

001 General, you have a number of UN forces in the field, many of them operating under combat conditions. How would you describe their organic intelligence capabilities at this time?

The Peacekeeping Missions of today are complex contingencies that require a mixture of Peace Enforcement and Peace Support Intelligence capabilities. We can plan a strong Intel Analysis capability on Mission HQ level - but are largely dependant on the capabilities of the TCC contingents.

Some contingents are strong in technological intelligence gathering capability, others in low tech, on the ground HUMINT ability - gained through experience in operating in similar environments or PK missions.

Unfortunately, much of this organic intelligence capability is designed only to satisfy the tactical "Force Security" requirement of the Contingent, and seldom provides the scope and quality of Intelligence required by Contingent and Force commanders in a dynamic PK environment, where limited resources mean you need the force multiplier effect of accurate, timely intelligence to achieve your mission objectives.

Despite this, we are making some progress. I think that by preparing for possible PE and not just Peace Support Missions, the member states are starting to provide more capable and better-equipped contingents.

002 If you could prevail on the Member states for improvements in tactical intelligence support to UN forces, what would you ask for today?

Capability starts with the selection of the right "profile" personnel – especially for leadership and key staff posts. Capability is enhanced by the quality of the training and the type of equipment and resources allocated to a contingent by the member state. Finally, tactical Intelligence support is entirely dependant on the degree to which each and every soldier in a contingent is utilized as a collector of information. The effectiveness of this process is also dependant on there being sufficient intelligence specialists to collect, analyze and utilize this information. For instance, a reconnaissance Coy with the right equipment and operational application, can be far more effective than a Battalion of Infantry.

We need to move away from the traditional UN Peacekeeping "security guard" mentality of manning a checkpoint or just showing a presence by "being there", to a more interactive approach. Here is often where the problem lies – you need some language capability to be able to communicate with the local population and belligerents in a mission area. You need some very basic "intelligence 101" orientation to know how to approach someone, speak to them, ask questions that include the basic "W's" – who, what where why how etc, write this down with an on-the-spot assessment, and have the means to send this possible accompanied by photo from a cheap digital camera over a radio channel to an HQ - within minutes instead of days.

Imagine having 80% of a force having this basic capability and having made the "mind shift" to utilize it instead of the maybe 5% we have sometimes seen in the past .

Lastly, to avoid what we term “command paralysis” member states should choose men with initiative to lead their contingents – but most importantly, give them the political mandate and assurance of your support so that they can go out there and use their leadership in the information warfare peacekeeping game with high intensity activities that produce results!

003 Taking Africa as a specific example, where you have Burundi, the Congo, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, and the Sudan, as well as other less violent situations, what intelligence shortfalls exist that could be resolved with either money for commercial support, or improved national support from the US, among others?

Technology is a force multiplier. We need more “tools of the trade” down to the lowest level. Sometimes some very basic tools such as a simple, cheap digital camera down to section level, can improve intelligence collection capability tremendously. Availability and accuracy of maps and GPS's, IT equipment and systems, all increase operational tempo tremendously in trained hands.

The training aspect is just as critical – member states with the economic or institutional capacity should increase their foreign assistance programs in PK related training to TCC's who are prepared to provide contingents – especially in Africa. There are many successful examples of this form of training assistance, however the need outstrips capacity many fold at present.

004 At the operational level of war and peace, you have emphasized the importance of training, the importance of force commander coordination of all intelligence collection and analysis by subordinate units, and the importance of Human Intelligence (HUMINT). Can you comment on each of these in turn?

Our greatest asset is our man on the ground. As I have mentioned, it all starts with the skills and capabilities this person has obtained through his training. You cannot do away with the basic skills of being a fighting soldier, but in Peacekeeping, especially in complex contingencies affected by internecine warfare between various factions so typical of Africa Missions, the Human Intelligence resource is the most critical. Enhancement of this capability through language skills training, negotiation techniques and basic intelligence orientation can be invaluable.

The next important factor is that operations should continually be pre-emptive in nature. Subordinate units must not only have the training and capacity, but must effectively use the intelligence cycle and flow of information to stay within the operational planning cycle of the belligerents and opposing factions - there on the ground in the deployment area!

Of course it is also essential that the Force Commander receives all this information and the analyzed intelligence product as soon as possible - and has a hands on approach to the coordination of the Mission Intelligence Collection effort.

You must bear in mind that the role of the Force Commander has evolved from coordinating a military security component, towards the key role of facilitating the political objectives of the mission through his role in providing not only military stabilization and a secure environment

for the Humanitarian agencies to operate in, but he must also incorporate the overall mission requirements for information into his military Priority Intelligence Requirements, in order to effectively support the Political head of the mission with accurate intelligence and sound advice. The Force Commander is the only one that sees the full picture of the political initiatives and security situation and should be the most important resource a SRSB has in obtaining his overall mission objectives.

The lessons of the UN failure in Rwanda are clear – we must be dynamic and adaptable, but most of all we need a continuous flow of credible, timely, multi-source information in order that competent, informed decisions can immediately be made – all the way up the line. That is the only way to retain the initiative!

005 General, you have a rich background as a peacekeeper in the field, including experience as a force commander. Now you have almost a year of experience at the strategic level, as Military Advisor to the Secretary General of the United Nations. What are your first impressions?

Well, what a year!. Its been exciting, rewarding and sometimes frustrating but most of all - busy!. A new job always has a learning curve, but the secret to success in any situation is to trust and rely on the professionalism and competency of your staff and subordinates and then apply your knowledge and experience in that context.

It has been a privilege to be in a position to gain a bit more insight into the complexities of mission control and mission planning on this level in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It is always easier to point out the flaws of the system from the bottom up, but the challenges increase exponentially as you go up the line.

In general though, it has been a wonderful opportunity to try and give a bit of strategic direction in some of the mission planning processes and try to avoid the pitfalls of the past. Unfortunately there are no quick solutions and by it's nature, the complex wheels of the UN turn slowly. At the same time, missions are becoming more complex. However, the opportunity to improve the way we do things is here and now. In many ways, as a military man, this is the ultimate job. We are after all in the business of saving lives. I look forward with anticipation to the challenges of my second year as Military Advisor to the Secretary General.

006 Over a year ago, the Brahimi Report made some very important recommendations about the urgency of creating a UN intelligence capability at the strategic level, one that would help the UN get the mandate right, get the force composition right, and avoid losing the mission before it even started. Where is the UN today in terms of implementing the Brahimi Report recommendations on strategic intelligence?

While we have not seen the realization of many of the recommendations in terms of the posts, personnel and co-operation we would have liked to have, in many areas the Brahimi report has had a tremendous influence in affecting the mind-set of the people who must do the job. We are after all in the information game. Call it Political, Military, Humanitarian, Socio Economic or Security information – the UN needs processed intelligence product and analysis on all of those fields to function effectively.

The Brahimi recommendations have pointed out shortcomings and I think on every level, people have looked up, taken note and tried to improve the way they do things in order to make a better contribution to the “bigger picture”. This contributes to the strategic situational awareness of the organization.

However, we still do have a long way to go and I would have liked to have seen our situational awareness and general “Intelligence Analysis” capacity increased with the creation of more posts and development of specialized capacity, but, unfortunately, things are dependant on an overstretched budget and influenced by misperceptions that the word “intelligence” conjures up!.

007 Let's discuss classified Member nation intelligence support versus open source or commercial intelligence support. One comes “free” but reflects the agenda of each Member, the other costs money which you do not have. What are your impressions of the relative value of each, and where does the UN need to go in the future on both sides of this intelligence coin?

Intelligence is a commodity. There is always a price to pay for a commodity and people tend to think in terms of “you get only what you can afford to pay for”. However, intelligence can be obtained for free if it is perceived that firstly - It will be kept in confidence, and Secondly - It will be used in such a way as to contribute to collective security or regional stability in some form.

The golden rule that prevents sharing of information is fear of losing the “goose that lays the golden egg”. In other words, compromising the source or advantage of the information by letting others see what you know.

The sticky question has always been how, in an organization designed to be transparent, will confidences be held. Who will hold the file of secrets and who will “watch the watchers”. This may have had an influence in the reluctance of the UN to increase its intelligence capacity in terms of the Brahimi recommendations.

Commercial intelligence is often more tech orientated like satellite intelligence. Open source information is inadvertently already “vetted” by being in the public domain and open to scrutiny – you can have a more objective analysis of an occurrence through international media analysis of a situation than you get from the subjective and possibly biased interpretation of the intelligence officer compiling a report for a member state. That said however, “secret” information means just that – it is secret because it is open source. Secret member state intelligence can be extremely valuable. The danger is when this intelligence stands alone as the whole picture instead of being one or two of the “puzzle pieces”. I think as long as you properly analyze this product and solicit corroborating information, intelligence contributions from member states is critical to the success of any mission.

It seems to me that one possible way forward would be for TCC's to direct and allocate state intelligence resources to ensuring an enhanced intelligence capability of the mission through their contingent contribution to that mission. The UN could also facilitate Intelligence collection, sharing and analysis by encouraging regional member states that have a vested

interest in the stabilization effect of a UN mandated PK mission. Official Intelligence sharing forums and regional structures could then be used under a “UN Mandate” to ensure the availability of sufficient intelligence to either monitor a situation or plan a PK mission using regional “high readiness” brigades – whether in Africa, Asia or Europe!. The only challenge once again is the conduit back to the decision makers in the Security Council and who gets what intelligence at what stage.

008 Where is the UN in terms of having access to tactical military maps, such as Russian or indigenous military maps, or commercial imagery at the 1:50,000 scale? What are you using in the five African contingencies, and what would you like to have?

What I would like to have is accurate, 1:50 000 scale maps down to section level, with a strong, integrated computerized Geographical Information System department in every mission, with the capability to produce and print updated and custom maps.

Unfortunately, this is not available in any of the African Missions. The existing maps are generally very old, based on surveys up to 50 years ago, use various datum's and formats and are sometimes more misleading than helpful. They are also generally not easily available.

Commercial satellite imagery can be very useful and we do have that option available for certain areas. It can be a useful tool, however what the troop on the ground knows, can use and understand is the standard 1 : 50 000 UTM style, topographical grid map. This is the basic tool. Often the available products are so inaccurate when compared to a GPS reading, that infrastructure can be between 5km and 20km out.

We are however in the process of implementing a pilot project in four missions to try and integrate and develop GIS capability in order to enhance our mapping capability. For instance, in the UNMEE mission we implemented a system where we trained UNMO's to do GPS tracking when doing routine patrols. Routes could then be accurately plotted every 200m and the road database of the GIS cell updated on a weekly basis.

Using a system like this, roads and infrastructure can be rapidly updated in a mission area and accurate maps produced. The technology is there and we are developing the expertise, techniques and systems– we are just constrained by the financial resources, especially with the mission level printing of maps.

009 The world has become much more dangerous with the introduction of suicidal terrorism, the continued expansion of complex emergencies involving famines, migrations, genocides, and so on. Most nations appear to believe that the UN is both vital, and often incompetent. What is your own view on where the UN might be going in the next few years?

The UN has many critics. It is true that it is sometimes perceived as incompetent, slow to react , partial to certain power blocks and too often disproportionately influenced by minority groups.

What the UN is however, is an extremely complex bureaucracy, dependant on the goodwill of member states, and the only place on earth where different cultures, creeds, religions, Nations and opposing political views come together for the common purpose of humanity.

Although we have seen an evolving role and increased effectiveness of regional organizations of states such as in SADEC, the African Union, European Union and many others, at the end of the day they are subject to the influence of regional politics and economic interests.

The UN remains the only truly neutral global village. It is both the forum and the mechanism whereby collective but impartial pressure and aid can be used in to save lives and increase the quality of life for millions.

I believe that the UN has tremendous potential for facilitation and conflict resolution. Progress however, lies in becoming more pre-emptive, dynamic and reactive as an organization to the international political and security environment. The UN can become more efficient by facilitating and utilizing regional organizations of member states for service delivery and preventative diplomacy.

While there is no denying the power projection and military solution ability of organizations such as NATO and the US, as well as the power and influence of the economic contribution of a handful of member states in terms of budget contributions, the UN remains the only forum with the international legitimacy to draft, influence and implement a truly international "road map" for peace on every continent

010 You are featured on the cover of the book, Peacekeeping Intelligence, which would not have been published without your inspired contribution, and you will be the featured speaker at the forthcoming second annual conference on peacekeeping intelligence in Canada. What has changed in your own mind, from the lessons you included in the book, to your planned presentation in December? How has the past year affected your thinking on the future of UN intelligence, secret intelligence, and commercial intelligence?

In the post 9/11 period, American law enforcement and Intelligence organizations soon realized that they held a lot of good information – but no systems and structures existed to share that information properly. The left hand did not know what the right hand knew. Suddenly the concepts of "net-centric information warfare" and "data mining" became very popular.

Unfortunately, the UN has hundreds of hands, but the 9/11 lessons are still very valuable. I think more information gets passed in casual conversation in the corridors of the UN than what the KGB could ever have aspire to collect when at the height of their power. The difference is that the puzzle pieces are not brought together in one central place to form a dossier of "secret intelligence". This is essentially operational and strategic level information – exactly what we need at this level for mission planning.

The strength of the UN's intelligence capacity is often based on those individuals in the system that have become regional experts on a theatre of operation or problem area through their own "networking" and "data mining". They build up contacts across agencies and

organizations and down to the tactical field worker level in order to be able to see the “bigger picture” and do their specific job better. They gather some of the puzzle pieces together, add a bit of open source information and “presto” – they are both the local expert and the holder of what some would refer to as “secret intelligence”. These reservoirs of knowledge are often our strength and our greatest untapped resource. On mission planning level, if we were able to “data mine” this resource, add some commercial or open source intelligence from Satellite imagery, GIS systems, CNN and other resources, add in selective operational level and perhaps tactical intelligence from concerned member states with a vested interest in stability in their region – then we could have a very successful formulae.

We do not need a massive intelligence organization, rather a few more specialists and the freedom to co-ordinate and data mine the “information knowledge” of our many left and right hands, and critically, we need the confidence of member states – especially TCC’s who would be willing to empower their contingents with all the available intelligence resources and information needed for to win the information war when employed in PK operations – from appreciation to mission planning, mission control down to tactical deployment!.

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