

BRIDGING THE SECURITY GAP: STABILITY POLICING IN A NON-ARTICLE 5 ENVIRONMENT

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The need for NATO to be equipped with a military capability of civil policing became apparent during the 1997 Stabilisation Force (SFOR) operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Allied Command Europe saw the space in the field of public order and security. Known as the security gap, it was the grey area between the SFOR military capabilities and the UN International Police Force mission, with no executive powers, as well as the capabilities of the local police forces, who often either lacked the capability or were unwilling to enforce the law.



In this grey area, no party either could or wanted to take responsibility. Subsequently the gap was bridged by a military unit capable of performing some of the typical tasks of a civil police force and this was to be known as the NATO Multinational Specialised Unit (MSU). The MSU was made up of gendarmerie forces, which are military forces with a full police capability. Since then, this concept has been put into practise several times and the deployed MSUs have received the contribution of military police forces and infantry forces trained for the specific mission.

A key example of this is the Kosovo Force MSU; KFOR MSU is based in Pristina and is composed entirely of Italian Carabinieri. It provides the KFOR commander with a capability for security operations including criminal

intelligence, crowd and riot control as well as information gathering and assessment. The MSU can also provide advice, training and support to local police forces on a wide range of policing issues if required. These include law enforcement, combating organised crime and terrorism, war crime investigation, crime prevention and public security. The MSU is commanded by an Italian Carabinieri officer who advises the KFOR commander on all civilian police matters. The idea itself of military forces performing police duties to cover the 'security gap' has evolved up to the current concept of Stability Policing (SP).

What is Stability Policing and how it is conducted?

The concept of SP, targeted within the stabilisation and reconstruction post-

conflict process, concentrates on the requirements of the civil populace. Stability Policing, a concept described throughout the NATO AJP 3 doctrinal series, is defined as a set of police related activities for the restoration and/or upholding of the public order, security and rule of law as well as the protection of human rights through supporting and, when necessary, temporarily replacing, the indigenous police forces, when the latter are either unable or unwilling to perform the function themselves.

Security Policing falls within the Security Sector Reform covered in the AJP-1 and AJP-3 doctrinal series, which entails reforming security organisations so that they can deliver an effective role in providing internal and external security with accountability, as well as the military assistance to civil authorities function envisaged in AJP-3.4, that may require involvement in civil security tasks. This includes operations to maintain local law and order until appropriate civil authorities can resume control of the task. Despite this, SP can't be compressed within the confines of civil policing since it can embrace such a wide spectrum of activity that relates to other agencies or services that are most likely to occur. Stability Policing is conducted in unstable areas where NATO is engaged, throughout the spectrum of conflict ranging from peace to high intensity conflict.



The aim of Stability Policing

The aim of SP is to establish a safe and secure environment (SASE), restore public order and security and contribute to create the conditions for effective governance. Throughout the spectrum of conflict the initial goal of SP is to re-establish and maintain sufficient security for the local populace. Afterwards, it seeks to re-establish law and order and to enforce the law, eventually leading to reinforcement of local security institutions.

Is Stability Police a function of the Military Police?

The key components of SP, in the wake of the NATO MSU, developed over approximately two decades. Stability Policing is not currently a defined function of the MP corps, but the discussion within NATO is ongoing. Taking into consideration that SP requires a civil policing-focussed mindset and a specialist approach, such thinking reflects that focus, meeting the needs and expectations of the civil population in order to be successful. Stability Policing is a capability that can be applied to any NATO operation and includes a wide range of civil police activities that focus on civil populations. Security Policing may be conducted by a range of military forces; the best suitable forces are the gendarmerie-type forces and the MP. When MP are required to conduct SP, they are not conceptually performing MP activities, but assisting in delivering civil police activities. Other military forces can contribute with their own specialised capabilities.

The added value of SP is inherent in its contribution to enable NATO to have a holistic approach to crisis response. The added usefulness for the NATO Force commander resides in having the availability of military forces trained and equipped to conduct the operation with a specialist capacity of civil policing.

The Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoESPU)

Stemming from an Italian initiative, supported by G8 Summit countries as part of a wider action plan of the International Community for Expanding Global Capability for Peace Support Operations, with an emphasis on African countries, the CoESPU was established by the Carabinieri on 1 March 2005 in Vicenza, Italy.

The CoESPU, as a national structure opened to international contributions, is a centre for advanced studies and a doctrinal hub, serving as a think tank and a training centre that mainly operates in cooperation with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and with other international organisations, to develop Carabinieri-like units of interested police contributing countries committed to support peace operations. Sponsored by the US Department of State through its Global Peace Operations Initiative, the project is based on the international expertise developed by the Italian Carabinieri, as well as on their expertise developed through numerous peacekeeping missions over last few decades. The Centre is primarily dedicated to:

- Conducting training programs;
- Maturing current police peacekeeping doctrine and related best practises, developing doctrinal proposals and new operational procedures;

- Promote interoperability principles;
- Be an active part of a worldwide 'doctrinal network', interacting with the various international organisations, academic institutes and research centres.

The CoESPU's training efforts aim to prepare police peacekeepers specialised in managing the transition from a post-crisis situation to a stable environment for reconstruction, through a people and community-oriented approach. The Centre of Excellence is open to all countries interested in establishing their own SP units, which may be employed in peace operations under the auspices of the UN, as well as of other international organisations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Captain Patrick Crossland is a 12-year veteran of the British Army and currently serves as a Military Police staff officer with the ARRC. In his previous assignment he served as the Operations Officer for the 158th Provost Company, Royal Military Police in Bullford, England. Capt. Crossland has deployed on combat operations in Afghanistan and has conducted Military Police training on four continents. A native of North Yorkshire, England, Capt. Crossland holds a degree in International Politics from Swansea University.

