Final Report

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Civil-Military Cooperation and the 3D Approach – Myth or Reality?

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Overview

**Name of Event:** Civil-Military Cooperation and the 3D Approach—Myth or Reality? The Case of Canada in Kosovo and Afghanistan

**Date and Time:** January 23, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

**Venue:** Austrian Institute for International Politics (oiip)
Berggasse 7; A-1090 Vienna

**Speaker:** Christopher Ankersen (Adjunct Assistant Professor of Politics and Economics at the Royal Military College of Canada and Chief of Security at the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials in Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

**Moderation:** Alexander Klimburg (Fellow and Senior Adviser at the Austrian Institute for International Politics)

**Report Area(s):** International Conflict Management, Conflict Studies (Prevention—Peacekeeping)

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1 Program and presentation can be accessed via [http://www.oiip.ac.at/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen-detail/article/20/civil-military-cooperation-and-the-3d-approach-myth-or-reality.html](http://www.oiip.ac.at/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen-detail/article/20/civil-military-cooperation-and-the-3d-approach-myth-or-reality.html).
Summary

In response to the changed threat perception during the post-Cold War and post-9/11 era, the ensuing shift in both military and political thought resulted in the idea that military operations are best understood through a holistic approach accounting for a broad variety of different tasks. Thus, instead of primarily focusing on defense, the scope was widened by issues of diplomacy and development (the 3D approach), which was gradually introduced around the turn of the millennium.

It was especially during Paul Martin’s term as Prime Minister that Canada started to actively promote the 3D approach. With regard to Canadian defense policy, this was most prominently reflected and expanded upon in Chief of Defense Staff Rick Hillier’s concept of a joint, interagency, multinational, and public-enabled Canadian Force (JIMP) first presented in 2008. Essentially, JIMP was intended “to attain unity of purpose and effort in achieving desired effects, all while considering the requirement for public trust and support both domestically and internationally.” It has been described as “3D+C”, as it adds “commerce” to the mix of instruments, in particular within the context of longer-term and peace and state-building activities. In context of the wider 3D Approach, Canada’s Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and the related activities (including reconstruction, governance and development) were identified to best represent the JIMP capability. This has prominently been demonstrated during the Kosovo conflict, where the Canadian Forces carried out humanitarian aid operations that were financially supported ($750,000) by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The apocryphal origins of the 3D approach (a development worker, a diplomat and a military officer all from Montreal happen to meet in a café in Kosovo and develop the 3D concept) however illustrate some of the many problems associated with this approach. Firstly, there is a clear overemphasis on “defense”, and “development” receives very little attention – the chronic underfunding of “development” led to the CIDA formally disengaging from “Canada’s International Policy Statement” (2005), which was intended as the 3D “capstone” document. In the 2008 Final Report of the Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan (also referred to as Manley Report), the concrete impact of Canada’s civilian programs was assessed as being rather weak.

Secondly, even within “development” there was a clear overemphasis of military-specific tasks, in particular CIMIC: when development funding for national programs in Afghanistan started to exceed the financial support for non-governmental organizations, objections were raised about CIMIC potentially posing a danger of mission creep.

Thirdly, there was a danger of the 3D concept running into other realities within CIMIC – in particular, the Strategic Advisory Team-Afghanistan (SAT-A) approach, which fundamentally worked outside of the concept and partially undermined it.

Fourthly, the “underspecialisation” of the 3D approach has led to the reality that “if everyone can do it, anyone can do it” – meaning that there is a consistent clash of responsibilities and consistent institutional over- and underreach. Much ends up “falling between the cracks”.

2 For instance, from Traditional War (“mere” war-fighting) to Three Block War (war-fighting+supporting peace operations+humanitarian aid).
3 For instance, from National Security to Human Security.
4 See http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/324640/publication.html.
Fifthly, the lack of coordination becomes a central issue. The whole of government approach implied here means a flat-hierarchy, with no particular department or organization in control. A net result of this was that there is also no final responsibility, and therefore no incentive for the different parts of government to actually resolve differences when they came about. An example for the need for clear ownership and adequate coordination was given in the Manley Report.

As a consequence of Kosovo and Afghanistan, the 3D approach remains a vague idea through which no “unitary objective was established and no division of functions between the 3Ds exist to help achieve the objective.” It became clear that the military operated in a more integrated approach across different objectives such as security, governance and prosperity. Yet, there is an urgent need to develop “institutions, practices and procedures to more fully facilitate the goal” (e.g., the allocation of development funding between the different Ds). In particular, the “activities” of independent parts of government need to be better coordinated; they should be better seen as “lines of operation” that cross different departmental silos. These lines of operation can be run by individual departments (a similar model is employed in the UK “Comprehensive Approach”), but they need to be cross-departmental (whole of government) and not restricted to their individual silos.

Overall, the need for a “Joint mission” has to be strengthened together with the need of enhanced coordination of the individual tasks. As the Canadian Land Force Commander (now Army) put it in 2009: “Notwithstanding attempts to practice an integrated, more “whole of government” approach to operations, recent efforts have largely been ad hoc in nature. As such there is a need to develop clear and accepted institutions, practices and procedures to more fully facilitate the goal.”

Note taker: Philipp Mirtl