategic direction. Indeed, Ross Babbage asserts that the absence of such clear strategic direction is often a major weakness identified in states' national security systems.⁵⁰

Whether or not, however, those engaged in the process of formulating strategy and defence planning have the latitude to adjust the direction of travel to the extent and pace necessary to align with changes in the security environment is questionable. There are two abiding reasons for making this assertion. First, the function of national defence and security is almost inevitably a relatively heavy burden on society, given that there will always be alternative possible uses for scarce resources. Second, the permanent fact that the future is neither reliably known nor knowable means that typically there is scope for political argument over what the country needs in order to be sufficiently secure.⁵¹ Ultimately, political will and public support, which are of course interrelated, will continue to be the crucial factors in determining the likely appetite for change. Hew Strachan and Ruth Harris argue that a lack of engagement between government and the people on defence issues can be extremely damaging, constraining the potential for developing strategy and capability, and for the coherent use of the military.⁵² If Ireland is to generate a mature attitude to the use and utility of its armed forces in a changing strategic environment, it needs to seize the opportunity it is now presented with for a more mature debate about defence; one that truly engages the public, allows the military to take part, and which government facilitates by enabling the structures to permit discussion.⁵³ It is through such meaningful engagement that prevailing attitudes and opinions to national defence can be challenged.

⁵⁰ Babbage, *Rethinking Defence*, p. 76.

⁵¹ Gray, *Defence Planning*, p. 167.

⁵² Hew Strachan and Ruth Harris, *The Utility of Military Force and Public Understanding in Today's Britain* (Cambridge: Rand, 2020), p. i.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. ii.



Integrating our National Security and Defence capabilities: A more comprehensive response to evolving challenges?

Brig Gen Tony Cudmore

Abstract

Lessons identified from conflicts in recent years and a greater awareness of the vulnerability of our societies following the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, together with significant changes to traditional international relationships, have highlighted the potential for reviewing and expanding our National Defence planning framework – with particular attention to the necessity for greater integration across all government departments to counter hybrid threats. Hybrid warfare has been described as a strategy which employs political warfare and blends conventional warfare, irregular warfare and information warfare utilising diplomacy, manipulation of traditional news sources and extensive social media exploitation. This paper argues that we can better integrate our National Security and Defence capabilities in a more comprehensive manner to prepare against such evolving challenges. It looks to an understanding of the concept of hybrid threats before looking at the significant developments within the European Union, which may guide the coordinated strategic response needed to achieve a ‘whole of government’ approach to enable the appropriate level of security and defence integration.

Introduction

The current international relations environment has highlighted that the traditional understanding and expectations with regard to security have been replaced by instability and unpredictability in the European neighbourhood. Across all regions of the world, communities have suffered from the impact of the global pandemic COVID-19. The world is still in the midst of attempting to manage the coronavirus, and many societies are already learning valuable lessons with regard to the impact on national security and the importance of establishing resilience to take necessary measures to prevent, prepare and respond to such crises in the future. The potential for hybrid threats to undermine such resilience has been reported as a matter for concern to national security professionals across the world. But do we need to engage a wider range of ‘actors’ in this conversation? A definition of national security by Michael H.H. Louw¹ provides a basis for understanding that these challenges are not solely Defence concerns: “National security includes traditional defence policy and also the non-military actions of a state to ensure its total capacity to survive as a political entity in order to exert influence and to carry out its internal international objectives.”

According to Ferguson,² the increasing complexity of the relationship between economics and security means that issues of finance, energy, trade, climate change, along with economics and security are closely interlinked with implications for both domestic politics and national security. Ferguson proposes that economists should do more to anticipate problems which will impact on security and that military planners need to take more account of the economic effects of their actions. Whereas Ireland is currently a stable and developed state it would be short-sighted to neglect the potential damage that disinvestment by foreign investors could cause.

There are many lessons available from both recent and current conflicts, that although distant from the island of Ireland, increasingly have the potential to impact on our society. This paper

¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* (Colchester: ECPR, 2007), p. 16.

² Alexander Ferguson, “The Uneasy Relationship between Economics and Security”, *Prism* 4, no. 2 (2013), National Defence University USA, p. 77.

will briefly outline the threats and vulnerabilities from hybrid conflict. The recent developments within the European Union will be explored to establish if lessons can be learned from the impact of ‘influence activities’ and the important role of strategic communications in countering such activities. The potential for greater integration of Security and Defence capabilities to counter hybrid threats against Ireland will be considered – primarily through a shared awareness of the importance of such threats across all Government Departments, with the objective of a ‘whole of government’ response to such challenges.

Threats and Vulnerabilities

Hybrid warfare has been described as a military strategy which employs political warfare and blends conventional warfare, irregular warfare and information warfare utilising diplomacy, manipulation of traditional news sources and extensive social media exploitation. This concept of “liminal strategy”³ is an example of hybrid warfare strategy that requires a strategic response.

The European Union (EU) in the recently launched EU Security Union Strategy⁴ has highlighted the need to adapt to these changing circumstances and has recognised that both threats and vulnerabilities are evolving:

“The safety, prosperity and well-being of citizens depend on being secure. The threats to that security depend on the extent to which their lives and livelihoods are vulnerable. The greater the vulnerability, the greater the risk that it can be exploited. Both vulnerabilities and threats are in a state of constant evolution, and the EU needs to adapt.”

In 2019, the Swedish Defence Commission⁵ presented a report, ‘*Defensive power – Sweden’s Security Policy and the Development of its Military Defence 2021-2025*’ which may provide a useful reference for Ireland. In Sweden the preparations and planning required to prepare Sweden for war are described as ‘Total Defence’. When the highest alert is declared, all societal functions are considered to be part of total defence - consisting of military defence and civil defence. The Swedish Defence Commission provided two reports which represent two parts of a unified policy: *Resilience, The Total Defence Concept and the Development of Civil Defence 2021-2025*⁶ and *Security Policy and the Development of Military Defence 2021-2025*.⁷ In a translation of the latter document it is stated that, “In order to counter the use of hybrid methods, it is particularly important to raise awareness, and to maintain contact and communications among actors in the total defence.”

A report completed following a Conference conducted by RUSI⁸ and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency highlights the importance of remembering that “the public is a resource in

³ David Kilcullen, *The Dragon and the Snakes* (Oxford: OUP, 2020), p. 29

⁴ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Security Union Strategy, 24 July 2020, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0605&from=EN> (accessed 25 July 2020).

⁵ Government Offices of Sweden, “Swedish Defence Commission,” 14 May 2019, <https://www.government.se/articles/2019/05/the-swedish-defence-commission-presents-its-white-book-on-swedens-security-policy-and-the-development-of-its-military-defence/> (accessed 10 July 2020).

⁶ Swedish Defence Commission Secretariat, *Resilience, The Total Defence Concept and the Development of Civil Defence 2021-2025: Unofficial Summary*, 20 December 2017, <https://www.regeringen.se/4afeb9/globalassets/regeringen/dokument/forsvarsdepartementet/forsvarsberedningen/resilience---report-summary---20171220ny.pdf> (accessed 25 September 2020).

⁷ Swedish Defence Commission Secretariat, *Security Policy and the Development of Military Defence 2021-2025: Unofficial Summary*, <https://www.government.se/4ada4f/globalassets/government/dokument/forsvarsdepartementet/forsvarsberedningen/defence-commissions-white-book-english-summary.pdf> (accessed 25 September 2020).

⁸ Tom Inglesby, “Lessons from the Coronavirus Crisis,” in Elizabeth Braw (Ed.), *Revamping Crisis Resilience and Security in the Post-Pandemic World* (London: RUSI, 2020), p. 24.

a disaster” as a lesson to help to revamp crisis resilience and security in the post-pandemic world. One of the authors Tom Inglesby contends that: “pandemics affect the entire society. Therefore, we need resilience across the whole society”.

Many different national security strategies outline potential threats, e.g. ranging from terrorist attacks to the potential for more sophisticated hybrid operations focusing on economic damage and mass casualty in order to create major social instability. Such strategies also suggest the requirement for integrated levels of Defence. An interesting example can be found with Singapore⁹ where there are Six Pillars of Total Defence identified – Social, Economic, Psychological, Military Defence, Civil Defence and most recently Digital Defence.

Hybrid Threats

In considering hybrid threats, it is useful to consider the position of the EU as a basis for our national consideration. The EU has described hybrid campaigns to be:

“...multidimensional, combining coercive and subversive measures, using both conventional and unconventional tools and tactics (diplomatic, military, economic, and technological) to destabilise the adversary. They are designed to be difficult to detect or attribute, and can be used by both state and non-state actors.”¹⁰

Clarke and Ramsar outlined in their book, *Tipping Point: Britain, Brexit and Security in the 2020s*, that “Western analysts described the growth of ‘hybrid warfare’ as a means of military and pseudo-military competition that could be used in surprisingly impactful ways.”¹¹ Antulio Echevarria proposed that historically “hybrid war has been the norm, whereas conventional war...has been something of a fiction.”¹² He suggested that the lack of historical awareness contributes to the lack of understanding and preparedness against such threats. Nick Reynolds¹³ provides a further consideration in suggesting that the “theoretical split between counterinsurgency, conventional and hybrid warfare is artificial”. Lawrence Freedman describes the “grey zone” as the blurring of boundaries – “between peace and war, the military and the civilian, the conventional and unconventional, the regular and the irregular, the domestic and the international, and the state and the non-state, the legitimate and the criminal.”¹⁴

The most important feature of the common understanding of this phrase is that it allows a wider range of state actors to recognise that they must now consider that their area of responsibility may contribute to a vulnerability within Ireland’s critical national infrastructure.

European Response

The EU response to hybrid threats is set out in the 2016 Joint Framework on bolstering hybrid resilience. The Framework outlines that “challenges to peace and stability in the EU’s eastern and southern neighbourhood continue to underscore the need for the Union to adapt and increase its capacities as a security provider, with a strong focus on the close relationship between external

9 Singapore Ministry of Defence, “What is Total Defence?” <https://www.scdf.gov.sg/home/community-volunteers/community-preparedness/total-defence> (accessed 25 September 2020).

10 European Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, “Joint Communication on Increasing Resilience and Bolstering Capabilities to Address Hybrid Threats,” JOIN 16 (2018) 16, Brussels, p. 1.

11 Michael Clarke and Helen Ramsar, *Tipping Point: Britain, Brexit and Security in the 2020s* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), p. 26.

12 Antulio Echevarria, *Operating in the Grey Zone* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2016), p. xi.

13 Nick Reynolds, “Learning Lessons for High-End Warfighting from Counterinsurgency”, *RUSI Journal* 164, no. 7 (2019), p. 45.

14 Lawrence Freedman, *The Future War of War: A History* (London: Allen Lane, 2017), pp. 229-285.

and internal security.”¹⁵ The action at EU level is underpinned by a whole-of-society approach and based on close cooperation with strategic partners. The EU recognises that the responsibility for countering hybrid threats lies primarily with Member States – due to the intrinsic links with national security and defence policies – but also accepts that vulnerability is common to all Member States and threats extend across borders.

Gustav Gressel writing in 2019 has highlighted Europe’s increased vulnerability to hybrid attacks, as he cautions it is “not a risk inherent in technological progress and globalisation: it is a matter of choice.”¹⁶ He declares that, “Europe has settled on a laissez-faire approach to these issues”. Gressel continued by highlighting that: “Fundamentally, the flipside of Europe’s diversity and openness is that it retains a patchwork of approaches to hybrid threats. There are huge differences between the urgency, importance, and methods with which European countries combat these threats.” He also draws attention to the fact that many of the hybrid threats represent political practices which are not necessarily illegal under domestic criminal law and thus are not on the agenda of national police forces.

The EU Institute for Security Studies Chaillot Paper 151 sought to provide practical and operational insights on how the EU can best respond to and counter hybrid threats. It focuses on three key policy domains that it considers of vital significance in a hybrid context – borders, critical infrastructure and disinformation – and underlines the importance of developing a strategic response with coordinated EU approaches to hybrid threats. It highlights that “disjointedness is a serious weakness. Adversaries deploy conventional and unconventional tactics as part of an overall strategy to destabilise the EU. No single aspect of the threat facing Europe exists in isolation from others.”¹⁷

Since that time, the European Commission¹⁸ announced a new EU Security Union Strategy for the period 2020 to 2025, focusing on a wide range of concerns from combatting terrorism and organised crime, to preventing and detecting hybrid threats and increasing resilience of critical infrastructure, to promoting cybersecurity and fostering research and innovation.

The EU approach to external security within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will remain an essential component of EU efforts to enhance security within the EU.

The EU Security Union Strategy¹⁹ lays out 4 strategic priorities for action at EU level:

1. A future-proof security environment, which will be strengthened through new rules on the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure, physical and digital.
2. Tackling evolving threats including an EU approach on countering hybrid threats and mainstreaming hybrid considerations into broader policy-making.

¹⁵ European Commission, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats – A European Union Response, 6 April 2026, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0018&from=en> (accessed 20 July 2020).

¹⁶ Gustav Gressel, Protecting Europe against Hybrid Threats, ECFR Policy Brief, 25 June 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/protecting_europe_against_hybrid_threats, p. 2 (accessed 25 September 2020).

¹⁷ Daniel Fiott and Roderick Parkes, “Protecting Europe – The EU’s Response to Hybrid Threats,” Chaillot Paper 151 (Brussels: EUISS, 2019), p. 5 https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CP_151.pdf (accessed 29 July 2020).

¹⁸ European Commission, “Press Release: EU Security Union Strategy: Connecting the Dots in a New Security Ecosystem,” 24 July 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1379 (accessed 05 August 2020).

¹⁹ European Commission, Communication from the Commission on the EU Security Union Strategy, 24 July 2020, op cit.

3. Protecting Europeans from terrorism and organised crime by addressing the polarisation of society, discrimination and other factors that can reinforce people's vulnerability to radical discourse.
4. A strong European security ecosystem, through which the EU will help promote cooperation and information sharing, with the aim to combat crime and pursue justice.



Figure 1. EU Security Union Strategy (Source: Commission Press Office²⁰)

The Strategy declares that “the scale and diversity of hybrid threats today is unprecedented” and states that the “COVID-19 crisis saw more proof of this, with several state and non-state actors seeking to instrumentalise the pandemic – in particular through manipulation of the information environment and challenging core infrastructures.”²¹ This Strategy is intended to integrate the external and internal dimension in a seamless flow and brings the national and EU-wide considerations together. Moreover, a particular focus will be to ensure that consideration of hybrid threats is fully integrated into policy making. Following the announcement of the new strategy, the EU imposed the first ever sanctions against cyber-attacks on 30 July 2020.

Ireland's Response

In considering national security, it is useful to make a clear distinction between threats and vulnerabilities. States can seek to reduce their insecurity either by reducing their vulnerability or by preventing threats. Vulnerabilities are sometimes clear. However, threats are hard to measure and, in many cases, hard to perceive. Threats come in different guises including military threats,

²⁰ European Commission, “Press Release: EU Security Union Strategy: Connecting the Dots in a New Security Ecosystem,” op cit.

²¹ European Commission, Communication from the Commission on the EU Security Union Strategy, 24 July 2020, op cit., p. 14.

political threats, social threats, economic threats, and environmental threats. In assessing threats, probability has to be assessed against consequences.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has traditionally operated with a sound understanding of external threats and internal vulnerabilities. It has worked over the years to establish a comprehensive approach to dealing in an inter departmental fashion to achieve its objectives. The role of the Permanent Mission to the European Union is perhaps the greatest example of such engagement across all government departments, also reflected in *The Global Island*: “The Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Trade work closely to ensure our approach to international peace and security remains effective and responsive to the evolving international security environment.”²² This is further evidenced in Annex 1 of the DFAT’s *Statement of Strategy 2017-2020*²³ where it outlines a broad list of Key Strategic Partners in Government. The appointment of Minister Simon Coveney T.D. as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence²⁴ may lead to even further cooperation and integration of planning with regard to external and internal threats to the State.²⁵

Nonetheless, there is a requirement to broaden our understanding of how responsibility for national security can be integrated. In particular, this would ensure that a wide range of government departments are identified as having an important role in national security planning in addition to An Garda Síochána. This would facilitate an understanding of both threat and vulnerabilities and ensure that appropriate responses by the correct state body are undertaken at the appropriate operational level in the necessary time. Greater integration across government departments on security issues, would lead to improved planning, more efficient use of resources and enhanced threat mitigation.

The establishment of the Office of Emergency Planning²⁶ within the Department of Defence was a very useful first step toward such integration. However, the creation of the National Security Analysis Centre²⁷ (NSAC) within the Department of An Taoiseach provides a significant advance in the level of integration. The development of a Hybrid Fusion Cell, as a focal point for hybrid threat assessments within the NSAC, would be beneficial to protecting against hybrid threats and building national resilience.

Conclusion

The Government proposal to develop a National Security Strategy²⁸ is an important opportunity to ensure that Hybrid Threats are considered in a ‘whole of government’ approach to national

²² Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *The Global Island*, p. 28, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/ourrolesandpolicies/ourwork/global-island/the-global-island-irelands-foreign-policy.pdf> (accessed 7 August 2020).

²³ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Statement of Strategy 2017-2020*, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/aboutus/DFAT-Statement-of-Strategy-2017-2020.pdf> (accessed 7 August 2020).

²⁴ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, accessed 07 August 2020 <https://www.dfa.ie/about-us/who-we-are/our-ministers/minister-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade/>

²⁵ A previous Minister for Justice and Minister for Defence Mr Alan Shatter T.D. raised the potential for “a comprehensive approach on the issue of Cyber Security and Defence” at a High Level Conference on Cyber Security Cooperation in the EU in June 2013, see Government of Ireland, “Minister Shatter Hosts a High Level Conference on Cyber Security Cooperation in the European Union,” 20 June 2020, <http://merriestreet.ie/en/News-Room/Releases/minister-shatter-hosts-a-high-level-conference-on-cyber-security-cooperation-in-the-european-union.html> (accessed 10 August 2020).

²⁶ Department of Defence, “Office of Emergency Planning,” 31 October 2019, <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/22afe3-office-of-emergency-planning/> (accessed 25 September 2020).

²⁷ Conor Lally, “Former Justice Official Heads State Security Threat Agency,” *The Irish Times*, 7 July 2019, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/former-justice-official-heads-state-security-threat-agency-1.3949615> (accessed 01 August 2020).

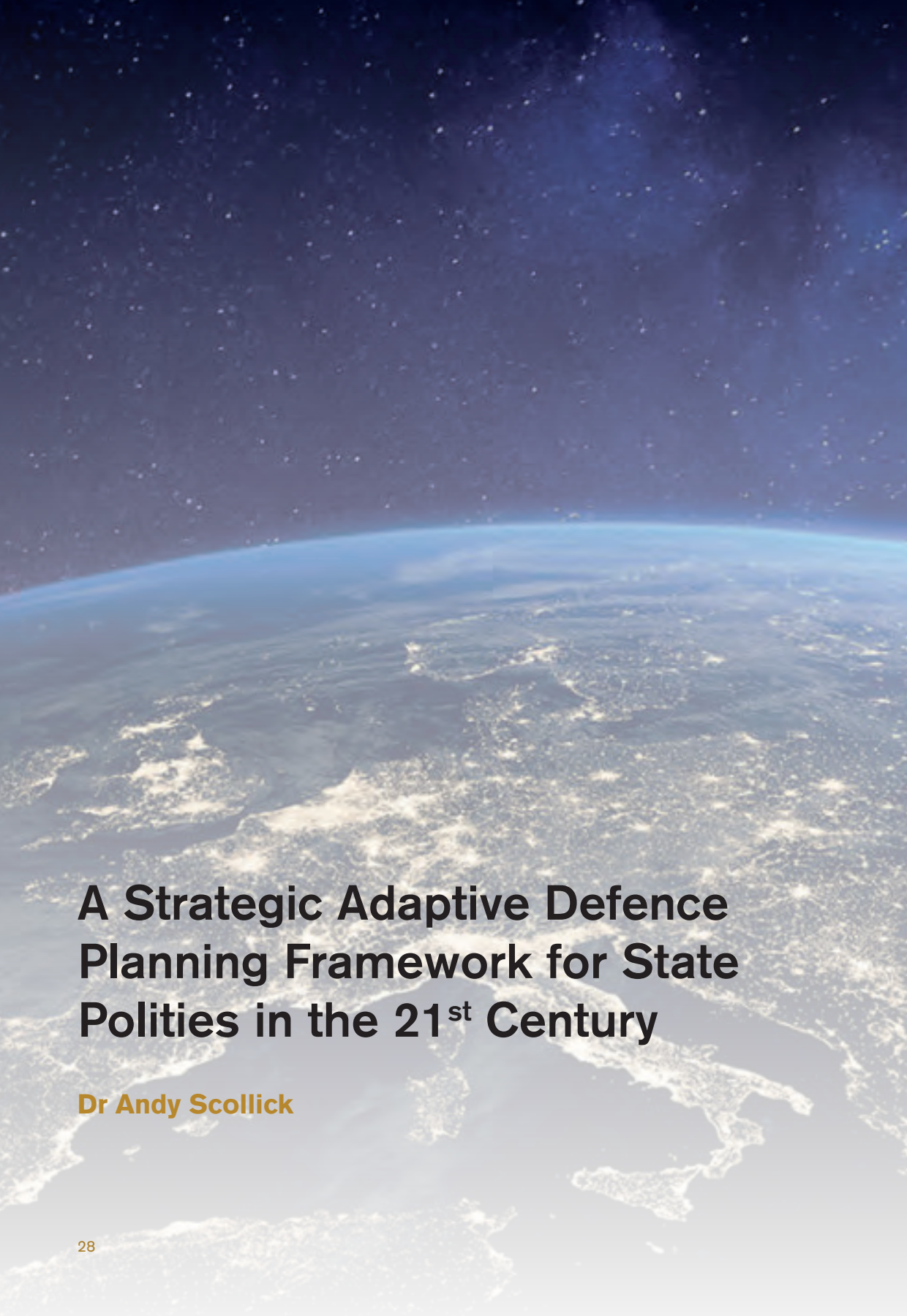
²⁸ Department of the Taoiseach, “Public Consultation on the Development of a National Security Strategy,” 5 December 2019, <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/8b3a62-public-consultation-on-the-development-of-a-national-security-strate/> (accessed 25 September 2020).

security, which will protect our vital interests from current and emerging threats. Like many other states, the security environment that Ireland now faces is broad and changing. While a number of Government Departments and state services have a central responsibility to protect the State, other Government and non-government services and bodies will increasingly have a role in the national security response and we need to develop new capabilities to respond to the changing environment and potential hybrid threats.

There is an opportunity for the Commission on the Future of the Defence Forces²⁹ to recognise the need for a greater primary role for the Defence community in response to hybrid threats, which may include an evolution beyond the current supporting role through 'Aid to the Civil Power' and 'Aid to the Civil Authority' tasks. The Defence Forces Military College³⁰ could serve as the central point for cross-departmental strategic leadership education on the issue of national security and hybrid threats. Such a role has the potential to result in greater integration of the work of the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces with other state and community actors, leading to enhanced economies and efficiencies for the State.

29 Daniel McConnell, "Commission on Future of the Defence Forces to be Established in New Government," Irish Examiner, 15 June 2020, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-31005296.html> (accessed 25 September 2020).

30 The planned 'Institute of Peacekeeping and Leadership Training' within the Military College may be an appropriate forum for such education, see Tom Brady, "New 'Peace Institute' to Tap Good Friday Agreement Experience," Irish Independent, <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/new-peace-institute-to-tap-good-friday-agreement-experience-35340248.html> (accessed 10 August 2020).



A Strategic Adaptive Defence Planning Framework for State Polities in the 21st Century

Dr Andy Scollick

Abstract

Strategy and defence planning for national security must be fit for purpose and future-proof if Ireland and other European states are to meet the challenges and uncertainties of the 21st century. This paper proposes that the design of a multilevel adaptive architecture for defence planning can be usefully informed by complex adaptive systems thinking. Defence planning is the range of activities that constitute preparations for the defence of a state in an inherently uncertain future. Developing a durable defence planning system requires institutions and an architecture that are fundamentally contextual, visionary, reflexive, integrative, functional, multilevel and adaptive. A complex adaptive systems perspective serves as a foundation for the development of an adaptive planning approach; the purpose of which would be to transform defence planning into an integrated process that is responsive to the rapidly changing strategic landscape. Significantly, as a way of thinking, a strategic adaptive framework complements rather than replaces existing defence planning structures and processes. Achieving effective defence planning requires a paradigm shift in the pattern of thinking: away from the view that systems are largely predictable and controllable, toward a view that recognises their intrinsic complexity and dynamics, and that addresses deep uncertainties.

Introduction

“Strategy is a system of expedients; it is more than a mere scholarly discipline. It is the translation of knowledge to practical life, the improvement of the original leading thought in accordance with continually changing situations. It is the art of acting under the pressure of the most difficult conditions.”¹

Regardless of how we define strategy, Helmuth von Moltke the Elder’s 1871 description recognises that strategy is a system capable of learning and adapting in order to fit changing conditions. Lawrence Freedman describes strategy as a process of thinking about actions in advance, in light of our goals and capacities.² Strategy is about maintaining a balance between the desired objectives (ends) and the use of realistic methods (ways) and available resources (means) to achieve them. Freedman adds that a strategy is much more than a plan. A plan assumes a sequence of events that allows us to move in an orderly way with confidence from one state of affairs to another; whereas strategy “is required when others might frustrate one’s plans because they have different and possibly opposing interests and concerns.”³ In Freedman’s view, strategy is necessarily adaptive due to the inherent unpredictability of human affairs. The process of moving toward a desired end state evolves through a series of intermediary states, each one different to what was anticipated at the start. This requires a reappraisal and modification of the original strategy, including the ultimate objectives themselves.⁴

Planning is the process of determining in advance what objectives should be achieved; and how. Planning also anticipates changes, problems and successes. To this we must add the monitoring of implementation actions, evaluation of results and the management feedbacks that modify

¹ Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the Prussian General Staff, “On Strategy” (essay, 1871), in Daniel J. Hughes (Ed.), *Moltke On the Art of War: Selected Writings* (New York, NY: Presidio Press, 1993), p. 124.

² Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. x.

³ Freedman, *Op. Cit.*, xi.

⁴ Freedman, *Op. Cit.*, xi.

not only the plan but also the planning process itself. Like strategy, planning is about learning and adapting; it is an iterative and reflexive process. In defence and other contexts, planning provides a basis for other management functions. Therefore, defence planning is the foundation for decision-making in defence organisations, an integral component of defence policy-making and the core defence management process.⁵

Strategy and defence planning must be fit for purpose and future-proof if state polities⁶ such as Ireland are to meet the challenges and uncertainties of the 2020s and beyond. This paper proposes that the design of a multilevel framework for national defence planning can be guided by complex adaptive systems thinking. Following this introduction, the paper considers the nature of defence planning in the context of a state polity. It then outlines the key design elements of an architecture for defence planning. Next, the paper asserts that a complex adaptive systems perspective is essential for guiding the understanding of a multilevel adaptive defence planning architecture. It then suggests an approach to defence planning based on the concept of adaptability. Finally, the conclusion is presented as a basis for further discussions regarding the design and development of defence planning consistent with Ireland's 2015 White Paper on Defence and 2019 Update.

Defence Planning

According to Colin Gray, defence planning is the range of activities that constitute preparations for the defence of a polity in the future.⁷ All polities are obliged to plan (i.e. make systematic provision) for their security and defence in a future that probably will contain dangers. Defence planning, while predominantly focused on the military, also includes non-military thought and activities.⁸ In Gray's view, defence planning relates to and covers the following activities, which need to be considered as continuous processes:

- Preparation of military advice relevant to the feasibility of options for political choice as policy;
- Selection and design of grand and military strategies;
- Design, making and administration of military programmes; preparation of military plans;
- Coordination with complementary social, economic and political/diplomatic programmes and activities;
- Gathering and assessment of intelligence bearing on possible risks and threats to the polity; and
- Cooperation with allies (and co-belligerents, if not necessarily friends).⁹

5 See: Todor Tagarev, "Defence Planning – Core Processes in Defence Management," in *Defence Management: An Introduction*, eds. Hari Bucur-Marcu et al. (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2009).

6 In this paper, the terms 'polity' and 'polities' are used in the sense of a coherent, politically-organised structure with a distinct identity, regardless of the context-specific form of governance (e.g. self, collaborative or hierarchical), institutional arrangements, and interactions between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed; Jan Kooiman et al., "Interactive governance and governability: an introduction," *The Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies* 7, no. 1 (2008), pp. 3-9. According to Ferguson and Mansbach, 'A polity (or political authority) has a distinct identity; a capacity to mobilize persons and their resources for political purposes, that is, for value satisfaction; and a degree of institutionalization and hierarchy (leaders and constituents)'; Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach, *Polities: Authority, Identities, and Change*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), p. 34. There are many types of polities, including state (e.g. Ireland) or non-state (e.g. Islamic State), supranational (e.g. the European Union) and multilevel (e.g. NATO).

7 Colin S. Gray, *Strategy and Defence Planning: Meeting the Challenge of Uncertainty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 4.

8 Colin S. Gray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

9 Colin S. Gray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

As Gray emphasises, the purpose of strategy and defence planning for national security is to deal with the challenge of inherent uncertainty about the future.¹⁰ Fundamentally, defence planning aims to limit the condition of uncertainty.¹¹ Therefore, defence planners must cope with and account for unavoidable uncertainties arising from variability, inadequate knowledge and ambiguity about the state of the world and human behaviour. However, many important planning problems faced by decision-makers are characterised by a high degree of uncertainty about the future that cannot be reduced by gathering more information or statistical analysis.¹² Decision-making under such situations of deep uncertainty¹³ is a particular type of “wicked problem.”¹⁴

In the overall context of serving the political domain and defence policy, defence planning deals with not only the military domain but also the political-military interface. It may also address civil defence and other non-military policy considerations directly. In doing so, defence planning must consider the different nested levels of military (and broadly similar or equivalent levels of non-military) organisation and behaviour: technical, tactical, operational, strategic and cross-cutting institutional.¹⁵ However, the main focus of defence planning is on providing guidance to decision-makers and preparing strategies, plans and programmes at the political, institutional, strategic and operational level. The challenge for military leaders at the strategic level¹⁶ is to actualise defence policy by translating political guidance into strategic military objectives and generate, deploy and sustain a military force by applying the full range of national or multinational resources.¹⁷

Defence planning is tasked with determining what objectives should be achieved and how, by whom and at what cost. Defence strategy guides the building, arrangement and putting into operation of the diplomatic, economic and military instruments of national or multinational power to achieve governmental or intergovernmental policy objectives. In other words, strategy links planning to implementation. In turn, implementation processes are reflexively linked back through learning to planning. Overall, these processes form feedbacks both at and across different levels of organisation in the military domain (likewise in the parallel and interacting non-military civil defence domain). This set of feedbacks interacts with the political-military interface. Together, the dynamics of the defence planning system provide a kernel for the design of a multilevel framework for national defence planning.

10 Colin S. Gray, *Op. Cit.*, p. vii.

11 Henrik Breitenbauch and André K. Jakobsson, “Defence planning as strategic fact: introduction,” *Defence Studies* 18, no. 3 (2018), p. 255.

12 Vincent A.W.J. Marchau et al., “Introduction,” in *Decision Making under Deep Uncertainty: From Theory to Practice*, eds. Vincent A.W.J. Marchau et al. (Cham: Springer, 2019), p. 8.

13 Jan H. Kwakkel et al., “Coping with the Wickedness of Public Policy Problems: Approaches for Decision Making under Deep Uncertainty,” *Journal of Water Resources Planning and Management* 142, no. 3 (2016), p. 1.

14 Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning,” *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973), p. 155-169.

15 Daniel Sukman, “The Institutional Level of War,” *The Strategy Bridge*, May 5, 2016, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2016/5/5/the-institutional-level-of-war>.

16 Strategy supports policy and decision making at the strategic level, which the UK Defence Doctrine defines as “the level at which national resources are allocated to achieve the government’s policy goals (set against a backdrop of both national and international imperatives);” Ministry of Defence, *Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01: UK Defence Doctrine, 5th Edition* (Swindon: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence Shrivenham, 2014), p. 7. NATO defines strategic level as ‘The level at which a nation or group of nations determines national or multinational security objectives and deploys national, including military, resources to achieve them’; NATO, *Allied Joint Publication-01, Allied Joint Doctrine, Edition E Version 1* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2017), LEX-8.

17 NATO, *Allied Joint Publication-01, Allied Joint Doctrine, Edition E Version 1* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2017), Ch 3-1.

Designing Architecture for Defence Planning

Strategy and defence planning constitute a system or subsystem nested within the broader defence system of the polity. Developing a defence planning system that is suitable and enduring requires institutions (rules and arrangements) and an architecture (framework for processes) that are fundamentally contextual, visionary, reflexive, integrative, functional, multilevel and adaptive. The term ‘architecture’ is used to convey a coherent conceptual structure or framework that is carefully designed and constructed.

Many elements of defence planning are context-dependent and reflexive: the context shapes decision-making, which shapes the context. Planning is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors associated with specific circumstances, events, locations, and spatial and temporal factors. Vision (i.e. forethought or foresight) is central to strategy and defence planning. The reflexive aspect of architecture refers to defence planners continuously engaging in developing competencies, including through systemic deliberation and critical self-reflection regarding planning processes, possible alternatives, uncertainties and unintended consequences of previous attempts to steer defence. It also refers to multi-loop learning processes that modify goals, decision-making and learning itself in the light of experience.

Integration is at the forefront of contemporary military thinking.¹⁸ The joint, multidomain and multinational action that characterises the military and other instruments of national power and their utility require a defence planning architecture that addresses integration.¹⁹ In other words, an approach to systemic coherence that involves multi-actor collaboration to coordinate, integrate (combine) and reconcile disparate aspects of the defence organisation, defence planning system and their interactions. In order to be effective, architecture for defence planning must accommodate different types and degrees of integration processes. Integration entails harmonising the different dimensions and perspectives that make up the defence organisation and its planning component.

Strategy and defence planning depend on the performance of multiple overlapping and interacting functions by different actors at different levels of organisation across the defence system, and the coordination of their activities. Therefore, the design of architecture for defence planning needs to reflect and respond to a dynamic pattern of functionality across changing contexts. Such design is unlikely to be based on purely functional criteria. It will nearly always be subject to a variety of preconceived ideas, models, conventions, political realities and other constraints regarding what constitutes ideal structures, institutions and processes for defence planning.

In terms of authority and decision-making, ‘multilevel’ refers to arrangements and processes in which power, competencies and responsibilities are not monopolised by one level of actors and institutions. Instead, they are negotiated and shared between multiple interconnected and interdependent levels. A multilevel approach calls for three axes or directions of coordination and integration. First, the horizontal coordination and integration of policy, strategy and planning between, for example, the defence ministry and general staff of the armed forces of a state polity. Second, vertical coordination and integration between the political, strategic and

¹⁸ See, for example, the speech by General Sir Patrick Sanders, Commander of the UK's Strategic Command delivered to the *Chief of the Air Staff's Air and Space Power Conference 2020* on 15 July 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/commander-strategic-command-general-sir-patrick-sanders-speech-at-the-air-and-space-power-conference>.

¹⁹ As reflected in, for example, the UK Defence Doctrine; Ministry of Defence, *Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01: UK Defence Doctrine, 5th Edition* (Swindon: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence Shrivenham, 2014).

nested operational, tactical and technical levels of the polity's overall defence system. Third, cross-cutting or external coordination and integration between, for example, an EU member state's defence organisation and the EU's various military committees and agencies.

A key design challenge in developing a multilevel architecture is how to match the various institutional arrangements and processes at each level to the levels both above and below. Each level has evolved its own characteristic structure, dynamics and functions; this is what makes it a distinct level in a nested hierarchy.²⁰ In order to facilitate the effective functioning of the defence system, it is essential to overcome mismatch between system components, processes or functions at one level of organisation and those at another level in the hierarchy.

The term 'adaptive' refers to a complex system's capacity to make small, incremental changes (adjustments) to its structures, behaviours and functions in response to or anticipation of changes in its environment.²¹ 'Adaptive' is also a term applied to various approaches that aim to respond to and shape system dynamics. For example, adaptive governance, adaptive planning and adaptive management are approaches that aim to improve and develop policies, plans and practices in the face of changing circumstances and deep uncertainty. In order to make provision for a polity's security and defence, actors and institutions at every level of organisation need to adapt and work with rather than against the complexity and dynamics of the defence system. Therefore, a complex adaptive systems perspective is essential to understanding a multilevel adaptive defence planning framework.

A Complex Adaptive Systems Perspective

Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) are ubiquitous. Biological organisms, populations, ecosystems, the biosphere, human societies, corporations, business networks, economies, financial markets, political systems, governance systems, international affairs, defence organisations, the military, defence planning, Moltkean strategy and warfare itself²² are all examples of CAS. Such systems improve their chances of persistence and success through continuous experimentation, learning and evolutionary processes.²³

CAS are inherently capable of self-organisation: a process of reorganisation and pattern formation arising from interactions among component agents (referred to as 'actors' if they involve people), often in response to disturbances and other external factors. It occurs without any direction from a central or global controller, or external imposition. Self-organisation plays a crucial role in the emergence of complexity: collective behaviours, patterns such as multiple levels of organisation and structure (e.g. a hierarchy of nested subsystems), and other system-level properties. The emergent properties influence how the whole system functions and interacts with its external environment.

CAS are, of course, fundamentally adaptive. Adaptability, or adaptive capacity, is primarily a function of the agency and capacity²⁴ of actors in the system to prepare for, respond to, cope with,

²⁰ Ahjond S. Garmestani *et al.*, "Panarchy: Discontinuities Reveal Similarities in the Dynamic System Structure of Ecological and Social Systems," *Ecology and Society* 14, no. 1 (2009), <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss1/art15/>, accessed 27 July 2020.

²¹ See John H. Holland, *Hidden Order: How Adaptation Builds Complexity* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995).

²² Paul K. Davis, "Strategic Planning Amidst Massive Uncertainty in Complex Adaptive Systems: the Case of Defense Planning," in Ali Minai and Yaneer Bar-Yam (Eds.), *Unifying Themes in Complex Systems, New Research, Volume IIIB: Proceedings from the Third International Conference on Complex Systems*, (Cambridge, MA: Springer, 2006), p. 203.

²³ Melanie Mitchell, *Complexity: A Guided Tour* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 13.

²⁴ Here, the term 'agency' refers to the power and ability of actors to act independently and to make their own free choices. The term 'capacity' refers to actors' power and ability to perform the choices they make.

create and shape change in an informed manner. Therefore, adaptability is ultimately about decision-making and the power and ability of individuals and groups to implement decisions. According to Chapin *et al.*, adaptability depends on four interrelated factors: diversity, which provides the building blocks for adaptive responses; capacity of actors to augment diversity by introducing novelty; actors' willingness to experiment and innovate in order to test new learning and to explore new approaches; and social capital (including networks and institutions), bridging organisations and leadership.²⁵

Due to the processes of self-organisation and emergence, feedbacks, adaptability and the resulting nonlinear dynamics of the system, and depending on path dependence,²⁶ alternative development trajectories and multiple outcomes are possible. Therefore, CAS are endowed with intrinsic variability, unpredictability and persistent uncertainty. Based on this understanding, CAS theory and the concept of adaptability serve as a framework and foundation for the development of an adaptive planning approach.

Adaptive Planning Approach

The purpose of adopting an adaptive planning approach would be to transform defence planning into an integrated process that is responsive to the rapidly changing strategic landscape and world events.²⁷ In the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the US Department of Defense (DoD) developed an Adaptive Planning (AP) approach²⁸ to address weaknesses in defence planning, including: low responsiveness; long, slow and inflexible contingency planning cycles; disconnect between contingency and crisis action planning; prevalence of 'off the shelf' plans based on outdated assessments; and feasibility analysis and interagency involvement only at late stages. Likewise, the input from senior-level leaders came late in the planning process, meaning that leaders were presented with a single military option: a *fait accompli* that bound political decision-making. As Robert Klein describes,²⁹ rapid planning and greater efficiency are achieved through combining the best characteristics of contingency and crisis action planning and execution into an integrated AP process that includes:

Clear strategic guidance and iterative dialogue

The four-step AP process comprises strategic guidance, concept development, plan development and plan assessment. Though generally sequential, these steps may overlap in order to accelerate the overall process. Senior leaders are involved throughout by means of periodic reviews integrated into the process. Later-stage reviews are key to facilitating adaptation by creating opportunities to revisit, refine, modify or amend strategic guidance and other early-stage planning outcomes. Such reviews ensure that the plan remains relevant to the situation and responsive to the political and military leaderships. In effect, the integrated reviews create feedback loops that turn strategic guidance into approved plans via a continuous cycle of adaptive development and assessment.

25 F. Stuart Chapin, III *et al.*, "A Framework for Understanding Change," in F. Stuart Chapin, III *et al.* (Eds.), *Principles of Ecosystem Stewardship: Resilience-Based Natural Resource Management in a Changing World* (New York, NY: Springer, 2009), p. 23.

26 Path dependence is the phenomenon in which a system's state and its development depend on non-reversible events, disturbances, adaptations or decisions in the present and past. The idea that 'history matters.'

27 Kathleen H. Hicks, *Transitioning Defense Organizational Initiatives: An Assessment of Key 2001-2008 Defence Reforms* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008), pp. 16-17.

28 The first Adaptive Planning Roadmap was adopted by the DoD in 2005. A second roadmap was adopted in 2008 in order to develop the Adaptive Planning approach into a broader, overarching system known as the Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) enterprise.

29 Robert M. Klein, "Adaptive Planning: Not Your Great Grandfather's Schlieffen Plan," *Joint Force Quarterly* 45 (2007), pp. 86-88.

Integrated interagency and coalition planning

AP recognises that interagency and coalition partners' considerations "are intrinsic rather than optional and need to be integrated early in the process rather than as an afterthought once the military plan is complete."³⁰

Integrated intelligence planning

In AP, the intelligence campaign planning process is directly linked to contingency planning to ensure that changes in the global strategic environment continually inform plan development and assessment.

Embedded options

To make the design and development of plans more dynamic, AP features a number of embedded options each with branches and sequels (subsequent operations or phases) together with associated decision points and criteria. This 'menu of options' provides political and military leaderships with increased execution flexibility that anticipates and rapidly adapts.

Living plans

The plan assessment step represents a 'living' environment in which plans are refined, adapted, terminated or executed. In the AP approach, such living plans are maintained within a collaborative, virtual environment and are updated routinely to reflect changes in intelligence assessments, force readiness and management, transportation availability, guidance, assumptions and the strategic environment. Living plans provide a dynamic foundation for seamless transition to time-sensitive crisis planning.

Parallel planning in a network-centric, collaborative environment

Essentially, the AP approach employs information, information and communications technology, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies to shorten the decision-making cycle and gain advantage. Plans, planning tools and databases are linked in a network-centric environment with an integrated architecture that enables parallel collaboration among geographically dispersed planners.

The evolution of the AP approach since 2005 has not been without issues or criticism. For example, a 2009 study of an experimental approach to incorporating interagency (State Department and USAID) perspectives into the development of strategic guidance for military planning at US European Command identified deficiencies including the lack of formal interagency collaboration and coordination mechanisms, and lack of codification of such practices in DoD planning doctrine and policy guidance. Moreover, the compressed planning timelines in the AP approach 'complicated the accommodation of inputs from the interagency partners'.³¹ In another example, John Price describes the DoD's transformation toward AP as having 'failed by almost any measure' and 'slowly dying'.³² He attributes this failure to the prevailing institutional culture: "Fixated on the virtues of planning, the military could not see that the desired outcomes depended on a revolution in strategic thinking, not strategic planning."³³ Price concludes that the objectives of the AP transformation effort are even more relevant today than they were when

³⁰ Klein, Op. Cit., p. 87.

³¹ Caroline R. Earle, "Taking Stock: Interagency Integration in Stability Operations," *PRISM* 3, no. 2 (2012), p. 42.

³² John F. Price Jr., "The Downfall of Adaptive Planning: Finding a New Approach after a Failed Revolution," *Air & Space Power Journal* 26, no.2 (2012), p. 118.

³³ Price Jr., Op. Cit., p. 118.

the AP programme began. '[B]ut we stand little chance of reaching them without significantly changing our approach.'³⁴

Despite such drawbacks, RAND recently recommended that, in order to increase its likelihood of developing into a successful organisation, the US Space Force should adopt an adaptive planning approach to guide the service's future planning and implementation efforts.³⁵ Adaptive planning continues to be researched including, for example, in the field of cyber security.³⁶ Furthermore, in 2019 researchers from RAND found that although the DoD's defence planning process is "conceptually sound and normally capable of meeting the demands placed on it by senior leaders",³⁷ in its implementation, the current system is "insufficiently timely, flexible, adaptive, and robust."³⁸ It would appear, therefore, that much work has yet to be done, in the US and elsewhere, in order to develop and implement an adaptive planning approach to transform defence planning.

In an ideal situation, an adaptive planning approach would significantly shorten the time taken to produce high quality, multifunctional plans that could be regularly updated and rapidly adapted to speed up response times and increase flexibility. Such adaptive plans would present multiple options and support near-continuous collaboration, both in parallel (horizontally) and across multiple levels of organisation (vertically), using a common set of tools. Feedbacks from periodic assessments of plans and from interactions with political and military leaderships would enable 'learning by doing', adaptation, self-organisation and emergence and, therefore, continual development: an integrated process that provides a seamless transition between contingency and crisis action planning. Adaptive planning would generally proceed through arrangements that engage a diversity of stakeholders in processes of goal-setting, experimentation, implementation, monitoring, review, readjustment, revision and reorganisation. These processes are interdependent in the sense that the output from one step becomes the input for another. The next iteration of the same step is adjusted through feedbacks, changing the results. This may lead to a modified approach or to the development of alternative approaches based on learning.

Of course, the design for such a strategic adaptive framework for defence planning does not take place on a blank slate. A complex state of affairs already exists. A polity's defence organisation will always have some form of existing planning structure and processes. New architectures and approaches need to be negotiated, taking into account the realities of the political and military landscape, if they are to be implemented. In this sense, the existing planning landscape simultaneously constitutes a constraining and enabling environment. However, as a way of thinking, grounded in CAS theory and the concept of adaptability, a strategic adaptive framework complements rather than replaces existing defence planning structures and processes. With careful management, it would reflexively and incrementally adapt the defence planning system over time. A transformation rather than a revolution.

³⁴ Price Jr., Op. Cit., p. 130.

³⁵ Michael Spirtas et al., *A Separate Space: Creating a Military Service for Space* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020), p. 102.

³⁶ Jussi Tuovinen and Kimmo Frilander, *Militarizing Red Taming – Agile and Scalable Process for Cyber Red Teaming Using Adaptive Planning and Execution Framework* (Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2019), pp. 67-91.

³⁷ Michael J. Mazarr et al., *The U.S. Department of Defense's Planning Process: Components and Challenges* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), p. 31.

³⁸ Mazarr et al., Op. Cit., p. 32.

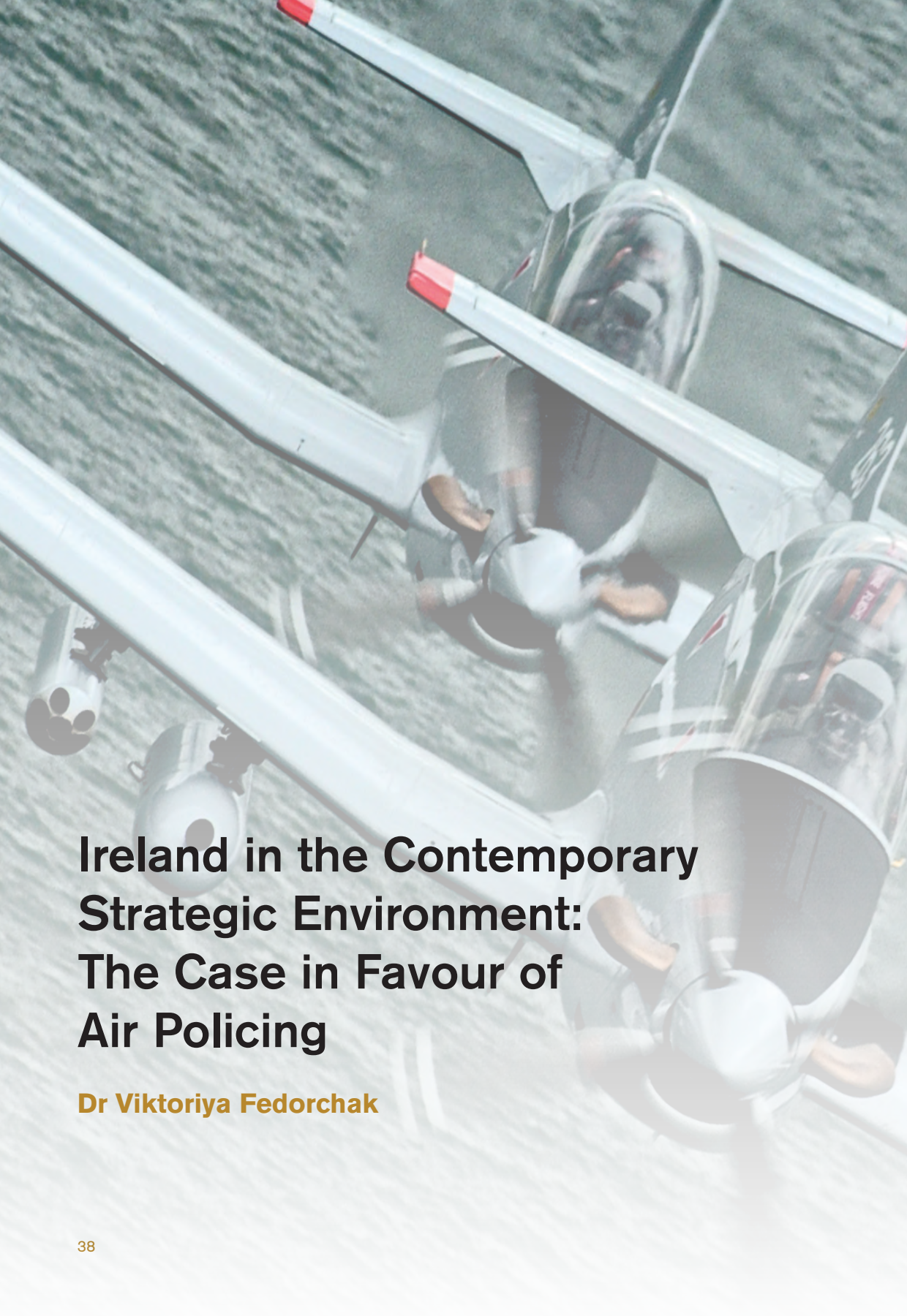
Conclusion

A failure to understand and deal with the fundamental properties of CAS can be detected as an underlying factor in the difficulties encountered during defence planning.³⁹ Real-world systems confront defence planners with so-called ‘wicked problems’ that are difficult to define, have no apparent solution and which tend to persist, posing a continual challenge and adding to deep uncertainty. To be effective, defence planning systems must somehow reflect the complexity, dynamics, scale and diversity of the systems they deal with, as well as respond to rapid changes in those systems. Therefore, achieving effective defence planning requires a cultural paradigm shift⁴⁰ in the predominant pattern of thinking: away from linear, reductionist, fragmentary and deterministic views of reality in which systems are viewed as largely predictable and controllable, toward a new pattern grounded in CAS thinking. Defence planning frameworks that are static, inflexible, siloed and unresponsive are mismatched with their *raison d’être*, which is to assist key decision-makers to make wise strategic choices by defining and linking the various strategic components and dimensions.⁴¹ Instead, modern defence planning requires an architecture that is by design both multilevel and adaptive.

39 See Heinrich Brauss, “The Future of Defence Planning – A NATO Perspective,” in Sven Biscop and Franco Algieri (Eds.), *The Lisbon Treaty and ESDP: Transformation and Integration*, Egmont Paper 24, (Gent: Academia Press, 2008), pp. 35-37; Prakash Menon, “The New Defence Planning Committee Needs to Overcome Structural Flaws to be Successful,” *Pragati*, 16 May 2018, <https://www.thinkpragati.com/opinion/4527/the-problems-of-defence-planning/>; Thomas-Durell Young, “The Failure of Defense Planning in European Post-Communist Defense Institutions: Ascertain Causation and Determining Solutions,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 7 (2018), p. 1052.

40 Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Third Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, [First published Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962]).

41 See Department of Defence, *Strategy Framework Planning Handbook 2006* (Canberra: Department of Defence, Australian Government, 2006), p. 5.



Ireland in the Contemporary Strategic Environment: The Case in Favour of Air Policing

Dr Viktoriya Fedorchak

Introduction

The contemporary strategic environment is characterised by great uncertainty and multiple threats. The recent trends of the US reorientation towards the Indo-Pacific area of responsibility (AOR) and the partial withdrawal of troops from Europe suggest greater commitment among European countries to strengthening regional security. The geopolitical standing of Ireland between two NATO members creates additional challenges to its security today, explaining the regular penetration of Irish-controlled airspace by Russian fighters and bombers. This article discusses the crucial importance of air policing in ensuring the security of the country. The central argument is that investment in national fighter jets for the Air Corps is the main solution to the current and future security threats to the Irish state. Bilateral and international cooperation can also strengthen this solution as a systematic treatment of the problem. The article does not aim to address the political debate on the neutral status of Ireland, but to initiate and stimulate the debate on how the security of Irish airspace should be achieved through air policing.

The Contemporary Strategic Environment

The relative post-Cold War status quo in international relations and geopolitics has come to an end. Whereas previously, the likelihood of large-scale interstate warfare was dismissed as impossible and even unbelievable, today it is to some extent inevitable. Global powers are fully prepared for near-peer and peer conflicts. In 2005, the most famous strategist of our time, Colin Gray, argued that conventional interstate warfare cannot be eliminated. He was often criticised for holding a state-centric view regarding warfare.¹ Nevertheless, just fifteen years later, once again Russia poses one of the greatest threats to the NATO alliance; the principles of international law have been violated and completely undermined by unilateral aggressive actions within the framework of hybrid warfare. An arms race is in full swing and the global powers are demonstrating their military potential across domains, including in space. Accordingly, the USA is concentrating its military capabilities and efforts on the Indo-Pacific scenario. Colin Gray was right all along.

Geopolitics Prevail!

Just as during the Cold War, geopolitics today prevail and the spheres of influence in various regions are becoming even more important, considering the changing dynamics in regional politics. The boundaries of the NATO alliance and power projection are constantly being questioned and tested by near-peer and peer opponents, aiming to explore the thresholds and limitations of national and allied responses. The power struggle for influence in the third countries have also become more hybrid, varying from purchasing control shares in key industries and infiltrating national infrastructure to compromising democratic electoral processes through sabotage, cyberattacks and disinformation. Moreover, the principles of international law that formerly provided a certain degree of equilibrium and stability in international relations have been manipulated and distorted beyond recognition, as clearly illustrated in the Ukraine-Russian conflict. This example also showed a complete violation of the core of any law, *pacta sunt servanda*.² Rendering the current situation in the world even more complicated, the revival

¹ Colin Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London: Orion, 2005), Ch. 5.

² Viktoriya Fedorchak, "Ukrainian-Russian Conflict: The Revival of the Classic IR Realism?" *Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations* 13, no. 2 (2016), pp. 5–18.

of frozen conflicts and territorial disputes like in Nagorno-Karabakh and between India and China, and India and Pakistan, pose threats of instability and new waves of refugees in the years to come.³ The world today is more unstable than it was at the end of the Cold War. Indeed, the post-Cold War peace dividend has not paid off.⁴ It seems like the wisdom of millennia of human experience call back to us once again: *'Si vis pacem, para bellum'* ('if you want peace, prepare for war'). In the context of current events, this can be interpreted as 'strengthen your defence, to protect your sovereignty.'

The Reorientation of US Forces to the Indo-Pacific AOR

One of the most distinctive features of the contemporary strategic environment is the reorientation of the American military from the European to the Indo-Pacific AOR since the publication of new national security priorities in 2018.⁵ While one could explore the political discourse of the Trump administration regarding allied commitments to regional security and monetary contributions to the allied budget, the military rationale is the reorientation of attention and strategic commitments to the Indo-Pacific AOR and the consequent necessity of concentrating forces and capabilities in that region, not to forget the necessity of undertaking training and exercises with allies in the region in order to deepen interoperability.⁶ Accordingly, 12,000 of US personnel were announced to be withdrawn from Germany, 5,600 of whom will be redeployed in other European countries, while the remaining 6,400 will return to the USA.⁷ In a similar move, 700 US marines will be withdrawn from their deployment in northern regions of Norway, ending their permanent presence there since 2017.⁸ This decision also corresponds to the current reorientation of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) to the Indo-Pacific scenario and the consequent reorganisation of the service's structures and capabilities.⁹

What might this reorientation of American attention mean for European security? First, it does not undermine the importance of the European AOR for the USA or its commitments to the alliance, nor does it signal the reduced geopolitical importance of the region. On the contrary, its significance increases and requires more noteworthy actions from the European members of the alliance in strengthening European security and defence in future near-peer and peer conflicts. Hence, while the USA concentrates on the Indo-Pacific AOR, despite preserving its presence in the European region, its European allies will have to focus more on guarding their backyard and their national securities, accordingly reflected in their budgetary, personnel and capabilities commitments. Second, the existing status quo should not be taken for granted: Russian actions in Eastern Ukraine never followed existing ceasefire agreements. Similarly, the Russian appetite for Belarus should not be underestimated,¹⁰ especially considering the recent elections in the country. Hence, less protected elements on the geopolitical chessboard will be of greater importance and consequently more vulnerable.

3 Anton Bebler, *"Frozen Conflicts" in Europe* (Berlin: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2015).

4 Viktoriya Fedorchak, *British Air Power: The Doctrinal Path to Jointery* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), p. 53.

5 U.S. Department of Defense, *The Summary of the National Defense Strategy of the United States: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge* (Washington, D.C.: DOD, 2018), pp. 2-4.

6 *Ibid.*, 9.

7 Glen Carey and Anthony Capaccio, "U.S. Plans to Withdraw About 12,000 Troops from Germany," *Bloomberg*, 29 July 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-29/u-s-plans-to-withdraw-about-12-000-troops-from-germany>.

8 David Nikel, "U.S. Pulls 700 Marines Out of Norway," *Life in Norway*, 7 August 2020, https://www.lifeinnorway.net/u-s-pulls-700-marines-out-of-norway/?fbclid=IwAR3-yxFMAJRNwPPZCL7qnevCOgxFxdw8F1_pYtIDBOaUzmxGJp7-oisc3m8.

9 United States Marine Corps, *Force Design 2030* (Pentagon, VA, 2020).

10 Unian, "Ex-Chief of NATO Sees Annexation, War in Belarus as Probable Scenario," 21 February 2019, https://www.unian.info/world/10454217-ex-chief-of-nato-sees-annexation-war-in-belarus-as-probable-scenario.html?utm_source=social&utm_medium=share&utm_campaign=site&fbclid=IwAR1VwHSRkO7FF2BqYxfz2HQCCPe2H3UnW18GvIvV5ofmmek3oTHPZD1GjY.

Ireland in the Contemporary Strategic Environment

The logical question is, where does Ireland fit in this intricate geopolitical pattern? Due to its geopolitical location, Ireland will always be of interest to adversaries of the alliance and the EU. Being located between the USA and the UK and representing the western border of the EU, Ireland is an ideal point of entry to destabilise regional security and undermine the UK's defences. For these reasons, Irish airspace has always been of bilateral and regional importance. Accordingly, when Russian aircraft entered Irish-controlled airspace on numerous occasions over the last few years,¹¹ Royal Air Force (RAF) fighter jets were the ones to escort them away. The most recent occurrence was on 8 March 2020, when Russian Tupolev TU-95 'Bear' bombers were intercepted off the northwest coast of Ireland by six RAF Typhoons, launched from RAF Lossiemouth and RAF Coningsby: "after making contact four Typhoons closed on the Russian aircraft before withdrawing, while another two forced them to alter course."¹²

At first glance, it may seem that Russian provocations are mainly aimed at flexing muscles and intimidating the countries involved. Both politically and militarily, such actions can illustrate the long arms of Moscow and its ability to reach far into the EU's borders and NATO. On the other hand, strictly from a military perspective, these actions and interference have an evident task of testing national air defence capabilities in the region and the readiness of Ireland's close neighbour, the UK. Russians can do so primarily because Ireland does not have air defence capabilities to counter being penetrated: "[t]he most recent national air defence capabilities were ground-based, consisting of short-range, low-level RBS-70 portable surface-to-air missile (SAM) launchers, 'Giraffe' Mk4 radars on BV206 tracked all-terrain vehicles."¹³

Hence, there are no immediate implications of these actions besides interception by the RAF. The problem is that the breaching of Irish airspace and the deployment of RAF Typhoons provides Russians with important information on the readiness of the RAF's capabilities and response time and the core of British-Irish defence cooperation. Moreover, as Edward Burke stresses, these actions aim to stretch RAF capabilities:

"[t]he UK has participated in NATO's Icelandic air-policing mission and is also an important contributor to the Baltic mission over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It has no QRA stations in Northern Ireland; the RAF deploys Voyager air-to-air refuelling aircraft from RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire on the east coast of England to ensure that its Typhoon aircraft can monitor Russian long-range sorties off the west coast of Ireland."¹⁴

Another important consideration is that at the moment, Russian actions are aimed at intelligence gathering, with little direct impact on Irish security. However, this status quo cannot be guaranteed in the future. In the case of a direct threat to the UK and the alliance as well as the increasing necessity of using capabilities elsewhere, the security of Irish airspace might be low on the list of neighbours' and allied priorities. This situation might be conditioned by the lack of sufficient capabilities of air-to-air refuelling to extend Typhoons' air policing of Irish

11 For these instances, see Ray O'Hanlon, "RAF Forced to Intercept as Russian Bomber Planes Enter Irish Controlled Airspace" *Irish Central*, 9 February 2017, <https://www.irishcentral.com/news/raf-forced-to-intercept-as-russian-bomber-planes-enter-irish-airspace>; and *The Journal.IE*, "British Fighter Jets Scrambled to Intercept Russian Bombers," 23 September 2016, <https://www.thejournal.ie/russian-bombers-uk-airspace-2992558-Sep2016/>.

12 Brian Hutton, "Military Aircraft Breach Irish Airspace during Russian Interception." *The Irish Times*, 8 March 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/military-aircraft-breach-irish-airspace-during-russian-interception-1.4196696>.

13 Viktoriya Fedorchak, *Understanding Contemporary Air Power* (London: Routledge, 2020), p. 141.

14 Edward Burke, "What are Russian Bombers Doing in Irish Airspace?" *The Irish Times*, 10 March 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/what-are-russian-bombers-doing-in-irish-airspace-1.4197785>.

airspace. Moreover, the current trend in the reorganisation of armed forces across the world is towards reducing numbers but improving technological capabilities.¹⁵ As a result, greater attention is paid to procuring cutting-edge technologies which would correspond to the requirements of allied interoperability and integration in the multi-domain warfare of today and tomorrow. Despite the apparent advantages of this approach, the most evident shortfall is the case scenario, when there are not enough capabilities to be devoted to numerous needs in different locations simultaneously.¹⁶ Accordingly, the question of priorities in committing these capabilities would arise. For any country, one's national security and protection of airspace will be paramount, while neighbours' airspace will come second in times of distress. Currently, the British Armed Forces, including the RAF, are reorganising according to the technology-centred approach with an intended fleet of 138 F-35Bs. However, at the moment they only have 18, with a consequent order of 30 more to come.¹⁷ Hence, technological sophistication comes not only at a high price but also requires more time to produce, deliver, test and integrate into national armed forces. Consequently, the dispersion of capabilities across various areas of responsibilities might be substantially readjusted depending on the type of threat, the actual availability of different capabilities and the consequent risk assessment of their deployment and the cost of a potential loss.

Why is Air Policing Important?

The task of air policing entails "the use of interceptor aircraft, in peacetime, for the purpose of preserving the integrity of a specified airspace."¹⁸ The military aircraft of another state or a hijacked civilian aircraft may undermine such integrity. In both cases, fighter jets are used to intercept and/or escort the violator out of national airspace. Air policing originates in the traditional role of air power, which is control of the air, being the use of both offensive and defensive means in order to achieve freedom of action in the aerial environment, while denying or limiting similar actions to an adversary. Achieving control of the air is crucial for any aerial operation. It also provides greater freedom of manoeuvre in ground and naval operations by friendly forces. Its endurance requires the constant commitment of resources and effort to preserve the required degree of control and consequent freedom of movement. A change in circumstances (such as the involvement of a third party, new technologies, or anti-aircraft systems) might undermine the initially gained control of the air.¹⁹

The primary distinction between the two is that air policing is more appropriate to peacetime purposes of monitoring the airspace and securing its integrity, while control of the air is better attributed to wartime and sovereign states that sustain the full range of capabilities to protect their independence against any potential adversary. In other words, control of the air is more substantial in its extent and requires more systematic budgetary and military commitments to provide freedom of manoeuvre across all three physical domains. Consequently, it requires stable and sustainable infrastructure, sufficient logistics and interoperability with the capabilities of

¹⁵ Peter Gray, "British Air Power: Allowing the UK to Punch above Its Weight," in J. Olsen (Ed.), *European Air Power: Challenges and Opportunities*, (Lincoln: Potomac Books, 2014), pp. 106–139.

¹⁶ Fedorchak, *Understanding*, p. 147–170.

¹⁷ Forces.net, "F-35B: What You Need To Know About The Lightning Jet," 10 June 2020, <https://www.forces.net/news/what-you-need-know-about-f-35b>.

¹⁸ *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, s.v. "Air Policing," <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/air+policing>.

¹⁹ Fedorchak, *Understanding*, p. 10.

other countries.²⁰ Hence, the introduction of control of the air role relatively from scratch may prove both time- and cost-consuming. On the other hand, air policing as a peacetime task of monitoring one's sovereign airspace would be a fraction of that cost. It would primarily require a smaller number of fighter jets of the previous generation, compatible air-to-air refuelling and much less logistical support and infrastructure for the fighter squadron to be located, serviced and made airborne.

Why should a neutral state like Ireland address the question of air policing and invest accordingly? Besides the already mentioned conventional threat of Russian bombers and fighter jets, there is also the increasing threat posed by civilian aviation and the hijacking of civilian aircraft. Although there is nothing new about this security concern, the likelihood of it happening in Irish airspace cannot be ruled out, especially considering that Dublin Airport is home to the world-famous low-cost airline Ryanair. In a recent event covered by Norwegian news, on 17 July 2020 a Ryanair flight from London to Oslo was escorted by Danish F-16 fighter jets to the Norwegian capital after a bomb threat was announced.²¹ Although the incident did not take place in Irish airspace, but in turn British, Danish and Norwegian, at the moment the primary interceptor of hijacked aircraft in Irish airspace is still the RAF.²² The introduction of air policing in Irish airspace would certainly improve the security of civilian aviation and strengthen the security of the state.

Solutions

The complexity of the current strategic situation and the place of Ireland in the geopolitical struggle does not mean stalemate or a dead end. There are various options available to improve the situation, which can be applied either individually or systematically across all three levels. These options are unilateral actions, strengthening of bilateral cooperation and international allied solution.

A unilateral option

The national solution refers to the procurement of fighter jets of the previous generation to secure the air policing of Irish airspace by the Irish Air Corps. This option has substantial benefits for Irish national security. First, the state will illustrate that it is more than capable of protecting its sovereignty and independence, which in the current state of international relations is paramount for national security. Second, it will strengthen the Irish Defence Forces, allowing the Air Corps to fulfil the full spectrum of air power roles in the protection of national sovereignty. Consequently, the service will be able to attract more recruits and qualified specialists and with additional financing and defence roles retain skilled personnel.²³ Third, this action would signal the security and defence self-sufficiency of the Irish state against both threats: Russian bombers and hijacked civilian aircraft. Finally, the national defence would become more systematic and prepared for the uncertainties of the current and future strategic environment.

²⁰ Dag Henriksen, "Control of the Air," in J. Olsen (Ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Air Power* (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 83–95.

²¹ The Local.no, "Danish Fighter Planes Escort Ryanair Flight to Oslo after Bomb Threat," 15 July 2020, <https://www.thelocal.no/20200717/danish-fighter-plane-escorts-ryanair-flight-to-oslo-after-bomb-threat>.

²² Burke, "What are Russian."

²³ Conor Gallagher, "Air Corps Pilot Retention Scheme Attracts 70% Sign-Up Rate," *The Irish Times*, 5 December 2019, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/air-corps-pilot-retention-scheme-attracts-70-sign-up-rate-1.4104941>.

A bilateral option

Another option is the current reliance on the military capabilities of the UK and the RAF as the primary deterrent of adversaries' penetration of Irish airspace. This solution may seem to be a preservation of the existing status quo. However, the current deteriorating security environment and previously mentioned overstretching and technology-oriented transformation of the British Armed Forces indicate that in the worst-case scenario, the protection of Irish airspace may not be the priority for another sovereign country, despite the geopolitical importance of Ireland for both the UK and the alliance. Moreover, this arrangement is often discussed in British academic and political circles as a case of 'bandwagoning' in international relations²⁴ and an additional burden on British defence. Hence, sooner or later, greater commitments and procurement of more diversified and multi-functional aerial capabilities will be required to sustain this bilateral cooperation.

An international option

The most obvious alternative or a segment of a systematic treatment would be an extension of NATO air policing over Irish airspace. This option would provide multifaceted, 24/7, 365-day security²⁵ with the advanced capabilities of the alliance. Given that NATO air policing is a peacetime mission, it could be extended to Irish airspace, minimising the potential risks and providing the safety of the national airspace. This certainly could be the most challenging solution considering the political complexity of making it happen. However, the short- and long-term strategic and security benefits would outweigh the short-term political struggle of making such an arrangement.

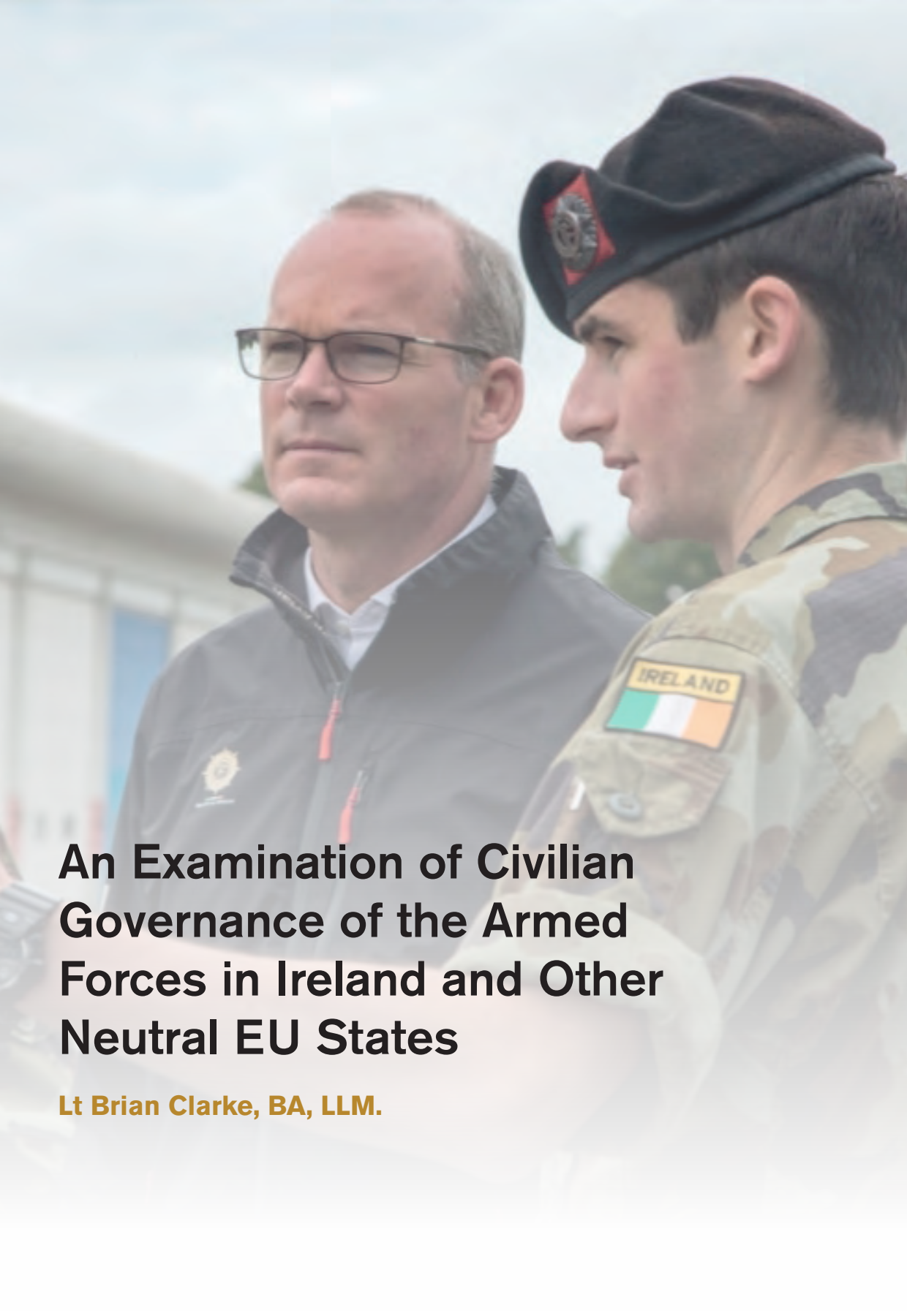
Although these three distinctive solutions have been emphasised in this article, the author is a strong believer in a systematic approach to everything, especially to national security, readiness for multiple case scenarios and coping with uncertainty. Hence, I remain convinced that the key to solving the air policing problem of Irish airspace is in procuring fighter jets for the Air Corps and establishing national air policing here. Such a decision would signal a national commitment to defending its security and sovereignty. It could also stimulate better and more functional bilateral collaboration with Ireland's closest neighbour, the UK. No matter how hopeful and optimistic one may be, the 'what if?' case scenario seems to remind of itself more often today than before. Being prepared has always been half the battle won.

Conclusion

Overall, uncertain times require a greater commitment to national security and the current strategic environment is far from being certain or predictable. The undermining of the principles of international law and the international commitments to national security and integrity illustrated in Ukraine suggest the necessity of more significant domestic investment in defence capabilities. While control of the air might be extremely difficult to achieve within limited budgets, the air policing task would be a sufficient deterrent of current security threats. Defence has never been easy to build, but it is necessary for the stability and prosperity of the Irish state. Indeed, it is a path through the struggle to prosperity. Hence, *per ardua ad astra*.

²⁴ For bandwagoning in IR, see Fathali M. Moghaddam, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Political Behavior* (London: Sage Publications, 2017), p. 53.

²⁵ NATO, "Air Policing: Securing NATO Airspace," 18 May 2020, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132685.htm.



An Examination of Civilian Governance of the Armed Forces in Ireland and Other Neutral EU States

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Abstract

In the context of the currently evolving geopolitical landscape and the requirement for appropriate security planning, this paper examines the varying degrees of Civil Service and general civilian involvement in the management of armed forces in neutral countries in the European Union. This paper will focus on Ireland's unique model of management of its Defence Forces, and will present a historical and legislative context for that model. Some critiques of the Irish model from academia, political discourse, and the media will be presented along with the explanation of Ireland's structure. The basic structures of governance of the armed forces in other neutral and non-aligned European Union states will be presented and compared with those of Ireland. The Irish White Paper on Defence has a Strategic Review of Defence scheduled for 2021, at the halfway point of its ten-year cycle. The Irish government has also committed to a Commission on the Future of the Defence Forces, which will include an examination of governance structures. With these projects in mind, the overall goal of this paper is to provide information for critical analysis and consideration in appraising the suitability of Ireland's unique military governance structures while it faces into a challenging and fluid contemporary security environment.

Introduction

The Irish State as we know it was born out of an uncertain time in the island's history. The relationship between the militant movement for independence and the fledgling political establishment was one of shared membership and collective effort. After the achievement of independence this fact became a nuisance for the new Irish Free State government of W. T. Cosgrave. What followed solidified the place of the military in Irish society. Now almost a century after these events, potential changes for how Ireland caters for its defence are on the horizon. The government intends on establishing a Commission on the Future of the Defence Forces.¹ The White Paper on Defence has a 'Strategic Review of Defence' scheduled for 2021,² and the international security environment is in a particularly mobile state of flux. The assessment of the 'suitability of governance structures' over defence in Ireland is specifically mentioned in the government's objectives for the Commission on the Future of the Defence Forces.³

This paper will present the origins of Ireland's military governance model, clarify the command structure, explain the role of the Civil Service in Ireland's military affairs and the criticisms it has recently received, and it will outline the basic governance structures in other neutral and non-aligned EU states. What is realised is that Ireland's command structure circumvents its most senior military officers in a way that the structures in other comparable countries do not, and that to change this would be a relatively complex task.

Historical Context

Soon after the Irish Civil War (June 1922 - May 1923), the Free State government faced the rigorous task of establishing itself as the government of an independent and responsible nation among nations. One of their first post-war onerous tasks was the reduction in the size of the army. Half of the National Army's officers and a large number of the other ranks previously served in

the British Armed Forces.⁴ It was proposed that the army be reduced in size to 18,000, all ranks.⁵ Officers with prior professional military experience were to be favoured, but some members of the officer corps were also members of the still sitting Army Council of the IRA, with some also being members of the secretive IRB.⁶ Irish Republican Army Organisation (IRAIO) was established to defend the interests of these officers in demobilisation. In the Curragh Camp, 60 officers refused to retire, and were swiftly relieved of their commissions without any pay or pensions.⁷

The IRAIO showed deliberate disregard for the new democratic institutions of the State in its issuing of an ultimatum to government, supposedly on behalf of IRA veteran army officers.⁸ A number of troops in Roscommon disobeyed orders and refused to parade. Officers in Gormanston, Baldonnell, and Templemore absconded with a number of weapons from each location.⁹ Open revolt from within the army was afoot. Cosgrave offered to hold talks with the IRAIO. But he immediately then took sick leave and handed the matter and his role as head of government to his ex-IRA Justice Minister Kevin O'Higgins. The IRAIO were to meet in a hotel in Dublin City on 18 March 1924, and a body of armed men gathered at the meeting point. The Adjutant General of the Army, General Gearóid O'Sullivan, ordered a raid on the hotel for fear that a Coup d'état was occurring.¹⁰

As *de facto* Prime Minister, O'Higgins was faced with an obscure predicament. Elements of his armed forces were in open disobedience and mutiny, while other elements were engaging in operations without the consent or direction of the government or the Oireachtas. O'Higgins acted fast. The National Army was disbanded and on 01 October 1924 the Irish Defence Forces was established.¹¹ Civilian control over Ireland's new professional military was solidified in the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924, which established the Council of Defence, and gave the Department of Defence a clear role in all affairs of the military.¹² The Chief of Staff and General Staff of the Defence Forces would sit on the council were only responsible for the affairs of Defence assigned to them by the minister.¹³ The army was put in its place. Historian John M. Regan succinctly sums up the affair when he says the government's handling of the Army Mutiny of 1924 was "a statement to the world by the Minister for Defence that neither he [...] nor the institutions of State would ever again take their stride from a soldier's boot."¹⁴

Command of the Irish Defence Forces

The command structure of the Irish Defence Forces that still exists today is a direct result of the events of 1924. There are a number of legislative provisions that shape that command structure. Article 13 of the Constitution names the President as the Supreme Commander of the Irish

4 "Reflections on the Foundation of the Irish State – Garret Fitzgerald, UCC 2003", Collins 22 Historical Society, Last modified March 25, 2010. https://web.archive.org/web/20110319151530/http://www.generalmichaelcollins.com/Cumann_na_nGael/Garrett_Fitzgerald.html

5 Joe Joyce, "Army Mutiny," *The Irish Times*, 10 March 1924.

6 Army Enquiry Committee, *Report of the Army Enquiry Committee*, (Dublin: Dáil Éireann, 1924), p. 6.

7 Fitzgerald, *Op. Cit.*

8 Dáil Éireann, *Dáil Debate - The Army Position*, Vol 6, No 25. (11 March 1924).

9 Joyce, *Op. Cit.*

10 Frank Bouchier-Hayes, "Civil Authority Reasserted Quickly in 1924," *The Irish Times*, 4 March 2004, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/civil-authority-reasserted-quickly-in-1924-1.1134276>.

11 Maryann Gialanella Valiulis, "The 'Army Mutiny' of 1924 and the Assertion of Civilian Authority in Independent Ireland," *Irish Historical Studies* 23, no. 92 (1983), pp. 362-366.

12 Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924. Section 8.

13 Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924. Section 8 (2).

14 John M. Regan, *The Irish Counter-Revolution 1921-1936, Treatyite Politics and Settlement in Independent Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 2001), p. 197.

Defence Forces.¹⁵ The later Defence Act of 1954 brings more clarification on command. Section 17 of the Act outlines that although the President is the Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces, actual command is delegated to the government.¹⁶ The Act provides for command of elements of the Defence Forces to be delegated to commissioned officers through Defence Forces Regulations, and it also provides for geographical areas of responsibility for command to be divided up around the country as the Minister for Defence sees fit, with command of the organisation as a whole retained in the hands of the government.¹⁷

This easily provides for a military that is more stable, and less susceptible as a whole to stepping out of line with government direction. It also makes it particularly difficult for the Defence Forces to ever engage in any activity against the democratically elected government of Ireland. The Act provides for the appointment of a Chief of Staff, and a small General Staff to administer the day to day affairs of the Defence Forces for the minister but without them having legal command of the Defence Forces.¹⁸ There is no provision in Irish law for a uniformed Chief of Defence type appointment with nationwide command over the country's military.

Role of the Civil Service in Management of the Defence Forces in Ireland

The governance structure in Ireland is restrictive of the military. It avoids vesting a commissioned officer of the Defence Forces with command of the whole organisation, even on behalf of the Minister for Defence or government. In strong contrast to this, the wide-ranging roles of the Department of Defence are defined in the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924. It is given an all-encompassing role in “the administration and business of the raising, training, organisation, maintenance, equipment, management, discipline, regulation, and control according to law of the Military Defence Forces [...], and all powers, duties and functions connected with the same”.¹⁹ It also names the Minister for Defence as the head of the Department. The only military presence in the Department of Defence is Defence Forces Headquarters. It is headed by the Chief of Staff, and staffed by military personnel.²⁰ Its role is solely development, military advice to government, strategic planning, and internal administration. Defence Forces Headquarters does not have a military command function.²¹ Although the command structure is quite clear in legal terms, it has not changed or evolved to keep up with the changing nature and role of the Civil Service in general in Ireland.

The Department of Defence has developed an even more involved role in military affairs over recent decades. The Public Services Management Act 1997 solidified a stronger role for the Secretary General. The Act specifies that the Secretaries General of government departments shall be responsible for providing policy advice to their respective minister²², and that the respective minister can delegate roles directly to the Secretary General.²³ The Act specifies that the responsibility for the performance management of the department also falls to the Secretary

¹⁵ Constitution of Ireland, 1937. Article 13. (4).

¹⁶ Defence Act, 1954, Section 17 (1).

¹⁷ *Ibid.* Sec 17 (2)(a) and (b).

¹⁸ *Ibid.* Sec 12.

¹⁹ Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924. Section 1 (1).

²⁰ Defence Act, 1954, Section 13.

²¹ Government of Ireland, Corporate Governance Framework – Department of Defence, (Dublin: Department of Defence, 2016), p. 46.

²² Public Services Management Act, 1997, Section 1 (d).

²³ *Ibid.* Section 4.

General.²⁴ Developments in Irish case law have further added to this increased power and role. The Carltona Principle, born from case law in 1940s Britain, states that the decisions of the Civil Service are as binding as if they were decisions of the minister his or herself.²⁵ In 1998, the Carltona Principle was confirmed to apply fully to the Irish Civil Service by a Supreme Court Decision.²⁶

In Ireland's case, the Minister for Defence exercises command of the military on behalf of the government, and the Secretary General of the Department of Defence now has the legal basis for making decisions on behalf of the minister. Command and management of the Irish Defence Forces has deepened in complexity. Effectively, the Secretary General of the Department of Defence, an unelected official, can now at times hold *de facto* command of the Irish Defence Forces. In recent years, the Secretary General of the Department of Defence has even filled minor ministerial roles on an ad hoc basis, attending a conference for European Union Defence ministers in 2019 on behalf of the Minister for Defence,²⁷ and presenting a speech when the minister was absent from a commissioning ceremony for new army officers in 2020.²⁸

Hitherto this, command and control were less complex. The Department of Defence has grown to 354 employees at the end of 2019, and is split over multiple branches with a hands on role in military affairs.²⁹ The four main branches of the Department of Defence are 'Strategic Planning, Capability Development, and Corporate Support,' 'International Affairs and Legislation,' 'Defence Capability (People),' and 'Emergency, Operations, and Infrastructure Oversight.' All four branches are headed by civil servants.³⁰ The Department of Defence consists in total of its civilian branches, and Defence Forces Headquarters, without any major cross-staffing.

Recent Criticism of Ireland's Model

Aspects of this civilian-heavy approach has been the subject of some criticism from retired members of the General Staff, military representative associations, academia, and politicians. The main themes from retired generals' critiques seem to allege a willingness of the Department of Defence to act contrary to best advice from the military and international experts³¹ and the inflexibility and "obsessive rigidity"³² of the Civil Service. The working relationship between senior officers and civil servants has even been described as "toxic."³³ The Representative Association for Commissioned Officers (RACO) described the relationship between officers and the Department of Defence as "divisive and dismissive."³⁴

²⁴ Ibid. Section 3.

²⁵ *Carltona v Commissioners of Works* [1943] 2 All ER 560 (United Kingdom).

²⁶ *Devaney v Shields* [1998] 2 IR 130.

²⁷ "Informal meeting of Defence Ministers - August 2019", Council of the European Union, Last Modified June 25 2020. <https://newsroom.consilium.europa.eu/events/20190829-informal-meeting-of-defence-ministers-august-2019>

²⁸ Ronan McGreevy, "Double Marriage Proposals for Newly-Commissioned Army Officers in Dublin Castle," *The Irish Times*, 20 February 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/double-marriage-proposals-for-newly-commissioned-army-officers-in-dublin-castle-1.4180064>.

²⁹ Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank, DPER, http://databank.per.gov.ie/Public_Service_Numbers.aspx?rep=CS, accessed 1 August 2020.

³⁰ Government of Ireland, "Who-Does-What," <https://whodoeswhat.gov.ie/root/defence/>, accessed 1 July 2020.

³¹ Lt Gen Gerald McMahon (Retd), "Defence Paper Presents Appalling Vista," *The Irish Times*, 9 February 2000.

³² Brig Gen Peter O'Halloran (Retd), addressing "Irish Defence Forces Officers Club," Webinar on the Commission on the Future of Defence, 21 July 2020, https://twitter.com/_JDFOC/status/1285530330120753153, accessed 8 August 2020.

³³ Sean O'Riordan, "Relationship Between Military and Civil Service is 'Toxic,'" *Irish Examiner*, 21 August 2019, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30945156.html>, accessed 1 August 2020.

³⁴ RACO Presentation to Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence 30 May 2019. Oireachtas Ireland. Last Modified 29 May 2020. https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/Dail/32/joint_committee_on_foreign_affairs_and_trade_and_defence/submissions/2019/2019-05-30_opening-statement-commandant-conor-king-general-secretary-raco-representative-association-of-commissioned-officers_en.pdf, accessed 1 August 2020.

A Workplace Climate Survey of the Defence Forces by University of Limerick found that “micromanagement,”³⁵ and increased involvement of the Department of Defence in operational decisions was an increasing concern of all ranks.³⁶ Concerns about the focus of the Department of Defence being on financial savings as opposed to capability development and empowerment of the Defence Forces were also expressed heavily.³⁷ The authors of the climate survey recommended that “the relationship between the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces and the Representatives Organisations needs to be reviewed”³⁸ and that the Defence Sector should move to a “more inclusive partnership”³⁹, with specific reference to the perception of disproportionate power in the hands of the Civil Service over military affairs.⁴⁰

In the political world recently, the suitability of the Department of Defence has also been discussed. A salient point is the questioning of the role of the Secretary General as Accounting Officer of the Defence Vote after over €38,000,000 was made liable for return to the exchequer between 2017 and 2018 by the then Secretary General Mr Maurice Quinn.⁴¹ This criticism was levied in hand with allegations that the Defence Sector in Ireland was simultaneously experiencing a retention crisis.⁴² The Department of Defence has also received political criticism for its procurement priorities.⁴³ The former head of the HSE even expressed during the government’s response to the Covid-19 emergency that the HSE should be able to liaise directly with the Defence Forces for assistance as opposed to through the Department of Defence.⁴⁴ With such levels of criticism for the Department of Defence’s levels of involvement in military affairs, and in lieu of any outstanding arguments in favour of such levels of involvement, the suitability of this model going forward may be questionable.

Governance in Other EU Countries

There are some notable differences and similarities in other EU states who identify themselves as neutral or non-aligned militarily. Generally speaking, the international norm appears to centre on command of the entire military being vested in a military officer or officers, who are then directly under the command of government. This differs greatly from Ireland’s model of command being directly from the Minister for Defence to military formations, circumventing the Defence Forces’ general staff in the process.

Austria

In Austria’s case, the Federal Ministry of Defence is a mixed entity with military officer’s present across its branches. Defence in general is under civilian command via the Minister for Defence. Austria also has a Council of Defence type establishment known as the Minister’s

35 Dr Juliet McMahon et al., *Workplace Climate in the Defence Forces Phase 2: Results of the Focus Group Research, Commissioned Climate Survey*, (Limerick: Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, 2017), p. 112.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 110 – 112.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 111.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 174

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

41 Comptroller and Auditor General, *Appropriation Accounts 2018 – Department of Defence* (Dublin: Office of Comptroller and Auditor General, 2018), p. 795.

42 Dáil Éireann, Jack Chambers TD, Dáil Debate – Defence Forces Personnel 972, no. 8 (3 October 2018).

43 Dr Cathal Berry TD, Twitter Post, 11 March 2020, 2:46pm <https://twitter.com/berrycathal/status/1237751848746004482?s=21>, accessed 1 July 2020.

44 Tony O’Brien, RTÉ Radio 1, “the Defence Forces are helping out [...], one of the things the Government can do is shorten the chains of command [...]. In a time like this we don’t need the Defence Forces having to ask the Department of Defence [...]. Once the Defence Forces are part of this effort the chain of command needs to be much closer to the ground, directly from the HSE to the Defence Forces.” 15 March 2020, <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radioplayer/html5/#/radio/1/21733860>, accessed 1 August 2020.

Cabinet, which is headed by the minister, and whose Chief of Staff is a military officer. The rest of the ministry is split into sections. Section 1 is led by a civilian and has responsibility over administration, legal affairs, and personnel issues.⁴⁵ Sections 2, 3 and 4 are under the control of the General Staff who also hold command over the military itself.⁴⁶ They deal with Planning, Logistics, and Operations respectively.⁴⁷

Finland

Similar structures exist in Finland where the government department responsible for Defence primarily exists as a link between government and the military. In Finland direct operational command of the whole Finnish Defence Forces is in the hands of Chief of Staff and his General Staff⁴⁸, with administrative affairs being the concern of the Department of Defence.⁴⁹ The department is headed by a Permanent Secretary. The various departments and units within the Finnish Department of Defence, outside of the command structure of the Chief of Staff, are cross-staffed by military officers, civil servants, and ex-military personnel.⁵⁰

Sweden

Sweden maintains a similar system where the Department of Defence has primacy over administrative affairs, with the Swedish Armed Forces itself commanded by a military officer.⁵¹ In Sweden's case, the department is headed by the Minister for Defence, with a civilian non-political Director-General for Administrative and Legal Affairs.⁵² Unlike Ireland, the Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces is a military officer, who's deputy is in turn a civil servant.⁵³

Malta

In Malta, due to its size, there is no Department of Defence. Instead, defence affairs are overseen by the Directorate of Defence Matters. It is a part of the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Security, and Law Enforcement, and is headed by a civil servant. The directorate is responsible for policy advice, monitoring the implementation of cabinet decisions, liaison with other departments, and developing policy initiatives.⁵⁴ The Malta Armed Forces Act 1970 names the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces as the President, who like in Ireland's case, delegates command to the government. After government level however, military command of the armed forces is vested directly in an army officer.⁵⁵

45 Federal Ministry of Defence, The Central Office of the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMLV) (Vienna: February 20, 2020), pp. 10-21

46 *Ibid.*, p. 22-43

47 *Ibid.*, p. 43-47

48 Finnish Defence Forces, "Commander of the Finnish Armed Forces," <https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/about-us/commander-of-the-finnish-defence-forces>, accessed 28 July 2020.

49 Finnish Ministry of Defence, "Ministry of Defence in Brief," https://www.defmin.fi/en/overview/ministry_of_defence#cbfad27d, accessed 31 July 2020.

50 Finnish Ministry of Defence, "Departments and Units," https://www.defmin.fi/en/overview/ministry_of_defence/departments_and_units#cbfad27d, accessed 31 July 2020.

51 Government Offices of Sweden, "Organisation – Ministry of Defence," <https://www.government.se/government-of-sweden/ministry-of-defence/organisation/>, accessed 31 July 2020.

52 *Ibid.*

53 The Swedish Armed Forces, "The Supreme Commander," <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/about/organisation/supreme-commander/>, accessed 28 July 2020.

54 Home Affairs, "Defence Matters Directorate," <https://homeaffairs.gov.mt/en/MHAS-Departments/Defence%20Matters%20Directorate/Pages/Defence-Matters-Directorate.aspx>, accessed 28 July 2020.

55 Malta Armed Forces Act, 1970. Part II, Section 4.

Employment Ratios

Civilian employment figures from Finland and Sweden are available and highlight a very different approach to governance of the military compared to Ireland. The Finnish Department of Defence has about 130 members of staff, 20 of whom have a military background.⁵⁶ Finland has over 33,000 full time members of its Defence Forces.⁵⁷ This gives Finland's Department of Defence an employment ratio of one civil servant for every 254 full time soldiers. Sweden maintains a military of 22,700 full time personnel,⁵⁸ and Sweden's Ministry of Defence employs roughly 140 civil servants.⁵⁹ This gives Sweden a ratio of one civil servant for every 162 full time soldiers.

In comparison, if Ireland's 354 civil servants employed in the Department of Defence are to be compared to our establishment figure of 9,500 professional soldiers, the ratio would be roughly one civil servant for every 26 professional soldiers. Using the most recently released figures for Irish Defence Forces manning levels of 8,434 professional soldiers,⁶⁰ the real employment ratio is one civil servant for every 23 soldiers.

Conclusion

It is evident that Ireland's management of its Defence Forces is effected by a unique approach, and aspects of this model are coming under increased criticism. This is the product of the uncertainty of the early days of independent Ireland and is demonstrably civilian focused. Ireland is facing into a new decade with new global defence and security considerations. The modern approach to military governance in similar countries is less complex than Ireland's model. Comparable countries seem to maintain the highly important civilian command of the military in a democratically elected government, with command from a minister delegated straight to a single military commander, or Chief of Defence.

Generally speaking, the role of the Civil Service in this more prevalent approach is one of administration, legal assistance and some oversight, and not in direct management. This approach also appears to feature a large degree of military involvement in the civilian department or ministry itself, as opposed to Ireland's approach of purely separate branches with differing interests. If any review body or commission recommend that Ireland should move away from its civilian focused governance model and move towards a more contemporary and trusting approach, the legislative provisions of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924, the Defence Act 1954, the Public Services Management Act 1997, and their relative amendments will need to be considered.

If changes to financial control of the Defence Forces are being examined, further consideration will have to be given to the provisions of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act, 1993. Ireland may be ready for a change to its defence governance structures, and may be ready to trust its military with its own full command again. But if governance of the military is to

56 LinkedIn, "Ministry of Defence of Finland – LinkedIn Page," <https://www.linkedin.com/company/finnish-ministry-of-defence/>, accessed 31 July 2020.

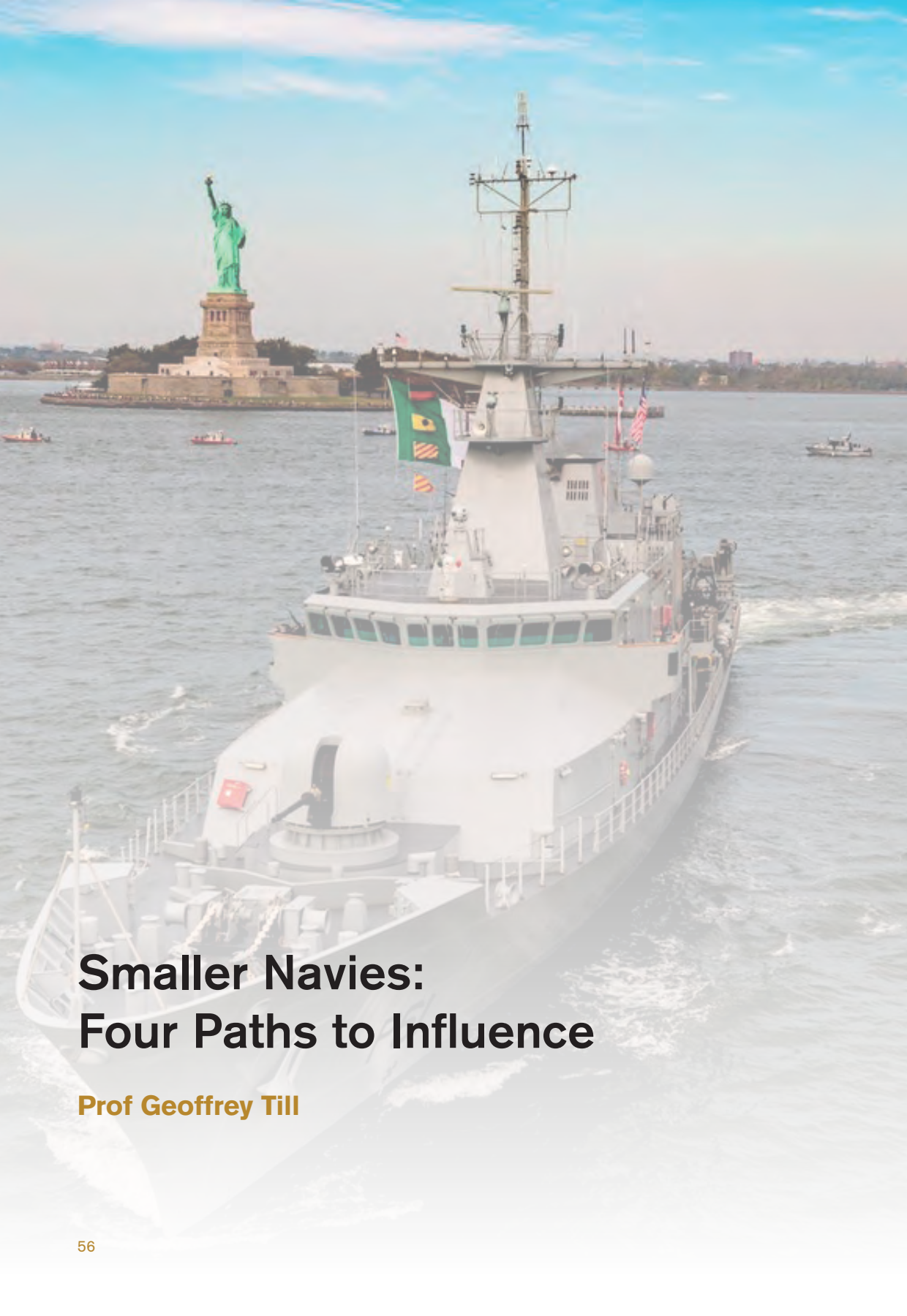
57 Puolustusvoimat, "Global Exchange of Military Information, Annual Exchange of Information, Republic of Finland," <https://puolustusvoimat.fi/documents/1948673/2015391/GEMFI19.pdf/58adac71-a33d-5911-801f-916868dfba1d/GEMFI19.pdf>, accessed 28 July 2020.

58 Swedish Armed Forces, "Personalsiffor," archived version, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150325222140/http://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/information-och-fakta/forsvarsmakten-i-siffor/>, accessed 28 July 2020.

59 Government Offices of Sweden, "Organisation – Ministry of Defence," <https://www.government.se/government-of-sweden/ministry-of-defence/organisation/>, accessed 31 July 2020.

60 Sean O'Riordan, "Air Corps and Navy Short Nearly One Fifth of the Personnel They Require," Irish Examiner, 3 August 2020, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-40026104.html>, accessed 8 August 2020.

be brought in line with the international norm of a military chain of command going all the way to the government, then multiple amendments to legislation will be required. The alternative is to continue into an uncertain global security environment with a largely criticised paradigm of governance that is far outside of standard international practice.



Smaller Navies: Four Paths to Influence

Prof Geoffrey Till

Introduction

The role and development of smaller navies gets little coverage in naval literature which these days tends to focus on those of great powers like the United States, China, Russia and (maybe) India, together with some of their more important medium navies in Europe and Asia. What these navies do clearly affects us all, helping shape our collective futures. It's easy to slide from this into the view that the others, the world's smaller navies are of little account, they matter little and, in some ways, deserve their anonymity.

This, however, is untrue. Smaller navies do matter, maybe more than ever before. Establishing this requires first an attempt to define the characteristics and the problems confronting the smaller navy and then a review of four pathways to influence, or means, by which they can and do significantly affect the naval and international scene. Those four pathways are to make innovative use of new technology, to establish their own domestic worth, to fill the increasing gaps left by the larger navies and finally to ally with them and each other in intelligent ways. By so doing they underline their own significance.

Challenges in Common

The first problem, though is to define what we mean by a “smaller navy.” Their diversity makes this extremely difficult; there is no “typical” smaller navy, Irish or otherwise, and so to generalise we have to range widely through the many examples the world provides. But, very generally, smaller navies have fewer people, less numerous fleets, often smaller vessels and a more limited range of strategic options than their larger equivalents. Another thing that smaller navies have in common, despite their very differing situations, is that they nearly always feel that they need to be bigger in order to cope with the opportunities and the problems they face. This is true of most “bigger navies” too, of course, but this apparently iron law of naval development is particularly applicable to their smaller equivalents because their experience shows them to be much more vulnerable to challenges such as the consequences of the relentless march of new technology. Already, for example, this means that Sweden's famously futuristic *Visby* corvettes from 2000 are already approaching the need for a late/mid life upgrade, and thoughts are turning to their replacement. Smaller navies also face greatly reduced economies of scale. Their lack of critical mass in ships and people leaves them with reduced margins for error and room to manoeuvre. Limited numbers of platforms mean that each is likely to be more expensive than if they were one of a larger batch, and the second iron law of naval development, the need for expensive maintenance and refit makes their operational availability when needed potentially unreliable. Malaysia's experience with its two Scorpene diesel submarines illustrates both these problems while the accidental burning out of the same navy's single Newport class LST in 2009, effectively took out the whole of its amphibious capability for a while. Since this unavoidable vulnerability constitutes a major source of uncertainty for naval planners, a smaller navy's inability to provide *reliable* future capabilities may therefore lead to diminished ambition and even to scepticism that such money as is spent on it actually represents good value for money.

The same considerations may also apply to a smaller navy's people. Providing the necessary infrastructure for training and professional military education (PME) may seem cost-ineffective given the likely throughput and this can lead to excessive dependence on foreign assistance – something that can complicate overall cradle-to-grave PME systems. The result may be too few

specialists in less obvious disciplines such as intelligence, logistics, fleet designers, planners and strategists, and, indeed one study shows the latter to have been true even of the bigger “smaller navies.”¹ Smaller navies also tend to have less assured and expert access to the latest thing in technology and to the manufacturers who produce it. But one other, more hopeful thing smaller navies have in common is the ability to choose how to respond to the challenges they face. The same four pathways to influence mentioned earlier are available to them all.

So, How to Respond?

Against this potentially depressing review of some of the challenges faced by smaller navies it is easy to see how smallness might be equated with 'of no account' and their countries consigned to those victims of history who, as Thucydides concluded, can only do what they must while the greater brethren do what they wish. Although that can indeed be their fate, as perhaps exemplified by some of the less effective, smaller navies of Africa, it does not need to be. Much depends on the aspirations as well as the resources of their governments. For those content to stand on the sidelines while the players on the field decide the rules of the game and essentially determine outcomes for them and everyone else, doing the bare minimum, and perhaps not even that, remains an option. It is, moreover, a response that has the inestimable advantage of cheapness! But in the majority of cases, governments prefer to have a say in their own destiny and for this influence over the behaviour of others is required. As mentioned earlier, there are at least four inter-related paths to influence open to the smaller navy, in preparing for what is manifestly an uncertain and potentially dangerous future.

Exploiting New Technology

The first is not just to manage the costs and risks associated with new technology but to seek to exploit the opportunities it provides as well. These, when allied to new and possibly asymmetric operational concepts, may help narrow the gap between the great and the small, in rather the same way as this approach has allowed the Houthi rebels in the Yemen to exercise strategic effect through their use of missile strikes against land and sea targets.² In such cases, the aim might not be to 'win' but at least helpfully to affect the strategic calculus of much stronger powers through the prospect of either a threat to some of their valued assets, or to their diplomatic reputation. In 1981, an unexpected dispute with India over South Talpatty persuaded Bangladesh, despite its extreme resource limitations, to expand its naval horizons beyond a limited and passive law enforcement role to a significantly more active defence of its maritime interests and is a good example of this, not least in its long and ultimately successful search for a submarine capability.³ Such small diesel coastal submarines are often regarded as the sea-denial weapon of choice for smaller navies as demonstrated especially by Vietnam, but also Malaysia and Indonesia. When their deterrent effect is also backed up by shore-based anti-ship missiles, which can only be neutralised by pre-emptive strikes against the mainland the result has to be taken seriously by the strongest navy. The “distributed lethality” demonstrated by the Russian Navy's successful employment of Kalibr land attack missiles mounted on corvettes in the Syrian campaign and

1 Donal M. Schurman, “Historical Strategy and its Uses in Large and Small Navies,” in W.A.B. Douglas (Ed.) *RCN in Transition* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), pp. 54-60.

2 Jeremy Binnie, “Yemeni Rebels Claim to Have Hit Naval Ship,” and “Saudi Large Crude Tankers Diverted Away from Red Sea,” in *Jane's Defence Weekly* 15 June and 18 August 2018, respectively.

3 Guy Toremans, “A Three-Dimensional Force Evolving to Match National Aspirations,” interview with Rear Admiral Mohammad Musa, *Warship IFR*, March 2020, pp. 21-23.

their decision to mount such missiles on their latest icebreaker suggests that naval technology may be moving in the right direction for this approach. Alternatively, the Danish Navy's decision to move into the particularly demanding field of area air defence⁴ shows that smaller navies can make use of new technology to develop serious capabilities that contribute to deterrence but is also of value to allies and partners and so likely to earn the respect of both friends and adversaries.

But even if technology is not moving in directions especially helpful to smaller navies, experience suggests that distributed lethality can come in operational rather than technological form through the swarming tactics of a myriad of small boats that characterised the Tamil 'Sea Tigers' in Sri Lanka's long and bitter civil war, and more recently by the anti-carrier, anti-surface ships exercises of the Iranian Republican Guard Navy.⁵ But either way, for this to work, there needs to be sufficient investment in associated Research and Development, and a realistic sense of the achievable on the part of the navy's leaders and the government. The controversy over Brunei's pursuit of more capable OPVs than its navy could handle and the tragic outcome of Argentina's reliance for deterrent effect on old systems impossible to maintain cost-effectively demonstrate some of the pitfalls to be avoided when attempting to follow this path.⁶ It is particularly important to note, though, that thanks to additive manufacturing and 3D printing much transformative technology (such as drones and other unmanned means of surveillance and strike) are commercially available and if imaginatively deployed surprisingly cheap, especially when compared to the costs of defending against them.

The advantages for smaller navies of access to enabling technology is not of course restricted merely to the kinetic side of their activity. The availability of autonomous vehicles multiplies the effectiveness of small fleets of small ships in developing maritime domain awareness ("the engine room for national and regional maritime security governance"⁷) for example, while the ability of new techniques in machine learning and Artificial Intelligence makes greatly enhanced sense of the data they supply. Such perhaps transformational technologies may well greatly enhance the effectiveness of smaller but smart navies, in comparison with larger less enlightened ones and of course when compared to the operational challenges they face.

Demonstrating Domestic Value

The second path to influence for smaller navies is indirect and more aimed at the domestic audience of government and attentive public. The operational target is not opposing countries but the malign effects of maritime crime and insurgency in its many forms primarily on the national economy, and for archipelagic nations in particular, on their sovereign integrity as well. Many states of South America face critical challenges of this sort in the exploitation of their rivers and estuaries by terrorists and drugs smugglers. By contributing to their defeat, and in many cases by assuring access to remote and relatively under-developed parts of their country, smaller navies defend the national economy. Because the effects of domestic instability, say

4 Captain Edward Lundqvist, USN (Ret.), "Royal Danish Navy Becoming a Missile Defence Force by Design," in *Tidskrift / Sjovasendet*, N3, 2020.

5 Jayanath Colombage, *Asymmetric Warfare at Sea: the case of Sri Lanka* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2015);

Dave Majumdar, "Navy Nightmare: Could Iran Sink a U.S. Aircraft Carrier?" *The National Interest*, 26 December 2018.

6 Dilara Hamit, "Argentine Commission Reveals Cause of Submarine Wreck: ARA San Juan with 44 Crew Members Sank in 2017 after Water Got into Battery Tank Through Ventilations System, Causing Fire," *Anadolu Agency*, 19 July 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/argentine-commission-reveals-cause-of-submarine-wreck/1535890>.

7 Christian Bueger and Jane Chan (Eds.), *Paving the Way for Regional Maritime Domain Awareness*. (Singapore: RSIS, 2019), p. 4.ula, 19 July 2019.

in the form of a burgeoning illicit trade in drugs and/or people, can and usually does, spill over into neighbouring countries, regional and even global stability can suffer. In all these cases, maintaining national peace and prosperity through the prevention of crime, the defeat of insurgency and the protection of a sustainable exploitation of maritime resources justifies significant investment in forces focused on Maritime Security.

Success sustains national and probably regional stability but makes much else possible as well. It can generate greater governmental revenue some of which can be recycled into further investment in coastguard and naval capability.⁸ Much of the experience and even the specialist technology required is “exportable” and so prove of value to both the producer and foreign consumer. Uruguayan expertise for example led to that country taking a leading role in the UN peacekeeping effort on the rivers of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁹ Finally, since many, perhaps most, of the challenges faced in Maritime Security cannot be resolved purely on a national basis, developed expertise at that local level can be, and indeed needs to be, plugged into wider international efforts. Thus, many smaller navies, such as Colombia and Sweden have long sought to develop expertise and operational skills in the Antarctic and Arctic regions respectively gaining recognition for their contribution to the collective understanding of the consequences of climate change. But this of course requires choice and investment, to provide in Sweden's case, a new research icebreaker to replace the thirty-year-old *Oden*. Such expertise, however, comes at a cost.

Filling Gaps

This takes us to the third path to influence open to smaller navies, one that is at least reinforced, if not generated, by the world's descent into a much more acute form of great power competition, in which we may already have moved from what Henry Kissinger called the “foothills of the next Cold War” into the actual thing.¹⁰ It seems likely that deteriorating relations between China, Russia and the United States, together with many of its allies and partners, will divert their attention away from multinational maritime security, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations either because they will invest in them proportionately less than they did, or because their involvement is objectionable to their adversaries. Smaller navies along with coastguards can help fill the dangerous gap that these great power preoccupations may leave - dangerous because these lower-level but substantial threats to the international order are not standing still but growing. As such smaller navies could become leaders amongst the defenders of a cooperative vision of the world's future at a time when great navies feel they have to concentrate their efforts upon competitive alternatives. Historical experience suggests that smaller nations are particularly vulnerable when the great powers clash, and so have a special interest in the defence of a rules-based order which makes such clashes less likely.

Theirs would be a naval version of the honest broker role played, say, by Norway in seeking to encourage dialogue between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This, though, is also something that would require investment since the joint and naval capabilities required for this kind of

⁸ It is worth making the obvious point that most great navies, started in this often-riverine way, as did, for instance, today's Chinese and Russian navies.

⁹ Interviews and correspondence with Captain Daniel Martinez, Uruguayan Navy, 2011-3.

¹⁰ Frederick Kempe, *The Cold War Between U.S. And China Just Got A Lot Hotter*, CNBC, 18 July 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/18/op-ed-the-cold-war-between-us-and-china-just-got-a-lot-hotter.html>.

peacekeeping leadership are rather different from those of coastal and homeland defence which could well be a smaller navy's core tasks. Norway, for example is also one of a group of small countries, which includes Belgium, Denmark, Portugal and Sweden in the MINUSMA project in Mali and decided to run a camp that will ensure the permanent availability of a supporting C-130 aircraft. Norway initiated a series of bilateral arrangements with these partners "...so that they can operate together as a multinational unit cycling in and out of the mission, which provided us with predictability of that important asset."¹¹ These "Multinational Rotation Contributions" are based on a high level of interoperability deriving from the contributors' familiarity with each other; they increase the professionalism of the involved forces while serving an important peacekeeping role. This helps reconcile the differences between their core tasks and these wider discretionary ones. The Norwegian MOD's then Director of Operations made the essential point:

"We structure our armed forces mainly to participate in the collective defence of our home country and NATO territories," he said, "whereas international operations very often ask for different capacities or capabilities that we don't necessarily offer. That in itself forces us to be smart; it forces us to be creative, and it forces us to look towards allies in other small countries, in terms of how we can co-operate and put something together that is relevant for international operations."¹²

The Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) system, under which Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand cooperate to manage the problem of piracy and sea-robbery in the confined waters off Southeast Asia is a more maritime example of the same kind of thing. In some ways it is less ambitious than the Mali operation since it is based on co-ordinated national action rather than an combined and integrated one, although there are moves in this direction certainly since the launch of the multinational 'Information Fusion Centre' set up in 2009.¹³ Moreover, the MSP is a particularly interesting example of the genre since it was explicitly set up, not just in consequence of the emergence of piracy as a strategic problem, but also because of a perceived need to head off the prospect of great power engagement in its resolution. The locals felt that the involvement of the United States, India or China was undesirable because of the strategic baggage they would bring with them, whether they wished to or not. The more recent trilateral agreements between Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines to come together to grapple with the worsening situation in the Sulu sea is another example of smaller navies cooperating to head off the possibility of a local problem escalating into a threat to regional stability.

Allying with Others

The principle of cooperation with others also, however, underpins the fourth path to influence for smaller navies, namely that of associating with others of their ilk and with great powers too, in the cause of collective defence against perceived threats. NATO is the most obvious example of this. Adherence to a large and powerful military alliance of this sort has seemed to be an excellent bargain for the leaders of Europe's smaller countries, for it provides much more than physical defence at a cost they can afford. It becomes a means through which the professional standards of their navies are enhanced through regular and ambitious exercises, participation

¹¹ Adam Smith, Team Leader of the UN's force generation and capability planning cell, quoted in Gerard Cowan, "Punching Above their Weight," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 2 August 2017, p. 24.

¹² Runar Kvamme, quoted in Cowan, "Punching Above their Weight," op cit, p. 26.

¹³ Bueger and Chan, *Paving the Way for Regional Maritime Domain Awareness*, op cit.

in multinational planning, staff exchanges and other forms of cooperation. It helps shape the behaviour of others since the weaker brethren have the same voting and veto rights as anyone else. "This gives them a kind of influence and leverage. They have the ability to be heard, to be listened to, and to be players, in a way that didn't exist in the 19th Century."¹⁴

These perceived advantages also explain the flight, when they could, of the smaller countries of Eastern Europe to NATO from the Warsaw Pact, an opposing collective security organisation which manifestly did not provide equivalent benefits. Clearly, much depends on the nature and purpose of such organisations, and one task for the smaller nations involved in them is to do what they can to ensure that the organisation develops in a way that serves their interests. The cautious diplomatic dialogue that is part and parcel of this process helps explain the slow, even glacial, progress of other organisations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Organisation of American States (OAS). When these negotiations relate to maritime matters (which they all do to varying extent) and when the delicate issue of the relationship of the strong with the weak is in question, the possession of effective and professional maritime (naval or coastguard) forces is a clear path to influence.

Conclusion

Reference was made at the beginning of this article to the enormous diversity of the world's smaller navies, but whichever combination of paths they choose, or are forced upon them, they have at least three more things in common. Firstly, they all face the same uncertain future and its dangers. Secondly, the wide variety of the challenges they have to deal with underlines the point that their maritime aspects usually need to be seen as but part of larger considerations and so require a seamless "whole-of-government" if not "whole-of-nation" approach to their resolution. Nowadays, the desirability of this is almost a truism, but there is a world of difference in the extent to which it is put into practical effect, and the overall shortage of resources available to smaller countries with smaller navies makes it imperative that they make the most of what they've got. This helps explain why so many of them are engaged in campaigns to increase the coherence of their machinery for maritime governance.¹⁵ Finally, since the future for all of them is both complex and uncertain, they increasingly need smart people capable of "leading-edge thinking." For all navies, but perhaps above all for the smaller ones, the human element is all-important. Accordingly, coping with the problems they face in delivering smart people through their systems of training and professional military education, which were addressed earlier, is perhaps the highest imperative of all, in a smaller navy's capacity to grow its maritime power and influence.

While, given their enormous diversity, it is hard to generalise about the nature and composition of 'smaller navies,' one thing that one can say with some confidence is that they still matter. Perhaps this is especially true in an age of widened concepts of security that reflect all-embracing global issues such as climate change, pandemics and rising great power competition.

¹⁴ Dr Jamie Shea, deputy assistant secretary general for emerging security challenges in NATO, quoted in Cowan, "Punching Above their Weight," *op cit*, p. 21.

¹⁵ Indonesia is engaged in a particularly interesting and significant campaign of this sort. See Octavian, Amurulla, *Indonesian Navy, Global Maritime Fulcrum and ASEAN*, (Jakarta: SESKOAL Press, 2019), pp 64-87 and Dr Evan Laksmana, CSIS Jakarta, "No Time for Maritime," Podcast interview, *Indonesiaindepth*, 29 March 2020 at <http://hyperurl.co/notimeformaritime>; Evan A. Laksmana, "Here's why Jakarta Doesn't Push Back When China Barges into Indonesian Waters," Monkey Cage Blog, *Washington Post*, 28 March 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/28/heres-why-jakarta-doesnt-push-back-when-china-barges-into-indonesian-waters/>.

Analysing the problems they face in coping with this new and challenging world, and the contributions they make, illuminates both the range of the roles and the nature of the 'smaller navy' and also the leading aspects of the strategic context against which their contribution needs to be assessed.



Highway 10: Cocaine's Silk Route to Europe

Cdr Cathal Power and Michael O'Sullivan

Context

On the evening of 31 January 2019, the Panamanian registered cargo ship MV Eser entered the port of Praia in Cape Verde with the grisly task of offloading a crew member who had died unexpectedly. Unbeknownst to the remaining crew however, the multinational staff of the Maritime Analysis Operations Centre – Narcotics, MAOC(N), had been coordinating an international surveillance operation, culminating with Cape Verdean authorities boarding and locating 9.5 tonnes of cocaine onboard. The ship's crew, eleven Russian nationals, were all detained for what is now considered the largest single seizure of cocaine ever coordinated by MAOC(N) since its establishment in 2007.¹ This seizure was so large that law enforcement sources are confident that it was supplying multiple markets in Europe, including Ireland.²

The transatlantic drug trade is a real and current threat to Irish society, and a key method of countering this trade is through enforcement at sea. This article presents a case for greater Irish involvement at an international level through operations with MAOC(N) to counter this threat, thereby directly contributing to a safer and more secure Irish society. By considering the international naval response to drug trafficking and the maritime security implications of the current situation at a regional level, it is submitted that a substantial argument exists for the deployment of Irish assets to Cape Verde to assist MAOC(N) in this international fight against the illicit drug trade.

The oceans are the last great global commons, amounting to two and a half times the land surface of the planet.³ Transnational criminal networks are increasingly capitalizing on this freedom, which poses significant challenges to coastal States.⁴ From a trafficking perspective, these transnational criminal networks are exploiting the soft underbelly of access into Europe, that is, the west coast of Africa.

While the predominant trade in heroin originates from Afghanistan, the world's supply chain of cocaine begins in the northern latitudes of South America and production is on the rise; during the last two decades, the global manufacture of cocaine has more than doubled.⁵ It is estimated that 90 to 110 tonnes, worth €4.5Bn - €7Bn profit, is shipped illegally to Europe every year, the equivalent turnover of one of Ireland's most successful business models, Ryanair.⁶

The trafficking of cocaine from South America across the Atlantic into Europe, often via West Africa, has also grown exponentially. The EU Strategy for the Gulf of Guinea (and West Africa by default) has highlighted that the trafficking of drugs over the past two decades, particularly cocaine, has severely weakened several countries in West Africa, further exasperating the problems of the continent and the consequential spill over into Europe.⁷ It is reported that between 2015

1 Colin Freeman, "Cocaine Highway: On the Front Line of Europe's Drug War," *The Telegraph*, 3 November 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/drug-trafficking-in-cape-verde/>, accessed 25 May 2020.

2 Conor Gallagher, "Large Portion of €1bn Cape Verde Cocaine Seizure 'Destined for Ireland,'" *The Irish Times*, 3 February 2019, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/large-portion-of-1bn-cape-verde-cocaine-seizure-destined-for-ireland-1.3780663>, accessed 6 August 2020.

3 Martin N. Murphy, *Small Boats, Weak States, Dirty Money* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2009); Patrick Love, *Fisheries: While Stocks Last?* (Paris: OECD, 2010).

4 Ben Lombardi, *The Future Maritime Operating Environment and the Role of Naval Power* (Ottawa, ON: Defence Research & Development Canada, 2016).

5 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *World Drug Report 2019* (Vienna: UN, 2019).

6 European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) "Cocaine Trafficking to Europe," https://www.emcdda.europa.eu/cocaine-trafficking-europe_en, accessed 25 May 2020; *The Irish Times*, "Top 1000: Our Guide to Irish Business," <http://www.top1000.ie/companies>.

7 Council of Europe, *EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea*, 17 March 2014, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/28734/141582.pdf>.

and 2017, cocaine production significantly increased in Colombia,⁸ and coordinated seizures in the North Atlantic doubled from 2018 to 2019, with an estimated two billion euros of cocaine seized at sea by MAOC(N) countries in 2019.⁹ The expansion of the global drug market over the past two decades has been matched with an overall decrease in purity-adjusted prices, reaffirming the suspected expansion of the market.¹⁰

The volume of illicit drugs required to meet European demands means the presence of multiple modes of access to keep the supply chain to Europe fed, all of which means crossing the Atlantic. The Maritime Analysis Operations Centre (Narcotics), MAOC(N), established in 2007, acts as an EU law enforcement unit with military support that coordinates maritime and aviation intelligence, resources, and personnel in order to respond to the threat posed by illicit drug trafficking by maritime and air.¹¹ The creation of MAOC(N) allowed the formation of a small but highly effective operations centre in Lisbon, manned by personnel from all contributing nations. This facilitates the sharing of operational information and intelligence, avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring effective use of maritime forces in the interdiction of illicit drugs in the North Atlantic. The seizure of 9.5 tonnes of cocaine on MV Eser as previously described, followed on from another MAOC(N) coordinated seizure of 2.5 tonnes of cocaine on MV Sea Scan 1 by Portuguese authorities in the North Atlantic on 30 Jan 2019, also bound for Europe. These seizures are indicative of the routes being used, in particular 'Highway 10', a densely travelled route along latitude 10° North, from the Caribbean to Cape Verde and West Africa; a key route for trafficking to Europe.¹² This is corroborated by AMERIPOL:

“South American drug cartels have turned the West African coast, including Cape Verde into a strategic ally for their purposes: distribution of cocaine in Europe, that is to say, criminal organisations will always make use of the weaker countries to build their criminal structure and West Africa is obviously a place of interest.”¹³

Maritime Security & the Naval Response to Drug Trafficking

Why should navies be interested in the trafficking of narcotics? Is this not the core business of other enforcement agencies, rather than navies? The key issue here is that navies are pivotal to the maintenance of maritime security. The term 'maritime security' encapsulates the non-military dimension of security at sea, such as counter terrorism, counter-piracy and counter trafficking operations.¹⁴ It has even been suggested that the military interest in maritime security is a new-found phenomenon, a means for navies to remain relevant in a post-Cold War era where the threat of state-on-state aggression at sea has diminished.¹⁵ However, Trelawny posits:

8 Europol, *EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA): Crime in the Age of Technology*, 28 February 2017, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/european-union-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2017>.

9 Maritime Analysis Operations Centre (Narcotics), "Statistics," <https://maoc.eu/statistics/>, accessed 8 August 2020.

10 UNODC, *World Drug Report 2020* (Vienna: UN, 2020).

11 MAOC(N), n.d. "Maritime Analysis Operations Centre (Narcotics) – Who Are We," <https://maoc.eu/who-we-are/>, accessed 6 August 2020.

12 Freeman, "Cocaine Highway," Antonio L. Mazzitelli, *The New Transatlantic Bonanza: Cocaine on Highway 10* (Miami: Western Hemisphere Security Analysis Centre, Florida International University, 2011).

13 Ameripol, *Situational Analysis of Drug Trafficking - A Police Point of View* (Bogota: Ameripol Executive Secretariat, 2013).

14 Basil Germond, *The Maritime Dimension of European Security* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015).

15 Ian Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2014), p.151.

“It is important to take a strategic long-term view and to interpret the enhancement of maritime security as a building block for greater stability on land, making fullest use of navies as diplomatic asset within a comprehensive strategy.”¹⁶

Considering the vastness of the North Atlantic, over 16 million square miles,¹⁷ would the efforts of partner nations be better placed once potential traffickers land shipments ashore? The key issue with such a course of action is the considerable chance of such shipments being landed, subdivided and dispersed before law enforcement agencies can intercept. It has been reiterated that the use of navies and enforcement agencies upstream can be more efficient, due to volume that be interdicted prior to making it to market.¹⁸ The Deputy Director of JIATF-South stated that “targeting large shipments at sea offers a more time-effective and resource effective approach.”¹⁹

Proof of this resource effectivity appears in the EU Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment, which describes an international multiagency operation at multiple airports, coined ‘Operation Fuleco.’ Over two months and in twelve countries with hundreds of enforcement personnel, this operation resulted in the combined seizure of 500 kilos of cocaine.²⁰ In comparison, a recent MAOC(N) coordinated seizure at sea by Spanish authorities in August 2020 was 1.2 tonnes of cocaine onboard a single yacht.²¹ This ability to seize larger shipments upstream, prior to offloading (and dispersion) proves to be a highly effective use of enforcement resources.

Current Situation

In April 2020, the US Government decided to enhance the number of air and maritime assets available to US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), doubling its capacity to conduct counter narcotic operations.²² This is part of an ongoing multinational effort commenced in 2012 on either side of the Central American isthmus, Campaign Martillo, to counter drug trafficking from South America.²³ Joint Inter-Agency Task Force South (JIATF-S) coordinates this multinational effort, with the mainstay of assets coming from the United States.²⁴

The surge in asset availability since April 2020 has resulted in an increase in drug interdictions at sea this year by USN and USCG assets. JIATF-S has seen the “maritime domain becoming increasingly important to traffickers [...] noting the growth in maritime traffic versus air traffic.”²⁵ The efforts of JIATF-S have also seen the traffickers become more resourceful, by adapting and improving their transportation methods. Chief amongst these developments have been advances in self-propelled semi submersibles (SPSS), commonly referred to as ‘narco-sub’.²⁶ This adaptation to avoid the efforts of Campaign Martillo has seen a dramatic growth in the number of narco-sub incidents from 2017 (16) to 2018 (35) and 2019 (39). When it comes to drug trafficking, the *modus*

16 Chris Trelawny, “Maritime Security Beyond Military Operations - A Civilian Perspective,” *Royal United Services Institute Journal* 48, no. 52 (2013), pp. 48-52.

17 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “How Big is the Atlantic Ocean?” 25 June 2018, <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/atlantic.html>, accessed 6 August 2020.

18 Germond, *The Maritime Dimension of European Security*.

19 D. L. Willett, “Co-operate to Counter - Caribbean Counter Narcotics Operations,” *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 21 November 2018, pp. 22-29.

20 Europol, *EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA)*, p.37.

21 MAOC(N), “Spanish Authorities Seized 1200kg of Cocaine in a Sailing Vessel Heading to Galicia,” 24 August 2020, <https://maoc.eu/spanish-authorities-seized-1200kg-of-cocaine-in-a-sailing-vessel-heading-to-galicia/>, accessed 31 August 2020.

22 US Southern Command, *SOUTHCOM Enhanced Counter Narcotics Operations*. 1 April 2020, <https://www.southcom.mil/EnhancedCounterNarcoticsOps/>, accessed 6 August 2020.

23 US Southern Command, n.d., “Campaign Martillo.” <https://www.southcom.mil/Media/Special-Coverage/Operation-Martillo>, accessed 7 August 2020.

24 Joint Inter Agency Task Force South., n.d., “JIATF (South) - About Us,” <https://www.jiatfs.southcom.mil/About-Us/>, accessed 6 August 2020.

25 Willett, “Co-operate to Counter.”

26 M. Ince, “What Lies Beneath? Tackling Colombia's Narco Sub-threat,” *IHS Jane's Navy International*, January 2014, pp. 8-9.

operandi is maturing, equipment is being standardised and new points of departure are being discovered; particularly with an increase in the use of narco-submersibles from the east coast of South America. The upward trend of seizures of narco-submersibles on the east coast of South America since 2014 had implied that transatlantic destinations were planned for these vessels.²⁷ Proof of this prophecy came in 2019 with the interdiction of a narco-submersible, complete with 3,000 kilos of cocaine embarked, off the Galician coast by Spanish Authorities - and coordinated by MAOC(N).²⁸ While the US Coast Guard and Navy have significant experience dealing with the narco-submersible threat, its relatively new arrival in the North East Atlantic creates whole new challenges for EU navies and Law Enforcement Agencies that they are currently not structured to deal with.

MAOC(N) and its partner nations have seen an exponential increase in seizures over the past two to three years, with the Portuguese and Spanish authorities bearing the majority of these high profile events.²⁹ The key reason is that the three island chains in the North Atlantic (Azores, Canaries and Cape Verde) are the first potential landfalls of traffickers. As such, the Cape Verde island chain and West Africa are considered the weak link due to poor security and political instability. In his address to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the outgoing commander of Allied Joint Forces Command (Naples), Admiral James Foggo III, further reinforces that viewpoint, stating that Africa is a complex continent of great importance and population growth and is the “nexus of transnational crime and terrorism.”³⁰

In order to protect the EU's interests, the Union should be capable and willing to contribute directly to maritime governance or maritime capacity building.³¹ The EU is endeavouring to bring together the specialised capabilities of various enforcement agencies to ensure that it is best protected from such threats as drug smuggling. Considering that security cooperation (and capacity building) are increasingly important in the fight against trafficking and organised crime, the EU expects Member States to contribute their share to, what it considers, a European problem.³² Surely Ireland has a vested interest in the delivery of this shared European initiative?

Maritime Security Strategy

Germond posits that navies must secure the seas, but military means are not sufficient and the struggle against transnational criminality requires varied bodies and services to operate together.³³ In an Irish context, this valid point was acknowledged as far back as 1993, with the establishment of the Joint Task Force (JTF) on Drug Interdiction. The JTF is brought together when the agencies with primary responsibility in this area, An Garda Síochána (AGS) and Revenue, review intelligence received and consider that a joint operation should be mounted. The Naval Service (NS) is legally empowered under the Criminal Justice Act 1994 [as amended by the Criminal Justice (Illicit Traffic by Sea) Act 2003] to engage in drug interdiction operations³⁴.

27 H. I. Sutton, *Narco Submarines: Covert Shores Recognition Guide* (Wroclaw: Self Published, 2020).

28 Sam Jones, “Cocaine Seized from ‘Narco-Submarine’ in Spain was Likely Headed for UK,” *The Guardian*, 27 November 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/27/police-in-spain-find-three-tonnes-of-cocaine-in-narco-submarine>, accessed 7 August 2020.

29 Ruairi Kavanagh, “The Front Line: MAOC-N and the Battle to Combat the Narcotics ‘Avalanche,’” *South EU Summit*, 7 February 2019, <https://southeusummit.com/europe/portugal/the-front-line-maoc-n-and-the-battle-to-combat-the-narcotics-avalanche/>, accessed 7 August 2020.

30 International Institute for Strategic Studies, “One Decade, Two Continents: A Discussion with the Commander of US Naval Forces Europe-Africa,” 25 June 2020, <https://www.iiss.org/events/2020/06/discussion-commander-us-naval-forces-europe-africa>, accessed 6 August 2020.

31 Marcus Houben, “Maritime Security,” in Jochen Rehr (Ed.), *Handbook for Decision Makers - The Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union*, (Vienna: Armed Forces Printing Centre, Austria, 2014), pp. 166-169.

32 Council of the European Union, *European Pact to Combat International Drug Trafficking – Disrupting Cocaine and Heroin Routes*

(Luxembourg: Council of the European Union, 2010); Eva Magdalena Stambøl, “EU Initiatives along the ‘Cocaine Routes’ to Europe: Fighting Drug Trafficking and Terrorism by Proxy?” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27, no. 2 (2016), pp. 302-324.

33 Germond, *The Maritime Dimension of European Security*.

34 Government of Ireland, *White Paper on Defence* (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2015).

The NS brings the unique capabilities of a decisive maritime presence to bear, allowing this inter-agency approach to work, which is reflected in the motto of the JTF, “*Ní neart go cur le chéile*” – There is no strength without unity. At an operational inter-agency level in Ireland, the aim has been to provide the coherence and common purpose to achieve the task of keeping Ireland's citizens safe.

At present, Ireland does not have a Maritime Security Strategy. The establishment of the National Security Analysis Centre (NSAC) in 2019 can be viewed as an incredibly positive step towards the development of a National Security Strategy of which a Maritime Security Strategy must be an essential part. NSAC are currently leading the Government process to create a National Security Strategy.³⁵ While there is not a national maritime document, the EU has published a 2014 Maritime Security Strategy (MSS) with the aim of articulating the main strategic maritime interests of the EU; identify the threats, challenges, and risks to these maritime interests and to create coherence across the EU in maritime policies and strategies.³⁶ Within the EU MSS, Maritime Security is understood to be:

“The state of affairs of the global maritime domain, in which international and national law are enforced, freedom of navigation guaranteed and citizens, infrastructure, transport, and the environment and marine resources are protected.”³⁷

This captures succinctly the duties of EU countries to enforce, guarantee, and protect. The US Maritime Security Strategy, titled ‘A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower’ describes the tasks as ‘Protect, Enhance, Secure.’³⁸ This maritime strategy is the first time that the US Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard have joined to create a unified maritime strategy. The joint nature of this strategy emphasises importance of unity of effort between services at a strategic level, to ensure best use of national or international (e.g. EU) resources in combatting the various transnational maritime threats.

The themes reflected in this are in a similar vein to the EU MSS, highlighting the common nature of the problems encountered in the maritime domain. At an international level, the promulgation of maritime strategies ensure the prudent allocation and commitment of resources; there is now an imperative to ensure that Ireland creates and publishes a Maritime Security Strategy to ensure that the State's limited resources are put to best use.

Recommendation / Action

The transnational nature of the threat posed by drug trafficking on the high seas requires an internationally focussed and combined effort. The high seas, as previously stated, have been viewed as the last great Wild West (the global commons) by some, due to the potential limitations of international agreements such as UNCLOS or the Suppression of Unlawful Acts (SUA). However, intelligent use and application of the powers and rights of warships would ensure that the high seas should not be viewed as an area beyond regulation, but rather as a common

³⁵ Department of the Taoiseach, “Public Consultation on the Development of a National Security Strategy,” 5 December 2019, <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/8b3a62-public-consultation-on-the-development-of-a-national-security-strate/>, accessed 8 August 2020.

³⁶ Michael E. Smith, *Europe's Common Security and Defence Policy - Capacity Building, Experiential Learning and Institutional Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 241.

³⁷ Council of Europe, *EU Maritime Security Strategy* (Brussels: Council of Europe, 2014).

³⁸ US Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government, 2007).

resource and an area where the ideal of absolute freedom should only be restrained to safeguard the common good and prevent morally reprehensible and illegal acts.³⁹

To this end, MAOC(N) has coordinated the periodical support by partner nations to Cape Verde through capacity building and joint operational patrolling bolstering this perceived weak link in the Atlantic island chains.⁴⁰ Since 2010, the Belgian Navy has been involved in Maritime Capacity Building on an annual basis with West African navies and coastguards⁴¹. From 2018, the Belgian Navy has conducted such capacity building in close coordination with MAOC(N), for Cape Verde. Although Belgium is not a partner nation in MAOC(N), they appear to understand the benefit domestically of such capacity building with MAOC(N) in countries such as Cape Verde. Even while the US Government surge assets to Campaign Martillo, as recently as August 2020, they acknowledged the operational imperative to deploy a US Coast Guard Cutter, USCGC Bear (WMEC 901) to Cape Verde for a capacity building mission.⁴²

As a partner nation in MAOC(N) and a EU country cognisant of its responsibilities, Ireland now needs to step forward as the only MAOC(N) partner that has not yet committed to capacity building missions in Cape Verde.⁴³ Ireland needs to consider the merits of deploying assets to assist in capacity building and joint operational patrolling off Cape Verde; the removal of drugs upstream, in bulk, would have an immensely positive impact on European and Irish society. Ireland's recently published foreign policy strategy, 'The Global Island', wishes to focus, in particular, on building stability in Africa.⁴⁴ The Global Island strategy also considers the need to harness all instruments at the country's disposal, such as diplomatic, developmental, trade and security. Trelawny posits that countries underestimate the capabilities and attributes that a warship can bring to bear:

"Essentially it is worth remembering that, whereas an army is essentially a kinetic weapon system, navies are diplomatic tools of government with the ability to project power and influence globally."⁴⁵

The utility of warships under the aegis of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) should not be underestimated. A warship provides a multitude of attributes, ranging from its versatility, mobility, access potential, projection ability and endurance.⁴⁶

Such capacity building missions would also be in keeping with the Government's Strategy on Africa; to increase engagement with African Small Island Developing States, promote peace, and contribute to a more effective EU partnership in Africa.⁴⁷ The EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea focuses on four objectives, one of which is to build capacity in regional organisations to counter the threats from organised criminal networks.⁴⁸ MAOC(N) Capacity Building in Cape Verde further strengthens such goals, with Maritime Security cooperation and capacity building cited

39 Maria Gavouneli, *Functional Jurisdiction in the Law of the Sea* (Leiden / Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2007).

40 Royal Navy, "HMS Portland Works with Cape Verde Coast Guard," 18 February 2014, <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2014/february/18/140218-hms-portland-cape-verde-coast-guard>, accessed 7 August 2020.

41 <https://www.mil.be/nl/artikel/godetia-helpt-afrikaanse-marines-versterken> accessed 7 August 2020.

42 USGC Atlantic Area, 14 August 2020, <https://twitter.com/USCGLANTAREA/status/1294303361425182722?s=03> accessed 15 August 2020.

43 Under the aegis of the European Pact to Combat International Drug Trafficking (2010).

44 Government of Ireland, *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World* (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2015), p.71.

45 Trelawny, "Maritime Security Beyond Military Operations - A Civilian Perspective."

46 Ken Booth, *Law, Force and Diplomacy at Sea* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985).

47 Government of Ireland, *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, pp. 7, 8, 14.

48 Council of Europe, *EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea*.

as essential in the development and maintenance of alliances and leads to greater burden sharing across like-minded nations.⁴⁹

Now is the time for Ireland to join our European partner nations in a more overt, forward presence in the southern part of the North Atlantic. Partner nations can also bolster support through capacity building to developing nations such as Cape Verde, thereby aiming to interdict larger bulk shipments prior to cooperating and dispersing into smaller shipments, reducing the multiplicity of routes available to transnational organised crime networks. Such capacity building or forward presence could be delivered through short training missions and deployments over periods of four to eight weeks, at a time. This is in a similar manner to other navies operating in West, such as the US Navy Africa Partnership Station.⁵⁰

Ireland's problem with cocaine is continuing to grow, with the Health Research Board highlighting a 50% increase in treatment cases for cocaine from 2017 to 2018.⁵¹ To conclude, over the past twenty years the EU has transitioned from being a beneficiary of security to becoming a global security provider. The Defence Forces has contributed to this shift in strategic position through contribution to UN mandated CSDP missions, helping to improve the wider security climate for the EU.

Prior to the publication of the White Paper on Defence in 2015, there may have been a reluctance at a strategic and policy level to consider the Irish Navy as a Service that could contribute to overseas missions. However, the White Paper opened this door with the capability and utility of Irish warships in overseas missions reinforced by the missions in the South-Central Mediterranean, namely Operation Pontus and EU NAVFOR Operation Sophia. The limited resources of the Irish Navy married to the extensive maritime security commitments in and close to Irish waters have also been considered a potential barrier to such operations far from Irish shores. However, the direct benefits of such operations to Irish society should not be underestimated. As such, maybe it is now opportune for Ireland to contribute to enhancing the safe and secure environment that the EU is endeavouring to improve, by involving itself in capacity building missions in Cape Verde in close coordination with MAOC(N). Such operations could have a direct effect in stemming the flow of cocaine onto the streets of Ireland, thereby having a direct contribution to the well-being and safety of our citizens. Ireland's recent maritime humanitarian mission to the Mediterranean has shown the significant 'power to weight ratio' which can be delivered by Irish warships when deployed in the maritime security space. Involvement in this MAOC(N) mission would not only serve to reinforce Ireland's stated commitments to being a contributing force in the maintenance of an economically prosperous maritime security environment, but it presents an opportunity for doing so in a specifically neutral way, while simultaneously tackling one of Ireland's most prolific societal ills.

49 Eric Hovey and Jason Hotalen, "Optimize Maritime Security Cooperation," *USNI Proceedings* 146, no. 8, iss. 1,410 (2020), pp. 44-49.

50 US Africa Command., n.d., "Africa Partnership Station," <https://www.africom.mil/what-we-do/security-cooperation/africa-partnership-station>, accessed August 7, 2020.

51 Health Research Board, *HRB Annual Report 2019* (Dublin: Health Research Board, 2020), p. 8.



Security in the Digital Age: The Finnish Experience

HE Ambassador Raili Lahnalampi

Abstract

The paper discusses digital security, or as often termed, cyber security, which is essential in highly digitalised countries such as Finland and Ireland. As the critical societal functions and the daily lives of our citizens become increasingly dependent on the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), cyber security has become vital to our prosperity and security. Cyberattacks aiming to disrupt the proper functioning of critical infrastructures and supply of essential services are on the rise.¹ We have formidable challenges in securing the wellbeing of our citizens and the core functions of states against the inherent vulnerabilities of the digitalised society. Accelerating digitalisation in a post-Covid-19 world will exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. European security is heavily dependent on our cyber resilience. This is also the case in Ireland, where about 30% of European cloud data is stored. Given the interconnected nature of the cyber domain, we need to foster partnerships and urgently strengthen our capabilities to prevent, deter and respond to these threats. However, first you must secure your “home base” by adopting a holistic approach to security.

Introduction

The role of states as providers of security and well-being for the people is inherently linked to the way our economies are structured and how prosperity is accumulated. A sound economy is a basic requisite for a secure society. The nexus between development and security is an old concept, but it has a new complexity in our modern societies. The present competition for economic hegemony between China and the United States is symptomatic of the situation.

Geography remains a factor, but in a digital world with interdependent economies, borders have lost their traditional meaning. Threats are linked to everyday life and can affect a large part of our societies without warning and with enormous speed. Unpredictability has increased. Given the similarities of our societies and economies, the Finnish experiences in countering these threats can be of interest to Ireland. Strengthening multilateralism and the rules-based system is in the interest of both countries, as would working together towards more comprehensive approaches.

Climate change, hybrid and cyber threats are no longer threats: they are the reality we live in. The global dimension of this reality means that nobody can do it alone. Strong partnerships are at the core of developing national security and the EU's security and defence policies. Smaller states need to be innovative in how to manage the new situation. To succeed, credible national defence and active multilateral security cooperation is necessary, but no longer sufficient. Greater attention needs to be paid on how to support digital expertise and cyber security at the EU and international level. Finland joined the EU in 1995 primarily for traditional security reasons. Now our challenge is to secure production chains and promote the EU's digital agenda and legislation in areas such as cyber security and certification.

Cyberattacks are often one of the tools in hybrid operations. Therefore, it is important to consider cyber security in the context of hybrid threats². Occurrence of hybrid threats is linked to the rapid technological evolution, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and quantum computing.

¹ See for example, World Economic Forum, *WEF Global Risk Report 2020*, 15 January 2020, <https://reports.weforum.org/global-risks-report-2020/wild-wide-web/>.

² Here, 'hybrid' is understood to mean unwanted, illegal interference that is against international law.

An added challenge is the use of social media to spread disinformation, including the use of bots and algorithms. Dependencies for example across energy or communications systems and their reliance on ICT increase our vulnerabilities to hybrid and cyber threats. According to Mikko Heiskanen,³ Chief Information and Cyber Defence Officer of the Finnish Defence Forces, cyberspace is operational at all times, not only during war; consequently defence forces should be able to defend it every day.

The core argument of this paper is that in a digitalised world, where hybrid and cyber threats are the new reality we live in, a whole-of-society approach is necessary to counter them. First, the paper illustrates how this approach is implemented in Finland through the concept of comprehensive security. The paper also examines the relation between Finland's digital strengths and cyber security. Additionally, it discusses Finnish cyber resilience and strategy and how they interact with the concept of comprehensive security. Finally, the paper compares the Irish and Finnish strategies and reflects on the political, management and capacity challenges and how policy makers in both countries should react to these challenges.

Finland's Digital Strengths

Finland has a long digital history that merits a deeper analysis, but I only mention three trends relevant to cyber resilience: public commitment and private innovation – and the cooperation between these two. Two examples: about sixty years ago, the Finnish postal service acquired its first computer and this commitment towards digitalisation continues to be a goal of our government⁴. Nokia, the iconic mobile phone company, was the global leader in information technology and paved the way for wide range of domestic ICT suppliers throughout the country fostering an extensive ICT know-how in Finland.

Finland's competencies in digital surveys

In the 2020 United Nations E-Government Survey⁵, which captures the scope and quality of online services, status of telecommunication infrastructure and existing human capacity, Finland holds fourth place. In the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index 2020 (DESI)⁶, which monitors progress in digitalisation, Finland retained the top ranking. The Finnish minister responsible for digitalization, Sirpa Paatero, attributed our success to the fact that:

“In Finland, the various stakeholders in society work extensively together, which has contributed to strengthening our position as a leader in the digital transformation process. The Government Programme focuses strongly on moving forward with digitalisation, and we are firmly committed to this work.”⁷

³ Author's interview, July 2020.

⁴ Finnish Government, "Government Programme: 3.4. Dynamic and Thriving Finland," <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/government-programme/dynamic-and-thriving-finland>.

⁵ United Nations, *UN E-Government Survey 2020*, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/research/un-e-government-surveys>.

⁶ European Commission, "The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2020," see the index and on the country report for Finland, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>.

⁷ See Minister Paatero's press release; Ministry of Finance, "Finland Retains Top Position in EU Digital Comparison," 16 June 2020, <https://vm.fi/en/-/suomi-sailytti-karkisijansa-eu-n-digivertailussa>.

According to DESI 2020, Finland and Ireland are top performers in digital transformation⁸ giving our businesses a competitive advantage. Finnish businesses are leaders also in the utilization of cloud services. At present some 50% of companies use cloud services. Continued success of our businesses depends on a secure cyber environment. Cyber security of cloud computing is progressing, but many security aspects call for further innovations.

The DESI-report concludes that human capital is one of Finland's strongest competitive advantages, with 76% of the population having basic or above basic digital skills, which is substantially above the EU average of 58%. These skills are crucial if a society is to advance economically and socially. The report further states that in digital public services Finland ranks fourth among EU countries and well above the EU average. This, it notes, is primarily thanks to the higher number of e-government users. COVID-19 has given a huge impetus for remote working, distance learning, digital public services, such as e-health, and tools to avoid social exclusion. Providing adequate cyber security to protect privacy, data security and information security will be an important part of advancing these services

Finland leads the EU's Women in Digital Scoreboard,⁹ which measures the participation of women in the digital economy. This fact, as such, is an important gender equality indicator. Moreover, it demonstrates a broad involvement of our society in the digital sphere: an important enabler for digital business as well as effective training to prevent cyberattacks.

Concrete Steps to Ensure Cyber Security Resilience

The Finnish government has an ambitious, but practical agenda for both digitalisation and cyber security¹⁰ to improve the technological and digital capabilities and security of the public sector¹¹. A key objective is to enhance cooperation between the public and the private sector. Given that the digital tools are mainly in the hands of the private sector this is a basic prerequisite for success. The government's measures include: establishment of a joint high-level advisory board comprising of private and public sector representatives; making more public data to be not only used freely as "open data" but also ensuring its interoperability; making public services available digitally to individuals and businesses by 2023; and providing a platform (AuroraAI) for all public services using AI. In addition, Finland believes in the importance of educating people on new technologies. As part of Finland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Finland launched a free online course "Elements of AI" with the goal of educating 1% of European citizens in the basics of AI.¹² The course, due to be launched in all EU languages, will be launched in Ireland in late October 2020.

The EU's role in promoting cyber security is crucial. Not only do cybercrime and malicious cyber activities pose a threat that necessitates joint responses, but cyber resilience is fundamental for the EU's economic success. With open borders, joint data banks and the Internet of Things, the "weakest link" can be present anywhere. To illustrate, a prerequisite for working remotely is

⁸ European Commission, "The Digital Economic and Society Index (DESI) 2020," p. 4, Figure 1.

⁹ European Commission, "Women in Digital Scoreboard," <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/women-digital-scoreboard>.

¹⁰ Finnish Government, "Government Programme: 3.4. Dynamic and Thriving Finland."

¹¹ Ministry of Finance, *Digital Security in the Public Sector: Public Sector ICT*, 1 June 2020, <http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162265>.

¹² "Elements of AI" online course at <https://www.elementsofai.com/eu2019fi>.

better preparedness and securing “the human firewall.”¹³ Recent 5G discussion have shown that there is also a need to review the whole supply chain and better identify the majority different subcontractors and suppliers in order to monitor their cyber security solutions and possible risks involved. Moreover, we need European digital innovations and business.

Joint actions are of the essence in countering cyberattacks. Therefore, Finland was in the forefront in supporting the development of the Joint EU Diplomatic Response to Malicious Cyber Activities approved in June 2017. Attribution has been a huge challenge. The first ever sanctions against cyber-attacks were finally endorsed in July 2020.¹⁴ a list including individuals and entities of Chinese and Russian origin. This is a welcome and concrete action showing that cyberattacks can be tracked down and that they have consequences.

The Finnish Approach to Cyber Security: Concept of Comprehensive Security

The foundation for Finnish cyber security lies on our long tradition of comprehensive security¹⁵ – a concept created during the 1950s. It is a cooperation model for preparedness of the Finnish society to secure the vital functions of society, including defence, economy and security of supply. Within the collaborative framework actors from all fields of society share and analyse information, prepare joint plans and, perhaps most importantly, train together. Being comprehensive means that in addition to the authorities, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and citizens are involved.

This unique system relies on the Finnish tradition of a whole-of-society approach. The concept requires an open society where basic values such as freedom of information and the press are respected. Cooperation is productive only if different actors can tolerate divergent views and accept changes to their own positions. To succeed it requires a high degree of trust between all actors and in particular citizens’ trust of the authorities. Trust and joint approaches are fostered through regular exercises and training. An excellent example is the National Defence Courses.¹⁶ These courses facilitate networking between civil servants, politicians, business people, and non-profit organizations with the aim of showing how different sectors of the society work together during a crisis. Separate training is arranged for critical private sector participants by the National Emergency Supply Agency.¹⁷

The Finnish system must evolve to ensure that it will be capable of responding to future threats. Covid-19 has provided some important lessons. According to Tytti Yli-Viikari, the Auditor General of Finland¹⁸, flexibility within different hierarchical structures and line ministries has been crucial in responding in a timely and accurate manner to the crisis. However, the workload of some key officials was found to be too high so stronger horizontal structures are needed. Flexibility of the administration and networking will be key in utilizing the full capacity of the civil service.

¹³ By securing the human firewall, the writer refers to further training on cyber security issues to enhance the preparedness of employees and people using the network in order to prevent a human act jeopardizing the safety of the network.

¹⁴ See Council Decision concerning restrictive measures against cyber-attacks threatening the Union or its member states; European Council, “Press Release: EU Imposes the First Ever Sanctions against Cyber-Attacks,” 30 July 2020, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/07/30/eu-imposes-the-first-ever-sanctions-against-cyber-attacks/>.

¹⁵ The Security Committee, “Comprehensive Security Concept,” <https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi>.

¹⁶ National Defence Training Association, <https://mpk.fi>.

¹⁷ National Emergency Supply Agency, <https://nesa.fi>.

¹⁸ Tytti Yli-Viikari, Director, National Audit Office of Finland, *Helsingin Sanomat*, interview 11 July 2020 <https://hs.fi>.

The Finnish Cyber Security Strategy

The current Finnish Cyber Security Strategy¹⁹ was adopted in 2019. The three strategic guidelines of the strategy are international cooperation; better coordination of cyber security management, planning and preparedness; and developing cyber security competence. These objectives are in line with the previous strategy from 2013. I was closely involved in its preparation when the strategy was considered by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Finnish Parliament²⁰ and can still recall two main aspects of the discussions. One was the strong support for a more comprehensive approach and better coordination between the public and private sector on cyber security; the second was the recognition that resilience is the key: since a 100% cyber security is not possible given the speed of malware development and emergence of new hackers. These observations remain valid.

The close cooperation between the authorities and the business sector from the outset was in a way “unavoidable,” since most of the assets were in the hands of the private sector. Now this cooperation is vital, as without it, the state would not be able to keep up with the latest technology developments. The payback of close cooperation is that strong cyber security benefits businesses and provides a secure environment for investments. As mentioned earlier, trust is a fundamental element in successful cooperation. The fact that the National Cyber security Director is placed in the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the cyber security coordination is in the Finnish Transport and Communication Agency makes collaboration routine.

Finally, some basic structures of the Finnish society are important pillars in strengthening cyber security. A well-functioning and non-corrupt²¹ bureaucracy is a good starting point. According to Mikko Hyppönen, the Chief Research Officer from F-Secure, one of Finland’s “intangible niches” is that we are a non-corrupt and trustworthy country.²² The high quality of the free education system²³ enables widespread teaching of basic IT skills, promotion of cyber awareness as well as future specialisation in the cyber domain. Another strength is our system of a conscription army.²⁴ Mikko Heiskanen points out that through conscription the Defence Forces recruit young IT experts, immerse them in the military dimension of cyber and retain them in the military reserve while they continue to work in a wide spectrum of the digital society.²⁵

ETLA Economic Research’s Digibarometer 2020²⁶ focuses on cyber security as a key competence for digitalisation. While Finland ranks above the European average in cyber security performance, we cannot be complacent. As ETLA’s researchers²⁷ rightly point out, mastering cyber security requires constant and relentless skills development. Finland has the potential needed for continued leadership in cyber security, but this needs to be pursued rigorously in government policies and investments.

19 The Security Committee, *Finland’s Cyber Security Strategy 2019*, <https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi/en/finlands-cyber-security-strategy-2019/>.

20 Report 1/2013 by the Foreign Affairs Committee, https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/Mietinto/Documents/uavm_1+2013.pdf.

21 Finland is one of the least corrupt countries, see Transparency International, “Finland,” <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/finland>.

22 Author’s interview, February 2020, Mikko Hyppönen, Chief Research Officer, F-Secure.

23 Shown for example in PISA surveys, see OECD “PISA,” <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/>.

24 Finnish Conscription system, <https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/finnish-conscription-system>

25 Author’s interview July 2020, Mikko Heiskanen, Chief Information and Cyber Defence Officer of the Finnish Defence Forces.

26 ETLA, “Digibarometer 2020,” 11 June 2020, <https://www.eta.fi/en/publications/digibarometri-2020-kyberturvan-tilannekuva-suomessa/>.

27 Mattiia Juri and Seppälä Timo, “Ahead of the Game, But for How Long? Insights from a Benchmarking Study on Finland’s Cybersecurity Landscape,” *Cybersecurity Finland Quarterly Review 2* (2020), pp. 14-16.

Comparing Finnish and Irish Approaches to Cyber Security

As highly digitalised, open economies, Finland and Ireland have a shared interest in building a secure cyberspace. Ireland is Europe's data centre capital, with Amazon, Google and Microsoft leading the list with over 50 data centres in the country. This is an important business sector that underlines the need for a strong cyber security. As our daily lives are increasingly reliant on cloud computing and data, the data centres can be targets for those who seek to disrupt our societies.

When comparing the Finnish strategy with the Irish National Cyber Security Strategy²⁸ from 2019 at the Embassy,²⁹ it was concluded that the cyber security principles and the overall approach to cyber security are very similar. Both strategies rely on the national implementation of the EU's cyber security policies. For Finland and Ireland, the constant updating of cyber security is a necessity in order to ensure the provision of increasingly digitalised public and private services as well as protection of basic infrastructure. A common challenge is recruiting sufficient cyber expertise. Perhaps the main difference is the large number of international technological companies, and the significant concentration of data centres and IP addresses in Ireland. This means that the Finns have a vested interest in high-level cyber security in Ireland, since our "digital lives" are stored here.

Looking Ahead: What Should we Prepare For and How?

Political challenges

In various national security strategies and white papers, the lists of threat scenarios are long. With limited resources and growing risks, the challenge is to predict and prepare for the most probable threats over a certain period. With Covid-19, we seem to have experienced the opposite. Although pandemics have for long been recognised as a potential threat in most Western countries, and there were credible early warnings on pandemics by experts, we were still not sufficiently prepared for a pandemic in terms of proper investments in preventing – or handling – the virus.

Unfortunately, this may be the case also in the future. There are many reasons for this, including the more complex nature of threats and the relatively short political cycles of governments compared to the longer perspective needed for budgeting for potential but politically "distant" threats. However, in the digitalised world one thing is evident. We need to prepare in a more holistic way. Societies need to be able to sustain attacks and have resilience to bounce back in a reasonably short time. This requires vision and leadership to invest in long-term projects even though political rivals may ultimately take the credit for them.

Management challenges

Technology and digitalisation are advancing at warp speed at all levels of society, but many security aspects of transformation are yet to be discovered and legislated for. One example is the sudden increase of remote working due to Covid-19 and the consequent jump in cyberattacks, many of which were successful due to insufficient safety measures.

²⁸ Government of Ireland, *National Cyber Security Strategy, 2019-2024*, December 2019, https://www.dccae.gov.ie/documents/National_Cyber_Security_Strategy.pdf.

²⁹ Anne Mutanen, Deputy Head of Mission and Helmi Rantala, Intern and author's discussions with Richard Browne, Director, National Cyber Security Centre, Ireland.

The physical “core” structures of our societies rely heavily on digital networks. This means that it is difficult to separate physical and digital security. The consequence of this, according to Dr. Jarno Linnell,³⁰ Professor at Aalto University, is that cyber security must be part of every aspect of security in our societies. In Finland, our strength is that this will be possible to achieve with our comprehensive approach to security.

Capacity challenges

Development of cyber competence is one of the three objectives in the Finnish Cyber Strategy. This needs to be a real priority given the speed of technology development and recruitment challenges. A strong ecosystem of cyber security and top-notch cyber security companies, such as Badrap, F-Secure, Hoxhunt, Nixu, SSH.Com, together with high-quality academic research³¹ provide up-to-date expertise in Finland. However, Mikko Hyppönen³² stresses that Finnish companies need to reinforce their competitive edge, including in encryption and AI. Furthermore, the public administration needs to be able to secure expertise and financial means to fulfil its obligations.

Cyber security entrepreneur Juha Remes,³³ Chairman of the North European Cybersecurity Cluster (NECC) is concerned that Europe as a whole is losing its competitive edge. This is a valid concern since the majority of cyber security vendors are non-European. He calls for more ambitious European companies and wider public-private collaboration to achieve the long-term goals. The EU needs to build a stronger investment programme, support innovation and build up sufficient demand in the European single market.

The director of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats³⁴, Teija Tiilikainen³⁵, points out that for too long the effect of AI and quantum sciences on our societies, and their vulnerabilities, remained unknown. The interdependencies digitalisation creates between various levels of societies is a significant challenge for cyber security planners. Tiilikainen believes that incorporating cyber security as a part of the education system and increasing investments in research and development form a key in safeguarding sufficient technological knowledge and mechanisms for cyber security. Efficient utilisation of research-based knowledge in addressing the vulnerabilities of the digital age is part of the solution.

Conclusion

Finland has core strengths that are well suited for cyberspace. Keeping our comprehensive security system effective, investing in research, providing a conducive environment for cyber security startups and enabling their scalability and working with partners, including Ireland, ensure that Finland remains a net contributor to security in Europe – also in the digital age.

Finland and Ireland have shared interests in building a secure cyberspace. Given the similarities of our societies and economies, the Finnish experiences in countering these threats can be of interest to Ireland. Strengthening multilateralism and the rules-based system is in the interest of both countries, as is working together towards more comprehensive approaches.

³⁰ Author's interview, July 2020.

³¹ Such as University of Jyväskylä and Aalto University.

³² Author's interview, February 2020.

³³ Author's interview, July 2020, also Mikko Heiskanen raised the challenge of technological development

³⁴ Hybrid CoE, <https://hybridcoe.fi>.

³⁵ Author's interview, July 2020.

Ireland is Europe's data centre capital, which accentuates the need for cyber security. The Finnish experience in cyber security and the nexus to comprehensive security concept might provide an interesting perspective also for Irish policymakers. Finland and Ireland would both stand to benefit from closer cooperation on cyber security, whether between companies, researchers or between policy makers.



Why Right-Wing Extremism Poses a Threat to Ireland

Livia Margna

Abstract

The Christchurch mosque attack claiming 51 lives, the El Paso mass shooting killing 23 people, and the assassination of the German politician Walter Lübcke, represent only a small fraction of last year's deadly terrorist incidents, which highlight the growing threat of right-wing extremism in the Western world. Acknowledging the imminent risk for their societies, governments from Australasia, North America and Europe have declared the fight against the proponents of a discriminatory and dehumanising ideology a top priority. In Ireland, however, the attention to this topic has been limited and of a fragmentary nature – despite the registration of three violent anti-immigration incidents in 2019 and a recent increase in online right-wing extremist activity. This raises the under-discussed question on whether Ireland has good reasons to discount a global trend, seemingly affecting almost all Western societies, or it is overestimating its own resilience to it. Seeking answers to the debate, this article discusses three of the most salient global factors contributing to the contemporary worldwide surge in Western right-wing extremism, namely grievances caused by the neoliberal backlash, the mainstreaming of radical right-wing ideology in the socio-political discourse, and the internet-enabled amplification of indoctrination efforts and violence. Arguing that these factors also impact the Irish society, the article concludes that the Republic currently provides a fertile soil for right-wing extremism.

Introduction

The past few years saw a considerable increase in the threat of right-wing extremism. Worldwide, right-wing terrorist attacks rose by 320% since 2015.¹ In the US, they represent 90% of all extremist-related murders in 2019.² Europe registered a 43% surge in right-wing extremist incidents in 2017 alone,³ while arrests related to this type of political violence more than doubled in the following year.⁴ In the UK, one-third of 24 foiled terrorist attacks registered between March 2017 and December 2019 were motivated by a right-wing extremist ideology, with referrals of its assumed proponents to the UK counterterrorism mechanism Prevent almost doubling in three years.⁵

The destructive potential hiding behind this striking surge is considerable and its real-life implications are severe. The Christchurch mosque shooting claiming 51 lives, the El Paso Walmart attack killing 23 people, the assassination of the German politician Walter Lübcke, and the shooting of 9 people in Hanau, represent only a small fraction of this and last year's deadly terrorist incidents, and thus only the tip of an iceberg of hatred and violence.

These, and other recent attacks, can be ascribed to the fourth wave of post-war right-wing extremism, manifesting since the dawn of the 21st century⁶ and setting itself apart, both structurally and ideologically, from its predecessors.⁷ Its proponents do not form a coherent,

1 UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, *Member States Concerned by the Growing and Increasingly Transnational Threat of Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism* (New York, NY: UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee, 2020).

2 Anti-Defamation League, *Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2019* (New York, NY: Anti-Defamation League, 2020).

3 UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

4 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2019* (The Hague: Europol, 2019).

5 Lizzie Dearden, "Number of Far-Right Referrals to Counter-Extremism Programme Hits Record High," *The Independent*, 19 December 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/far-right-extremists-programme-prevent-counter-terrorism-record-a9253016.html>, accessed 11 August 2020.

6 Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019).

7 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020* (The Hague: Europol, 2020).

homogeneous and static group, but rather belong to “a shifting, complex and overlapping milieu of individuals, groups and movements,” embracing varying but nonetheless related ideologies.⁸ Their common denominator is a belief that their ingroup’s success or survival depends on hostile action against outgroups, perceived as alien or inferior.⁹ The targets of this fourth wave are mostly immigrants and Muslims,¹⁰ but also include Jews, Roma and Sinti, Travellers, people of colour, feminists, LGBTQI+ and other minorities or marginalised groups.

After years of downplaying the risk,¹¹ governments from Australasia, North America and Europe have recently started to acknowledge the threat emanating from these discriminatory and dehumanising ideologies, declaring the fight against their proponents a top priority. In Ireland, however, the topic has only received marginal public attention until now, as for most of the republic’s post-war era, homegrown right-wing extremism has been negligible,¹² and no high-profile attack on Irish soil was registered. Yet, in June 2020, Europol issued a warning of growing Irish right-wing extremist activity for the first time,¹³ after registering a number of arson attacks on an Irish direct provision centre and a vehicle in 2019.¹⁴ While the Garda did not publish the motives or arrested suspects, these cases assumedly concern the Rooskey immigrant housing facility, which has been twice set on fire, and the burning of Sinn Fein TD Martin Kenny’s car after he publicly championed the accommodation of refugees.¹⁵ Moreover, the Garda recently detected a strong international right-wing extremist network involving individuals from Ireland, as well as an increase in Irish right-wing extremist activity on the internet.¹⁶

In order to assess whether these manifestations are isolated cases in a country otherwise resilient to the global trend, or rather underestimated warning signs, this article discusses the main factors fuelling the contemporary surge of right-wing extremism in the Western world and their occurrence in Ireland. The first section analyses the grievances fuelling right-wing extremism; the second is dedicated to the role of socio-political discourses in mainstreaming radical right-wing ideology; and the third part reflects on how the internet enables the amplification of indoctrination efforts and violence.

The Neoliberal Backlash – Producing Grievances

Individuals willing to violently subvert a society’s status quo are often deeply dissatisfied with it. Current right-wing extremists owe much of their discontent to the actual or perceived structural and cultural losses they sustained in consequence of the neoliberal globalisation unleashed in the 1980s.¹⁷

8 UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, p. 1.

9 John M. Berger, *Extremism* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2018).

10 Andrea Carlo, “The Far Right Paint Muslims as the Enemy of the LGBT+ Community – but They are the Real Danger,” *The Independent*, 30 March 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/far-right-lgbt-muslims-christchurch-shooter-salvini-le-pen-a8846031.html>, accessed 30 September 2020.

11 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

12 Thom Barry, and Matthew Collins, “Ireland and Its Contradictory Welcomes,” *Hope Not Hate*, 20 November 2019, <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2019/11/20/ireland-and-its-contradictory-welcomes/>, accessed 11 August 2020.

13 Conor Gallagher, “Rise in Far-Right and Islamic Extremism Activity in Ireland Last Year, Says Europol,” *The Irish Times*, 25 June 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/rise-in-far-right-and-islamic-extremism-activity-in-ireland-last-year-says-europol-1.4287646>, accessed 11 August 2020.

14 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020*.

15 Gallagher, “Rise in Far-Right and Islamic Extremism Activity in Ireland.”

16 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020*.

17 Tahir Abbas, “Ethnicity and Politics in Contextualising Far Right and Islamist Extremism,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 11, no. 3 (2017), pp. 54-61.

On the one hand, while enriching a few, neoliberalism, and the rapid socio-economic changes it brought along, meant growing horizontal inequalities and a decline in social and economic security for many. As the Global Recession demonstrated, worldwide working classes are increasingly threatened by unemployment, precarity and downward social mobility. With deprivation still above the 2006 levels,¹⁸ and 321,000 people finding themselves in consistent poverty, while other 752,000 people are at-risk-for-poverty,¹⁹ Ireland is no exception to the phenomenon.

On the other hand, these increasingly globalised, egalitarian and multicultural Western societies empower formerly subordinated groups such as women or ethnic minorities. Hence, these groups can compete more and more for resources such as influence, power and status, which were previously a monopoly and identity pillar of local patriarchies.²⁰ Registering more than half a million immigrants in 2016,²¹ and one of the highest scores in gender equality in the EU, Ireland has become an increasingly diverse country in the past two decades.²² In particular, women's share in economic, political and social power has substantially increased since 2005.²³ In relative terms, both these economic and social transformations mostly affect the traditional security, privileges and dominance of white men,²⁴ who constitute the main recruitment pool of Western right-wing extremist groups.

As multiple studies and the demographics of extremists show, however, it is not necessarily cultural or economic distress that pushes individuals to adopt an extremist stance, but rather a subjective impression of suffering from it.²⁵ The concept of perceived deprivation describes the conviction that an individual or their group – be it a socio-demographic category, ethnic group or nation – “is undeservingly worse off than others,”²⁶ or than they were in the past.²⁷ With almost one in every five people conceiving both their financial and job situation as adverse and 29% estimating the situation of the national economy as negative, perceived deprivation concerns a significant share of the Irish society.²⁸

Perceived deprivation may serve to explain why growing parts of society have become receptive of extreme ideologies which promise to radically change the undesired status quo. Thus, right-wing extremists' goal to restore an alternative social order of an imagined past, seemingly guaranteeing recovered dominance, stability and status are ideas resonating with these portions of society.²⁹ Furthermore, perceived deprivation accounts for why high-power, together with low-power, groups engage in right-wing extremism – afraid to lose their privileged position

18 Conor Teljeur et al., *The Trinity National Deprivation Index for Health and Health Services Research 2016* (Dublin: Trinity College Dublin, 2019).

19 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2019*. Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2019*; Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, *Social Inclusion Monitor 2017* (Dublin: Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, 2019).

20 UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

21 Frances McGinnity et al., *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2018).

22 European Institute for Gender Equality, *Gender Equality Index 2019: Ireland* (Vilnius: European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019).

23 European Institute for Gender Equality, *Gender Equality Index 2019: Ireland*.

24 James A. Piazza, “The Determinants of Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the USA: Economic Grievance, Societal Change and Political Resentment,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34, no. 1 (2017), pp. 52-80.

25 Cf. Jonas R. Kunst, and Milan Obaidi, “Understanding Violent Extremism in the 21st Century: The (Re)Emerging Role of Relative Deprivation,” *Current Opinion in Psychology* 35 (2020), pp. 55-59.; Piazza, “The Determinants of Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the USA.”

26 Kunst and Obaidi, “Understanding Violent Extremism,” p. 55.

27 Tim Vlandas and Daphne Halikiopoulou, “Does Unemployment Matter? Economic Insecurity, Labour Market Policies and the Far-Right Vote in Europe,” *European Political Science* 18 (2019), pp. 421-438.

28 European Commission, *Standard Eurobarometer 92 Autumn 2019* (Brussels: European Commission, 2019).

29 Sam Jackson, *A Schema of Right-Wing Extremism in the United States* (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2019).

due to deteriorating economic and social conditions,³⁰ they appear ready to violently defend it.³¹ The concept thus explains the appeal right-wing extremist groups exert on individuals whose identity formation has been problematised by rapid socio-economic and cultural transformations. Extremists who invoke ethnicity, nationhood and sometimes religion as their *raison d'être* offer a powerful source of identity, crucial for inducing further extremist engagement.³²

Yet, perceived deprivation does not directly explain why individuals, dissatisfied with the status quo, explicitly link their grievances to minorities or marginalised groups. In other words, a condition of low social status or unemployment does not solely explain why someone sets fire to an asylum centre. As the next section proposes, outgroups need first be defined as the root of one's grievances, before they can be considered an enemy worth fighting against.

The Political Climate – Normalising Hatred

If neoliberal transformations produced grievances, rendering significant parts of society receptive for extremist ideologies which promised to radically subvert the undesired status quo, the dominant socio-political discourses accompanying recent events have channelled these negative feelings towards the radical or even extreme right. Therefore, it is no coincidence that right-wing terrorist incidents in Europe, predominantly targeting refugee institutions and symbols of Islam, increased noticeably in the light of the Islamic State's attacks on Europe and the 'refugee crisis'.³³ Yet, it can hardly be sustained that these and similar events *per se* have pushed groups receptive to radical ideas near the right-wing fringe. Indeed, the influx of refugees in the European Union was manageable, and the threat from Islamic extremism for European citizens' physical safety negligible.³⁴

It is therefore the *framing* of such occurrences, and of the outgroups attributed to them, which accounts for recent surging hatred and violence against Muslims in particular, as they have been perceived as a threat to the ingroup's economic or cultural existence. In other words, right-wing extremism is boosted by the translation of socio-economic grievances into a socio-cultural or ethno-racial rejection of a minority or a marginalised group.³⁵ A study on attitudes on immigration shows that the Irish society is particularly susceptible to this bias, as views on immigration are closely tied to the current economic situation. Thus, after being fairly positive in the early 2000s, attitudes became significantly more negative in 2008 before becoming more positive again in 2012, with respondents suffering from perceived deprivation assuming more negative attitudes towards immigrants.³⁶ The fact that much of this socio-cultural rejection of immigrants is channelled towards Muslims,³⁷ indicates that in Ireland, as elsewhere in the West, the right-wing narrative declaring Islam as a core threat to the ingroup has reached the mainstream.

30 Vlandas and Halikiopoulou, "Does Unemployment Matter?"

31 Kunst and Obaidi, "Understanding Violent Extremism,"; Piazza, "The Determinants of Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the USA."

32 Allan Harriett *et al.*, *Drivers of Violent Extremism: Hypotheses and Literature Review* (London: Royal United Services Institute, 2015).

33 Seth G. Jones, Catrina Doxsee, and Nicholas Harrington, *The Right-Wing Terrorism Threat in Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2020).

34 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

35 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

36 Frances McGinnity *et al.*, *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland*.

37 Frances McGinnity *et al.*, *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland*.

The large-scale normalisation of Islamophobia started with the establishment of linguistic links between the presence of Muslims in Western societies and white Europeans' grievances. Labelling mass refugee influxes as a 'migrant crisis',³⁸ while indiscriminately securitising Islam against the backdrop of Islamist terrorist attacks, for instance, designated Muslims as enemies – above and beyond the domain of language. Narratives blaming Muslims for either conducting terrorist attacks, stealing one's opportunities, or Islamising one's environment successively cemented these negative connotations.³⁹ The same framings also spread in Ireland – the victims of Islamophobic abuse in Ireland confirmed that the verbal slurs against them drew on such stereotypes.⁴⁰ Their perpetuation was inadvertently helped by the societal mainstream. Moderate media in the West cemented stereotypes of Muslims, while providing a prominent platform to extremists by excessively covering their well-selling stories.⁴¹ A report on Islamophobia in Dublin even identifies

“the media as the main source of, and means, to propagate homogenising, racialised stereotypes of Muslimness [...]. [T]here was a shared perception among participants [of the study] that various media actors have an agenda when it came to Muslim communities: namely to sell copy without due regard for the consequences of their stories.”⁴²

Mainstream politicians, on the other hand, have for years projected Islamist extremism as a result of Muslims' “alien values and norms” instead of political concerns,⁴³ and incorporated the radical right's traditional topics into their programmes for fear of losing support.⁴⁴ In Ireland, this co-option dates back to the 20th century, when “the key tenets of racist nationalism [were] already operationalized by the mainstream Irish parties.”⁴⁵

Hence the societal mainstream legitimised the threat framing and agenda setting of radical groups. In many countries, these developments manifested in election success of far-right parties and rising support for officially non-violent radical groups such as the Identitarian Movement,⁴⁶ which in turn gained even more influence on socio-political discourses. While experiencing a less accentuated shift in the political landscape than many other Western countries, Ireland also witnessed the mainstreaming of radical right-wing ideas.⁴⁷ The recent emergence of parties such as the National Party, the Irish Freedom Party and Identity Ireland – whose candidate won 0.5% of Ireland's South Constituency's votes in the 2019 European Parliament elections⁴⁸ by calling for a “zero tolerance approach towards demands [...] to accommodate minority held beliefs and cultures”⁴⁹ – stand testament to the presence of intolerance. Furthermore, almost a quarter of the electorate supported Peter Casey in the

38 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

39 Florian Hartleb, *Lone Wolves – the New Terrorism of Right-Wing Single Actors* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2020).

40 James Carr, *Islamophobia in Dublin: Experiences and how to Respond* (Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2016).

41 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

42 James Carr, *Islamophobia in Dublin: Experiences and how to Respond*, p. 8.

43 Tahir Abbas, *Race and the Imagined Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 10.

44 Hartleb, *Lone Wolves*.

45 Steve Garner, “Ireland and Immigration: Explaining the Absence of the Far Right,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 41, no. 2 (2007), pp. 109-130.

46 Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020*.

47 Conor Kenny, “Opinion: Far-Right Politics on the Rise So We Need to Stop Silencing Working Class Voices on the Left,” *The Journal*, 18 January 2019, <https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/opinion-far-right-politics-are-on-the-rise-in-ireland-we-need-to-stop-silencing-working-class-voices-on-the-left-4443245-Jan2019/>, accessed 11 August 2020.

48 Irish Independent, “News Elections 2019,” last modified 28 May 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190528090909/https://elections.independent.ie/european-election-2019/ireland-south>, accessed 11 August 2020.

49 Identity Ireland, “Immigration,” n.d., <https://identityireland.org/immigration.php>, accessed 11 August 2020.

2018 presidential election⁵⁰ because or despite his anti-immigration and anti-Traveller stance.⁵¹ Moreover, compared to ten predominantly Western and Central European countries, Irish-born respondents hold above-average racist convictions – almost half of them believe some cultures to be superior to others, while 45% considers certain ethnic groups to be born harder working, and almost a fifth thinks that some ethnic groups are less intelligent.⁵²

The gradual normalisation and mainstreaming of antagonistic worldviews, immigration anxiety and xenophobic views has created a socio-political climate⁵³ – in Ireland as in other Western countries – that is increasingly accepting of extremism.⁵⁴ This poses a clear threat, as high rates of perceived deprivation positively correlate with people's willingness to violently fight whoever their political ideologues identify as a menace,⁵⁵ a fact which is exacerbated by the abundance of extremist rhetoric found online.

The Internet – Amplifying Indoctrination and Violence

As early adopters of many online technologies,⁵⁶ right-wing extremists have long been aware of the opportunities the internet offers. Thus, over the last two decades, a vast decentralised and transnational online network has been established, consisting of discussion forums, chat groups, imageboards, gaming and social media platforms aiming to disseminating ideas, radicalising, mobilising and connecting individuals, while providing social, material and tactical support.⁵⁷ While a range of tailored strategies recently amplified this network's influence,⁵⁸ two effects in particular served to maximise its reach and impact.

The first concerns the internet's propensity to amplify indoctrination efforts and thus to function as a force-multiplier of right-wing extremist ideology. Due to the absence of gatekeepers, extreme ideas, hate speech, hoaxes and conspiracy ideologies can circulate freely in the online space.⁵⁹ Furthermore, if algorithms detect a user's inclination towards such content, the echo chamber effect reinforces it by selectively exposing them to similar content while withholding other perspectives. Carefully tailored messages resonating with as many people as possible maximise both impact and reach of online indoctrination. As an entry point to the radicalisation process, 'soft' content consisting of innocently sounding words such as 'ethnopluralism' and seemingly innocuous, but often dehumanising and discriminatory, memes and jokes are used to allure the disengaged mainstream,⁶⁰ who might be appalled

50 The Irish Times, "Presidential Election Results," last modified 27 October 2018, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/presidential-election/results>, accessed 11 August 2020.

51 Jack Power and Simon Carswell, "Election 2020: Peter Casey to Stand in Both Donegal and Dublin West," *The Irish Times*, 22 January 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/election-2020-peter-casey-to-stand-in-both-donegal-and-dublin-west-1.4147763>, accessed 11 August 2020.

52 Frances McGinnity et al., *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland*.

53 Raffaello Pantucci, "Lone Actor Terrorists and Extreme Right Wing Violence," Royal United Service Institute, last modified 31 October 2018, <https://rusi.org/commentary/lone-actor-terrorists-and-extreme-right-wing-violence>, accessed 11 August 2020.

54 Jones, Doxsee and Harrington, *The Right-Wing Terrorism Threat in Europe*.

55 Kunst and Obaidi, "Understanding Violent Extremism."

56 Maura Conway, Ryan Scrivens, and Logan Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists' Persistent Online Presence: History and Contemporary Trends* (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2019).

57 Conway, Scrivens and Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists' Persistent Online Presence*; Jones, Doxsee, and Harrington; Karolina Schwarz, *Hasskrieger – Der Neue Globale Rechtsextremismus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2020).

58 Cf. Schwarz.; Conway, Scrivens and Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists' Persistent Online Presence*; Anti-Defamation League, *The Consequences of Right-Wing Extremism on the Internet* (New York, NY: Anti-Defamation League, 2013).

59 Jim Edwards, "The Chilling Number of Misunderstood 'Jokes' in the Christchurch Killer's Manifesto Show How Few People Understand the Disinformation Ecosystem of the Alt Right," *Insider*, 30 December 2019, <https://www.insider.com/memes-in-christchurch-brandon-tarrant-manifesto-2019-12>, accessed 11 August 2020.

60 Conway, Scrivens and Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists' Persistent Online Presence*.

by more unambiguous symbols such as swastikas and openly racist statements. Professional-looking alternative news outlets such as Breitbart or influencers such as Irish Gemma O'Doherty or Rowan Croft, whose appearance and socio-demographics have little in common with the Nazi stereotype, often mediate anti-immigration and other right-wing messages. Thus socialised into endorsing evermore extreme content, increasing numbers of vulnerable individuals are gradually radicalised online. In Ireland, right-wing extremist ideology has become more widespread among internet users in the past years,⁶¹ with the Irish Network Against Racism registering a quadrupling of online racist incidents between 2019 and 2020.⁶²

The second effect refers to the propensity of the internet to amplify violence. Recently, copycat terrorism experienced a boom. Several extremists sought to imitate the El Paso attacker,⁶³ referencing, like others, the Christchurch terrorist,⁶⁴ who in turn took inspiration from the Norwegian extremist, killing 77 people in 2011, and the Charleston church shooter killing 9 people in 2015.⁶⁵ The key role assigned to the internet in these incidents and in their interpretations substantially contributed to this development. The Christchurch shooter, for example, livestreamed his attack on Facebook, where it was shared 1.2 million times in the first 24 hours alone,⁶⁶ while the El Paso terrorist announced his attack on the imageboard 8chan.⁶⁷ In the right-wing extremist network, these unannotated publications, and consequently the corresponding incidents, are often met with veneration and glorification – the El Paso attacker is openly lauded for “fighting to reclaim his country,”⁶⁸ and the Christchurch terrorist is seen as a ‘saint’ with an ‘impressive high score’ for the large amount of people he killed.⁶⁹

This effect therefore serves as an ideological and tactical inspiration for copycats around the globe.⁷⁰ Accounting for the majority of high-profile attacks,⁷¹ including most of the ones mentioned in this article,⁷² such self-radicalised lone actors pose today the biggest threat from the extremist right-wing milieu. A search on some of the most popular transnational right-wing extremist online platforms reveals that Irish extremists organise in a variety of groups, offering support, recognition, and inspiration. The sub-thread ‘Éire’ on Stormfront, a major

61 Eugenia Siapera, Elena Moreo, and Jiang Zhou, *Hate Track – Tracking and Monitoring Racist Speech Online* (Dublin: Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2018); Europol, *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020*.

62 Maresa Fagan, “Reports of Racism more than Double in First Quarter of 2020,” *Irish Examiner*, 1 May 2020, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30997027.html>, accessed 26 September 2020.

63 Tess Owen, “Police Keep Arresting Young White Men for Trying to Copycat El Paso,” *Vice News*, 13 August 2019, https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/a35z9b/police-keep-arresting-young-white-men-for-trying-to-copycat-el-paso, accessed 12 August 2020; Friederike Wegener, “The Globalisation of Right-Wing Copycat Attacks,” Global Network on Extremism and Technology, last modified 16 March 2020, accessed 12 August 2020, <https://gnet-research.org/2020/03/16/the-globalisation-of-right-wing-copycat-attacks/>.

64 Kristen Gelineau, “El Paso Shooting Suspect’s References to Christchurch Attack Reveal Dark, Growing Pattern,” *Global News*, 6 August 2019, <https://globalnews.ca/news/5731115/el-paso-shooter-inspiration-christchurch-attack>, accessed 12 August 2020.

65 Adam Taylor, “New Zealand Suspect Allegedly Claimed ‘Brief Contact’ with Norwegian Mass Murderer Anders Breivik,” *The Washington Post*, 15 March 2019, accessed 12 August 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/03/15/new-zealand-suspect-allegedly-claimed-brief-contact-with-norwegian-mass-murderer-anders-breivik/>.

66 Jack Gramenz, “Christchurch Mosque Attack Livestream: Why Facebook Continues to Fail,” *The New Zealand Herald*, 17 February 2020, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12309116, accessed 12 August 2020.

67 Conway, Scrivens and Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists’ Persistent Online Presence*.

68 Jason Burke, “Norway Mosque Attack Suspect ‘Inspired by Christchurch and El Paso Shootings’,” *The Guardian*, 11 August 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/11/norway-mosque-attack-suspect-may-have-been-inspired-by-christchurch-and-el-paso-shootings>, accessed 12 August 2020.

69 Conway, Scrivens and Macnair, *Right-Wing Extremists’ Persistent Online Presence*.

70 State of New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, *Analysis: Online Manifestos Inspire Other Extremists* (Trenton: Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness – State of New Jersey, 2019).

71 Mudde, *The Far Right Today*.

72 With the exception of the Lübcke assassinator, who allegedly had help in procuring weapons: Kai Biermann, and Martin Steinhagen, “Die Waffen Des Stephan E.,” *Die Zeit*, 4 May 2020, <https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2020-05/mordfall-walter-luebcke-stephan-e-taeter-waffen>, accessed 13 August 2020.

transnational right-wing extremist website, for instance, counts over 700,000 views and grows daily by violence-glorifying hate posts.⁷³ On other social media platforms such as Gab or Telegram, Irish right-wing extremist groups congregate a significant audience too.⁷⁴

Thus, due to the internet, right-wing extremism is no longer predominantly a threat to countries with a strong offline right-wing extremist culture, but also to particularly peaceful regions previously free from high-profile right-wing extremist incidents, as the attacks in Norway and New Zealand demonstrate.⁷⁵

Conclusion

This article argued that there are three key factors creating conditions in which an increasing number of individuals in the West consider right-wing extremist violence a legitimate means to express their political will: economic and cultural grievances, the current socio-political discourse and the internet's role as a force-multiplier. Moreover, it evidenced that these factors also impact the Irish society. Ireland is therefore assessed as providing a fertile ground to the current worldwide surge in right-wing extremism. While an in-depth discussion of the factors driving right-wing extremism, the degree of their manifestation in Ireland, and in consequence a thorough threat assessment would exceed the scope of this article, it nonetheless follows that Ireland would greatly benefit from starting to decisively counter right-wing extremism, as its unhindered spread generates at the very least fear, animosity against minorities and marginalised groups as well as societal rifts.

73 "Éire Subthread," on Stormfront.

74 E.g. "Ireland First!" on Gab, and "Ireland Knows," on Telegram.

75 Hartleb, *Lone Wolves*.



5G

5G and the Huawei Question in Ireland

Dr Richard Maher

Abstract

This article examines some of the risks and trade-offs regarding Huawei's inclusion in Ireland's 5G (fifth-generation) mobile network infrastructure. As information networks become increasingly important components of national security for many states, questions over the security of these networks have assumed greater urgency. While 5G mobile technology – which promises to make possible advances in everything from autonomous vehicles to artificial intelligence (AI) and the so-called Internet of Things (IoT) – presents many exciting new opportunities it also creates potentially serious security risks and other dangers. The Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei is the world's leading maker of 5G network equipment. Due to the company's murky ties to the Chinese government, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), some countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand, have banned the company from their 5G network infrastructure. Many other countries are reviewing what level of access to their 5G networks, if any, to permit Huawei. This article argues that permitting Huawei even restricted access to Ireland's 5G mobile broadband network poses potentially serious foreseeable and unforeseeable risks, and that the nature and scale of these risks are likely to defy efforts to manage or mitigate them.

Introduction

Ireland, like many countries around the world in recent years, has faced a difficult and potentially far-reaching decision when it comes to the rollout of its 5G, or fifth-generation, wireless networks: whether to allow Huawei, the Chinese telecom giant with suspected links to the Chinese government and Communist Party, to build part of its 5G mobile broadband infrastructure or whether to ban the company from its networks, a step many countries have already taken. As 5G becomes increasingly embedded in states' critical infrastructure – and a key component of everything from artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing to the command and control of military operations and defence systems – a clearer understanding of the nature and scope of the potential security risks associated with Huawei's inclusion in 5G wireless networks and whether these risks can be managed or mitigated is increasingly important.

Of Ireland's three major mobile network providers, one – Eir – has decided to use Huawei equipment in its 5G mobile networks.¹ While, to date, the Irish government has taken no official position on Huawei's inclusion in Ireland's 5G network infrastructure, this article argues that the inclusion of Huawei equipment in even non-core parts of Ireland's 5G mobile networks creates both foreseeable and unforeseeable risks to network and data security that are likely to defy efforts to manage or mitigate them.

This article first describes both the potential benefits as well as some of the possible dangers associated with the transition to 5G wireless technology. It then discusses the risks of including Huawei equipment in Ireland's 5G network infrastructure and why efforts to manage or mitigate these risks will be so difficult.

¹ Eoin Burke-Kennedy, "Eir 'Very Happy' with Huawei as Supplier for 5G network," *The Irish Times*, 28 January 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/technology/eir-very-happy-with-huawei-as-supplier-for-5g-network-1.4153946>, accessed 24 September 2020. Eir is using Huawei equipment only in the non-core part of its 5G network; it is using Ericsson for the more sensitive parts. Ericsson is also building the networks for Vodafone and Three, the other two major mobile network providers in Ireland.

The Promise and Peril of 5G Technology

5G wireless technology has emerged with great fanfare over the past decade. While previous transitions to next-generation wireless technology – which happen about once a decade – were more evolutionary than revolutionary, many technologists believe that 5G could usher in a period of fundamental change.² With faster speeds and lower latency, 5G opens up many new functional possibilities. It is expected to play a large role in the development of emerging technologies such as autonomous vehicles and virtual reality, for instance, and will be essential to realise the full potential of the so-called Internet of Things (IoT), in which billions of devices will be directly connected to each other and able to communicate in real time. With applications in everything from healthcare and energy technology to transport and national defence, some observers claim that 5G will be “the central nervous system of the 21st-century global economy.”³

Huawei is today the world’s biggest telecoms equipment maker and arguably the world leader when it comes to 5G technology.⁴ Founded more than three decades ago with a focus on the manufacture of phone switches, it now has 180,000 employees and controls nearly 30% of the global telecom equipment market.⁵ Headquartered in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, Huawei has operations in 170 countries, boasts 21 research institutes around the world, and has to date secured more than 90 5G contracts worldwide.⁶ With more than \$120billion in revenue in 2020, Huawei sits alongside Google and Microsoft as one of the world’s largest technology companies.

Huawei has been providing telecommunications equipment to Europe for two decades, and many European countries currently use the company’s equipment in their 4G mobile networks. As it has sought to expand its operations in Europe, Huawei has cultivated political and corporate friendships and has mounted a public relations offensive across the continent.⁷ Huawei’s founder Ren Zhengfei has said that Huawei’s goal was for Europeans to see it as “a European company.”⁸

Distrust of Huawei products has been growing around the world, however, including in Europe. The company is suspected of having close ties to the Chinese government and Communist Party, potentially making it susceptible to government pressure.⁹ Ren, the company’s founder and its current chief executive, served as an engineer in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) for nearly a decade, and Huawei’s first customer was with the PLA.¹⁰ The Chinese government has subsidized Huawei, which has allowed it to provide low-cost telecom equipment and undercut

2 See, for instance, World Economic Forum, “The Impact of 5G: Creating New Value across Industries and Society,” January 2020, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Impact_of_5G_Report.pdf, accessed 23 September 2020.

3 Keith Johnson and Elias Groll, “The Improbable Rise of Huawei,” *Foreign Policy*, 3 April 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/03/the-improbable-rise-of-huawei-5g-global-network-china/>, accessed 14 August 2020.

4 Dan Strumpf, “Where China Dominates in 5G Technology,” *Wall Street Journal*, 26 February 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/where-china-dominates-in-5g-technology-11551236701>, accessed 14 August 2020.

5 Johnson and Groll, “The Improbable Rise of Huawei.”

6 Reuters, “Factbox: Deals by Major Suppliers in the Race for 5G,” 17 June 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-telecoms-5g-orders-factbox/factbox-deals-by-major-suppliers-in-the-race-for-5g-idUSKBN23O2G4>, accessed 14 August 2020.

7 Adam Satariano and Raymond Zhong, “Huawei Cultivated Europe, but Suspicion is Growing,” *New York Times*, 23 January 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/22/technology/huawei-europe-china.html>, accessed 24 September 2020.

8 Quoted in Raymond Zhong and Li Yuan, “Telecom Giant Sees Doors Slam Shut across the Globe,” *New York Times*, 7 December 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/06/technology/huawei-arrest-meng-wanzhou.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

9 Lindsay Maizland and Andrew Chatzky, “Huawei: China’s Controversial Tech Giant,” Council on Foreign Relations, 6 August 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/background/huawei-chinas-controversial-tech-giant>, accessed 23 September 2020.

10 Johnson and Groll, “The Improbable Rise of Huawei.”

its competition.¹¹ Citing security concerns, many countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand have banned Huawei from their 5G network infrastructure.¹²

Instead of coming down simply to questions of cost and reliability, therefore, the decision of which vendor to use to build 5G wireless networks holds important national security implications. With its prominent data centres and technology sector – including the presence of multinational technology companies such as Google, Facebook, and Apple – this is particularly true for Ireland. As countries around the world are slowly beginning to realise, ensuring trusted and secure 5G networks is essential not just for economic but also for national security.

What Are the Risks of Including Huawei in National 5G Systems?

The use of Huawei equipment in national 5G networks involve two kinds of risk: technical and political. The technical risk concerns questions of network and data security. The political risk involves the possible repercussions from either China or the United States on an issue that has taken on broader geopolitical significance.

The United States and other Huawei critics have argued that including the company in national 5G networks could allow the Chinese government to infiltrate these networks, leaving countries vulnerable to intelligence gathering, data theft, or sabotage.¹³ A 2019 report by the Oversight Board of the UK's Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Centre (HCSEC) highlighted, moreover, "serious and systematic defects in Huawei's software engineering and cyber security competence."¹⁴ Not only could Beijing gain access to the vast amounts of sensitive data from individuals, companies, and governments that flow across these networks, but in a moment of conflict, China could even disrupt or disable them.

Many critics have pointed in particular to China's 2017 National Intelligence Law – which requires Chinese companies to "support, assist, and cooperate with state intelligence work" wherever they are – as evidence that Huawei could be forced to work on behalf of the Chinese government.¹⁵ Unlike in Western countries, these critics argue, there is often no clear line between independent business and the state in China. While Huawei insists it would resist any government order to share information and says that it complies with laws and regulations wherever it operates, many national security and intelligence officials find these assurances less than fully convincing.¹⁶

China may not even have to take drastic steps such as requiring Huawei to include pre-installed back doors in its equipment to wield significant leverage over those countries that

11 Chuin-Wei Yap, "State Support Helped Fuel Huawei's Global Rise," *Wall Street Journal*, 25 December 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/state-support-helped-fuel-huaweis-global-rise-11577280736>, accessed 23 September 2020.

12 Robert Fife *et al.*, "Canada is Now the Only Five Eyes Member to Not Ban or Restrict Use of Huawei 5G Equipment," *Globe and Mail*, 14 July 2020, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-canada-now-only-member-of-five-eyes-alliance-to-have-not-banned-huawei/>, accessed 25 September 2020.

13 Stephen Castle, "Pompeo says China Seeks to Control Future Internet," *New York Times*, 9 May 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/08/technology/pompeo-huawei-britain.html>, accessed 23 September 2020.

14 Reuters, "Britain Rebukes Huawei over Security Failings, Discloses More Flaws," 28 March 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-huawei-security-britain/britain-rebukes-huawei-over-security-failings-discloses-more-flaws-idUSKCN1R90ZC>, accessed 14 August 2020.

15 Yi-Zheng Lian, "Where Spying is the Law," *New York Times*, 13 March 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/13/opinion/china-canada-huawei-spying-espionage-5g.html>, accessed 23 September 2020.

16 Ashley Feng, "We Can't Tell if Chinese Firms Work for the Party," *Foreign Policy*, 7 February 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/07/we-cant-tell-if-chinese-firms-work-for-the-party/>, accessed 24 September 2020.

use Huawei kit in their 5G networks. The mere knowledge that China could use its position to infiltrate or disrupt these networks would itself be a form of leverage. “How free would we really be in our choices with respect to protecting human rights and other issues,” said Norbert Röttgen, chairman of the German Parliament’s foreign affairs committee, “if we know that the functioning of crucial parts of our economy depends on the good will of an external power?”¹⁷

While Huawei has claimed that it is committed to openness and transparency, the company’s ownership structure and business operations remain opaque and secretive, which has further diminished perceptions of its trustworthiness in many countries. The company, which remains privately held, has a well-chronicled history of corruption and intellectual property theft.¹⁸ It has also faced myriad legal troubles in recent years. In December 2018, Meng Wanzhou, the company’s chief financial officer and Ren’s daughter, was arrested in Canada at the request of the United States on charges of violating U.S. sanctions against Iran. In January 2019, Polish authorities arrested a Huawei employee on spying charges.¹⁹

Adding to the closer scrutiny of Huawei and other Chinese technology companies has been the shift in China’s behaviour in recent months, which has raised alarms in many Western capitals.²⁰ China’s aggressive pursuit of regional pre-eminence and its crackdown in Hong Kong have signalled that Beijing’s authoritarian posture both at home and abroad is hardening. Without naming Huawei or China, a 2020 European Commission report warned against using 5G suppliers from a “hostile” country, especially cases in which there is a link between a firm and a government that does not face checks and balances.²¹

The decision to use Huawei equipment also carries various political risks. Both the United States and China have pressured countries to take sides in what is emerging as a battle for global technological supremacy.²² The United States has lobbied allies and other close partners, including Ireland, to ban Huawei from their 5G networks, threatening to cut off intelligence sharing with any country that uses Huawei equipment in its 5G infrastructure.²³ China, in turn, has threatened retaliation against any country that bans Huawei from its 5G network. China’s ambassador to Germany, for instance, warned that German automakers could be pushed out of the Chinese market as well as other unspecified “consequences” if Germany bans Huawei from its 5G infrastructure.²⁴

17 Quoted in David E. Sanger and David McCabe, “Europe Resisting Campaign by U.S. to Block Huawei,” *New York Times*, 18 February 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/17/us/politics/us-huawei-5g.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

18 Katie Benner, Paul Mozur, and Raymond Zhong, “Huawei Said to be Under U.S. Investigation in Trade-Secrets Case,” *New York Times*, 17 January 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/technology/huawei-investigation-trade-secrets.html>, accessed 23 September 2020.

19 Adam Satariano and Joanna Berendt, “Poland Arrests 2, including Huawei Worker, on Spying Charges,” *New York Times*, 12 January 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/11/world/europe/poland-china-huawei-spy.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

20 Steven Lee Myers, “For an Ascendant China, Reining in Hong Kong is just the Start,” *New York Times*, 25 May 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/24/world/asia/china-hong-kong-taiwan.html>, accessed 24 September 2020.

21 European Commission, *Cybersecurity of 5G Networks: EU Toolbox of Risk Mitigating Measures*, 29 January 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/cybersecurity-5g-networks-eu-toolbox-risk-mitigating-measures>, accessed 14 August 2020.

22 Marianne Schneider-Petsinger, Jue Wang, Yu Jie, and James Crabtree, “US-China Strategic Competition: The Quest for Global Technological Leadership,” Chatham House, November 2019, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/CHHJ7480-US-China-Competition-RP-WEB.pdf>, accessed 23 September 2020.

23 Charlie Taylor, “US Reiterates Opposition to Huawei Equipment being Used for Irish 5G,” *The Irish Times*, 17 February 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/technology/us-reiterates-opposition-to-huawei-equipment-being-used-for-irish-5g-1.4176580>, accessed 24 September 2020.

24 Katrin Bennhold and Jack Ewing, “German Call on Huawei and 5G may Hinge on Vital Automakers,” *New York Times*, 17 January 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/world/europe/huawei-germany-china-5g-automakers.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

For many European countries, calculations of political risk may simply come down to the question of whether Huawei will be able to resist Chinese government pressure to spy. If so, the experience of other countries, including the United States, should be troubling. “Given that the U.S.’ National Security Agency is known to sabotage equipment in transit, bribe companies to deploy sabotaged standards, and compel cooperation of U.S. companies in intelligence activities,” one observer noted, “it would be naive to expect any less of China.”²⁵

Are the Risks Manageable?

While few observers in Europe deny that allowing Huawei and other Chinese telecom companies to build part of their country’s 5G network would come with no risk, some have argued that this risk can be effectively managed or mitigated.²⁶

The UK announced in January 2020, for instance, that it would permit Huawei to build part of its 5G network, though with some restrictions. Huawei would be excluded from the “core” or most sensitive parts of the UK’s network, such as government, military, or intelligence installations. The UK also limited Huawei’s stake in its 5G network to no more than 35 percent and required the company to provide its hardware and source code for examination and security reviews.²⁷ For many European countries faced with the same decision of whether to include Huawei in their 5G network infrastructure, this seemed to represent a reasonable and pragmatic middle road: it limited Huawei’s role in 5G network infrastructure, subjected it to rigorous monitoring and inspection, but did not exclude it completely.

The UK reversed this decision in June 2020, however, and announced that it would exclude Huawei entirely from its 5G networks. UK cyber security officials cited the impact of new U.S. sanctions against Huawei, which meant that reliable non-Chinese suppliers could no longer work with the company. In turn, UK cyber security officials could not provide assurances that Chinese-made equipment would be safe to use in the UK’s telecom network infrastructure. The UK also decided to strip existing Huawei equipment from existing networks.²⁸

Two problems arise when it comes to efforts to manage or mitigate the risk of a state actor infiltrating national 5G networks for malicious purposes. First, the risks are essentially incalculable.²⁹ China could gain a foothold in the network of any country using Huawei equipment, for instance, which would then introduce a new set of risks. As 5G promises to become a key component of states’ critical infrastructure in coming years, risks to data security and the operation of key industries multiply and expand. As a result, the damage to a country’s financial, industrial, and energy infrastructure could potentially be incalculable. Moreover, notions such as core and periphery make little sense when talking about next-generation wireless technology. In the world of 5G, there is no clear-cut distinction between

25 Nicholas Weaver, “A Risk Analysis of Huawei 5G,” *Lawfare*, 17 April 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/risk-analysis-huawei-5g>, accessed 14 August 2020.

26 Mathieu Duchatel, “While Weighing 5G Security Risks, France Predicts it can Manage Huawei without Banning It,” *South China Morning Post*, 28 July 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3020354/while-weighing-5g-security-risks-france-predicts-it-can-manage>, accessed 25 September 2020.

27 Adam Satariano, “Britain Gives Green Light to Huawei for 5G Work,” *New York Times*, 29 January 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/technology/britain-huawei-5g.html>, accessed 25 September 2020.

28 Adam Satariano, Stephen Castle, and David E. Sanger, “Defying China, Britain rejects telecom giant,” *New York Times*, 15 July 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/business/huawei-uk-5g.html>, accessed 25 September 2020.

29 Alexei Bulazel, Sophia d’Antoine, Perri Adams, and Dave Aitel, “The Risks of Huawei Risk Mitigation,” *Lawfare*, 24 April 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/risks-huawei-risk-mitigation>, accessed 14 August 2020.

core and periphery as there was in previous generations of wireless technology.³⁰ Restricting Huawei to certain parts of the network infrastructure is thus not a feasible option for ensuring the system's overall security.

Second, full risk mitigation is essentially impossible at a technical level. Even with rigorous testing and monitoring, it would be impossible, for instance, for a national security or intelligence service to provide assurances that Huawei equipment was not compromised or posed no national security risk.³¹ "No reasonable amount of system testing can prove that the system is free of defects," one cyber security expert said. "Testing offers evidence that a system meets certain requirements [...] but it is impossible to demonstrate that the system will not also do something undesirable."³²

Source code validation can be useful when it comes to trusted partners. It can show, for instance, that a system meets certain standards. But, as other experts warn, "the *absence* of vulnerabilities or backdoors can rarely be proved."³³ Constant efforts to manage and mitigate risk is also enormously costly. The cost of constant and rigorous testing and other risk-mitigation efforts would likely far exceed any upfront savings that might be gained from using Huawei equipment in the first place. "For technology embedded in critical infrastructure," these experts say,

"the scale and complexity of risk mitigation so quickly outstrips the lower-cost benefit that discussing possible mitigations seems akin to rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic. Over the long term, the upfront savings in cost will be dwarfed by the need to constantly create, update, and maintain mitigations for the ever-evolving risk the government would be taking on."³⁴

Risk management or mitigation efforts are thus likely to prove insufficient to ensure full data and network security. Given how often codes can be updated or changed, Huawei's gestures such as offering government access to its source code is also insufficient to guarantee that the company is a safe vendor. Still, while the question whether China *could* use Huawei to spy or steal information is a technical one, the question whether China *would* use these networks for malicious activity is a political and intelligence one.

Conclusion: Where Does Ireland Go from Here?

Where does this leave Ireland and its decision whether to include Huawei in its 5G network? Since it is unlikely that Ireland could replicate the UK's ability to rigorously monitor Huawei equipment for security vulnerabilities, does it have any choice but to follow London's decision to ban Huawei from its 5G mobile networks?

Ireland finds itself in a no-win position. Its decision will either strain its relationship with the United States or alienate China, which is an increasingly important trade and investment partner. Further complicating Ireland's decision is that absence of a common EU approach

30 Alexi Drew and Charles Parton, "Committing to Huawei for 5G risks Establishing a Dependency," *Financial Times*, 12 September 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/b63e31b6-cb1a-3a64-a74d-4f6be367e788>, accessed 25 September 2020.

31 Weaver, "A Risk Analysis of Huawei 5G."

32 Herb Lin, "Huawei and Managing 5G risk," *Lawfare*, 3 April 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/huawei-and-managing-5g-risk> accessed 14 August 2020.

33 Bulazel *et al.*, "The Risks of Huawei risk Mitigation" (emphasis in original).

34 *Ibid.*

toward 5G. While the EU has introduced a “toolbox” member states can use to bolster the security of their 5G networks, member states are ultimately responsible for implementing risk mitigation strategies themselves and ensuring the security of their network infrastructure. Especially for small member states like Ireland, a common EU approach could mitigate some of China’s ability to exert pressure or retaliate against countries that restrict Huawei’s access to their 5G networks or ban it entirely.

Huawei’s inclusion in Ireland’s 5G network introduces serious and arguably unmanageable security risks and challenges. While the threat of Chinese retaliation for excluding Huawei is real, Ireland must weigh the long-term risks and strategic implications of using Huawei equipment in its 5G network to any short-term disruption to trade or financial flows with China. In an increasingly digital global economy, 5G has the potential to generate complex and often unquantifiable risks to a state’s national security. As the contest over information networks and next-generation technology heats up, Ireland and other countries must determine how to navigate this new form of great power competition.



Europe’s “Interstitial” Security Institutions: What Relevance for Ireland’s Defence Forces?

Dr Brendan Flynn

Introduction

This paper explores "some small interstitial" European security institutions which exist in the margins between the EU and NATO. The latter are not the only "show in town." A more diverse European security ecosystem has emerged which includes: the Franco-British Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF); the UK led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) with Nordic/Baltic membership; the French led European Intervention Initiative (E2I); the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (HCCE), in Finland; and finally, three distinct heavy lift aircraft pooling arrangements. These interstitial institutions are offering many European states opportunities to co-operate on defence without the excessive political baggage associated with 'the big two.' Yet apart from participation in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), a more typical multilateral body, Ireland stands aloof from all of these initiatives. This is regrettable because some present few challenges to Irish neutrality and indeed could help in achieving the aims of the Defence White Paper (and update) in 2015, 2019. More fundamentally, European security has become increasingly complex, fragmented and diverse, a trend to which Irish defence policy needs to be flexible enough to respond.

Getting beyond a 'Brain Dead NATO' and the Mirage of European Strategic Autonomy

The paper highlights institutional opportunities as Europe's security and defence institutions evolve. Europe's defence has been traditionally conceived of in binary terms: a US led NATO contrasted with the EU's recent proactivity on defence and the proverbial bogeyman of "an EU army." A "stark choice" is often suggested between either NATO or the EU. In this vein, French president Macron quipped in 2019 that "NATO is brain dead,"¹ while the year before he argued: "We won't protect Europeans if we don't decide to have a real European army [...] we must have a Europe that can defend itself on its own without relying only on the United States."²

There are clearly significant political problems within NATO although it remains the paramount military framework for co-operation within Europe. Not the least of their woes is President Trump's lacklustre support, but Turkey has also repeatedly delayed or blocked key decisions.³ Conversely, for the first time an EU budget for defence policy has been agreed, with important implications for the funding of EU missions.⁴ There is also much renewed activity on defence industrial co-operation, which has led to a discussion about 'European Strategic autonomy'. However, none of this means the EU is a proven defence actor and the EU's most recent budget deal cuts back on ambition.⁵

Neither is the idea of strategic autonomy to be taken at face value. During some episodes of the Cold War, European leaders have doubted American presidents would always stand by them up

1 James Dobbins, 'Is NATO Brain Dead?', *The RAND Blog*, 3 December 2019, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/12/is-nato-brain-dead.html>.

2 Steve Holland, Tim Ahmann, David Alexander, and Cynthia Osterman, "Trump, Arriving in Paris, Lashes out at Macron over Defense Remarks," *Reuters World News*, 9 November 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-macron-idUSKCN1NE2HN>.

3 Turkey blocked for over six months a NATO defence plan for Poland and the Baltic states, agreed in December 2019 and in 2017 a NATO-Austria association agreement.

4 The recently proposed European Peace Facility offers higher levels of common funding for EU peace-keeping missions. €5bn was agreed for this fund for the years 2021-27. See: Niklas Novaky, "The Budget Deal and EU Defence Cooperation: What are the Implications?", *Euractiv*, 22 July 2020, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/opinion/the-budget-deal-and-eu-defence-cooperation-what-are-the-implications>.

5 Brooks Tigner, "EU Leaders' Budget Deal Savages Union's Defence and Military Support Initiatives," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 22 July 2020, <https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/eu-leaders-budget-deal-savages-unions-defence-and-military-support-initiatives>.

to the threshold of risking nuclear war.⁶ However, this often produced a dynamic of seeking to "lock the Americans" within NATO as much as it prodded the Europeans to club together. We can witness the same dynamic at play today, especially led by eastern members such as Poland and the Baltic states.

European countries have also in the past sought to produce military equipment together to reduce their dependence on American military technology, or to rationalise their own national defence industrial base by avoiding duplication.⁷ As important has been a desire to secure lucrative arms export contracts free from American conditionality. It is no accident that the recent debate on "strategic autonomy" emerged following an American refusal to allow sub-components for French made cruise missiles be exported to Egypt.⁸ However, given the complexity of global supply chains, the era of any country autonomously producing their own military weapon systems does not accurately reflect how dependent European states (and even the US itself) have become on non-European partners for raw materials, key sub-components, and most of all, as industrial and commercial partners.

European strategic autonomy should not then be read as a rekindling of the old Gaullist desire for "autarky" considering that French defence policy decisions in recent years have seldom adopted "*la défense européenne avant tout.*" France over successive presidencies has become more pragmatic, flexible and agnostic about what security institutions it supports.⁹ It is worth observing that as part of a wider policy shift, the French Navy has recently deployed their single carrier off Taiwan in support of America's posture towards China.¹⁰ That carrier's Rafale-M jets are now more used to operations from American aircraft carriers than British aircraft,¹¹ while French special forces fight with US forces in the Sahel and Syria.¹² No more than the rest of Europe, France co-operates with the reality of American hegemonic military power when and where it is expedient.

What Level Should we Look at to Understand European Defence?

Notwithstanding such complexities, much of the academic and media commentary remains fixated on the very latest NATO or EU security developments. This tends to ignore what is going on outside the "bubble" of their institutional ecosystems. Recent scholarship has quite rightly re-emphasized the importance of the nation state in driving security policy choices, budget spending, force deployment and quality.¹³ There is a lot happening in European security that is not being decided in Brussels, the locus for both NATO and the EU.

6 Beatrice Heuser and Kristan Stoddart, "Difficult Europeans: NATO and Tactical/Non-strategic Nuclear Weapons in the Cold War," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 28, no. 3 (2017), pp. 454-476.

7 Irish soldiers who trained with the MILAN anti-tank missile might be interested to note it was a product of Franco-German industrial co-operation from the 1960s. It has since been replaced by the all-American Javelin missile.

8 Gareth Jennings, "France Could Replace US Parts in SCALP Missile to Circumvent ITAR Restrictions for Egypt, but at Some Delay," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 2 August 2018, <https://www.janes.com/article/82147/france-could-replace-us-parts-in-scalp-missile-to-circumvent-itar-restrictions-for-egypt-but-at-some-delay>.

9 Thierry Tardy, "France's Military Operations in Africa: Between Institutional Pragmatism and Agnosticism," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 43, no. 4 (2020), pp. 534-559.

10 Judah Grunstein *et al.*, "How Will France's Growing Naval Presence in Asia Affect Its China Ties?" *World Politics Review*, 3 June 2019, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/27908/how-will-france-s-growing-naval-presence-in-asia-affect-its-china-ties>.

11 Mark D. Faram, "French Connection: Joint US-French Carrier Ops Highlight Common Ground," *The Navy Times*, 18 May 2018, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/05/18/joint-usfrench-carrier-ops-highlight-common-ground-and-interests/>.

12 Gorm Rye Olsen, "Transatlantic Cooperation on Terrorism and Islamist Radicalisation in Africa: The Franco-American Axis," *European Security* 27, no. 1 (2018), pp. 41-57.

13 Hugo Meijer and Marco Wyss, "Upside Down: Reframing European Defence Studies," *Cooperation and Conflict* 54, no. 3 (2019), pp. 378-406.

This paper argues we should also be alert to the "interstitial spaces" between and at the margins of NATO, the EU or even the UN,¹⁴ but firmly above the national level. As Samuel Faure has argued, European states do not just choose one institutional mode of co-operation but many at the same time, even sometimes entailing significant costs and contradictions.¹⁵ In this context, interstitial security institutions can be defined as security organizations, or even looser *ad hoc* initiatives, that emerge in the interstices-the political and military operational spaces-between the EU, NATO and the UN. They exist and sometimes thrive on the margins of these classic multilateral institutions.¹⁶ They are typically intermediary organizations, working like bridges to cover a political gap or obstacle, and they often borrow resources and their practices from well-established actors (notably NATO). Any military units they may have access to are also usually prioritized for national, UN, NATO and/or EU missions. They are also often ambiguous as to whether they are complementary or an alternative to the dominant institutional structures such as the EU, NATO or the UN. While usually overlooked, or dismissed as marginal "side shows," they are experiencing considerable activity in recent years, making it opportune to chart how they relate to Ireland's situation.

Ireland already participates in one of the oldest examples of such institutions-the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and Irish military personnel have been deployed as observers on their missions over the last decades in very small numbers.¹⁷ While the OSCE could be described as a classic multilateral security institution it has in practice become a rather limited and specialized platform inhabiting the interstitial spaces between the UN, NATO and the EU-it is one of the few bodies consistently acceptable to Russia. Apart from election monitoring, it currently provides an observation force in the Ukraine, however, it lacks logistical support and is vulnerable to intimidation and attacks.¹⁸

It is important to qualify that the claim here is not that interstitial security networks matters above all others, or that NATO or the EU are irrelevant. Rather the argument is that we need to examine the totality of interactions between multiple levels of European defence policy. At each level there are reciprocal exchanges of diplomatic, military and industrial co-operation, sometimes open competition, and often organizational learning mingled with symbolic gestures and discourse. The interaction overall is what counts.

Two core observations are offered here. Firstly, we see diversity and nuance in European security arrangements: many European states are hedging their security bets and backing several 'horses' while retaining investment in NATO and the EU. Secondly, rather than being content to face a stark binary choice between either an increasingly fractured NATO or a very unproven EU as a security actor, European countries are exploring interstitial "work arounds" that deliver pragmatic security co-operation and opportunities for diplomatic reassurance. They are certainly not content to be stuck with an either NATO or the EU binary.

14 The UN remains an important and yet often overlooked venue for the mediation of European conflicts involving Russia, notably the still unresolved Ukraine crisis and on Europe's hinterland are conflicts such as Libya or Syria, where again Russia has both an important veto within the Security Council and a military capability to influence events on the ground through backing armed factions. While a more robust UN observation mission replacing the current OSCE mission in the Ukraine is a possibility, an EU or NATO observer force would be unacceptable to the Russians.

15 Samuel B.H.Faure, "Varieties of International Co-operation: France's "Flexilateral" Policy in the Context of Brexit," *French Politics* 17 (2019), pp. 1-25.

16 Jozef Bátor, "The 'Mitrailleuse Effect': The EEAS as an Interstitial Organization and the Dynamics of Innovation in Diplomacy," *Journal of Common Market Studies* (2013), pp. 1-16. See discussion on interstitial institutions, pp. 2-5.

17 For example, two Irish officers were deployed with the OSCE for 2016. However, Irish monitors with the current OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine are all civilians.

18 See OSCE/SMM Ukraine, *Status Report*, 27th July 2020, <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/5/5/458446.pdf>.

A Franco-British post-Brexit *entente*? The Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF).

Even though Brexit means an end to British participation in EU security policy, the possibility of UK participation in some EU mission has not been ruled out entirely and could be examined on a 'case by case basis.'¹⁹ Informally, the UK continues to co-operate closely with EU led forces in specific missions, notably Mali, where the British Army have recently "surged" 250 soldiers to assist the deteriorating security situation in that country.²⁰ To be clear, these troops will operate separate from but 'parallel to' French and other national forces, including those who are part of the EU mission to Mali. Given that neither country has been shy about overseas armed interventions in the past, pragmatism and a shared strategic culture will likely underpin ongoing Franco-British security operation. Britain will continue to be a vital player in European Security, but just not under formal EU institutional structures.

The most obvious example of how this might happen is the so-called 'Lancaster House' special relationship between France and Britain which predates Brexit but has received renewed interest because of that shock.²¹ Politics aside, a tangible Franco-British military formation has emerged: Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF). In bilateral exercises such as Griffin Strike 2019,²² an ability to conduct joint amphibious operations up to brigade scale was demonstrated. The CJEF could be suitable to undertake emergency mass extractions of UK, French and other nationals in the context of a civil war. Both countries have sufficient amphibious and/or airborne national capabilities if required. Rather than manage the operation through NATO, and because it cannot now be an EU mission if the UK is involved, it would be expedient to just run the operation from national HQ's in either Paris or London.



Figure 1. Amphibious Operations have consistently featured in joint Franco-British exercises—a French (top) and British (bottom) landing craft training, circa 2012, together as part of the CJEF.²³

The relevance of the CJEF for Ireland is that such an operation may be joined by other countries in a 'coalition of the willing' even though the CJEF is usually conceived of as purely Franco-British. Because these two countries are the two most important security actors in Europe, with the most capable and deployable armed forces, they can use the CJEF as a platform to lead any crisis. Yet a purely bilateral Franco-British task force would be untenable if a proposed intervention would

²³ Image Source: Open Government License from <http://www.defenceimagery.mod.uk/fotoweb/archives/5042-Downloadable%20Stock%20Images/Archive/Royal%20Navy/45154/45154571.jpg>.

be very large. For legitimacy a greater number of participants would be needed. One would hope that senior military planners in London and Paris have not forgotten the many lessons from the Suez debacle (1956).²⁴ A "solo-run" by the French and British did not prove politically tenable then and it is no more sensible today except in very discrete situations.

While it might seem the CJEF is irrelevant from an Irish Defence Forces perspective, there could be scenarios where it might be deployed under a robust UN mandate including 'by the way', an extraction of a small number of Irish citizens as third-country nationals. In that case, participation by Irish special forces might be opportune, although to be clear it would not be essential for France and Britain. Moreover, any Irish involvement would be under their direction and control.

Not for the Faint Hearted? The European Intervention Initiative (EI2)

The limits of a purely Franco-British contingency military force reveal a space for a bespoke "European" structure that permits flexible security co-operation without "EU-ising" the relationship. We need to appreciate that future European security co-operation will not always equal EU led security missions, although in practice the operational overlap 'on the ground' between the two categories of EU and European (but not EU) deployments may become Jesuitical: blink and you might miss it, especially if you were a Malian insurgent.

The logic of a bespoke organization to permit European, but not EU or NATO led missions, can be explicated as follows:

- The operation is diplomatically blocked within NATO;
- The operation is politically rejected as unsuitable for the EU;
- Participation by non-EU states such as Britain, Norway or Denmark (who has an opt-out on EU security affairs) is essential or desirable;
- A Franco-British or bilateral operation is unfeasible or undesirable.

In the past such restrictions might have activated the now defunct West European Union (WEU), an alliance that existed within the NATO alliance.²⁵ Or purely ad hoc coalitions of the willing would be whipped up.²⁶ Today, there is the possibility of the new (2018) French led European Intervention Initiative (EI2). This was apparently launched because of Macron's dissatisfaction with the PESCO project, which we should recall has a great many small states tinkering with their many modest defence collaborations that may in the end not amount to much.²⁷

²⁴ Simon C. Smith (Ed.), *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on The Crisis and its Aftermath* (London: Routledge, 2008).

²⁵ See Alyson J.K. Bailes and Graham Messervy-Whiting, "Death of an Institution: The End for Western European Union, a Future for European Defence?" *Egmont Paper* No. 46, 26 May 2011, <https://www.egmontinstitute.be/death-of-an-institution-the-end-for-western-european-union-a-future-for-european-defence-2/>.

²⁶ A good example of such was *Operation Alba*, an Italian led, UN mandated, multi-national intervention into Albania in 1997, which lasted five months. The EU and US (and therefore NATO) refused to get involved. See Paolo Tripodi, "Operation Alba: A Necessary and Successful Preventive Deployment," *International Peacekeeping* 9, no. 4 (2002), pp. 89-104.

²⁷ See Brendan Flynn, "PESCO and the Challenges of Multilateral Defence Co-operation for Ireland: More of the Same or Sea-change?" *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 29 (2018), pp. 73-95.

More tellingly, French unease relates to how PESCO is about developing defence capabilities but not about using them. It does not create common usable EU forces, which the EU Battlegroups were supposed to be but are not (at least yet) given that they have never been deployed. EI2 provides then a platform for countries that are both willing and able to deploy forces on robust missions but also humanitarian assistance. Politically, EI2 is almost exclusively a creature of the Elysée palace and the tiny secretariat is run from the French Defence Ministry.²⁸ It is a creature of the Macron presidency and it remains an open question whether it will survive his tenure.

Militarily, it remains an unproven entity and for now is merely a scaffold for ambition rather than having a solid operational planning capability, which NATO and the EU both have. It does not attempt to develop new capabilities (which at least PESCO does) nor promise new dedicated forces. Instead, a somewhat obscure role for the EI2 has been the claim that its mission is to create 'a common European strategic culture.' This is a potentially open-ended and nebulous goal. The literature on strategic culture stresses how particularistic and nationally embedded such mindsets are and how they are slow to change, often only through operational experience.²⁹

The EI2 has conducted no military exercises (to date). If it has a future it may well be in response to some ad hoc contingency where NATO and the EU both refuse to intervene, and yet the leading European countries might steel feel obliged to act. This means it is a residual framework. However, it is not fanciful to imagine a NATO or EU internally divided and incapable of agreeing action. We should recall that the Libyan intervention of 2011 initially looked like it would go that way. France, the UK and Italy were resolved upon intervention, but they lacked political support.³⁰ Even after they secured a relatively robust UN mandate, the Obama administration was lukewarm, and Turkey within NATO moved to delay the operation becoming an official NATO mission. Germany simply refused to participate outright.

In conclusion, the EI2 is a framework to manage "European" coalitions of the willing, with French leadership. Its suitability for Ireland would appear to be unclear chiefly because it is both unproven and lacks focus, although it is significant that Finland and Sweden have joined. However, both of these countries have moved much closer to NATO, with special 'host nation status' agreed in 2014, and both have participated in either NATO exercises, or have hosted NATO forces for training on their territory: US marines were in Sweden for manoeuvres in 2018.³¹

Yet because neither country is covered by full NATO membership, they are keen to hedge their bets by investing in other security initiatives. Living adjacent to a Russia that has repeatedly waged small wars (and arguably won them) is a sobering geopolitical lesson. In the event of some unspecified act of Russian aggression towards either country, EI2 offers the possibility that a French led European (but not EU) force could come to their assistance. However, this would be without the need to invoke NATO, with all the escalatory dynamics that could entail nor the necessity for high level American (and Turkish) approval.

²⁸ Alexandra Brzozowski, "Macron's Coalition of European Militaries Grows in Force," *Euractiv*, 24 September 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/macrons-coalition-of-european-militaries-grows-in-force/>.

²⁹ Dmitry Adamsky, "Russian Campaign in Syria: Change and Continuity in Strategic Culture," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 43, no. 1 (2020), pp. 104-125.

³⁰ Dag Henriksen and Ann Karin Larssen (Eds.), *Political Rationale and International Consequences of the War in Libya* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

³¹ See Shawn Snow, "Marines are on Sweden's Coast Preparing for Largest NATO Exercise as Russia Grumbles," *Marine Times*, 4 September 2018, <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/09/04/marines-are-on-swedens-coast-preparing-for-largest-nato-exercise-as-russia-grumbles/>.

A Very British *Coup d'Éclat*? The Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF)

Announced at the NATO Cardiff summit in 2014,³² this is a British initiative but speaks to a need once again for countries like Sweden and Finland to find reassurance outside of formal NATO links.³³ It is officially described as,

“a partnership of like-minded nations that provides a high-readiness force of over 10,000 personnel [...] committed to supporting global and regional peace, stability and security either on its own or through multinational institutions such as NATO.”³⁴

The uncertainty of NATO acting swiftly and coming to battle united is probably the main reason why the UK's Joint Expeditionary Force is attractive to many Nordic and Baltic countries. Members include almost all of these countries,³⁵ Sweden and Finland joining in 2017, with the notable exceptions of Germany and Poland.

While the British see the JEF as an adjunct to NATO forces,³⁶ its attraction is that it can deploy a substantial British-Nordic expeditionary force very fast, free from Turkish, German or potentially, American, dithering within NATO, and which can be later folded up within a NATO framework.



Figure 2. A Royal Marine, foreground, training together with a Latvian Soldier in old Soviet era buildings at Skrunda, Latvia, in 2019. Both were participating in the JEF exercise Baltic Protector 2019.³⁷

The JEF is then in some ways the inverse of Macron's EI2. It is British rather than French led. It is narrow in its focus on the Arctic-Nordic-Baltic theatre of operations whereas EI2 is open-ended with a suspicion that it is destined to fight, if at all, with the French in some African country. It offers structured and deployable military units and engages in exercises to test its capability whereas EI2 does neither. There is no mention of strategic culture but there are close doctrinal and operational affinities between the Royal Marines, Dutch Marines and other amphibious and

32 UK Government, "International Partners Sign Joint Expeditionary Force Agreement," 5 September 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-partners-sign-joint-expeditionary-force-agreement>.

33 For background, see Håkon LundeSaxi, "British and German Initiatives for Defence Cooperation: The Joint Expeditionary Force and the Framework Nations Concept," *Defence Studies* 17, no. 2 (2017), pp. 171-197.

34 See RAF/MoD, "Comments by UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace on NATO and European Security Signalled through Joint Expeditionary Force Readiness Declaration and Baltic Air Policing deployment," 13 February 2020, <https://www.raf.mod.uk/news/articles/nato-and-european-security-signalled-through-joint-expeditionary-force-readiness-declaration-and-baltic-air-policing-deployment/>.

35 The Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania are founding members from 2015. Iceland would appear to be another Nordic omission if operations in the wider North Atlantic are envisaged.

36 RAF/MoD, "Comments by UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace on NATO and European Security."

37 Image Source: Open Government License: <http://www.defenceimagery.mod.uk/fotoweb/archives/5042-Downloadable%20Stock%20Images/Archive/Royal%20Navy/2020/September/45166141.jpg>.

special forces that are pivotal within the JEF. These are countries whose militaries greatly respect and know each other, and they have no difficulty operating together (in English).

Does the JEF have any relevance to the Irish Defence Forces? The fact that neutral Finland and Sweden are members might suggest as much, although as already explained those countries are moving beyond their traditional neutral stance. One is tempted to describe them as 'post-neutral' although the term 'non-aligned' seems preferred. Irish participation in the EU Nordic battlegroup in the past will have created some understanding of how the Nordic militaries operate and probably also an appreciation for the quality of Ireland's soldiers. However, the focus on expeditionary territorial defence would seem incompatible with Ireland's neutral stance. The JEF is designed to turn up to the fight if the Russian's engage in a Crimea style land grab or perhaps some other show of force in the Baltic sea or in the high Arctic (seizure of Svalbard).

Preparing for 'Polite People/ вежливые люди': The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, Finland

In fact, rather than a conventional military invasion, Russia's operational art in the Ukraine matched the concept of hybrid war: blending covert and overt elements, regular and irregular forces, and fundamentally blurring the line between war and peace. Hybrid attacks involve a mix of cyber, subversion, propaganda and terrorist style attacks with threats, and in some cases, actual significant use of conventional forces. These can also be employed unconventionally-for example, seeking partial occupation of territory rather than full invasion or enforced 'protection' for humanitarian styled convoys.

Unmarked Russian soldiers, who took over the Crimea in a matter of hours, were dubbed by the pro-Kremlin media as 'polite people' in keeping with the fiction that they were indigenous armed groups (and not at all elite Russian naval infantry). If we leave aside the academic hype about hybrid war, the concept is useful although nothing new.³⁸ States have often waged covert and proxy wars or blended regular and irregular forces in the past, and not just Russia. Britain fought, and arguably won, a longstanding '*konfrontasi*,' or undeclared war, with Indonesia for much of the 1960s.³⁹ The Irish Defence Forces are no strangers to hybrid forces in the guise of Hezbollah or the South Lebanese Army.

Reflecting this threat and the fact the geography places Finland in the frontline of a renewed Russian willingness to use force in unpredictable and nuanced ways, Helsinki is the location for the European Centre of Excellence for Counter Hybrid Threats (HCoe). This is not a NATO or EU institution, although its origins are rooted in EU Commission, Parliament and Council dialogue on hybrid threats. Formally however, it was founded by national government agreement although representatives of both NATO and the EU are invited to sit on its steering board. Membership is open for any member state of NATO or the EU and therefore it includes the USA, Canada and Turkey. HCoe co-operates closely with both NATO and the EU, yet by being hosted in non-aligned Finland it should be attractive to Ireland, although inexplicably, Ireland does not participate. In fact, Ireland is one of very few European states who are not members (Switzerland,

³⁸ Robert Johnson, "Hybrid War and Its Countermeasures: A Critique of the Literature," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 29, no. 1 (2018), pp. 141-163; Mark Galeotti, *Russian Political War: Moving beyond the Hybrid* (London: Routledge, 2019).

³⁹ John Subritzky, "Britain, Konfrontasi, and the End of Empire in Southeast Asia, 1961-65," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 28, no. 3 (2000), pp. 209-227; C. H. Tuck, "Measuring Victory: Assessing the Outcomes of Konfrontasi, 1963-66," *Journal Of Military History* 82, no. 3 (2018), pp. 873-898.

Croatia, Malta and Serbia are outside but neutral Austria and non-NATO Cyprus are members along with Sweden and Finland).

Perhaps there is a mistaken view that hybrid threats are not relevant to Ireland or that membership would be inconsistent with the longstanding policy of neutrality? Because most hybrid attacks fall below or skirt the threshold of an "armed attack or aggression," neutrality is not strictly speaking relevant because it is not a question of taking sides in a war or delivering on a call for military assistance, but rather of proactively helping another country facing systematic subversion.

Ireland could credibly participate in the HCoE as long as it is made clear there is no obligation to deploy troops to defend another state. More relevant would be an anticipatory role through participation in simulations, joint exercises and training which improves national capabilities to resist cyber, subversion and covert actions by hostile third countries. In this guise HCoE can be viewed as a collaborative capacity building partnership and not an alliance.

If there is a criticism of the HCoE it could be that the organization for now works most like an academic think-tank and research institute. It is not a security actor that deploys uniformed forces. Their remit includes running simulations and exercises, and these may involve national armed forces among other relevant agencies, but arguably there is not enough focus on building national capabilities to deal with hybrid threats through joint procurements, training and shared placements of key personnel.

European Heavy-Lift Co-operation: Three Case Studies in Pragmatism?

A narrower but also more pragmatic style of interstitial defence cooperation can be found in the various European initiatives for "smart pooling"⁴⁰ heavy lift aircraft capacity, of which at least three major projects have emerged. The first of these is a NATO funded initiative which bizarrely relies on Russian aviation!

The Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS), which emerged in 2006 involves nine NATO countries⁴¹ paying a 'retainer' for guaranteed access to up to five Russian An-124 aircraft between 24hrs and nine days availability based out of Leipzig.⁴² It has been an "interim" fix for well over a decade and was originally managed by a sub-contracted commercial firm (Volga Dnepr), in effect being a multi-national type of 'public-private' partnership. Flying hours are agreed on a "per year, per country" basis. Russian aircraft and crews remain a staple of the global heavy lift commercial market and even Irish forces have contracted them to move equipment. SALIS in particular was used, for example, by the Belgian air force to deploy their NH90 helicopters to Mali in 2018 in support of the UN MINUSMA mission.⁴³

40 Daniel Möckli, "Smart Pooling: State of Play in European Defence and Armaments Cooperation," *CSS Analysis in Security Policy*, December 2012, No. 126, <https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/61251/1/eth-7152-01.pdf>.

41 France, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Norway, Belgium and Czechia still remain members of SALIS. Originally 15 NATO countries were members, plus Sweden from 2006. However, by 2012 various countries have exited SALIS relying on other initiatives.

42 For an overview, see NATO, "Strategic Airlift," 31 March 2020, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50107.htm.

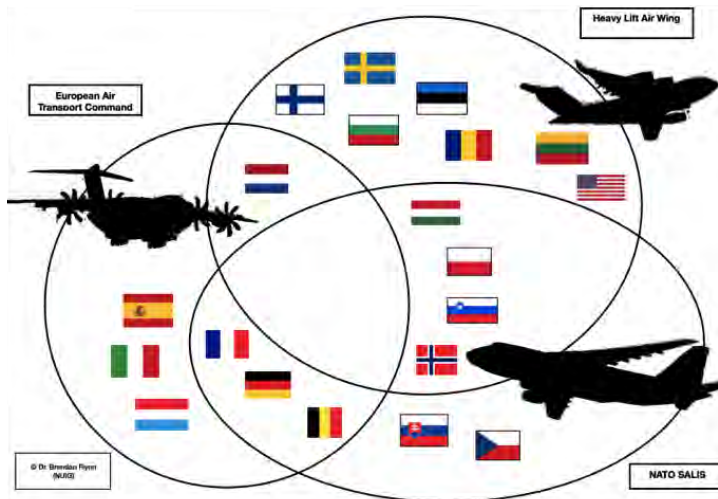
43 For details, see Helis, "Antonov AN-124 Took Belgian NH90s to Mali," 6 February 2018, <https://www.helis.com/database/news/an-124-nh90-mali-belgium/>.

Europe's "Interstitial" Security Institutions: What Relevance for Ireland's Defence Forces?

However, the link with Russia has become sensitive given the imposition of ongoing EU sanctions against Russia.⁴⁴ For a period in 2018 the contract underpinning SAILS was not working.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, the need for these aircraft is such that nobody wants to end the deal, and in late 2018 a reconstituted commercial entity, registered in Germany, now delivers the capability including potentially other Russian heavy lift types. It remains unclear how politically robust this arrangement is, given the reality that Russia is a party to conflicts in Syria, Libya and other parts of the world where NATO and the EU may wish to deploy forces.

It is partially for that reason that other "pools" have emerged. Since 2009, the Heavy Airlift Wing, based in Hungary, has a fleet of three C-17 strategic airlifters, access to which is shared among ten NATO member states as well as Sweden and Finland. This is a different model which involves fractional ownership and access to dedicated aircraft. Although the management structure is technically independent of NATO, they are in fact heavily supported by NATO.

From 2010, the European Air Transport Command (EATC), based in Eindhoven, provides a consortium of seven EU and NATO states⁴⁶ that have agreed to pool on an annual basis their large aerial refuelling aircraft and a suite of strategic and tactical airlift transporters (A400M, Hercules, C295, etc.). It is a bespoke entity, although it is clearly intended to make air assets available for EU security missions, and if necessary, the UN and NATO. It has a rota of 'hours per tonne of cargo' with over 200 aircraft which is about 75% of the European air transport capacity and on a daily basis involves up to 60 flights a day.⁴⁷ Aircraft assigned to the EATC remain nationally owned and maintained but come under the operational control of its commander⁴⁸, however, there are robust procedures for return of aircraft to national authority if required⁴⁹.



44 Still in place as of July 2020. See European Council, "Russia: Council Renews Economic Sanctions over Ukrainian Crisis for Six More Months," 29 June 2020, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/06/29/russia-council-renews-economic-sanctions-over-ukrainian-crisis-for-six-more-months/>.

45 Will Waters, "Volga-Dnepr Confirms Withdrawal from NATO SALIS Contract," *Lloyd's Loading List*, 1 May 2018, <https://www.lloydsloadinglist.com/freight-directory/news/Volga-Dnepr-confirms-withdrawal-from-NATO-Salis-contract/71842.htm>.

46 France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain and Italy, with Belgium operating its own and a single A400M for Luxembourg.

47 For details, see <https://eatc-mil.com/en>.

48 For details, see <https://eatc-mil.com/en>.

49 See section on the EATC in Dick Zandee, Margriet Drent, and Rob Hendriks, "Defence Cooperation Models Lessons Learned and Usability," *Clingendael Report*, October 2016, https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Report_Defence_cooperation_models.pdf.

This latter initiative is probably the most realistic type of co-operative pooling for Ireland, although to be clear a country has to negotiate entry and that is not a straightforward process. In particular, any country has to offer an aircraft into the common pool and given that the Irish air corps have no dedicated transport aircraft⁵⁰ this would logically require Ireland to purchase such. The question of military transport has been the subject of recent Oireachtas questions⁵¹, but what has received less attention is the idea of joining one of the pooling arrangements in place. It might be objected that such pooling arrangements would be incompatible with neutrality and the triple lock. The example of Germany during the Libya intervention is relevant here in that they refused to participate in the intervention, despite the fact it had a UN mandate. While the EATC fleet of aircraft were busy meeting the extra demands of its member states participating in that mission, German aircraft were not assigned duties that would support Libyan operations but were given other routine transport assignments.⁵² A similar arrangement could be employed for any Irish aircraft/crew in the event of an operation that did not have a UN mandate or was otherwise inconsistent with neutrality. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Conclusion: The Case for a Cautious Embrace of the 'Interstitial'?



Ireland's profile on defence co-operation is arguably remarkably cautious. The bulk of Irish political and institutional capital remains invested in UN peacekeeping operations, and occasionally EU led peacekeeping. In the past, Irish troops have operated successfully under NATO to deliver

⁵⁰ The existing CASA 235's are maritime patrol aircraft that can be tasked for transport roles. They have been deployed outside the state for such missions, however, this necessitates taking them away from maritime duties. The new Airbus 295's on order to replace these will in the same way be optimised for maritime patrol with secondary transport abilities. The Air Corps do operate a VIP jet but this is not the same thing as a tactical transporter.

⁵¹ See for example the replies by the then Minister of State for Defence Paul Kehoe on 3 June 2020, when he indicated an 'options paper' on strategic airlift would be prepared, *Oireachtas Debates*, 993, no. 7 (2020), <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-06-03/4/>.

⁵² Matteo Ricci, "The European Air Transport Command: A Viable Model for Promoting European Military Cooperation? EU Diplomacy Paper 08/2016," August 2016, http://aei.pitt.edu/85951/1/edp_8_2016_ricci.pdf.

UN mandated peacekeeping, but co-operation today with NATO is minimalist. Beyond such interactions there has been little engagement in any other initiatives nor much by way of Irish participation in multi-lateral European exercises which are vital for the professionalism of any military. In a wider European context Irish non-participation must increasingly seem isolationist, an attribute hardly consistent with a country that is shortly to become a member of the UN Security Council?

While it is quite understandable that Ireland chooses not to participate in either the CJEF, the JEF or even the EI2 examples of defence co-operation described here, it is rather more puzzling that Ireland has decided to remain aloof from the HCoE or the various heavy lift pooling arrangements. It is interesting that the recent (2019) Review of the White Paper on Defence specifically mentions the phenomenon of hybrid warfare,⁵³ but fails to specify in detail how the Defence Forces and other relevant agencies are to be resourced and oriented to better deal with such threats. It is in this context that membership of a modest organization such as HCoE could help galvanise Irish efforts and ensure that our responses, however modest, were consistent with best practices elsewhere.

The lack of interest in joining aircraft pooling is also puzzling considering that need for mobility which Ireland's Defence Forces obviously have considering the volume of peacekeeping undertaken, which have often in the past necessitated contracting aircraft or ships from third parties. However, disinterest probably reflects a lack of political ambition for the Irish Defence Forces, revealed in consistently one of the lower defence budget allocations of any EU state. Joining aircraft pooling requires countries to make a financial stake, or commit aircraft and personnel, and this straight away is problematic in an Irish context given the small size of the Irish Air Corps as regards numbers of aircraft and personnel.

Yet "interstitial" projects offer scope for flexibility and pragmatic co-operation on defence in ways that avoid the usual objections of neutrality or the triple lock requirements. These institutional 'work arounds' have become a fact of life for the European security architecture and they need to be understood. If opportune and suitable, they should be actively participated in.

One of the insights offered here, is that other small states are not content to leave security to the hands of just NATO, or the EU, nor the UN. They also explore other institutional solutions, partly because the international bodies such as the EU and NATO face their own blockages which require redundancy in how to respond to threats. Such participation does not have to call into question the traditional Irish policy of "military neutrality" or the precise formula of the triple lock which governs foreign deployments. If anything, to make existing Irish defence policy sufficiently flexible and workable, openness to participation in at least some of the more suitable "interstitial" security initiatives would seem timely.

⁵³ See in Government of Ireland (Department of Defence), *White Paper on Defence Update 2019*, 12 December 2019, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a519cf-white-paper-on-defence-update-2019/>, pp. 18-19.



Assessing the Strategic Implications of the ‘Triple-Lock’ for Ireland’s Democratic Control of Armed Forces and Engagement in International Peace Missions in a Context of Geopolitical Competition

Dr Cornelia Baciu

Abstract

This article examines the following research questions: 1) Does the triple-lock infringe Ireland's democratic control of its armed forces, and 2) What are the strategic implications of the triple-lock for Ireland's participation in peace missions in a perilous context of great power rivalry? It is argued that, as 'international support' is increasingly turning into international competition, and international consensus becomes increasingly fragmented, future UN decisions can be skewed by geopolitical tensions. The paper begins by first discussing the puzzle of geopolitical competition and the principle of democratic control of armed forces, which implies that domestic civilian institutions are in charge of the State's military. Second, the legal roots of the triple-lock are ascertained. Third, it gauges the implications of the triple-lock on Irish sovereignty and democratic control of armed forces. Fourth, the paper concludes by estimating the strategic implications of heightened geopolitical competition and waning multilateralism on the Irish Defence Forces and future engagement in international peace missions.

Introduction – The Puzzle of Great Power Competition and Democratic Oversight

As the geopolitical environment is becoming increasingly volatile, could Ireland, from a legal perspective, risk losing democratic oversight agency, due to the triple-lock requirement, in the future? The UN five permanent members (P5) have a substantive relevance for Irish foreign policy. Authorisation or endorsement by the UN is a prerequisite for Irish participation in peace support and crisis management missions, as per the triple-lock. The UN authorisation is perceived to constitute a mechanism through which the public is assured that overseas military missions of the Irish Defence Forces benefit from broad 'international support', testified by a UN resolution. Irish neutrality is deeply rooted in UN-mandated action, which is seen as a source of legitimacy. But the exert of authority by P5 might represent an encroachment of Irish sovereignty, as the final decision making is transferred to the UN permanent members. This paper argues that, as 'international support' is increasingly turning into international *competition*, P5 decisions in the UN Security Council (UNSC) can be skewed by geopolitical tensions. It gauges the implications of geopolitical competition on the principle of democratic control of armed forces, which implies that domestic civilian institutions have full command of the State's military.

Given the tectonic shifts and competing views in the strategic aspirations of P5 countries and the increasingly fragmented international consensus, the triple-lock could engender a situation in which one or more of the P5 can veto a UN resolution and thus the deployment of Irish military troops in peace missions abroad, thus exercising control of the State's armed forces, *de jure*. The paper argues that the triple-lock could prevent Ireland from participating in future EU operations that are not "formally mandated" by the UN.¹ This could jeopardise Irish credibility to participate in future EU missions, as it might pose the State in a serious legal foreign policy dilemma. Such a legal dilemma occurred in 2003, when Ireland had to withdraw its initial contribution to the peacekeeping mission to Macedonia when the EU decided to take over from NATO after the establishment of a UN mission was vetoed by China. Similarly, lack of certainty of a renewed UN

¹ Ray Murphy, "Introduction," in *The Irish Yearbook of International Law, Volume 13, 2018*, ed. Fiona de Londras and Siobhán Mullally, (Oxford, New York, NY: Hart Publishing, 2020).

mandate² was a factor prompting the government to withdraw its important contribution to the peace mission in Chad, a decision much regretted by the international community.

The Triple-Lock and Irish Peace Deployments – Many Questions, Few Answers

The triple-lock can be interpreted as an extension of the *contrat social*, in which the P5 become an invited extension of the Leviathan. The authority invested to the State by its citizens is transferred to the UN, which is invested with agency on the Irish Defence Forces.

The legal origins of the triple-lock are not easily ascertained. The word ‘triple lock’ in relation to the triple requirement for Irish Defence Forces participation in international missions appears in a Dáil debate from 2002: “there must be a UN mandate, it has to be a decision of this House and it must come within the remit of our Defence Acts.”³ The phrase “triple-lock” *per se* is not mentioned in the Constitution or any of the Defence Acts. It is rather a *policy* perceived to conserve the military neutrality, *de facto* conditioning Defence Forces deployments on UN authorisation.

Indeed, UN authorisation as legal premise for international deployments can be traced back to the Defence (Amendment) Act 1960. This specifies that contingents of the permanent defence forces can be dispatched to an “international force established by the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations.”⁴ This policy has remained contested. Concerns regarding the foreign policy restrictions imposed by it were expressed on numerous occasions. Talking in the Dáil on 08 May 2003, Deputy Gay Mitchell (FG) affirmed: “As a sovereign state, we should decide these matters for ourselves, based on the merits of each individual case. We should not have bound our hands in this way. It is time to end this sham and the Defence Acts should be amended accordingly.”⁵ Others in the Dáil went even further with the counterfactual analysis, questioning the viability of the triple-lock in the case of sudden UN disappearance. Another highly important dimension is related to the right to self-defence: would Ireland be legally entitled to self-defence in a context in which its troops would come under attack while being in a conflict theatre under the presumption that the mission will become an International United Nations Force, but which, for some reason – e.g. the UN resolution is vetoed by P5 – is not forthcoming?⁶ Art. 4.5 of the Irish Constitution stipulates that “nothing (...) shall be invoked to prohibit, control, or interfere with any act of the Defence Forces during the existence of a state of war or armed rebellion”, raising an additional intriguing question, namely whether the prerequisite of UN authorisation would not actually constitute an interference, if not control, of the Defence Forces, thus infringing this constitutional provision.

A further important act is the Green Paper on Defence 2013. The Paper acknowledged that the triple-lock is a “legal constraint on the State’s sovereignty in making decisions about the

2 Ray Murphy, “Post-UN Withdrawal: An Assessment of Peacekeeping in Chad,” in *Irish Yearbook of International Law*, ed. Fiona de Londras and Siobhán Mullally, 3–28, Irish yearbook of international law v. 4-5 (Oxford: Hart, 2013).

3 Dáil Éireann, “Ceisteanna – Questions. - Constitutional Amendments,” <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2002-03-26/4/?highlight%5B0%5D=triple&highlight%5B1%5D=lock> (accessed August 11, 2020).

4 See *Defence (Amendment) Act 1960: Number 22 of 1960* (1960), <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1960/act/22/enacted/en/print> (accessed August 11, 2020); *Defence (Amendment) (No. 2) Act, 1960: Number 44 of 1960* (1960), <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1960/act/44/enacted/en/print.htm>.

5 See Dáil Éireann, “Athens European Council: Statements,” <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2003-05-08/8>

6 Tanya Colclough, “The Role of Neutrality on Irish Defence Policy Decisions: EU a Time for Change,” *Political Perspectives* 2, no. 2 (2008), p. 25.

use of its armed forces” and that this “could prevent the State from participating in a peace support operation”.⁷ The EUFOR Concordia is given as an example. The Paper concluded that the advantages of retaining the triple-lock mechanism outweighs the disadvantages, while, nonetheless, setting the auspices for future debates on the utility of the triple lock.

In sum, the triple-lock policy is not a provision mentioned in the Constitution – which does not make any reference to the “United Nations”. The triple-lock is legally rooted in domestic legislation, i.e. the Defence Act of 1960 and subsequent amendments. It does not mean that the UNSC needs to approve Irish troops deployments in a separate decision. In fact, it means that the Defence Forces can be only deployed to international forces “established, mandated, authorised, endorsed, supported, approved or otherwise sanctioned by a resolution of the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations.”⁸ This premises an international deployment and ultimate control of the armed forces in international despatches on the existence of a UN resolution and unanimous approval by P5.

Civil-Military Relations, Sovereignty, Neutrality and the Irish Defence Forces

The classic civil-military *problematique*⁹ pertains to the amount of control that should be exerted over the armed forces in order to maintain both democratic institutions and military effectiveness. But Ireland is a *sui generis* case, exposed to another type of double paradox: 1) is the triple-lock infringing Ireland’s democratic control of its armed forces, and 2) is it obstructing Ireland’s participation in peace missions in a context of escalating great power rivalry?

According to Art. 13.4 of the Constitution, the supreme command of the Irish Defence Forces is vested in the President. The subordination of the military to civilian authority is a *sine qua non* premise of democracy. Democratic civil-military relations imply civilian oversight of armed forces, which means that civilian state institutions have the ultimate command and control of the military. Participation in the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) unleashed heated debates on the implications for neutrality and the State’s control of its armed forces, while the triple-lock is normatively far less contested.

Whether the triple-lock is an infringement of Art. 13.4 of the Irish Constitution, or even Articles 1 and 5 that affirm the Nation’s sovereignty, is an extremely difficult question. As per the triple-lock, the final decision on Irish Defence Forces’ deployments to international missions is the prerogative of the UN five Permanent Members in the Security Council, which can veto UN resolutions, and thus ultimately decide on Irish international peace engagement. This invites us to gauge the consequences for Ireland’s sovereignty and democratic control of armed forces.

In a Westphalian legal understanding, democratic state sovereignty refers to the ultimate authority of an elected government to exert authority within a territory and have monopoly over the means of violence, including police and armed forces. But legitimacy and the *de jure* ultimate control of the Defence Forces, i.e. whether they participate in an international despatch or not, is vested in

⁷ Department of Defence, *Green Paper on Defence* (2013), <https://assets.gov.ie/24285/585a2c35199444a7be6d14e0b775c258.pdf>, p. 9.

⁸ *Defence Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009: Number 35 of 2009* (2009), <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2009/act/35/enacted/en/print.html>.

⁹ Peter D. Feaver, “The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control,” *Armed Forces & Society* 23, no. 2 (1996).

a collective security organisation, more precisely in the five UNSC permanent members, any of which can veto a UN resolution. The exertion of authority by foreign entities by *invitation*,¹⁰ in the sense that the triple-lock procedure can be seen as a form of invitation of the UN (P5) to take decisions on behalf of the Irish State, raises an important ontological question pertaining to the meaning of Westphalian sovereignty altogether.

If we apply a definition of sovereignty in which the "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception,"¹¹ the UN can be argued to be more sovereign than the Irish state. Peace missions and crisis management operations can be understood as emergencies, crises and thus exceptions from normal behaviour.¹² The UN has demonstrated juridical agency to ultimately decide on 'exceptions' and whether Ireland can participate in international peace support or crisis management operations or not, possessing "the responsibility for making the final binding decision."¹³ The most tangible proof of the impact that UN P5 can have on the Irish Defence Forces was operation Concordia, when China, based on geopolitical calculations, vetoed the establishment of a UN mission. The NATO Allied Harmony mission was replaced by an EU military peacekeeping mission, but this lacked *de jure* UN authorisation. Ireland had to withdraw its troops set for the peacekeeping mission in Macedonia. Hence, it can be inferred that the UN (P5) exercised indirect, but ultimate control, on the Irish Defence Forces.

In Irish understanding of collective security, the UN is considered a normative source of (international) legitimacy and Irish neutrality. Through the triple-lock, the UN becomes an international legal sovereign, with the authority to exert decision-making power on Defence Forces' international deployment. Ireland joined UN in 1955, after a Russian veto on the 1946 membership attempt in the context of the Cold War geopolitical rivalry. The authority investment into the UN is linked to the notion of military neutrality. Neutrality evolved from a pragmatic policy in the pre-Second World War context towards a principle that has shaped Irish identity, strategic culture and foreign policy.¹⁴ In a difficult international context, the new Irish State displayed strong support for the League of Nations, later UN, which was perceived as potential balance against an international system dominated by great powers.

In contrast to other European neutrals such as Austria or Switzerland, neutrality is not enshrined in the state constitution and on several occasions, during the 1960s, Taoiseach Seán Lemass and Jack Lynch denied that there was a principle of Irish neutrality.¹⁵ All other European neutrals have substantially stronger militaries, whereas Ireland's expenditure on defence was the lowest in EU/EEA comparison as percent of the GDP in 2018.¹⁶ While there is no technical definition of Irish neutrality and neutrality remains a contested term, the study of parliamentary debates in the Irish Dáil between 1999-2018¹⁷ revealed that the meaning of neutrality is intensively

10 Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, N.J [u.a.]: Princeton Univ. Press, 1999), p. 22.

11 Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty / Carl Schmitt; Translated by George Schwab; Foreword by Tracy B. Strong*, University of Chicago Press ed. (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press; Bristol : University Presses Marketing [distributor], 2005), p. 5.

12 See Pablo Zambrano, "Protego Ergo Obligo? The Sovereignty Paradox in the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine," in Steven Ratuva, Radomir Compel and Sérgio L. C. Aguiar (Eds.), *Guns & Roses: Comparative Civil-Military Relations in The Changing Security Environment* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 411–432.

13 Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Problem of Sovereignty Reconsidered," *Columbia Law Review* 48, no. 3 (1948), p. 361.

14 For more details on the evolution of Irish foreign policy see Ben Tonra *et al.*, *Irish Foreign Policy* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2012).

15 Noel Dorr, "The Significance of Neutrality in Irish Foreign Policy," in Iain Aitken and Seán McCrum (Eds.), *Neutrality: Irish Experience, European Experience* (Dublin: Dublin Monthly Meeting Peace Committee, 2009), pp. 23-26.

16 Eurostat, "How much do governments spend on defence?" 2 March 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20200302-1>.

17 Cornelia-Adriana Baciu, "Security Transformation and Multilateralism: The Future of Irish Defence and Foreign Policy," *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 29 (2018), pp. 97-117.

debated every time a decision is due that has security or foreign policy implications. Neutrality and membership in multilateral organisations co-exist and are both sources of Irish identity and foreign policy strategy. In citizens' perceptions neutrality has traditionally been associated with foreign policy objectives such as "non-involvement in war, independence, impartiality, peace-promotion, self-defence only, non-aggression, not supporting big powers, making own decisions, UN peacekeeping only."¹⁸

Especially post-Cold War, Irish neutrality meant, in practice, non-participation in mutual defence pacts and NATO. Ireland's right to refrain from participating in common or mutual defence is guaranteed by Protocols 10 and 11 of the Lisbon Treaty. Non-participation in common defence "pursuant to Art. 42 of the Treaty of the European Union" was also enshrined in the Irish Constitution with the adoption the 28th Amendment on 15 October 2009. PESCO shall not be confused with a common defence, being legally rooted in Art. 42 of TEU, inter alia.¹⁹ Art. 42 has six sub-clauses and the sub-clause 6, on which PESCO is co-based does not refer to establishing a common defence, but a "permanent structured cooperation."²⁰ The sub-clause pertaining to a common defence is 42.2, which is was mentioned as a hypothetical future objective, premised by a unanimous Council decision. Moreover, PESCO is in line with Art. 3 of the 2009 Defence Act, which condition Ireland's participation in permanent structured cooperation on its utility for UN missions. Capabilities developed by states in PESCO framework can be made available to UN or NATO missions, having thus the potential to boost Irish contribution to international peace support and crisis management.

In the case of NATO, Ireland did not join in 1949, as membership would have involved the recognition of UK sovereignty over Northern Ireland. In the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP), some of Ireland's activities include advancing the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, as well as resolutions on the protection of civilians and on good governance.²¹ As per Art. 3(b) and 6(e) of the PfP Framework Document, Ireland is bound to ensure democratic control of defence forces, stressing once again the importance of assessing the strategic implications of the triple-lock.

In sum, the invitation of the UN P5 to exert agency on domestic decision-making, and ultimately on the armed forces, does not seem to be Pareto-optimal, as the re-location of decision power at UN level is made in the detriment of Irish domestic decision agency pertaining to its military. Through the voluntary transfer of authority, Ireland does not receive anything in exchange, except the perceived guarantee of legitimacy for an international deployment. This invites us for further scrutiny of whether international legitimacy and P5 are really one and the same, as the collective understanding of neutrality seems to assume. The triple-lock mechanism does not provide the possibility to hold the UN accountable nor has the Irish public any options to sanction this body – in democracies, the electorate can sanction the governments through their voting behaviour. In the context of Brexit and increased Irish support for the EU, UN peacekeeping continues to be perceived as a normative guaranty of Irish neutrality, despite declining multilateralism and rising geopolitical tensions.

18 Karen Devine, "Irish Political Parties' Attitudes towards Neutrality and the Evolution of the EU's Foreign, Security and Defence Policies," *Irish Political Studies* 24, no. 4, (2009), pp. 467-490, p. 470.

19 See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12008M042>.

20 *Ibid.*

21 See <https://www.dfa.ie/partnership-for-peace/ireland-in-the-partnership-for-peace-programme/>.

Conclusion – The Paradox of Ireland's Democratic Control of Armed Forces and the Strategic Implications of the Triple-Lock on Irish Support for International Peace

The triple-lock policy raises crucial questions related to democratic control of armed forces, legitimacy and sovereignty, as well as its viability in the context of global power shifts and soaring rivalry between the great powers US and China or Russia, all three permanent members in the UNSC.

Whether the UN is a source of normative legitimacy for international deployments is a dilemma that was analytically canvassed in this paper. The international order in 2020 resembles to some extent the one in the 1950s, when Ireland joined the UN. The United States is once again officially engaged in great power competition, this time not with Russia, but with China. Ireland's positive attitudes towards the UN in the context of the Second World War and its aftermath can be explained by the overall enthusiasm vis-à-vis a brand new international collective security organisation, which at that time seemed to be able to balance an international system dominated by great power competition. But it did not. The Cold War ended after nearly half a century of tensions and it did not bring eternal peace. It transformed the international order and generated new theatres of conflicts and violence. Despite calls and efforts for reform, the UN, especially the UNSC came under massive fire for its decision-making procedure, which basically gives supreme authority to the P5, and mistrust persists. Not only that the P5 do not constitute a superior moral authority,²² but the UNSC has been inoperable on numerous occasions. Hitherto, because of recurrent vetoes, the UN was not able to solve armed conflicts in Europe's neighbourhood, i.e. Syria or Libya, which arguably have disproportionate implications on some of the P5.

Under the Defence Act 2009, the triple-lock also pertains to OSCE or EU missions, including to future deployments of the Battlegroups. The EU's agency in crisis management and as security actor in international governance has evolved considerably since the EU Global Strategy 2016. In the context of Brexit, Trump administration and emerging great power contest, the EU increased its level of ambition. This might be associated with more CSDP missions in the future. Despite the context of a pandemic, the EU is expected to invest more in its security and defence capabilities in the future, and the recent withdrawal of US troops from Germany in a blitz decision by the White House, might in turn stimulate Germany's role as policy entrepreneur in European security policy. In practice, most EU military missions were legally rooted in UNSC resolutions, however, not all, and such a condition is not compulsory, as the EU Concordia demonstrated. Some missions, e.g. in Mali, Somalia and CAR, were established based on invitation by the host government,²³ which is indeed a pre-condition in terms of legitimacy of an EU mission. In 2015, the UN and the EU signed the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peacekeeping and Crisis Management, which could boost EU contributions to UN peacekeeping in the future. But this does not exclude EU-own operations, or hybrid missions, which for example, could take the form of EU Battlegroups being a first responder until a UN mission is established.²⁴ As the UNSC becomes increasingly politicised and sometimes inoperable, and as missions

²² Ben Tonra, "Unpicking the "Triple-Lock" of Ireland's Defence Green Paper," (UCD School of Politics and International Relations), <http://politicalscience.ie/?p=451> (accessed August 11, 2020).

²³ Thierry Tardy, "The European Union and UN Peace Operations: What Global-Regional Peace and Security Partnership?," in Cedric de Coning and Mateja Peter (Eds.) *United Nations Peace Operations in a Changing Global Order*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 238.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

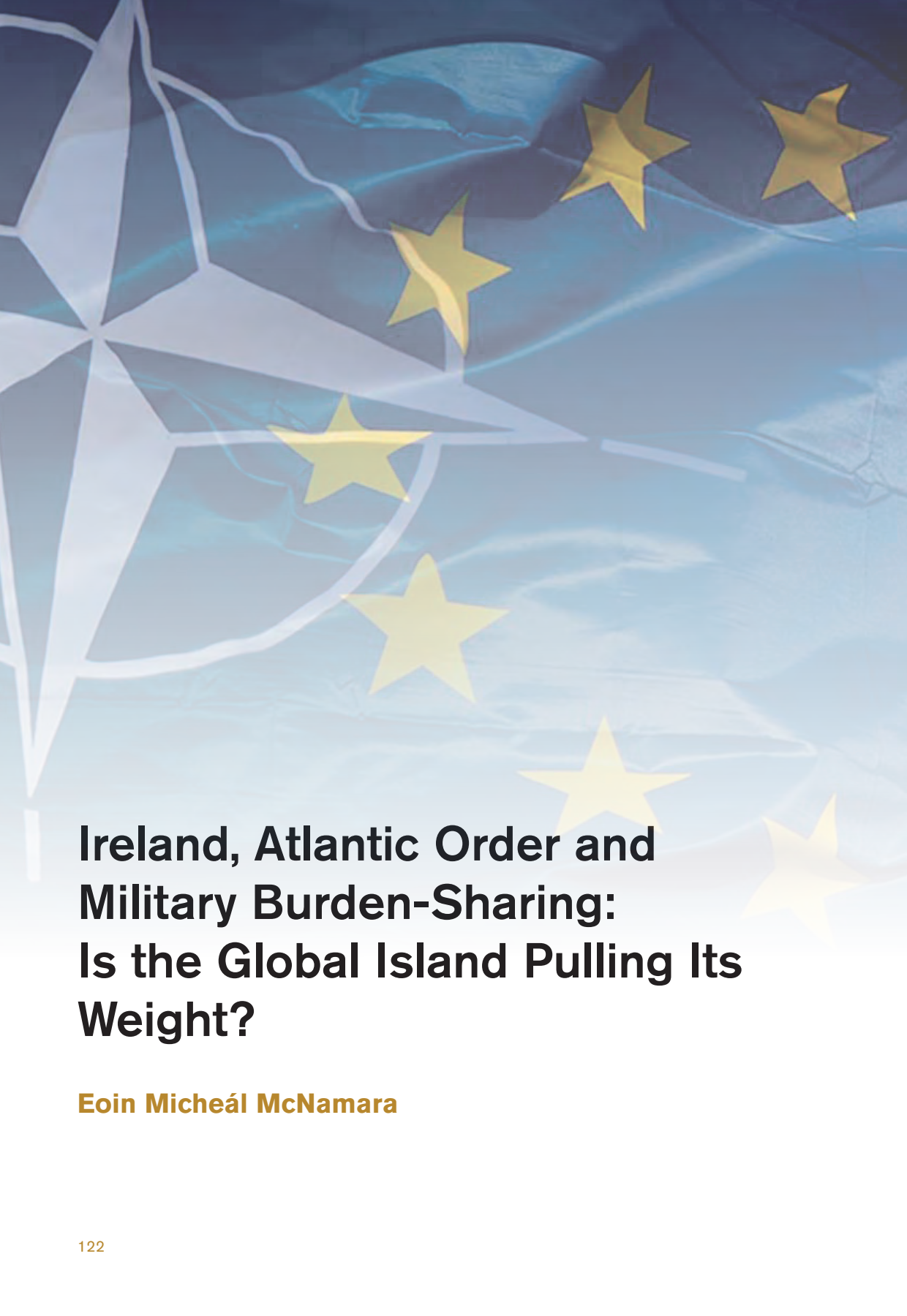
become increasingly strategic, more future EU missions outside the UN framework are therefore a plausible development. In the scenario in which EU governments will have to choose between contributing to an EU or an UN mission, most might opt for a European role, and so might Ireland. The preference to rather contribute to an EU mission might also be motivated by avoiding possible rejections by P5. Since 2000, more than 35 UN resolutions were vetoed, most of them by Russia and China.²⁵

To conclude, the UN is perceived as a source of legitimacy in Irish foreign policy making. As the international peace and security order returned to great power politics, there is an increased risk that future UN operations will be biased by P5 interests. International institutions can be obfuscated by great power politics, as recent withdrawals of the US from a series of international institutions (including the announced withdrawal from the World Health Organization in the context of a global pandemic!) demonstrated. While in debates about multilateral vs. multipolar international order, a small state “informed by public conceptions of neutrality,”²⁶ is anticipated to tend to support multilateralism, calculations need to be more strategic in a context of weakening multilateralism. The world becomes increasingly volatile and unpredictable, compelling the Irish government to be the only sovereign in command and control of its armed forces, and not delegate the right to self-defence to P5. Whether the triple-lock infringes the NATO Partnership for Peace Framework Document, and perhaps even Art. 4.5 of the Irish Constitution, can constitute some puzzles for future research. The downturn of UN primacy in the international order and the rise of the EU as a more autonomous crisis management actor, free from great powers veto, might trigger renewed public debates, especially in the context of a future national security strategy, about the utility of the triple-lock and whether it serves Ireland’s interests well or whether it should be undone.

Ireland’s engagement as a UNSC non-permanent member is highly important to push for much needed reforms and for reviving international organisations in the context of declining international institutionalism. But it needs to transcend formulating Irish foreign policy based on a collective understanding that equates P5 (on whose interests international UN missions will ultimately depend) with international legitimacy, to the detriment of national free will or regional organisations such as the EU, whose missions are also in line with UN principles. Moreover, escalating great power competition can evoke a paradox of Irish support for international peace but also a paradox of democratic control of armed forces. The triple-lock does not only constitute a legal impediment for the democratic control of the defence forces, but also an obstacle in planning ahead for peace and security.

²⁵ Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Security Council - Veto List* (2020).

²⁶ Baciu, “Security Transformation and Multilateralism,” p. 102.



Ireland, Atlantic Order and Military Burden-Sharing: Is the Global Island Pulling Its Weight?

Eoin Micheál McNamara

Abstract

Atlantic order constituted on multifaceted transatlantic cooperation between the EU and the US is an international structural platform that vitally supports Ireland's socio-economic prosperity. As a society, Ireland has benefitted immensely from the political, economic and security "public goods" that this order generates. This article argues that it is both a strategic necessity and a moral responsibility for Ireland to contribute effectively to the military security burden that underwrites Atlantic order. Transatlantic burden-sharing in today's international system requires a combined focus on regional and international security. At the broader international security level, Ireland has participated effectively as a small state in expeditionary operations under EU and UN auspices, these missions prevent security risks mobilising from conflict-torn locations. However, the "return of geopolitics" in Europe – signalled in earnest as the Ukraine crisis began in 2014 – has emphasised that European states must improve their territorial defence capabilities. Deteriorating security in Europe has put Ireland's ability to engage in military burden-sharing with EU and NATO partners under increased stress. While not at the frontline of tensions between Russia and the West, Ireland's strategic environs can still be a target for Moscow as Russia seeks to compete with the EU and NATO. This article argues that some problematic deficits in Ireland's national security posture also risk creating additional uncertainty within the broader Euro-Atlantic security environment.

Introduction

Liberal political and market economic principles form the basis of the Atlantic order that binds the US and Canada with Europe's liberal democracies. Atlantic order supports a complex entanglement of cooperative social, political, economic and security arrangements. This has been the main structural force driving intensified globalisation, transforming international economic and political systems over recent decades, with David McWilliams stressing that, "few societies in the world have been so positively transformed by the economic opportunities arising from globalisation as Ireland."¹ However, the maintenance of this Atlantic order comes with significant costs. Collective action across various binding institutions is required to service the military security burden that underwrites the Atlantic peace and the economic opportunities that derive from this.²

This article examines Ireland's performance as a contributor to the collective military burden-sharing that upholds Atlantic order. The article first situates Atlantic order within the broader international system before introducing some of the main concepts that define the military burden-sharing debate. At the broader international security level, it is argued that Ireland is a well specialised small state that can effectively contribute to EU and UN operations important for reducing global security risks. However, as the pan-European security situation has deteriorated over recent years, Ireland's military burden-sharing at the regional security level has been unimpressive. It is argued that some serious national security shortcomings particularly pertaining to airspace policing and maritime security are not only problematic

¹ David McWilliams, "Ireland Has a Lot to Lose from 'Slowbalisation,'" *The Irish Times*, 2 February 2019, <http://www.davidmcwilliams.ie/ireland-has-a-lot-to-lose-from-slowbalisation/>, accessed 14 August 2020.

² For a detailed analysis on Atlantic order and the peace that it supports, see Sten Rynning, "The Geography of the Atlantic Peace: NATO 25 Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall," *International Affairs* 90, no. 6 (2014), pp. 1383-1401.

for Ireland, but these vulnerabilities may also negatively affect EU and NATO partners, thus undermining Atlantic order at a time of increased geopolitical upheaval.

Atlantic Order and Transnational Flows

NATO has long been the military lynchpin that supports a stable Atlantic order. This is not to downplay a variety of important roles undertaken by EU; the OSCE; and the UN; all make important contributions to shared security allowing Atlantic order to prosper. This order has never been strategically insulated; it is situated within a wider international system eclectically defined by disparate densities of liberal peace; pragmatic economic cooperation; and the security competition and limited governance that increases military conflict risk.³ The Cold War was defined by bipolar tensions between two superpowers located at the core of the international system. Strategic change during the post-Cold War era has instead frequently diverted the West's security priorities towards the management of many small wars breaking out in the international periphery.⁴

With globalised mobility, risks extending from political violence in volatile areas of the periphery can soon be encountered in Western societies. This pattern was most strikingly demonstrated by the transnational circuit linking Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Germany and the US that facilitated the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.⁵ As well as terrorism, the illicit weapons transfers; refugee flows; human trafficking; and organised crime that continually trouble Western societies often have some connection to regions where violence flares. Blame for the aggravation of such risks rests not just with political violence in the periphery, but equally with consumption patterns in Western societies. For example, as Kalevi Holsti argues, many of the risks associated with human trafficking and organised crime networks are stimulated by Western economic demand. Western wealth combined with buoyant demand for illicit goods and services increases incentives for warlords and criminal networks to exploit financial profit from societies stricken with violent instability and limited governance.⁶

Collective Action and Security Provision

Opportunities for Western socio-economic prosperity are reinforced by an often hidden but nevertheless vital military security burden. Peter Forster and Stephen Cimbala define burden-sharing as the "distribution of costs and risks among members of a group in the process of accomplishing a common goal."⁷ As an alternative to the term "burden-sharing," former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Frederica Mogherini, has instead referred to this cooperative process as "responsibility sharing."⁸ The alternative terminology that Mogherini offers is important as the term "responsibility" captures the political implications involved with greater clarity. The

3 Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 9.

4 Amitav Archarya, "The Periphery as the Core: The Third World and Security Studies," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (Eds.), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, London: UCL Press, 1997, pp. 299-328.

5 Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, "Global NATO," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 5 (2006), p. 109.

6 Kalevi J. Holsti, "The Decline of Interstate War: Pondering Systemic Explanations," in Raimo Väyrynen (Ed.), *The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 153-154.

7 Peter K. Forster and Stephen J. Cimbala, *The US, NATO and military burden-sharing* (London: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 1.

8 As EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Mogherini has discussed "responsibility sharing" as an alternative to "burden-sharing" in different foreign policy contexts. Mogherini expressed her preference for "responsibility sharing" in security and defence cooperation encompassing both EU-NATO and EU-US relations in an interview with Hans Kundnani at the Lennart Meri Conference in Tallinn, Estonia on 12 May 2017, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ALQ0-8GUo8>.

consumption of economic or security benefits from a collectively upheld Atlantic order also comes with a political and moral responsibility to contribute proportionately to the maintenance of this order. Due to these political connotations, military burden-sharing has long been a tense issue in transatlantic relations. Speaking in 1970, Harlan Cleveland, then US Permanent Representative to NATO, summarised the alliance as “an organised controversy about who is going to do how much.”⁹ This logic has continued resonance in the contemporary NATO and EU contexts.

Much of the vocabulary informing the military burden-sharing debate originates from Mancur Olson’s logic of collective action pioneered during the 1960s. Olson’s theory focuses on the generation of “public goods,” within the state; these are defined as “goods and services, such as defence, that the government provides in the common interest of the citizenry.”¹⁰ This logic also transfers to politics within international organisations. “Public goods” can be produced “purely” (non-exclusive) or “impurely” (partially restricted), but when exclusively restricted these instead become “club goods” and therefore accessible only to members.¹¹ Olson theorises that larger organisations, like NATO and the EU, are prone to a “systemic tendency” that sees “exploitation of the *great* by the *small*.”¹² Larger states usually acquire greater responsibility to manage the organisation. Maintaining the organisation therefore becomes obligatory for larger members, while only optional for smaller counterparts. Asymmetric structural conditions create opportunities for smaller members to “free ride” by contributing less to an organisation’s collective security burden, while still consuming the collective benefits produced.¹³

Olson’s original theory was concentrated on NATO defence spending, but the burden-sharing that is today required to produce the collective security essential for maintaining the social wellbeing of Western states has been widened to include a diverse range of social, political, economic, ecological and military “goods.”¹⁴ As the organisation that coordinates the production of public and club “goods” across this broad spectrum, this transformation has brought burden-sharing among EU members into particular focus. The main burden-sharing tasks undertaken by EU member states to improve and maintain collective socio-economic prosperity have historically centred on non-military areas. In particular, the EU has a primary role in the management of economic stability among its members.¹⁵ However, with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) undergoing intense development since the 1990s, the EU has since excelled as a multidimensional security provider in international affairs. Andrew Moravcsik has described the EU as a “quiet superpower” because of its leadership in civilian security provision.¹⁶ The Union can routinely

9 Harlan Cleveland cited in Tomáš Valášek, “A New Transatlantic Security Bargain,” *Carnegie Europe*, 23 May 2017, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/2017/05/23/new-transatlantic-security-bargain-pub-70050>, accessed 14 August 2020.

10 Mancur Olson and Richard Zeckhauser, “An Economic Theory of Alliances,” *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 48, no. 3 (1966), p. 267.

11 Richard Cornes and Todd Sandler, *The Theory of Externalities, Public Goods, and Club Goods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

12 Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 29.

13 Robert Albanese and David D. Van Fleet, “Rational Behavior in Groups: The Free-Riding Tendency,” *Academy of Management Review* 10, no. 2 (1985), pp. 244-255.

14 Mark A. Boyer, *International Cooperation and Public Goods: Opportunities for the Western Alliance* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

15 Han Dorussen, Emil J. Kirchner and James Sperling, “Sharing the Burden of Collective Security in the European Union,” *International Organization* 63, no. 4 (2009), pp. 789-810.

16 Andrew Moravcsik, “Europe: The Quiet Superpower,” *French Politics* 7, no. 3-4 (2009), p. 403.

claim to be the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid and development assistance.¹⁷ The development of CFSP has seen the EU transform to become a formidable diplomatic presence. This includes a diverse range of functions including attractive persuasion through “soft power” or more robust non-military coercion possibilities extending to punishing economic sanctions against governments that violate human rights or threaten international order.¹⁸

US leaders regularly highlight unwillingness from NATO's European allies to undertake the most risk intense combat tasks often required for stabilisation in war-torn areas as a chronic problem in transatlantic burden-sharing.¹⁹ Criticism from Washington can downplay how strong EU performance as a civilian security provider partially compensates for this military shortcoming. US-EU diplomatic coordination often assists Washington's broader foreign policy aims; this lends strength to US legitimacy as a military security provider in policy areas benefiting Atlantic order.²⁰ The EU has also continued to improve its transatlantic burden-sharing performance as a military actor. The decision to lead Operation Artemis in Congo in 2003 began a more accommodating division of labour for expeditionary military operations with NATO.²¹ While NATO is better prepared for operations that require high-intensity combat as the alliance is directly reinforced by US military superiority, in cases where there is transatlantic divergence in strategic emphasis, the EU has become better specialised to deliver the combination of civilian and military stabilisation tasks required to manage risks extending from low-intensity conflicts. Military interventions are always prone to setbacks, but the EU's current conflict management efforts in Africa's Sahel region still highlight the stabilisation capabilities that the Union has now developed.²²

EU and UN Missions

Ray Kinsella has discouraged Irish support for EU military cooperation, claiming that this is focused on “preparing for war” and that deeper participation will undermine Ireland's neutrality.²³ The EU's military functions facilitate security provision that benefits both the Union's member states specifically and international security more broadly. However, most – if not all – EU military actions cannot be defined as “war” as conventionally understood. Under the conventional Clausewitzian “politics by other means” expression, “war” is an exercise that aims to “decisively defeat” an enemy or make a relative gain at the expense of a strategic competitor.²⁴ The EU's record as a military actor does not synchronise with Clausewitzian logic. Alexander Astrov argues that most of today's Western military operations have instead become a form of “policing” in support of international order.²⁵ Supporting this objective, the EU has developed multipurpose

17 European Commission, “EU Remains the World's Leading Donor of Development Assistance: €75.7billion in 2017,” press release, 20 April 2017, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/eu-remains-worlds-leading-donor-development-assistance-eu757-billion-2017_en, accessed 14 August 2020.

18 Gustav Lindström, “EU-US Burdensharing: Who Does What?,” *Challiot Paper* no. 82, (2005), pp. 62-78.

19 Robert M. Gates, “Remarks by Secretary Gates at the Security and Defense Agenda, Brussels, Belgium,” US Department of Defence, press release, 10 June 2011, <http://archive.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=4839>, accessed 14 August 2020.

20 Andrew Moravcsik, “Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain,” *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 4 (2003), pp. 88-89.

21 Richard G. Whitman, “NATO, the EU and ESDP: An Emerging Division of Labour?,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 25, no. 3 (2004), p. 430.

22 Andrea Locatelli and Michele Testoni, “Intra-allied Competition and Alliance Durability: The Case for Promoting a Division of Labour among NATO Allies,” *European Security* 18, no. 3 (2009), pp. 354-355.

23 Ray Kinsella, “Ireland Deserves a Referendum on our Neutrality,” *Irish Independent*, 21 July 2018, <https://www.pressreader.com/ireland/irish-independent/20180721/281569471513985>, accessed 14 August 2020.

24 Ian Roxborough, “Clausewitz and the Sociology of War,” *British Journal of Sociology* 45, no. 4 (1994), pp. 623-624.

25 Alexander Astrov, “Great Power Management without Great Powers? The Russian–Georgian War of 2008 and Global Police / Political Order,” in Alexander Astrov (Ed.), *The Great Power (Mis)Management: The Russian–Georgian War and its Implications for Global Political Order* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 3.

expeditionary military functions to enable: peacekeeping deployments; security and logistics to deliver.

humanitarian relief; and missions like Operation Atalanta to protect global supply-chains from organised piracy and looting.

These are lower-intensity military tasks that still vitally assist Atlantic order and wider international security. As a stable Atlantic order allows Irish society access to a multitude of socio-economic benefits, a strong contribution from Ireland to the military burden-sharing tasks undertaken by EU members is both strategically and morally advisable. Ireland's Defence Forces are well specialised to offer expertise in peacekeeping; security sector reform; and security for humanitarian outreach that most EU-led missions require. For example, these attributes have been important during EUFOR Chad/CAR commanded by Lieutenant General Patrick Nash between 2008 and 2009 as well as during Ireland's non-combat contribution to the EU Training Mission in Mali that began in 2013.

Sten Rynning explains that military burden-sharing in support of Atlantic order continually overlaps between "coalitions, institutions and big tents," options offered by multiple security organisations encompassing NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the UN.²⁶ Ireland's strong suitability as a contributor to UN peace operations can sometimes also relieve parts of the security burden shouldered by other EU members. Jens Ringsmose argues that while burden-sharing during the Cold War was preoccupied with defence spending as an "input side," the West's post-Cold War emphasis on expeditionary operations has refocused political scrutiny towards an "output side" that prioritises military risk-sharing to meet stabilisation tasks.²⁷ Many UN peace operations are lower-intensity and lower-risk compared to some recent EU or NATO-led missions. Critics might therefore argue UN missions as a less valuable contribution to international stabilisation efforts.

This is not always correct. Today's Middle East continually suffers from violent instability; this is compounded by polarising rivalries between the region's main powers. UN peace operations reduce the risk of some post-conflict areas in the Middle East re-emerging as hosts for dangerous proxy-wars. With UN missions providing some safety to prevent post-conflict instability being worsened by intervening regional powers, Ireland's military contributions to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights remain important. Ireland's consistent participation in UN peace operations has also been politically important; this has reduced claims of Irish "free-riding" on the wider West's expeditionary security burden. Partners can sometimes engage in trade-offs to more efficiently produce "public goods."²⁸ In 2015, Ireland was involved in a prominent burden-sharing exchange as France sought solidarity within the EU after ISIL's devastating terrorist attacks in Paris. As President François Hollande's administration sought to "free up" more of its military resources for counterterrorism operations, Ireland was able to assist by partly replacing French deployments on some other expeditionary missions.²⁹

²⁶ Sten Rynning, "Coalitions, Institutions and Big Tents: The New Strategic Reality of Armed Intervention," *International Affairs* 89 no. 1 (2013), pp. 53-68.

²⁷ Jens Ringsmose, "NATO Burden-Sharing Redux: Continuity and Change after the Cold War," *Contemporary Security Policy* 31, no. 2 (2010), p. 320.

²⁸ Mark A. Boyer, "Trading Public Goods in the Western Alliance System," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 33, no. 4 (1989), pp. 700-727.

²⁹ Tom Brady, "Irish Troops Set for Africa to Ease Burden on France," *Irish Independent*, 17 November 2015, <https://www.independent.ie/world-news/europe/paris-terror-attacks/irish-troops-set-for-africa-to-ease-burden-on-france-34211426.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

Ireland and the “Return of Geopolitics”

The contemporary international system suffers from significant upheaval and expeditionary military operations to protect Atlantic order at distance will remain important. However, the deterioration of security in Europe since 2014 has again altered the gravity of transatlantic burden-sharing. Contrary to closer pan-European cooperation, Russia’s recent foreign policy actions have instead emphasised competition with the EU and NATO. Russian strategy has been explained as targeting the “cracks” in Europe’s collective security frameworks.³⁰ Therefore, to avoid leaving “weaklinks” in Europe’s collective security chain, each EU and NATO member has a responsibility to first strengthen its own national security posture before optimising cooperative options when necessary. Dan O’Brien claims that “Ireland is located in what is probably the safest place on the planet.”³¹ Since the Belfast Agreement in 1998, military de-securitisation has been a prevalent theme in Irish politics. This is definitely a welcome development. Further securitising discourse arguing for “emergency measures” beyond what is accepted as “normal politics” in Ireland would risk unnecessary social anxiety.³² Nevertheless, despite largely anodyne security discourses in Irish society, the weakening of Ireland’s national security posture remains a concern with regard to wider strategic developments in Europe.

From a burden-sharing perspective, a failure to militarily adapt to a deteriorating security environment could eventually leave Ireland exposed to political ramifications caused by “free riding” on the collective security produced by European and transatlantic partners. It is debatable whether NATO would restrict collective defence as an exclusive “club good” were Ireland to ever be threatened. The collective defence that NATO generates might be interpreted as an “impure public good” that Ireland could avail of in an emergency. Although not certain, the political, economic and security interdependence that links Ireland with the US and the UK means that these two leading powers in NATO will perceive important interests as intersecting with Ireland’s national security situation.³³ While ambiguous, knowledge to this effect might also deter any state seeking to threaten Ireland’s security. With the maintenance costs shouldered by others, this is an unofficial and residual benefit that Ireland gains from its strategic proximity to NATO members. This is more than a theoretical proposition, for example, as Ireland is without the military capabilities to monitor and police its own airspace, Tom Clonan claims “That function – remarkably – is carried out for us [Ireland] by the [UK’s] RAF [Royal Air Force].”³⁴

While not an urgent emergency at the current time, stronger security management still needs to be developed as a policy area that is essential but routine within the context of Ireland’s “normal politics.”³⁵ While currently in a more secure location compared to many EU counterparts, Ireland is still not fully sheltered from the “return of geopolitics” in Europe that began in earnest with the Ukraine crisis in 2014.³⁶ Walter Russell Mead has explained this pattern as contrary to ever closer international cooperation and integration, arguing that “old-fashioned power

30 Matthew Kaminski, “Putin Has Exposed Europe’s Cracks,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 16 June 2014, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/putin-has-exposed-europes-cracks-140295067>, accessed August 14 2020, p. 6.

31 Dan O’Brien, “Ireland Takes a Free Ride on the Back of NATO as it Protects us,” *Irish Independent*, 11 August 2016, <https://www.pressreader.com/ireland/irish-independent/20160811/282041916522862>, accessed 14 August 2020.

32 Ole Wæver, “Securitization and Desecuritization,” in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (Ed.), *On Security* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press), pp. 46-86.

33 O’Brien, “Ireland Takes a Free Ride.”

34 Tom Clonan, “Our Defence Forces are Effectively on Life-Support,” *The Journal.ie*, 27 September 2020, <https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/defence-forces-in-crisis-5213752-Sep2020/>, accessed 27 September 2020.

35 Karsten Friis and Erik Reichborn – Kjennerrud, “From Cyber Threats to Cyber Risks”, in Karsten Friis and Jens Ringsmose (Eds.), *Conflict in Cyber Space: Theoretical, Strategic and Legal Perspectives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 27-44.

36 Walter Russell Mead, “The Return of Geopolitics: The revenge of the Revisionist Powers,” *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 3 (2014), pp. 69-79.

plays” centred on military force, coercion and intimidation will have an expanded future role.³⁷ Russia challenges the EU with a strategy that seeks political ambivalence to incapacitate the EU consensus required to effectively respond to Moscow’s actions.³⁸ Russia’s “full-spectrum” strategic blueprint often utilises military operations below the emergency threshold.³⁹ This has included frequent violations by Russian military aircraft in the territorial airspace of northern EU member states, a tactic designed to create creeping insecurity that is difficult to curb.⁴⁰

While Ireland has been a peripheral actor in the wider standoff between Russia and the West, as Moscow has pursued a low-intensity strategy prioritising marginal gains across the pan-European strategic area, weaknesses in Ireland’s national security posture remain vulnerable to exploitation. Gustav Gressel argues that “Russia doesn’t really recognise neutrality [including Ireland’s]. The Kremlin still has a Soviet mindset. They see neutrality as tactical. Ireland is viewed as a weak spot for the enemy and nothing more.”⁴¹ Despite the presence of the UK’s RAF, Dublin’s inability to monitor and police its own airspace allows Russia’s military aircraft greater freedom of action to conduct manoeuvres. Ireland is a neutral state, but this military deficit can still assist a Russian strategy that is broadly focused on NATO. As a particular concern for the UK’s RAF, opportunities for Russian reconnaissance to survey the reaction times of NATO members sharing Ireland’s strategic theatre are increased.⁴² There is a risk that some intelligence gathered through these manoeuvres could be transferred to advantage the Russian military in other strategic theatres where Moscow competes with Western actors.

Risks Building in the North Atlantic

Security in Ireland’s north Atlantic maritime hinterland has deteriorated over the past decade. The Irish media has reported recent Russian intelligence gathering focused on the undersea telecommunications cables that facilitate transatlantic telephone, internet and financial exchanges. It is claimed that 75 percent of the northern hemisphere’s undersea connections linking North America and Europe “pass through or near Irish waters.”⁴³ While analysts have long anticipated that many undersea cables will be phased out to be replaced by satellite communications, this transition has so far only been gradual.⁴⁴ US intelligence sources assert that the GRU – Russia’s military intelligence agency – seeks to map weak points in undersea cable networks. The information gathered can be a strategic asset to strengthen espionage or to cut “communications at a time of conflict.”⁴⁵ As a major global centre for technology companies, it is important to stress that attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) also obligates Ireland to ensure that economic activity is not risked by any serious infrastructure breach. The undersea cable network that serves

37 Mead, “The Return of Geopolitics,” p. 69.

38 Mark Galeotti, *Russian Political War: Moving beyond the Hybrid* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

39 Oscar Jonsson and Robert Seely, “Russian Full-Spectrum Conflict: An Appraisal after Ukraine,” *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 28, no. 1 (2015), pp. 1-22.

40 Alberto Nardelli and George Arnett, “NATO Reports Surge in Jet Interceptions as Russia Tensions Increase,” *The Guardian*, 3 August 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/03/military-aircraft-interventions-have-surfed-top-gun-but-for-real>, accessed 14 August 2020.

41 Gustav Gressel cited in John Mooney, “Blocking of Irish Embassy Expansion Only Puts Russian Spooks on Hold,” *The Sunday Times*, 23 August 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2020-08-23/ireland/blocking-of-irish-embassy-expansion-only-puts-russian-spooks-on-hold-3p8kfqgl2>, accessed 23 August 2020..

42 Ray Murphy, “Why are Russian Military Aircraft Flying in Irish Controlled Airspace?,” *RTE Brainstorm*, 8 June 2020, <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2020/0318/1123836-russian-military-aircraft-bombers-ireland/>, accessed 14 August 2020.

43 Shane Mulcahy, “Patrolling Below the Horizon: Addressing Ireland’s Awareness of our Maritime Geospatial Domain,” *Defence Forces Review*, 16 (2019), p. 117.

44 Mulcahy, “Patrolling Below the Horizon,” p. 117.

45 John Mooney, “Russian Agents Plunge to New Ocean Depths in Ireland to Crack Transatlantic Cables,” *The Sunday Times*, 16 February 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russian-agents-plunge-to-new-ocean-depths-in-ireland-to-crack-transatlantic-cables-fnqsmgncz>, accessed 14 August 2020.

the north Atlantic rim is dense, and connectivity outages from routine damage or disruption can be alleviated by rerouting data through other fully functioning cables. Intricately complex cable density combined with the harsh logistics of the maritime seascape thwart intelligence gathering expeditions.⁴⁶ Besides these coincidental protections, increased Irish naval monitoring is required to ensure that espionage that could put the telecommunications infrastructure of Ireland and its EU and NATO partners at risk is prevented. If not, Sébastien Roblin argues that improved situational awareness could provide a strategic competitor with the “capacity to launch a more targeted attack against selected cables” with potential to “cause significant disruptions.”⁴⁷ The arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic has further heightened the stakes in this policy area. Government advice to the labour force to work remotely where possible already increases stress on telecommunications infrastructure. Increased economic dependence on this infrastructure means that targeted disruption carries severe consequences if allowed to occur.

In addition to unconventional security risks pertaining to undersea cables, recent escalations in Russian submarine activity in areas immediately proximate to Ireland’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) have renewed the prospect of conventional naval competition in the north Atlantic. Magnus Nordenman argues that increased security concerns centre on the “maritime choke point at the Greenland–Iceland–UK gap.”⁴⁸ Prominently highlighted by China’s “One Belt, One Road” ambition in Eurasia, great power politics is now increasingly focused on the control of major global trade routes, as Mikael Wigell explains: “The key to security and wealth in our time is no longer the geopolitical control of physical territory, but the ability to control the economic links that connect the world.”⁴⁹ Climate change and the melting of polar ice sheets will facilitate the emergence of a lucrative Arctic shipping lane. With increased Russian submarine activity in the north Atlantic claimed as now equivalent to “the level last seen shortly after the Cold War,” this pattern can be strongly suspected to be supporting Moscow’s effort to militarily dominate the wider access points leading to this emerging Arctic trade route.⁵⁰ Russia’s naval posture in the north Atlantic carries a range of economic, political and strategic implications. For example, should Europe’s security situation deteriorate further, NATO’s enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) supporting deterrence for the Baltic states and Poland will depend on a further mobilisation of military assets. The supply-chains that vitally support military reinforcements for eFP are both amphibious through the “North and Baltic seas” and land-based.⁵¹ If the Russian Navy’s Northern Fleet achieves dominance in the north Atlantic, this could be converted into Anti Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) to potentially obstruct maritime transport of US military eFP reinforcements to Europe.⁵²

46 Sébastien Roblin, “Russian Spy Submarines are Tampering with Undersea Cables that Make the Internet Work. Should we be Worried?,” *The National Interest*, 19 August 2019, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russian-spy-submarines-are-tampering-undersea-cables-make-internet-work-should-we-be>, accessed 14 August 2020.

47 Roblin, “Russian spy submarines are tampering with undersea cables”.

48 Magnus Nordenman, “Back to the Gap: The Re-Emerging Maritime Contest in the North Atlantic,” *The RUSI Journal*, 162, no.1 (2017), p. 24.

49 Mikael Wigell cited in “FIIA Launches its New Flagship Event: The First FIIA Forum Sheds Light on the Geoeconomic World Order,” *Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA)*, 16 September 2020, <https://www.fiaa.fi/en/news/fiaa-launches-its-new-flagship-event-the-first-fiaa-forum-sheds-light-on-the-geo-economic-world-order>, accessed 25 September 2020.

50 Nordenman, “Back to the Gap,” p. 26.

51 Luis Simón, “Assessing NATO’s Eastern European ‘Flank’,” *Parameters* 44, no. 3 (2014), p. 70.

52 Nordenman, “Back to the Gap,” p. 27.

Due to this deteriorating maritime security situation, the US Navy has taken a strong initiative to re-establish its 2nd Fleet for the north Atlantic having previously disbanded this in 2011.⁵³ These are serious strategic developments immediately proximate to Ireland's EEZ, and with military action required to uphold the West's collective security in this area, it is Ireland's responsibility to ensure that its maritime zones are not easily violated by Russian submarines engaged in exercises aimed at obstructing NATO's military mobility. Reports that Ireland's "Defence Forces are effectively on life-support" with capacity in the Naval Service suffering significantly are of profound concern in this context.⁵⁴ It is claimed that the Naval Service currently operates without "one fifth" of the personnel required to fully undertake even routine tasks including patrols to prevent illicit drugs trading and the monitoring of fisheries.⁵⁵

Improved naval capacity is essential if the Irish government is to better respond to both national security priorities and transatlantic burden-sharing responsibilities. Meeting these objectives in the maritime domain now involves a response to escalating naval competition between Russia and the West as well as countering maritime-based organised crime. The transport of illicit narcotics has a chronic presence in Ireland's EEZ, a zone that forms part of the "cocaine highway" linking narcotic producer networks in the Americas with lucrative European markets.⁵⁶ Cathal Berry, TD for Kildare South, has assessed the Irish government's allocation of military resources to tackle this problem as insufficient.⁵⁷ With Ireland's EEZ a possibly under-secured passage for illicit narcotics transit, weaknesses in this area do not just increase Irish society's vulnerability to dangerous criminal networks, this also heightens a knock-on risk for EU partners. Cocaine is a particularly lucrative earner on Irish and European black markets. Much of the brutal gangland violence witnessed on Irish streets has been fuelled by an insatiable demand for illegal drugs consumed within the same society.⁵⁸ It is correctly asserted that this problem requires a "whole of government" response. The development of the Garda Crime and Security Branch; the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB); and different social support programmes aimed at preventing vulnerable individuals drifting into criminality all contribute to significant progress in confronting this problem at the point of delivery.

However, organised crime networks can still be further disrupted with improved concentration on the point of source. This "whole of government" approach will remain incomplete without a naval presence that is better resourced to prevent illegal narcotics reaching Ireland's streets in the first instance. Stronger performance from Ireland in this area is also a significant responsibility when EU collective action is considered. Frustration from EU partners towards Dublin will increase if illegal narcotics shipments continue to evade intercept when crossing the country's EEZ while bound for European markets. Ireland's Defence Forces have traditionally been

53 Mark D. Faram, "Back to the Future with 2nd Fleet," *Navy Times*, 24 August 2018, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/08/25/back-to-the-future-with-2nd-fleet/>, accessed 14 August 2020.

54 Clonan, "Our Defence Forces are effectively on life-support".

55 Sean O'Riordan, "Special Report: Massive Underfunding 'Severely Constricts' Ability of Naval Service to Carry Out Operations," *Irish Examiner*, 14 August 2020, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/spotlight/arid-40032200.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

56 Paul Williams, "Life on the High Seas with the Maritime Drug Busters," *Irish Independent*, 15 August 2020, <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/life-on-the-high-seas-with-the-maritime-drug-busters-39448752.html>, accessed 15 August 2020.

57 Cathal Berry cited in Neil Leslie, "TD Warns Ireland will be Left 'Defenceless' and with no Naval Service in Three Years unless Defence Forces Pay Crisis is Sorted," *Irish Mirror*, 12 July 2020, <https://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/td-warns-ireland-left-defenceless-22340479>, accessed 14 August 2020.

58 Paul Williams, "A Love for Cocaine has Fuelled this Brutal Descent into Narco-Terrorism," *Irish Independent*, 16 January 2020, <https://www.independent.ie/opinion/comment/paul-williams-a-love-for-cocaine-has-fuelled-this-brutal-descent-into-narco-terrorism-38866618.html>, accessed 14 August 2020.

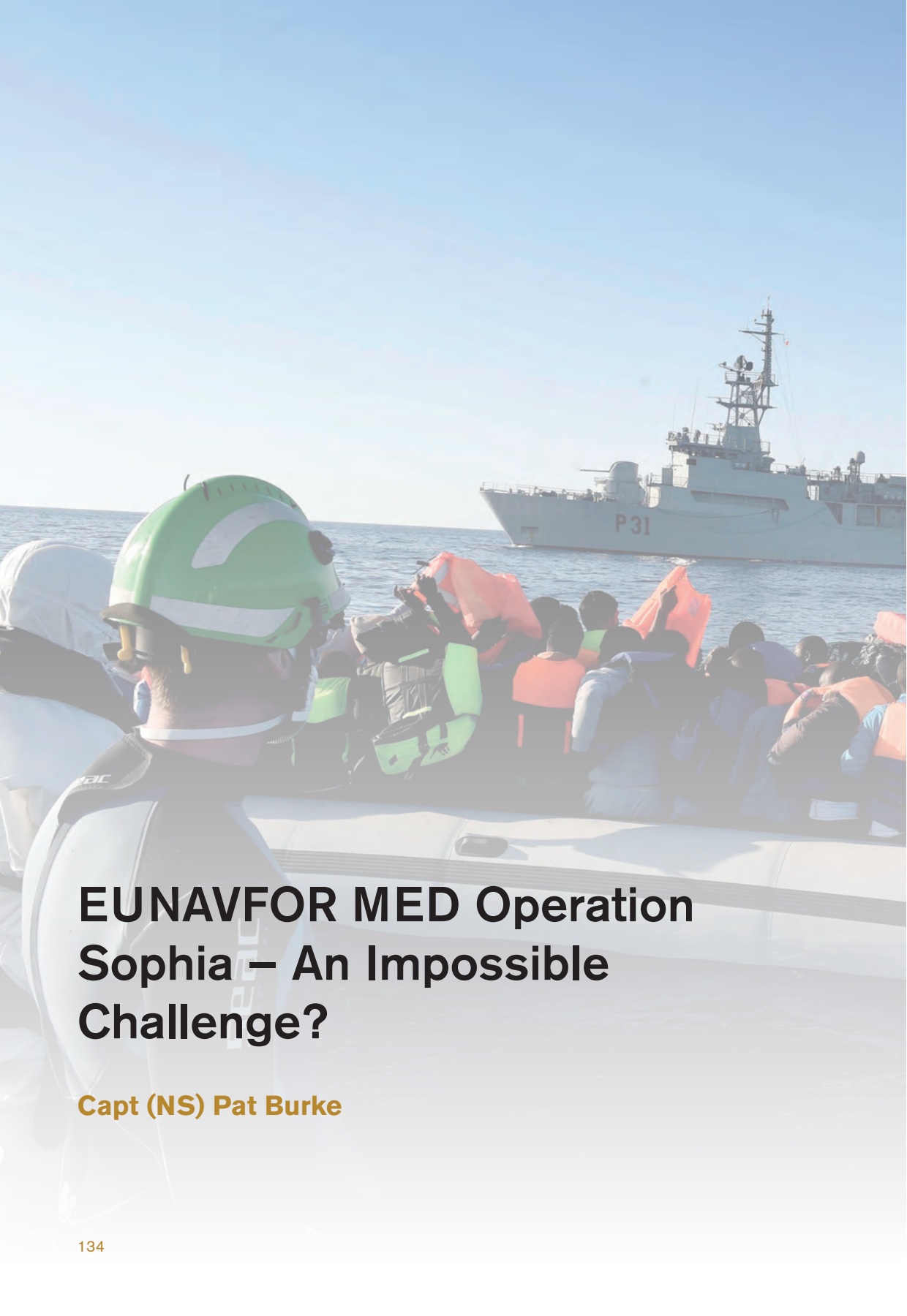
specialised on the army branch.⁵⁹ However, the formidable character of the multifaceted security risks now building in Ireland's north Atlantic hinterland creates cause to rethink this force balance to ensure stronger naval transformation.

Conclusion

Cooperating with other North American and EU democracies, Atlantic order has been a vital international structural platform for Ireland's socio-economic prosperity. Irish society draws considerably from the "public goods" that are provided by transatlantic cooperation. While beneficial, this also imposes a strategic interest and a moral responsibility on Dublin to contribute effectively to the collective military security burden that underpins Atlantic order. Expeditionary military capabilities are required to prevent risks mobilising from political violence in volatile areas of the international system. As a non-member of NATO, Ireland has not participated in some of the West's high-risk combat operations. Nevertheless, Ireland has still performed well as an expeditionary military contributor, participating in some high-profile EU-led missions, but mostly through continuous service to UN peace operations.

However, this is only one side of today's transatlantic burden-sharing equation, the deterioration of security in Europe since 2014 has placed further stress on Ireland's ability to military burden-share with its EU and NATO partners. Ireland's attempt to improve its national security and by extension its military burden-sharing performance must now prioritise events closer to home by addressing some serious defence weaknesses. Ireland is not a frontline state in the wider standoff between Russia and the West, but this does not mean that it will not be a target for Moscow as Russia seeks to compete with NATO and the EU. National security deficits that pertain to airspace policing and maritime security are not only problematic for Ireland, but these vulnerabilities may also negatively affect EU and NATO partners, thus undermining Atlantic order at a time of increased geopolitical upheaval.

⁵⁹ Daniel Keohane, "Ireland," in Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich and Alexandra Jonas (Eds.), *Strategic Cultures in Europe* (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 2013), p. 183.



EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia – An Impossible Challenge?

Capt (NS) Pat Burke

“...pass the message to the world that fighting the smugglers and the criminal networks is a way of protecting human life”.¹

Federica Mogherini

Abstract

This article will consider the evolution of Operation Sophia, the European Union's maritime-led mission established to tackle the migration crisis in the Mediterranean Sea. By examining Operation Sophia's evolution against the emergent legal and political complexities, and the addition of United Nation's authorised maritime security tasks, the author will submit that the overall coherence of the mission became excessively challenged. As the Legal Adviser to the Defence Force's participation in Operation Sophia and its predecessor, Operation Pontus, the author witnessed at first-hand the complexities that challenged the overall success of the mission. In addition to these complexities, the misperception that the primary function of Operation Sophia was maritime search and rescue and the belief that military effort alone could solve the EU's migration crisis, led to persistent criticism of the mission. The author will discuss whether the evolution of the mission created unrealistic expectations which impacted the ability to deliver tangible effects.

Introduction

The Mediterranean Sea has been described as a sea of legends and harsh realities that provides a unique combination of complex geographical, political, cultural and economic factors that have shaped regional solutions and prompted developments in the law of the sea.² In June 2015, in an attempt to tackle the harsh reality of the widespread loss of life from drowning created by the mass movement of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea, the EU launched EUNAVFOR MED.³ The primary mission of EUNAVFOR MED was to contribute to the EU's efforts to dismantle the economic model of smugglers and traffickers of human beings in the southern part of the central Mediterranean. Four years later, the mission had evolved to include the supporting tasks of training the nascent Libyan Coastguard and contributing to the implementation on the high seas of UN Security Council resolutions on illegal arm trafficking and the unauthorised export of oil from Libya. The renaming to Operation Sophia followed the birth on 24th August 2015 on-board the German frigate *Schleswig-Holstein*, of baby Sophia to a Somali mother rescued together with another 453 migrants. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was moved to call on the EU Member States to change the name of the mission, “To honour the lives of the people we are saving, the lives of people we want to protect, and to pass the message to the world that fighting the smugglers and the criminal networks is a way of protecting human life.”⁴

With the EU decision to conclude Operation Sophia on 31st March 2020 and to replace it with a new maritime mission, Operation Iirini, which is focussed primarily on enforcing the UN arms embargo in and around Libya, it is timely to consider the evolution of Operation Sophia. The

1 Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Rome, 24 September 2015, <https://www.operationsophia.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Factsheet-about-Mission-EUNAVFOR-MED-Operation-SOPHIA-1.pdf>.

2 Iirini Papanicolopulu, 'The Mediterranean Sea' in Donald Rothwell, Alex Oude Elferink, Karen Scott, and Tim Stephens (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Law of the Sea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 604

3 Council Decision 2015/778 dated 18 May 2015 on a EU Military Operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR Med) www.eu-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/txt/celex/3A32015D0778

4 Mogherini, *op. cit.*

humanitarian mission launched to respond to the unprecedented surge of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea became a rescue operation with a policing role while also generating added value to the EU as a maritime security instrument.⁵ This unplanned evolution meant that what Operation Sophia was exactly about became increasingly uncertain and it became ever more dependent on parameters that were beyond the EU's own reach and control.⁶ The Irish Government were quick to order the despatch of an Irish Defence Force's naval ship in 2015 to assist in the humanitarian crisis. Operating under a bi-lateral agreement with the Italian government under Operation Pontus, Ireland participated in a search and rescue capacity. Ireland became a member of EUNAVFOR MED in 2017 and participation in Operations Pontus and Sophia resulted in the direct rescue by members of the Irish Defence Forces of more than 18,000 people from drowning at sea. This experience has left a deep impression on all who participated, aptly summarized by one sailor who stated, "making a difference is one of the reasons we all joined the Defence Forces and, in terms of making a difference, this was really second to none."⁷ However, external changes and uncertainty led to the increased withdrawal of naval assets by EU States leading to the conclusion of Operation Sophia with the mission being described as an impossible challenge for the EU.⁸

Operation Sophia – An Impossible Challenge?

The initial mandate for the mission was certainly ambitious, consisting of a total of four planned different phases. While the old military adage cautions that the first casualty in any military operation is the plan, Operation Sophia's plan became increasingly stymied by political and legal impediments. Phase One consisted of information gathering and high sea patrolling to detect and monitor the existing migration networks. Phase Two operations involved classic law of the sea maritime interdiction operations including search, boarding, seizure and diversion of vessels suspected of engaging in human smuggling. These operations took place on the high seas and Operation Sophia enjoyed the support of almost all EU member states as the Operational Headquarters in Rome sought to sequentially deal with the unfolding humanitarian crisis.

Recognizing the limitations of Article 110 'Right of Visit' of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),⁹ on EU member states to take measures against those vessels suspected of engaging in migrant smuggling on the high seas, the UN Security Council enacted Resolution 2240/2015.¹⁰ This authorized EU member states to inspect vessels on the high seas that were suspected of engaging in migrant smuggling or human trafficking from Libya. While permitting the seizure and destruction of vessels suspected of engaging in migrant smuggling or human trafficking from Libya UNSCR 2240/2015 also underlined the attendant international human law rights of migrants. Emphasizing the co-existing duties to protect these migrant rights enshrined in international law, Butler and Ratovich outlined that these obligations needed to be observed even if the UNSCR had not existed.¹¹

5 Thierry Tardy, 'Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges', Brief Issue (EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 2017) www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief_Operation_Sophia.pdf.

6 *Id.*

7 Peter Murtagh, "Naval Service and sailors lament ending of Operation Sophia," *The Irish Times*, 2 April 2019, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/naval-service-and-sailors-lament-ending-of-operation-sophia-1.3845980>.

8 Tardy, "Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges."

9 https://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/e.pdf

10 [Unscr.com/en/resolutions/2240/2015](https://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/e.pdf)

11 Graham Butler and Martin Ratovich, "Operation Sophia in Unchartered Waters: European and International Law Challenges for the EU Naval Mission in the Mediterranean Sea," *Nordic Journal of International Law*, 85, no. 3 (2016), p. 255.

However, the ongoing instability in the Libyan political situation posed a significant obstacle to the success of Operation Sophia. Phase Three operations envisaged the EU either being granted a mandate by the UN Security Council or consent by the Libyan Government to conduct maritime interdiction operations inside Libyan territorial waters. However, the granting of such a resolution remained highly unlikely.¹² Legally there were also a number of issues to consider if Phase Three type operations were to be conducted in Libyan territorial waters. Under international law when suspected human smugglers are interdicted on the high seas they face prosecution in an EU state, many having been prosecuted in Italy.¹³ If these suspected human smugglers were interdicted by EU navies in Libyan territorial waters then the question of Libyan criminal jurisdiction applied. The European Convention on Human Rights would apply to EU personnel were they to engage in interdiction operations inside Libyan territorial waters. This required careful consideration of the human rights implications of transferring EU detained suspected human smugglers to the Libyan authorities where doubts existed concerning the standard of human rights applicable in that country.

The result of such legal and political obstacles was that Operation Sophia found itself confined exclusively to operations on the high seas with two consequences. Firstly, Operation Sophia became focussed on rescue operations which did not tackle the source of the problem and secondly, the consequential waning of EU member states support for the mission as a result.¹⁴ Recognising that Operation Sophia assets could not engage in operations inside Libyan territorial waters emboldened the smugglers to act with relative impunity within the Libyan twelve nautical mile territorial limit.

Adapting to the inability to conduct operations in Libyan territorial waters, Operation Sophia was revised in 2016 to include the task of conducting the training, mentoring and capacity building of the Libyan Coastguard. This indirectly afforded the EU the mechanism to seek to influence activities of the human smugglers inside Libyan territorial waters. UN Security Council Resolutions 2292/16 and 2357/17 gave Operation Sophia the additional role of implementing the UN arms embargo on Libya on the high seas.¹⁵ Adding to the existing tasks of combatting human and arms smuggling, Operation Sophia's mandate was also amended to include surveillance of alleged illegal trafficking of oil from Libya.¹⁶ These amendments to Operation Sophia resulted in greater maritime domain awareness of activities in the south central Mediterranean. Under the EU Comprehensive Approach information was shared with other EU agencies operating in tandem to Operation Sophia such as EUROPOL and FRONTEX. Recognising the different actors present in the area, Operation Sophia also engaged in information sharing with the UNHCR, the UN mission present in Libya, UNSMIL, the International Organisation for Migration and various NGOs via an agreed Code of Conduct. Building on this extensive network of contacts, Operation Sophia established the Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean seminar (SHADE MED).¹⁷ As a co-ordination concept SHADE MED's success may be gauged by the participation at the sixth seminar in the series in Rome in January 2019 of 189 attendees, from 37 different countries and 121 organizations. Rear Admiral Credendino, then officer in command of Operation Sophia, stated "SHADE MED is an example of how we can shape a

¹² Tardy, "Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges."

¹³ For more detailed analysis see Eurojust Annual Report 2018, Europa.Eu, www.eurojust.europa.eu/doclibrary/ 07 March 2019.

¹⁴ Tardy, "Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges."

¹⁵ Unscr.com/en/resolutions/2292/17 & [2357/17](http://Unscr.com/en/resolutions/2357/17)

¹⁶ Unscr.com/en/resolutions/2362/17

¹⁷ <https://www.operationsophia.eu/shade-med/>

constructive dialogue an interaction among the relevant military and civilian actors who share a common interest in the Mediterranean region”.¹⁸

Although Operation Sophia began ostensibly as a military mission, it evolved to including humanitarian aspects via search and rescue and security through its evolved maritime policing roles. As such it tested the boundaries of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) due to conducting its mission at the juncture between external and internal security.¹⁹ The evolution of Operation Sophia’s mission is not unique when compared with other EU missions such as Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Operation Atalanta in the Gulf of Aden, both of which have evolved to become more security rather than defence focussed in character.²⁰ The concurrent law of the sea obligations on the Member States to engage in search and rescue at sea per UNCLOS underlined the humanitarian aspect of the mission.²¹ Ironically, these moral and legal obligations to render humanitarian assistance to those in peril of losing their lives at sea led to criticism of how Operation Sophia’s naval assets performed their duties. In 2017 a UK House of Lords EU Committee report stated that an unintended consequence of Operation Sophia’s policy of destroying interdicted smugglers’ boats was that they have adapted and instead now sent refugees and migrants to sea in unseaworthy vessels, leading to even more deaths.²² The Report stated that as people-smuggling began onshore a naval mission alone was the wrong tool for tackling such a dangerous, inhumane and unscrupulous business.

Nonetheless, the Committee considered the mission a humanitarian success due to the rescue work which has directly saved the lives of almost 44,000 people since its inception.²³ The author agrees with Butler and Ratovich that rescuing migrants at sea and transporting them to ports for processing which could subsequently entail giving them status created a further pull factor rather than the deterrent which the EU was attempting to achieve.²⁴ The humanitarian aspect of Operation Sophia has also not been without criticism with claims that the interception of migrants at sea through search and rescue could also act as a form of border control. Moreno-Lax argues that the invocation of human rights paradoxically serves to curtail migrant’s human rights by justifying interdiction at sea to save lives and thereby impeding access to Europe via a narrative of ‘rescue’; interdiction as a life saving device instead becomes an ethically sustainable strategy of border governance.²⁵ In seeking to tackle migration solely at sea Operation Sophia faced a paradox, the very success of the humanitarian facet made it all the more difficult to terminate the mission in the absence of an alternative competent search and rescue element.²⁶

From Search and Rescue to Maritime Security Capacity Building

The EU 2018 Strategic Review on Operation Sophia claimed that the mission’s presence played a decisive role in improving the overall maritime security picture in the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷ The

¹⁸ <https://www.operationsophia.eu/shade-med-1-2019/>

¹⁹ Tardy, “Operation Sophia’s World: Changes and Challenges.”

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ UNCLOS Art 98, www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos

²² House of Lords, European Union Committee, *Operation Sophia, the EU’s Naval Mission in the Mediterranean: An Impossible Challenge* (13 May 2016), www.publications.parliament.uk.

²³ *Ibid*.

²⁴ Butler and Ratovich, “Operation Sophia in Unchartered Waters.”

²⁵ Violeta Moreno-Lax, “The EU Humanitarian Border and the Securitization of Human Rights: The ‘Rescue-Through-Interdiction/Rescue-Without Protection’ Paradigm,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 56, no. 1 (2018), pp. 119-140.

²⁶ Tardy, “Operation Sophia’s World: Changes and Challenges.”

²⁷ EEAS (2018) 835 Strategic Review on EUNAVFOR MED Op Sophia, EUBAM Libya & EU Liaison and Planning Cell, 26/07/2018. <https://eeas.europa.eu>

Review lauded the training of more than 200 personnel of the Libyan Coast Guard which enabled Libya to take more control within its territorial sea. Noting the significant decrease in migrants entering Europe via the central Mediterranean, the UNHCR reported that between January and July 2018 the number of refugees and migrants dropped by 41% compared to 2017.²⁸ Explaining this significant reduction, the UNHCR cited new measures targeting irregular migration in the central Mediterranean, including further support for Libyan authorities to prevent sea crossings to Europe, further restrictions on the work of NGOs involved in search and rescue operations, and limited access to Italian ports for refugees and migrants rescued at sea as key factors.²⁹ The UNHCR report went on to find that the establishment of a Libyan search and rescue region had also resulted in increased numbers of people being intercepted or rescued at sea by the Libyan Coast Guard and returned to Libya.³⁰

However, the 2018 EEAS Strategic Review and the UNHCR ‘Desperate Journeys Report’ must be read against the backdrop of a change in government in Italy in 2018. Newly elected populist Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini stated “Italy will no longer be Europe’s refugee camp”.³¹ The change of Italian government policy to denying access to NGO vessels with rescued migrants to Italian ports put significant pressure on the EU’s leaders. Italy’s actions in closing all access to Italian ports and the resultant increase in interceptions of migrants at sea by the Libyan Coastguard has been widely criticised.³² A communiqué issued by the European Council cautioning the NGO vessels’ operators that they should now defer to the Libyan Coastguard, was described by NGOs as amounting to “deliberately condemning vulnerable people to be trapped in Libya, or die at sea”.³³ The UN Secretary-General noted that the Libyan Coast Guard had taken an increasingly active role in fighting illicit activities and saving lives at sea as a result of the training and equipment provided by the EU. However, there have been extensive allegations of human rights violations and abuses of migrants by the Libyan Coastguard.³⁴ While Operation Sophia reported that it undertook a vetting process for all Libyan trainees and that it monitored the performance of the Libyan Coastguard, it was precluded from the observation of migrant’s conditions ashore. The automatic detention in Libya of those disembarked there exacerbates an already fraught human rights situation and the increased pressure on overwhelmed facilities has compounded the deterioration of conditions.³⁵

Criticism of Italy for denying unrestricted access to Italian ports to NGO rescue operations overlooks the obligations placed on a State by the Maritime Safety Committee of the UN International Maritime Organisation (IMO). The IMO requires the state responsible for the search and rescue region in which the rescue occurred to take primary responsibility for ensuring that co-ordination and co-operation occurs so that survivors assisted are disembarked from the

28 UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January-August 2018*, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/65373>.

29 *Ibid*

30 *Ibid*

31 Daniel Boffey, “Italy’s Call for France and Spain to Open Ports to Migrants is Rejected,” *The Guardian*, 30 Aug 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/30/italy-call-france-spain-open-ports-migrants-rejected-eu>.

32 Eugenio Cusumano and Kristof Gombeer, “In Deep Waters: The Legal, Humanitarian and Political Implications of Closing Italian Ports to Migrant Rescuers,” *Mediterranean Politics*, 25, no. 2 (2020), pp. 245-253. See also Amnesty International, *Between The Devil and The Deep Blue Sea: Europe Fails Refugees and Migrants in The Central Mediterranean* (2018), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur30/8906/2018/en/>.

33 Jon Stone, “EU Condemns Rescue Boats Picking up Drowning Refugees in Mediterranean as Leaders Side with Populists,” *The Independent*, 29 June 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/eu-migrant-crisis-rescue-boats-refugees-drowning-charity-mediterranean-a8423261.html>.

34 UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the Human Rights Situation of Migrants and Refugees in Libya*, 20 December 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/desperate-and-dangerous-report-human-rights-situation-migrants-and-refugees-libya>.

35 *Ibid*

assisting ship and delivered to a place of safety and that such disembarkation should be effected as soon as possible.³⁶ The IMO also requires that assistance shall be provided regardless of the nationality or status of such a person or the circumstances in which that person is found.³⁷ Accordingly, it would be a matter for the Italian authorities to determine places of safety within their search and rescue zone; a place of safety being defined as a location where rescue operations are considered to terminate, i.e. where the survivors safety of life is no longer threatened and where their basic human needs can be met and from which arrangements can be made for the survivors' next or final destination.³⁸ All of this presupposes that the rescue actually took place within the Italian Search and Rescue Region in the first place. However, this was increasingly not the case. The Italian authorities pointed to NGO vessels conducting rescue operations outside of their search and rescue region, but then seeking to utilise Italian ports as the place of safety for the rescued migrants. This led to NGO vessels being denied access by Italy and forced to seek places of safety in other countries such as France and Spain, thereby subjecting the already vulnerable rescued migrants to protracted sea journeys.³⁹

The EEAS Strategic Review of 2018 recognised that further support was required for the EU project supporting the Libyan Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre.⁴⁰ The IMO publicised the Libyan Search and Rescue Region as being effective on its Global Integrated Shipping Information System website in June 2018.⁴¹ The United Nations Secretary-General recognised that durable solutions necessitates continued engagement with the Libyan authorities as well as greater solidarity at the European and international level.⁴² He expressed his concern that the space for refugee protection is shrinking as human rights protection is eroding. Recognising that all States have the right to manage their borders and the right to define their own migration policies, the Secretary-General appealed to nations to do so in a manner which remains sensitive to the protection of migrants and refugees while fully respecting applicable international law norms.

Conclusion

Operation Sophia demonstrated the external complexities that EU missions can experience and a key implication for the Defence Forces is the necessity to retain poise and adaptability for participation in such future operations. As Operation Sophia evolved to embrace a more maritime security focussed mandate it faced increasing criticism due to a misperception that the primary function of the mission was search and rescue. The UN Secretary-General stated that the exact function of Operation Sophia became uncertain and that the mission faced further complexity due to the dependence on factors that were increasingly beyond the control of the EU.⁴³ Operation Sophia is the first naval mission under the EU's Maritime Security Strategy

36 Regulation 33 of SOLAS and IMO Guidelines on the Treatment of Persons Rescued at Sea. [www.imo.org/en/our-work/facilitation/persons-rescued/Documents/MSC.167\(78\)](http://www.imo.org/en/our-work/facilitation/persons-rescued/Documents/MSC.167(78))

37 IMO, UNHCR and International Chamber of Shipping, *Rescue at Sea: A Guide to Principles and Practice as applied to Refugees and Migrants* (2015), available at: http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/seamigration/Documents/UNHCR-Rescue_at_Sea-Guide-ENG-screen.pdf.

38 International Maritime Organization, "Guidelines on the Treatment of Persons Rescued at Sea," Annex to Resolution MSC.167(78) (adopted on 20 May 2004), para 6.12.

39 *The Irish Times*, "Italy Ships Criticism over Plan to Send Migrants to Spain," 12 June 2018, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/italy-ships-criticism-over-plan-to-send-migrants-to-spain-1.3527715>.

40 EEAS (2018) 835 Strategic Review on EUNAVFOR MED Op Sophia, EUBAM Libya & EU Liaison and Planning Cell, 26/07/2018. <https://eeas.europa.eu>, p.30.

41 Tom Kington, "Libya Takes Charge of Refugee Rescues in the Mediterranean," *The Times*, 29 June 2018, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/libya-takes-charge-of-refugee-rescues-in-the-med-zgrj9dsd>.

42 UN Security Council Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of resolution 2380(2017) S/2018/807 31 August 2018

43 *Ibid*

and sought to tackle the human traffickers and smugglers economic model in order to prevent those bringing vulnerable and desperate migrants to the EU via the central Mediterranean route.⁴⁴ Crucially, Operation Sophia was hamstrung from the outset by the legal imperative which prevented its naval assets engaging the human traffickers and smugglers inside Libyan territorial waters. Just as the efficacy of this border shield was being eroded by the emergence of the Libyan Coastguard, the closure of ports of disembarkation for rescued migrants by the new Italian government presented a new level of complexity for Operation Sophia's planners.

When viewed through the scope of mission effectiveness it is submitted that Operation Sophia has enjoyed some success, albeit more limited than initially expected. This assessment is attributable to a mandate that evolved to encompass other tasks and the unrealistic expectation that a military mission alone could manage the EU's increasingly complex migration issue. It is submitted that mission creep due to the gradual shift in objectives during the course of the campaign led to an unplanned and longer than expected commitment by the EU to Operation Sophia. The author is in agreement with Tardy when he questions whether the evolution to the different mission facets including rescue, smuggler disruption, capacity building and maritime security excessively challenged the overall coherence of Operation Sophia and as a consequence, its ability to have a tangible effect.⁴⁵ Participation in implementing the UN arms embargo as well as monitoring the illicit traffic in oil has significantly increased the EU's maritime domain awareness and enhanced the EU's security role in this area. While Ireland demonstrated its commitment to the EU's common defence and security operations by participating in Operation Sophia, the Defence Forces played an integral part and gained invaluable experience.

In conclusion, Operation Sophia does not, and indeed should not, provide the sole lens through which to analyse the EU's policy on illegal migration. The mission itself was but one part of a much broader response.⁴⁶ Instead, it is submitted that it is more useful to assess Operation Sophia for what it really was: a targeted and limited response with a restricted mandate as opposed to viewing it as the sole potential answer to the EU's ongoing and increasingly complex migration issue. While Europe's navies participating in Operation Sophia have directly saved over 44,000 people from drowning at sea, it must be accepted that of itself the mission was unable to deliver the panacea that many unrealistically sought to the EU's migration crisis.

⁴⁴ Council of the EU, *European Union Maritime Security Strategy (11205/14)* consilium.europa.eu/doc.

⁴⁵ Tardy, "Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges."

⁴⁶ Tardy, "Operation Sophia's World: Changes and Challenges."



The Libyan Conflict and Migration across the Mediterranean: Is There a Role for Ireland?

Dr Omar Grech

Introduction

The EU has, as of August 2020, been unable to provide coherent and effective responses to assist in resolving or even managing the Libyan conflict,¹ and to the management of migratory flows from Libya.² Within the Libyan context, these two issues are closely connected as the lack of an effective central government and the proliferation of militias contribute to the business of human smuggling.³

The larger EU Mediterranean states, France and Italy, have tried to lead the efforts in dealing with the Libyan conflict and Libyan migratory flows. Both states have been competing for influence in Libya for many years, in terms of their respective geopolitical and commercial interests. These business interests⁴ (and their colonial history in the region) mean that the contributions of other EU member states towards managing the security and migration situation in Libya should be explored. Particularly, the contribution of smaller EU states with a good record of humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping, such as Ireland, warrants consideration.

This paper commences with a brief overview of the security situation in Libya and how this is impacting both the humanitarian situation of migrants in Libya (and Libyan civilians) as well as the migratory flows from Libya towards the European Union (EU). It then proceeds to briefly critique the efforts made by the EU and specifically its larger member states in the Libyan context. The paper concludes by making the case for the contribution that may be made by small states such as Ireland towards the management of the conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts in Libya. In particular, this paper suggests that cooperation between Ireland and Malta in the context of Libya is an avenue that merits serious consideration.

Migration from Libya

Migration from the southern shores of the Mediterranean towards member states remains a critical issue for the EU to manage. The patterns of migratory flows along the central Mediterranean route demonstrate very clearly that Libya is the key transit state in this context. As of April 2020, the IOM Libya Migrant Report stated that there were 625,639 migrants present in Libya. Evidently, a proportion of these migrants are seeking or will seek to migrate from Libya towards the EU. The number of migrants reported as having crossed from Libya to Italy alone between January and April 2020 amounts to 3,466 migrants. This number excludes those arriving in Malta or other destinations in the central Mediterranean.

Moreover, in the first four months of this year, a total of 3,283 migrants were rescued at sea and returned to Libya by the Libyan Coast Guard. The number of confirmed migrant deaths attempting to cross the central Mediterranean during this same period were “at least 146 individuals”. Malta reported 2,012 arrivals by sea for the first 6 months of 2020.⁵ It is safe to assume that given Malta’s location, the vast majority of these arrivals would have had Libya as their departure-point.

1 Ludovica Marchi, “The EU in Libya and the collapse of the CSDP,” *US-China Law Review Journal*, 14, no. 6, (2017) available at http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/83719/1/Marchi_The%20EU%20in%20Libya%20and%20the%20Collapse%20of%20the%20CSDP_Final.pdf accessed 11 August 2020.

2 Omar Grech, “Migration and the Failure of EU’s Cooperative Frameworks in the Mediterranean,” in Monika Wohlfeld (Ed.), *Cooperative Security and the Mediterranean*, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies.

3 Alessandra Bocchi, “Libya’s Rogue Militias Keep the Country From Tackling Human Trafficking,” *Terrorism Monitor Volume*, 16, no. 4, <https://jamestown.org/program/libyas-rogue-militias-keep-country-tackling-human-trafficking/> accessed 11 August 2020.

4 Paul Taylor, “France’s Double Game in Libya,” *Politico*, 17 April 2019 available at <https://www.politico.eu/article/frances-double-game-in-libya-nato-un-khalifa-haftar/> accessed on 11 August 2020

5 This figure is reported as at 3 August 2020 on the IOM Flow Monitoring Map for Europe available at <https://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals> accessed on 10 August 2020.

Migration from Libya to the EU across the central Mediterranean route has been ongoing for a long period of time.⁶ Migration from Libya was a critical issue in the negotiations which Italy had with Colonel Ghaddafi in the latter stages of his rule. In 2009, the Berlusconi-led Italian government signed an agreement with Ghaddafi's Libya which, inter alia, allowed the Italian coastguard to return would-be migrants to Libya.

The agreement lost its effectiveness once Ghaddafi was removed from power in 2011. Indeed, in the wake of the Libyan revolt of 2011, the flow of migrants from Libya resumed as a power vacuum in Libya emerged, with different factions vying for political and economic control through military means. Some analysts contend that the militias in Libya partially fund themselves through controlling the migrant and fuel smuggling business from various points on the Libyan coast.⁷

The formation of the UN recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Fayez el Serraj, in late 2015 provided an entity which had, at least, *de jure* control over Libya although its *de facto* control was limited to (most of) Tripolitania area *ab initio*. The EU thus acquired a political vis-à-vis of sorts with whom to negotiate the management of migratory flows. Within this framework, Italy pursued another bilateral negotiation spearheaded by its then Minister of the Interior Marco Minniti. This resulted in another Italy-Libya agreement intended to limit would-be migrants leaving for the EU from Libya's shores.

The Security Situation in Libya

However, the overall security situation on the ground in Libya remained extremely volatile as the GNA was challenged for control over the Libyan territory by the Tobruk-based House of Representatives, and more directly by its military arm: the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Khalifa Haftar. The political and security situation in Libya was further complicated by the existence of "a plethora of local players, tribes, municipalities, city-states and militias struggling in the quest for power without any binding political framework."⁸ The intervention, whether direct or indirect, of external actors (Turkey, Russia, Egypt and the UAE, etc.) exacerbated the difficulties of stabilizing Libya.

The GNA's armed forces and the LNA have been engaging in a military confrontation centred around the control of Tripoli throughout 2020. The UN Secretary-General in July 2020 warned again on the urgency of the situation in Libya:

"The conflict has entered a new phase with foreign interference reaching unprecedented levels, including in the delivery of sophisticated equipment and the number of mercenaries involved in the fighting [...] Between 1 April and 30 June, UNSMIL documented at least 356 civilian casualties, including 102 civilian deaths and 254 civilian injuries. This is a 172 per cent increase compared to the first quarter of 2020."⁹

6 See for example, Derek Lutterbeck, "The Central Mediterranean Migration Route: Rise, Fall, and Rise Again," *Perspectives in a Changing Mediterranean*, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, 2016.

7 See for example, Atlantic Council, "Libya's Profitable Business of War," 27 March 2017, where it was stated that "Smuggling and human trafficking are also widespread and involve a well-coordinated network of smugglers, warlords, and politicians—operating from deep within sub-Saharan Africa to Libya's coast," available at <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/libya-s-profitable-business-of-war/>.

8 Aldo Liga, "Playing with Molecules: The Italian Approach to Libya," IFRl, April 2018 available at https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/liga_playing_with_molecules_italian_approach_to_libya_2018.pdf accessed 10 August 2020.

9 United Nations, "Negotiated Solution in Libya Crucial as Foreign Interference Grows, Thousands Flee Homes, Secretary-General Warns Security Council, Stressing Time 'Not on Our Side'," 8 July 2020 available at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm20166.doc.htm> accessed 10 August 2020.

The deteriorating security situation in Libya has impacted, inter alia, Libyan civilians, the fraught humanitarian situation of would-be migrants and the migratory flows from Libya towards Europe. With respect to would-be migrants, their situation in Libya has always been extremely difficult. In the above-quoted statement, the UN Secretary-General acknowledged that “migrants and asylum seekers in Libya continue to be routinely subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, sexual violence, abduction for ransom, forced labour and unlawful killings.” Migrants in Libya are facing a dire situation which is “only likely to be exacerbated by the ongoing conflict.”¹⁰ The airstrike that hit the Tajoura detention centre with the loss of 52 detained migrants in June 2019 is only one example of this reality.

It is fundamental to note that the military conflict has had a direct impact on migrant flows from Libya. As has been noted “militias are also primarily responsible for the process of industrialisation and concentration of illicit trafficking.”¹¹ The conflict in Libya has also inevitably created a cohort of Internally Displaced persons which as of July 2020 registered around 400,000 people. It is probable that some of these will seek to cross international borders, thus adding to the already swelling migratory flows.

A Failed EU Response

These factors have strained internal EU relations in terms of how to respond to the conflict in Libya and how to manage migratory flows across the Mediterranean.¹² In the context of migration, the EU’s whole border policy and the lack of viable and legal entry routes into the EU has also been subject to considerable criticism as it simultaneously sets extremely stringent limits to legal entry into the EU and criminalises migration to a very large extent.¹³

The difficulties faced by the EU in agreeing and implementing an effective Union-wide policy on migration was acknowledged in the European Agenda on Migration adopted on the 13th May 2015, which included a recognition that the “collective European policy on the matter has fallen short.” The EU Mediterranean states claim lack of solidarity from the rest of the EU (particularly the Visegrad states) in managing migratory flows, while they have squabbled amongst themselves on the responsibility of saving lives at sea in various unsavoury episodes.

More broadly, the EU’s approach to foreign and security policy in its immediate neighbourhood has been lacklustre: “European policy on north Africa is typically characterised by a lack of unity, but the Libyan conflict shows just how far apart EU member states can drift in their posturing against one another.”¹⁴

In the case of Libya, it has been argued that the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has collapsed: “Ultimately, national preoccupations, concerns and interests gained the upper hand, expressed their disinterest in a common action within the EU framework and conveyed a sense of a collapsed CSDP.”¹⁵ With Italy and France competing to take the lead in

¹⁰ Grech, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

¹¹ Arturo Varvello, “Libya Between Conflict and Migrants: Rethinking the Role of Militias,” Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), 1 August 2018, <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/libya-between-conflict-and-migrants-rethinking-role-militias-21094> accessed 10 August 2020.

¹²

¹³ For a discussion on the securitization and criminalisation of the EU border policy see inter alia Derek Lutterbeck, “Policing Migration in the Mediterranean,” *Mediterranean Politics*, 11, no. 1 (2006), pp. 59-82; and Monika Wohlfeld, “Is Migration a Security Issue?” in *Migration in the Mediterranean: Human Rights, Security and Development Perspectives*, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, 2014.

¹⁴ European Council on Foreign Relations, Germany’s Quiet Leadership on the Libyan War, 24 November 2019 available at https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_germanys_quiet_leadership_on_the_libyan_war accessed 6 August 2020.

¹⁵ Ludovica Marchi, *op. cit.*

Libya but neither making any effective headway, Germany became more involved in the Libyan conflict at the political level, negotiating with the main Libyan factions and also with the external actors involved in Libya. This led to Germany hosting the January 2020 Berlin conference where the participants agreed to end foreign intervention in Libya and implement a pre-existing UN arms embargo. As at the time of writing (August 2020), the Berlin conference has not reaped great results.¹⁶ The Third Follow Up Committee meeting in June 2020 highlighted inter alia continued military escalation as well as continued violations of the UN arms embargo.¹⁷ In the wake of the Berlin conference, the EU proceeded to establish Operation Irini intended to monitor the UN arms embargo through sea patrols around the central Mediterranean. As a secondary mandate, Irini is also assigned the task of disrupting human smuggling in the area. Nevertheless, even in this context the EU is facing difficulties, with the assets provided to Irini deemed insufficient.¹⁸

As things stand, the prospects in Libya remain volatile: it appears likely that we will witness a continuation of the military stalemate. A further intensification of the conflict is also possible. A stabilisation of the conflict with some cooperative framework between the conflicting parties being agreed to is a distant prospect. Given the failures of EU foreign and security policy in this context, fresh thinking and fresh approaches from a different cast of political actors are worth considering. It is in this framework, that Ireland may be able to offer a valuable contribution to the Libyan conflict.

A Role for Ireland?

Ireland's role in this context must be framed in the ambit of Ireland's status as a constitutionally neutral state, a state with no direct commercial or geopolitical interests in Libya, and a state with a long history of peacekeeping. Furthermore, the Irish experience in conflict resolution, within the context of Northern Ireland, provides an additional reason why an Irish input in Libya may be beneficial. All of these factors are outlined in Ireland's foreign policy priorities.¹⁹

In *The Global Island*, Ireland's statement of its foreign policy published in 2015, the role Ireland should play globally is emphasised by focusing on its connections "to the global community." Thus, in principle, there is no reason for Ireland not to become more involved in the Libyan conflict. This is even clearer if one refers to '*Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025*,' which claims that the key objective of this strategy is "To deepen and strengthen Ireland's political, economic and cultural relationships with Africa, contributing to peace, prosperity and sustainable development." Within this strategy, one of the key objectives is "the promotion of peace, security, and respect for human rights and the rule of law."²⁰ The Libyan conflict presents an opportunity for Ireland to fulfil this objective.

Ireland's contribution to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Libya is in Ireland's interests for a number of reasons. It would enhance Ireland's profile and relevance within the EU and

¹⁶ The above quoted statement by the UN Secretary General of July 2020 refers to unprecedented levels of foreign interference (see op. cit.).

¹⁷ UN Support Mission in Libya, International Follow-Up Committee on Libya Third Senior Officials Meeting 22 June 2020 Co-Chairs Statement available at <https://unsmil.unmissions.org/international-follow-up-committee-libya-third-senior-officials-meeting-22-june-2020-co-chairs-statement> accessed on 10 August 2020.

¹⁸ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Operation Irini: EU's latest Libya mission short on assets*, 17 July 2020 available at <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2020/07/operation-irini-eu-libya-mission-assets> accessed 12 August 2020.

¹⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, International Priorities available at <https://www.dfa.ie/our-role/policies/international-priorities/>.

²⁰ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025*, 28 November 2019, <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/publications/publicationarchive/2019/november/global-ireland---irelands-strategy-for-africa-to-2025.php>, p. 2.

particularly with the EU Mediterranean states. Ireland would demonstrate that spirit of European solidarity by investing resources into assisting in resolving a challenge which is not of direct geopolitical relevance to itself. Moreover, Ireland's relevance and status within North Africa and the Arab world more generally would also benefit from such a contribution. If Ireland grounds its contribution to peacebuilding in Libya in a human rights agenda, it would also be enhancing its profile as a leading human rights actor in the international community, fulfilling its human rights commitments as stated in the strategic objectives quoted above.

The humanitarian cost of the Libyan conflict and its impact on migrants is substantial and this should also drive Ireland to consider Libya as an important context for its foreign and security policy. While the estimates of deaths from the conflict vary, they clearly run into thousands for the period 2014-2020.²¹ This is without taking into account those wounded and injured, and without factoring in the impact the conflict has on Libya's health and educational infrastructures. In 2019 alone, migrant deaths along the central Mediterranean route mostly departing from Libya were estimated at 2,183.²² The case for an Irish contribution to peacebuilding in Libya is thus grounded both in political interest and in a humanitarian imperative.

The ways in which Ireland may contribute to the resolution of the Libyan conflict are various and will depend both on the status of the conflict and on the resources available. However, one may summarise some of the potential contributions as follows:

- Offer to host and to act as mediator between the parties to the conflict using its expertise in conflict resolution;
- Contribute further military assets to Operation Irini in its efforts to disrupt the supply of military equipment to Libya as per the relevant UN resolutions.²³ While Ireland has approved the contribution of up to three military personnel to Operation Irini,²⁴ no military vessels have been offered to the current operation;
- Offer to take a more active role in respect of the UN Support Mission in Libya;
- Establish a representative office in Libya including personnel with conflict resolution, peacebuilding, state-building and human rights expertise;
- Work with Libyan authorities and international partners to close down migrant detention centres and replace them with facilities offering reception and accommodation services for migrants in Libya;
- Provide training, including human rights training, for personnel working in centres hosting migrants in Libya and support the upgrade of the conditions in these centres;
- Provide peacekeeping personnel and offer to take a leadership role therein, if a UN peacekeeping force is established;

²¹ For example, the Libya Body Count project estimated 1523 deaths for both 2015 and 2016 with 2825 for 2014. <http://www.libyabodycount.org/>. For the current year 2020, UNMISIL has estimated 170 deaths from January to June.

²² These are IOM estimates as available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM_Mediterranean_3Jan2020.pdf accessed on 10 September 2020.

²³ Ireland contributed to the preceding EU Operations Pontus and Sophia with military assets including both personnel and vessels.

²⁴ See Daniel McConnell, "New Mission for Defence Forces in Med Approved by Cabinet," *Irish Examiner*, 22 May 2020 available at <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-31001198.html> accessed 8 September 2020.

- Offer assistance in capacity building in the field of security sector reform, including training for an ‘all of Libya’ national army if this is established;
- Offer scholarships to Libyan students committed to working in Libya in relevant fields such as security, peace, human rights etc.;
- Utilise its seat in the UN Security Council 2021/22 to promote and support peacebuilding initiatives that support the peace, security, rule of law and human rights agenda in Libya.

The major limitation Ireland may face in contributing effectively to the stabilisation efforts in Libya perhaps relate to a lack of expertise on the ground in the country, given Ireland does not have a long-standing presence on Libyan territory nor does it have deep-rooted historic, political and cultural ties with Libya. This lacuna, which in a tribal context such as Libya, can be especially challenging, may however be remedied by engaging in a partnership with Malta as another EU member state. Malta is a small island and constitutionally neutral but which sits at the heart of the Mediterranean within a very short distance from Libya.

Malta’s interests in the Mediterranean are self-evident but may be summed up in its contribution to the establishment of a Mediterranean chapter within the CSCE (now OSCE). At the time, Malta insisted on the establishment of this Mediterranean dimension based on the theorem that there can be no security in Europe without security in the Mediterranean. For geographic reasons, Malta has also had long-standing political, cultural and economic ties with Libya. Like Ireland, Malta has no colonial legacy in North Africa to contend with. Although Malta has very limited capacity in terms of military resources, it does have historic, cultural, political and commercial ties with Libya. It also hosts a relatively large Libyan diaspora. All of these factors, if properly leveraged, could complement Ireland’s expertise in peacebuilding in all its facets. Track Two conflict resolution initiatives could be a particularly useful starting point for Irish-Maltese cooperation in this context.

Such a partnership between Ireland and Malta would be aided by the excellent relations between the two countries, as well as by both having English as an official language. These bilateral relations have developed considerably since Malta joined the EU in 2004 and the concomitant establishment of diplomatic missions in the respective countries. Relations between the two countries have intensified across the board including in security and defence matters.²⁵

This is not to suggest that Ireland (alone or in tandem with Malta) may resolve the Libyan conflict. However, a ‘Global Ireland’ should consider carefully the multi-faceted contribution it may be able to provide in managing a critical conflict in the EU’s immediate neighbourhood. A conflict which endangers lives in the Mediterranean Sea and in Libya itself, hampers the peace, prosperity and security of Libyans and has a direct impact on the EU’s own security.



‘Burning Frontiers’: The Role of Climate Change in the Conflicts of the Sahel and the Impact on European Security in the Twenty-First Century

Lt Arto Salonen

Abstract

Across a vast span of territory, stretching from Senegal in the west to the Red Sea in the east, climate change, it will be argued, is playing a significant and escalating role in conflict and life, with serious long-term strategic implications for European security in the twenty-first century. This paper examines the role of climate change and conflict in three distinct but complementary ways. The debate regarding the relationship between climate change and conflict will be examined. Climate change and conflict has become one of the most debated topics within the realm of environmental security literature. It has garnered significant policy analysis from military and governmental agencies and is therefore important to examine to provide a frame of reference for what is happening at ground level. At a regional level, the paper examines climate change and conflict occurring on the periphery of Europe, particularly in the form of clashes between pastoralists and farmers in the Western Sahel. The paper also examines the implications of climate change in these regions from the perspective of European security concerns in the twenty first century. According to estimates of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the countries along this belt will be among those most adversely affected by climate change. Coupled with enormous population growth, poor governance, resource scarcity and unemployment, the ability of climate change to act as a 'threat multiplier' poses significant concern for European security interests. The spectre of mass migration, the creation of 'ungoverned zones' exploitable by terrorist and insurgent groups requiring the continuous deployment of expeditionary forces to the Sahel, and the potentially destabilising political effects of the above on domestic opinion, all pose significant and strategic challenges to Europe in the decades ahead.

Introduction

"Climate change did not cause the conflicts we see around the world, but drought and crop failures and high food prices helped fuel the early unrest."¹

President Barack Obama

"Climate change will see increased competition for scarce land, water and food resources and may have devastating consequences for many states on Europe's periphery."²

Defence Forces White Paper 2015

Climate change is synonymous in the public eye with melting polar ice caps, desertification, the extinction of species and the disappearance of remote Pacific Atolls. As humanity advances into the twenty-first century, climate change is also becoming more readily associated with conflict, particularly intra-state conflict. This paper is concerned with the role that climate change has played, and more importantly will play, in generating conflict in the coming decades. The above quotes from President Obama and the 2015 Defence Forces White Paper reflect the dichotomy of the argument that now exist in relation to this subject. Current thinking at both academic and policy level does not place climate change as a direct cause of conflict, rather more of an accelerant or to use the popular phrase, 'threat multiplier.' This will form the core argument of the paper.

¹ Robinson Mayer. "Does Climate Change Cause More War?" *The Atlantic*, 12 February 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/does-climate-change-cause-more-war/553040/>, accessed 18 May 2020.

² Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Dublin: Government Press, 2015), p. 13.

It will be argued that climate change has significantly impacted on intra-state conflict in regions such as the Sahel but that this has been in conjunction with numerous other factors, in particular poor governance, significant population growth and ethnic divisions, inter alia. The paper will examine the debate surrounding the idea of climate change as a 'threat multiplier' and then bring this debate to a regional level by examining the concept in the framework of the ongoing conflicts in the Sahel with a view to understanding the implications for European security in the coming decades.

Climate Change and Conflict: The Debate

Among the early proponents of the links between climate change and conflict, and arguably the most influential, was the Canadian political scientist Thomas Homer Dixon. Forming an integral part of what was known as the Toronto Group, the argument was put forward that pressure on scarce resources and the misuse of such resources could have severe consequences for a society's ability to provide for its citizens with a resultant potential for conflict. Among the contributing factors leading to this resource scarcity listed in the study was climate change.³

In addition to the work of Homer Dixon and the Toronto Group, another project based in Bern/Zurich and led by Gunther Baechler led to complementary conclusions. Creating a database of over forty case studies, Baechler and his team examined the consequences of human transformation of the natural environment. Their conclusion was that such transformation frequently led to "environmental discrimination" and the capture of and restriction of access to natural resources by different ethnic groups. Such "capture" inevitably led to human conflict.⁴

During this period, defence departments in both Europe and the United States began to pay attention to the environment and climate change as a factor in international conflict. In 1997, for the first time, climate change was listed as a security threat in the National Security Strategy of the United States. While the issue would take a back seat with the onset of the Bush Administration, in 2003, long time Pentagon futurist Andrew Marshall commissioned a report entitled 'An Abrupt Climate Change' authored by Doug Randall and Pete Schwartz. The paper presented a dystopian vision of the impact of climate change on international security with the effects of global warming leading to conflict over natural resources, global food insecurity and the significant mass movement of 'climate refugees' across continents. While the report, as it described itself, had been at the extreme end of possible outcomes, it demonstrated climate change was starting to become a defence related issue.⁵

Evolving from this early effort at linking climate change and international security, an influential 2007 report commissioned under the auspices of the CNA Corporation by the US Navy coined the term 'threat multiplier' and argued that climate change was now interacting with social conditions around the world to spark conflict. The argument put forward was that climate change influenced already vulnerable societies suffering from poor governance, food insecurity, ethnic strife, disease and acted as a veritable catalyst for conflict. The term has been in vogue in climate security literature ever since.⁶

3 Thomas Homer Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 23

4 Gunther Baechler, *Violence Through Environmental Discrimination* (Amsterdam: Springer, 1999).

5 Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall, "An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security," Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy, October 2003,

https://www.iatp.org/sites/default/files/An_Abrupt_Climate_Change_Scenario_and_Its_Impl.pdf, accessed May 17 2020.

6 The CNA Corporation, *National Security, and the Threat of Climate Change* (Alexandria: CAN Corporation, 2007), p. 7.

In 2009, political scientists Marshall Burke and Edward Miguel at Berkley explored the topic further by reviewing the literature on climate change and conflict, in this case, fifty-five case studies, with a view to establishing a relationship between climate and conflict. Burke and Miguel argued that the literature showed a correlation between temperature and violence regarding civil conflict in Africa. From a statistical point of view, the report argued that a one-degree centigrade increase in temperature led to an increase in violence of over twenty per cent. Combining their findings with climate projections, they estimated that by 2030, armed conflict would increase by roughly fifty-four percent.⁷

Dissenting from the climate change causes conflict thesis were authors such as Halvard Buhaug. Buhaug took issue with the evidence put forward demonstrating links between climate and conflict arguing that the statistical evidence had been overstated and that there had been an over emphasis on Africa as a sample base. The core argument put forward was that conflict remains a political act and that governance or lack thereof were much more important stimuli for conflict than climate change. The role of climate change in conflict generation was not denied, merely that the links were overstated, particularly in terms of the media and in political coverage.⁸

Attempting to generate consensus regarding the issue, Stanford University in 2019 commissioned a study led by Katharine Mach, which pooled eleven of the leading experts on the issue, including Buhaug, and examined the literature anew to consider the issue. The conclusions were that climate and conflict were linked and that between three and twenty percent of armed conflict over the last century had been impacted by climate. Other factors were found to have more bearing on the outbreak of conflict, including low socio-economic development, the strength of institutions, inequality within society and a recent history of violent conflict all made a greater impact. Crucially though, the study concluded that ongoing warming of the Earth would have a much greater bearing on conflict in the future. Even in a best-case scenario of two degrees of warming, the impact of climate change on conflict would double, rising to a thirteen percent chance and doubling again in a worst-case scenario of four degrees warming.⁹

What can be concluded from the literature regarding the issue of climate change and conflict is that considerable debate still exists about the exact nature of the relationship between the two. Disagreement exists about the evidence linking both and the statistical methods used to generate that evidence. The exact causal mechanisms between climate and conflict are also poorly understood and require further study. Irrespective of the disagreements over the links between conflict and climate to date, what can be concluded is that the future relationship between the two will be radically different. As the Earth moves into uncharted territory climatically, societies around the world will encounter unprecedented environmental conditions with corresponding side effects. Nowhere is this more evident today than on the periphery of Europe's borders and the Sahel region of Africa.

Climate Change: A Regional 'Threat Multiplier'

Stretching from Senegal in the west to northern Ethiopia in the east, the Sahel is the fastest growing region within Africa. By 2030, the population is expected to rise to 700 million people according the UN Development Programme. Niger presently has the highest fertility rate in the

7 Marshall Burke *et al.*, "Warming Increases the Risk of Civil War in Africa," *PNAS* 106, no. 49 (2009), pp. 20670

8 Halvard Buhaug, "Climate Not to Blame for African Civil Wars," *PNAS* 107, no. 38 (2010), pp. 16477-16482

9 Katharine Mach *et al.*, "Climate as a Risk Factor for Armed Conflict," *Nature*, no. 571 (2019), pp. 193-197.

world at seven and will reach a population of seventy million in 2050, whereas in 1960 it was three million. Analysis of the Human Development Index (HDI) indicates that nine out of the ten lowest ranking countries are located within the region, Niger being 189 out of 189. The OECD lists every Sahelian country except for Senegal as either fragile, or extremely fragile, with low levels of development, weak infrastructure, non-existent social safety nets and ethnically divided societies.¹⁰ Added to these structural vulnerabilities is a challenging natural environment that is already being seriously impacted by climate change. Ibrahim Thiaw, UN Special Adviser for the Sahel, describes the region as being home to the largest number of people, globally, affected by climate change.¹¹ Annual rainfall has dropped significantly since the 1970s with reductions in the region of seventy percent and rainfall patterns shifting notably southward away from the region. Temperatures in the region are rising at an estimated one and a half times faster than the global average.

Africa, and the Sahel in particular, are expected to reach two degrees of warming, but potentially higher, by the middle of the century irrespective of climate change mitigation efforts elsewhere.¹² Lake Chad and its environs are a veritable poster child for the environmental effects of climate change with the lake having shrunk by ninety percent since the 1960s. Over fifty percent of the shrinkage is estimated to be due to climate change according to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).¹³ Over 60% of the population is employed in agriculture, which is characteristically rain dependent. Currently some thirty-three million people in the region are chronically food insecure and dependent on outside assistance.¹⁴

A study on the region from the University of California in Berkeley, led by Malcolm Potts, argues in relation to food insecurity in the region that, "there is no escaping the conclusion that climate change and population growth in the Sahel will rapidly outstrip the food supply."¹⁵ In no uncertain terms, UNEP goes as far as to argue, alarmingly, that feeding the Sahel in the future will amount to "mission impossible."¹⁶

Given these structural and environmental vulnerabilities, it is unsurprising that armed conflict has occurred on a regular basis in the region. In terms of the impact that climate change is having on conflict in the region, the Climate Change and African Political Stability Project (CCAPS) at Princeton University has created a climate security vulnerability model with results indicating that the area most vulnerable to climate induced conflict runs across the southern Sahel. The primary arena of conflict is that of violence between pastoralists and farmers. Clashes of this nature are not new to the region and have been ongoing for centuries, however, recently they have been presented as among the first climate related civil conflicts. Given the southward shift of the Sahara Desert and the growing need for agricultural land to feed the burgeoning

10 Jennifer G. Cooke *et al.*, *Militancy and the Arc of Instability* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2016), pp. 5-10.

11 Robert Muggah and Jose Cabrera, "The Sahel is Engulfed by Violence. Climate Change, Food Insecurity and Extremists are Largely to Blame," *World Economic Forum*, 23 January 2019, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/all-the-warning-signs-are-showing-in-the-sahel-we-must-act-now/?utm_campaign=clipping_institucional_dia_a_dia&utm_medium=email&utm_source=RD+Station, accessed May 31 2020.

12 Jurgen Scheffran *et al.*, "Climate and Conflict in Africa," *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Climate Science*, April 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333005004_Climate_and_Conflict_in_Africa_Oxford_Research_Encyclopedia_of_Climate_Science, accessed 15 July 2020.

13 Janani Vivekananda *et al.*, "Shoring up Stability," *Adelphi*, 15 May 2019, <https://shoring-up-stability.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Shoring-up-Stability.pdf>, accessed 17 July 2020.

14 Malcolm Potts *et al.*, "Crisis in the Sahel," *Oasis*, 9 April 2013, https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Crisis_in_the_Sahel.pdf, accessed 23 July 2020.

15 Potts, p. 25.

16 UN – OHRLLS, *World Must Wake Up to The Coming Crisis in The Sahel*, accessed 16 July 2020, UN General Assembly, 2020. <http://unohrlls.org/news/world-must-wake-up-to-the-coming-crisis-in-the-sahel/>

population, herders have been moving south and farmers claiming greater areas of farmland in northern regions, with this inevitably leading to clashes.¹⁷

Between 1978 and 2008, the length of the rainy season in northern Nigeria dropped from 150 to 120 days. In Nigeria's middle belt alone, over 60,000 people are estimated to have died in violence between pastoralists and farmers since 2001.¹⁸ Jihadist groups such as *Boko Haram* and *Al Qaeda* in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) have attempted to exploit these conflicts on numerous occasions. According to some estimates, seventy percent of captured Boko Haram insurgents under interrogation have been found to be not religious zealots but rather displaced farmers and herders from drought-stricken areas in Niger.¹⁹ While the above statistics are difficult to fully verify, particularly as they derive in the main from interrogations, the United Nations has examined in detail the membership motivations of African members of extremist organisations. *Journey to Extremism in Africa*, based on interviewee testimony from former members of *Boko Haram* and *Al Shabaab* among others, has estimated that 55% of recruits voluntarily join out of high frustration with economic conditions, and over 83% feel a high sense of grievance towards their often distant national governments. The report cites employment as the most frequently mentioned need at time of joining for recruits of these organisations.²⁰ This has important bearing regarding the long-term potential effects of climate change on regions such as the Sahel. Given the importance already mentioned of agriculture as an employer in the region, if the long-term climate trends for the region are realised in conjunction with significant population growth, the potential for significant increases in membership of these groups is of distinct concern.

The multiplying effects of climate change are compounded by the structural deficiencies of government in the region. This is evident in the ongoing Tuareg Rebellion in Mali with resultant spill-over effects into neighbouring Chad and Niger which has also drawn in European nations, particularly France, since 2013. Severely affected by drought in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, Tuareg society has been influenced by the return of fighters from Libya in the aftermath of the overthrow of Gaddafi and a parallel surge in available munitions from the fallout of the collapse of the regime in Benghazi.

Stateless and significantly impacted by climate driven landscape changes, the Tuareg resist and have rebelled against what they perceive as an inadequate adherence to the Rural Code in the region with inequitable distribution of scarce natural resources such as water, as well as dwindling cropland and a general ignorance of issues affecting their society by the government in Bamako.²¹

The Sahel is likely to remain the most unstable region in Africa into the foreseeable future due to the combination of structural weaknesses, enormous population growth and the multiplying effects of climate change. As recently as 1915, a severe drought in the Sahel region disrupted daily life to the point that millions emigrated southward into Central Africa.²² At the time, the region carried one-eighth of the population it does today, and border controls were non-

17 The Climate Security Expert Network, *Climate-Fragility Risk Brief: North Africa & Sahel* (Berlin: Adelphi, 2020), p. 8.

18 R. Barras Tejado, "Climate Change and Demographic Trends: Security Challenges in The Sahel," in D. Ghanem-Yazbeck (Ed.), *The Sahel: Europe's African Borders* (Barcelona: Euromesco, 2018), p. 107

19 Charles Iceland, "Water Stress is Helping Drive Conflict and Migration," *World Resources Institute*, 16 August 2020, <https://www.wri.org/news/water-stress-helping-drive-conflict-and-migration>

20 UN Development Programme (UNDP), *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point for Recruitment* (New York, NY: UNDP, 2017), p. 58

21 Scheffran, p. 24

22 J.R. McNeil, "Can History Help us with Global Warming," in Kurt M. Campbell (Ed.), *Climate Cataclysm: The Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Climate Change* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2008), p. 30

existent. Given the projected population growth of the region and the temperature increases expected, migration may well become necessary again soon. This time, the population may move northward, a possibility that concerns Europe greatly.

The Implications for Europe in the Twenty-First Century

The implications for Europe of climate-induced instability along its wider borders and near abroad in the twenty first century are myriad and of considerable concern from a geopolitical, security, humanitarian and moral perspective. Scientific estimates indicate that current efforts to mitigate carbon emissions and reduce warming will place the world in the region of between two and three degrees of warming by the end of the century in a best-case scenario, at worst four degrees. As highlighted, regions such as the Sahel, based on current estimates, will endure warming significantly higher than the global average. At lowest levels of warming, the implications are dangerous and will threaten international order.

At a broad geopolitical level, Robert Kaplan makes the prescient argument that the combination of violent upheavals and the communications revolution since the end of the Cold War have created a more claustrophobic and contested world, in which every crisis is interlinked. Degrees of separatism now diminish at a more rapid pace than ever. With relevance to the Sahel, Kaplan cites the late historian Fernand Braudel who argued that in antiquity, Europe's borders encompassed the entire Mediterranean basin and that in today's globalised world, Europe's southern borders are no longer Italy or Greece but the Sahara Desert south of Algeria and Tunisia. In effect, what happens in the Sahel echoes into mainland Europe.²³

The Sahel has occupied the security concerns of the EU, and the West in general, prior to the eruption of the Malian Crisis in 2013. An initial strategy was developed in 2011, laying out an outlook of security through development. This policy was sustained by the EU's 2015 Sahel Regional Action Plan which emphasised preventing the growth of radicalisation and improving social conditions in the region.²⁴

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) in the United Kingdom views the region as remaining unstable into the foreseeable future, arguing that it will remain the most unstable region of Africa for the next three decades.²⁵ The lead nation from a European perspective, regarding efforts in the Sahel, has been France via Operations Barkhal and Serval. It is evident that long term constabulary missions feature prominently in defence thinking regarding the region. General Francois Leconte, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces has stated publicly that in his opinion French troops will be in the Sahel for the next thirty years. Indeed, the ongoing evolution of the jihadist threat in the region shows no sign of abating with a variety of groups coalescing to create considerable zones of instability, most notably on the common border of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, which has been referred to as the 'triangle of death'.²⁶ While climate change does not directly play a role in the motivations of these groups, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that as temperatures rise in the region, climate change and the impact it is having on

²³ Robert Kaplan, *Return of Marco Polos World* (New York, NY: Random House, 2018), p. 40.

²⁴ Tareq Baconi, "What Lies Beneath," *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 28 June 2018, https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_climate_change_aggravate_problems_Europe_shores_, accessed 25 July 2020.

²⁵ Ministry of Defence, *Africa out to 2045* (London: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2016), p. 125.

²⁶ Majed Nehme, "France's Flawed Strategy breeds security threats in the Sahel," *The Arab Weekly*, 19 January 2020, <https://theArabweekly.com/frances-flawed-strategy-breeds-security-threats-sahel>, accessed 20 July 2020.

marginalised areas of the Sahel may become a rallying factor for new recruits, and European interests a target by association.²⁷

Underlying the European security concerns is a fear of Sahelian instability spilling over into Europe. The primary agent of this instability, it is feared, will be in the form of mass migration. The instability induced by the inward migration of over one million refugees in 2015 and the subsequent political instability in Europe is arguably uppermost in mind when European officials consider the region. While the exact numbers or even scale of future population movements are difficult to predict, the United Nations estimates that by 2050, 200 million 'climate refugees' may be on the move, a significant number of these from sub-Saharan Africa.²⁸ If only a fraction of this number is realised on Europe's borders, it will still dwarf that of 2015. This presents significant humanitarian and moral dilemmas for Europe. All EU members are signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. By restricting entry to 'climate refugees' European governments are faced with the prospect of compromising their moral principles. By allowing the mass entry of refugees, they are potentially faced with renewed domestic turmoil that will have unpredictable consequences. It is a potential scenario that Europe cannot ignore in the hope that it will not occur or leave preparations until it is on our doorstep.

Arguably, up until now, Europe's reaction to, in part, climate induced migration out of Africa has been the securitisation of borders and attempts to externalise security efforts into Africa proper. Migration deals have been secured with countries such as Niger and Senegal and the Frontex budget has increased from six million in 2005 to over 300 million in 2017. Stephen Smith describes Europe's strategy as attempting, "to plug a leaking dike with sandbags full of Euros and stem the migratory tide."²⁹

The securitisation of borders not only compromises Europe from a moral perspective, it also plays into the hands of those who would attempt to exploit the situation. Kelly Greenhill has been at the forefront of studies on the "weaponisation of migration," and the ability of one country to threaten another with the opening of the spigot of migration unless certain demands are met.³⁰ Her work indicates that liberal democracies are extremely vulnerable to what she refers to as coercive engineered migration (CEM).³¹ Europe has proven extremely vulnerable to this type of 'blackmail' over the last two decades. Both Libya and Turkey have been able to derive significant financial and political concessions from Europe by threatening to unleash a migratory tide at various points.³² Given the numbers predicted by the UN to be on the move in the coming decades, strategies involving such deals potentially will leave Europe vulnerable to exploitation on an increasing basis.

The reality is that humanitarian and developmental efforts at a local level in regions such as the Sahel will potentially prove more beneficial in terms of reducing the mass movement of people towards Europe's borders rather than higher walls. The development of resilience to the effects of climate change through efforts such as the Greet Green Wall, an agricultural project to stem

27 Paul Rogers, "Isis and the Revolts from the Margins: The Real Threat to Global Security," *The Irish Times*, 12 September 2016, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/isis-and-revolts-from-the-margins-the-real-threat-to-global-security-1.2788019>, accessed 19 June 2020.

28 Matthew Ader, "How Climate Change will Shape the Future Operational Environment," *Modern War Institute*, 16 June 2020 <https://mwi.usma.edu/climate-change-will-shape-future-operational-environment-sahel-case-study/>, accessed 5 July 2020.

29 Stephen Smith, *The Scramble for Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019), p. 144.

30 Kelly Greenhill, "Migration as a Weapon in Theory and Practice," *Military Review*, Nov- Dec (2016), p. 24.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 26

32 *Ibid.*, p. 24

the advance of the Sahara by the African Union, are examples of such initiatives and an example of the developmental initiatives that will be required into the foreseeable future.

Conclusion

While it is by no means a foregone conclusion that Europe is going to face what Smith refers to as a “migratory encounter” in the twenty-first century with Africa, the indications are already there that the numbers of migrants are going to grow exponentially, especially given that the population of the Sahel will double by 2050 and then double again by the end of the century in an environment of, at best, two degrees of warming.³³ It behoves Europe to pay attention to what is occurring on its southern borders and not just from a security perspective. Given the likelihood already mentioned of significant movements of ‘climate refugees’ towards its borders in the coming decades, and the evident desire of the EU to avoid this, significant developmental strategies will have to be implemented on the ground in regions such as the Sahel to ensure the resilience of populations to the effects of climate change and the ability of local governments to manage these effects. The cruel irony of climate induced change is that the nations least culpable for such change are the least able to overcome its effects. As indicated already, Sahelian nations languish at the bottom of the HDI index and in circumstances such as Niger, where only one female in a thousand completes secondary education, national resilience will require significant external humanitarian assistance in order to ensure the survivability of life south of the Sahara. Paul Collier is prophetic when he argues that, “international efforts must not merely be scaled up, but radically redirected to building the sinews of the state. Without effective states, the Sahel will implode, and Europe will notice the consequences.”³⁴

³³ Smith, p. 152

³⁴ Serge Michailof, *Africanistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. ix.



The Rise of the EU as a Security and Defence Power, and the Positive Implications for Ireland

Capt Catherine Barrett

Abstract

For the first time since its inception, the EU has, somewhat surprisingly, started to move towards strategic autonomy as a security player in the international system. The EU has taken unprecedented strides in building upon and reinforcing the pre-existing Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and growing its own defence ambitions, particularly since 2016 and the launch of the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy. While European integration has only strengthened and deepened economically and politically, military integration, or even further military cooperation, has been slow to materialise. This reluctance is attributed in part to the traditional perception of the military as the last bastion of sovereignty and the preferred lean towards Atlanticism for regional security and defence needs. This paper tracks the incremental rise of the EU as it seeks to become an autonomous security actor in its own right, and the implications and opportunities for Ireland of being a part of a militarily robust and independent EU.

Introduction

Almost 30 years ago, in 1991, Diplomat and Former Foreign Minister of Belgium, Mark Eyskens, likened the EU to an “economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm.”¹ At the time of speaking, many theorists, academics and policymakers would broadly find this metaphor to be befitting and it became widely utilised in academia as an apt illustration of the state of the union.² Even as European integration expanded and deepened, the EU remained unambitious in its approach to defence policy, seemingly content with its identity as a civilian or normative power.³ It has only been in recent years that a shift can be identified which might indicate the gradual and cautious rise of the EU as an actor in its own right in global security and defence affairs.

This paper will track the incremental rise of the EU as it seeks to become an autonomous security actor in its own right. It explores the driving forces behind this development and the initiatives designed to propel the EU to a new elevated position as an autonomous security actor on the world stage. The implications and opportunities for Ireland being a part of a militarily robust and independent EU are also examined.

The Metamorphosis of a ‘Military Worm’

The EU has spent most of its lifespan as the proverbial ‘military worm,’ a non-player in global security and defence affairs. This largely stemmed from the lack of a robust Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). While a CFSP technically exists, enshrined within Article J of Maastricht Treaty of the European Union,⁴ in the decades that followed its investiture, it remained little more than a technicality with low expectations for further development and reinforcement. The political will simply was not in place amongst member states to develop or build upon the CFSP. Traditional perceptions of the military as the last bastion of sovereignty meant that it lagged

¹ Quoted in Craig R. Whitney, “War in the Gulf: Gulf Fighting Shatters Europeans’ Fragile Unity,” *The New York Times*, 25 January 1991, <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/25/world/war-in-the-gulf-europe-gulf-fighting-shatters-europeans-fragile-unity.html>.

² See Phillip H. Gordon, “Europe’s Uncommon Foreign Policy,” *International Security* 22, no. 3 (1997-1998), pp. 74– 100; Juan Díez Medrano, “The European Union: Economic Giant, Political Dwarf,” in T.V. Paul and John A. Hall (Eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

³ See Trineke Palm and Ben Crum, “Military Operations and Europe’s Identity as an International Security Actor,” *European Security* 28, no. 4 (2019), pp. 513-534.

⁴ Council of the European Communities; Commission of the European Communities, *Treaty on European Union*, 7 February 1992, https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf.

behind economic and political progress in integration. Furthermore, vastly differing national foreign policy traditions, long term goals, priorities, cultures, relationships and histories between member states hampered prospects of further military cooperation and development.

With a perception that the development of a unanimous foreign policy was difficult to the point of impossibility, there remained very limited optimism for the case for Europe emerging as a significant actor on the world stage.⁵ The lack of military ambition, or the lack of political will amongst member states to develop and build upon the existing CFSP, meant that the EU seemed resigned to be and to remain a military worm.

But what a difference a decade makes. Shifts in the geo-strategic context, a rebalancing of poles of global power, a divergence from Atlanticism as well as transforming external threats, and consequently changes in priorities for EU member states have resulted in a renewed focus on the CFSP and new European defence initiatives. These new initiatives which often encourage member state cooperation as well as the general strengthening of the clout behind the CFSP have allowed the EU to commence its departure from its status as a military worm.

Driving Forces for Change

The European inclination towards Atlanticism is as much the reason why the union was slow to develop upon the CFSP as it is the reason that ambitions in security and defence are growing today. The NATO Alliance, ever in pursuit of a relevant role in the post-Cold War context, already fulfilled a certain function; facilitating cooperation and cohesion in matters of defence for many (but not all) of the member states of the EU. Thus, it was arguably unnecessary or even counterproductive for the EU to pursue its own defence cooperation agenda.

Atlanticism, is the concept that global prosperity and stability is intricately related to the US-European relationship.⁶ Europeans have long favoured the lean towards Atlanticism in defining and structuring their security objectives. But as time has gone on, the favoured Atlantic lean has become progressively more fraught with greater disparities growing between North American objectives and those of Europe. In the current US political administration, President Trump has long been critical of NATO, maintaining a long-held position that all alliances are a burden on the US.⁷ An apparent shift from embracing Atlanticism to adopting Isolationism on the part of the US illustrated the narrow view of American security policy, one that does not necessarily include NATO.⁸

The concern about over reliance on the US for European security is not a new one or unique to the Trump administration. Theorists have long talked about “the collapse of Atlanticism,” or “Atlanticism in crisis.”⁹ It is interesting to note however, that EU leaders have justified European defence development as a way of diminishing reliance on the US and Trump. Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission for example, stated on the unveiling of the new Defence

5 Ulrich Krotz, “Momentum and Impediments: Why Europe Won't Emerge as a Full Political Actor on the World Stage Soon,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 47, no. 3 (2009), pp. 555-578.

6 Definition of ‘Atlanticism’ by Madaline Schwartz, “The End of Atlanticism: Has Trump Killed the Ideology that Won the Cold War?” *The Guardian*, 4 September 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/sep/04/atlanticism-trump-ideology-cold-war-foreign-policy>.

7 Doug Bandow, “Trump and U.S. Alliances: From Burden-Sharing to Burden-Shedding,” *Foreign Affairs*, 25 January 2017, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-01-25/trump-and-us-alliances>.

8 Judy Dempsey and Tomáš Valášek, “The United States of Donald Trump,” *Carnegie Europe*, 11 July 2018, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/76799>.

9 See for example, Ivo H. Daalder, “The End of Atlanticism,” *Survival* 45, no. 2 (2003), pp. 147-166.

package in 2017 that “the protection of Europe can no longer be outsourced.”¹⁰ Other European heads of state have made similar statements, including Emmanuel Macron’s statement in an interview that “the instability of our American partner and rising tensions have meant that the idea of European defence is gradually taking hold.”¹¹

Aside from the growing consensus that Europe can no longer continue to rely on the US for security is another driving factor in European Defence ambitions. Europe sees instability not only in the transatlantic relationship, but much closer to home as well. Along its Southern and Eastern flanks, Europe faces dynamic and constantly transforming threats. As such, Europe has a vested interest in the security of the regions surrounding it as well as shoring up its own borders. The Russian annexation of Crimea and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine form another collective security concern to member states on the East of the Bloc.

Newly emerging ‘hybrid threats,’ the nature and extent of which are only beginning to be understood, are also prompting the EU to look at its capabilities in dealing with issues such as; piracy, trafficking, border control, crisis response and radicalisation.¹² The general recognition amongst member states that a concerted approach is the best way to deal with the security threats of tomorrow, particularly when the US can no longer be relied upon to offer support, has prompted support for continuing EU defence development.

European Security and Defence Initiatives

From what has been a slow and incremental reinforcing of the CFSP, the EU has taken great strides, particularly since 2016 in its defence ambitions. The previous EU High Representative Federica Mogherini, presented the Global Strategy for the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy in June of 2016, laying out an implementation plan on security and defence and made clear EU intentions to be able to independently provide security within its own borders and neighbourhood as an autonomous actor.¹³

Under the leadership of then Secretary General Anders Rasmussen in the years following the global recession, NATO pushed ‘smart defence’ initiatives, which were designed to encourage member states to become involved in the pooling and sharing of defence resources and making joint procurements and acquisitions. The concept was essentially a rebranding of already existing initiatives, and failed to revolutionise or even to refresh the way that the alliance operated as hoped.¹⁴ By 2017, the EU’s own cooperation initiative was launched in the form of PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation).¹⁵ Under PESCO, 49 projects have been launched to facilitate cooperation in land, air, maritime and space security and defence. These include, for example, the EU Training Mission Competence Centre, the Joint EU Intelligence School, the Deployable Military Disaster Relief Capability Package and the Cyber and Information Domain

¹⁰ European Commission, “Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Defence and Security Conference Prague: In Defence of Europe,” 9 June 2017, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_17_1581.

¹¹ Macron also controversially described NATO as “brain dead” during the interview with *The Economist*; see *The Economist*, “Emmanuel Macron in His Own Words (English,” *The Economist*, 7 November 2019, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-in-his-own-words-english>.

¹² See Erik Brattberg and Tomáš Valášek, *EU Defense Cooperation: Progress Amid Transatlantic Concerns*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 21 November 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/11/21/eu-defense-cooperation-progress-amid-transatlantic-concerns-pub-80381>.

¹³ See European Union Global Strategy, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy*, July 2016, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/EUGS_0.pdf.

¹⁴ Ian Wood, “A Strategic Assessment of NATO’s SMART Defence and its Implications for Canada,” *Studia Diplomatica* 67, no. 3 (2014), pp. 9-14.

¹⁵ See Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), <https://pesco.europa.eu>.

Coordination Centre to name but a few. These projects allow for member states with particular experience or expertise in a field to share and contribute their knowledge and resources to allow for the overall strengthening of the Union as a whole.

The European Defence Fund (EDF) is another significant initiative. Launched in 2017 by the European Commission, the EDF is the first time that the EU budget is used to co-fund defence cooperation. It is essentially an internal market instrument made up of different public funding tools to promote research and development in military projects, as well as complimenting national investments to incentivise collaboration in joint development, research and acquisition of new defence capabilities.

In terms of funding and financing, a strong indicator of the new emphasis and urgency is the rate of defence spending. In 2017, Europe was the fastest-growing region in real-terms defence spending, with a 3.6% increase over the 2016 figure.¹⁶

Not an Army, but a European ‘Standing Force’?

The EU has been keen to dispel the “myth”¹⁷ that there exists or there is an intention of creating a ‘European Army,’ partially out of concern for stoking Euroscepticism.¹⁸ But one area where political commentary, journalistic coverage or academic assessment has been relatively quiet is the introduction of FRONTEX, the European Border and Coastguard Agency, which came into force in 2019. FRONTEX is a self-described “Standing Corps,” making up “Europe’s first uniformed law enforcement service.”¹⁹ The idea that “the standing corps will be composed of FRONTEX and EU Member States’ officers, who will at any time be able to support the Member States facing challenges at their external borders.”²⁰ The FRONTEX agency allows Europe to make a concerted and proactive effort to protect its own borders, sharing the burden with member states, particularly Southern coastal nations such as Greece, Spain and Italy who have complained of struggling to deal with the effects of illegal migration. While the agency is not and cannot be in any way considered as a military force, it is the first time Europe has had its own standing corps of uniformed, armed service people with executive powers, mandated to support member states facing challenged at their external borders.²¹ This in itself, is a highly significant step in the deeper securitisation of Europe and its ability to act and to defend itself autonomously.

Implications and Opportunities for Ireland

The Economist recently described Ireland as an “unlikely diplomatic superpower” stating that “Ireland has a good claim to be the world’s most diplomatically powerful country.”²² In 2020 alone, Paschal Donohoe’s presidency of the Eurogroup and the Irish victory over Canada to win

16 Lucie Béraud-Sudrea, “Eurasian Defence Spending: The New Consensus,” *The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) ‘Military Balance Blog*,” 15 February 2018, <https://www.iiiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2018/02/european-defence-spending>.

17 The EU pointedly describes the concept of a European Army as a “myth,” see, European Parliament, “Defence: Is the EU Creating a European Army?” 24 June 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/security/20190612STO54310/eu-army-myth-what-is-europe-really-doing-to-boost-defence>.

18 See Sophia Besch, “Waging War on the Myth of an EU Army,” *Centre for European Reform*, 7 June 2016, <https://www.cer.eu/in-the-press/waging-war-myth-eu-army>.

19 For information on FRONTEX, see <https://frontex.europa.eu>.

20 FRONTEX, “News Release: Frontex Selects the First Group of Future Members of its Standing Corps,” 20 May 2020, <https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/frontex-selects-the-first-group-of-future-members-of-its-standing-corps-wN1BM4>.

21 The fact that border guards are armed and hold executive powers is important. Although, it is not clearly or distinctly broadcast on the FRONTEX website, the fact that personnel are armed is quietly stipulated; see FRONTEX, “Careers: Become a Frontex Border Guard,” <https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/careers/frontex-border-guard-recruitment/>.

22 Charlemagne, “How Ireland Gets its Way,” *The Economist*, 18 July 2020, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2020/07/18/how-ireland-gets-its-way>.

a seat as a non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council have highlighted this diplomatic clout. As a non-member of NATO, Ireland has had limited cause to be involved with NATO-led initiatives other than in its capacity as a Partnership for Peace participant. However, as a committed and contributing part of the EU family, the rise of Europe as a security actor in its own right will open up opportunities for Ireland. Ireland has the potential to reinforce its position as a diplomatically influential nation and may find opportunities to take a leadership position in new EU security projects, drawing upon its extensive experience in peacekeeping by sharing expertise. Increased collaboration may result in more possibilities to participate in multinational joint training exercises and courses as well as split procurement programmes. As Ireland continues to participate in the international security architecture of the EU, it compounds and reinforces its own reputation as a diplomatically powerful state.

Through the state's participation in PESCO, Ireland has already become involved in projects such as the EU Training Mission Competence Centre (EU TMCC) and an Upgrade of Maritime Surveillance. The former is a German-led initiative that seeks to streamline the participation of military personnel in Training Missions on an EU level, which ultimately endeavours to improve the skillset, availability and interoperability of states involved. As a current contributor to the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) and with previous experience in EUTM Somalia, Ireland is well-placed to contribute expertise and to develop its own capabilities. The Maritime Surveillance Upgrade is a Greek-led project and will see improvements to the real time sharing and exchange of information in maritime operations, thus improving situational awareness and response effectiveness to potential threats and challenges. This means an improved capability to handle new and emerging challenges as well as traditional ones for example; energy security, human security, trafficking and environmental challenges. For Ireland, the framework of PESCO projects ultimately will allow for an exchange of expertise, technology and skills with our neighbours on a new, elevated level. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) notes that this initiative will enhance coordination, reduce duplication of effort and increase cooperation in the development of EU common security capabilities.²³

The scope for Ireland's continued participation in EU security and defence initiatives is broad, and still in its infancy. While former Taoiseach Leo Varadkar noted that Ireland would not be making large scale defence hardware purchases as a result,²⁴ in theory it may be possible, for example, for Ireland to collaborate with another state on bulk purchases of equipment to make savings on expenditure, allowing Ireland access to products that previously may not have been accessible due to cost limitations. Ireland may also take the opportunity to become involved with more PESCO projects or even to take on a leadership role, launching and leading a project.

Developments such as Ireland's involvement in PESCO have been raised by critics as a worrying example of the further erosion of Irish Neutrality and sovereignty as well as a further step towards a 'European Army.' Euro-sceptic politicians such as Luke Ming Flanagan have been particularly

²³ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Common Security and Defence Policy," <https://www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/international-priorities/peace-and-security/common-security-and-defence-policy/>.

²⁴ Leo Varadkar "We are not going to be buying aircraft carriers; we are not going to be buying fighter jets; and we are not going to be shopping around military trade fairs." Dáil Éireann Debate Wednesday, 6 December 2017, Vol 962, No. 7, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-12-06/>.

vocal on this front, declaring that stated intentions not to develop a European military force were an “obvious lie.”²⁵

Separate from the voices of dissent, the Irish government and civil service have long maintained support for the compatibility of Irish neutrality and independence with participation in EU security initiatives.²⁶ Other non-aligned nations such as Austria and Sweden participate in these initiatives with the same spirit as they participate economically or politically.

Irish involvement in EU security has not started suddenly, it has already been a participant in various EU initiatives. With a significant history of contributing troops to CFSP missions, Ireland currently contributes troops to the EU Training Mission in Mali as well as the EU Battle Group. This cooperation and collaboration is possible without an overall transformation into a European Army.

Conclusion

Defence was expected to be a top policy and budgetary priority for the EU in 2020. This was obviously hampered by the advent of the COVID-19 crisis which diverted focus to health care initiatives. European defence has however not been put entirely on the back burner. The EDF is still set to receive €8 billion in a seven-year plan from 2021, albeit a drop from the initially promised €13 billion.²⁷ These developments represent yet another a shift in a world where the balance of power is increasingly multipolar. In time, Europe may emerge as a robust autonomous security actor in its own right and as long as Ireland is part of the European Union, it will be part of the new geo-strategic landscape. Whether or not Europe succeeds in its ambitions remains to be seen, and will be impacted by the ongoing global health pandemic. But, even at this early fledgling stage, it would be more difficult to defend the assertion that the EU is a metaphorical military worm. An acorn idiom might be more appropriate: small for the time being but with the potential to become something mighty and strong as a great oak.

25 In a video advert released in 2018 by MEP Luke Ming Flanagan, he stated that assertions that there were no moves to build a European Army were an “obvious lie.” He also stated that, “PESCO makes a mockery of what’s left of Irish neutrality.” See also Flanagan’s critical view on PESCO and European Defence, Luke Ming Flanagan, “If We are Heading for an EU Army, What Does that Mean for Irish Neutrality?” *TheJournal.ie*, 12 November 2018, <https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/if-we-are-heading-for-an-eu-army-what-does-that-mean-for-irish-neutrality-4331443-Nov2018/>.

26 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Common Security and Defence Policy.”

27 See European Commission, “EU Budget for 2021-2027: Commission Welcomes Provisional Agreement on the Future European Defence Fund,” 20 February 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/eu-budget-2021-2027-commission-welcomes-provisional-agreement-future-european-defence-fund_en.



‘Taken up from Trade’: The Marinisation of Hybrid Warfare

Lt (NS) Ben Crumplin

Abstract

Over the past two decades there has been a global trend towards threats facing the maritime domain manifesting as hybridized and unconventional, mirroring that seen on land. Ireland, as an island nation, should pay particular concern to the trend in the hybridisation of naval operations, in so far as a blurring of the line between merchant vessels and warships. In other words, merchant vessels ostensibly exercising the right of innocent passage through the waters of another state while concurrently conducting military operations. The literature has discussed the hybridisation of warfare in the post 9/11 security context in great detail, particularly surrounding non-state actors and unconventional warfare. Although the relative absence of conventional inter-state conflict over the last two decades would suggest hybridised warfare is a symptom of conflict between state and non-state actors, some state actors have begun to heavily employ hybridised warfare in pursuit of their foreign policy agenda. Russia has utilised this tactic through the use of state sponsored/non-uniformed belligerents, as has been seen by recent involvement of Russian Private Military Contractors in Middle Eastern and African conflict zones, and as was seen in the case of the Russian use of the 'little green men' during the annexation of Crimea in 2014. The use of these tactics in an ostensible interstate conflict sets a worrying precedent. According to a report by the Estonian Intelligence and Security Service, it seems that hybridized warfare is now pervasive in Russian naval operations.¹ In terms of Ireland's strategic defence picture, this shift has the potential to become a key element amongst others rapidly developing in the spectrum of maritime threats. The trend of using merchant vessels for military operations, or otherwise, poses significant challenges in the context of defending Ireland's sovereignty vis a vis its maritime jurisdiction. This paper will examine the level that these hybridised threats pose to Ireland, particularly in the context of conventional maritime security doctrine. Furthermore, it will examine how best to counter this threat through increased cooperation, enhanced analysis of Open Source Intelligence as well as continuing overt presence in the maritime domain.

Introduction

The blurring of lines between conventional military operations and other activities, in both a state and non-state context is a concerning trend in recent times. Manifestations of this trend (Global War on Terror, Russian annexation of Crimea, etc.) have focused squarely on a land centric axis and proved highly effective. The maritime domain is not immune to these blurring lines and there is worrying potential for significant damage to be inflicted against Western Nations sovereignty and prosperity. This paper will examine the shift towards a hybridisation of conflict in the maritime domain and the potential ramifications for Ireland. Firstly, the paper will briefly outline the characteristics of hybrid warfare. Secondly, the paper will develop these concepts and discuss the development of hybrid warfare in the maritime domain, drawing heavily on recent examples. Thirdly, the paper will argue that Ireland, being a small, open economy with integral economic ties to other large Western Nations, essential to its prosperity is not immune to these threats. This section will speculate as to the potential impact which nefarious actors could have on Ireland by utilising hybrid tactics in the maritime domain. Finally, the paper will detail several recommendations which Ireland should implement to be in a position to effectively counter these

¹ Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, *International Security and Estonia* (Tallin: Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, 2019).

threats, should they ever manifest themselves in Ireland's area of responsibility, however unlikely this may be.

Brief Introduction to Hybrid Warfare

The collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the 20th century prompted a rush to define new ideas surrounding what would constitute warfare and conflict. Analysts and scholars endeavoured to redefine warfare; terms such as 'revolution in military affairs (RMA),' 'compound wars,' 'asymmetric conflict' and 'fourth generation warfare' all entered the vernacular.² Recently, the ubiquity of technology and the re-emergence of the state as a belligerent has spurred the development of the idea of Hybrid Warfare. Hybrid warfare has since gained traction in the discourse of warfare and is now pervasive in the doctrine of many major defence and security organisations including NATO and the EU.

Hybrid warfare however is not a 21st century concept. Ever since Odysseus utilised his Trojan Horse to devastating effect, belligerents have understood the benefit of subversion as a tactic. In October 1983 Ronald Regan approved the top-secret National Security Decision Directive 108 on *Soviet Camouflage, Concealment and Deception* which references the Soviet doctrine of '*maskirovka*' which the document defines as a "set of measures to deceive or mislead the enemy with respect to Soviet National Security Capabilities, actions and intentions. These measures include concealment, simulation, diversionary actions and disinformation."³ What this document is referring to and what Odysseus used in the 12th century BC is what is colloquially known today as Hybrid Warfare. The European Union suggest that the purpose of hybrid warfare is to "coerce the object of a threat into complying with the aggressor's strategic interests."⁴ The ubiquity of technology in modern society gives belligerents unprecedented scope to conduct clandestine operations against other states. However, although hybrid warfare has become synonymous with cyber-warfare, the Regan administrations contention of the characteristics of this type of warfare remain pertinent.

The modern concept of Hybrid Warfare, which gained notoriety in 2005,⁵ suggests the converge of several facets inside and outside the traditional military sphere.⁶ In other words, hybridity is the application of tactical approaches harmonised from within and outside military structures, in order to achieve a political aim. Hybrid warfare utilises *amorphous* tactics below the level of war, para-military forces, offensive cyber techniques, security and intelligence service operations, information operations designed to influence society, foster instability and sow division and confusion.⁷ Hybrid warfare offers huge advantage to belligerents; operates outside the traditional scope of armed conflict, is borderless, deniable, relatively inexpensive, and oftentimes far more politically palatable than conventional military action.

2 Waseem Ahmad Qureshi, "The Rise of Hybrid Warfare," *Notre Dame Journal of International & Comparative Law* 10, no. 2 (2020), p. 8. not-for-profit public policy research center. The Institute identifies key science, technology and national security issues, and aggressively follows through with focused research and policy advice. From this research and subsequent public discussions, the Potomac Institute has a track record for developing meaningful policy options and assisting their implementation at the intersection of both business and government. In partnership with the U.S. Marine Corps, the Potomac Institute established the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities (CETO)

3 "National Security Decision Directive 108 - 'Soviet Camouflage, Concealment and Deception'" (Washington, DC, 1983).

4 Gustav Gressel, "Protecting Europe against Hybrid Threats," *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 25 June 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/protecting_europe_against_hybrid_threats, p. 2.

5 In a speech in 2005, Lieutenant General James Mattis spoke about irregular challengers which America will face utilising combination of novel approaches-a merger of different modes and means of war. This, he later described as hybrid warfare. For more information, see Lieutenant General James Mattis and Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hoffman, "Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 15 (November 2005), <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2005/november/future-warfare-rise-hybrid-wars>.

6 Murat Caliskan, "Hybrid Warfare through the Lens of Strategic Theory," *Defense and Security Analysis* 35, no. 1 (2019), p. 48.

7 Gressel, "Protecting Europe against Hybrid Threats," p. 2.

The best example of application of *hybrid warfare* in recent times is Russia's campaigns in Crimea, where Russia fermented local pro-Russian sentiment (societal/cultural,) utilised militia in civilian attire (proxy/para-military,) and oversaw local elections with a view to granting the annexation legitimacy (political).⁸ The effectiveness of this campaign, along with recent successes utilising similar techniques in Syria and Libya, demonstrates an effectiveness of hybrid warfare to which the West seems to have little answer.⁹

Hybrid Warfare in the Maritime Domain

The definition of maritime hybrid warfare remains somewhat ambiguous. Admiral James Stavridis, writing in the *US Naval Proceedings* asserts that maritime hybrid warfare is conducted in the littoral, features the use of both civilian vessels manned by 'little blue sailors,' who utilise a variety of weaponry and also provide 'surveillance, logistics, command and control' to conventional military force.¹⁰ Naval warfare is often characterised by opposing forces operating out of sight of one another, in a clandestine fashion or simply by existing.¹¹ Hybridised conflict has existed in the maritime sphere far longer than realised. In the Second World War, British Special Operations Forces regularly employed tactics involving deception and surprise against Axis merchant and naval vessels in the Mediterranean theatre.¹² Similarly, Italian frogmen scored significant victories against Allied warships, utilising clandestine tactics against vessels in port.¹³

Modern times have witnessed an increase in nefarious activity by Chinese maritime militia, masquerading as Chinese fishermen.¹⁴ China has directly employed this maritime militia in order to enforce its sovereignty claims in disputed areas in the South China Sea, under the direct command of the Peoples Liberation Army. What began as a coastal patrol force in the 1970s, Chinese *Little Blue Men* increasingly became involved in all manner of operations traditionally assigned to Naval Forces; maritime rescue; combat operations and sovereignty enforcement. China has been known to engage in campaigns operating in the grey zone of conflict, by subduing the enemy without fighting, by overcoming the enemy by swarming them with large numbers of vessels. The advantage which this offers China is clear; deniability, manipulating the law of armed conflict and far less likely to trigger interventions from other regional powers.¹⁵ The Chinese Maritime Militia have been involved in several conflicts and standoffs with other regional powers, notably the Battle of the Paracels, the Chinese seizure of the Mischief Reef and Scarborough Shoal and blockading Manila from resupplying the Second Thomas Shoal in

8 Alexander Lanoszka, "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe," *International Affairs* 92, no. 1 (2016), pp. 175-76.

9 For more information on the Russian campaign in Crimea see Mark Galeotti, "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New Is Russia's 'New Way of War'?", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27, no. 2 (2016), pp. 282-301; Robert Seely and Alya Shandra, "The Surkov Leaks : The Inner Workings of Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine," *RUSI Occasional Paper*, 2019, <https://www.rusi.org/publication/occasional-papers/surkov-leaks-inner-workings-russias-hybrid-war-ukraine>.

10 James Stavridis, "Maritime Hybrid Warfare Is Coming," *US Naval Institute* 142, no. December (2016), pp. 3-4, <https://www.usni.org/print/89461>.

11 The idea that a naval force can cause significant concern relates to one side having to invest heavily in both hunting the opposing naval force and protecting its vital infrastructure, should the naval force choose to incite aggressive action. For information see Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed. (Taylor & Francis, 2013), 173-76.

12 See Philip Warner, *Secret Forces of World War Two* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper Ltd, 2004), Ch. 2.

13 See Admiral William McRaven, "The Italian Manned Torpedo Attack at Alexandria, 19th December 1941," in *Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York, NY: Presidio Press, 1996).

14 Derek Grossman, "A Short History of China's Fishing Militia and What It May Tell Us | RAND," *RAND*, 6 April 2020, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/04/a-short-history-of-chinas-fishing-militia-and-what.html>.

15 In separate incidents in 2009 and in 2014, Chinese Maritime Militia repeatedly harassed US naval forces, who were unable to effectively counter the threat and ultimately withdrew, demonstrating the effectiveness of this tactic. For information on the incidents, see Michael Green et al., *Countering Coercion in Maritime Asia: The Theory and Practice of Grey Zone Deterrence*, CSIS Report, 9 May 2017, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/countering-coercion-maritime-asia>.

2014.¹⁶ The proliferation of the Chinese Maritime Militia serves as an example of the efficacy of Hybrid tactics at Sea, and have grown to become an integral part of China's naval strategy.

Closer to home, the European Union Maritime Security Strategy lists several maritime threats to European nations, most relevant to Ireland, and some particularly in the context of hybridised conflict. The document lists several threats which potentially face EU Member States; their maritime sovereignty; economic interests; as well as terrorism, crime and unlawful acts designed to target the prosperity and security of European Member States.¹⁷ Given, These maritime threats, although speculative, must be considered in the context of the recent attacks in several European states by non-state and clandestine forces. The European Union, of which Ireland is a member, has recognised that hybrid threats to its maritime sovereignty and prosperity are real and worthy of consideration.

Hybridised Maritime Threat to Ireland

Notwithstanding its stated position of remaining neutral/militarily non-aligned, Ireland, due to it being a small, open economy, largely dependent on multinationals and foreign direct investment, is intrinsically aligned to the other large, western economies of Europe and the United States. Given Ireland's disposition as a small island nation, with relatively limited defence capability, Ireland may be considered a 'soft target' for those who may want to damage western countries and their economies. Ireland's prosperity is dependent on the maintenance of *good order at sea*.¹⁸ Despite history suggesting that the likelihood of an attack against Ireland is very low, the cost effectiveness of utilising hybridised tactics in the maritime domain, outside the scope of conventional naval/military action leave Ireland's sovereignty, economic wellbeing and societal stability troublingly exposed.

Most closely aligned with conventional naval thinking, one threat facing Ireland's maritime area of responsibility is the threat of the obstructing of Ireland's physical sea lines of communication. In 2017 30.34 million tonnes of trade passed through Irish Ports.¹⁹ In the same year, 55 million tonnes of trade passed between Europe and North America, much of which passed through Ireland's area of responsibility.²⁰ Although the threat to this traffic remains low, considering the volume of traffic which passes through this area, any action which impedes safe passage would have severe ramifications. This threat has the potential to manifest itself through interdiction of vessels as well as through blockades or harassment of vessels by civilian vessels, as has been witnessed in the South China Sea. Paramilitary forces operating onboard merchant vessels are nigh on impossible to positively identify. *Little blue sailors* could be operating in Ireland's area

16 Conor Kennedy, "The Struggle for Blue Territory: Chinese Maritime Militia Grey-Zone Operations," *RUSI Journal* 163, no. 5 (2018), pp. 10-12.

17 Council of the European Union, "11205/14 European Union Maritime Security Strategy," 24 June 2014, pp. 10-12, [http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST 11205 2014 INIT.protected and secure seas and oceans for economic development, free trade, transport, energy security, tourism and good status of the marine environment. The major part of both the EU's external and internal trade is transported by sea. The EU is the third largest importer and the fifth global producer of fisheries and aquaculture. More than 70% of the external borders of the Union are maritime and hundreds of millions of passengers pass through its ports each year. Europe's energy security largely depends on maritime transport and infrastructures. The important increase of the EU Member States' fleets and the adequate port infrastructures \(e.g. LNG facilities](http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST 11205 2014 INIT.protected and secure seas and oceans for economic development, free trade, transport, energy security, tourism and good status of the marine environment. The major part of both the EU's external and internal trade is transported by sea. The EU is the third largest importer and the fifth global producer of fisheries and aquaculture. More than 70% of the external borders of the Union are maritime and hundreds of millions of passengers pass through its ports each year. Europe's energy security largely depends on maritime transport and infrastructures. The important increase of the EU Member States' fleets and the adequate port infrastructures (e.g. LNG facilities)

18 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, 10-11.

19 The Irish Maritime Development Office, "The Irish Maritime Transport Economist" 15 April 2018, pp. 22, [www.imdo.ie.support and market the shipping and shipping services sector. 3. To advise the Minister for Transport on the development and coordination of policy in the shipping and shipping services sector so as to protect and create employment. 4. To carry out policy as may be specified by the Minister for Transport relating to the shipping and shipping services sector and seafarer training. 5. To advise the Minister for Transport on the development and coordination of policy and to carry out policy, as may be specified by that Minister, relating to ports and the ports services sector, and; 6. any additional functions relating to the shipping and shipping services sector conferred on the Institute under section 4\(4](http://www.imdo.ie.support and market the shipping and shipping services sector. 3. To advise the Minister for Transport on the development and coordination of policy in the shipping and shipping services sector so as to protect and create employment. 4. To carry out policy as may be specified by the Minister for Transport relating to the shipping and shipping services sector and seafarer training. 5. To advise the Minister for Transport on the development and coordination of policy and to carry out policy, as may be specified by that Minister, relating to ports and the ports services sector, and; 6. any additional functions relating to the shipping and shipping services sector conferred on the Institute under section 4(4)

20 World Shipping Council, "Trade Routes," <http://www.worldshipping.org/about-the-industry/global-trade/trade-routes>, accessed 5 August 2020.

of responsibility without the knowledge of Irish authorities and pose a direct threat to Irish sovereignty and interests.

Of even greater concern is the potential impact which these *little blue sailors* could have on Irish ports and other strategic infrastructure. 98.5% of Irish trade, by weight, passes through Irish Ports.²¹ Increased economic activity will generally coincide with an increase in goods and/or commodities and consequently more ships in Irish ports. Hostile actors may see greater opportunity to clandestinely enter Irish Ports and ultimately impact the flow of trade into Ireland. For example, an individual or group could orchestrate an attack on the shore infrastructure through IEDs or other direct actions. They could engage in a sea-denial operation by the employment of Maritime IEDs or mines, deliberately create an obstruction in the port environs by scuttling a vessel or creating an obstruction.²² Inhibiting access to a strategic Irish port will directly impact the flow of goods as well as increase costs as shipping companies and port operators must contend with added logistical, fuel and insurance requirements. Some shipping companies may avoid Ireland altogether.

Ireland, being a small, open economy in a highly strategic location, is an important hub for technology, finance, and communications. A significant number of transatlantic subsea cables which cross the Atlantic, many of which transfer critical data relating to the functioning of the global economy, make landfall in Ireland. Furthermore, three quarters of all transatlantic cables pass through or near Irish waters.²³ These cables transfer critical data integral to the Irish economy and the economies of Western Europe and North America including financial transactions, intellectual property, and communications. Some have argued that the threats of physically cutting cables are overblown, given the redundancy built into the network.²⁴ Conversely, any interference in communication network caused by damaging undersea cables could contribute significantly to a campaign designed to create instability.²⁵ Interrupting the latency, impacting the flow of data or even mining the flow of data has the potential to widely impact the geopolitics and the global economy.²⁶ In 2014, leaked documents purported that UK intelligence agencies have fitted 'listening devices' to Subsea cables in Irish Waters, something which the operators of the cables claim to have no knowledge of.²⁷ Similarly, it was reported that Russia could fit devices to undersea cables, allowing them to harvest data.²⁸ Notwithstanding the strategic risk associated with interfering in the undersea network, what is necessary is access; for which a ship, often a merchant ship with seemingly innocent intentions is required. The Russian Ship YANTAR is one such vessel which may be capable of interfering with cables. Ostensibly an oceanographic

21 Martina Lawless and Edgar L. W. Morgenroth, "Ireland's International Trade and Transport Connections," no. 57 (2017), p. 12.

22 During the Kerch Strait Incident in 2018 Russian para-military forces seized a barge and used it to block the Kerch Strait, impacting over 2,200 vessels. Comparisons could be drawn between the Kerch Strait incidence and Roches point on the entry to Cork Harbour. At its narrowest point, Roches Point is less than 500 meters wide. Any obstruction here could have severe ramifications for traffic coming in and out of the Port of Cork. For more information on the Kerch Strait Incident, see Andrew Roth, "Kerch Strait Confrontation: What Happened and Why Does It Matter?" *The Guardian*, 27 November 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/27/kerch-strait-confrontation-what-happened-ukrainian-russia-crimea>.

23 "Submarine Cable Map 2019," TeleGeography, <https://submarine-cable-map2019.telegeography.com/>, accessed 5 August 2020.

24 Nicole Starosielski, *The Undersea Network* (London: Duke University Press, 2015), pp. 12–13.

25 Martin Murphy and Gary Schaub Jr., "'Sea of Peace' or Sea of War - Russian Maritime Hybrid Warfare in the Baltic Sea," *Naval War College Review* 71, no. 2 (2018), p. 10.

26 CCDCOE, "Strategic Importance of, and Dependence on, Undersea Cables," November 2019), <https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2019/11/Undersea-cables-Final-NOV-2019.pdf>.

27 "UK Government Communications HQ Tapped Irish Internet Cables," ICS, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://www.ics.ie/news/view/1298>.

28 John Mooney, "Russian Agents Plunge to New Ocean Depths in Ireland to Crack Transatlantic Cables," *The Sunday Times*, 16 February 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russian-agents-plunge-to-new-ocean-depths-in-ireland-to-crack-transatlantic-cables-fnqsmgncz?i=ie>.

research vessel, this vessel has on several occasions been reported to be loitering in the vicinity of subsea cables for no apparent reason.²⁹

Without the means to monitor cables, these devices could go undetected for significant periods of time. Notwithstanding the potential damage lost data could do and the associated reputational damage to Ireland would be significant should this targeting of cables occur in Irish waters, such action could allow nefarious actors to achieve *information dominance*, a key element of a successful hybrid campaign.³⁰ Furthermore, given the global shift towards renewable energy, much of which is generated at sea and transferred ashore by undersea cables, it is not difficult to imagine how an interruption to this supply could make more traditional carbon based energy production more cost effective, viable and attractive. This could be done by clandestinely targeting these cables, through damage or interference, and could greatly reduce the efficiency of renewable power generation. The network of undersea cables are hugely reliable; redundancy within the undersea cable network means that any interruptions often go unnoticed.³¹ However, it is not difficult to imagine how a coordinated effort as part of a hybrid campaign could interfere with the undersea network to such an extent as to have a noticeable impact on the global communication networks.

Conceivably, the most concerning threat to Ireland's maritime industry could be from cyber-attacks. Although concerning in and of themselves, the potential damage which a directed cyber-attack could have on maritime infrastructure could be compounded if incorporated into a wider of a hybrid campaign. The threat lies in the modern port and the modern vessel's complex IT systems. Port operations present a worrying vulnerability. Managing the large quantity of many different types of cargo relies upon complex IT systems. A cyber-attack against these systems has the potential to cause significant disruption, physical and environmental damage, and could last for days or weeks, depending on the severity of the attack.³² Furthermore, the individual vessels themselves are also at risk. Even a cursory glance at a modern bridge reveals a labyrinth of systems which allow for the safe navigation, engineering, and cargo operations, all of which have become heavily integrated and linked to internal and external networks. Therefore, a potential cyber-attack could leave the ship unable to manoeuvre, navigate or manage its cargo, with potentially catastrophic consequences, particularly if the vessel is operating in confined or congested waters.

In the context of the cyber-attacks and information dominance Ireland is vulnerable to a directed and highly concentrated information ops campaign. As has been articulated above, information dominance is a key component of inciting societal unrest. Furthermore, the level of threat facing Ireland mean that significant resources must be allocated to protect its critical maritime infrastructure.³³ Ireland is a nation who's foreign and defence policy is based upon being militarily non-aligned/neutral. One of the most effective methods of combating hybrid threats is through cooperation with organisations, alliances and through bilateral arrangements. A nefarious group, whether a state or a transnational group may therefore feel

29 Laurence Peter, "What Makes Russia's New Spy Ship Yantar Special?," *BBC News*, 3 January 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42543712>.

30 Leona Alleslev, "NATO Anti-Submarine Warfare: Rebuilding Capacity and Preparing for the Future," *NATO Science and Technology Committee*, 2019, p. 4.

31 Murphy and Schaub Jr., "'Sea of Peace' or Sea of War," p. 10.

32 Gary Schaub, Murphy Martin, and Frank G Hoffman, "Hybrid Maritime Warfare: Building Baltic Resilience," *RUSI Journal* 162, no. 1 (2017), pp. 11, <https://rusi.org/publication/rusi-journal/hybrid-maritime-warfare-building-baltic-resilience>.

33 See below.

that its interests are best served by creating tension and opposition to collaborating with external organisations. Therefore, Ireland's interests may face an indirect threat from a group attempting to achieve *information dominance* by manipulating the flow of information through the internet. Ireland's communications networks are vulnerable to such external threats.

What Can Ireland do to Counter These Threats?

The essence of the threats described above implies that they can only be countered by well-resourced military and complimented by dedicated civilian components. However, these threats can be addressed by relatively inexpensive capabilities, many of which are within the scope of Ireland's defence and security apparatus.

Firstly, Ireland must maintain and develop its defence capability in the maritime domain. The size of Ireland's EEZ, the environmental conditions routinely experienced there and range of threats described above is such that Ireland's military and naval capability must be considered of critical importance. The ability to conduct Maritime Defence and Security Operations (MDSO) are of seminal importance to Ireland's sovereignty. In this context, Ireland should continue to invest in its ability to conduct MDSO through investment in vessels, maritime patrol aircraft as well as exploring further capabilities in the guise of Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) and Unmanned Ariel Vehicles (UAVs). A key consideration of providing for and ensuring Ireland's sovereignty remains with its ability to conduct operations at the lower end of the maritime spectrum. These operations, such as Force Protection, Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO), and Counter Espionage Operations are directly applicable to combating the threats described above and should remain a core focus of Ireland's capability development.

Secondly, Ireland must continue to develop its Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities as a key element of Ireland's counter hybrid strategy. Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is generated through the acquisition of human intelligence, and image intelligence. Equally as important is the ability to monitor the vast array of open source information, such as vessel static or voyage data (acquired through monitoring of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data), and pertinent information news outlets and on social media. MDA must also be maintained in Ireland's ports, through analysis of vessel's pattern of life, cargo manifests and crew lists. The development of MDA must become normalized through intelligence sharing through domestic inter-agency cooperation and international/bilateral cooperation to ensure that Ireland has access to the most detailed and current maritime intelligence available. Continued engagement with international organisations such as the European Defence Agency's MARSUR, and MAOC-N are vital to enhancing MDA. Similarly, exploring additional intelligence sharing avenues, such as through NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) organisations would enhance Ireland's ability to develop MDA, ultimately contributing to Ireland maintaining the initiative in countering maritime threats, both conventional and hybrid.

Thirdly, Ireland must routinely exercise its maritime capability with a specific focus on countering hybrid threats. These exercises should always be joint in nature³⁴ and should include; maritime interdiction; port security and amphibious operations and exercises which practice detecting and quickly removing obstructions which block ports. Ireland should routinely exercise its ability to locate and counter any threats to its subsea critical infrastructure, specifically deploying

³⁴ Schaub, Martin, and Hoffman, "Hybrid Maritime Warfare: Building Baltic Resilience."

hardware to conduct inspections and identify any interferences in this infrastructure. The ability to build further resilience in port systems should be explored. This resilience should include the efficient rerouting vessels to alternative ports in the case of a major port being taken offline and the aim of any such resilience building should be minimising economic disruption. Similarly, war-gammed scenarios should be exercised so that threats are faced in a holistic manner by Joint Task Forces involving relevant stakeholders. The primary mission of any such exercise must be the resumption of services to critical maritime infrastructure.

Conclusion

Hybridised warfare is not a new concept, nor is it a concept which enjoys a rounded definition; as this definition changes as, new technologies emerge and tactics evolve. What can be stated definitively is that hybrid warfare is a development of the traditional notion of military strategy, but by other means. The advantages offered by engaging in a hybrid campaign has resulted in a complex, dynamic, and volatile threat environment facing Ireland and other western nations. In the context of the maritime domain, the evolution of hybrid warfare should be of significant concern to Ireland, as a small island nation with an open economy. Ireland's EEZ is vast, environmentally volatile, resource rich and contains key communication pathways linking Europe, America, and the global commons. To counter these very real threats, Ireland must be proactive. Ireland must implement policies which build resilience in its ability to secure its waters and protect its sovereignty. Ireland must continue to invest in a robust defence organisation, capable of addressing these threats. Ireland must ensure it invests in building cross-domain intelligence sharing relationships both between internal stakeholders and externally through engagement with bilateral partners through international arrangements. Ireland must ensure that it exercises these capabilities, develops contingencies to ensure a robust and resilient maritime sector capable of dealing with the spectrum of threats, synonymous with 21st century hybrid warfare.



India's Role in the Indo-Pacific: Geopolitics in Times of Uncertainty and Opportunity

Dr Jivanta Schottli

Abstract

India's official definition of the Indo-Pacific as an area of strategic significance stretches from the Arabian Sea across to the Pacific Ocean. It is a far more comprehensive conceptualisation than usually invoked by other major actors and reflects the country's multi-regional oceanic outlook. Currently, India has one aircraft carrier in operation (having operated one since 1961) and a second, its first indigenous carrier, is to be commissioned next year. While there are limits to India's ability to project power across this massive expanse it is important to note the growing willingness of India to engage with other Indo-Pacific actors (Australia, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, USA). This marks a clear change from the past when the stated objective was to keep the Indian Ocean free of extra-regional influences, especially military operations. Today, India holds the most naval exercises with the United States including in the Bay of Bengal. It has reached logistics and base-sharing agreements with Australia, Japan, France and the United States. With Japan there are efforts to coordinate investments in ports and island infrastructure in third countries. Overall, the trend in maritime cooperation looks set to grow given the collective realisation of the need to pool resources and share intelligence. The paper argues there has been a concerted effort to shore up India's naval capabilities, expand the country's maritime interests, engage island nations and global powers through a vigorous maritime diplomacy. This has meant overcoming, or coping with, a number of challenges. An entrenched legacy of the Cold War has meant a traditionally sceptical and cautious approach to military allegiances, especially with Western powers. Additionally, and due to resource constraints but also for historical reasons, there has been a concern about an institutionalised 'sea-blindness'. As a result, and due to a set of very real land-based threats, India's military and political establishment have traditionally had a continental outlook and focus. However, growing international trade and energy needs has raised awareness about maritime vulnerabilities and strengths.¹ Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi (recently re-elected in 2019), the government has pursued a pro-active foreign policy agenda with maritime security and defence relations playing a prominent role.

Introduction: India as Regional Net Security Provider

On 26 October 2015, the Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar released India's new maritime-military strategy titled, *Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy*.² The 2015 document was widely welcomed and praised by observers and scholars.³ The document mentioned the 'Indo-Pacific' – the first time it appeared in an official document and marking a move away from the previously established terminology of the Asia-Pacific. In terms of details, the Indian navy's areas of interest (primary and secondary) were significantly expanded, signalling a willingness to play a larger role within the region. The Red Sea, previously a secondary area of interest, became an area of primary interest. Furthermore, "the Gulf of

¹ It is estimated that over 90% of India's foreign trade by volume and 70% in value terms is seaborne, accounting for approximately 40% of India's GDP.

² India's first Maritime Doctrine was issued in 2004. In 2007, a second document, *Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy*, was published and subsequently revised in 2009.

³ See for example, Darshana M. Baruah, "India's Evolving Maritime Strategy," *The Diplomat*, 3 December 2015, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/indias-evolving-maritime-strategy/>; Gurpreet S. Khurana, "India's Maritime Strategy: Context and Subtext," *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 13, no. 1 (2017), pp. 14-26.

Oman, the Gulf of Aden and their littoral regions, the Southwest Indian Ocean, including the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) island nations therein and East Coast of Africa littoral regions.” which previously had not featured at all, were added as primary interests to India’s maritime security.

Another indicator of a shift in strategic thinking and communication was the definition and depiction of India’s role as a ‘net security provider.’ Having previously side-stepped usage of the term, the 2015 maritime strategy document laid out India’s interpretation and aspirations. Defined as “the state of actual security available in an area, upon balancing prevailing threats, inherent risks and rising challenges in the maritime environment, against the ability to monitor, contain and counter all of these,” the document portrays India as a responsible stakeholder, contributing to net security in the region but not acting as a regional policeman. This important and rather subtle distinction stems from a principled desire not to engage in balance of power politics as well as a deep-seated sensitivity towards appearing to act as the regional hegemon. As a result, the doctrine also emphasizes maritime security in terms of non-traditional security threats, involving non-state actors as well as showcasing the Indian navy’s role as a provider of humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) in South Asia and across the Indian Ocean.⁴

Despite the apparent shift towards a greater prioritisation of India’s maritime interests and role, there continues to be uncertainty about the extent to which the country is willing to engage militarily. This hesitation, the reasons for it and evidence that this might be changing are considered in the rest of the paper.

An Indian Ocean Strategy

As part of India’s natural zone of influence, the Indian Ocean has been viewed through the prism of historical, cultural ties and the widespread diaspora but also in terms of sea power.⁵ The Indian Navy, which traces its formation back to the arrival of East India Company ships on the West coast of India in 1612, went through various avatars, including as the Royal Indian Navy during World War Two.⁶ Following the country’s independence in 1947, the navy inherited and articulated an ambitious maritime vision.⁷ India’s ‘control’ over the Indian Ocean was meant to guarantee leverage over its traditional rival Pakistan. However, over time the ocean receded in India’s strategic horizons and spending plans. An emphasis was instead placed on India’s army and its Himalayan/Hindukush land borders.

The budget allocation for the navy was given a boost in the 1980s. Rising from 3% during the early 1960s to over 8% by 1971, it reached 12.5% in 1985-86⁸. In comparison, it was estimated that in China, the army and navy each received about 20 percent of total defence funds in

4 The 2015 document was in consonance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of “SAGAR” (Security and Growth for All in the Region), announced in March 2015 in Mauritius. PM Modi expressed a five-pronged vision for the Indian Ocean, including safeguarding India’s territories and interests as well as maintaining its role as a provider of ‘net security’ in the Indian Ocean.

5 For an early example of modern maritime strategic thinkers, see Panikkar, K.M., *India and the Indian Ocean: An Essay on the Influence of Sea Power on Indian History* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1945).

6 Rear Admiral Satyindra Singh Avsm (Retd.), *Under Two Ensigns: The Indian Navy 1945-1950*, <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/sites/default/files/Under-Two-Ensigns-06Apr16.pdf>.

7 David Scott, ‘India’s ‘Grand Strategy’ for the Indian Ocean: Mahanian Visions,’ *Asia-Pacific Review* 13, no. 2 (2006), pp. 97-129.

8 Steve Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta, *Arming without Aiming: India’s Military Modernization* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2010) p. 75.

1980.⁹ In May 1986, the government purchased HMS Hermes, recommissioning her as INS Viraat in May 1987 and equipping India for the first time, with two aircraft carriers. This gave the country the capacity to carry out simultaneous carrier operations in its western and eastern theatres.

A declassified CIA report dating from 1988, described India's Indian Ocean strategy at the time, as seeking regional predominance.¹⁰ The assessment argued that New Delhi's strategy,

"Centres on maritime defence and the assertion of its leadership over other regional states. It also includes supporting the internal stability of these states, protecting the interests of local Indian ethnic groups, and limiting – if not supplanting – foreign presences [...] India is most involved in the affairs of Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius but also is concerned with island states farther to the southwest and the Indian Ocean littoral countries."¹¹

At the time of writing, India had supported the *Indian Ocean Zone of Peace* proposal to the United Nations, which had irked the Americans; India was heavily involved in the ongoing Sri Lankan civil war; had intervened to calm unrest in the Seychelles; established its first satellite tracking station on Mauritius and expressed vocal support for Mauritius' claim on Diego Garcia. The report nevertheless concluded that India's efforts to restrict or challenge foreign presence and interference in the region would remain largely diplomatic.

The situation as portrayed above in 1988, stands in marked contrast with today. In 2016 India signed a Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the United States. This was followed by an agreement with France. New Delhi has similar agreements with Australia, Singapore, South Korea and Japan and is in the process of negotiations with the United Kingdom and others. This has considerably advanced India's reach and ability to project power across the Indian Ocean. For example, India's P-81 maritime reconnaissance aircraft have been deployed to France's La Reunion, an island in the western Indian Ocean. France (also a one-time colonial power in India) became the first country to hold joint (as opposed to coordinated) patrols with India, using La Reunion as the base for exercises in the southern Indian Ocean. Similarly, under the terms of the LEMOA agreement with the United States, India could potentially gain access to the same US military facilities Diego Garcia that had once symbolised the epitome of neo-colonialism.

India's engagement with the island states across the Indian Ocean has intensified after a hiatus during the 1990s and 2000s. For instance, Prime Minister Modi's visit to Mauritius, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka in 2015 was the first by an Indian head of government in over two decades. In 2016 a new division was created within India's Ministry of External Affairs called the Indian Ocean Region Division, bringing under its geographical responsibility, the island nations of Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka to better coordinate initiatives and policy. Initially, the IOR division left out the western islands of Comoros and Madagascar, the only two other islands in the Indian Ocean. This was corrected in December 2019, suggesting there is an ongoing effort to develop a cohesive framework through which to approach the region.

9 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Chinese Defense Spending, 1965-79* (Washington, D.C. National Foreign Assessment Center, CIA, 1980), pp. 3-5.

10 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *India's Navy and Its Indian Ocean Strategy: Pursuing Regional Predominance – An Intelligence Assessment*, June 1988, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP89S01450R000300330001-8.pdf>.

11 *Ibid.*

A major impetus to budgetary adjustments, renewed investments and strategic thinking has been the growing presence and influence of China in the near and wider neighbourhood. Since 2008 warnings have been voiced amongst Indian officials about China's 'string of pearls' strategy. Chinese investment in ports, infrastructure and energy projects across the region, in Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, could potentially provide access to valuable strategic assets as well as giving China tremendous influence in their domestic politics.¹²

In Sri Lanka, China has played a major role in the country's post-civil war infrastructure development, especially in the coastal, Hambantota Development Zone and the Colombo Port City project. China's investments and management role in Pakistan's deep-sea port, Gwadar provides a highly strategic location along key oil shipping lanes in the Hormuz Straits. In 2017, China opened its first overseas base in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa.

Initially the Government of India's response was to take a principled position. For example, in 2017 India turned down an invitation to the inaugural Belt and Road meeting in Beijing, voicing objections to one of the BRI's signature projects – the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor – because it runs through disputed territory in Kashmir. Concerns over sustainability and transparency in Chinese-funded projects were also raised.

However, what was a more restrained and accommodating position has given way to a much more assertive strategy of pushback. Following a violent border standoff in June 2020 the Indian government has held its ground in subsequent de-escalation talks. In what was seen as a counter-move to the border clash, the Indian Navy deployed its frontline warships around the Malacca Straits, a route taken by Chinese vessels to enter the Indian Ocean. Over 80% of Beijing's oil and hydrocarbon imports from West Asia traverse the Malacca Strait, the shortest shipping channel between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, giving rise to what has been called China's 'Malacca Dilemma'. That China would seek to secure its access to the Straits and develop alternative energy and trade sea route linking the Middle East, Persian Gulf with Asia, is not surprising.

The Indo-Pacific – A New Great Game?

Harking back to the heyday of geopolitical thinking, the 19th century, some analysts have drawn parallels with the evolving geo-politics of the Indo-Pacific.¹³ In many ways, competition amongst the key vested actors has developed from primarily an economic focus, on trade, investment and infrastructure development, to one that is increasingly expressed in ideological terms.

The 'Indo-Pacific' has been described as a 'principled vision' by American diplomats and policy-makers,¹⁴ based on the rule of law, fair competition, regional order and values.¹⁵ Chinese officials

12 Gurpreet S. Khurana, "China's 'String of Pearls' in the Indian Ocean and Its Security Implications," *Strategic Analysis* 32, no. 1 (2008), pp. 1 – 39.

13 Bertil Lintner, *Great Game East: India, China and the Struggle for Asia's Most Volatile Frontier* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012). See also Jonathan Ward, "The Emerging Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean Region," *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, no. 386 (2017); and David Scott, "The Great Power 'Great Game' Between India and China: The Logic of Geography," *Geopolitics* 13, no. 1 (2008), pp. 1-26.

14 US Deputy National Security Adviser Matthew Pottinger, during a panel discussion at Raisina Dialogue, January 2020 <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-us-defend-indo-pacific-vision-6220490/>.

15 See the State Department document, released in November 2019, U.S. Department of State, *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision*, 3 November 2019, <https://www.state.gov/a-free-and-open-indo-pacific-advancing-a-shared-vision/>.

have viewed the concept with suspicion and scepticism, casting doubt on its coherence and resilience and criticising it as a US-led, military design to contain China.¹⁶

India's position has been to emphasize that the Indo-Pacific is rooted in its historical associations with this region (linkages that were broken during the colonial era) and an aspiration towards building prosperity. The official line has been:

"Inclusiveness, openness and ASEAN centrality and unity, therefore, lie at the heart of the new Indo-Pacific. India does not see the Indo-Pacific Region as a strategy or as a club of limited members. Nor as a grouping that seeks to dominate. And by no means do we consider it as directed against any country."¹⁷

This position has been described as a form of hedging or as representing continuity in India's tradition of non-alignment or more recently, a position of 'strategic autonomy' in global geopolitics. The preference certainly has been to focus on describing the Indo-Pacific in terms of the global commons and the collective need to uphold free and equal access to the commons, bolstered by international law. The navy plays a prominent role, showcasing India's contribution and commitment to international order, through HADR operations and anti-piracy missions. India has reached out to Russia in a bid to get it to also participate in the Indo-Pacific, to strengthen the notion of it being a free, open, transparent and inclusive concept.¹⁸

Conclusion – The Quad Test and India as a Maritime Security Partner

India's role within the emerging context of the Indo-Pacific is marked by both significant change as well as constraints. The extent to which India's military and security ties have developed with the United States and other Western powers is unprecedented. Having maintained a relatively low-profile in the past, the Indian navy today is recognised as a key provider of security for the world's vital international sea lines of communication that pass through the Indian Ocean. From advocating that the Indian Ocean be kept free from external influences and militarisation, the Indian Navy now annually hosts one of the largest multilateral naval exercises – MILAN.¹⁹

Nonetheless, an element of reticence has also continued to shape Indian strategic planning, most notably on the issue of the Quadrilateral grouping. Formed in 2007 and comprising the maritime powers, Australia, India, Japan and the United States, there have been on and off discussions about institutionalising the grouping. It is widely perceived to be, and has been increasingly positioned as, a group aimed at countering Chinese influence and hegemony. The Quad was recently revived in 2017 at a regional summit involving the original four. India has been described as the 'weakest link' with New Delhi seen as unwilling to formalise the group or to upgrade its status by giving it a naval security focus.

16 In March 2018, Foreign Minister Wang Yi compared the Indo-Pacific idea to "the sea foam in the Pacific or Indian Ocean", which 'may get some attention but soon will dissipate,' see https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1540928.shtml.

17 Keynote address by Narendra Modi at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2018, see Ministry of External Affairs, "Prime Minister's Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue," 1 June 2018, <https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/29943/Prime+Ministers+Keynote+Address+at+Shangri+La+Dialogue+June+01+2018>.

18 Sachin Parashar, "India Hopes Russia Will Join Indo-Pacific with Japan Trilateral," *The Times of India*, 10 August 2020, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-hopes-russia-will-join-indo-pacific-with-japan-trilateral/articleshow/77450048.cms>.

19 MILAN 2020 had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. The record number of invites (41 not including Pakistan or China) and acceptances (over 30) has been quoted as evidence of growing acceptance of India's role and status in the Indian Ocean.

The key test many argue, and which many expect to happen, is whether India extends an invitation to Australia to join the upcoming annual Malabar naval exercise, alongside the United States and Japan. This would represent a clear step towards formalisation of the Quad and would follow in the wake of other key developments in Australia-India relations. These have been elevated during COVID-19, to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, notably including a mutual agreement to allow access to military bases for logistics support.

Other important negotiations underway include those with the British Royal Navy, which recently established its first permanent naval support facility in Bahrain, opened in 2018 over 50 years after its withdrawal 'east of Suez'. Providing naval access to the UK's Bahrain base has been discussed as well as increasing naval technology transfers and warship building, focusing on aircraft carrier capability. Both India and the UK share a vital interest in the Gulf due to energy imports and have a network of important bilateral defence and security partnerships in the region. Along with the UK, France is the only other Western power to maintain a military presence within the Indo-Pacific. Just this year India joined as an observer, the inter-governmental Francophone Indian Ocean Commission and over the years there has been talk of using the Commonwealth as a forum through which to extend India's Indo-Pacific reach.

Alongside diplomacy, there continues to be a very real need for investments in,²⁰ and modernisation of,²¹ the Indian defence forces and in particular within the Indian navy.²² China's first domestically-built aircraft carrier, *Shandong*, entered service in late 2019 whilst India's, launched in 2013, has been beset by delays and is now expected to be in operation in 2021. China has a clear lead over India in submarine technology and in terms of personnel and equipment²³. To offset this asymmetry, India will continue to deepen and extend its maritime partnerships with major powers and the region's resident navies. India is also likely to further support multilateral frameworks such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association, adding credibility to its role as a net provider of security in the region. However, by adopting the Indo-Pacific as a strategic outlook, India's policy-makers have cast India into the global limelight, moving beyond the traditional remit of the Indian Ocean. This is a major step and will require careful calibration of both resources and rhetoric.

²⁰ The government's 'Make in India' campaign has sought to enhance defence manufacturing capacity, to a varying degree of success.

²¹ Arzan Tarapore, *The Army in Indian Military Strategy: Rethink Doctrine or Risk Irrelevance*, Carnegie India, 10 August 2020, <https://carnegieindia.org/2020/08/10/army-in-indian-military-strategy-rethink-doctrine-or-risk-irrelevance-pub-82426>.

²² The navy's share in the defence budget declined from an 18% high in 2012 to a lower 13% by 2019-2020. Due to recent budget constraints, the requirement of 200 ships has been brought down to 175.

²³ For a comparison of India / China naval capabilities, see Hemanth Kumar, "India vs China: A Comparison of the Indian and Chinese (PLA) Navies," *Naval Technology*, 9 September 2020, <https://www.naval-technology.com/features/india-vs-china-indian-and-chinese-pla-navies-compared/>.

United Nations Training School Ireland | Scoil Traenála na Naisiúin Aontaithe in Éirinn
1993 - 2013

The Irish Defence Forces: Global Leaders in Protection of Civilians Training

Lt Col Timothy O'Brien

Introduction

This paper demonstrates how the Irish Defence Forces, building on the reputation of the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI) and by supporting the development of the new, government proposed, Institute for Peace Support and Leadership Training (IPLST), can make Ireland global leaders in the field of education and training for Peace Support Operations (PSO).¹ Working in tandem, UNTSI and the IPLST can support government policy, which describes Ireland's commitment to UN peacekeeping as one of the State's signature foreign policies,² by educating a global audience of uniformed and civilian peacekeepers, to hold appointments at the strategic, operational and tactical levels on United Nations (UN) mandated PSO.³ Given that in 2020, the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Mr Jean-Pierre Lacroix, stated that the protection of civilians (POC) has become the most visible standard by which the performance of UN peacekeeping is judged,⁴ this paper suggests that UNTSI and the IPLST could differentiate themselves, from similar institutions worldwide, by specialising in preparing peacekeepers to effectively implement the complex POC mandates that the Security Council have been authorising for over two decades.

The POC on UN PSO

UN peacekeeping is an instrument that provides security, political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult transition from conflict to peace.⁵ The mandated responsibility of UN PSO to protect civilians has been in place since 1999, when the Security Council adopted its first resolution on the subject. That mandate was for the newly established UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), in what was then civil war-torn West Africa.⁶ POC mandates are defined by the UN as those that require:

“Without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the host state, integrated and coordinated activities by all civilian and uniformed mission components to prevent, deter or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians, within the mission's capabilities and areas of deployment, through the use of all necessary means, up to and including deadly force.”⁷

Arguably the key distinguishing features of these mandates, and the reason that proper training for their implementation is of critical importance, is that they not only authorise peacekeepers to use deadly force to protect civilians under threat of physical violence, but their success also requires an integrated and coordinated mission wide response by all uniformed and civilian components in the face of complex and often changing threats that include, but are not limited to, threats posed by non-state armed groups, host state security forces and foreign state security forces. Since the establishment of UNAMSIL in 1999, the Security Council has mandated sixteen peacekeeping missions to protect

1 On pages 129-130 of the Programme for Government, published on 26 June 2020, there is a commitment to develop a new Institute for Peace Support and Leadership Training in the Curragh. The document also commits to ensuring that the Defence Forces are suitably resourced to continue to partake in PSO given the challenges facing the global community caused by the changing nature of warfare. See <https://static.rasset.ie/documents/news/2020/06/draft-programme-for-govt.pdf>

2 See Government of Ireland, *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, Dublin, 2015, p. 27

3 For a definition of these different levels, see United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO), *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2020) p. 4.

4 UNDPO, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook*, Foreword

5 UNDPO, *Policy: The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2019), p. 4

6 To view this mandate see “Sierra Leone - UNAMSIL - Mandate “United Nations Peacekeeping, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/unamsil/mandate.html>.

7 UNDPO, *Policy: The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping*, p. 6

civilians, seven of which are still active today throughout Africa and the Middle East.⁸ Irish troops have deployed on eight of these missions and remain deployed on three: in Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali.⁹

The Continued Relevance of POC Mandates

If, as the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations suggests, POC has become the most visible standard by which the performance of UN peacekeeping is judged, then an assessment of how peacekeeping is performing can perhaps be found in the annual reports to the Security Council by the UN Secretary General on *The Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*.¹⁰ In his 2020 report, the Secretary General described 2019 as a year of suffering for civilians caught up in worldwide conflict. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed, physically injured or traumatised during 2019, the year that marked the 20th Anniversary of the first POC mandated mission. Continuing what the Secretary General referred to as a consistent trend, women and girls in particular, were subject to appalling sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, direct or indiscriminate attacks by parties to a conflict, damaged or destroyed homes, schools, hospitals, markets, places of worship and essential civilian infrastructure, such as electrical and water systems. For the ninth consecutive year, over ninety per cent of those killed and injured by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, were civilians.

The Role of UNTSI within the Defence Forces

UNTSI was established in 1993 as a school of the Irish Military College to enhance instruction and training on peacekeeping within the Defence Forces.¹¹ According to its 2019 prospectus, the school continues to do this today by capturing best practices in peacekeeping through liaison with similar institutions worldwide and by active engagement with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping, NATO's Training and Education for Peace Support Operations Working Group, the European Security and Defence College and the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres.¹² The breath of this engagement is a function of both the differing types of PSO that the Defence Forces are involved in on a global scale and the range of international partners that they deploy with, including not only the UN but also the European Union, NATO and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.¹³ In particular, the school's instructors strive to address the myriad of crosscutting issues and conflict dynamics, which challenge uniformed and civilian peacekeepers worldwide. In the foreword to the 2019 prospectus, the School Commandant lists these conflict dynamics as the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, enhancing civil military relations, promoting a gender perspective when planning and conducting operations and POC.¹⁴ The primary means by which UNTSI engages, with a broader domestic and international audience, is by hosting an annual series of international courses. The target audience for these courses is,

8 UNDP, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook*, p. 3

9 For an overview of current Defence Forces PSO, see <https://military.ie/en/overseas-deployments/current-missions/>.

10 United Nations Security Council. *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary General* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2020).

11 For detailed background on the establishment of UNTSI, see Tom Hodson, *The College – The Irish Military College, 1930-2000* (Dublin: The History Press Ireland, 2016).

12 See https://www.military.ie/en/who-we-are/army/defence-forces-training-centre/the-military-college/un-training-school-ireland/prospectus-2019_.pdf.

13 For an overview of the different types of PSO that the Defence Forces are currently deployed on, see <https://military.ie/en/overseas-deployments/current-missions/>.

14 The promotion of a Gender Perspective is an acknowledgement that in conflict zones worldwide men, women, boys and girls are affected differently by both the conflict and the PSO of international peacekeeping forces.

in addition to members of the Defence Forces, international military personnel, members of An Garda Síochána and international police forces, Irish Aid Rapid Response Corps volunteers, staff of non-governmental organisations (NGO), Irish civil and public servants, academics researching or teaching PSO and third level students with an interest in pursuing careers on PSO or as humanitarian staff. Such a student body is reflective of the diverse make-up of the global peacekeeping community and UNTSI's rationale in attracting such a grouping is that unless this diverse range of actors train and are educated together then they cannot be expected to succeed in the uncertain and complex environments where civilians are under threat. The School has been running an annual International POC Course since 2015 and is currently engaged with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping to gain that organisation's accreditation for this course.¹⁵

How UNTSI Prepares Peacekeepers to Implement POC Mandates

UNTSI's approach to preparing members of the Defence Forces for the challenges they will face when implementing POC mandates is multifaceted and includes the following:

POC Workshops on all Career Courses

POC is mainstreamed into Defence Forces training by the delivery of a POC block as part of the PSO module on the career courses of all commissioned and non-commissioned officers.¹⁶ Typically, this instruction will focus on POC mandates, principles and roles and responsibilities along with an overview of the current global situation. Students are taught that the most effective way of protecting civilians is to ensure stability, peace and security through a political process and by supporting the host nation security forces to fulfil their responsibility to protect their own civilian population. The importance of this mainstreaming of POC into ongoing military training, rather than it being first encountered by the military during PSO pre deployment training, is outlined by the UN Secretary General who argues that making POC a strategic priority in the planning and conduct of military operations requires a review and rethinking of urban warfare. It also means updating doctrine, strategies and tactics to fully consider the inherent and heightened vulnerability of civilians in urban contexts and the need to prioritise those aspects in operational decision making at all levels.¹⁷

PSO Pre-Deployment Training

All Defence Forces personnel deploying on PSO are prepared in accordance with the UN's Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials or their NATO equivalent.¹⁸ This training material is captured and reflected in Defence Forces PSO related training circulars, instructions and syllabi. Commissioned and non-commissioned officers attend weeklong pre-deployment briefings in UNTSI where the core material, including POC, is delivered. A particular emphasis is paid to the three UN missions where Irish troops operate under a POC mandate. For these missions, in addition to the core material, previous experience briefs are delivered by Defence Forces personnel who have recently completed their deployments.

International POC Courses

In 2019 UNTSI conducted its 5th International POC Course, in close coordination with the

¹⁵ Author's interview with the Chief Instructor of UNTSI on 23 July 2020.

¹⁶ Career courses are those which prepare and qualify members of the Defence Forces for promotion to the next higher rank. They range in duration from one to nine months.

¹⁷ United Nations. Security Council. *Protection of civilians in armed conflict. Report of the Secretary General*. New York. 06 May 2020.

¹⁸ UN Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials are made available to UNTSI by the UN Department of Peace Operations. NATO training material is developed by the Alliance's Training and Education for PSO Working Group. As PfP members, UNTSI staff form part of this Working Group.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which had pledged to the international community to deliver this type of PSO training during the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conference in Vancouver¹⁹. DFAT advertised the course through its global embassy network and assisted in the selection of students from Africa and Asia. Overall, the course attracted an international audience of 45 students. Joining members of the Defence Forces were military students from United States of America, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Togo and Bhutan. Police students came from An Garda Síochána and Namibia, while the civilian component of the course was composed of Irish Aid Rapid Response Corps volunteers, DFAT staff and several post-graduate students and third level lecturers. Amongst the students were uniformed and civilian personnel about to deploy to UN Missions in Lebanon, Syria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Mali and Cyprus. The primary aim of the Course was to prepare students for operating at the operational or tactical level in command or staff appointments on PSO, which have a POC mandate. Participants on the course were taught what is meant by protection and who is responsible for providing protection to civilians in both conflict and post conflict zones. The evolving operational and contextual realities surrounding POC mandates were explained in detail. Using contemporary examples from the Middle East and Africa students were appraised and taught how to assess and prioritise reacting to the range of threats of physical violence against civilians worldwide. These include direct and indiscriminate attacks and targeting, torture, sexual violence, the recruitment and use of child soldiers and the dangers caused by explosive remnants of war.²⁰ In addition, students were guided through the crosscutting role of military, police and civil actors in protecting civilians.

Developing an IPSLT

The concept of developing the IPSLT first appeared in the 2015 Defence White Paper, which authorised the Department of Defence to evaluate the concept.²¹ Both the 2015 White Paper and the 2020 Programme for Government, specify that the institute should be located in the Curragh, home of both UNTSI and the Military College. The ambition expressed by the government in the White Paper was that the new institute would have an international standing and facilitate the State contributing to the overall development of knowledge and experience in the areas of peace support and conflict resolution, by forging educational partnerships with the world's leading universities and academic institutions, while also capitalising on the PSO experience of the Defence Forces. Media reports at the time of the White Paper launch suggested that the Institute was aimed at attracting international military personnel and politicians to study in Ireland.²² According to the Defence White Paper update, published by the Department of Defence in December 2019, the evaluation of the project is underway.²³

What Benefit Would the IPSLT Deliver for Ireland on the Global Stage?

If developed, the Institute would allow Ireland, which will commence a two year term on the UN

¹⁹ For details of the pledges made at the conference by Ireland, see <https://www.facebook.com/CanadianForces/photos/a.2169866623240528/2169944669899390> and <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/11/636252-vancouver-conference-delivers-46-new-pledges-un-missions-peacekeeping-chief>.

²⁰ For details of current threats to civilians, see UNDP, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook*, p. 83.

²¹ See Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2015), pp. 32-35.

²² Tom Clonan, "White Paper Reflects Changed Security Environment and New Threats to State" *The Irish Times*, 27 August 2015, p. 7.

²³ An update on the project is given at p. 101 of the report, see <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a519cf-white-paper-on-defence-update-2019/>

Security Council in 2021,²⁴ to enhance the 2017 PSO training commitments it made in Vancouver, by providing bespoke practical and context related POC training for senior civilian, military and police peacekeepers, filling strategic PSO appointments across mission worldwide. This cohort of senior leaders would be taught how to take all necessary and available actions to exercise their authority to ensure proactive, coordinated, efficient and effective implementation of POC mandates. Training would be reinforced by Command Post and Tabletop Exercises. Potential students for the IPSLT would be preparing to fill senior UN Mission Leadership Team positions. These would include Heads of Mission, Special Representatives of the Secretary General, Force Commanders, Police Commissioners, their respective deputies, Legal Advisors, POC, Gender and Child Protection Advisors, as well as the heads of Strategic Communications Units, Joint Operation Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres.

Does Ireland Have the Expertise to Provide this Education?

The unique selling point of the IPSLT is that it will be located in the Curragh, home of both UNTSI and the Military College and therefore it can draw on the extensive PSO operational experience of the Defence Forces, who have participated globally in UN PSO since 1958, European Union led operations since 1991 and NATO led PSO since 1997.²⁵ The Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, who have been operating on UN PSO since 1964 and DFAT, whose diplomats receive their pre deployment security training in UNTSI, would be able to supply suitably qualified mentors during the conduct of courses. The Institute would also have access to the network of contacts built up over quarter of a century by UNTSI with Third Level Institutes and a wide variety of NGOs.

Benefit to the Defence Forces

Currently all members of the Defence Forces serving in PSO Command and Staff appointments undergo both specialist and pre-deployment training in UNTSI. Due to physical, time and staffing constraints, it is not possible to provide separate training at the strategic, operational and tactical levels for different cohorts of the Defence Forces prior to their deployment.²⁶ If the IPSLT were to assume responsibility for training at the strategic level, then UNTSI could specialise on preparing students to operate at the operational and tactical levels. This focus would be to the benefit of all members of the Defence Forces preparing for deployment on PSO.

Conclusion

The UN Security Council have been mandating PSO to protect civilians since 1999. Despite this, tens of thousands of civilians annually fall victim worldwide to armed conflict. Defence Forces personnel, as well as an invited domestic and international audience, have been receiving targeted operational and tactical level POC training from UNTSI since 2015, when the school first introduced its international POC course. This paper suggests that the development of the proposed IPSLT presents an opportunity, not only for the Defence Forces, but also for Ireland, to fill an essential global deficit in the training of senior appointment holders on UN PSO in the delivery of integrated and coordinated responses to threats against civilians.

²⁴ See Brian O'Donovan, "Ireland Wins Seat on the United Nations Security Council," *RTE News*, 18 June 2020, <https://www.rte.ie/news/2020/06/16/1147864-un-security-council-vote/>.

²⁵ For details on the history of the Defence Forces participation on PSO, see <https://military.ie/en/overseas-deployments/past-missions/>.

²⁶ Author's interview with the Chief Instructor of UNTSI on 23 July 2020.

Social Media



Ireland's Role within United Nations Information Operations during Peacekeeping

Mark Williams and Matthew G. O'Neill

Introduction

Conflict has traditionally been fuelled by misinformation, disinformation, falsehoods, rumour, and propaganda. 21st century conflicts are in many respects no different; however, the reach and impact of information operations (IO) now have the ability to create uncertainty far beyond the geographic boundaries of the conflict zone. Peacekeepers serve as the eyes and ears of the international community, but the challenges of engaging in multilateral missions and the spoilers of fragile peace processes are now increased in the context of the wider use of IO campaigns by competing networks of influence.

This paper examines the impact on, and application of, IO on peacekeeping efforts at a tactical, operational, and strategic level. Specifically, in this paper, we examine: (1) IO as they relate to peacekeeping; (2) the characteristics of IO in the context of peacekeeping in Lebanon; (3) the future role of IO during peacekeeping; and (4) Ireland's role in the future of IO during peacekeeping.

Information Operations and Peacekeeping

Information operations (IO) remains a poorly defined concept reflecting its complexity and ever evolving nature in contemporary conflict and geopolitical affairs.¹ While any definition should remain relative to the context, certain features of IO remain consistent and agreed upon. At a fundamental level, IO campaigns seek to achieve a strategic advantage in the information sphere, usually through inducing behavioural change. The NATO Information Operations Reference Book posits three elements of IO: influencing will, affecting understanding, and targeting capabilities that promote understanding and/or application of will.²

Elements of IO overlap with information warfare (IW) and specifically, the six components of IW outlined by Nichiporuk. These are: electronic warfare, operations security, deception, physical attack, information attack and psychological warfare.³ However, while IW conjures images of rogue players seeking to gain advantage by misleading, confusing, manipulating and ultimately influencing events in a non-organic way, IO operations in a peacekeeping context can be seen more as an extension of soft power to influence and build trust.⁴

The United Nations (UN) has utilised IO campaigns, usually under euphemistic titles such as 'Public Information Programmes,' 'Sensitisation Programmes' etc., since 1946 to further peace and humanitarian goals.⁵ At a basic level, IO in a peacekeeping context seeks to use the most appropriate medium to deliver a message that ensures the desired outcome in the most advantageous way possible in the delivery of its mandate. This can include training programmes, public awareness campaigns, monitoring programmes, counter information activities etc. with the objectives of, for example:⁶

¹ Matthew J. Fecteau, "Understanding Information Operations & Information Warfare," *Global Security Review*. Retrieved, 7 June 2019, <https://globalsecurityreview.com/understanding-information-operations-information-warfare/>.

² NATO Bilateral Strategic Command, *Information Operations Reference Book*, 5 March 2010, <https://publicintelligence.net/nato-bi-sc-io-reference/>.

³ Brian Nichiporuk, "US Military Opportunities: Information-Warfare Concepts of Operation," in Zalmay Khalilzad, John P. White and Andy W. Marshall (Eds.), *Strategic Appraisal: The Changing Role of Information in Warfare* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1999), pp. 187-219.

⁴ Gary E. Phillips, *Information Operations – A New Tool for Peacekeeping* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, 1997).

⁵ Osman Mentès and Chereè Browne, *Case Studies on UN Information Operations Ethiopia, Liberia, and Kosovo*. Doctoral dissertation, Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School, September 2012.

⁶ Dan Lindley, *Untapped Power? The Status of U.N. Information Operations*, 11 March 2004, <https://www3.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/UNInfoOps.htm>.

- Reducing tensions amongst former conflicting parties;
- Countering rumours and fears about conflicting parties, the UN operation etc.;
- Confirming/reinforcing positive developments such as troop withdrawal, disarmament etc.;
- Educating local parties on electoral issues, public health issues etc.;
- Ensuring compliance by disclosing treaty violations, potential dirty tricks, election fraud etc.

Two recent examples highlight the importance of IO campaigns in the support of UN peacekeeping missions. Firstly and currently, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is working closely with the South Sudanese government and humanitarian partners to ensure that a direct, clear, and concise public health message is communicated to the population to mitigate the spread of the virus and to ensure that misinformation, stigma and hate arising from the pandemic is addressed and opposed by a factual and coherent counternarrative.⁷ Secondly, IO campaigns have been invaluable in UN missions in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic and South Sudan to induce displaced persons to return home by providing up to date information on the current situation nationally and regionally and by countering fear and rumour by providing certainty and confidence through physical presence and information campaigns.⁸

Beyond aiding peacekeepers in the field, IO campaigns are also a necessary and effective strategic tool to garner political and material support in the Peacekeepers home nation and from the international community.⁹ With the low cost of entry, the blurring of geographic boundaries, and the potential to manipulate perception, it is not unreasonable to assume that an IO campaign could be used against peacekeepers. This could be used to sow disinformation in the host nation and to engineer apathy or hostility to the operation and/or the peacekeeping force domestically and internationally.¹⁰ To this point, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, remarked in a speech in February 2020, that UN Peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Mali had been targeted by misinformation campaigns enabled by social media.¹¹ These campaigns have facilitated growing anti-UN sentiment that has resulted in attacks on UN bases and the death of peacekeepers.¹²

At a fundamental level, information is the interpretation of data in the context of knowledge. Data without knowledge is merely noise, therefore the primary function of information is to reduce uncertainty. As such IO used offensively can be seen as a means to create uncertainty or at least reduce certainty. Therefore, IO during peacekeeping (IODP) must be utilised to at best, create certainty, reduce uncertainty, or at least provide a framework by which this can be achieved through vertical information flows.¹³

7 Caroline Hungwe, "Combating Misinformation in South Sudan during COVID-19," *UN Peacekeeping – Medium*, 21 May 2020, <https://medium.com/@UNPeacekeeping/combating-misinformation-in-south-sudan-during-covid-19-27661c7c663>.

8 United Nations, *Coming Home: UN Peacekeeping's Role in Allowing Displaced Persons to Return* (Washington DC: Better World Campaign, 2017).

9 UN, *Coming Home*.

10 A. Walter Dorn, *Keeping Watch: Monitoring Technology and Innovation in UN Peace Operations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2011).

11 UN News, "Press Release: Growth of Non-State Armed Groups Has Made Negotiating End to Conflict More Difficult," 17 February 2020, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm19975.doc.htm>.

12 Daniel Fahey, "ADF Rebels in the DRC: Why are Locals Protesting against the UN, Again?" *African Arguments*, 11 December 2019, <https://africanarguments.org/2019/12/11/adf-rebels-in-the-drc-why-are-locals-protesting-against-the-un-again/>; UN News, "UN Condemns Killing of Indonesian Peacekeeper in DR Congo," 23 June 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066912>.

13 United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General: Roadmap for Digital Cooperation* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2020).

Reducing uncertainty and complexity in missions, however, cannot be achieved without making sense of the decision context. Knowing and contextualising how events are connected is of crucial importance when developing an integrated policy to accomplish the strategic goals of a peacekeeping mission.¹⁴ The dangers of failing to do this are illustrated by recent events in The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

In the DRC, social media campaigns have made claims that UN Peacekeepers are collaborating with rebel groups, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), and seeking to exploit the regions material wealth.¹⁵ These campaigns have also aggravated existing criticism of the UN peacekeeping mission with regard to claims of its ineffectiveness to protect civilians, its support for the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) despite its history of human rights abuses, and the sexual abuse of women and children in the region by peacekeepers.¹⁶ Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations of the United Nations, has claimed that these campaigns are coordinated and financed by political actors who seek to enflame the situation.¹⁷

These problems however go deeper and illustrate how MONUSCO's limited ability to collect and analyse information has left the mission prone to IO campaigns seeking to affect understanding of the conflict.¹⁸ This has negatively impacted military decisions and the ability develop a strategic communications strategy to manage expectations, explain the mission mandate and approach, and dispel false narratives regarding the mission.¹⁹

This lack of a knowledge base has impacted MONUSCO at both a macro and micro level. At a macro level MONUSCO has embraced politically charged and inherently flawed narratives regarding the ADF, in terms of its abilities, actions and links to global Islamist networks.²⁰ These information campaigns have been orchestrated externally by the Ugandan Government and internally by the government of the DRC who utilise the ADF as a 'useful enemy' to further political and economic goals, to divert attention from human rights abuses and to clamp down on political opponents.²¹ At a micro level, the lack of a knowledge base has allowed the ADF to control the narrative at the local level by becoming deeply woven in communal politics and to develop relationships with local power brokers, militias, and officers within the FARDC.²² As such, the details of joint operations between UN Peacekeepers and FARDC are often leaked resulting in failure, ADF reprisals, and at times exacerbating local communal conflicts. This in

14 Allard Duursma, "Information Processing Challenges in Peacekeeping Operations: A Case Study on Peacekeeping Information Collection Efforts in Mali," *International Peacekeeping* 25 (3), pp. 446-468.

15 Fahey, "ADF Rebels in the DRC."

16 Christoph Vogel, "Congo: Why UN Peacekeepers Have a Credibility Problem," *The Guardian*, 30 August 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/30/congo-un-peacekeepers-problem>.

17 Glody Murhabazi, "RDC: 'Les Attaques Contre les Bases de la MONUSCO à Beni n'Étaient pas Spontanées, elles ont été Planifiées et Financées,'" 1 December 2019, <https://7sur7.cd/2019/12/01/rdc-les-attaques-contre-les-bases-de-la-monusco-beni-netaient-pas-spontanees-elles-ont>.

18 Kristof Titeca and Daniel Fahey, "The Many Faces of a Rebel Group: The Allied Democratic Forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *International Affairs* 92, no. 5, pp. 1189-1206.

19 United Nations – Department of Peacekeeping, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2020).

20 International Crisis Group (ICG), *A New Approach for the UN to Stabilise the DR Congo*, Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°148, 4 December 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/democratic-republic-congo/b148-new-approach-un-stabilise-dr-congo>; Titeca and Fahey, "The Many Faces of a Rebel Group."

21 Fahey, "ADF Rebels in the DRC.," Titeca and Fahey, "The Many Faces of a Rebel Group."

22 ICG, *A New Approach for the UN to Stabilise the DR Congo*.

turn contributes to anti-UN sentiment because of perceived ineffectiveness and complicity in the conflict.²³

The failure of MONUSCO to develop an adequate knowledge base in the DRC is tragically illustrated by the case of Mr X. This lone fabulist, who claimed to be a senior ADF commander, was able to deceive MONUSCO intelligence analysts and convinced them, amongst other things, that Taliban-trained Boko Haram jihadists were planning to attack MONUSCO bases. As a result, peacekeepers were confined to barracks or placed on limited patrols while a series of massacres took place.²⁴ While the failure to protect civilians in the DRC cannot be solely attributed to intelligence failings and IO campaigns by state and non-state actors, clearly the inability of MONUSCO to assess narrative framings of the conflict in the light of well-sourced and analysed intelligence has contributed to significant failings in the mission with potential implications for the mandate in terms of support and funding.

IO within the Arab World: Peacekeeping within the Context of Lebanon

Before we outline how UN IODP could be better utilised, in this section we will use Lebanon as a case to study to explore the characteristics of UN IODP, to highlight issues faced, lessons learned and opportunities to be built upon.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established in 1978 to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and to restore the Government of Lebanon's authority in the area. The mandate has been adjusted twice in response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in 2000. Following the 2006 Lebanon War, the UN increased the number of UNIFIL troops to 15,000 and expanded the mandate to include, amongst other things, the monitoring of cessation of hostilities, protection of civilians and the provision of support to the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon.²⁵

The Irish Defence Forces have been deployed as part of this mandate from its inception in 1978 to 2001. Over a period of 23 years, Ireland saw 30,000 of its troops serve in Lebanon.²⁶ During the periods between 2001 and 2011 Irish personnel remained within the area to act as UN observers. Irish peacekeepers returned to South Lebanon in 2011, where at present Ireland has 358 troops stationed as part of the State's commitment to the UN.²⁷ Irish troops operate from the UN posts located in South Lebanon along the blue line which separates Lebanon and Israel.

While it is not possible to go into detail regarding the political history of Lebanon in this paper, to understand the use of IO in the region, it is necessary to understand how its unique confessional system of government contributes to political instability and uncertainty. Confessionalism, which is a form of consociationalism, in theory, enables the peaceful co-existence of Lebanon's religious and ethnic communities by allocating power to each group according to its demographic weight. Traditionally, the president is required to be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni,

²³ Fahey, "ADF Rebels in the DRC."

²⁴ Daniel Fahey, "Congo's 'Mr. X' – The Man who Fooled the UN," *World Policy Journal* 33, no. 2, pp. 91-100.

²⁵ United Nations Security Council, *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon – Report of the Secretary General (S/2020/473)*, 1 June 2020.

²⁶ Irish Defence Forces, "Current Missions," <https://www.military.ie/en/overseas-deployments/current-missions/>.

²⁷ Irish Defence Forces, n.d., "Current Missions,;" This is Ireland, n.d. "A Future of Peace: 60 Years of an Unbroken Tradition of Irish UN Peacekeeping," <https://www.ireland.ie/peacekeeping/>.

and the Speaker of the Parliament a Shi'a.²⁸ This political sectarianism, however, quickly ensured that corruption became an accepted reality characterised by state inefficiency and a paralysis of decision making. It also ensured that sectarian identities became reinforced at the expense of the convergence of a common national identity or indeed, even the common good. As such, Lebanon has historically been sensitive to internal change or external force, resulting in instability, uncertainty and occasionally conflict. These vulnerabilities expose the country to those capable of staging sophisticated hybrid attacks, including IO campaigns within the region. Such strategies in turn reinforce division between the different communities, foster mistrust with international organisations and prolong any opportunity for political and economic recovery.²⁹

Against this backdrop, the 2019 Lebanon protest emerged initially as a response to the proposed taxation of gasoline, tobacco and digital communications commonly known as the 'WhatsApp Tax.' These protests quickly expanded into a nationwide condemnation of sectarian rule, unresponsive local government, mass unemployment, economic stagnation, corruption at the heart of government, and of course, a feeling amongst many different demographics that their plight was either being ignored or met with apathy.³⁰ The Lebanese protests can be located in the trend of peaceful anti-government protests which took place in 2019, in amongst other places, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Ecuador, Egypt, and Indonesian. Such protests seek to enact change in the face of government corruption and the failure to meet basic social and economic needs.³¹

The inability of the Lebanese government to meet the social and economic needs of its people, has allowed other non-state actors such as Hezbollah, a South Lebanon based Shia Islamist Political Party and Military group, to fulfil this role. Historically, Hezbollah was able to develop its political base by providing social welfare, health care, education, and social assistance. The provision of welfare was, and remains, an effective IO tool for Hezbollah, and engenders a sense of belonging to the community while garnering local allegiances.³²

The provision of social services is not the only IO tool that Hezbollah utilises to mobilize support and control the narrative in Lebanon. Hezbollah have developed a sophisticated influencing campaign since the early 1990s, in which they claim to build "on the peoples causes around the narrative."³³ From the 1990s onwards as an organisation, Hezbollah developed a keen understanding of the importance of messaging through different mediums.

The creation of a media arm, Al-Manar, in 1991, has enabled Hezbollah to influence public opinion in Lebanon, Israel and the region. By broadcasting battlefield footage, Hezbollah, has sought to affect Israeli morale and position itself as the leader of 'Arab resistance.'³⁴ Internationally, Hezbollah's media strategy has involved being interviewed by media figures in English and French, as well as connecting personal stories on a level to enlighten audiences on Hezbollah's and Lebanon's position in the Arab-Israel conflict.

28 Joseph Bahout, "The Unravelling of Lebanon's Taif Agreement: Limits of Sect-Based Power Sharing," 16 May 2016, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/05/16/unraveling-of-lebanon-s-taif-agreement-limits-of-sect-based-power-sharing-pub-63571>.

29 Dan Lindley, "Untapped Power: The Status of UN Information Operations," *International Peacekeeping* 11, no. 4 (2004), pp. 608-624.

30 Amnesty International, "Lebanon Protests Explained: Protests and Repression," 22 September 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/lebanon-protests-explained/>.

31 Kareem Chehayeb and Abby Sewell, "Why Protesters in Lebanon Are Taking to the Streets," *Foreign Policy*, 2 November 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/02/lebanon-protesters-movement-streets-explainer/>.

32 Melani Cammett, *Compassionate Communalism: Welfare and Sectarianism in Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

33 Zahera Harb, *Liberation Propaganda: Lebanese Media Campaigns against the Israeli Occupation of South Lebanon (1996-2000)*, PhD Thesis, Cardiff University, 2007, <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/55699/>.

34 Lorenza Fontana, "Conflicting Information Strategies in the 2006 Lebanese War," 30 March 2010, <https://www.arabmediasociety.com/conflicting-information-strategies-in-the-2006-lebanese-war/>.

Hezbollah were also early adapters in using the internet and developed a 'internet technology division,' for IO purposes.³⁵ This multigenerational approach to IO has seen the extensive use of social media by Hezbollah and even the creation of an online game in which 'cyber jihadis' wage war against Israel.³⁶

Hezbollah has thus been able to develop and deploy online strategies, most notably developing and entering many notable cyber conflicts with Israel, often referred to as an undeclared cyber war.³⁷ Hezbollah's cyber tactics have involved psychological warfare and disinformation campaigns; asserting their ideas and ideology towards a wide audience to strengthen the party's base and position within Lebanon, the Arab world and international community. Furthermore, their media messaging campaigns have concentrated interests on Palestinian resistance groups while emphasising Israeli militarism. They have also developed narratives around American and European "imperialism" within the Arab region itself and provided support for different insurgent groups.³⁸

The effectiveness of this strategy was demonstrated in the 2006 Lebanon War, where despite being the weaker military force, Hezbollah were able to control the narrative by emphasising Israeli militarism and positioning itself as a vanguard of resistance against perceived Israeli and Western interference.³⁹ Through controlling the narrative, the subsequent use of kinetic force by Israel further strengthened and legitimized Hezbollah's soft power and contributed to an enormous psychological defeat for Israel and international condemnation.⁴⁰

IO campaigns have also been employed by Hezbollah to restrict the movement of UNIFIL Peacekeepers. These restrictions have been framed by Hezbollah as trespass of private farming and conservation areas, and as a response to environmental and infrastructural damage caused by UNIFIL patrols.⁴¹ It should be noted that land fenced off by the Hezbollah funded environmental NGO, Green without Borders, has been used to spy on and launch attacks on Israeli positions.⁴²

The example of Hezbollah offers insight into how non-state actors can craft a well-honed, targeted and specific IO strategy that emphasises themes of resistance, martyrdom and the provision of social services to control the narrative and garner support locally in Lebanon, and more broadly in the Arab and Islamic world. The uncertainty caused by the current situation in Lebanon offers organisations like Hezbollah and other competing networks of influence in the region the potential to undertake IO campaigns to further their own geopolitical aims. Iran and Israel, in particular, have demonstrated a holistic approach to the use of IO as a means of achieving diplomatic and strategic leverage within the region.⁴³

Experiences drawn from Lebanon demonstrate a fraction of the complex nature of what peacekeeping missions have encountered and will continue to face as hybrid warfare becomes

35 Harb, *Liberation Propaganda*.

36 Colin P. Clarke, "How Hezbollah Came to Dominate Information Warfare," *RAND Corporation Blog*, 19 September 2017, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/09/how-hezbollah-came-to-dominate-information-warfare.html>.

37 Kali Robinson, "What is Hezbollah?" *Council on Foreign Relations*, 1 September 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah>.

38 Harb, *Liberation Propaganda*; Robinson, "What is Hezbollah?"

39 Marvin Kalb and Carol Saivetz, "The Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006: The Media as a Weapon in Asymmetrical Conflict," *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 12, no. 3 (2007), pp. 43-66.

40 Fontana, "Conflicting Information Strategies"

41 United Nations Security Council, *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon*.

42 Matthew Levitt and Samantha Stern, *Green Without Borders*. Policy Notes – The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 2020, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/green-without-borders-the-operational-benefits-of-hezbollahs-environmental>.

43 Hugh Ward and Han Dorussen, "Standing alongside your Friends: Network Centrality and Providing Troops to UN Peacekeeping Operations," *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 3 (2016), pp. 392-408; Mehul Srivastava, "Israel-Iran Attacks: 'Cyber winter is coming,'" *The Financial Times*, 31 May 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/3ea57426-40e2-42da-9e2c-97b0e39dd967>.

the norm. For example, in other UN Peacekeeping missions, such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the Islamist group Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) has been able to utilise IO to unite local factions and gain support from international jihadi networks such as al-Qaeda. JNIM, taking a lead from Hezbollah, has also developed its own media arm, az-Zallāqa, with which the group preaches several main narratives including military prowess, victimization of Muslims in the Sahel, and dehumanization of the enemy including UN Peacekeepers.⁴⁴

Peacekeeping missions can no longer be thought of as 'traditional' campaigns. It is therefore vital that peacekeepers engage with different forms of cyber elements as well as media narratives to engage with the complex geopolitical makeup that comes with IO campaigns.⁴⁵ Lessons learned from other peacekeeping missions, such as early success in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) demonstrate how clear, well-articulated and information led strategic communications can be used to influence and gain support for peacekeeping missions domestically and internationally, while countering sophisticated and competing IO narratives propagated by militant non-state actors (Al-Shabab).⁴⁶

As such, it is important to move towards a more coherent understanding of the fifth domain of warfare, cyberspace, and how it can be integrated with the other domains of war (land, sea, air and space) especially in the light of the hybrid threats that Peacekeepers face in complex settings with a tapestry of nation states, political actors and proxy actors jostling for position.⁴⁷

While the UN currently does not offer guidance in terms of policy or practice on how to respond to the use of offensive IO campaigns on Peacekeepers and Peacekeeping missions, Irish Peacekeepers, with their experience in the region are well placed to develop policy relevant knowledge and practice within this domain. To facilitate this, Ireland could take the lead on developing a concept of Cyber Peacekeeping that better reflects the realities of 21st conflict and post conflict,⁴⁸ and to create resilience techniques that lessen the impact of IO in Lebanon and on the mission mandate.⁴⁹

The Future of UN IODP

The above case study highlights how the strategic advantage gained by peacekeepers in pursuit of their mandate, through engagement with local people and understanding political, social and economic networks is no longer merely reducible to physical boundaries but is increasingly conducted in the digital sphere. Digital IO campaigns are increasingly defining power, revealing competing influence networks, and undermining peacekeeping efforts by manipulating grievances, spreading fear, and mobilising local populations to engage in violence. Arguably, if 20th century

44 Maj Ryan C.K. Hess, "Lassoing the Haboob: Countering Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin in Mali," *Journal of European, Middle Eastern and African Affairs* 2, no.3 (2020), <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JEMEEAA/>.

45 Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce (Eds.), *Analyzing Intelligence: National Security Practitioner's Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014).

46 Paul D. Williams, "Strategic Communications for Peace Operations: The African Union's Information War Against al-Shabaab," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 7, no. 1 (2018), p. 3.

47 J.D. Work and Richard Harknett, "Troubled Vision: Understanding Recent Israeli-Iranian Offensive Cyber Exchanges," *The Atlantic Council*, 22 July 2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/troubled-vision-understanding-israeli-iranian-offensive-cyber-exchanges/>.

48 Matthew G. O'Neill and Mark Williams, "Mapping Ireland's Role in Cyber Warfare and Peacekeeping: Developing Policy Towards Situational Awareness and Incident Response," *Defence Forces Review* 2019, pp. 154-163.

49 Harb, *Liberation Propaganda*; R. Carlson, "Humanitarian Operations during Conflict," CSRS, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012, http://www.csrnsps.org/logistical/public/docs/summer_game_report.pdf; George and Bruce (Eds.), *Analyzing Intelligence*.

conflict can be characterised as the use of kinetic force backed loosely by IO,⁵⁰ 21st century conflicts can be seen as IO campaigns backed with a threat of force.⁵¹ While truth may have historically been the first casualty of war, increasingly the very concept of truth is at stake in IO campaigns.⁵²

Peacekeeping going forward will need to recognise and organise for its role in mitigating and countering offensive IO campaigns and develop a strategy to navigate in an interconnected world of competing influence networks that seek to control the narrative. At a core level, the uncertainty caused by offensive IO campaigns, needs to be converted to a risk that can be managed, mitigated, and countered. This strategy must also address how influence networks are connected horizontally through processes of control, communication, and trust and vertically in terms of their impact on local communities. For example, a threat model could be implemented to capture the IO event, source and scenario, the effects of utilising resilience techniques, and the potential impact of implementing different approaches to counter the adversary's objectives.⁵³ A starting point for such a threat model could be the *RESIST – Counter-disinformation Toolkit* published recently by the UK Government to aid public sector organisations develop a capability to deal with disinformation in a standardised way.⁵⁴ The toolkit is based on cyber resilience techniques of monitoring and assessing threats in terms of aim, impact and reach and responding only when policy or security is threatened. In many respects, this approach reflects Fjäder's concept of resilience as marginality, in which changes produced by a crisis or shock are marginalised to safeguard against changes to existing structures and/or policies.⁵⁵

While data collection, analysing communications and assessing the combination of disinformation and spoilers are necessary, this cannot be carried out in isolation from low level intelligence gathering that allows peacekeepers to get the pulse or understand the needs of the local population. It is only through the development of a socio-technical system that the impact of hostile IO campaigns can be reduced. While technology has increased the range and possible impact of IO campaigns,⁵⁶ their success or not, remains dependent on meeting or fulfilling certain human needs.

The authors would suggest, as a first step, that social network analysis should be utilised to understand the underlying patterns of communications, relationships, and networks active in hostile IO campaigns. This will allow peacekeepers to identify what information networks exist, how they are structured and how they spread information.⁵⁷ This may be complemented with intelligence gathered by peacekeeping forces to understand the will and needs of the local population. Social theories on the variables that motivate, and influence behaviour could also be used with a relational statistics model to evaluate the ability of an IO to engage and influence its

50 Lynn E. Davis, *Peacekeeping and Peacemaking After the Cold War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1993); Charles Cleveland, Benjamin Jensen, Susan Bryant and Arnel David, *Military Strategy in the 21st Century – People, Connectivity and Competition* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2018).

51 Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations* (Solna: SIPRI, 2012); Dorn, *Keeping Watch*; Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First Century Combat as Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

52 Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2014).

53 Michael E. Kuhl, M, Moises Sudit, Jason Kistner and Kevin Costantini, "Cyber-attack Modelling and Simulation for Network Security Analysis," *2007 Winter Simulation Conference 9-12 December 2007*, Washington, D.C., <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/4419720>.

54 UK Government Communication Service, *RESIST: Counter Disinformation Toolkit*, 2019, <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/publications/resist-counter-disinformation-toolkit/>.

55 Christian Fjäder, "The Nation-state, National Security and Resilience in the Age of Globalisation," *Resilience* 2, no. 2 (2014), pp. 114–129.

56 Cleveland, Jensen, Bryant and David, *Military Strategy in the 21st Century*.

57 Nichiporuk, "US Military Opportunities; Dorn, *Keeping Watch*; George and Bruce (Eds.), *Analyzing Intelligence*; Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*; Alicia Bargar, Stephanie Pitts, Janis Butkevics, Ian McCulloh, "Challenges and Opportunities to Counter Information Operations Through Social Network Analysis and Theory," *2019 11th International Conference on Cyber Conflict (CyCon)* 900 (2019), pp. 1-18.

target.⁵⁸ The authors envisage that this could be used dually; defensively to inoculate a population against the threat of an IO and/or offensively to elevate an information campaign in support of the mission mandate.

Ireland's Role in the Future of UN IODP

With Ireland's recent victory in obtaining a UN Security Council seat for the period of 2021-22, it is clear that Ireland is ambitious about its role on the world stage and its use of empathy, partnership and independence to foster multilateral responses to the global challenges of the 21st century.⁵⁹ During this campaign, Ireland's peacekeeping operations and commitments were front and centre, demonstrating their proud unbroken record working with the United Nations in the furtherance of peace and addressing humanitarian needs. It is this paper's assertion that to maintain this record and political leverage in the future, Ireland must lead on the development of a Peacekeeping model that reflects the changing nature of 21st century conflict and the increased use of IO campaigns.⁶⁰

In progressing this strategy, Ireland can build upon its peacekeeping experience to implement an IO audit framework that uses threat modelling as a basis of managing, mitigating and countering the risk associated with the uncertainty propagated by hostile actors in today's geopolitical climate. A socio-technical *Detect, Verify, Disseminate, and Intervene* approach could be undertaken for these purposes. A simple example of which is shown in the table below, Table 1:

Key Term	Definition	Application
Detect	Detect and identify data that may be an IO	Detect and identify anomalies that may be IO campaigns or used for IO campaigns. Identify and map sources and mechanisms of IO.
Verify	Verify data and metadata	Monitor IO sources, scale, techniques, tools, objectives, and consequences. Confirm information, sources, veracity, potential impact etc at grassroots level.
Disseminate	Disseminate data to inform analysis and decision making	Carry out situational awareness and impact analysis. Disseminate findings.
Intervene	Formulate intervention strategy	Take appropriate response and evaluate responses and lessons learned.

Table 1. Detect, Verify, Disseminate, and Intervene Approach.

⁵⁸ Fecteau, "Understanding Information Operations."

⁵⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Ireland – United Nations Security Council 2021-2022 Campaign Brochure* (Dublin: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2020); Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Ireland Wins Seat on United Nations Security Council," 18 June 2020, <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press-release-archive/2020/june/ireland-wins-seat-on-united-nations-security-council-18-june-2020>; United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General: Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*.

⁶⁰ Ward and Dorussen, "Standing alongside your Friends."

The recent White Paper on Defence Update⁶¹ highlights the potential impact of non-conventional hybrid threats to the perceived stability of Ireland, the EU and European region caused by conflict and uncertainty in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.⁶² As the White Paper on Defence Update continues, the inability to pursue consistent multilateral approaches “generate additional uncertainty and enhance a context that is more permissive to aggressive behaviours in the security environment.”⁶³ Ireland is well placed, through extensive years of experience of Peacekeeping to develop best practice in managing, mitigating, and countering IO in conflict zones.

This model will need to:

- Identify – What are IO objectives, techniques, how does it make an impact?
- Monitor – How is digital monitoring and intel used to assess potential IO threats and vulnerabilities?
- Situational insight – What insight in the context of the IO campaign can be used to support a response;
- Strategic response – What should a response look like, sign off process, different options?
- Impact analysis – Goal, impact, reach of IO; how should IO be prioritised?
- Outcomes – How is IO recorded and shared, how are actions and lessons learned recorded and evaluated?⁶⁴

Ireland, by creating and exporting best practice with regard to IODP, can contribute to coherent international efforts to reduce the uncertainty caused by non-conventional hybrid threats. The European Union (EU) Action Plan on Disinformation⁶⁵ provides one mechanism by which Ireland could extend the reach of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) by conducting niche research and developing best practice, possibly through the creation of an IO hub, in detecting, analysing and countering IO operations in conflict zones.⁶⁶ Domestic political support will also be needed and coordination between different agencies, such as the National Cyber Security Centre, the Irish Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Defence etc will need to be developed to ensure an adequate infrastructure is developed and best practice is shared.

This change would encourage decision-makers to think of IO in a holistic way and create a unified understanding of the concept to respond effectively to adversaries seeking both to undermine the peace and humanitarian efforts of Irish Peacekeepers and the stability of Ireland and her international partners.

Conclusion

Peacekeepers serve as the eyes and ears of the international community but the challenges of engaging in multilateral missions and the spoilers of fragile peace processes are now increased

61 Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence: Update 2019* (Dublin: Department of Defence, 2019).

62 Charles Thomas Hunt, *Public Information as a Mission Critical Component of West African Peace Operations*, KAIPTC Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, 1 July 2005, <https://www.africaportal.org/publications/public-information-as-a-mission-critical-component-of-west-african-peace-operations/>.

63 Department of Defence, *White Paper on Defence*, p. 27.

64 NATO Bilateral Strategic Command, *Information Operations Reference Book*.

65 European Commission, *Action Plan against Disinformation* (Brussels: European Commission, 2018).

66 European Commission, *Action Plan against Disinformation*; Fecteau, “Understanding Information Operations.”

in the context of the wider use of IO campaigns by competing networks of influence. In the years ahead IODP will become increasingly important and pose strategic, tactical, and operational challenges for peacekeeping. This paper seeks to instigate a timely discourse on the future of UN IODP and Ireland's role as part of this. There is space for Ireland to use her voice as part of the UN security Council in 2021-2022 to advance a new of model of information operations during peacekeeping to enhance mission mandates, protect her interests and reduce global uncertainty.



UN Peacekeeping in Mali: Stabilisation or Counter- terrorism?

Prof Ray Murphy

Introduction

In 2019, the government approved sending a small contingent of Irish soldiers primarily drawn from the special forces unit, the Army Ranger Wing (ARW), to participate in the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali, known as MINUSMA.¹ Although the Defence Forces already contributed to an EU training mission there, this EU mission is not a combat role.² In Mali, a protracted conflict remains ongoing, aggravated by the intervention of various armed groups and a power vacuum in the north and the centre of the country.³ *The 2015 peace agreement remains fragile. At the same time, jihadist violence against security forces, including UN peacekeepers, is increasing and ethnic groups have exploited the terrorist threat to pursue local rivalries. The instability in Mali spills over into the whole Sahel region.* Despite significant intervention in the form of military assistance and aid, violence has been increasing across the region since 2015.⁴ With over two hundred fatalities to date, this is considered one of the UN's most dangerous missions.⁵ This article examines the nature of the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali and asks if the Defence Forces should continue to participate.

In order to understand the significance and context of the decision to contribute troops to MINUSMA, it is useful to review the evolution of UN peacekeeping. Peacekeeping is understood as “to describe a type of military action, used as a tool in the UN system [...] which is consent based and tries to maintain or preserve peace with no or only a minimal use of force.”⁶ It has evolved from a primarily military dominated observance of cease-fires and the separation of forces following armed conflict between states, to incorporate a complex model involving military, police and civilian components working together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace.⁷ The nature and extent of force resorted to by peacekeepers presents a dilemma. While some degree of force is permitted, UN forces were generally established to eschew force and to project a low-profile use of power.⁸ The Brahimi Report had expressed dissatisfaction with the inability of peacekeepers to prevent violence and attacks on civilians. It deplored the “mismatch between desired objectives and resources” and recommended the adoption of a protection of civilians (POC) mandate and the capacity to enforce this.⁹ In so doing, it was blurring the distinction between traditional peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Many of the major contributing states were open to such a policy shift as it had become evident that they would no longer agree to participation in inadequately prepared and supported operations.¹⁰ This was especially so among the powerful states that had traditionally declined to participate in UN led operations and had a preference for UN approved missions led by NATO or a selected lead nation.

1 Dáil Éireann Debate – Tuesday 18 June 2019, “Proposed Service by Defence Forces with United Nations in Mali: Motion,” <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-06-18/32/>, 20 July 2020.

2 Security Council Report, *May 2020 Monthly Forecast: EU-UN Briefing*, 30 April 2020, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-05/eu-un-briefing-3.php>.

3 Mohamed Salaha and Philip Kleinfeld, “What’s Behind the Mass Protests in Mali?” *The New Humanitarian*, 10 July 2020, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2020/07/10/Mali-protests-Keita-Dicko>.

4 Pauline Le Roux, *Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel*, Africa Security Brief No. 36, (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2 December 2019).

5 United Nations Peacekeeping, “MINUSMA Factsheet,” <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma>.

6 Bruno Simma, *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed, 2012), p. 1174.

7 Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines* (the “Capstone Doctrine”) (2008).

8 Simma, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1182.

9 UN, *Report of the Panel on UN Peacekeeping Operations* (Brahimi Report), UN, A/55/305-S/2000/809, 23 August 2000, paras. 62-63.

10 Wibke Hansen, Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse, *Hawks and Doves: Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution*, Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management, August 2004, https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Articles/hansen_et_al_handbook.pdf, p. 7.

Robust Peacekeeping and Stabilisation Operations

Robust forms of peacekeeping involving the use of force, whether in self-defence or defence of the mandate, are common today. There are numerous precedents for the Security Council establishing peace operations involving a so-called peace enforcement role.¹¹ In this way, recent mandates adopted in respect of the peacekeeping missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), DRC (MONUSCO) and Mali (MINUSMA), constitute a doctrinal shift from traditional consent based peacekeeping towards stabilisation and peace-enforcement missions.¹² The strategic thinking behind this change is not clear, nor indeed are the implications for all UN peacekeeping operations and how they are perceived.

The UN attempted to outline the principle of ‘robust peacekeeping’ in a number of documents. Robust peacekeeping may involve the tactical use of force for limited periods. It should be distinguished from peace enforcement which usually involves the strategic use of force without the consent of the host state or parties to the conflict.¹³ The concept has not been without its critics. Many states considered that the Chapter VII operations permitted force and were robust enough to meet any challenges.¹⁴ It is easy to understand how it may be confused as a peace enforcement tool, something inconsistent with peacekeeping. It could be argued that the description captures the kind of operation undertaken in Mali, but the exact limits of the use of force and where the line crosses from robust to enforcement is difficult to outline in practice as well as theory.

Robust peacekeeping shares many of the characteristics of NATO peace support operations doctrine.¹⁵ It should be distinguished from stabilisation operations. The term ‘stabilisation’ entered the lexicon of peace operations with the establishment of the NATO Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995.¹⁶ Unlike peacekeeping, which assumes a peace to keep, stabilisation implies military operations to stabilise a situation. The UN adopted the term when establishing the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti in 2004,¹⁷ and considers stabilisation as part of the broader remit of UN multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations.¹⁸

Although there have been many pronouncements and reports on the need to protect civilians, it is debatable if this has translated into increased security on the ground. This is especially so in Mali.¹⁹ The emphasis seems to have been placed on the principle of protection rather than the actual result. This is a consequence of the gap between rhetoric and reality, facilitated by a UN Security Council that feels it fulfils its responsibilities when a resolution with the POC principle enshrined is adopted. The physical presence of peacekeepers is not enough and may create the illusion of protection in situations where none, in fact, exists.

11 Terry Gill and Dieter Fleck (Eds.), *The Handbook of the International Law of Military Operations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 94–109, 143–149 and 199–200.

12 John Karlsrud, “The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace-Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali,” *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2015), pp. 40–54, 41.

13 UN, *A New Partnership Agenda – Charting a New Horizon for Peacekeeping*, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support New York, July 2009, pp. 31–32.

14 Interview, Irish Dept of Foreign Affairs official, Dublin 2015.

15 NATO Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 3.4.1, *Peace Support Operations*, paras. 0202–0204 and 508.

16 S/RES/1088 (1996).

17 S/RES/1542 (2004) para. 1.

18 Capstone Doctrine, Op. Cit., pp. 22–24.

19 Interview, former MINUSMA officer, June 2020.

Different states have adopted stabilisation policies, chiefly the US and UK. It has also been argued that a shared understanding exists between NATO states.²⁰ The adoption of stabilisation policies by the UK and US in particular are important as they, along with France (the so-called P3), are the regular pen-holders on Security Council resolutions relating to peace operations. In 2019, the UK Stabilisation Unit defined stabilisation as:

“[A]n initial response to violence or the immediate threat of violence [...] the UK seeks to protect the means of survival and restore basic security, promote and support a political process to reduce violence as well as prepare a foundation for longer term stability.”²¹

UK policy is to focus on a ‘comprehensive approach’ to stabilisation which is civilian-led with the support of the military.²²

The US adopts a more assertive approach, where the intervening force attempts to defeat an insurgency while at the same time entrenching support for a domestically owned transition towards peace and capacity building.²³ Both approaches seek to identify a legitimate authority and to bolster its capacity to govern. Using force in this way to counter spoilers and typically support the host state has been described as “bordering on counterinsurgency.”²⁴

Counter-Terrorism

Violent extremism is a major threat in Mali. The UN forces operate alongside French troops deployed as part of Operation Barkhane (previously Operation Serval) and a regional counter-terrorism force, the Cross-Border Joint Force or FC-G5S.²⁵ The latter is a separate ongoing anti-insurgent operation which was established by the so-called G5 Sahel leaders.²⁶ The relationship between FC-G5S and MINUSMA is governed by a Security Council resolution, under which the UN force provides operational and logistical support.²⁷ France is a strong advocate of the force, which it views as part of a long-term exit strategy for the French-led Operation Barkhane. There is close cooperation with the French and FC-G5S in particular.²⁸ In this way, the UN has associated itself with the counter-terrorism agenda in Mali which could affect the mission’s other work, particularly in supporting the government’s national reconciliation efforts.

20 David Curran and Paul Holtom, “Resonating, Rejecting, Reinterpreting: Mapping the Stabilization Discourse in the United Nations Security Council, 2000-14,” *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development* 4, no. 1 (2015), pp. 1-18, 3.

21 UK Stabilisation Unit, *The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* (May 2014), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784002/Chapter_1_The_UK_Government_s_Approach_to_Stabilisation_incl_exec_sum_.pdf, pp. 11, 14.

22 Stuart Gordon, “The United Kingdom’s Stabilisation Model and Afghanistan: The Impact on Humanitarian Actors,” *Disasters* 34, Iss. s3 (2010), pp. S368-S387, S370.

23 *Ibid* p.S372 and US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-07 Stability Operations* (29 September 2011) <https://www.health.mil/Reference-Center/Policies/2012/07/16/Joint-Pub-307-Stability-Operations-September-29-2011>, p. xvi.

24 Curran and Holtom, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

25 Formed by five former French colonies that span the Sahel, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Modia Dieng, “The Multi-National Joint Task Force and the G5 Sahel Joint Force: The Limits of Military Capacity-Building Efforts,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 40, no. 4 (2019), pp. 481-501, 482.

26 Security Council Report, *Monthly Forecast June 2020: Group of Five for the Sahel Joint Force*, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-06/group-of-five-for-the-sahel-joint-force-2.php>.

27 The Security Council welcomed FC-G5S in S/RES/2359 21 June 2017 and provided for its formal cooperation with MINUSMA in S/RES/2391 (2017).

28 Karine Bannelier and Theodore Christakis, “The Intervention of France and African Countries in Mali – 2013,” in Tom Ruys, Olivier Corten and Alexandra Hofer (Eds.), *The Use of Force in International Law: A Case-Based Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 812-827.

MINUSMA supports these operations in a range of ways, including through the identification of groups and individuals considered a threat to the mission.²⁹ The informal sharing of such³⁰ information with Operation Barkhane has serious operational, political and legal implications. MINUSMA becomes a party to the conflict under international humanitarian law as a result of providing ‘actionable intelligence’ for the French Operation Barkhane. The Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) warned that a UN peace operation should maintain clear and distinct divisions of labour between itself and parallel offensive operations.³¹ Where MINUSMA is concerned, the divisions are blurred, with the mission’s All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU) involving itself with the work of non-UN forces fighting terrorism.

Ireland’s EU partners, especially France, have prioritised MINUSMA in order to help limit large movements of people and insurgent activities in the region. If UN forces in Mali are considered a party to the conflict, this raises the question of whether *counter-terrorism or any form of limited combat is something the Defence Forces should engage in under the guise of peacekeeping?*

To deal with the threat, the UN Security Council approved MINUSMA taking robust and active steps to counter asymmetric attacks and carry out its mandate.³² Although not explicitly stated, this amounts to a de facto counter-terrorism role, something the UN HIPPO Report recommended the UN should not do.

The MINUSMA mandates risk causing further marginalisation in the north where supporting a counter-terrorism agenda could be detrimental to the peace process. Charbonneau highlights that Operation Barkhane and the FC-G5S force externalise the fight against terrorism by operating on a regional level that undermines the Malian peace process.³³ He quotes a Malian official that the UN should do its job and break these terrorists. Mali has sought Security Council approval for a UN rapid intervention force similar to MONUSCO’s Force Intervention Brigade, to help Malian forces “combat terrorism.”³⁴

MINUSMA’s role in addressing violent extremism in Mali has proved divisive. While the mission has endured attacks on its bases and numerous roadside bombs, the Security Council has not given it an explicit counter-terrorism mandate. This reflects the lack of consensus in respect of the mission. However, on the ground the issue is more nuanced as MINUSMA is clearly aligned to other forces conducting anti-terror operations. When the mandate is translated into operations on the ground, the *de facto* task is to limit terrorist action.

Human Rights Implications

The promotion and protection of human rights has been integral to the work of MINUSMA since 2013.³⁵ In 2014, the renewed mandate maintained a focus on human rights protection but merged human rights work with support for re-establishing state authority. This, in turn, meant MINUSMA would specifically assist the Malian government with building capacity for

29 John Karlsrud, “From Liberal Peacebuilding to Stabilization and Counterterrorism,” *International Peacekeeping* 26, no. 1 (2018), pp. 1-21, 9

30 John Karlsrud, “Towards UN Counter-Terrorism Operations?” *Third World Quarterly* 38, no. 6 (2017), pp. 1215-1231, 1224.

31 UN, *Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people*, A/70/95. S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, pp. 11-12.

32 S/RES/2423 (2018).

33 Bruno Charbonneau, “Intervention in Mali: Building Peace between Peacekeeping and Counterterrorism,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 35, no. 4 (2017), pp. 415-431, 421; and Bruno Charbonneau, “Intervention as Counter-Insurgency Politics,” *Conflict, Security & Development* 19, no. 3 (2019), pp. 309-314, 311.

34 UN Security Council, 7600th Meeting (11 January 2016) S/PV.7600, 8 per Mr. Diop.

35 S/RES/2100 (2013) para 16(d).

human rights protection.³⁶ Any assistance given must comply with the UN Human Rights Due-Diligence Policy.³⁷ This requires that UN assistance can only be given to non-UN security forces that respect human rights, humanitarian law, and refugee law.

The policy is especially relevant for stabilisation operations due to the support given to the host state. Such support is not permitted where there are substantial grounds to believe human rights violations could occur and corrective measures have not been taken by the relevant authorities. For this reason, the UN is required to undertake a risk assessment looking at the compliance record of the non-UN forces in order to avoid accusations of complicity.³⁸

While the UN acknowledges that counter-terrorism operations must not infringe on human rights or marginalise communities, in reality Malian counter-terror operations have violated human rights law and alienated local communities.³⁹ This places MINUSMA in an invidious position and the mission needs to take account of the consequences of assisting such operations.

Conclusion

Recent mandates adopted in respect of peacekeeping missions in Mali and elsewhere constitute a doctrinal shift from traditional consent-based peacekeeping towards stabilisation and peace-enforcement missions. The strategic thinking behind this change is not clear, nor indeed are the implications for all UN peacekeeping operations and how they are perceived.

MINUSMA is an example of what the 2015 UN HIPPO report described as conflict management operations. These are intended to deter escalation and contain conflict while also protecting civilians and supporting a peace process. It is noteworthy that the Panel believed that UN troops should not undertake military counter-terrorism operations. This was consistent with the earlier Brahimi Report which emphasised that the UN does not wage war, and peace enforcement should be entrusted to coalitions of the willing with an appropriate UN mandate.⁴⁰ Although the 2017 Santo Cruz Report seemed to challenge some of these tenets, it has not achieved the acceptance or status of the earlier major UN reports on peacekeeping and it should be seen in the context of the UN mission in the DRC.⁴¹ It is worth recalling the pitfalls of UN peace enforcement operations during the UNITAF/UNOSOM II operations in Somalia in 1992-3.⁴²

In recent years, the UN has increasingly devoted more resources to strengthening the military capabilities of its peacekeepers. In Mali, the operation has increased combat readiness and included intelligence and reconnaissance units from the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, and Norway.⁴³ Much of this is the result of NATO countries reengaging with UN peace operations. UN efforts towards stabilisation and counter-terrorism are led by the Security Council's P3.

36 S/RES/2164 (2014) para 13 (c) (iv).

37 HIPPO Report, Op.Cit. 11-12.

38 Helmut Philipp Aust, "The UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy: An Effective Mechanism against Complicity of Peacekeeping Forces?" *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 20, no. 1 (2015), pp. 61-73, 61.

39 UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali' (31 May 2016) S/2016/498 paras 39 and 84. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, Note sur les tendances des violations et abus de droits de l'homme 1 er Janvier - 31 Mars 2020, Avril 2020.

40 Brahimi Report, Op. Cit. 10.

41 Carlos Albertos dos Santo Cruz, *Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way we are Doing Business* (United Nations, 2017), https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/improving_security_of_united_nations_peacekeepers_report.pdf.

42 Ray Murphy, *UN Peacekeeping in Lebanon, Somalia and Kosovo: Operational and Legal Issues in Practice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 93, 185.

43 John Karlsrud, "For the Greater Good?: 'Good States' Turning UN Peacekeeping towards Counterterrorism," *International Journal* 74, no. 1 (2019), pp. 65-83, 71-2.

However, this change in direction has come at a cost to the focus on good governance, and may be a detrimental to human security in the long term.⁴⁴ MINUSMA has not succeeded in protecting civilians and little progress has been made in preventing transnational violent extremism. Ethnic identity is at the heart of the conflict and there is also concern that entire communities are being stigmatised as terrorists.⁴⁵

The UN's counter-terrorism agenda should be kept distinct from its other activities in order to avoid jeopardising efforts to achieve an inclusive peace and national reconciliation. There is still disagreement amongst the members of the Security Council over the extent to which the UN should be involved with offensive counter-terrorism operations. The US is correct to advocate the prioritising of the protection of civilians.⁴⁶ The Secretary-General has expressed the view that "stronger support to the Joint Force [...] is critical to ensuring the success of that initiative."⁴⁷

The ARW are highly trained and able for any mission they may be assigned. However, their current role as part of MINUSMA could in fact be carried out by any trained Irish soldiers. As efforts are underway to downsize operations such as UNIFIL in Lebanon, MINUSMA may look like an attractive alternative for the Defence Forces eager to continue UN peacekeeping and practice their soldiering skills.

Moving away from traditional peacekeeping principles and methods threatens the core concept of UN peacekeeping. It potentially undermines efforts to promote and protect human rights. Ireland is well-placed as a recently elected non-permanent member of the Security Council to defend traditional peacekeeping principles which the Defence Forces have a proven track record of success in implementing. Limited mandates with realistic aims are preferable to counter-terrorism operations under the guise of conflict management. Large scale open-ended deployments with full or quasi-combat roles should not be allowed become the norm. In the long term, this form of conflict management by UN peacekeepers is not sustainable.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁴⁵ *UN Monthly Forecast Mali*, June 2019.

⁴⁶ S/PV.8703 meeting 15 January 2020 7.

⁴⁷ UN Security Council, 'Situation in Mali,' (6 June 2018) S/2018/541 para 88.



The Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the Impact of Hague Convention Act, 2017

Comdt (AR) Lar Joye

Abstract

In 2018, The Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Hague Convention) Act 2017 was passed into Irish Law. The Hague Convention, as it is known, is an international treaty that focuses on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict. Such laws have become more relevant in the last 30 years as cultural heritage has been targeted by armies and terrorists, in many cases due to its “shock” effect. The failure to protect such sites, as during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, caused loss to the local population and reputational damage to the coalition forces. The Irish Act was passed with the support of a variety of Irish organisations, including the Irish National Committee of the Blue Shield, a body that works to protect cultural property from damage caused by armed conflicts and natural disasters. Responding to the theme of this year’s *Defence Forces Review*, this article examines how this new Act and the targeting of civilians and culture in recent wars will impact on Ireland’s engagement in peace support operations. At the same time, other armies have looked at their commitments under the Hague Convention and have created Cultural Property Protection Units in preparation for wars and natural disasters and applying the lessons that they have learned.

Introduction

Over the last 30 years, the specific targeting of cultural and heritage sites has become more common in various wars. This is changing the pattern of warfare and how armies respond to protecting civilians and important cultural sites and is becoming critical during and in the aftermath of wars. In this article, I intend to inform the development of Cultural Property Protection training in the Irish Defence Forces by examining the impact of recent wars and natural disasters, how the world responded to destruction of culture in World War II (WWII) with the 1954 Hague Convention, and then finish with a review of civilian and military response to the Convention.

Starting in the 1990s, attacks on culture have increased especially during the wars over the breakup of Yugoslavia and in particular during the Croatian War (1991-95), the Bosnian War (1992-1995) and the later Kosovo War (1998-1999) where churches, cemeteries, architectural heritage sites, museums, archives and libraries were attacked. In these wars, news footage showed the deliberate destruction of Dubrovnik in October 1991, Bosnia Mostar’s old bridge on 9th November 1993, and the Sarajevo public library, 25th August 1992. What these attacks showed was the need for combatants not to just kill the enemy, but to erase a different society’s collective memory and, if possible, their history. Libraries and museums hold vast collections, many of which are irreplaceable items: rare books, documents, audio recordings, paintings, invaluable folklore collections and unique collections of film and photographs. Once they are lost, they cannot be replaced. This was seen on larger scale again during the 2003 Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. While winning a conventional war in one month with an army of 250,000 capturing a county of 25 million, its prestige was quickly undermined with the deliberate and organised looting of archives, archaeological sites, libraries and in particular the National Museum of Iraq.¹ More recently, with the Arab Spring (2011-2012), we have seen societal breakdown due to the ongoing civil wars in Yemen, Syria and Libya where again,

¹ Peter G. Stone & Joanna Farchakn Bajjalay (Eds.), *The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008).

cultural sites were attacked, often to see looted collections turn up in the antique sale rooms of Europe and USA.

Of course, such destruction is not a new experience but seeing it immediately on TV and social media has increased its impact. In the 18th century, the Royal Navy and British Army institutionalised looting and prize money was set out in law and evenly distributed among all ranks.² In 1914, the German Army destroyed the library at Louvain University during the invasion of Belgium at the start of World War I (WWI). This caused international outrage while the German Army blamed local civilians for attacking them. In Article 247 of the Versailles Treaty Germany was required to replenish its collections. The library reopened in 1927 and was again destroyed 26 years later by the German Army on 16th May 1940.³ During WWII, Reichsmarchall Herman Goering, the head of the German Airforce, the Luftwaffe, arranged to steal collections from galleries and museums in occupied countries and plunder Jewish property stating, “it used to be called plundering. But today things have become more humane,. In spite of that, I intend to plunder and to do it thoroughly.”⁴ After the war, the USSR raided the museums of Austria and Germany and transferred many of their collections back to Moscow.

Closer to home in Ireland between 1916 and 1922 in an area of two square miles, Dublin City experienced the loss of three of its most famous and oldest buildings. During the 1916 Rising, the largest street and the historic General Post Office were destroyed by the artillery of the British Army. Most of Ireland’s local government records and the 1790s James Gandon-designed Custom House was burned down by the IRA in 1921.⁵ In 1922 another James Gandon building, the Four Courts with the Public Records Office was destroyed at the beginning of the Irish Civil War.⁶ The question of who destroyed the building is still contested.⁷ What is not disputed, however, is that Ireland’s history archive dating back 1200 was destroyed.⁸ Such destruction today would be illegal under International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

At the same time as wars were impacting on cultural history, climate change and natural disasters over the last 30 years have hit countries with devastating results, requiring Armies to take part in the recovery and rebuilding their own countries. After the Tsunami in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Haiti Earthquake in 2010, and the Danube Flooding in 2013, the first response was to protect the civilian population but in each cultural property was destroyed and lost forever.

How the World Responded to Destruction of Culture in WWII

During WWII, USA and Britain created the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program in 1943 and it operated until 1946. It provided target advice to artillery and air force units prior to battles, stabilised buildings damaged during battles and then rescued looted art. After the war, there began the restitution of collections to individuals and cultural organisations, a process that is still ongoing to the present day. They were helped in their work in Europe when General Dwight

² Richard Hill, *The Prizes of War: The Naval Prize System in the Napoleonic Wars, 1793 to 1815* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998).

³ Richard Ovenden, *Burning the Books: A History of Knowledge under Attack*, (London: John Murray Press, 2020), pp. 107-113.

⁴ Robert M. Edsel with Bret Witter, *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History*, (London: Arrow Books, 2009), p. 1.

⁵ Liz Gillis, *May 25: Burning of the Custom House, 1921*, (Dublin: Kilmainham Tales, 2017)

⁶ Michael Fewer, *Battle of the Four Courts: The First Three days of the Irish Civil War* (London: Apollo Books, 2018).

⁷ Caitriona Crowe, “Ruin of Public Record Office Marked Loss of Great Archive,” *The Irish Times*, 30 June 2012, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/ruin-of-public-record-office-marked-loss-of-great-archive-1.1069843>.

⁸ See Beyond 2022, <https://beyond2022.ie/>, an international project to create a Virtual Record Treasury for Irish history, an open-access, virtual reconstruction of the Record Treasury destroyed in 1922.

Eisenhower was appointed Commander of Mediterranean theatre of operations in November 1942, and later Supreme Commander of the invasion of Europe in January 1944. He issued two important letters in December 1943 in Italy and on 26th May 1944 prior to D-Day to his commanders, setting out his belief that while the lives of their soldiers are paramount they need to protect historical sites:

“Inevitably, in the path of our advance will be found historical monuments and cultural centres which symbolise to the world all that we are fighting to preserve. It is the responsibility of every commander to protect and respect these symbols wherever possible... Civil Affairs staff at higher echelons will advise commanders of the localities of historical monuments of this type...”⁹

Despite these letters and their intention, the reality during these European wars was that historical sites, such as castles, walled towns and monasteries were often at strategic locations and had been for hundreds of years. The most controversial destruction of such a site by the Allies was the Abbey at Monte Cassino,¹⁰ which was fought over from January to May 1944 and was destroyed by aerial bombardment on 15th February having no impact on the German defenders.¹¹

The Hague Convention

Following WWII, there was a focus again on IHL, similar to what had happened after WWI. IHL seeks to strike a balance between military necessity and the interests of humanity by regulating the conduct of armed conflict. It places limits on the means and methods of warfare in the interests of humanity and has developed since the 1st Geneva Convention in 1864. The basic rule of IHL is that only combatants and military targets can be the object of attack – civilians, prisoners of war, the sick and wounded, and civilian objects are protected. Cultural property is a civilian object unless used for military purposes, which is generally prohibited. It is in this context that the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict & Protocol was agreed at a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Conference in 1954 in the Hague in Holland, establishing legal responsibilities for armies during wars. It sets out clearly the opinions of the drafters in the preamble:

“Cultural property has suffered grave damage during recent armed conflicts and that, by reason of the developments in the technique of warfare, it is in increasing danger of destruction. That damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its contribution to the culture of the world”.¹²

⁹ David Brown & Lt Col Shortland, “The Two letters from Ike: Military Necessity and Cultural property Protection,” *British Army Review: Culture in Conflict 2019*, https://www.army.mod.uk/media/6862/bar_special_culture_conflict_web.pdf, pp. 6-16.

¹⁰ Richard Holmes (Ed.), *Battlefield: Decisive Conflicts in History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

¹¹ See British Pathé, “Cassino Smashed, 1944,” <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/cassino-smashed>. This newsreel film shows how the Abbey dominated the landscape and the destructive force of the US Airforce attack.

¹² Irish Statute Book, “Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Hague Convention) Act 2017,” 21 December 2017, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2017/act/36/enacted/en/print.html>, p. 9.

The Convention defines cultural property as:

“Movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above.”¹³

Without citing the whole Convention, the main obligations are as follows:

- To safeguard and respect cultural property;
- In time of peace, to make preparations to safeguard cultural property against foreseeable effects of armed conflict and natural disasters;
- Not to use cultural property for purposes likely to expose it to destruction or damage during armed conflict;
- To refrain from any hostile act against cultural property *except* in cases of imperative military necessity;
- To place a responsibility on military commanders for their actions;
- To prohibit, prevent and stop theft and pillage of cultural property; and
- That a Blue Shield is the emblem that is used to identify cultural property protected under the Convention.

Importantly, the Convention and updated protocol in 1999 requires States to make the violation of the Convention a criminal offence, to deal with non-international armed conflict and sets out the responsibilities for Military Commanders.

In 1954, the Hague Convention was signed by Ambassador Josephine McNeill,¹⁴ Lt Col Harrington of the Irish Defence Forces and Dr Patrick Henchy of the National Library. However, like many countries, Ireland did not implement the Convention into law. It is really in light of the Yugoslav Civil Wars in the 1990s and in particular, the failures to protect heritage during the 2003 invasion of Iraq that countries have focused on signing the convention and 136 countries have now ratified the Convention including recently Denmark (2003) Japan (2007) New Zealand (2008) United States (2009) UK (2017) and Ireland in 2018.¹⁵

Civilian Organisations Involved with Cultural Protection

At the same time as countries were engaging with the Hague Convention, heritage professionals representing museums, archives, galleries, built heritage and monuments created Blue Shield International (BSI) in 1996, as a volunteer body similar to the International Committee of

¹³ Irish Statute Book, “Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,” p. 10.

¹⁴ Michael Kennedy, “It is a Disadvantage to be Represented by a Woman”: The Experiences of Women in the Irish Diplomatic Service,” *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 13 (2002), pp. 215-235.

¹⁵ Irish Statute Book, “Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.”

the Red Cross (ICRC).¹⁶ They took the name from the Blue Shield emblem mentioned in the Hague Convention and its aim is to preserve cultural property during conflict and natural disasters. It is comprised of 25 registered National Committees. In particular, it has helped facilitate international responses to emergencies threatening cultural property such as the Haiti Earthquake in 2010. In addition, risk preparedness and training are also the focus of these cultural professionals, but unlike the ICRC, it is a volunteer-run organisation without its own funding. The Irish committee was created in 2012 and is now chaired by Zoe Reid, Head of Conservation of the National Archives of Ireland.

More recently, in 2010, the International Centre for the Study of the preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) created a First Aid to Cultural Heritage in times of Crisis course, coordinated by Aparna Tandon, who has been involved in emergency responses in Philippines (2013), Haiti (2010), Myanmar (2016) and Nepal (2015, 2016). In 2018, Tandon published a book to accompany the course, *The First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis Handbook*.¹⁷ She also taught a three-day course in Dublin for the Irish National Committee of the Blue Shield (INCBS) to 20 students consisting of Irish first responders, the Irish Defence Forces and heritage professionals. UNESCO, the original sponsors of the Hague Convention in 1954, launched their own *Protection of Cultural Property: Military Manual* in December 2016 at a seminar entitled, “Targeting Heritage: In Search of New Paradigms – Save Heritage through Dialogue.”¹⁸

Cultural Property Protection (CPP)

As more countries have signed the Hague Convention Armies, they are now setting up Cultural Property Protection Units and providing Cultural Property Protection (CPP) training to soldiers going on operations abroad.

Austria took its obligations under the Hague Convention very seriously after signing it in 1966, in particular after fears of invasion by Soviet Union during the Prague Spring in 1968.¹⁹ Within the Austrian Armed Forces, CCP is central to their rules of engagement and experienced CPP Officers are appointed.²⁰ Their role is to act as an adviser to their commanders, provide training, and maintain contact with civilian authorities. Austrian Officers have worked in Mali as part of the MINMUSA peacekeeping operation where part of the mandate focuses on the “support for cultural preservation,”²¹ in particular to protect the heritage of Timbuktu. This was attacked by terrorists in the summer of 2012, destroying many historic shrines. These attacks led to the trial in International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2016 of Ahmad al-faqi al-Mahdi who led the attacks,

¹⁶ The International Committee of the Blue Shield was created in 1996 by five non-governmental organisations:

The International Council of Archives (ICA), <https://www.ica.org/en>;

The International Council of Museums (ICOM), www.icom.museum;

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), www.icomos.org;

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), <https://www.ifla.org/>;

The Co-ordinating Council of Audio-visual Archives Associations (CCAAA), <https://www.ccaaa.org/>;

¹⁷ Aparna Tandon, *First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis Handbook*, https://www.iccrom.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/fac_handbook_print_oct-2018_final.pdf.

¹⁸ Roger O’Keefe, Camille Péron, Tofiq Musayev and Gianluca Ferrari, *Protection of Cultural Property: Military Manual*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246633>.

¹⁹ Karl Von Habsburg-Lothringen, “Cultural Property Protection in the Event of Armed Conflict,” in Lauri Rush (Ed.), *Archaeology, Cultural Property, and the Military: 3 (Heritage Matters)* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010).

²⁰ Von Habsburg-Lothringen, “Cultural Property Protection in the Event of Armed Conflict,” p. 152.

²¹ United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), “Cultural Heritage,” <https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/cultural-heritage>.

where he was sentenced to nine years in jail. This was the first trial taken by the ICC involving cultural destruction.

Over the last eight years, NATO has begun the process of developing its own policies and procedures on CPP.²² The NATO-accredited Civil Military Cooperation Centre for Excellence based in Holland recommends that generic CPP training be undertaken, followed up by country-specific training in advance of a mission. However, no formal doctrine has been created but is under consideration.²³ Within NATO, the British Army created a CPP Unit in 2018 as part of the 77th Brigade of the 6th (UK) Division, and in 2019, the US Army established a Cultural Heritage Task Force. Blue Shield International (BSI) has worked with NATO and the British Army in CPP training and has created a CPP Estimate to tie in with Operational Planning Process during Mission Planning. In November 2019, BSI and the INCBS ran a CPP military training course for the Irish Defence Forces, led by Professor Peter Stone and Major Bobby Friel of the British Army's CPP unit and supported by the Heritage Council of Ireland.²⁴

Underscoring all these approaches is the responsibilities of Military Commanders set out in the Convention. Under Article 28 of the Convention, there is an obligation for countries to “undertake all necessary steps to prosecute and impose penal or disciplinary sanctions upon those persons of whatever nationality, who commit or order to be committed a breach of the present Convention.”²⁵

The Offences are defined as:

- Making cultural property under enhanced protection the object of attack;
- Using cultural property under enhanced protection or its immediate surroundings in support of military action;
- Extensive destruction or appropriation of cultural property protected under the
- Making cultural property protected under the Convention and this Protocol the object of attack;
- Theft, pillage or misappropriation of, or acts of vandalism directed against cultural property protected under the Convention.

This increases the pressure on Military Commanders who have their own defined responsibilities but now find themselves with extra challenges, including that they can be charged with an offence where they fail to exercise proper control over their own soldiers²⁶. With such requirements, it can be appreciated that all militaries who have recently signed up to the Convention are grappling with its implications.

²² Frederik Rosén, *NATO and Cultural Property: Embracing New Challenges in the Era of Identity Wars* (Copenhagen: Nordic Centre for Cultural Heritage and Armed Conflict, 2017).

²³ Emma Culiffe, Paul Fox & Peter Stone, “The Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict: Unnecessary Distraction or Mission-Relevant priority?” *NATO Allied Command Transformation* 2, no. 2 (2018), p. 11.

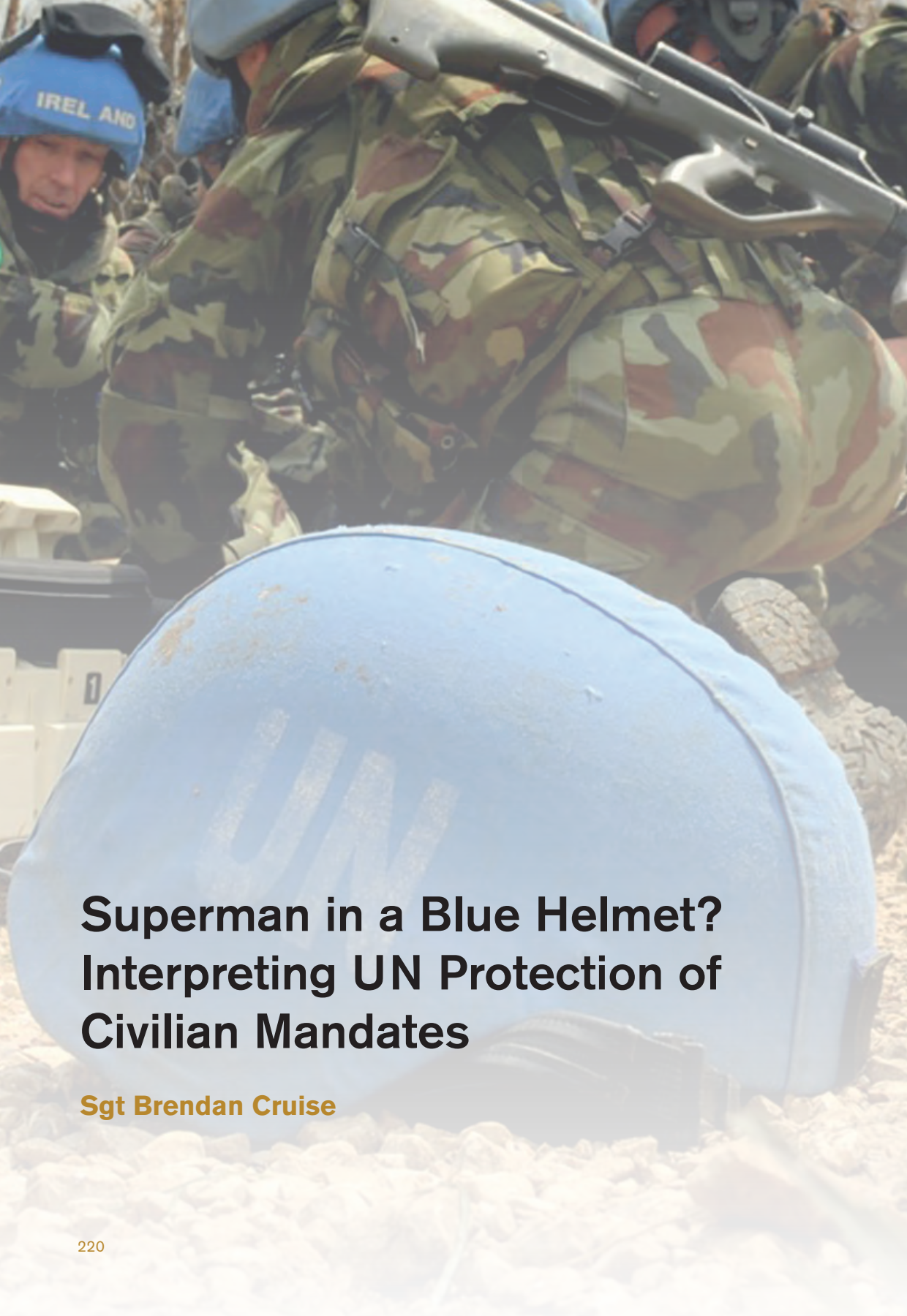
²⁴ Patrizia La Piscopia, “Towards a Monuments Men Unit?” *Archaeology Ireland* 34, no. 1, iss. 131, pp. 47-49.

²⁵ Irish Statute Book, “Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,” p. 19.

²⁶ Irish Statute Book, “Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,” p. 6.

Conclusion

People's identity is connected to where they come from and this is reflected in their cultural property and what they believe is important to them. The targeting of civilians and culture in recent wars has shown various attempts to deliberately erase culture. This approach to modern warfare shows the importance of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which has been designed to deal with modern wars, be they at state level or part of non-international armed conflict. However, although the Convention is 64 years old, its implementation has only been tackled by most militaries in the last 10 years. So, we are in era of development, learning and training with a focus on making Commanders aware of Cultural Property Protection (CPP), their obligations and its important role, where it can act as a "force multiplier." The Irish Defence Forces are also in the early stages of creating their own response to Convention and its legal requirements on them.



Superman in a Blue Helmet? Interpreting UN Protection of Civilian Mandates

Sgt Brendan Cruise

“The heroes of the world community are not those who withdraw when difficulties ensue [...] but those who stand the heat of the battle, to fight for the world through the United Nations.”

Hubert Humphrey, 38th US Vice President

Introduction

In 1942, under the command of Sir Arthur “Bomber” Harris, the British Royal Air Force shifted its focus toward destroying “the morale of the enemy civil population” by firebombing the cities of Cologne, Hamburg and Dresden.¹ This new strategic bombing policy resulted in huge loss of civilian lives, caused large scale casualties, and caused heavy infrastructure and cultural destruction. The German civilian population had expected their government and military to protect them from this type of targeting however they failed to do so.

Of course, it is not just conventional conflicts where civilians are systematically targeted for strategic purposes. Some belligerents seek to “capture the will of the people” by deliberately targeting civilians for violence for a multitude of reasons, including undermining a disputed political authority, enforced recruitment, exerting political pressure in order for states to give in to a political demand, or to eliminate a population through ethnic cleansing.² Extremists and terrorists have complicated this matter further by testing governments’ ability to protect their civilians by deliberately targeting them and undermining work in support of peace agreements.

Violence against civilians has always existed and all too often in recent conflicts, armed groups have intentionally targeted civilians as a tool of war, including many in which United Nations (UN) peacekeepers have been deployed.³ Two major examples are Rwanda and Srebrenica. In Rwanda in 1994, the UN system and its hopelessly inadequate peacekeeping force were “almost paralysed in the face of a wave of some of the worst brutality humankind has seen in [that] century.”⁴ This was closely followed up in 1995, where peacekeepers in the tragically named UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) oversaw the establishment of “safe areas.” These areas were anything but safe as up to 20,000 civilians were killed in and around Srebrenica. More recent conflicts have also had a negative impact on civilians displaced by war, as seen in the conflicts of Syria, Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵

Now with the evolution of citizen journalism and belligerents’ own strategic public relations, an environment exists where, through social media and at unprecedented speeds, the dissemination of images of civilians severely affected by conflict can bring about questions concerning attempts, or lack thereof, by militaries, government or peacekeepers to protect civilians. This increased availability of information heightens the risk that action and inaction at the tactical and operational levels to protect civilians can have profound repercussions at the strategic and political levels.⁶

1 RAF Area Bombing Directive (General Directive No. 5) S.46368/11 D.C.A.S. 14 February 1942.

2 Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians, Proposed Principles for Military Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2010), https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/files/file-attachments/2_-_Proposed_Principles_Protecting_Civilians_2010_1_1.pdf.

3 Michael G. Smith, Jeni Whalan and Peter Thomson, “The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Operations Recent Developments,” *Security Challenges* 7, no. 4 (2011), pp. 27-38.

4 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda*, S/1999/1257, 16 December 1999.

5 Victoria K. Holt, “Mandates are Only the Start: Delivering on the Authorisation to Protect Civilians,” in Lisa Sharland (Ed.), *Evolution of the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping*, (Barton, ACT: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2019), pp. 23-33.

6 Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians, Proposed Principles for Military Operations*.

Sadly however, a stark reality for peacekeepers tasked with protecting civilians is that they will inevitably prove unable to protect all the civilians at risk no matter how much the international community desires that they do. Great strides have taken place regarding the development and implementation of Protection of Civilian (POC) in peacekeeping operation mandates. Much training, re-evaluation, logistical and intelligence planning must be in place for POC to be a success. Simply having POC in a mandate does not mean that if civilians are in imminent threat of violence that Superman in a blue helmet will fly down and rescue them.

This paper will initially look at the problematic issues of the lack of certainty surrounding the language used in POC mandates that are being implemented, followed by how over the past two decades, global politics have shaped these mandates to the extent that explicit requests have remained an ongoing source of contention in the UN Security Council (UNSC) and to commanders in the field.⁷

The Labour of Language

The phrase “Protection of Civilians” (POC) has become a buzzword when addressing specific yet evolving UN strategies and policies dealing with how to provide effective protection. The United Nations Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Operations Policy broadly defines POC as, “without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the host state, integrated and coordinated activities by all civilian and uniformed mission components to prevent, deter or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians within the mission’s capabilities and areas of deployment through the use of all necessary means, up to and including deadly force.”⁸

The concept of POC is relatively recent, it was not until 1998 that the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan coined the term in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa in which he identified protecting civilians in situations of conflict as a “humanitarian imperative.”⁹ This concept was first addressed in the preamble of Resolution 1265 where it was noted that there was a,

“need to address the causes of armed conflict in a comprehensive manner in order to enhance the protection of civilians on a long-term basis, including by promoting economic growth, poverty eradication, sustainable development, national reconciliation, good governance, democracy, the rule of law and respect for and protection of human rights.”¹⁰

More specifically, the resolution also expressed its “willingness to consider how peacekeeping mandates might better address the negative impact of armed conflict on civilians.”¹¹ This willingness was then implemented in 1999 when UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone expanded its mandate “to afford protection to civilians under threat of imminent physical violence.”¹² This phrase has since become an integral part of UN-mandated peace operations.¹³

⁷ Lisa Sharland, “Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping: A Decade of Seeking Consensus,” in Lisa Sharland (Ed.), *Evolution of the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping*, (Barton, ACT: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2019), pp. 34-41.

⁸ United Nations, *Policy: The Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping Operations*, 1 November 2019, https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/poc_policy_2019_.pdf.

⁹ UN Secretary General, “The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa. Report of the Secretary-General,” *International Peacekeeping* 5, no. 4 (1998), pp 156-168.

¹⁰ UN Security Council Resolution 1265 adopted in 1999.

¹¹ UN Security Council Resolution 1265 adopted in 1999.

¹² UN Security Council Resolution 1270 adopted in 1999. United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

¹³ Benjamin de Carvalho and Jon Harald Sande Lie, *Challenges to Implementing the Protection of Civilians Agenda*, Norwegian Institute for International Affairs Policy Brief No. 5, 2009, <https://www.nupi.no/en/Publications/CRISIn-Pub/Challenges-to-Implementing-the-Protection-of-Civilians-Agenda>.

This phrase is not without confusion, as the UN POC policy states that “...peacekeeping operations with POC mandates are required to protect civilians under threat of physical violence...” along with a footnote augmenting that some mandates may require protection of civilians under “imminent threat of physical violence.”¹⁴ Whilst some may see this as trivial, in a situation of POC concern, the term “imminent” may be the vital factor for commanders when deciding whether or not to rapidly implement a tactical operation.

This imprecise language concerning civilian protection exists in all post-2009 peacekeeping resolutions and “stretches the concept beyond what is functional.”¹⁵ Commanders are provided with little guidance on how to interpret, in particular, the key phrase contained in protection mandates of civilians.¹⁶ Along with this, roughly 95% of peacekeepers now serve under POC mandates with authority to use force when necessary.¹⁷ While these developments should only be seen in a positive light, considerable challenges remain, such as creating relevant mandates and how to translate this language into practice. Traditionally, UNSC negotiators are generally diplomats with little if any military experience, yet they construct the language on POC, and most are not well-qualified to say how this should be put into action.¹⁸

Some UN POC mandates lack substance and detail, such as UNAMID Resolution 1769¹⁹ and UNISFA Resolution 1990.²⁰ Both *re-affirm* previous Resolutions that are specific towards PoC, mainly Resolution 1674²¹ and Resolution 1894,²² yet offer scant if any further information. MINUSMA *decides* that it shall focus on priority tasks of Security, Stabilization and protection of civilians and *reiterates* that the Malian authorities have the primary responsibility to protect but offer little more.²³ Then there are resolutions that have broader detail and greater specifications, such as UNMISS Resolution 2155 which *re-affirms then expands* on its POC mandate. It does this by *emphasising* that “protection of civilians must be given priority in decisions about the use of available capacity and resources within the Mission,” and authorises UNMISS “to use all necessary mean to” protect civilians “under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source of such violence, within its capacity and areas of deployment.”²⁴ MONUSCO Resolution 1925 also has more substance, by prioritising POC by “ensuring the effective protection of civilians, under imminent threat of physical violence, in particular violence emanating from any of the parties engaged in the conflict” and supporting:

“the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure the protection of civilians through the implementation of the Government’s ‘zero-tolerance policy’ with respect to discipline and human rights and humanitarian law violations, committed by elements of the security forces.”²⁵

14 United Nations, *Policy: The Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping Operations*.

15 Alexander William Beadle, *Protection of Civilians in Theory: A Comparison of UN and NATO Approaches*, 15 December 2010, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, <https://www.ffi.no/en/publications-archive/protection-of-civilians-in-theory-a-comparison-of-un-and-nato-approaches>.

16 Alexander William Beadle, *Protection of Civilians in Theory*.

17 Holt, “Mandates are Only the Start.”

18 Richard Gowan, “The Security Council and the Protection of Civilians,” in Lisa Sharland (Ed.), *Evolution of the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping*, (Barton, ACT: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2019), pp. 7-10.

19 UN Security Council Resolution 1769 adopted in 2007. United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur.

20 UN Security Council Resolution 1990 adopted in 2011. United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei.

21 UN Security Council Resolution 1674 adopted in 2006. Protection of Civilians in armed conflict.

22 UN Security Council Resolution 1894 adopted in 2009. Protections of Civilians in armed conflict.

23 UN Security Council Resolution 2164 adopted in 2014. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

24 UN Security Council Resolution 2155 adopted in 2014. United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

25 UN Security Council Resolution 1925 adopted in 2010. United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

One of the basic limitations to the UNSC's promotion of POC lies in its institutional nature. It is a political body with international legal authority; it is not an operational headquarters.²⁶ As with anything concerning the UN, geopolitics and diplomacy has a key role in POC mandates. Debates surrounding this topic have become ever more sensitive in UN headquarters in New York over the past decade. Mandates are often deliberately vague as a result of political compromise and to secure UNSC agreement.²⁷

Initially, there were concerns about how POC mandates complied with the broader principles of peacekeeping. There was a mistaken belief that inclusion of POC would diminish the importance of host-state consent and their responsibilities, and also diminish the impartiality of peacekeepers. Now, POC mandates and subsequent guidance to peacekeepers have been careful to emphasize the primary responsibility of the host government to protect civilians, using language such as "without prejudice to the responsibility of the host government to protect civilians."²⁸ This type of cautious language was used in UNAMSIL²⁹ mandate, which made specific reference to "taking into account the responsibilities of the Government of Sierra Leone." Subsequently, this phrase has been repeated many times since and this may be one of the reasons why there has been so little discussion on the far-reaching implications that POC has for the future of UN peacekeeping.³⁰

POC is still elusive to many involved in peacekeeping. This fact is exacerbated by the broadness of the concept and the lack of tangibility.³¹ A 2009 study found that,

"the UN Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries, host states, humanitarian actors, human rights professionals, and the missions themselves continue to struggle over what it means for a peacekeeping operation to protect civilians, in definition and practice."³²

The UN Department of Peace Operations has attempted to remove some of this mystery by producing a 230-page handbook packed full of definitions, acronyms and "do's and don'ts."³³ While POC certainly has international support, its overall implementation as a principle has not been as fruitful as many other complex issues such as land mines, the arms trade and the International Criminal Court. These issues and concepts have been simplified, communicated, and advocated for by their respective campaign organisations to the international community, even when they have been vigorously opposed by some of the world's most powerful states. These campaigns have been negotiated and since developed into international treaties.³⁴

26 Gowan, "The Security Council and the Protection of Civilians."

27 Séverine Autesserre, "The Crisis of Peacekeeping," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-12-11/crisis-peacekeeping>.

28 Sharland, "Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping: A Decade of Seeking Consensus."

29 United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone deployed under UN Security Council Resolution 1289 implemented in February 2000 and successfully completed in December 2005 and replaced by United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone established under UN Security Council Resolution 1620 in 2005.

30 Conor Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations: UN Security Council Reform and the Protection of Civilians*. Igarapé Institute, Strategic Paper No. 4, August 2013, https://igarape.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AE-04_To-Save-Succeeding-Generations-1.pdf.

31 de Carvalho and Sande Lie, *Challenges to Implementing the Protection of Civilians Agenda*.

32 Victoria Holt and Glyn Taylor with Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks and Remaining Challenges* (New York, N.Y.: United Nations DPKO and OCHA, 2009), <https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/Protecting%20Civilians%20in%20the%20Context%20of%20UN%20Peacekeeping%20Operations.pdf>.

33 United Nations, *Policy: The Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping Operations*.

34 Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations*.

Politics and Principles

While there is undoubtedly an appetite and a strong belief in POC by the UN and the UNSC especially, in the context of UN peacekeeping deployments, POC has inevitably become a political tug o' war. The language within POC mandates allows countries to use this ambiguity to suit their agenda. Within the UN, there is an explicit imbalance between the wealthier and power-concentrated global North, and the largely marginalised and excluded global South.³⁵ There also still exists the traditional argument of East versus West. For example, in 2019, Russia and its Western counterparts had a war of words focusing on POC when Russia accused NATO of abusing the notion of POC in Libya, which resulted in Western diplomats attacking the Russians and their allies for ignoring POC in Syria. This was not the first time that either Russia or Western states have used POC for geopolitical gains. In 2016, Resolution 2286 condemning attacks on health workers and hospitals was successfully passed.³⁶ This resolution was a considerable part of an effort to embarrass Russian and Syrian Government forces for targeting health facilities in the Syrian conflict.

There also exists the issue of managing host state consent regarding POC. This is an ongoing challenge for UN peacekeeping in particular mission contexts, where some authorities interfere with efforts by peacekeepers to monitor human rights abuses or limit their movement throughout the country. These types of restrictions have knock-on effects at the operational and tactical levels. They present acute challenges for peacekeepers, where they are required to engage to protect civilians regardless of the source of the threat, even if it is coming from the host government.³⁷

Some of the UN POC demands seem to ignore these situations and realities. Belligerent forces often use human shields, take advantage of the uncertainties of close combat, and propagandise every casualty of a non-combatant. However, peacekeepers who act decisively may sometimes trade short-term casualties for much higher casualties as the failure to use force may increase the casualty rate.³⁸ Belligerents will always adapt their *modus operandi* to perpetrate attacks against civilians in an attempt to discredit the intervening force, thus undermining the force's credibility. This may result in its isolation from the civilian population, and lead to a reluctance by civilians to co-operate with the intervening force in measures to improve their security.³⁹ Conversely, forceful action against belligerents to protect civilians carries risks of its own, particularly where it challenges conservative interpretations of state sovereignty.⁴⁰

Civilian protection can and does exist outside of peacekeeping operations, which adds to the confusion.⁴¹ Even though the UN has a POC definition, its broadness has caused issues. The Russian Ambassador has cautioned against the "development of new international concepts and endless categories of people who require protection."⁴² This type of statement has led the UN to promote a Culture of Protection, *vis-à-vis* the international community, rather than redefining

35 Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations*.

36 UN Security Council Resolution 2286 adopted in 2016. Strongly Condemning Attacks against Medical Facilities, Personnel in Conflict Situations.

37 Sharland, "Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping: A Decade of Seeking Consensus."

38 Anthony H. Cordesman, "Civilian Casualty Trends Show Limited Growth in Total Deaths, but Growing Differences in Resolute Support and UNAMA Assessments of the Impact of ANSF and Coalition Attacks on Civilians," *Military Developments in the Afghan War* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2019), pp. 154-176.

39 Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians, Proposed Principles for Military Operations*.

40 Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians, Proposed Principles for Military Operations*, pp. 13-18.

41 Smith, Whalan and Thomson, "The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Operations."

42 United Nations, "Press Release SC/13822: Civilian Experiences, Needs in Conflict Critical to Creating Protection, Accountability Frameworks, Speakers Tell Security Council," 23 May 2019, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13822.doc.htm>.

POC.⁴³ This culture has been promoted by ideas such as the Austrian-led Resolution 1894,⁴⁴ which was a binding resolution to establish POC as a priority for missions, to call for mission-wide strategies, and to prioritise resources for POC.⁴⁵ This type of resolution has allowed the UNSC to use its Chapter VII⁴⁶ powers to authorise military action in Libya⁴⁷ to protect civilians at risk of attack during an uprising against President Muammar Gaddafi.⁴⁸ While this may be a surprising approach for POC, there still need to be mission considerations. For example, POC for UNIFIL⁴⁹ in south Lebanon should be distinguished from that of POC in MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁵⁰

The culture of POC has developed on multiple fronts, with a large focus on the Rwandan ‘Kigali Principles.’ These laid out an affirmative set of commitments for peacekeepers from signatory countries to protect civilians, and if necessary, to use force to accomplish that goal.⁵¹ Peacekeepers are now expected to pledge “to be prepared to use force to protect civilians,” to “not hesitate to take action to protect civilians,” and “to take disciplinary action against our own personnel if and when they fail to act to protect civilians.”⁵² It should be noted that in 2019, the Irish Ambassador to the UN stated,

“these Principles however very frankly are meaningless if they are not implemented, if they are not delivered on the ground. Mandates must match the realities of the conflict on the ground, while training and resources in turn must match mandates.”⁵³

Conclusion

The norm that civilians are not legitimate targets in war and should be protected from the consequences of violent conflict is subject to little contestation.⁵⁴ Violence against civilians can occur suddenly, exacting a significant human cost and altering the strategic, operational, and tactical environments very quickly. Sadly, war is war and peacekeeping forces cannot fight in areas occupied by civilians and warring factions without inflicting civilian casualties, nor can they realistically save every civilian whose life is in immediate threat. However, that does not mean that they should not aspire to save them all. Mandates for peacekeeping missions continue to be written by a UNSC dominated by its five permanent members, which carries with itself political issues but UN peacekeeping missions also grapple with the legal and practical dilemmas that implementing their POC mandates pose. It is becoming increasingly clear that the existing legal framework lacks clarity and provides insufficient guidance and regulation.⁵⁵ When states fail to protect civilians, it is the international community which steps in to assist, largely in the

43 Jon Harald Sande Lie and Benjamin de Carvalho, *The Tension between UN HQ and the Field in Implementing the Protection of Civilians*, Norwegian Institute for International Affairs Policy Brief No. 4, 2009, <https://nupi.braege.unit.no/nupi-xmlui/handle/11250/194373?locale-attribute=en>.

44 UN Security Council Resolution 1894 adopted in 2009. Protections of Civilians in armed conflict.

45 Holt, “Mandates are Only the Start.”

46 Chapter VII of Charter of United Nations: Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. 1945.

47 UN Security Council Resolution 1973 adopted in 2011. Concerning the situation in Libya.

48 Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations*.

49 United Nations Interim Force Lebanon deployed under UN Security Council Resolution 1701 implemented in August 2006.

50 United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo deployed under UN Security Council Resolution 2502 implemented in December 2019.

51 Holt, “Mandates are Only the Start.”

52 The Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians. International Conference on the Protection of Civilians. 2015.

53 Statement on behalf of Ireland by Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. 23 May 2019.

54 Smith, Whalan and Thomson, “The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Operations.”

55 Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations*.

form of UN peacekeepers, but it should be remembered as the Chinese representative to the UN recently stated “that governments have the primary responsibility to protect.”⁵⁶

Host nations and UN member states need to manage the expectations of the population regarding the force’s ability to provide security, and this should be pursued through continuous and convincing public information campaigns and key leader engagement.⁵⁷ They also need to redress the causes of armed conflict in a comprehensive manner in order to enhance the protection of civilians on a long-term basis, including by promoting economic growth, poverty eradication, sustainable development, national reconciliation, good governance, the rule of law and respect for, and protection of, human rights.⁵⁸ The traditional strategy of implementing sustainable peace agreements and ending civil wars is far more beneficial than protecting civilians *ad infinitum*.

The future success of POC will depend largely on a coherent political approach. The military is a necessary component of peacekeeping and stabilisation operations; however, it can only contribute to the conditions in which other tools can construct a durable peace. Political and military leaders increasingly identify the protection of civilians from systematic or mass violence as a strategic or operational objective across a wide range of national and multilateral contexts.⁵⁹ The correlation of multidimensional strategies along with the development of national POC doctrine and cohesive training is also critical to any success. Institutionalising POC awareness and establishing within member states a firm Culture to Protect is paramount.

UN peacekeepers have saved thousands of lives, and have often risked their own to do so. They have done so because of moral reasoning, as it is fundamental to a soldier’s creed to not stand by and watch mass atrocities occur. While UN peacekeepers’ failures have been recorded, so should their successes: peacekeeping missions have protected civilians, as seen on a large scale in Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Central African Republic. POC is undeniably a laudable goal surrounded by considerable difficulties. It is hard to plan for, train for and execute, and there are often limits on missions and capacities. The reality is that it is difficult to succeed at POC, but there is also another reality in that POC ideally should not have to be included in mandates and the concept of protecting civilians should be a given. For soldiers, the notion that if something is difficult then it should be avoided does not exist. Instead, they tend to heed to the words of President John F Kennedy, albeit in a space exploration context, “and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard...”⁶⁰

56 United Nations, “Press Release SC/13822: Civilian Experiences, Needs in Conflict.”

57 Max Kelly, *Protecting Civilians, Proposed Principles for Military Operations*.

58 Foley, *To Save Succeeding Generations*.

59 Alison Giffen, *Addressing the Doctrinal Deficit: Developing Guidance to Prevent and Respond to Widespread Systematic Attacks against Civilians* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2009), <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/POC%20Addressing%20the%20Doctrinal%20Deficit.pdf>.

60 US President John F. Kennedy, “Apollo Program Moon Landing Speech,” 12 September 1962, Rice University, Houston, Texas.



The Role of the Military During the Ebola Crisis in Sierra Leone

Dr Sinead Walsh¹

¹ This article draws in part on material in my co-authored book: Sinead Walsh & Oliver Johnson, *Getting to Zero: A Doctor and a Diplomat on the Ebola Frontline* (London: Zed Books, 28). I am also grateful to Lt. Col. Louis Flynn of the Irish Defence Forces, who led the ECAT team, for his reflections on the paper.

Abstract

This paper is based on my experience as Ambassador of Ireland to Sierra Leone and Liberia during the Ebola crisis, including my experience of a six-month Irish Defence Forces deployment at the Irish Embassy in Sierra Leone. I will reflect on the role of military actors in general in the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, as well as the specific case of the Irish deployment. The role of the military in global health crises has both benefits and risks which we saw during the Ebola epidemic. Both national and international military forces were active. In terms of benefits, the military could be deployed quickly. They had relevant and useful skillsets, including in medical, logistics, and engineering arenas. Critically they brought much-needed discipline and order into the response, as well as innovative solutions. The risks did not relate so much to the military itself but to what they were asked or not asked to do. The response became over-militarised/over-securitised when national security forces were too much in the front-line, given that it was a health crisis. Conversely, international military medical officers did not play a significant role in Ebola treatment despite arguably being far more suitable than the available alternatives for this role at the time. The Irish Defence Forces deployment to the Embassy was largely a success. Central to this were the relevant skills that the Emergency Civilian Assistance Team (ECAT) team brought and the flexibility they exercised on how to use these skills to assist in the response as guided by the Embassy. The lessons from this deployment would suggest that these types of deployments would ideally grow in number and become more significant as a tool of Irish foreign policy during health crises and other humanitarian emergencies.

Introduction

Military interventions during the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone were largely successful and this paper argues that the success of these interventions support the notion that the Irish government should consider expanding military deployments in health and humanitarian crises in the future. After providing an introduction to the context of the Ebola crisis and my role therein, this paper describes the deployments of the Sierra Leonean, British and Irish militaries during the Ebola crisis, what they did and what benefits they brought to the response. Relevant skills and flexibility were two particularly important features of the Irish response. I then outline the downsides and risks of these military deployments and conclude with two lessons that can help to mitigate these risks: clear Terms of Reference, (including definition of roles vis-à-vis other actors) and a detailed consideration of the contexts involved. I will end with a short reflection on the relevance of these lessons for the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The largest Ebola epidemic in history and the first in West Africa began in December 2013 in a remote village in Guinea, most likely when an 18-month old baby, Emile Ouamouno played in a tree close to his house and came into contact with bat droppings. Two and a half years later when the epidemic came to a close, 28,616 people had been infected and 11,310 had died, mostly in Guinea and neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone, including young Emile.

I was in Freetown at the time as Irish Ambassador to Sierra Leone and Liberia and head of the Irish Aid programme. Similar to the current situation of COVID19, normal life in Sierra Leone came to a standstill when its Ebola epidemic began in May 2014. The regular Irish Aid

programmes in nutrition, women's rights and other areas largely ground to a halt as movement and gathering restrictions began. Along with the government and the rest of the international community, we had to figure out what to do about the outbreak, and fast.

Unfortunately, in the early months of the response, the Ministry of Health was beset by politicisation and corruption, and coordination started off as a mess. The leadership of the country did not grasp the severity of the situation and take action. The baseline was poor; Sierra Leone's health system was extremely weak, under-funded, and under-staffed. There was 1 doctor for every 45,000 people¹, compared with the WHO recommendation of 1 doctor per 1000 people, and 1 doctor per 345 people in Ireland.²

The rapidly growing outbreak quickly outstripped the capacity of the health system to keep up with surveillance, isolation and treatment. The government, including the Sierra Leone military, set up isolation facilities, as did NGOs like Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) but all became overwhelmed within weeks of the first confirmed cases. Transmission was rampant and people were dying without care at the gates of hospitals and in communities.

The situation was so dire that on 2 September at the United Nations in New York, MSF called for military intervention, the first time the organisation had done so in its forty-three-year history. In her speech, MSF International President Joanne Liu was categorical:

“To curb the epidemic, it is imperative that States immediately deploy civilian and military assets with expertise in biohazard containment. I call upon you to dispatch your disaster response teams, backed by the full weight of your logistical capabilities [...] Without this deployment, we will never get the epidemic under control.”³

Liu was calling out for the speed, scale and risk-taking that MSF felt by then could only be provided by the military. Liu's request for military intervention would be met, but not in the way that she intended.

Positive Features of The Sierra Leonean Military Intervention: Rapidly Laying Foundations of the Response

The first military intervention in the crisis was carried out by the Sierra Leonean army itself. In the early days of the response in the summer of 2014, this consisted of standing up isolation and treatment units, and enforcing quarantine restrictions.

With respect to their medical role, the Medical Corps of the army set up an isolation unit for Ebola patients early on at one of their hospital sites, 34 Military Hospital in Freetown. At this time, there were very few resources for the outbreak, for instance, very little personal protective equipment (PPE) was available for health workers, and the Medical Corps had no experience with Ebola, given that it was the first outbreak in West Africa. However, working under a strong leader, Dr Foday Sahr, who led by example in treating Ebola patients, they threw themselves

¹ Simon Wright and Luisa Hanna with Mathilde Maifert and with research by Dimitri Gushulvili and Grace Kite, *A Wake-Up Call: Lessons from Ebola for the World's Health Systems* (London: Save the Children, 2015), <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/health-and-nutrition/a-wake-up-call.pdf>, accessed 6 August 2017.

² OECD and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, in cooperation with the European Commission, *State of Health in the EU: Ireland Country Health Profile 2017* <https://www.oecd.org/ireland/ireland-country-health-profile-2017-9789264283435-en.htm>, p. 7.

³ Joanne Liu, “MSF International President United Nations Special Briefing on Ebola,” Médecins sans Frontières, 2 September 2014, <https://www.msf.org/msf-international-president-united-nations-special-briefing-ebola>, accessed 13 August 2017.

into the response. When my co-author Oliver Johnson, who was involved in one of only two other isolation units in Freetown at the time at Connaught Government hospital, went to visit 34 Military, he was impressed. The unit was well-organised and the young doctor Mohamed Boie Jalloh showing Oliver around had come up with some creative solutions to the enormous challenge of dealing with this new disease:

“They had also come up with a few innovations I immediately wanted to adopt at Connaught. My favourite was their simple solution to providing each patient with their own toilet, which was important because shared toilets could lead to Ebola spreading between suspected Ebola patients who actually did have the disease and those who didn’t. Back at Connaught, we simply gave each patient buckets. Whilst the buckets might have been practical from our perspective, they were an undignified solution for the patients, and those who were really sick were at risk of falling if they tried to squat. Mohamed’s pragmatic solution was to buy a dozen cheap plastic garden chairs and cut a large round hole in the seat to make a crude commode, with a bucket underneath. Comparatively, this was a huge improvement.”⁴

When the government set up a large Ebola treatment centre in September, the Army Medical Corps was co-opted in at the last minute since many other health workers refused to work with Ebola patients. This was understandable given how many health workers were dying, in part of course due to the lack of PPE in the early days of the response. However, the Medical Corps accepted to help without pause or protest. One example was the same Dr Jalloh who was asked to work in the new Hastings Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU). As he later recounted to me:

“At 10 p.m. on that Friday, I got a call to say that the next morning I should go to Hastings to work as a physician. The ETU was opening the next morning. We arrived and made a plan for how to deal with incoming patients and started training the nurses. For the first week, myself and my colleague, we could not go home. We slept in the store.”⁵

Of all Sierra Leone’s institutions, the army was the one that stands out as having excelled during the crisis. A key factor behind this success was the British Army, who arrived in Sierra Leone in October 2014.

Positive Features of the British Army Intervention: Leading, Enabling and Resourcing the Response

The UK, with its colonial history in Sierra Leone was the country’s lead donor. The UK had intervened effectively towards the end of Sierra Leone’s civil war (1991-2002) and had thereafter led a comprehensive programme to help reform the country’s army that had been corrupted and decimated. This capacity building programme, which included the participation of other Western militaries, was still ongoing in 2014 when Ebola began, although it had scaled been down to eight international advisors.

The Sierra Leone army had progressed enormously, and by 2014 was sending peacekeepers to other countries such as Sudan and Somalia. This deep and long-term engagement of the UK

⁴ Walsh & Johnson, *Getting to Zero*, p. 177.

⁵ Walsh & Johnson, *Getting to Zero*, p. 370.

military with its Sierra Leonean counterpart became critical when, in October 2014, the UK sent 750 military personnel to assist Sierra Leone with the Ebola crisis.⁶

Working as part of the UK Government's Joint Inter-Agency Taskforce (JIATF), the UK military quickly set up operations and coordination systems at national and district levels in support of the Sierra Leone government, working closely with the Sierra Leone military and NGOs. It was an enormous effort that brought much-needed discipline and order to the response which had been largely chaotic and ineffective for its early months.

One example was the work the UK military did on organising mass safe burials along with the Ministry of Health, Concern Worldwide and others. Burials, when done in the traditional way, were major transmission routes for the Ebola virus since the bodies of Ebola victims were highly infectious for the first 48 hours after death. While the government had mandated that all deaths should have a safe burial countrywide, they completely lacked the capacity and the organisation to conduct such burials. Bodies would lie unburied for days within communities waiting to be collected and this caused considerable anger and posed a huge infection risk.

Over the course of three weeks in October, the UK and Sierra Leone militaries, along with Concern and others designed a new system for burials. Fiona McLysaght from Concern described the first morning:

“The [UK army] guys slept in the PPE store on the Saturday night before we took on responsibility for burials the next morning. I came in at 6 a.m. and met them, they were wrecked. They helped us to set up the system for the first 10 burial teams, which became more or less the system we would maintain over the next twelve months. We got the role on a Friday and it was to be sorted by Sunday a.m. Late on Saturday night, we were fuelling vehicles and seriously wondering what we had had agreed to take on. It was crazy.”

Crazy as it was, it worked. Within three days, the backlog of bodies in Freetown was cleared and the UK asked the President to authorise this as the national system, which he did.

This was just one example of an impact that was felt across the response and across the country. The British Army contribution to the Ebola response, as part of the broader UK effort was enormous.

Positive Features of the Irish Defence Forces Intervention: A Flexible and Skilled Contribution to the Response

The nature of the Irish Defence Forces intervention on Ebola in Sierra Leone was more limited and specific and also provides useful lessons.

At the Embassy, we were a bit apprehensive in November 2014 when the first team of four ECAT personnel was due to arrive at the Embassy. None of us had ever worked directly with the military before. We had lobbied for Irish health workers to support the response, many of whom did deploy independently through WHO, but it had never occurred to us to ask for the Irish army. When the idea was suggested by our headquarters, we were initially sceptical. The original proposal was that they could help with Embassy security, but we still felt very safe in

⁶ The US military made a similar intervention in Liberia.

Freetown. Remarkably, despite all of the hardships the population had suffered during the Ebola crisis, there was very little unrest. We had given that feedback to our headquarters, but were still worried, as arrival day approached, that we would end up with camouflage-clad army officers patrolling the Embassy all day long for no particular reason while we scrambled around trying to do our Ebola work!

Fortunately, our trepidations were quickly allayed. After explaining the situation to the first team of four officers on their arrival, they immediately offered to help with whatever we thought the pressing needs were. “Headquarters discussions are headquarters discussions,” they said. “We’ve been sent here to work for you.” This agility and willingness to adapt to the contextual conditions and needs turned out to be the strongest feature of the deployment.

The deployment was six months long with a rotation of officers in the middle. The team had logistics and engineering skills and these skills were deployed in a wide range of tasks around the country as the need arose. Helping GOAL with engineering related to the water system of their Ebola treatment centre was one example. Supporting Concern with the set-up of their Community Care Centre was another.

An example which illustrates some of the challenges of the response was the role of the Defence Forces team helping to run and monitor a fleet management programme for over 1000 vehicles for the response.

To provide a little context, the reason why the flexibility of the team was so valuable was that it was precisely flexibility which we saw as the hallmark of the broader Irish Aid response to Ebola. The UK was the largest funder and with JIATF also provided much of the international technical support. At the Irish Embassy we worked on finding critical gaps and emerging issues that no-one else was focussing on, using our strong links to NGOs. This included providing critical household items to people in quarantined homes, or extra food for infant nutrition during the lockdown of districts. Sometimes the UK colleagues would request us to do something that for some reason they did not have the flexibility to do themselves. One example of this was a fleet management programme.

Shortly before the Defence Forces team arrived, my colleague at the Embassy, Emma Mulhern, worked with JIATF to contract a consortium of NGOs to set up fleet management systems in each district for the over 1000 vehicles in the response. The main issue the programme was trying to solve was the high potential for the theft of fuel and vehicle parts (in a country with one of the highest rates of corruption in the world), and heavy resistance to the attempts of the NGOs to enforce a system of control. In one instance, a brand new vehicle left Freetown and, by the time it arrived in Port Loko district two and a half hours later, the gearbox had mysteriously aged ten years. Another time, a driver was caught emptying the fuel tank fifteen minutes after leaving his base. The NGOs tried to retroactively create an inventory of the vehicles, as none had been kept initially at central or district level. The programme was, as Emma described it, “a nightmare.”

When Irish Aid signed up for this role, we were aware that we would be able to tap into the Defence Forces expertise once the team arrived. In the interim, armed with her Masters in human rights law, twenty-seven-year-old Emma spent her evenings googling decontamination techniques and run-off systems. The day the team arrived, she quickly drafted one of the officers to work with her. As she later said to me:

“It was so surreal. For the first couple of months it was like we were all coming up with it ourselves, how to decontaminate ambulances, how to set up fleets. As if it had never been done before. We couldn’t figure out where the experts were. We chased WHO and eventually they came through with guidance but it took time.”

This surreal situation, with gaps all over the place was precisely why having flexible funding and flexible people at the Embassy, complemented by the Defence Forces team with relevant technical skills, was such an important contribution. The team were a huge hit: highly skilled; self-sufficient, and extremely motivated to boot.

As Lt. Col. Louis Flynn, the ECAT team leader commented when I asked him about lessons:

“I think that the real benefit of the Irish contribution was the fact that it was small and with empowered personnel who were sufficiently agile to adapt in what was a very dynamic situation with very few certainties or solid information. . . I think that the mind-set of you, your excellent team and my guys helped to bring some real value to the overall response. I actually think that the lack of direction probably helped in that we were not overly restricted on what we could or could not get into.”

The one negative aspect was what appeared to be administrative inflexibility at HQ that created issues. This meant, for example, that officers sharing a car, an apartment and a daily routine received different benefits when they were in Sierra Leone, which created disquiet that could presumably have been avoided and would need to be stream-lined were such deployments to become regular complements to Irish Aid programmes, for which there is certainly some potential.

Soon after the ECAT team arrived at our Embassy, the Irish Defence Forces deployed five other medical army personnel to work within JIATF, in one of the first times Irish soldiers have worked under British command in the modern history of the two countries. This deployment also worked out extremely well.

These were not big numbers of forces, certainly not compared with the large British deployment but they were high-quality people. And as we saw time and time again in the Ebola response, strong individuals could have a disproportionately large impact on the response.

Risks of the Military Interventions

The main negatives of the military interventions relate to what mandate the forces were given and provides useful lessons.

The Ebola response in Sierra Leonean became over-militarised and over-securitised from its early days with a disastrous policy of enforced quarantine of households and districts affected by the virus which back-fired. The quarantine policy largely failed because it led people to want to escape from the response, not to cooperate with it. The Sierra Leonean army was involved in this enforcement. But as implementers of a civilian government policy, the Sierra Leone army cannot be held responsible for this.

However, it did not appear from our interactions at the time (the Irish Embassy consistently advocated against the quarantine policy) that either the Sierra Leone or British armies opposed what we saw as a punitive approach. What’s more, in coordination meetings which had a heavy

military presence given the numerical dominance of the British and Sierra Leone militaries, military language was consistently used, like “attacking” the “enemy” of Ebola and maintaining a “battle rhythm”, going after “escapees” from quarantine, all of which led away from a community-centred approach.

This points to the need to ensure that such humanitarian responses have community engagement specialists, such as anthropologists who can bring in this perspective. Military forces cannot be expected to bring this expertise to the table (although some may) and it should be borne in mind that if responses have strong military components, there is a risk that securitised and punitive approaches may dominate and thus counter-balancing by bring in other voices is needed.

A second and related risk of a strong military component in a humanitarian response which we experienced was a tendency for black-and-white thinking. National response coordination meetings which, as noted, were largely populated by British and Sierra Leonean military had a strong emphasis on establishing and monitoring action points. When these meetings began, I was enormously relieved as the previous response leadership had failed to operate in a way that led to clarity and action. However, we observed over time that these meetings, through this emphasis on action points, tended to cut out nuance and debate, necessary in a new and rapidly evolving situation. The lesson here is again, not that the action-oriented military voices are not necessary, but that they need to be supplemented by others, such as public health experts, who for a period of time after JIATF came in were marginalised, but did eventually return.

A third and final risk is that assumptions may be made about military interventions, such as risk-taking ability and speed, which may turn out not to be valid. The British Army working as a part of JIATF played a transformative role in the response in Sierra Leone but did not meet the expectations of MSF as expressed at the UN by Joanne Liu. This is because the British Army, like their US counterparts in Liberia, did not engage in the treatment of Ebola cases of Sierra Leoneans to any significant extent⁷. While JIATF came to Sierra Leone with the promise of providing 700 treatment beds for Ebola patients, it turned out that this role would be outsourced to NGOs and that the military’s role would be confined to engineering, coordination, training and logistics.

This was apparently due to the decision by the UK government to prioritise protection of personnel. The military had been instructed to ensure a ‘zero casualty rate’ and placed enormous emphasis on force protection. Thus, while they were often out and about during the day at various field sites, under no circumstances could the soldiers get too close to the clinical Ebola frontline, which meant they could not even attend meetings in health facilities, not to mention treat patients.⁸ Apparently this conservatism related to the impact that deaths of young British soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan had had on the psyche of the army and the politicians giving it instructions⁹.

The lack of engagement in treatment was a challenge for the response however, since it was difficult to get NGOs to sign up to run treatment centres: no NGO, other than MSF, had experience in Ebola treatment. Eventually NGOs were recruited, including GOAL. However, there were long delays in the construction of the centres by the British Army as they had very

⁷ The only engagement they had in treatment was in running a 20-bed isolation unit which was designed predominantly for foreign aid workers receiving UK funds, although since it was often not stretched, it did ultimately treat some Sierra Leonean health workers.

⁸ In addition, they were usually confined to base outside work hours, which limited the extent to which they could network and understand the context—also linking to the weaknesses related to community-engagement and nuance mentioned above.

⁹ This was related to my co-author Oliver Johnson at the time as he worked closely with the UK military.

specific instructions to build to UK-standards, which meant that their construction took far longer than any of the non-UK centres which were seeing patients far more quickly.

These three risks lead to some important lessons which I will outline in the last section.

Conclusion: Lessons for Future Military Deployments in Humanitarian or Health Emergencies

On the whole, the three military forces played an enormously positive role in the Ebola response in their different ways including: quick deployment; relevant skillsets; the ability to bring discipline and order; and innovation in extraordinary circumstances.

However, the risks mentioned in the previous section illustrate the need for clear Terms of Reference, that build on the actual (not just perceived or stereotypical) abilities of the military and allow for other expertise, such as skills in community-engagement and public health, to complement what the military can bring. However, clear TORs should not detract from the core flexibility and responsiveness that was such a strong feature of the Irish response in particular.

A second lesson relates to how critical context is to determining what will make a successful deployment. The leadership of JIATF were quick to acknowledge that the transformative impact they managed to have on the Ebola response would not have been possible in most other contexts. Central to this was the strong relationship between British and Sierra Leonean armies, due to the long-term capacity building programme over many years, which built trust with the army and the wider Government of Sierra Leone and created a common language of interaction (English being the official language also helped). Another contextual advantage was that the Sierra Leonean public had a positive memory of British Army intervention during the war. Finally, and importantly, the country was at peace during the Ebola crisis which reduced complexity. These kinds of factors would be key to assess when considering any new deployment.

The lessons from the Irish deployment discussed above would suggest that these types of deployment would ideally grow in number and become more significant as a tool in Irish foreign policy during health crises and other humanitarian emergencies.

Naturally, it is difficult to discuss an international health crisis these days without reflecting on how lessons might apply to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, on the topic of international military deployments, two major differences between Ebola and COVID-19 are pertinent. Firstly, COVID-19 is affecting almost every country in the world. Secondly, COVID-19, while less deadly, is far more transmissible than Ebola. Taken together these differences mean that, to my knowledge, there is little talk of countries providing military assistance to others, not least due to fears on behalf of prospective donor or recipient countries of travelling militaries transmitting the virus. I witnessed this in South Sudan during the early months of the COVID-19 crisis when I worked there as EU Ambassador. UN peacekeepers working in South Sudan had their routine activities curtailed or stopped because their home countries, or the UN, or both were concerned that soldiers would catch the virus from the local population, spread it to them, or be seen to spread it. If at all there is potential for international military deployments to assist other countries in coping with COVID-19, I suspect this will be much later, when the prospective donor countries have dealt with their domestic situations and will come with tight protocols on international travel and domestic movement.



Building and Sustaining Peace: Ireland's Approach

Marcella Smyth and Aoife Lyons

Abstract

The ever-changing nature of conflict demands multidimensional, comprehensive, coordinated approaches to help secure the delivery of peace. This has been recognised by the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his “Sustaining Peace” agenda, which puts forward a coherent and comprehensive approach to peace drawing on all the tools and systems of the UN. The deployment of a comprehensive range of tools and strategies has been a long-term feature of Ireland’s approach to peace and security. This article examines Ireland’s approach historically and today, with a particular focus on work in the areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The resolution of conflict requires more than one response. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts are mutually reinforcing. From sharing lessons from Northern Ireland in Cyprus, to supporting the transition to peace in Liberia, to engagement in multilateral diplomacy, to support for community-based peacebuilding efforts and a focus on Sustainable Development Goals implementation as a contributor of conflict prevention, in addition to engagement in EU CSDP missions and UN peace support operations, Ireland’s work is underpinned by the recognition that the resolution of conflict demands a complexity of tools.

Introduction

The foreign policies of small states have often been viewed as subordinate to those of the superpowers. In particular, the development of security related foreign policies within small states is often perceived to be the by-product of power struggles between those who controlled their destiny.¹ As Hey has noted, small states are expected to “have a narrow scope of foreign policy issues” and “low level of participation in international affairs.”² More recently, however, the perception that small states can have a disproportionate influence on international security development through a pursuit of long-term, coherent strategies has grown. Furthermore, that these policies may be influenced by their own histories and interactions with great powers but are also underpinned by ideology and principle.

As Ireland’s recent securing of a seat on the United Nations Security Council demonstrates, Ireland’s role in, and influence on, the international stage is not determined by its size but by an active, independent and principled foreign policy that is internationally relevant and resonant. At its heart, is a commitment to playing its part in the securing of international peace and security via a comprehensive and multifaceted approach across the security, humanitarian, development and political dimensions of crisis and conflict.

This article delineates Ireland’s approach and its history, outlining Ireland’s modern roles in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict resolution as part of this comprehensive approach. The article will elaborate one of the key examples of Ireland’s peace and security engagements, demonstrating the value of the comprehensive approach across this work and, as Ireland prepares for membership of the United Nations Security Council, reflects on the challenges of this role at a time of global uncertainty.

¹ Jeanne A. K. Hey, “Introducing Small State Foreign Policy,” in Jeanne A. K. Hey (Ed.), *Small States in World Politics: Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 2003), pp. 1-13.

² Hey, “Introducing Small State Foreign Policy,” p. 8.

The Development of Ireland's Foreign Policy

A historical overview of Ireland's foreign policy development reveals that it is more than a reaction to its relationship with states. It has an ideological composition, undoubtedly informed by its own experiences and by its national interests but also informed by a wholehearted belief in the global preservation of peace and collective security.³ A belief so fundamental it is enshrined in the Constitution.⁴

Gaining entry to the United Nations (UN) in 1955, Ireland sought to prove itself an engaged and active power, embracing the UN Charter, zealously championing peace, the protection of small state independence, disarmament and human rights. Here, Ireland sought to fulfil its obligations and prove itself an international player of principle and deed.⁵ Ireland's first deployment to a UN peacekeeping operation – the United Nations Operations in the Congo (ONUC) in 1958 – was complemented by Ireland's involvement in the concomitant policy and political discussions, an early example of Ireland's attempts to bring coherence to its foreign policy and security approach.⁶ Ireland's deployment to ONUC was not the only visible expression of its belief in collective security and multilateralism. As O'Brien notes, "Ireland's chief policy aim at the UN was to promote and maintain peace among nations and this was the primary policy objective of the Irish delegation from 1958."⁷ That same year, Ireland also brought forward the first text on a resolution to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, a resolution that is now widely acknowledged as having paved the way for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Ireland was a loud and active force on the committees that dealt with issues such as social, human and economic rights so that from the outset, Ireland was cognisant of and acted on "the interrelationships between peace, security socio-economic progress, human rights and last but not least the rule of international law."⁸

Entry into the then-European Economic Community in 1973 afforded Ireland another foreign policy platform through which to grow and develop and through which to further its foreign policy principles and values, as the EEC (EU), shaped by its members, including Ireland, grew to become a global actor for peace and security.

Ireland's foreign policy remains faithful to those key principles set out and followed since the foundation of the state. The most recent policy document, the 2015 foreign policy review *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, sets out that "principled engagement on issues such as development, UN peacekeeping, disarmament and human rights"⁹ are central tenets of Ireland's foreign policy. Central, too, is the implementation of a coherent and coordinated approach to addressing these challenges. *A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development*,

3 Mervyn O'Driscoll, Dermot Keogh and Jérôme aan de Wiel, *Ireland Through European Eyes: Western Europe, the EEC and Ireland, 1945-1973* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2013).

4 Bunreacht na hEireann 1937, Article 29.

5 Michael Kennedy and Deidre McMahon, *Obligations and Responsibilities: Ireland and the United Nations, 1955-2005* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 2006), p. 43.

6 This was far from a successful mission and the extent of Ireland's involvement is detailed in Michael Kennedy and Art Magennis, *Ireland, the United Nations and the Congo: A Military and Diplomatic History, 1960-1961* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2014).

7 Ann Marie O'Brien, *The Ideal Diplomat? Women and Irish Foreign Affairs, 1946-90* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020), p. 57.

8 Evgeny M. Chossudovsky, "The Origins of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Ireland's Initiative in the United Nations (1958-61)," *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 3, no. 2 (1990), pp. 111-35.

9 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *The Global Island, Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, 2015, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/all/dfa/website/media/ourrolesandpolicies/ourwork/global-island/the-global-island-irelands-foreign-policy.pdf>.

published in 2019, reaffirms this and explicitly recognises the links between peace, security, human rights and development and need to build greater coherence.¹⁰

Ireland's Peacekeeping Focus

Participation in peacekeeping is one of the most tangible expressions of Ireland's commitments to the promotion of peace and security globally. Ireland has contributed to UN peacekeeping for over sixty years and is the only UN member state to have a continuous unbroken record of service. Ireland currently deploys to seven of the UN's thirteen peacekeeping missions, in addition to deployment to the UN mandated, NATO-led mission in Kosovo (KFOR). Ireland's participation in EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions is also notable, with Ireland currently contributing to three military and six civilian missions. Support to EU missions allows Ireland further opportunities to contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security, to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to support conditions for sustainable development.

Ireland's involvement in peacekeeping is not confined to the deployment of troops and civilians. Ireland recognises that peacekeeping is one element of a long-term peacebuilding strategy, which does not exist in isolation from the other policies, principles and tools necessary for the securing and consolidation of peace. Peacekeeping is often a vehicle for their implementation. This is why Ireland is engaged in the development of peacekeeping policy both within the EU and at the UN. At the UN, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has made reform one of his overarching concerns, and reform of peacekeeping is chief among his areas of focus.

In March 2018, Guterres launched his Action for Peacekeeping initiative – an initiative that aims at translating political rhetoric into action. Ireland's support for Action for Peacekeeping has resulted in it taking on the role of Action for Peacekeeping Women, Peace and Security Champion. This is a role where Ireland advocates for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all aspects and at all levels of peacekeeping, looking at ways in which it can also provide practical support to other countries to increase the number of women peacekeepers, such as through the provision of training. In 2019, Ireland provided funded training to other troop contributing countries on protection of civilians, an essential pre-deployment course, requesting countries to nominate women. In 2019, over 30% of funded participants were women. This is wholly coherent with its policy focus on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) more broadly. Ireland has also taken a policy lead on other relevant issues such as protection of civilians, human rights and training, while consistently calling for peacekeeping missions that respond to the needs of the conflict, engage local involvement, and are adequately resourced for their tasks. There is then a consistency in terms of Ireland's focus on developing effective and efficient peacekeeping operations that also work towards the delivery of Ireland's broader policy priorities of promotion and protection of human rights, protection of civilians and the promotion of peace and stability.

In his 1997 Programme for Reform, then Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, recommended that regional organisations be given a more active role in peacekeeping: at EU level, Ireland has been at the forefront of EU CSDP policy development, shaping the 2019 EU Civilian CSDP compact,

¹⁰ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *A Better World Ireland's Policy for International Development*, 2019, <https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/aboutus/abetterworldirelandspolicyforinternationaldevelopment/A-Better-World-Irelands-Policy-for-International-Development.pdf>.

with Ireland one of the first member states to launch its own National Implementation Plan, and helping ensure that EU tools and missions respond to the UN's call, providing support from conflict prevention to humanitarian and rescue tasks to post-conflict stabilisation.

Ireland has also been active in the development of the EU-UN relationship, here again too, consistently pushing the WPS agenda, and efforts that strengthen EU-UN cooperation. It was those efforts that led to the development of the EU's policy and action plan on supporting UN peacekeeping, formalised as *Strengthening the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peacekeeping and Crisis Management*.¹¹ Ireland continues to progress this agenda. The Department of Defence has led on a joint food for thought paper that considers how EU member states can collectively enhance UN peacekeeping operations efficiency through improving the coordination of EU troop contributions to UN peacekeeping.¹² Ireland has worked with the UN on a study that considers how to increase EU participation in UN peacekeeping. Alongside this, Ireland has been at the forefront of the development of the EU's development co-operation instruments to ensure that it is consistent with the comprehensive approach; that the EU is working across the peace, humanitarian and development nexus, while also working to ensure national principles and values are fully reflected.

Ireland's Peacebuilding Focus

Ireland has long asserted that its aim is to help build an international peace and security architecture where peacekeeping is no longer necessary. The importance of peacebuilding¹³ in that regard is evident throughout the political, diplomatic and development elements of Ireland's international engagement, from policy to practice, from multilateral through to local level. Key strategic priorities and strengths of Ireland's peacebuilding approach namely, sharing experience, taking an inclusive and community driven approach, and strengthening coherence and prevention, are elaborated below.

Ireland's ability to share direct experiences of peacebuilding is not common for an international partner. It allows a different type of engagement to be built with countries arising from, amongst other factors, our innate understanding and appreciation of the challenges of peacebuilding and demonstrated willingness to engage external support as part of peacebuilding on this island. Ireland's lesson-sharing approach involves working with other government and civil society actors to deepen their understanding of aspects of the peace process on the island of Ireland and supporting the engagement of figures in the Northern Ireland peace process in international peacebuilding and mediation today.¹⁴ For example, Ireland's Embassy in Cyprus worked with local community organisations to help share lessons from the Northern Ireland peace process. This work helped reinvigorate a bi-communal technical committee on Gender Equality, which was established as part of the peace process.¹⁵

¹¹ This has been recently updated to "EU-UN Strategic Priorities on Peace Operations and Crisis Management (2019-2021)."

¹² Irish Government News Service, "Press Release: Minister with Responsibility for Defence Launches a New Initiative to Enhance EU Member States Support to UN Missions," 20 November 2018, <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/c37686-minister-with-responsibility-for-defence-launches-a-new-initiative-t/>.

¹³ Peacebuilding is understood to encompass a wide spectrum of activities to support conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict.

¹⁴ See for example, The Crisis Management Initiative, *The Agreement 20 Years On: Recalling the Talks, Applying the Lessons Learned*, Seminar Report Conflict Management Institute, 15 June 2018, <http://cmi.fi/2018/06/15/20-years-lessons-learned-northern-ireland-peace-process/>.

¹⁵ This meeting culminated in the adoption of 2019 report, *The Role of Civil Society and Gender in Reconciliation – Lessons from the Good Friday Agreement*, which provides a number of actions and key messages for the peace process in Cyprus. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Event Report The Role of Civil Society and Gender in Reconciliation*, 4 March 2019, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/missions/cyprus/newsandevents/Report-012019-The-Role-of-Civil-Society-and-Gender-in-Reconciliation.pdf>. The success of this outreach is highlighted in the UN Secretary General's report to the Security Council on Cyprus; UN Security Council Document S/2018/919 <http://undocs.org/S/2018/919>

Over time, Ireland's exchange of experience has evolved and is now characterised by more consistent and sustainable support for peacebuilding efforts on the ground. For example, Ireland strongly supports the peace process in Colombia, evolving first from the Irish Mission in Mexico involvement in supporting the peace talks in Havana, through to the establishment of an Embassy in Bogotá to continue and strengthen this work. This support has taken many forms recognising the multifaceted nature of successful peacebuilding from sharing experience from Northern Ireland through to support for EU and UN peace funds and civil society.¹⁶ Other notable examples include Sierra Leone, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Driven by both conviction and experience, Ireland strongly supports an inclusive approach to peace. This means supporting civil society, women and youth from the very beginning and throughout the peacebuilding process. In particular, Ireland has built a strong reputation as a leader on WPS, launching its third National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS in June 2019, ensuring women and girls are at the heart of the Government's efforts to prevent and resolve conflict.¹⁷ Consistent with Ireland's broader foreign policy support for civil society, Ireland is a steadfast supporter of conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding civil society organisations at local, national and regional levels.

In seeking to address the challenges of conflict today, Ireland recognises the interlinkages across humanitarian, development and peace efforts and the increasing necessity, albeit not without its barriers, to build smart and effective partnerships, for coherence and for integrated approaches across these sectors.

At multilateral level, Ireland is a strong advocate for the UN Secretary General's Sustaining Peace Agenda, as an active current member of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, contributor to the Peacebuilding Fund, the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UN Development Programme amongst others activities.¹⁸ Recognising the role the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) can play in strengthening and building coherence in peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected states, Ireland sought membership of this Commission in January 2019, encouraging an inclusive approach and strengthening the Commission's work to build coherence and partnerships. During its membership, Ireland also pushed for and succeeded in strengthening the work of the PBC on women in peacebuilding.¹⁹ Ireland has intensified efforts to support regional organisations peace and security mechanisms including the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Eastern Africa and has engaged with the World Bank on their emerging strategy for fragility, conflict and violence.

Nationally, examples of innovative and integrated partnerships to support peace, which recognise and utilise different strengths across government, are emerging, such as in 2018, when Ireland harnessed specific technical expertise that lies in the Defence Forces with diplomatic presence and development assistance on the ground to support emerging needs of the Mozambican

¹⁶ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Annual Report 2016*, <https://www.dfa.ie/annualreport/2016/our-influence/colombia-peace-agreement/>. In 2019, debate in the Dáil, Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney set out the different supports provided to the Colombia peace process, see <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2019-09-17/97/>.

¹⁷ Ireland's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, June 2019, <https://dfa.ie/our-role/policies/international-priorities/peace-and-security/women-peace-and-security>.

¹⁸ In addition, Ireland co-chaired the Peacebuilding Architecture Review in 2010; Ambassador Anne Anderson (retired) is currently Chair of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Group Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

¹⁹ In October 2019, Ireland worked with the PBC to initiate a discussion on women in peacebuilding, in advance of the Security Council's Annual Debate on WPS. This will now become an annual discussion on the PBC calendar, <https://www.dfa.ie/pm/un/newyork/news-and-speeches/speeches/2019/statement-at-the-peacebuilding-commission-ambassadorial-meeting-on-women-peace-and-security.html>.

peace process. Other national examples include the Department of Foreign Affairs working to enhance its own internal policy coherence through the recent establishment of an inter-divisional structure to discuss peace and stability, or the Inter-Departmental Committee on peacekeeping, which brings together a range of government departments including Foreign Affairs and relevant embassies, Defence, Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, and Justice and Equality.

Ireland played a significant role in the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)²⁰ which recognise the links across the peace, humanitarian and development work.²¹ Underscored by the belief that there can be no better investment in conflict prevention than sustainable development and recognising the growing challenge of protracted conflicts, Ireland's new policy on international development is orientated around the successful achievement of the SDGs. It also places emphasis on and advocates for conflict prevention across Ireland's work specifically addressing underlying causes and/or accelerators of conflict, such as inequality, climate change and poor governance.²² In addition, Ireland's support for the UN Development System Reform process is aimed at strengthening the coherence and leadership needed in the system to support early warning and prevention efforts.

Putting it All Together: Ireland and Liberia

Ireland then has been consistently seeking to shape a coherent, comprehensive and integrated approach to sustaining peace, working across institutional and policy boundaries to help create the social, economic, developmental and political conditions in which peace and people can thrive. This can be demonstrated by taking a closer look at Ireland's work in Liberia.

From 1989 to 2003, Liberia was the site of devastating conflict that cost of the lives of over a quarter of a million people, resulted in the displacement of thousands and economic devastation. Ireland was a member of the UN Security Council from 2001 to 2002 where efforts to address the events in Liberia were discussed. An "Arria" formula meeting of the Security Council held during Ireland's Presidency of the Security Council focussed on the humanitarian situation.²³ Ireland was to the forefront of those calling for support for national and international reconciliation efforts. A multidimensional peacekeeping operation was established in October 2003 (known as UNMIL), with a robust mandate which provided for the protection of civilians, supporting the programme of disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation of the various armed groups as well as facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance and contributing towards international efforts to protect and promote human rights in Liberia.

Ireland deployed over 430 troops in November 2003. Concomitantly, Ireland was providing significant humanitarian assistance and soon began providing support focused on recovery interventions. Financial support was also provided for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme of UNMIL and micro-projects that the Irish troops in UNMIL were engaged on with local community organisations. By 2005, Ireland was involved in the rebuilding

²⁰ Ireland co-facilitated the intergovernmental negotiations of the SDGs with Kenya, in 2015. United Nations, General Assembly Resolution adopted 25 September 2015 A/RES/70/1, https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.

²¹ Explicitly in Goal 16 and implicitly through all other goals; see <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>.

²² Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *A Better World*.

²³ United Nations, Letter dated 21 December 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, <https://undocs.org/S/2001/1298>.

of Liberia, supporting programmes in education, gender equality, governance, health, and agriculture.²⁴ The drawdown of troops in 2007 did not see a lessening of overall engagement as Ireland consistently supported government and civil society efforts to help deliver a peaceful and secure society, widening its support to include security sector reform, and reconciliation projects.

The withdrawal of UNMIL in 2018 marked a new phase in Liberia's transition to peace. It is a transition with which Ireland is fully engaged, particularly at the UN PBC, advocating for a continued focus on human rights, women's inclusion and equality and on the resources to support Liberia through this fragile post-conflict period. From the establishment of a country configuration of Liberia in the PBC, Ireland has strongly engaged including in the latest PBC discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on peacebuilding in Liberia. Ireland supports the UN Strengthened Resident Coordinator's Office (SRCO), as well as support to the Liberian Peacebuilding Office (PBO).²⁵ Ireland deepened its diplomatic engagement, with the opening of its Embassy in Monrovia in 2018, signalling both its confidence in Liberia's potential as well as its desire to continue to support Liberia's progress. The multifaceted support that Ireland provides is a recognition that the end of conflict cannot be the end of international support for locally driven peacebuilding and development. The nascent security this has achieved must now be matched by a sustainable development that will cement peace and stability.

Building on Experience: Ireland on the United Nations Security Council

With 168 million people in need of humanitarian assistance at the beginning of 2020,²⁶ the majority as a direct result of conflict, the need for comprehensive, multifaceted and innovative approaches to peace has already been recognised.²⁷ COVID-19 has made this need more urgent as it has provided an undeniable demonstration of the profound inter-dependence between health, development, inequality, poverty, good governance, and peace and security. With the current tide of rising economic shocks, hunger, increasing authoritarianism and localised tensions, continuing comprehensive efforts to support peace and prevent conflict must be part of the global pandemic response.

This article has outlined that Ireland has long understood this interdependence and has attempted to pursue peace comprehensively through its foreign policy. That is not to say that Ireland has achieved total coherence. There are gaps and challenges for Ireland to address. The Development Co-Operation Review of Ireland carried out by the OECD in 2020, recognised the range of tools Ireland's uses to support peace and defined the overall approach to fragility and crises as "strategic." However, it also identified the need to "continue to improve its coherence with other

²⁴ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Liberia," <https://www.irishaid.ie/what-we-do/countries-where-we-work/othercountries/liberia/>.

²⁵ To include women and girls in local and national peacebuilding structures; promote peaceful approaches to pre-election campaigning; and respond a timely way to emerging threats to peace in the context of the 2020 senatorial elections.

²⁶ UNOCHA, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2020*, 4 December 2019, <https://www.unocha.org/global-humanitarian-overview-2020>.

²⁷ The first-ever United Nations and World Bank joint report, *Pathways to Peace*, recognised that "the human and economic cost of conflicts around the world requires all of those concerned to work more collaboratively." See United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways to Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>. This report was followed in 2019 with the adoption of the OECD Recommendation on the humanitarian, development, peace nexus, which provides guidance on taking a more comprehensive, multidimensional and integrated approach to conflict affected and fragile settings, see OECD, *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus*, 22 February 2019, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-5019>.

humanitarian, development and peace actors on the ground.”²⁸ Other actors have noted that coherence in foreign policy must be matched by a coherence with national policy, such as in the area of climate change,²⁹ arguing that credibility and legitimacy for action on the international stage demands that national efforts must match what a country is asking of others.

Externally, Ireland's strong support for the UN Secretary-General's Reform agendas will need to consistently interrogate progress, focussing on coherence across the system, inclusion of local communities, ensuring impact on the ground and most pertinently, that COVID-19 acts as an accelerator, not a delay, on the progress of reforms.³⁰ Rising geo-political tensions have impacted the UN Security Council's ability to act in support of peace.³¹ As the secondary impacts of COVID-19 develop and risks to peace and security mount, Ireland's ability to act as a bridge builder and to take a comprehensive, proactive and context-specific approach to sustaining peace and conflict prevention, will be required in order to be an effective and impactful member of the UN Security Council.

Grounded in Ireland's commitment to conflict resolution, peacekeeping, sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, and disarmament, Ireland's membership of the Council will be focussed around three principles – building peace, strengthening prevention and ensuring accountability. As it takes its seat on the UN Security Council, the valuable experience and lessons Ireland can share on the importance and benefits of inclusive peace, of working across policy divides on integrated approaches, and with local communities and other global actors, are an asset with the potential to have meaningful impact.

28 OECD, *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2020* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), <https://www.oecd.org/dac/oeecd-development-co-operation-peer-reviews-ireland-2020-c20f6995-en.htm>.

29 Trócaire, “Submission to the Public Consultation on Ireland's New International Development Policy, 2018,” 29 August 2018, https://www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/policy/trocaire_submission_new_international_development_policy.pdf.

30 Agathe Sarfati, *Operationalizing the Sustaining Peace Agenda: Lessons from Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Papua New Guinea*, International Peace Institute, 8 June 2020, <https://www.ipinst.org/2020/06/operationalizing-sustaining-peace-agenda-burkina-faso-liberia-papua-new-guinea>.

31 See UN News, “Stalled Security Council Resolution Adopted, Backing UN's Global Humanitarian Ceasefire Call,” 1 July 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/07/1067552>; Oxfam International, “UN Security Council Ceasefire Resolution Long Overdue – Oxfam Reaction,” 1 July 2020, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/un-security-council-ceasefire-resolution-long-overdue-oxfam-reaction>; Richard Gowan, “What's Happened to the UN Secretary-General's COVID-19 Ceasefire Call?” International Crisis Group, 16 June 2020, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/whats-happened-un-secretary-generals-covid-19-ceasefire-call>.



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Engaging Women's Mediation Networks in Military-Civilian Relations: UNSCR1325 and Responses to Contemporary Security Threats

Dr Heidi Riley

Abstract

While the Defence Forces have made much positive progress in their approach to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, this article argues that greater focus on military-civilian engagement, within the framework of UNSCR 1325, provides, currently untapped, opportunities in responding to the complexity of modern-day security threats. Specifically, this article examines the potential for greater engagement by the Irish Defence Forces with women mediation and peacebuilding networks. It argues that the benefits of greater engagement are numerous, including increasing knowledge exchange and engaging diverse expertise on cultural sensitivity, negotiations and dialogue, and gender training.

Introduction

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, recognises the devastating impact of conflict on women and girls and calls for an increase in the participation of women in all areas of conflict resolution and within security institutions.¹ The original resolution has now been complimented by a further eight resolutions that together make up the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and cover a variety of themes such as addressing conflict-related sexual violence, women's inclusion in peacekeeping and, more recently, recognising context specific gender dynamics as a root cause of conflict.² Implementation of the resolution is predominantly done via the adoption of National Action Plans (NAP), which 86 countries now have.³ Ireland adopted its first NAP in 2011 and is now on its third, launched in June 2019.⁴ Military institutions are important actors in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and most NAPs include actions specified to national militaries. Importantly, UNSCR 1325 has more recently been adopted by regional organisations involved in the provision of security such as the European Union, NATO, the OSCE and the African Union.

However, 20 years on, there still remains much criticism around the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by security institutions. One of the reasons for these criticisms is that the dominant focus of implementation tends to revolve around the quantitative adding of women, rather than addressing the gendered dynamics of conflict or deconstructing the masculine orientation of military institutions themselves.⁵ Moreover, critics have commented on the fact that although there is significant drive to recruit or promote women in military institutions, there is less importance placed on engaging with civil society women in a meaningful way.⁶ This is an oversight, as engaging with women from within civil society can provide important opportunities for knowledge and learning and may lead to a greater sense of legitimacy and trust of peacekeeping forces amongst local populations. This paper argues that one possible entry point for the Defence Forces to improve WPS orientated civil-military relations is through greater engagement with women's mediation or peacebuilding networks.

1 Peace Women, n.d., "Security Council Resolution 1325," <http://peacewomen.org/SCR-1325>.

2 Felicity Hill, Carol Cohn, and Cynthia Enloe, "UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Three Years On: Gender, Security and Organizational Change," Roundtable Discussion at the Boston Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, 20 January 2004, Boston, MA.

3 See Peace Women, n.d. "National-Level Implementation," <https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states>.

4 See Government of Ireland, *Women, Peace and Security: Ireland's Third National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions, 2019-2024*, 21 June 2019, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/ourrolepolicies/womenpeaceandsecurity/Third-National-Action-Plan.pdf>.

5 Annica Kronsell, "The Power of EU Masculinities: A Feminist Contribution to European Integration Theory," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 54, no. 1 (2016), pp. 104-120; Claire Duncanson and Rachel Woodward, "Regendering the Military: Theorizing Women's Military Participation," *Security Dialogue* 47, no. 1 (2016), pp. 3-21.

6 Melanie Hoewer and Heidi Riley, *Gender Justice in EU Crisis Management Missions*, GLOBUS Research Paper 17/2020.

UNSCR 1325 in a Military Context

With the increasing complexity of modern warfare, the gendered dimension of conflict is vital in understanding the root causes, the way conflict is fought, opportunities for conflict resolution and effectively protecting populations. As Carol Cohn argues, if we want to understand conflict then it is vital that we take gender into account.⁷ Ideologies that drive conflict are gendered in themselves but differ depending on context. Gendered ideologies even differ within the same context but between groups. For example, in Syria, ISIS and other extremist groups espouse a particularly conservative gender ideology, whilst the Kurdish forces espouse a much more gender-equal form of ideology, incorporating large numbers of women into the forces⁸. Each contributes to a different form of security threat and understanding the gendered dimensions of that security threat is vital in the administration of effective responses.

The way that conflict is fought and who are the main targets has shifted dramatically in the 21st century. Whereas in the early 20th century, the victims of conflict were predominantly combatants, in the 21st century, civilians now make up roughly 90% of casualties⁹ and civilians are subject a multitude of harms, many of which have a gendered dimension. For example, women and girls are particularly vulnerable to traffickers and women and girls make up the largest proportion of refugees and internally displaced persons. Despite some policy and legislative measures taken in order to tackle conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), it remains an ever-present feature of modern conflict. For example, in the multiple conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is estimated that up to 1000 women each day are subject to forms of sexual violence.¹⁰ Although women and girls are most affected by CRSV, men are also the victims, which is a gendered act itself as it is often used as a way of dehumanising or 'feminizing' men.¹¹

While the passing of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions sought to recognise the gendered dynamics of conflict and the specific harms that women and girls face in conflict contexts, a further criticism of the agenda has been that it has a tendency to portray women in conflict zones as the perpetual 'victim' which has the effect of overlooking their important agency.¹² However, the reality is that women in conflict contexts often hold vital knowledge of local dynamics and due to women's perpetual exclusion from high level peace talks, women are often very effective in mobilizing and networking to find ways to channel their voices into processes of political dialogue. Moreover, women in conflict contexts may find ways of networking across community divides. For example, the current civil society network of Yemeni women has been instrumental in bringing important issues from 'the ground' to the periphery of the peace negotiations.¹³ In Somalia, grassroots women mobilized to form what was called the 'sixth clan,' which was a network of women from across the five major warring 'clans' that found innovative ways of

7 Carol Cohn, *Women & Wars: Contested Histories, Uncertain Futures* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

8 See discussion of "The Kurdish Regions: Fighting as Kurds, Fighting as Women," in Jessica Trisko Darden, Alexis Henshaw and Ora Szekely, *Insurgent Women: Female Combatants in Civil Wars* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2019), pp. 34-56.

9 Terese Pettersson and Kristine Eck, "Organized Violence 1989 – 2018," *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 4, (2018), pp. 535-549

10 Josh Estey and Sarah Thust, "DRC's Male and Female Rape Survivors Share their Stories," *Al Jazeera*. 14 April 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/4/14/drcs-male-and-female-rape-survivors-share-their-stories>, accessed 12 June 2020.

11 Euan Hague, "Rape, Power and Masculinity: The Construction of Gender and National Identities in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina," in Ronit Lentin (Ed.) *Gender and Catastrophe* (London: Zed Books, 1997).

12 Nicola Pratt, "Reconceptualizing Gender, Reinscribing Racial-Sexual Boundaries in International Security: The Case of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security," *International Studies Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2013), pp. 772-783; Laura J. Shepherd, "Victims of Violence or Agents of Change? Representations of Women in UN Peacebuilding Discourse," *Peacebuilding* 4, no. 2 (2016), pp. 121-135; Hoewer and Riley, *Gender Justice in EU Crisis Management Missions*.

13 See presentation by Yemeni activist Rasha Jarhum from Peace Track Initiative, WILPF, "Rasha Jarhum, Founder and Director of the Peace Track Initiative, Briefs the UN Security Council on the Situation in Yemen," 19 November 2018, <https://www.wilpf.org/rasha-jarhum-founder-and-director-of-the-peace-track-initiative-briefs-the-un-security-council-on-the-situation-in-yemen/>.

mobilizing and raising the profile of vital issues.¹⁴ And, of course, in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition mobilized across community divides to garner sufficient support to be elected as a legitimate voice at the negotiations that led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

UNSCR 1325 and the Defence Forces

The Irish Defence forces have made some very positive progress in the area of Women, Peace and Security. In addition to working closely with the National Secretariat in the Department of Foreign Affairs, they have adopted their own Gender Action Plan¹⁵ that advocates for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective throughout the organisation. It has introduced a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment and abuse, and promotes diversity within the Defence Forces. Commitments in the current National Action Plan include amongst others, to "Continue the implementation of effective training policies on the prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), human rights, gender equality, and international humanitarian law, code of conduct, for all relevant Irish staff deployed overseas," and to "Advocate for the participation of Irish staff in Gender Adviser roles in international peace operations."¹⁶ Although the numbers of women in the Defence Forces still remains low at around 6%, despite recruitment campaigns specifically targeted at women, incorporating a gendered perspective throughout the institution has been evident in some newer methods of training, the adoption of gender advisors, and through advocacy in the upper echelons. Gender training by members of the Irish defence forces is well respected within the NATO training school and the Chief of Staff is a great advocate for the Women, Peace and Security agenda, speaking on the topic in a number of domestic and international platforms.

However, while the *National Action Plan* includes a commitment to women in mediation, this does not relate directly to the commitments made by the Defence Forces. One of the reasons for this, I suggest, is that traditional understandings of 'peace mediation' tend to be seen predominantly as something located in the political arena, taking place between political representatives and diplomats and thus somewhat disconnected from the day to day tasks of military institutions or peacekeeping forces. I acknowledge that the outcomes of political negotiations often define the mandate of a peacekeeping mission but the process of those negotiations tends to take place away from those that will actually carry out the mission. However, if peace mediation is conceptualized more broadly to include local level, or 'track three' mediation that takes place as part of peacebuilding at the community level, it provides a different picture and often takes place in areas where peacekeeping forces may be present. Moreover, taking a broader definition of peace mediation that is inclusive of all tracks of negotiations we find that women are heavily populated in grassroots negotiations but rarely recognised.¹⁷

14 Debra M. Timmons and Mary E. King, *The Sixth Clan: Women Organize for Peace in Somalia: A Review of Published Literature* (Geneva: University for Peace, 2004).

15 See DF commitments to Gender, Equality and Diversity, <https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/defence-forces-families/gender-diversity-equality/>.

16 See Government of Ireland, *Women, Peace and Security: Ireland's Third National Action Plan*, pp.36

17 Catherine Turner, "Absent or Invisible? Women Mediators and the United Nations," *Global Policy* 9, no. 2 (2018), pp. 244-253.

The Broader Women in Mediation Landscape

Statistics on peace mediation show high levels of gender inequality. A recent study on peace negotiations show that between 1992 and 2018 women only made up 3% of mediators.¹⁸ However, these statistics are focused almost exclusively on high-level peace talks, excluding peace mediation at the grassroots level used in peacebuilding practice. Research shows that women participate in peace processes in much higher numbers than commonly thought but often through different means. While this by no means justifies the low levels of women in high-level negotiations, it does shed light on the level of expertise held by women and also highlights the benefit of women's participation. Paffenholz *et al.* have shown how across 40 recent peace processes, women have been involved in 28 of them but often in roles outside of the official negotiations. But research shows that where women participate in whatever form, there is a greater likelihood of finalizing an agreement and it tends to produce a more inclusive document.¹⁹

However, the narrow understanding of the term 'peace mediation' limits what is understood as mediation and as a result overlooks and devalues the extensive work of women working at the grassroots level. This is particularly problematic given that women's voices in conflict contexts are a vital resource in efforts to implement culturally sensitive peacebuilding and peacekeeping.²⁰ To challenge the invisibility of women in mediation, scholarship on peace mediation have identified the need to forge better connections between the work that women do in local communities, and the work of international actors.²¹ While this scholarship tends to be oriented towards processes of political dialogue, it is also an area that military institutions could contribute to by working more closely with women on the ground. It is also an area that military institutions could benefit from in responding to modern day threats to peace and security.

To challenge gender inequality in mediation processes a number of women mediation networks have been established. At the time of writing, regional networks have been created in the Nordic region, the Mediterranean and across the Commonwealth.²² In Africa, the Femwise network was created under the auspices of the African Union and discussions are underway to create a new Arab Women Mediators Network. As a result of these new regional networks some country specific networks have also been developed, which focus more closely on grassroots mediation. For example, the Network of Nigerian Women Mediators was launched in September 2019, in collaboration with the Women Across the Commonwealth Mediation Network and recognises the work of women mediators at all tracks of peace negotiations, including those at the local, track three level.²³ Although not yet formally established, there is also now a loose network of women mediators across the island of Ireland. The aims of these networks are to raise the profile of women mediators, facilitate channels through which to gain political voice, share experience and training but also, importantly, recognise the work of grassroots peacebuilders, particularly those who use mediative practice. Given the, often, context-specific knowledge of local dynamics and

18 See UN Women for figures on women in mediation, UN Women, "Facts and Figures: Peace and Security," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>.

19 Thania Paffenholz, Nick Ross, Steven Dixon, Anna-Lena Schluchter and Jacqui True, *Making Women Count- Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*, Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative and UN Women Report (2016); UN Women, *Women's Participation in Peace Processes: Connections Between Presence and Influence* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2012).

20 Heidi Hudson, "Decolonising Gender and Peacebuilding: Feminist Frontiers and Border Thinking in Africa," *Peacebuilding* 4, no. 2 (2016), pp. 194-209.

21 Catherine Turner, *Women in Mediation: Connecting the Local and the Global*, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (2017).

22 For a list of regional women's mediation networks, see PeaceWomen, "Women Mediation Networks," <https://www.peacewomen.org/node/102742>.

23 Women and Girls Advancements and Resources Centre, "Launch of Nigerian Women Mediators Collaborative Initiative (NWMCI)," 20 September 2019, <https://wagarc.org/news/launch-of-the-nigeria-women-mediators-collaborative-initiative-nwmci>.

thematic expertise represented within these networks, greater engagement between the Defence Forces and women's mediation networks would provide an excellent resource with regard to knowledge sharing, training and building civil-military relations both at a domestic level and in overseas missions.

Benefits of Engaging with Women Mediator Networks

Military gender training highlights how taking a gender perspective increases effectiveness. For example, it allows for a more comprehensive and inclusive assessment of security threats with regard to men, boys, women and girls in order for responses to be formulated appropriately, taking into account different gendered needs.²⁴ Importantly, gender training highlights that by engaging with women on the ground in conflict contexts, this can build a more comprehensive picture of the dynamics of local conflict and complexity of insecurities. However, where this is done by military personnel without due consideration of the security concerns to the individual, then it may put women informants in a situation of danger. Hence continued learning around the gendered and cultural dynamics of the specific context is vital in responding to changing insecurities faced by local populations. For example, where armed groups are prone to fragmentation, the creation of splinter groups with a more conservative ideology or specific grievances may require changes in the delivery of security.

Women's mediation or peacebuilding networks at the country level thus provide an excellent resource, or entry point, through which to gain insight into the intricacies of conflict and the community. Also, greater military engagement with regional women mediation networks may provide a resource through which to learn about methods of effective communication within the local context, with the added value of learning from those with mediation or negotiation skills. For example, the South Lebanon Women Mediation Network are a network of women with diverse experience and local knowledge and the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network work closely with women mediators in Lebanon. Therefore, engaging with such networks could provide access to context specific knowledge relevant to ongoing IDF deployments as contributors to UNIFIL.

While engaging with overseas networks are important, greater connections with women's networks on the island of Ireland are also an untapped resource. On the island of Ireland, women have played a significant role in all areas of conflict resolution and peacebuilding and there are also increasing numbers of women now living on the island of Ireland who have come from conflict contexts and who have important mediation expertise.

A recent research project sought to map the diversity of women's experiences in peace mediation across the island of Ireland as well as understand some of the challenges that women face. The research was carried out between May 2019 and March 2020, in which four focus groups were held with women peacebuilders all from different backgrounds. These were held in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Dundalk and Dublin in order to include women from both North and South and also women from newer communities.²⁵

²⁴ Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, *Teaching Gender in the Military, A Handbook* (Geneva: DCAF and PfPC, 2016), <https://securitysectorintegrity.com/publication/teaching-gender-military-handbook/>.

²⁵ Heidi Riley, *Building Networks: Voices of Women in Peace Mediation on the Island of Ireland*, Report, Institute for British-Irish Studies, <https://www.ucd.ie/ibis/t4media/Promoting-Women-in-Peace-Mediation-Final-Report.pdf>.

One of major themes drawn from the focus groups was the range of experience held by women on the island of Ireland. Although many women did not define themselves specifically as mediators, the discussion showed that mediative practice was fundamental to successfully realizing their peacebuilding work. While the immediate connotation of peacebuilding and mediation across the island is assumed to relate to the Troubles, the expertise held by participants extended far beyond a single context. Some participants had come to the island directly from overseas conflict contexts and had experience of peacebuilding practice before coming to Ireland. For example, one woman described her first experience with mediative practice in her home country of Somalia at the age of fourteen and another, originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, told of her work on mediating between families and warring groups while she was in refugee camps in Burundi and Tanzania. She explained that in her ten years of living in Ireland there had never been an opportunity for her work to be recognised. This lived experience of the dynamics of local conflicts within refugee camps and how women in the camps negotiate security, is a knowledge that would feed well into the work of the Defence Forces, given that overseas missions may involve the securing of camps.

The focus groups also included women who had extensive experience in grassroots negotiations between contentious groups or paramilitaries during and after the Troubles, as well as women who are involved in political negotiations around the disarmament of paramilitaries or ongoing contentious issues around flags and parades. Many women originally from the island of Ireland also had peacebuilding and mediation experience overseas in countries such as Burundi, Guatemala, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Colombia.²⁶ There were also examples of Irish women's contributions to the Syrian women's peace talks and the European representative to Mediation Beyond Borders,²⁷ renowned for their exemplary work on peacebuilding, is also a woman from this island and part of the network. This diversity of experience already on the island of Ireland provides a potential starting point for military engagement with women mediation networks and for the Defence Forces to recognise that mediation expertise goes beyond those in high-level negotiation processes.

Soft Skills Training

One area of possible engagement with women mediation networks could be in the context of training, or pre-deployment training. Soft skills have been incorporated as an area of pre-deployment training and has been increasingly promoted by the Defence Forces. Soft skills training includes, gender training, cultural awareness and communications training and is normally conducted across "a network of training centres overseen by the European Security and Defence College (ESDC)."²⁸ Recent efforts have sought to "improve the quantity and quality of soft skills training," however, in practice, training in soft skills tends to be "limited to a few hours during the pre-deployment preparation" and is predominantly focused on cultural awareness training, often delivered by men not from the country of deployment.²⁹ The lack of attention to soft skills training is unfortunate given the importance of being able to dialogue with local

26 Riley Heidi and Murphy Emma, "Women in Peace Mediation on the Island of Ireland: Towards a More Inclusive Definition," in *Dealing with the Legacy of Conflict in Northern Ireland through Engagement & Dialogue*, forthcoming.

27 Mediation Beyond Borders, for more information, see <https://mediatorsbeyondborders.org/>.

28 Anne Holohan, "Transformative Training in Soft Skills for Peacekeepers: Gaming for Peace," *International Peacekeeping* 26, no. 5 (2019), pp. 556-578.

29 *Ibid.*

populations and also mediate between contentious individuals in a given context.³⁰ This is a view also shared with military personnel from the Finnish and Irish Defence Forces, whom within Anne Holohan's research into soft skills training, indicated that insufficient time was dedicated to such trainings.³¹

Although caution should be heeded in locating women's agency only in the area of soft skills, women mediation and peacebuilding networks provide an opportunity for a greater inclusion of a diversity of expertise in military soft skills training. Such networks include civilian expertise in gender sensitivity, skills in communication and dialogue in contentious contexts, and a diversity of knowledge on context specific cultural sensitivity. Thus, engaging expertise from within women mediation networks as contributors to military soft-skills training provides an opportunity to better equip military personnel for deployment.

Conclusion

The Defence Forces have made significant commitments to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and continue to build a positive reputation in this area. However, an area in which is lacking is within military-civilian relations beyond high-profile individuals participating in specific events. Given the knowledge of culturally sensitive conflict dynamics, gender concerns and negotiating skills that can be found within networks of women mediators or peacebuilders, this provides an important opportunity for civilian-military collaboration on training and knowledge sharing, both from a domestic and international perspective. Given current trends in the way that conflict manifests and the effect on civilians, greater engagement in this area has the potential to contribute to developing innovative responses to modern insecurities, beyond military might, whilst also building legitimacy with local populations.

30 David Curran, "Training for Peacekeeping: Towards Increased Understanding of Conflict Resolution?" *International peacekeeping* 20, no. 1 (2013), pp. 80-97; Anne Betts Fetherston, *Towards a Theory of United Nations Peacekeeping* (London: Springer, 1994).

31 Anne Holohan, "Transformative Training in Soft Skills for Peacekeepers."



Mediation Negotiation and Dialogue, and the Integrated Approach

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¹ The author acknowledges the contribution of the Kennedy Institute Peace Research Group, and in particular, Sean McGearty, Patty Abozaglo and Sharron Kelliher in the shaping of this article.

Introduction

The advent of the EU's integrated approach has brought a noticeable increase in activity related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding at all levels,¹ involving, among others, locals, international civil society, intergovernmental organisations, military, police and diplomats. Mediation, negotiation and dialogue (MND) facilitation is a key aspect of the integrated approach toolbox.² MND skills hover over the entire nexus of security and development, potentially enabling and assisting with the whole range of potential crisis management tasks, promoting respect for international law, gender sensitivity, protection of civilians, and principles of democracy, human right and good governance. Peacebuilding missions and operations are by their nature complex, and MND is applied in multi-dimensional, multi-phased, multi-lateral and multi-level contexts and is continuously dependent on cooperation.

However, challenges remain in moving conflict quickly from violence to the political domain. International observers remark that acting without selfish or strategic interest, Ireland plays a positive role in peacebuilding and has recognised expertise in mediation, negotiation and dialogue (MND) facilitation.³ This article looks at the legitimacy of that claim in the application of international MND facilitation, and examines what role Ireland, and specifically Ireland's military might play, if any, as a leader of 'good practice' in this complex world. This paper explores the Irish Defence Forces' opportunity within CSDP to work with other security organisations (including An Garda Síochana, and security forces from other jurisdictions) to co-develop MND knowledge and lessons learned. These are not only relevant to the Irish peace process, but more broadly to civilian-military involvement in security sector reform, and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes.

Context

It is increasingly clear that Lederach was correct when he identified that peace building is a shared space where various actors need to build relationships and capacities 'horizontally' between the stakeholders, including conflict parties, as well as 'vertically' between the leadership and lower levels of the conflict society.⁴ Reaching an accord is hardly sufficient to build peace. Peace processes have to move beyond top-level negotiations, and involve a much more comprehensive framework. Interacting with multiple tiers of leadership and participation. In Lederach's words, "peace-building efforts among the elite must be accompanied by efforts of mid-level and grassroots leaders."⁵

MND facilitation is a process whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict by helping to develop mutually acceptable agreements.⁶ Mediation is now a familiar conflict intervention tool. The frequency and the likelihood of mediation attempts has increased substantially since the end of the Cold War, with 73% of civil wars using mediation attempts – in comparison to 24% of Cold War-era civil wars.⁷ The rise in

¹ European External Action Service (EEAS), *The European Union's Global Strategy: Three Years On, Looking Forward*, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_global_strategy_2019.pdf.

² *Ibid.*, p. 25

³ Editorial, 'The Guardian View on Irish Politics: An Envious Beauty is Born,' *The Guardian*, 20 July 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/20/the-guardian-view-on-irish-politics-an-enviable-beauty-is-born>, accessed 29 July 2020.

⁴ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), p. 39

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Adapted from Julian Bergmann, *The European Union as International Mediator*, (Bonn: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020).

⁷ Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, *International Negotiation and Mediation in Violent Conflict: The Changing Context of Peacemaking*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

mediated settlements, whereby third parties help disputants secure a negotiated outcome, was one of the notable trends of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Determining how many intra-state conflict negotiations were actually assisted by third parties is a difficult task, as many of these attempts occurred in secrecy and/or have not been acknowledged publicly by the parties. However, the fact that the UN fields special envoys for ongoing conflicts around the world and many states, as well as regional and nongovernmental organizations, now make similar appointments, points to an explosion of the available supply of third-party mediators and facilitators of dialogue in conflict situations. Importantly, Beardsley *et al.* observed that mediation can be linked with reduced bloodshed in civil war, and concurrent efforts of dialogue and peacekeeping efforts reinforce one another, as each type of involvement makes an impact on reducing battlefield fatalities independently.⁸

EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and Mediation

Peacebuilding is a core precept of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP),⁹ and MND facilitation is recognised as a tool in promoting this goal.¹⁰ MND within the peacebuilding precept arises from Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty,¹¹ which sets out the parameters of EU action on the international scene, and the Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities¹² adopted by Council in 2009. A further Council Conclusion on Conflict Prevention (20 June 2011) invited the High Representative and the Commission to build on the 2009 Concept, and to develop mediation capacities through providing support and training. In the 2009 Concept, mediation is defined in a broad sense, reflecting the variety of ways in which the EU has used this tool at different levels and through different activities.¹³ These include directly mediating and facilitating; funding or providing political and financial leverage; providing technical support; and promoting the wider use of mediation and dialogue by national and international actors. As such, the Concept is focused on Mediation as a formal tool for use by mediation experts. Implicit also in the EU Mediation Concept (2009), is the notion that CSDP civilian missions and military operations are only indirectly relevant to mediation and dialogue efforts. If they play a role at all, it is a supportive role of building overall confidence between local actors.

In this author's view, this is a plausible approach if we accept the presupposition, inherent in the Concept, that mediation and dialogue are formal high-level processes for use by political actors and their specialised teams. Indeed, in most contexts where CSDP missions and operations are deployed, mediated peace processes will either be ongoing, or just concluded, or the CSDP deployment will form a part of efforts to lay the ground for peaceful settlement, or may even directly oversee or implement parts of a peace agreement. As stated, there is no actual

⁸ Kyle Beardsley, David E. Cunningham and Peter B. White, "Mediation, Peacekeeping, and the Severity of Civil War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 7 (2019), pp. 1682-1709.

⁹ European Union, "Common Security and Defence Policy," 3 May 2018, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/common-security-and-defence-policy-csdp/431/common-security-and-defence-policy-csdp_en, accessed 10 August 2020.

¹⁰ Ana E. Juncos and Steven Blockmans, "The EU's Role in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: Four Key Challenges," *Global Affairs* 4, no. 2-3 (2018), pp. 131-140.

¹¹ European Union, "Consolidated Version of the Treaty of the European Union" *Official Journal of the European Union* 55 (October 2012), pp. 13-46.

¹² Council of the European Union, *Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities*, 10 November 2009, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/cfsp/conflict_prevention/docs/concept_strengthening_eu_med_en.pdf, accessed 25 July 2020.

¹³ This emphasis on mediation and dialogue as a high-level process has had notable successes in for the EU in Kosovo/Serbia, Philippines, Indonesia (Aceh), Kenya and Georgia.

consideration given in the Concept to the notion of CSDP personnel engaging in mediation and dialogue process themselves.

However, unpublished research ongoing in the Kennedy Institute on the application of MND in Civilian CSDP indicates that, despite its absence in mission mandates, mission personnel, including uniformed police, are regularly involved in these activities.¹⁴ Most common are negotiations and facilitation of dialogue, particularly in issues relating to crisis management, mission mandate, multilateral working, freedom of movement, human rights and gender issues and building trust and confidence. The research finds that, while only a minority of CSDP staff will be involved in formal or high level MND processes, personnel at all levels would benefit from exposure to MND training. This is because MND involves an interpersonal decision-making process, necessary whenever we cannot achieve our objectives single-handedly and we seek to use persuasion and avoid coercion. Gourlay also takes the view that MND skills are particularly relevant at the field or tactical level, where personnel are directly engaged with local actors.¹⁵ While CSDP mission mandates generally exclude direct MND activities, UN policy recognises that mediation is required throughout the process of implementing a peace agreement, and that mission leadership is often involved in dispute resolution even if it is not part of their formal mandate.¹⁶

Identifying a Role for Ireland's Defence Forces within MND

Finding accommodation on two distinct and separate aspects of the conflict was the purpose of the Northern Irish political negotiation process in the lead up to the Good Friday Agreement.¹⁷ Senior civil servants identified that the two distinct strands were (i) political issues, which included constitutional issues, political structures and equality and (ii) security issues. The latter included policing; decommissioning; demilitarization; and the role of political prisoners, which was considered to be 'massively influential' along with the negotiations regarding fugitives. Negotiations were designed to address legacy issues, most importantly finding the disappeared and orchestrating cooperating with the authorities on this issue was core to reconciliation processes. Negotiations on many of the latter issues were conducted in the background away from the formal negotiation table.

Civil servants engaged in discussions with those who represented security in order to find accommodations. The issue of legitimacy of security including policing forces, discrimination towards the nationalist community, and lack of community confidence in security forces was a critical factor in negotiations. Transition, handing over from a militarized to a community-oriented policing strategy in the context of deteriorated civilian and security relationships, confounded some of the adaptive challenges that emerged during the implementation phase and transition from conflict to a post-conflict context. Critical to reconciliation was the issue of conflict stabilisation, including depoliticised and professional security forces that reflect the country as a whole, in order for economic recovery to emerge. Likewise, the same report identifies

¹⁴ Forthcoming Kennedy Institute report to EU Civilian Training Group on Mediation, Negotiation and Dialogue Facilitation within Civilian CSDP Missions 2020.

¹⁵ Catriona Gourlay, *Mediation and Dialogue as Tools for EU CSDP Missions* (Brussels: Initiative for Peacebuilding, 2010).

¹⁶ United Nations, *United Nations Activities in Support of Mediation: Report of the Secretary-General, 2017*, <https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/DPA%20Report%20REV9%20ENG%20WEB.PDF>.

¹⁷ Unpublished report on 'Peacebuilding – Progress and Prospects Seminar' Seminar, conducted during the visit of President of UN General Assembly and UN Ambassadors to Kennedy Institute, Maynooth University, 29 November 2019.

that the key phases of transition experienced by Bosnia Herzegovina included (1) the Accord phase, (2) the stabilization phase, and (3) the implementation phase. Within these phases of transition, institutions were important and the roles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UN), the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and the European Union (EU) in the transition from conflict to post conflict contexts were highly significant.

In addition, Crocker *et al.* argue that the complexity of conflict situation and the growth of war and post-war economies have added to the traditional challenges faced by those working on security issues in these contexts.¹⁸ War economies and corruption present huge challenges, particularly in protracted intra-state conflicts where both the government and non-state armed actors capture resources and the war can become self-financing and self-sustaining.¹⁹ Where there is “more to war than winning,” those benefiting from violence may have a vested economic interest in maintaining the conflict. The range of vested interests benefiting from the war economy challenges the assumptions that there is a clear break between conflict and peace, and that societies can easily transform from war to peace. The ongoing power of paramilitary groups in some communities in Northern Ireland, and the links to organised crime, highlight these challenges and provide some important lessons for other conflict situations.²⁰

Research by the author during the Improving the Effectiveness of Capabilities in EU Conflict Prevention (IECEU) project found that CSDP missions and operations have undergone significant changes over the last decades.²¹ Whereas in the early days of CSDP engagement, the focus was on civilian (police/rule of law) missions and military operations, nowadays, the EU has conducted or is conducting 36 missions and operations on three continents, encompassing a broad range of types of missions and instruments. It is evident from this research that security forces continue to have a central role in the implementation phase as societies move from away from militarisation.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants, as well as security sector reform (SSR) are two essential processes in stabilizing a post-peace agreement situation. Both DDR and SSR typically require the support, but not imposition, of the international community to assist this process. However, to what extent is this transitional phase of movement from militarisation to policing and ultimately Rule of Law environment via CSDP civilian and military missions and operations facilitated, understood, conceptualised and disseminated? Based on the analysis of eight case studies and 12 missions/operations, IECEU case studies point to a weak interoperability mindset, both within civilian missions and military operations, but more significantly between actors involved in CSDP crisis management operations. Competition for resources, position, and general lack of willingness to cooperate or work towards common goals hamper the realisation of interoperability potentials even where there are benefits that could be gained from greater interoperability. The need for such an integrated mindset becomes evident namely in relation to willingness to share information within CSDP missions and operations.

¹⁸ Crocker, Hampson and Aall, *International Negotiation and Mediation in Violent Conflict*.

¹⁹ World Bank Report, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/978-0-8213-8439-8>.

²⁰ John Jupp and Matthew Garrod, “Legacies of the Troubles: The Links between Organized Crime and Terrorism in Northern Ireland,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, forthcoming, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1678878.

²¹ Improving the Effectiveness of Capabilities in EU Conflict Prevention (IECEU), <https://www.ieceu-project.com/>. The IECEU (Improving the Effectiveness of Capabilities in EU Conflict Prevention) project aimed to examine EU conflict prevention capabilities. This project received funding from the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation HORIZON 2020.

Difficulties in creating a common mission-related intelligence gathering and sharing culture still prevail, which has become evident in several civilian and military CSDP missions/operations.

This is complicated, as pointed out in the IECEU report, which draws on the now-concluded EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (2007-2016) as an example.²² Ultimately, this research indicates that the EU's approach gave the impression to many in the international community, particularly the US, and also to most Afghans, that the EU did not know what it was getting into. This is because the Crisis Management Concept (CMC) excluded security, and did not factor in how the Afghan police could deliver 'normal' policing in the context of a complex violent threat typified by the Taliban – a sophisticated insurgency that undermines the rule of law to achieve its goals.²³ The report identified that human security embraces countering violence, gender inequality and corruption simultaneously. Therefore, by not relating how civilian policing could help the Afghan police fight Taliban terrorism, it hampered its efforts in the other two.

Ireland's military have reputational expertise and knowledge in the field of UN peacekeeping. However, this author suggests that this should now be contextualised within EU civilian / military cooperation in CSDP to reflect a 'whole of government approach' with other security actors in a multilateral 'integrated approach' to EU peacebuilding. As such, the Defence Forces now have an opportunity to work with other security organisations (including An Garda Síochana, and security forces from other jurisdictions) to co-develop MND knowledge and lessons learned, including joint handling of non-state armed actor threats and the pursuit of historical investigations in conflict zones.

During the mediation of a peace agreement, the basic outline of future security arrangements and security sector reform are laid; often it is important to create technical mechanisms that evolve during the implementation phase to take up new issues as they arise.²⁴ Therefore, it is important that these mechanisms include MND-proficient military personnel who understand how conflict scales up. They can therefore help shape the basis for successful DDR processes, which in turn reduce capacity for violence, while allocating resources to communities and providing alternatives in education and infrastructure, that resonate with former combatants. This normative framework of DDR increases the potential of establishing well-defined structures at the outset, thus encouraging trust and commitment from victims and ex-combatants alike.²⁵

Other notable civilian/military themes worth exploring and expanding further MND capacity include:

- Negotiation for change with local populations;
- Managing dynamics of moving from military to police missions;
- Adaptive leadership challenges;
- Community-oriented post conflict security;
- Separation of politics and security issues;

²² IECEU, *D4.5 Middle East and Asia: Conclusion Report*, 2 January 2017, https://www.ieceu-project.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/IECEU_D4.5_Middle_East_and_Asia_Conclusion_report.pdf.

²³ During the crisis planning process, the Crisis Management Concept (CMC) provides political strategic objectives for CSDP engagement, and provides CSDP option(s) to meet EU objectives.

²⁴ Schnabel Albrecht and Hans-Georg Ehrhart (Eds.), *Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding* (New York, NY: United Nations University Press, 2006).

²⁵ International Organization for Migration, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Compendium of Projects 2010-2017* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2019), https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/ddr_compendium.pdf.

- Separation of community-oriented policing and intelligence gathering;
- Capacity building and training of local security forces;
- Exploring the interoperability of concurrent peacekeeping and mediation; Climate change and security issues; and
- Involvement of former combatants in post-conflict economic investment.

Conclusion

The pragmatism of the EU Global Strategy, and increased commitments and demands of deeper cooperation necessitated in the world as it *actually* exists, have resulted in a wide variety of responses required in order to deal with emerging security challenges. These challenges include those involving complex and multifaceted issues like population growth, energy competition, migration, environmental degradation and climate change, all of which have both security and development impacts. The changes in structure and emphasis following the advent of the ‘comprehensive’ or ‘integrated’ EU interventions should be based on the realities of conflict, security and development issues in our surrounding world, and are necessary if one wants to foster sustainable and effective relationships. By expanding its MND capacities, Ireland’s military can assist the EU in its integrated concept of expertise and resources to support conflict resolution.²⁶ Working with other security actors such as An Garda Síochana would also improve wider MND knowledge, and increase civilian-military interoperability and common understanding.

The EU and its member states now have a broad spectrum of tools available to them. These include traditional diplomacy and foreign policy, trade policy and development assistance. This breadth of assets can not only facilitate direct interventions, but can tackle the structural causes of conflict. Martti Ahtisaari, when speaking in Iveagh House in 2017, identified that shifts in US policy and geopolitical tensions have moved the EU’s role in public and political space from global partner, to the responsibility of global leadership.²⁷ Demonstration of commitment through multilateral and integrated actions as part of the EU and UN can serve the interests of members, and if EU member states manifest sufficient political will, it can reinforce the ability of the UN to fulfil its mandate and promote peace worldwide.²⁸

²⁶ See IECEU, <http://www.ieceu-project.com/>.

²⁷ Martti Ahtisaari, “The Role of the European Union in Conflict Resolution,” *Journal of Mediation & Applied Conflict Analysis* 4, no. 2 (2017), pp. 628-632.

²⁸ Federica Mogherini, “Strong Partnerships for difficult times at work for Korea and Iran,” 11 August 2018, <http://www.federicamogherini.net/strong-partnerships-for-difficult-times-at-work-for-korea-and-iran/?lang=en>.

NIEMBA MEMORIAL
33 INF BATTALION

TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
ON UN SERVICE IN KATANGA
1960 - 1961

Lt K. Gleeson
Coy Sgt F. Grant
Sgt H. Gaynor
Cpl P. Kelly
Cpl L. Dougan
Cpl L. Kelly

Tpr T. Fennell
Tpr A. Browne
Pte M. McGinn
Pte G. Killeen
Pte P. Davis
Pte M. Farrell
B. Farhan

Be...



Contributor Biographies

Comdt Derek McGourty is an infantry officer with 20 years' experience in the Defence Forces. He has served in a variety of command, staff and training appointments at home and on overseas tours of duty in the Balkans, Africa and the Middle East. He is a graduate of the UK Advanced Command and Staff Course where he was awarded an MA in Defence Studies from King's College London. He also holds a BA from NUI Galway in Public and Social Policy. Comdt McGourty is currently serving as an instructor at the Command and Staff School in the Military College.

Brigadier General Tony Cudmore has over 39 years military service, including service abroad in both United Nations and NATO peacekeeping missions. He has changed his mind on many issues over the years, mostly as a result of reading, listening and discussion, but remains focused on national security as an issue of growing importance. This can be garnered from the evolution of titles in his thesis topics since the 2002 MA in International Relations '*Will Defence Lead Ireland's National Security Agenda in the 21st Century?*' through his 2007 MA in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies thesis '*Developing Strategic Leadership within the Defence Forces – an exploration of the road ahead*' and his 2012 Post Graduate Certificate in Strategic Leadership '*Is it time to consider a Comprehensive Approach to National Security in Ireland?*' to various papers including '*Can greater Social Justice lead to better National Security?*' as part of the MSc in Corporate Governance that he completed in 2018. He was appointed Brigade Commander of 2 Brigade of the Irish Defence Forces in 2019 and remains open to reading, listening and discussing other people's viewpoints.

Dr Andy Scollick is an independent consultant in the field of European and transatlantic security and defence. He specialises in systems thinking, design of governance architecture, and the development of resilience-based approaches. Since 2014, he has worked as a policy analyst and advisor to government and civil society actors in Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic states and other countries regarding the development of security and defence policy. Prior to that, for 22 years, he was an advocate, policy analyst and consultant in the field of European marine sustainability and maritime policy, working for national, EU and international level NGOs. Andy holds a PhD in sustainability science, complex adaptive systems theory and maritime governance from UCC where he also worked as an EU project researcher and lecturer.

Dr Viktoriya Fedorchak joined the Department of Historical and Classical Studies at NTNU, as Lecturer in European Studies in September 2019. Previously, Dr Fedorchak held the position of Lecturer in Military History at the Department of History, Maynooth University, and taught within staff courses at the Military College of the Irish Defence Forces.

Dr Fedorchak received her PhD from the University of Hull, exploring the subject of 'The Development of RAF Air Power Doctrine, 1999-2013.' Her first monograph 'British Air Power: The Doctrinal Path to Jointery' (2018) explored the shift from single-service to joint authorship of environmental doctrine and various stages of institutionalisation of jointery in the British Armed Forces. In her most recent book 'Understanding Contemporary Air Power' (2020), Dr Fedorchak explains air power to both military and civilian audiences, exploring the role of air power in conventional warfare, peace-support operations, and counterinsurgencies.

Lt Brian Clarke is a serving Army officer and works in 2 Brigade Artillery Regiment. He was commissioned in 2017 and has served overseas in Lebanon as a Mortar Command Post Officer with UNIFIL. Lt Clarke holds an LLM in Peace Support Operations, International Humanitarian Law and Conflict from the Irish Centre for Human Rights at NUI Galway; a BA in History, Sociology and Political Science from NUI Galway; a Diploma in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies from NUI Maynooth and the Military College of the Irish Defence Forces; and he completed distance learning module on the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with the European Security and Defence College.

Prof Geoffrey Till, Once Dean of Academic Studies at the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College, Geoffrey Till is Emeritus Professor of Maritime Studies at King's College London and Chairman of the Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies. Since 2009 he has also been a Visiting Professor and Senior Research Fellow and Advisor at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore. He is also adjunct Professor at the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, Hainan China. He now holds the Dudley W. Knox Chair for Naval History and Strategy at the US Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. His *Understanding Victory: Naval Operations from Trafalgar to the Falklands* was published by ABC-CLIO in 2014 and he has recently completed a fourth edition of his *Seapower: A Guide for the 21st Century*.

Michael O'Sullivan was appointed Executive Director of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre for Narcotics (MAOC (N)) in November 2017 having previously been the Irish member of the Executive Board in 2015. Michael is a former Assistant Commissioner in An Garda Síochána (Irish National Police Organisation). During his career he has specialised in investigating anti-terrorist activities, murder and other serious criminal investigations. He has extensive experience in the area of Drug enforcement and had responsibility for all national investigations into drugs and organised crime. Throughout his career Michael has strived to promote inter agency co-operation within Ireland involving Law Enforcement, Customs and other Government departments. On the international scene he created strong working links with D.E.A., Europol and Interpol and in doing so achieved significant seizures of firearms and drugs. Michael is a qualified barrister at law and has a wide range of academic qualifications including an MBA from University College Dublin and an MSc from Queens University Belfast.

Cdr Cathal Power joined the Defence Forces in 1993 as a member of the 33rd Naval Cadet Class and was commissioned as an Operations Branch Officer in 1995. He is currently working in Defence Forces Headquarters, Newbridge. He has held several seagoing appointments, including command of L.E. CIARA and has served in a variety of operations, staff and training appointments. He has also served overseas in UNIFIL. He was the first Irish officer to complete the Royal Navy International Long Navigation Course at HMS Dryad in 2000, graduating as top student. He holds a Higher Diploma in Geographic Information Systems (UCC), a Post-Graduate Diploma in Supply Chain Management, including Lean Black Belt (UCC). He is a graduate of the Command and Staff School in 2016 and holds an MA in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies from NUIM.

(HE) Raili Lahnalampi, Ambassador of Finland to Ireland, served as the Chief of Cabinet for the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2015 - 2019. She was responsible for the foreign and security policy and for the relations with other ministries, state administration and representatives of other countries.

Ms Lahnalampi has held various international positions and she has a strong background in foreign and security policy. Before having been nominated as Chief of Cabinet Ms Lahnalampi worked as the Counsel to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Finland. She has pursued a diplomatic career at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs over ten years and has served as an advisor to the Secretary-General of OECD and to the President of the UN General Assembly H.E. Harri Holkeri.

After graduating from the University of Turku Law School (LL.M) Ms Lahnalampi continued her studies achieving a diploma in European integration from the University of Saarland and followed international and human rights law studies at the University of Notre Dame Law School.

Livia Margna is currently specialising in conflict studies within the framework of a double degree programme in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies taking place at Dublin City University, Glasgow University and Charles University Prague. In her master thesis, she analyses the role of the media in constructing Islamist and right-wing extremist threats. Her research interest in the nexus both between language and political violence and between the domains of hard and soft security goes back to her previous academic and professional experience: Before analysing security threats for the Swiss Embassy in Indonesia and the Swiss contingent in NATO's KFOR peacekeeping mission, she majored in political science with a focus on political philosophy and minored in Arabic and German literature.

Dr Richard Maher is Assistant Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at University College Dublin. His research interests include security studies, European security and defense policy, and the history and theory of European integration.

Dr Brendan Flynn is a lecturer at the School of Political Science and Sociology, NUI, Galway. His current research interests include maritime security and defence and security studies more broadly. He teaches European politics and Ocean and Marine politics and has lectured at the Irish Defence Force's Joint Senior Command and Staff Course. He was a co-editor of the 2018 Defence Forces Review. Recent publications include: Flynn, Brendan (2019) "From hand-me-down navies to niche players? Comparing the navies of (very) small European states", pp. 51-70 in McCabe, Robert, Deborah Sanders and Ian Speller (eds.) *Europe, Small Navies and Maritime Security Balancing Traditional Roles and Emergent Threats in the 21st Century*. London: Routledge; Flynn, Brendan (2018) 'PESCO and the Challenges of Multilateral Defence Cooperation for Ireland: More of the Same or Sea Change?'. *Irish Studies In International Affairs*, 29 :1-23.

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Captain (NS) Pat Burke is the Defence Forces Director of Military Prosecutions. Commissioned into the Naval Service he held a number of appointments afloat including command at sea. Called to the Irish Bar in 2002 he completed BCL and LLM Degrees at UCC, and a MA (LMDS) Degree at NUIM. He has completed professional military and legal courses with the Royal Navy, US Navy War College, US Army JAG Corps, International Institute of Humanitarian Law, Sanremo, Institute of Migration, Geneva, UK Army Land Warfare Centre and the University of Liverpool. Awarded the Lt Gen Tadhg O'Neill award for best military student on the 63rd Senior Command and Staff Course he deployed as Legad for Operation Althea in Bosnia and with Irish Battalion Commanders in Chad and Lebanon. He was Legad to Operations Seabight and Unity during the successful interdiction of cocaine at sea by the Naval Service and also for Operations Pontus and Sophia dealing with the migration crisis in the Mediterranean Sea.

Dr Omar Grech is Director of the Centre for the Study and Practice and Conflict Resolution and lecturer within the Department of International Law, Faculty of Laws, both at the University of Malta. He holds an LL.D. from the University of Malta and a Ph.D. from the University of Limerick, Ireland. In 2011 he was Fulbright Scholar at George Mason University, USA and in 2017 served as Co-Chair of the European Union Council Working Group on Public International Law and the Working Group on the International Criminal Court during Malta's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Lt Arto Salonen is a Client Director in Core Media Ireland, a marketing communications group where he has worked since 2006 in a media buying capacity. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Archaeology from University College Dublin (UCD) and a Masters in International Relations from Dublin City University (DCU). He also holds a Master's Degree in International History from The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He is a Lt in the Reserve Defence Forces (RDF), joining as a recruit in the 7th Infantry Battalion FCA in 1997 and was commissioned in 2005 while serving in the 65th Infantry Battalion RDF. He is currently a platoon commander in the 7th Infantry Battalion based in Cathal Brugha Barracks.

Capt Catherine Barrett is the Instructor in the United Nations Training School Ireland. She was commissioned as an Infantry Officer with the 91st Cadet Class in 2016 and served for four years in an Chéad Cathláin Coisithe, Galway. She holds a Bsc in International Politics from City University of London, an MLitt in International Security Studies from The University of St Andrews and a Diploma in French Language and Culture from NUI Galway. Capt Barrett has spent time on academic programmes with the West Point Military Academy, NATO and the EU. She has served in EUTM Mali as a Team Leader on the Multinational Infantry Training Teams. Capt Barrett is a native of Dundee in northern Scotland.

Lt (NS) Ben Crumplin joined the Defence Forces as a Cadet in 2012 and was commissioned in 2014. Upon completing his training in the Officer Training School and the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) he was posted to the flagship of the Irish Naval Service, L.É. EITHNE, where he completed two deployments to OPERATION PONTUS, the Irish Naval Service's humanitarian mission in the Mediterranean, in 2015 and 2017. He has served onboard the L.É. EITHNE as gunnery officer, is currently serving as MA to Officer Commanding Naval Operations Command and is a qualified Naval Diver. He holds a BSc (Hons) from NMCI and an MA in Strategic Studies from University College Cork.

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Lt Col Timothy O'Brien is OIC Planning and Capabilities Section in the Directorate of Operations and Plans, Defence Forces HQ. A former School Commandant of UNTSI, he has lectured and written extensively on Peace Support Operations. His interest in the Protection of Civilians arises from his service with the United Nations in DR Congo and most recently in Lebanon, where as Military Assistant to the Head of Mission and Force Commander, he was responsible for enhancing UNIFIL's Protection of Civilians plan.

Matthew G O'Neill is a Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Cybersecurity and Society (LINCS) postgraduate research student in Political Science at the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice at Queen's University Belfast. His research explores the European Union Digital Single Market.

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Prof Ray Murphy is on the staff of the Irish Centre for Human Rights at NUI Galway. He is also on the faculty of the International Institute for Criminal Investigations in the Hague. He is currently a Commissioner with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Ray is a former member and Vice Chair of the Executive Committee of Amnesty International (Ireland). He has also conducted training on behalf of the ICRC, No Peace Without Justice, Amnesty International, the UN, the International Institute for Humanitarian Law and the Pearson Peacekeeping Center (Canada). Ray was a Visiting Scholar at the Centre for International Law, Al-Haq, Palestine in 2014. He was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in 2006 and worked with Human Rights Watch in New York as a resident scholar. He is a former Captain in the Defence Forces and he served with the Irish contingent of UNIFIL in Lebanon in 1981/82 and again in 1989. He practiced as a barrister for a short period before taking working at NUI Galway. He was Chairperson of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission from 1997 to 2000. He has field experience with the OSCE in Bosnia in 1996 and 1997. He has also worked on short assignments in west and southern Africa and the Middle East for Amnesty International and the EU.

Comdt (AR) Lar Joye is Port Heritage Director at Dublin Port, Irelands largest Port, responsible for the 300 year old Archive and developing a new cultural quarter in the Port connected to city through a series of new greenways. Previously he curated the award-winning *Soldiers & Chiefs - the Irish soldier at home and abroad from 1550* exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, described as a museum within a museum. He has played a key role in the Decade of Commemorations and has partnered with the theatre company Anu Productions on the plays *Pals- the Irish at Gallipoli*, *Sunder*, *These Rooms* and the forthcoming *Book of Names* in 2021.

Lar is a Commandant in the Reserve Defence Forces, joining as a Gunner in the 1st Air Defence Regiment in 1987 and was commissioned in 1997. Since the inception of Single Force Concept in 2013 he has served as Staff Officer in PR Branch DFHQ and in 2 Brigade HQ. He currently is attached to the Directorate Reserve Forces, DFHQ and this year served in Joint Task Force "Fortitude" as part of the IDF response to the COVID 19 pandemic. He serves on the Military Boards of the Defence Forces Centenary History Book and Civil War 18pdr conservation project. Previously he was on the Board of 1916-2016 Centenary Medal.

Sgt Brendan Cruise enlisted in the Naval Service in 1998 and later became a member of the Air Corps in 2001. He is currently an Office Information System Instructor in the Technical Training School in Air Corps College. He has served overseas with the 30 IRCON ISAF in Kabul, and 113 INF BN UNIFIL in South Lebanon. He holds an honours degree in Irish Law (LLB) and MA in International Security and Conflict Studies with his thesis titled *What does it really mean to say Drones are, or are not, proportionate regarding Jus in bello?*. He has previous papers in DF Review 2017 titled *Can the current International Law framework on the use of force adequately accommodate States' response to terrorism?* and in 2018 with the Necessity to evolve UN Peacekeeping operations mandates.

Dr Sinead Walsh is the Deputy Director General for Irish Aid and Africa at Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this, she was the EU Ambassador to South Sudan. She has worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs since 2009. She was a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative in 2016/17 while co-authoring a book on the Ebola crisis in West Africa, *Getting to Zero: A Doctor and a Diplomat on the Ebola Frontline*. Prior to this, she served as the Ambassador of Ireland to Sierra Leone and Liberia and the Head of Irish Aid in the two countries, based in Freetown from 2011 to 2016. Before joining the government, Sinead spent ten years in the NGO sector, predominantly with Concern Worldwide, working in India, Pakistan, Rwanda and South Sudan, as well as in a global advocacy role. She has a BA in English from Harvard University, an MSc in development studies from University College Dublin and a PhD in social policy from the London School of Economics.

Aoife Lyons is currently Deputy Head of Mission at the Representative Office in Ireland in Palestine, formerly Deputy Director of the Conflict Resolution Unit in Political Division in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Ms. Lyons has completed assignments in South Africa and the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN, in Geneva and New York. Before joining the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Lyons worked with a number of human rights NGOs. She holds a Masters in Law from Trinity College, Dublin.

Marcella Smyth is currently Deputy Director, International Security Policy in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this role, Ms. Smyth was posted to Ireland's Permanent Representation to the European Union where she served as press spokesperson before taking on the role of maritime affairs attaché. Ms. Smyth previously served in Ireland's Embassy to Belgium as Deputy Head of Mission and as Deputy Head of Mission to Ireland's Embassy to Canada. Ms. Smyth has also previously combined this work with her role as lecturer on social policy in the Institute of Public Administration. Ms. Smyth holds a Masters in Social Policy from University College Dublin and a Masters in Strategic Studies from University College Cork..

Dr Heidi Riley is an Adjunct Research Fellow and former Assistant Professor in International Relations in the School of Politics and International Relations, University College Dublin. Heidi's main research area is in gender and armed conflict, with a particular focus on the interaction between ideology and masculinity within non-state armed groups. As a secondary research area she also works on issues of negotiated settlement, with a focus on women's participation in international peace mediation and peace building. She has published works on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, women in mediation and masculinity in People War in Nepal, which is also the focus of her forthcoming book, *Masculinity, Ideology and Change in the People's War in Nepal*. **Teaching areas include:** Conflict and Conflict Resolution, Gender, War and Peace, UN Peacekeeping, and Qualitative Methods. In addition to academic works Heidi has previously worked for a number of NGOs and as a member of the Secretariat for the Irish National Action Plan on UNSCR1325 on Women Peace and Security.

Dr Kieran Doyle is Assistant Director and Lecturer in the Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention, Maynooth University. The Institute engages with key practitioners and organisations active in the practice of negotiation, mediation, peacebuilding and restorative practice. Dr Doyle is Irish representative on the Academic Board of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) based in the European External Action Service, Brussels, and also represented Ireland on the Academic Think Tank of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). His research and teaching interests lies in peacebuilding and practice based learning, and in recent years has lead the Kennedy Institute team in a number of EU funded research projects examining the effectiveness of EU conflict intervention capabilities. He is joint editor of the open access Journal of Mediation and Applied Conflict Analysis (ISSN 2009-7107). He previously served as an officer in the Defence Forces, holding appointments in 6 and 12 Inf Bn, Mil Col and DFHQ, and served on 4 overseas missions including Lebanon, Kosovo and the OHQ of EUFOR Chad/CAR. He is a graduate of École d'état-major, France.

