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At CCOE Mr. Ten Berge is working on a project concerning the importance of Good Governance as an element of the Advanced Cultural Competence Model. He is doing research on this NATO CIMIC relevant topic within a Comprehensive Approach, consistent with the latest draft of the NATO CIMIC Doctrine (AJP-3.4.9).

The following article reflects the views of the author alone and not necessarily those of the CCOE.
1. Introduction

Good governance has always been of high interest and value for military operations, since it is highly considered to be a key component in achieving the sustained success of a mission. Recent examples of international military missions have shown that as a prerequisite for political ownership, and therefore as a part of the desired end state, the high mission relevance of good governance becomes visible. Although civil actors are generally better placed and equipped for the task of strengthening good governance than the military, there are sometimes particular conditions and situations in which the military and its capabilities rest close at hand in supporting and facilitating this task. Civil-military co-operation (CIMIC) can then be used as a primary tool in supporting the civilian effort to promote good governance.

This article will inform how CIMIC can be used to promote, support and strengthen good governance before and during a military mission, including the transition phase which involves the actual handing over of certain responsibilities to the local government. Furthermore, it is the aim of this article to create a better understanding and competence among staffs and field teams that operate within the field of civil-military dimensions (both military and civil actors) on the aspects of good governance 1. As part of the ongoing CCOE project called ‘Good Governance Makes Sense – A Way to Improve Your Mission’ a publication will be released under the same title, as an integral part of the CCOE’s Advanced Cultural Competence model. Last but not least, the project will be a prerequisite for further development and fundamental knowledge about good governance and in the long run, the findings and conclusions deriving from this project shall contribute to integrated planning, doctrine development, improvement of training and education and a better support of operations.

For now the main objective of this article is to provide an analytical overview of good governance, and to demonstrate why this concept is of interest for military operations in a comprehensive context. Accordingly, the following questions will be answered: why is good governance a key component in achieving the sustained success of a mission, and how can CIMIC promote this? In other words, this article seeks to offer insights to the following issues in question:
  - What is good governance?
  - Why is it a key component to achieve sustained success of the mission?
  - How can CIMIC personnel/the military improve and solidify this component?

2. Governance

Before we can look into the question “what is ‘good’ governance?”, it is essential to understand how governance itself can be defined. In short, governance is the process of decision-making and the method through which decisions are implemented (or not). Governance consists of either a separate process, a multiple manager or several leadership processes, and these are all generally administered by a government. However, the government is merely one of the actors in governance. There are numerous other actors involved in governance and may vary on the type and nature of governance per se. In some areas for instance, other actors may include power brokers, warlords, NGOs, IOs/GOs, research institutions, religious leaders and religious institutions, political parties, militias or the military. 2

Organizations or actors other than the government, security forces and the military can be grouped together as part of the ‘civil society’. In some countries in addition to the civil society, criminal organizations also influence decision-making, particularly in urban areas and at the national level. It should not come as a surprise that such organizations are a threat to any properly functioning government, and thus are unfavourable to good governance.

Although even if we come up with a clearly articulated concept of governance, in all likelihood it will not be universally accepted. Nonetheless the following definition of governance formulated by the United Nations Development Programme encapsulates the dimensions of governance very well.

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1 In this article the term ‘CIMIC personnel’ is being used to define the staffs and field teams (both military and civil) that operate within the field of civil-military dimensions.
“Governance can be seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.”

3. Good governance

Similar to governance, as to date there is no single and exhaustive definition of ‘good’ governance. Although governance and good governance are increasingly being used in NATO documents and doctrines, there is still no consensus among NATO countries what this concept should encompass. A definition on what ‘good’ governance is has therefore not yet been set in stone in NATO doctrines. This could be seen as an advantage, inasmuch as it leaves room for interpretation, yet at the operational level, it also stresses a lot of difficulties.

It is however widely agreed that three institutions can be reformed to strengthen good governance. These institutions are the state (the legislative, executive and judicial branch), civil society and the private sector. The need and demand for reform within these institutions can vary amongst various cultures, yet what may cover such necessity is largely depending on the priorities of the specific country’s society. These forces of reform are driven by various state level initiatives and international movements, with their own emphasis on different types of governance reform. So each movement of reform brings about criteria for what they perceive as good governance according to their own needs and agendas. Good governance is therefore a principle that is largely associated with statecraft.

Bearing in mind, it should be noted that the principle of good governance is also being used in the context of the internal operations of private sector organizations. In such manner, corporate decision-making strategies integrate the principle of good governance and ensure that shareholder interests and employees are taken into account. It is hopefully clear that it is not the aim of this publication to elaborate too much on this aspect of good governance.

A red line running through this article is the notion what we perceive as ‘good’ governance, is not always shared by other cultures and authorities. This article acknowledges that good governance is a complex phenomenon that varies greatly along a number of dimensions. As stated before, a variety of states, international organisations, and people affected by governance in general, have their own needs and agendas. With this they also have a different notion of what good governance means to them. With regard to power structures for instance we can distinguish three types of legitimate authority, all with their own views on good governance:

- **Rational-legal authority** is the power distribution which is based on formal rules and the established laws of the state which are often written down and very complex. The power associated with this legal authority is described in the constitution of a nation state. Government officials are the best example of this form of authority such as an elected president for example.

- **Traditional authority** is derived from long-established customs, habits and social structures. Hereditary rulers such as a kings or sheikhs are examples of traditional authority, as well as tribal leaders.

- **Charismatic authority** is a power distribution based on religious beliefs or dogmas. It is authority derived from a higher power which is argued to be superior to both the validity of traditional and rational-legal authority. It often holds parallels with a cult of personality, as exemplified for instance by the late Kim Jong-Il.

All of these three legitimate authorities have different views on what good governance encompasses. A dictatorial regime for instance considers the fact that all power lies with the dictator as a form of legitimate, and in his eyes, good governance. For most Western countries this form of authority does not align with aspects of a ‘healthy’ formal government structure. With regard to these different elements of good governance we might look at dimensions such as (but not limited to):

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3 UNDP, Initiatives for Change (1994).
4. A key to success

Recent history regarding military missions has demonstrated us that a major challenge arising from an increased focus on partnership between international and local stakeholders, as well as public and civil actors, cooperating in countries emerging from, and hounded by, violent conflict has been to (re)construct aspects of good governance. As stated in the beginning of this article, good governance is a prerequisite to foster the development of security and economic recovery, and along with that a successful transition to sustainable peace. To reach this ‘end state’ military presence will be essential in areas of insecurity and weak government capacity to promote the dimensions of good governance.  

Military missions are no longer only about fighting wars. Current and future missions are also concerned with core goals such as creating democratic legitimacy and the efficiency of states, but also have to make sure that the (re)building of state structures is part of the agenda. This can all be seen as part of the larger good governance agenda. Especially failed or fragile states will most likely be unable to develop practices of good governance on their own behalf since very specific efforts are needed to (re)establish and uphold good governance in such settings. The goals and ambitions of military missions are thereby even more changing towards the guaranteed provision of safety and security by the state, thus directly and indirectly related to the promotion of good governance.

Subsequently, the relevance of good governance is hard to underestimate. Only if all of the dimensions of good governance function properly the result of a military mission will last for a long period of time. Of course, a perfectly functioning government as an end result of a mission will likely be an utopia, and can take years to develop. Therefore it also diffi-

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4 A comprehenske approach is the cross-governmental generation and application of security, governance and development services, expertise, structures and resources over time and distance in partnership with host nations, host regions, allied and partner governments and partner institutions, both governmental and non-governmental.

cult to answer the question how we should measure the achievements that are being made, end especially the desired outcome. It should however be clear that the tools and mechanisms to create good governance can be provided through CIMIC related activities between military personal and local civil actors. The following quote from the famous American political scientist Samuel Huntington summarizes this thought quite well.

“You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”

5. Tools for Improvement

For sustained success of a mission and as a desired end state it is important to create the conditions whereby the government is able to exercise its authority throughout the country. In an effort to promote good governance, CIMIC personnel are well suited to assess the necessities that can support the government and international community in security sector reform, including mentoring, training and operational support to the military and local police forces, like the Afghan National Army [ANA] and the Afghan National Police [ANP] for instance. Such activities basically consist of building capacity, supporting the growth of governance structures and promoting an environment within which governance can improve.

Another prerequisite for sustained success is the people’s acceptance of state authority as legitimate and trust its institutions. This will only succeed if the national government strive to deliver the people’s basic needs, such as security, justice and economic development - through good governance. The daunting task of CIMIC personnel is to sense which essential requirements in a particular situation or area are needed to create or develop this kind of trust among civil actors. Indeed, it is not the primary task of the international community of foreign military forces to develop or sustain good governance. Civil actors, but primarily the government itself should address these questions and come to an understanding that the failure of delivering basic needs can result in [a return to] a state of anarchy and tumult.

One of the main attributes to develop understanding and awareness among the local population is the provision of education and training in the field of good governance. It is therefore one of the aims of NATO CIMIC to send specialists in the field of good governance to accompany military personnel to raise awareness among state and civil actors on how governance can be used in a ‘good’ way. CIMIC personnel can then contribute to the evaluation of needed capacities and address these to military commanders overseeing the process of military planning in order to implement possible solutions in the mission objective. As a result these efforts will eventually lead to sustained success of a mission. In other words, CIMIC endeavors to strengthen good governance will in the end help to build the capacity to hasten the transition to self-sufficiency of a country’s government before and during a mission, and will contribute to a long lasting and sustained peace.

Example: support national constitution processes. When the host nation has no government, as may be the case during immediate post-conflict reconstruction or interventions in failed states, developing a national constitution is typically an important first step to establishing a foundation for governance and the rule of law. This may also be a key part of the process for achieving political settlement. An inclusive and participatory constitutional process that helps build broad based consensus on the country’s political future may help prevent the re-emergence of violent conflict. The military can support this process both with CIMIC Functional Specialist expertise, as required, and the provision of security and logistic support for key constitutional processes such as debates and balloting.

6. Conclusion

The success or failure of future and current missions will not be determined by military footprint alone. An important part of the outcome will be defined by the challenge in supporting the government in question in being rendered capable to be self-sufficient in providing basic needs, like security and safety, in coordination with other civil actors. The efforts exerted by CIMIC operators in the process of such transition should not be underestimated. Although it is not up to CIMIC personnel or other military actors to establish the criteria of good governance, nor be fully occupied with the making or the maintenance of the different dimensions of governance, they play a key role in evaluating and assessing the requirements that can support this process.

Undeniably, the aspects of ‘good’ governance ought to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and should not be fitted into a generic template. It is therefore crucial that CIMIC operators concerned with this subject, as well as military staffs and other personnel in the field, are to be well aware of the different dimensions of good governance. As shown earlier in this article, these assessments and evaluations on the governance situation in a specific country are in fact two of the main instruments for CIMIC personnel to promote the

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5 NATO AJP-3.4.5 SD1, Section V. Governance, Development, and Security Sector Reform - 0423. Military Contribution.
aspect of ‘good’ in governance. For these judgements can eventually support a military commander’s assignment or mission, especially when working together with civil actors in the field of governance.

The strengthening of good governance through CIMIC activities can thus be understood both as a process and as an outcome. As a result of all the possible CIMIC efforts regarding good governance, the last phase (transition phase), where virtually all responsibilities are handed back to the government, will lay the basis for an enduring stability and a ‘healthy’ formal government. This government should ideally be based on at least several of the elements of good governance as described earlier is this article. The tools and assessments provided by CIMIC personnel should then bear fruit and result in a situation where local civil actors concerned with governance, who have been made capable in being self-sustaining in strengthening good governance, can provide an unremittingly stable government. The end result of the CIMIC efforts regarding good governance will thus contribute to strong governance structures and capacities, even long after the military forces have handed over their responsibilities to the government in question. CIMIC, being an important facilitator in this process, is therefore a key factor in achieving a long lasting and sustained success of a military operation.

The overarching goal of promoting security and peace can be accomplished.

Finally, the importance of good governance for future military missions, as outlined in this article, has resulted in the CCOE consolidating its current process of developing a better understanding among CIMIC personnel and other groups of interest on this topic. As part of the CCOE’s activities regarding good governance, the Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities (CIC) Branch (supported by a peer group) is creating an operationally relevant publication on this subject, which can be implemented in the field by CIMIC (and related) personnel to quickly understand and assess what role good governance plays in their mission objective. Whereas the aim of this article is to give a broad overview of good governance’s relevance to military missions, the upcoming publication will further analyze and clarify in detail the separate dimensions of good governance, and how CIMIC can contribute to the strengthening of the respective elements of good governance. As a final point, we hope that this article has outlined the first steps towards a better comprehension of the mission relevance of good governance. Since raising awareness on the importance of good governance is a crucial component in understanding (future) conflicts, and to enable mission success.

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