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Blurring the Lines?

International Humanitarian Non-Governmental
Organisations and the Military use of Aid and
Development in Afghanistan

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Abstract

This thesis explores the theory that International Humanitarian Non-governmental Organisations (IHNGOs) have increasingly become part of the world-ordering security agenda of developed western states since the end of the Cold War. It argues that the adoption of humanitarian aid and development activities by intervening military forces in Afghanistan, criticised by IHNGOs for blurring the boundaries between humanitarian and military actors, is a symptom of, rather than the central reason for, reduced humanitarian space in Afghanistan. This study contends that the central issue is the wider integration of political, military and humanitarian action into the process of state-building as a way to pacify areas of conflict and instability that otherwise present potential security threats to the developed world. This has become even more pronounced with the aims of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) since 2001.

The merging of humanitarian aid and development with security in the pursuit of stable states has occurred as an international response to the humanitarian crises and intra-state wars since the end of the Cold War. Military involvement of this kind is typified in Afghanistan by Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) that combine security and development action. During the 1990s humanitarianism also underwent a metamorphosis as concern about the role aid could have in fuelling conflict and a desire to ameliorate the underlying causes of poverty and conflict led many aid agencies to adopt a new vision of humanitarianism that had political and social goals beyond those of just meeting the immediate needs of populations in crisis. Another feature of humanitarian interventions of the 1990s was the ambitious expectations placed upon IHNGOs and intervening military forces from the international community to manage or resolve these crises without a corresponding level of long-term political, economic and military commitment. These issues are also present in post-2001 Afghanistan where IHNGOs initially supported an international intervention and a new government which has since been

faced with a growing insurgency. Consequently, involvement with state-building, governance, rights and development have placed IHNGOs at odds with the insurgents.

A case study approach is used to examine five major IHNGOs and how they fit into the context of the international state-building project in post-2001 Afghanistan. The central finding of this study is that the integration of humanitarian aid and development into state-building as a means to enhance international security has seriously compromised the claims to the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence central to the concept of humanitarian space and consequently the security of the IHNGOs in the ongoing Afghanistan conflict.

To overcome these problems this study suggests that IHNGOs should place their humanitarian aid activity under a separate umbrella organisation that operates under the neutral, impartial and independent principles adhered to by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the organisation in this study that has managed to maintain some acceptance and dialogue with all parties to conflict.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIMS	Afghanistan Information Management Services
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
AOG	Armed Opposition Group
CA	Civil Affairs
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CDC	Community Development Council
CMC	Civil Military Cooperation
CMOC	Civil Military Operations Centre
CMOT	Civil Military Operations Team
COIN	Counter Insurgency
CORD	Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DIAG	Disarmament of Illegal Armed Groups
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GB	Great Britain
GCS	Global Civil Society
GWOT	Global War on Terror
EU	European Union
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IF	International Forces

IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IHNGO	International Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisation
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
MDM	Medicins Du Monde
MSF	Medicins Sans Frontieres
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSP	National Solidarity Program
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSH	Operation Support Hope
Oxfam	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSC	Private Security Company
QIPs	Quick Impact Development Projects
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SFA	Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (United Nations)
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNITAF	Unified Task Force (Somalia)
UNOSOM	United Nations Mission in Somalia
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force (Bosnia)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WFP	World Food Programme

Chapter One: Introduction

This study examines International Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisations (IHNGOs) and how they have been involved with and affected by the integration of aid, development, political and military action in the international intervention and state-building processes that have evolved in the post-Cold War era. This study specifically examines this in the case of Afghanistan and the international intervention that has taken place there since 2001.

Chapter two provides a background to three major theoretical approaches to the study of non-governmental organisations and their relations with states. The realist state-centric model, the Global Civil Society (GCS) model and the Marxist post-colonial models are outlined. Aspects of these three theories are later used to help explain developments in both aid and state security since the end of the Cold War. The third theory is significant to the study as it helps to explain the merging of aid and development with security. The principle concern of this paper is to examine the validity of the concept put forward by some academics from the Marxist post-colonial school of thought that IHNGOs have become part of the security and world ordering agenda of western developed states since the end of the Cold War and through the first decade of the post-Cold War and global war on terror (GWOT).

The methodology employed in this paper is outlined in chapter three. The criteria for the selection of the five IHNGOs examined in this study are explained, as is the choice of the international intervention in Afghanistan for a case study. The thesis of this study is outlined in this chapter. In brief, it contends that IHNGO engagement with the GWOT objective of major western states in securing zones of instability on the global periphery for their own state security has reduced the supposed neutral, physical and political humanitarian space IHNGOs operate within. This is especially

problematic for the IHNGOs in an ongoing conflict like that in Afghanistan where this involvement has a serious impact on security.

Chapter four traces the history of four significant humanitarian crises and interventions of the 1990s that were due to the intra-state conflicts in Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Kosovo. This period is significant for the rapid changes that occurred in IHNGO approaches to dealing with complex emergencies in conflict and post-conflict settings and how military forces started to be involved in activities beyond war fighting, specifically in providing aid and development assistance. The policy positions of the IHNGOs towards the interventions and their approaches to whether to cooperate with intervening governments and their military forces are also outlined to demonstrate the coming together of the state and non-state actors, their activities and their respective agendas that would have serious consequences in the case of Afghanistan after 2001.

The context of Afghanistan is outlined in chapter five so as to provide a geographical, cultural, historical and political background to the environment in which IHNGOs and international military forces would operate from late 2001. The involvement of IHNGOs in Afghanistan is traced from the time of the Soviet invasion and through the periods of the civil war and Taliban rule. The experiences of the IHNGOs in this time would influence their later involvement and the situation they encountered after 2001 would prove to be very different to what had gone before. The United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan is examined in this chapter, since it was the first attempt at the integration of political, humanitarian assistance and human rights under a unified UN structure.

The five IHNGOs selected for this study are examined in chapter six. These five IHNGOs share common attributes such as being large, long standing, western based and secular. A brief historical outline of the organisations is provided along with an overview of their principal activities, organisational structure, policy positions and sources of funding. The division between IHNGOs that focus on short-term humanitarian relief

and those that provide both short-term relief and longer-term development are also highlighted as this is considered a factor in how they interact with and are affected by the state-building process in ongoing or post-conflict situations.

The development of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) is outlined in chapter seven. The role of aid and development in counter-insurgency strategy and previous examples of it are identified. Assessments of the effectiveness of the PRTs are given from military and political points of view as well as the extensive criticisms of them from the IHNGO sector. The PRTs, their activities and their deployments are also placed within the wider political and military context of post 2001 Afghanistan. The idea is put forward in this chapter that PRTs were an attempt to establish security and extend government control without deploying large numbers of troops. Consequently they were hampered by these limitations as well as by restrictive national caveats surrounding their actions and movements. However, the frequent criticism from IHNGOs that the blurring of the lines between humanitarian and military actors attributed to the PRTs is the principle reason for IHNGO insecurity being questioned, as this study suggests there are other contributory factors and deeper underlying causes.

In chapter eight, the five IHNGOs in this study are assessed in terms of their activities, involvement with state-building, security issues and policy positions on military deployment and the use of aid and development by the military in post 2001 Afghanistan. How the IHNGOs are perceived by the Afghan population and belligerents, their access, acceptance and security concerns are also examined. Attacks against IHNGO staff in Afghanistan have been increasing and spreading across the country, especially in the last three to four years, and this chapter assesses the factors contributing to this. The blurring of the lines argument is frequently put forward by the IHNGOs but this study proposes that the wider issue of the merging of aid and development with security has contributed to the problem by the involvement of some IHNGOs in the internationally backed

state-building process. Although the IHNGOs and the international community had believed they were operating in a post-conflict situation after 2001, it is suggested that the early support for intervention and creation of a new government has now placed the IHNGOs at odds with the armed opposition groups (AOGs) and their campaign to attack and destabilise the state-building process.

Chapter nine places the issues faced by IHNGOs in Afghanistan since 2001 into the wider post-Cold War relationship that has evolved between the new humanitarianism and a security agenda implicit in the process of state-building by western developed states in areas of conflict. This coming together of political, military and humanitarian action is known as integration or coherence. The difficulties for IHNGOs in claiming a neutral humanitarian space in an integrated state-building intervention include moral and political overlap with intervening states, a legacy of IHNGO post-Cold War involvement with interventions and state-building, the use by states of humanitarian action for military and political ends and the desire from political and military actors that IHNGOs cooperate in support of counter-insurgency operations. This chapter also explores some options for IHNGOs in dealing with the security problems presented by deployment in integrated state-building interventions.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

To put the current situation involving international humanitarian non-governmental organisations (IHNGOs) and the military of intervening powers in the case of Afghanistan into context, some exploration is required of the major theories that have influenced the analysis of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their relationships with governments, the military and other state and non-state actors. Since the end of the Second World War the growth of NGOs and their increasing influence on and involvement with humanitarian aid, development, international human rights and humanitarian law has led to theoretical models to explain the strengthening of their roles and influence in international relations. An example of a theory about the role of NGOs and other non-state actors in the international system is the theory of global civil society (GCS).¹

Realist, GCS and post-colonial neo-Marxist perspectives on NGO involvement with military interventions will be outlined in developing the framework for this study to examine the specific situation regarding IHNGO-military relations in Afghanistan. The first two perspectives typify the divide between classical realism and liberal idealism in the study of international relations. This study argues that the relationship between states (and their military forces) and NGOs represents the interface between actors representing the traditional state-centric view of realism with the liberal/idealist stance of GCS. The third neo-Marxist post-colonial perspective derived from Marxist analysis of political economy focuses on the global economic and political inequality of international relations combined with the disillusionment of some within the NGO community with the manipulation of humanitarian aid for political purposes.

¹ See, for example: David Chandler, *Constructing Global Civil Society: Morality and Power in International Relations* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004); Marlies Glasius, Mary Kaldor and Helmut Anheier, *Global Civil Society Yearbook 2005/2006* (London Sage, 2005).

Realism, states and non-governmental organisations

Realists see the state as the central actor in international relations and view state sovereignty as an inviolable central principle of relations between states.² The centrality of state sovereignty and territorial integrity are recognised as fundamental principles in the Charter of the United Nations (UN).³ For realists, the state is seen as the ultimate force in deciding the fate of its own citizens. Further, it is accepted that one state should not intervene in another state's affairs, regardless of how that state may treat its own citizens. Realist thinking also views the actions of states as being motivated by the states' own interests in the decisions and actions that they take.⁴

A frequent criticism of NGOs from a state-centric perspective is that despite claims of impartiality and neutrality they are actually the manipulated agents of states. Funding from donor governments is often cited as a major factor of influence on NGOs, since "most donor governments allocate aid funds according to their political priorities."⁵ Another pressure on NGOs that can be identified as being caused by the influence of donor governments is the competition among NGOs for donor government funding which leads to NGO policies and programmes that are congruent with the wishes of the donor government.⁶

² See, for examples of the Westphalian state model: Richard Langhorne, *Introduction to Global Politics* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006) pp.71-73; Michael Mastanduno, 'Hegemonic States as Pacifying Powers: Why it May be Difficult to Count on the United States,' in *Strategies for Peace: Contributions of International Organizations, States and Non-State Actors*, ed. by Volker Rittberger and Martina Fischer (Opladen & Farming Hills: Barbara Budrich, 2008), pp.179-221.

³ The United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations: Article 2 (1), (4) and (7)* <<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>> [Accessed 17 March, 2009].

⁴ Jennifer Welsh, 'Taking Consequences Seriously: Objections to Humanitarian Intervention,' in *Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty*, ed. by Jennifer Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.58.

⁵ Fiona Terry, *Condemned to Repeat?: The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (London: Cornell University Press, 2002), p.23. See, for further examples of this type of criticism of government funding of NGOs: Kurt Mills, 'Neo-Humanitarianism: The Role of International Humanitarian Norms and Organisations in Contemporary Conflict,' *Global Governance*, 11 (2005), 161-183, Loramy Gerstbauer, 'The New Conflict Managers: Peace-building NGOs and State Agendas,' in *New Threats and New Actors in International Security*, ed. by Elke Krahnmann (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.35.

⁶ Christopher Spearin, 'Humanitarians and Mercenaries: Partners in Security Governance?' in *New Threats and New Actors in International Security*, ed. by Krahnmann, p.48.

David Chandler, a critic of NGO complicity with the actions of states, and especially with military intervention, sees the humanitarian principles and actions of NGOs as being exploited by governments for much more realist state-centred concerns. For example, the US led war in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al Qaeda since 2001, although having other state based goals such as self defence following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, was also presented as a war on behalf of humanitarian concerns to remove the Taliban, a harsh regime that had committed human rights abuses against its own population. The US at the outset of the war dropped food aid as well as bombs to demonstrate their supposed humanitarian motives.⁷ Kurt Mills suggests this has led to 'neo-humanitarianism' which is "...distinguished by the explicit manipulation of humanitarianism for political or military gain on the ground in a conflict or as a substitute for political or military action."⁸ Issues of state interest, especially in terms of projecting force beyond its own borders for security purposes or to secure access to resources are, from a realist point of view, the real issues beneath the humanitarian surface. David Reiff further argues that the ideological focus of NGOs on human rights as opposed to just humanitarian assistance plus their cooption into the political agendas of states have undermined their credibility as truly humanitarian actors.⁹

Therefore, when looked at through the realist lens, NGOs, despite the label of being 'non-governmental', are still influenced to a considerable extent by the governments of both donor and recipient states. This influence is exerted by the recipient or intervened-in states in allowing or denying NGOs access to populations in need, by donor states' funding of NGOs and in the politically selective claims of upholding humanitarian principles that are made by intervening states.

⁷ David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention*. (London: Pluto, 2002), pp.1-2.

⁸ Kurt Mills, 'Neo-Humanitarianism: The Role of International Humanitarian Norms and Organisations in Contemporary Conflict,' (p.162).

⁹ David Reiff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002).

The state-building project in new or formerly failed states holds state formation and the extension of the control and legitimacy of the internationally recognised government in that state as central concerns. Involvement in this process is presented by the intervening states as the actions of good global citizens. The New Zealand involvement in Afghanistan providing a PRT as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is an example of this. According to the New Zealand government, its PRT is helping extend the control of the Afghan government into the provinces and improving security and stability by training the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).¹⁰

Human Security and Global Civil Society (GCS)

The concepts of human security and global civil society (GCS) have developed in the last two decades as alternatives to the realist state-centric approach. GSC has its roots in the theory of functionalism that developed in the 1940s.¹¹ Functionalism suggested that economic and social cooperation would cut across state boundaries, therefore reducing the importance of state sovereignty. International organisations such as the UN were also emphasised by this theory.¹² David Chandler further suggests that the GCS model developed as a reaction to the realist view, especially as it emphasises human agency rather than economics.¹³ Mary Kaldor argues that the concept of security that was previously centred on state security has altered in the last two decades due to globalisation and the growth in numbers and influence of non-state actors such as IHNGOs. Human security is concerned with the “...growing concern about the fate of

¹⁰ New Zealand Defence Force, *NZ PRT: New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team Twelve*, updated 26 November, 2008, <<http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/operations/deployments/afghanistan/nz-prt/default.htm>> [Accessed 12 November, 2009], (para.7).

¹¹ Paul Taylor, 'Functionalism: The Theory of David Mitrany,' in *International Organisation*, ed. by Paul Taylor and A.J.R Groom (London: Frances Pinter, 1978), pp. 236-252.

¹² Joseph S. Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (New York: Pearson, 2007), p.262.

¹³ Chandler, *Constructing Global Civil Society: Morality and Power in International Relations*, pp. 6-12.

individual beings and their communities, rather than states.”¹⁴ From the GCS perspective, IHNGOs as trans-border actors with their support for human rights and humanitarian principles, norms considered universal by international law and the UN, have at least partly transcended state sovereignty. It must be noted that NGOs are not, however, viewed as the only element of GCS, and the concept itself is wide ranging and contested even among its proponents.¹⁵ Individuals, profit and not for profit organisations, social movements, cultural and religious groups and trade unions among others are also considered to constitute GCS.¹⁶

Information and communication technology has significantly contributed to the spread of GCS.¹⁷ According to John Keane “global civil society is a vast, interconnected and multilayered social space that comprises many hundreds of thousands of self-directing or non-governmental institutions and ways of life.”¹⁸ Communication technology, especially the internet, has allowed these diverse groupings to communicate their ideas and causes to a global public as well as communicate and work with each other regardless of geographical separation. Sumit Roy identifies compression of the world economy, the blurring of national borders and the creation of a new space that now coexists alongside states as the important features of globalisation that have also contributed to the growth of GCS.¹⁹

The extent of the influence of the concepts of GCS and human security at the start of the 21st century is apparent in the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). Established by the Government of Canada, the ICISS followed on from

¹⁴ Mary Kaldor, *Human Security: Reflections on Globalisation*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p.12.

¹⁵ See, for example, The Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics. Global Civil Society Yearbooks, available online from <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/yearbook07-8.htm>>

¹⁶ John Keane, ‘Global Civil Society?’ in *Global Civil Society Yearbook 2001*, ed. by Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius and Mary Kaldor. <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/Publications/Yearbooks/2001/2001chapter1.pdf>>[Accessed 15 March 2009], p.23.

¹⁷ Sumit Roy, *Globalisation, ICT and Developing Nations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), p.13.

¹⁸ Keane, p.23.

¹⁹ Roy, p.13.

recommendations in 2000 from the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. The report outlined the supposed responsibility of states to protect their own citizens from serious violations such as genocide, or potentially face the threat of military intervention from other states. State sovereignty in the context of the ICISS is, therefore, conditional upon how a state treats its own citizens, which is a departure from the realist perspective where sovereignty is paramount and a state can do as it wishes within its own borders. The ICISS acknowledged the role of NGOs, the media and academics (civil society actors) in promoting awareness of the issues that had led to the report and its recommendations.²⁰ According to Keane “global civil society has emerged and today flourishes in the absence of a global state or empire.”²¹

The concept of GCS has limitations in that those with the access to technology to allow them to be ‘interconnected’ are not those in dire need of assistance. The early optimism of the post cold war era has suffered due to continuing tragedies like Somalia and present-day crises such as in Darfur. The ineffective nature of the UN in the face of these crises leaves the recommendations of the ICSS and the supposed responsibility of states to protect their own citizens lacking in terms of any real enforcement or implementation. The ‘global war on terror’ (GWOT) since 2001 has also challenged the goals of GCS and human security as these concepts have been partly side lined by the US priority of forming alliances with states in the war on terror regardless of their internal human rights records and the closer alignment of donor aid expenditure with security agendas.²²

Marxist and post-colonial criticism

A third group of theorists, however, believe the problems of underdevelopment, poverty and conflict are due to economic and political inequality and the championing of liberal capitalism under the hegemony of a global empire. They tend to perceive an imperial role either for a state

²⁰ ICISS, p.4.

²¹ Keane, p.38.

²² See, for example: Caritas, *Humanitarian Challenges: The Political Dilemmas of Emergency Aid* (Lucerne: Caritas, 2005); Christian Aid, *The Politics of Poverty: Aid in the New Cold War* (London: Christian Aid, 2004), p.2 and p.11 ;

or group of states, principally the US, or the US and other western, developed nations. This approach also sees globalisation and GCS as forms of economic, political or even humanitarian imperialism. In relation to NGOs, these ideas have grown out of Marxist and post-colonial criticisms of Western development and aid to the poorest parts of the world. Mark Duffield argues that "... the NGO movement has established itself as a non-state or petty sovereign power among the world of peoples."²³ Development and emergency relief aid, according to this perspective, are seen as methods for containing and managing the surplus population in the decolonised world.²⁴

The disillusionment of some who have worked in the area of humanitarian aid and who have witnessed aid contributing to conflicts or being co-opted for political purposes has also fed into this school of thought.²⁵ The merging of security with development is a central point for Duffield and within this he sees the growth of NGOs as representing an "international liberal trusteeship" that has been extended via emergency and conflict "ignoring existing laws, conventions or restraints" therefore becoming a form of colonisation.²⁶ Duffield uses the analogy of native administration that was employed as a bulwark against nationalist movements in the times of British colonial rule with the current sustainable development model that he claims has merged with security as a means of managing internal conflict.²⁷ In this context, NGOs operating across borders to provide aid in emergency and conflict situations may be creating a precedent, as Vanessa Pupavac suggests, that is degrading the

²³ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), p.25.

²⁴ Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War*, p.24.

²⁵ Mark Duffield was Oxfam's country representative in Sudan in the late 1980s; Tony Vaux, author of the *Selfish Altruist*, and who is also critical of the exploitation of humanitarianism, worked for 20 years for Oxfam; Fiona Terry was director of research at MSF, see Q & A: MSF Author Fiona Terry talks about her new book *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* [Online] <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/article.cfm?id=1376>> [Accessed June 30, 2009].

²⁶ Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War*, p.48.

²⁷ Mark Duffield, 'Getting Savages to Fight Barbarians: Development, Security and the Colonial Present,' *Conflict, Security and Development*, 5, (2005), pp.141-159.

sovereignty of some states.²⁸ Stuart Elden has explored the situation of contingent sovereignty where a particular state may no longer claim sovereignty over parts of its own territory due to humanitarian crises or wars that the state is either encouraging or unable to prevent.²⁹ “In theory the borders themselves may change, but in practice it is more likely that some states may cease to be sovereign within them.”³⁰ It should be noted that deeper underlying issues such as ethnic or religious differences are the root causes that provide the impetus for the fragmentation of a state that then may lose sovereignty over those parts. The situation in Kosovo since 1999 where part of the state of Serbia was occupied by NATO in a humanitarian military intervention is such an example. Military interventions of this type have led to claims of a new imperialism from some academics and developing states.

David Harvey argues that the US has become an imperial power through its role of enforcing a vision of democracy and neo-liberal economics upon states that do not fit the neo-liberal democratic model.³¹ Michael Ignatieff also sees the US as an imperial power, but this is a humanitarian empire with the US leading other Western, developed states such as the UK, France and Germany, that is “...the new face of an old figure: the democratic free world, the Christian West.”³² Not all writers who discuss the role of US imperialism necessarily see the term as pejorative. Niall Ferguson suggests the US has had the imperial role thrust upon it and that it needs to accept it and rise to the task.³³ None the less, the concept of an empire with emphasis on a hegemonic state such as the US, or hegemonic non-state structures such as NGO petty sovereignty provides a point of view at odds with the progressive idealism of GCS. A shortcoming

²⁸ Vanessa Pupavac, ‘The Politics of Emergency and the Demise of the Developing State: Problems for Humanitarian Advocacy,’ *Development in Practice*, 16, (2006), pp.255 -269.

²⁹ Stuart Elden, ‘Contingent Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and the Sanctity of Borders,’ *SAIS Review*, vol XXVI, (2006), pp. 11-24.

³⁰ Elden, p.22.

³¹ David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

³² Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan*. (London: Vintage, 2003), p.17.

³³ Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).

with the Marxist post-colonial criticisms of humanitarian aid and its complicity with the agendas of western neo-liberal economics and the US is the lack of any viable alternative on offer that can seriously ameliorate the conditions for those in poverty and especially in zones of conflict. Interestingly, Vanessa Pupavac in her criticism of human security recalls state-centred economic development and a strengthening of sovereignty as a way forward.³⁴ This reads, in some ways, as an argument for a return to the realist approach with its emphasis on the state, strong central government, national development and state sovereignty.

Elements of the three theories relevant to this study

Elements of the three broad theoretical positions - the state-centric realist model, the trans-border GCS model and the Marxist post-colonial criticism of humanitarian imperialism - will be drawn out in developing the theoretical framework that will guide this study. Even GCS theorists would agree that states are still fundamental in the world system, if not as much as they once may have been. It is still the governments of states that make the decision to deploy military personnel, which aid agencies they fund and how much funding and support they provide. Equally, the international community prioritises the rebuilding of failed states, since those states can then control the legitimate use of force within their own borders. The United Nations system is made up of states that recognise that the UN is able to provide aid through major international NGOs and it is able to deploy peacekeeping forces, although the Security Council has almost always been hindered by the agendas and power of veto of the permanent members.³⁵ For NGOs, the state-centric view is significant both in the role of donor governments that provide at least part of their funding and through the issue of access into states to reach populations that need their assistance. States that constitute international and intergovernmental organisations such as the UN or European Union (EU) that may work with

³⁴ Vanessa Pupavac, 'Human Security and the Rise of Global Therapeutic Governance,' *Conflict, Security and Development*, 5, (2005), 162-181, (p.177).

³⁵ For an outline of the U.N. Security Council and its problems, see Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2007), pp.26-30 and 241-247.

and fund NGOs are, from the state point of view, operating with “some type of self-interest as the underlying reason for acceding to cooperative arrangements.”³⁶

GCS has, through rapid communications, and especially the internet, influenced populations across borders and how people in the developed west perceive events in the developing world. As a result of the public statements and advocacy work of NGOs, western governments cannot ignore the images and discourse presented about their actions overseas. The importance of GCS is underlined by the fact that NGOs administer a large portion of aid provided by donor states. Ian Smillie and Larry Minear state that “NGOs manage about 60 percent of all humanitarian funding.”³⁷ They point out that some major IHNGOs “have larger budgets than the government ministries to which they relate” and “carry more credibility with taxpayers than do government aid agencies.”³⁸ The ability of NGOs to administer aid budgets and work with UN agencies as implementing partners is important in supporting the proposition that that they wield a functionally based non-state power. Perhaps the most important force they possess, and one that is of great value to donor governments, is their perceived public credibility.

Combining the realist approach of state interests with GCS provides a model where states and GCS are in a symbiotic relationship with each needing things the other can provide. However, the underlying values of state interest versus GCS’s trans-border, humanitarianism and support for international organisations, especially the UN and its agencies, have also led to ideological and operational conflicts between state and GCS actors.

³⁶ Thomas Weiss and Leon Gordenker, ‘Pluralizing Global Governance: Analytical Approaches and Dimensions,’ in *NGOs, the UN and Global Governance*, ed. by Thomas Weiss and Leon Gordenker (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p.33.

³⁷ Ian Smillie and Larry Minear, *The Charity of Nations: Humanitarian Action in a Calculating World* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.14.

³⁸ Smillie and Minear, p.14.

This study will also employ the Marxist post-colonial criticism of aid as a means of managing the “global borderland,”³⁹ in suggesting that the aid and development agenda and therefore humanitarian relief and development NGOs are of great concern to developed western democracies for another reason, which is their own state security. As the nature of states and their relations with each other have altered, so have the security threats that states now face. The global uncivil society of internal wars, trans-national terrorism, organised criminal networks, environmental degradation, uncontrolled migration flows, HIV/AIDs, religious fundamentalism and trafficking in drugs, arms and people often result from failed states.⁴⁰ Intervening powers, the UN and NGO activity that compromise a state’s sovereignty also contribute to the problem. In this regard, Vanessa Pupavac has suggested “the weak state rather than the strong sovereign state is the problem that lies behind today’s humanitarian crises.”⁴¹ Equally, the National Security Strategy of the US in 2002 recognised that it was failing states that presented the greatest threat to its own state security.⁴²

Therefore, this study examines three important themes. First, state involvement with IHNGOs will be expressed in the influence of funding by donor governments of IHNGOs and the concerns of western governments about their overseas policy, especially involving military and aid activity and how this is perceived domestically. Second, GCS will be involved in the public position of individual IHNGOs and IHNGO networks towards the securitisation of aid exemplified by the role of the PRTs in Afghanistan, which are the agents of states with a realist agenda. This will be expressed in IHNGO policies, media campaigns, reports and press releases by individual IHNGOs and IHNGO coalitions. Third, both IHNGOs and the role of the military in aid and development work will be assessed

³⁹ Duffield, ‘Getting Savages to Fight Barbarians,’ p.147.

⁴⁰ See, for discussion of non-state security threats: *New Threats and New Actors in International Security*, ed. by Elke Krahmann, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Langhorne, pp.150-222, Part D, ‘Sources of Crisis and Conflict.’

⁴¹ Pupavac, p. 256.

⁴² The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/national/nss-020920.pdf>> [Accessed March 20, 2009], p.1.

as to how both these sets of actors fit into the neo-Marxist theory that development and aid are merging with security to manage populations outside the developed world and therefore secure it from the consequences of failed states in the future.

This paper argues that there has been an increasing convergence of IHNGO activity with that of the political and military objectives of intervening powers. However, this coordination, initiated by both the military and IHNGOs in earlier interventions, is now being put under a lot of stress when IHNGOs and military forces intervene in seriously failed states such as has been the case of Somalia, and the present focus of this study, Afghanistan. In these states the basic structures of civil society and state governance have failed or are very weak following prolonged periods of civil war, ethnic division, famine and economic collapse. These humanitarian crises generated by conflict are often referred to as complex emergencies.⁴³ The difficulties for IHNGO military relations in Afghanistan arise from the tension between the state building agenda of the intervening military forces and the struggle for access to populations in need, and for the credible neutrality of IHNGOs who feel compromised by the military involvement in activities that have previously been their own domain. This is the cutting edge of the previously mentioned symbiotic and sometimes conflicting relationship between the political and military apparatus of intervening states and GCS actors such as IHNGOs. To be able to work, humanitarians need security and sometimes the considerable logistical support that military forces can provide; but they also need to be seen to be neutral and impartial. Governments need the moral high ground ostensibly supplied by humanitarian causes and their militaries need humanitarian assistance in post conflict reconstruction. In the case of Afghanistan, this study argues that the problem is exacerbated by an ongoing conflict, the paucity of civil society and governance structures especially security, in police and military terms, and the serious lack of Afghan government legitimacy. Added to this dilemma is a vicious

⁴³ David Keen, *Complex Emergencies*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), p.1.

insurgency that rejects the stated impartiality of IHNGOs and sometimes targets them.

Thesis statement

The thesis of this study is that the development of military humanitarian interventions since the end of the Cold War has led to the conflation of military and humanitarian roles for military actors exemplified by the case of PRTs in Afghanistan and a consequent struggle for IHNGOs to reposition themselves in the humanitarian space they now share with the military. In terms of the theories outlined above, the realist agenda of states and their military forces, typified by PRTs, are competing for humanitarian space with the IHNGOs who represent the GCS approach. This has led to conflicting situations, sometimes cooperative, sometimes competitive, and at times leading to the borrowing of ideas and approaches from one another.

IHNGO criticisms of military involvement in aid work frequently point to the increasing insecurity and attacks on NGOs as a result of the blurring of the lines between humanitarian and military actors. This study suggests this is symptomatic of a wider issue for IHNGOs, that of their involvement with state-building in a situation of ongoing conflict, such as in Afghanistan, that has compromised their neutrality, impartiality and independence and consequently their own security. This study will examine these complementary and conflicting issues to assess whether there is validity in the post-colonial criticism that IHNGOs have been co-opted into the security agenda of western states.

The global war on terror (GWOT) and humanitarianism

The US led Global War on Terror (GWOT) since 2001 has further blurred the boundaries between the “soft power of aid” and security, leading to “coherence’ of military political and humanitarian responses to countries experiencing protracted crises of governance and underdevelopment”.

This is “the securitisation of aid.”⁴⁴ The role of major IHNGOs in developing a politicised agenda in relation to interventions in the affairs of states prior to the GWOT also needs to be examined to put the current situation for IHNGOs in the case of Afghanistan into context.

⁴⁴ Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer, *Humanitarian Action and the 'War on Terror': A Review of Issues* (London: Humanitarian Policy Group, 2003), p.10.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Research focus

The principle concern of this study is to assess the validity of the argument that major international humanitarian non-governmental organisations (IHNGOs) have become part of the security agenda of the developed western world in managing areas of the world experiencing extreme poverty and conflict. This study will assess the extent to which the selected IHNGOs conform to this thesis.

IHNGOS and the security agenda of western developed states

Five major international aid agencies, as opposed to local in country NGOs, have been chosen for this case study since they are more likely to reflect aspects of, or problems associated with, the securitisation of aid. These agencies, based in western developed nations, are more likely to either reflect this securitisation or be aware of or critical of it. It has been argued by some academics that this securitisation of aid is now an inherent feature of the wider policies of northern (western developed) governments towards zones of conflict and instability. This view sees development “as a technology of security.”¹ IHNGOs form a significant part of humanitarian aid and development assistance through operating in partnerships with donor governments and the UN, and therefore, despite their non-governmental moniker, there is likely to be some coherence of IHNGOs with the security concerns of donor governments, their intervening military forces and the UN.

The impact of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and other forms of military involvement with aid and reconstruction

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which are civil-military units deployed in Afghanistan (and Iraq), are also of significance to this study as they are the most salient example of military incursions into activities that were previously the domain of IHNGOs. Since they have been deployed

¹ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), p.viii.

by US led Coalition Forces and NATO as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan with the intention of improving security and strengthening the reach of the Afghan central government,² they represent the most overt manifestation of the use of aid and development in a security context. Therefore their impact on both the security situation in the country and on IHNGOs needs to be assessed.

The rationale for this study

Other studies of PRTs have assessed their effectiveness,³ and the internal civil-military relationships within them.⁴ Studies of the security issues facing NGOs in Afghanistan due to the shrinking of humanitarian space and the role of PRTs and other military actors in aid and reconstruction work have looked at the operational level of how the two groups impact on, cooperate or compete with and perceive each other.⁵ While there has been a lot written, especially from within the IHNGO community about the blurring of lines caused by military involvement in aid and development activities and how this has severely affected the security environment for aid workers,⁶ this study sees a gap in the literature for relating these

² NATO, *NATO's Role in Afghanistan* Updated 2 October, 2009

<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_8189.htm> [Accessed 14 October, 2009]

³ See, for example; Nima Abbaszadeh and others, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations* (Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2008), Michael McNerney, 'Stabilisation and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Are PRTs a Model or a Muddle?' *Parameters*, 35 (Winter 2005/2006); Robert Perito, *The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: Lessons Identified* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2005); Barbara Stapleton, 'A Means to What End? Why PRTs are Peripheral to the Bigger Challenges in Afghanistan,' *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 10 (Fall 2007), 1-49.

⁴ See, for example; Touko Piiparinen, 'A Clash of Mind Sets? An Insider's Account of Provincial Reconstruction Teams,' *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2007), 143-157;; Sebastian Rietjens, 'Managing Civil-Military Cooperation: Experiences from the Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan,' *Armed Forces and Society*, 34 (2008), 173-207.

⁵ See, for example; Andrew G. Gifford, 'Humanitarian Directed Violence in Afghanistan: Neutrality and Humanitarian Space' (unpublished master's thesis, Massey University, 2007); Michael J. Dziedzic and Col. Michael K. Seidl, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Military Relations with International and Non Governmental Organizations in Afghanistan* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2005); Save the Children, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian-Military Relations in Afghanistan*, (London: Save the Children, 2004).

⁶ See, for example, Nellie Bristol, 'Military Incursions into Aid Work Anger Humanitarian Groups,' *The Lancet*, 367 (2006), 384-386; Fabrice Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism: A Deadly Confusion,' (December 16, 2004).

<http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=762E8B7B-2F5F-448A-8EC26F2039794E54&method=full_html> [Accessed November 30, 2009].

issues back to the wider theoretical concerns noted above; that is the extent to which IHNGOs and intervening militaries are both becoming part of a wider international security agenda for managing areas of instability in the world that has developed since the end of the Cold War.

Sources

The study will be based on analysis of secondary sources including books, academic journal articles, newspaper articles, reports, press releases and policy statements and information available from NGOs, intergovernmental and government websites. Requests for information were made to the major IHNGOs chosen for this study and personal communication from some people who have been involved in or observed the NGO-military relationship firsthand has been included with their permission.

A case study approach

This study will take a qualitative approach employing a case study of a specific example of the securitisation of aid. The case study approach has been chosen as it is flexible and useful for both theoretical and policy research.⁷ Since there is now quite a large body of literature on the subject of IHNGOs and their role in international relations plus studies on the impact of PRTs, both on security in Afghanistan and on the perceptions and functioning of IHNGOs, a selective case study is appropriate to isolate particular issues and processes that result from the interaction of these actors.⁸ A case study is useful in generalising findings to a particular theory⁹ which, in this paper, has been identified as the securitisation of aid. Although Afghanistan is the example in this case study, issues such as the increasing coherence between IHNGOs and intervening forces and the use of aid and reconstruction activities to advance political and military aims are applicable to the wider international arena. The issues that have compromised the stated neutrality and independence of IHNGOs are also

⁷ Catherine Hakim, *Research Design: Strategies and Choices in the Design of Social Science Research* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p.65.

⁸ Hakim, p.62.

⁹ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 2nd edn, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), p.37.

to be found in other areas of conflict, intervention and state-building in the world, for example, Iraq and Somalia.

Afghanistan as a case study

In this study Afghanistan is the case study and presents a current and relevant example of the issues facing IHNGOs due to the securitisation of aid. It has a long history of foreign intervention, conflict, poverty and corruption. It has never had a very strong central government and since it is currently the focus of a state-building project through international intervention, the place of aid and development agencies within that intervention will be a valuable indicator to assess the extent of their involvement in the wider international security agenda. A case study of this particularly difficult environment for IHNGOs will also help contribute to knowledge about the problems faced by IHNGOs in similar zones of conflict with inherent poverty and corruption such as Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Georgia, Lebanon, Haiti or the Philippines.¹⁰ These issues include the difficulties for IHNGOs in maintaining neutrality and independence whilst cooperating to some degree with intervening forces and host governments struggling for legitimacy, the adoption of aid and reconstruction activities by intervening military forces and the attempts of IHNGOs to reposition themselves as distinct from those activities carried out by political and military actors. This has subsequently led to the accusation from IHNGOs that aid and reconstruction activities by the military are blurring the lines between the two sets of actors and further compromising IHNGO security in terms of how they are perceived by civilians and armed opposition groups (AOGs).

However, this study further suggests that coherence at a higher policy level between IHNGOs and the wider international community in the state building process, as in the example of Afghanistan, has also undermined IHNGO claims of neutrality and independence. Another reason for

¹⁰These countries, alongside Afghanistan, were identified as “some of the most places in the world,” by the ICRC in International Committee of the Red Cross, *Our World: Views from the Field* (Geneva: ICRC, 2009), p.8.

choosing Afghanistan is that it has represented the frontlines in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) since 2001. Therefore, the securitisation of aid as part of the wider security concern of intervening western states, the central concern of the thesis, is likely to be exhibited there.

Criteria for the choice of IHNGOs for the study

The five IHNGOs selected for this study are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), The International Rescue Committee (IRC), Oxfam, Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF, also known as Doctors Without Borders) and Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE). Only five IHNGOs were chosen since to assess the large number of international aid agencies operating in Afghanistan, let alone the numerous national ones, was beyond the scope of a Master's thesis.¹¹ These five organisations are all long standing, secular IHNGOs, based in either Europe or the US. Four of the five selected aid and development agencies have, since their inception, spread to have affiliated national member organisations in other states. The International Rescue Committee remains solely US based. There are 181 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world. MSF has 18 national members, Oxfam has 11 and CARE has 10. Most of these NGOs' national members are based in western and or developed donor states.¹²

The ICRC and MSF are concerned with the provision of medical care and emergency aid in areas of conflict, but differ in their view about neutrality and silence regarding the conflicts in which they operate. The ICRC, based in Geneva, Switzerland, is the oldest agency concerned with humanitarian issues, having been in existence since the late 19th century. MSF is the most recent IHNGO, and has been in existence since the early 1970s after being formed by French doctors who had split from the ICRC. Oxfam, the IRC and CARE are secular, humanitarian relief and development agencies. Since they carry out both emergency relief and

¹¹ See, for example, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, *The A to Z Guide to Afghanistan Assistance 2009* (Kabul: AREU, 2009), pp.153-259, for an extensive list of international and national assistance organisations active in the country.

¹² Smillie and Minear, pp.17-18.

longer term development work they are multi-mandate agencies as opposed to the humanitarian emergency relief focus of the ICRC and MSF. Oxfam is UK based, while the IRC and CARE are US based. These organisations have been in existence since just before or during the Second World War. All five organisations have information about their activities, history and policies available through publications, policy statements, press releases and their web sites making them suitable for this study. Staff from the IRC and the ICRC provided some personal communication for this study, giving valuable insights into the current situation in Afghanistan and the difficulties facing IHNGOs.

The central issue to be examined

The central proposition for this study is that involvement with the wider international security agenda of major western states and the UN, exemplified by humanitarian intervention in failed or failing states, has compromised the neutrality, impartiality and independence of IHNGOs. This consequently presents a problem for their security in complex emergencies with ongoing conflict where they have become associated with internationally backed governments and intervening forces that are opposed by armed groups. While they attribute attacks on their staff to the blurring of roles caused by humanitarian aid and reconstruction activities conducted by intervening military forces, for example PRTs, IHNGOs may themselves have also become part of the securitisation of aid to manage unstable parts of the world. IHNGOs are part of a larger system of management for these regions that also includes UN agencies, intervening military forces and international organisations such as the World Bank that exists as a substitute for serious long-term political engagement with those regions from the developed world.

While IHNGOs may attribute the loss of humanitarian space, neutrality, impartiality and independence to the actions of the military engaged in similar actions, this study argues further that the concern with the blurring of the lines is a symptom rather than the cause. Since the end of the Cold War, IHNGOs have been involved in interventions in failed and failing

states as a form of soft counter-insurgency, but the complex conflict in Afghanistan, wherein they have been attempting to distance themselves from this association, has brought their involvement in the international security agenda to the fore. The tension between short term emergency relief and longer term and politicised development is a likely fault line along which the IHNGOs may divide in terms of involvement with interventions and state-building.

How the study will proceed

The next chapter will provide an overview of humanitarian intervention since the end of the Cold War using four key examples (Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Kosovo) and will reveal the IHNGO involvement with these interventions and the difficulties they have faced in dealing with complex intra-state conflicts. This will also identify the development of military involvement in aid and reconstruction activities and the difficulties faced by both IHNGO and military actors through involvement with, or attempting to engage in, the process of state building or rebuilding.

Chapter five will examine the specific features of Afghanistan, its culture, geography and history to late 2001, to provide a setting for the current intervention and the particular problems this country presents to the aid community and the international military forces there in attempting to establish a working state.

Chapter six outlines the IHNGOs that have been selected for this study, why they have been chosen, their history, their position on political and human rights issues and their sources of funding.

Chapter seven examines the development of PRTs, their rationale in terms of security, aid and reconstruction, their composition, their activities and the criticism of them from within both the military and IHNGO communities. A focus of this chapter is the choice of using PRTs as part of the slow ISAF deployment in Afghanistan in the years following the fall of the Taliban regime. The example of the PRT's mixed security and

reconstruction roles, their limited effectiveness due to small numbers, the reluctance of troop contributing countries to put their troops in danger and their dependence on US air support lends credence to accusations of this being 'peace- building lite.'¹³ Within this paradigm the IHNGOs are operating in a severely compromised security situation and have become attached to the wider international intervention in the eyes of belligerents on all sides.

Chapter eight examines the specific cases of the IHNGOs selected for this study in the period from late 2001 and the fall of the Taliban regime to the present day. Their activities, their ability to operate, their composition of expatriate and national staff, and their stance on political and security issues, including military involvement in aid and reconstruction, will be explored to assess the degree to which they do conform to the theory that they are part of the managerial security apparatus of the intervening western powers in Afghanistan.

Chapter nine will draw out the main issues that have been examined in the IHNGO military relationship and in the IHNGO placement within the security agenda. Some suggestions will be put forward for ways the IHNGOs could manage involvement within international humanitarian intervention, and ways they might reposition themselves in relation to it.

Chapter ten will conclude with an overview of the study and its main findings and some suggested areas for further study

¹³ Nicholas Stockton, 'War, Aid and International Order,' in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), pp. 21-27.

Chapter Four: Humanitarian Intervention

Introduction

Prior to the Global War on Terror (GWOT) that followed the events of September 11th 2001, the most comprehensive use of military forces in a humanitarian role had been undertaken in the Kosovo intervention in 1999. The humanitarian interventions in Somalia in 1992 through to Kosovo in 1999 illustrate the development of IHNGO and military relationships and some of the major issues that have led to the problems currently faced by the IHNGOs in dealing with military involvement in humanitarian activities. The issues raised include security, neutrality and impartiality for IHNGOs, the tension between IHNGOs aligned with the UN and the military forces engaged in unilateral interventions by states that are major donors to IHNGOs, the differences in culture and knowledge between IHNGOs and the military, and the division between and within IHNGOs themselves regarding taking a political position on involvement with interventions. These are issues implicit in the difference between the state-based emphasis on power and national advancement of realism and the supposedly neutral, trans-border, supra-national (UN) concern with humanitarian values contained within GCS.

Humanitarian military intervention was only made possible in the 1990s, with the end of the super power rivalry that had paralysed the UN Security Council during the Cold War. There had been previous examples of humanitarian intervention, such as the Berlin airlift at the outset of the Cold War which was an example of military forces being used to provide humanitarian aid.¹ Equally, the operation had a political agenda in resisting the spread of Soviet influence. Political concerns were also always present in the more recent post-cold war humanitarian interventions that will be examined in this chapter.

¹ Thomas Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions: Humanitarian Crises and the Responsibility to Protect* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), p.9.

A definition of humanitarian intervention

A working definition of humanitarian intervention, must take into consideration that it is a rather slippery concept and the term 'humanitarian' is frequently invoked by politicians for a host of reasons, not all of which are as altruistic as they may at first seem. Thomas Weiss and Cindy Collins point out that the concept of humanitarianism is challenged "by the motivations and actions of warring parties as well as by humanitarian actors."² J.L. Holzgrefe defines humanitarian intervention as "the threat or use of force across state borders by a state (or group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of the fundamental human rights of individuals other than its own citizens, without the permission of the state within whose territory force is applied."³

IHNGOs and the 'Agenda for Peace'

The securitisation of relief aid and reconstruction which has given rise to PRTs in the case of Afghanistan had its genesis in the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist Eastern bloc, the scene was set for the involvement of NGOs within the peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building agendas of the post-Cold War UN. This was outlined in 1992 by then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his Agenda for Peace.⁴ The Agenda for Peace envisioned IHNGOs within, as Nicholas Stockton suggests, "a close partnership with an ambitious and expansive political project."⁵ Military intervention into states by major powers in the name of humanitarian concerns became a feature of the post-Cold War era. Examples include Northern Iraq in 1991, Somalia in 1992, Bosnia from 1992 to 1995, and Kosovo and East Timor in 1999.⁶ IHNGOs have been involved in these

² Thomas Weiss and Cindy Collins, *Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), p.5.

³ J.L. Holzgrefe, 'The Humanitarian Intervention Debate' in *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal and Political Dilemmas* ed. by J.L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003),p.18.

⁴ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 'An Agenda for Peace,' (1992), <<http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.htm>> [Accessed July 6, 2009](para.16).

⁵ Nicholas Stockton, 'Afghanistan, Aid and International Order' in *Nation Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermeister (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press), p.16.

⁶ See, for example, Weiss and Collins, (Chp 3), 'Key Post-Cold War Arenas,' pp.71-110.

interventions, both in providing assistance for the inhabitants of these states as well as taking a position supporting or opposing the interventions and sometimes working in co-ordination with the intervening forces. For example, Oxfam called for intervention in Somalia,⁷ whereas MSF had opposed intervention in Somalia and Bosnia, but called for intervention in Rwanda.⁸

The UN, state sovereignty and justifications for intervention

Humanitarian military interventions are often not clear cut in terms of international law and the UN. This is one source of tension for many IHNGOs who subscribe to the rule of international law and the authority of the UN as opposed to unilateral intervention by one state or a coalition of states without UN authorisation. Between 1991 and 2000, the UN Security Council authorised seven interventions. Five of these, Bosnia, Rwanda, Albania, Sierra Leone and East Timor, had host state consent so state sovereignty was not an issue.⁹ Somalia and Haiti were authorised by the UN without state consent, indicating that the UN had put humanitarian concerns ahead of state sovereignty, but the “unique nature” of these interventions was noted.¹⁰

Human security as a justification for intervention

The concept of human security that has developed in the last two decades underpins the supposed moral right of a state or group of states, or sometimes the UN, to intervene militarily in the internal affairs of another state. Human rights are central to the human security view of international relations and these rights are seen by those who support humanitarian interventions as now being more important than the previously accepted position of the state as the most important entity in international law. The sovereignty of a state from the GCS perspective is considered to be no

⁷ Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist: Dilemmas of Relief Work in Famine and War* (London: Earthscan, 2002), p.21.

⁸ Rieff, p.167.

⁹ Adam Roberts, 'The United Nations and humanitarian intervention', in *Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty* ed. by Jennifer Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.84.

¹⁰ Roberts, p.84.

longer as important as that state's duty to protect its own citizens, therefore human security prioritises the security of people rather than states.¹¹ This is usually invoked by intervening powers in a case of internal conflict in a state or failed state that is causing major crises such as genocide, famine or large scale displacement of populations. This view is at odds with the traditional realist state-centric prioritising of state sovereignty.

The case of Kosovo in 1999 is an example of the ascendance of human security and human rights over state sovereignty. The ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians from the then province of southern Serbia in the Republic of Yugoslavia was held as the justification for a coalition of states, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), to conduct an aerial bombing campaign on Serbia. At the time, it should be noted, some IHNGOs actively called for and coordinated with NATO in the intervention.¹² It has been argued, however, that the intervention was undertaken by NATO due to its perceived inaction and compromised credibility, in a realist, state-based power sense, following its previous failure to prevent the earlier wars in Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia.¹³ However, humanitarian concerns were put to the fore in justifying the NATO action in bombing Yugoslavia. British Prime Minister Tony Blair even stated that it was a "war for human rights".¹⁴ This statement also indicates the slippery position for IHNGOs wherein their concerns regarding humanitarian issues can easily become politicised, or be seen to support a particular political or even military action.¹⁵

A complex situation has developed as the clear cut lines of state sovereignty have sometimes been trumped by humanitarian concerns

¹¹ Kaldor, p. 182.

¹² Rieff, pp.196-229

¹³ Nicholas Wheeler, 'The Humanitarian Responsibilities of Sovereignty: Explaining the Development of a New Norm of Military Intervention for Humanitarian Purposes in International Society,' in *Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty* ed. by Jennifer Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.49.

¹⁴ Tony Blair quoted in Kaldor, p. 57.

¹⁵ Vaux, pp.41-42.

championed by IHNGOs. These concerns, while often valid, can also be exploited for realist state-centric agendas. The situation in Afghanistan is an example where the intervening forces claim to champion concerns such as human and gender rights that are also central to some IHNGOs, yet, at the same time, the IHNGOs are trying to distance themselves from the political and military agenda of the intervening forces to retain acceptance with the local population and avoid being targeted by insurgents.

IHNGO involvement in humanitarian interventions

IHNGOs have taken a variety of positions in terms of their policy towards interventions in the last two decades. Their support for military intervention in situations such as Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo has led to a situation where IHNGOs now find themselves working in co-ordination or in competition with the military forces of intervening powers in a situation such as in Afghanistan. For IHNGOs there is a tension between a need for security and for donor government support as well as attempting to appear neutral and impartial. The increasing role of military forces in supposedly humanitarian roles such as providing emergency aid and longer term reconstruction projects have had impacts on the IHNGOs involved in the same activities in the same regions. The humanitarian interventions of the 1990s were where the groundwork was laid that would lead to the present day issues for IHNGOs and PRTs over humanitarian space in Afghanistan. These issues include security, donor government funding, state and IHNGO relations with the UN, the types of aid provided, positioning on issues, differences in organisational culture, and respective knowledge and competencies between IHNGOs and PRTs.

Each of the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s differs from its predecessors or contemporaries and the lessons learned were not always applicable in another situation. This is also worth noting since differences in geography, economy, history, culture, religion and the internal and international political context of an intervention will all have a major influence on the nature of the humanitarian intervention, its duration, and

its success or failure. To this end the influence of these factors in Afghanistan will be outlined in chapter four.

It is therefore worth examining the background to and IHNGO involvement with four of the major interventions of the 1990s, before the GWOT started in 2001. Peter Hoffman and Thomas Weiss identify the events in Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Kosovo as the four “key traumas of the 1990s”.¹⁶ These will be examined to trace the development of IHNGO and military relations.

Somalia

Somalia in the Horn of Africa had been a client state of both the Soviets and, later, the US during the Cold War. The dictatorship of President Siad Barre ended in early 1991 when he was overthrown by a coalition of Somali warlords, who immediately started fighting each other for territory and resources.¹⁷ Drought and civil war rapidly laid waste to the country, especially in the south, with one third of the population estimated to be at risk from starvation in 1992.¹⁸ The few aid agencies operating at that time in the failing state found their resources being pillaged to supply the militias while the starving population went without. The few remaining aid agencies hired armed guards which really amounted to paying protection money to warlords.¹⁹

International attention, generated through news media coverage, especially on TV, and calls for action from NGOs such as that by Phillip Johnson of CARE,²⁰ led to a UN authorised UN Mission in Somalia (UNOSOM 1) arriving in April 1992 and a US led Unified Task Force

¹⁶ Peter J. Hoffman and Thomas Weiss, *Sword and Salve: Confronting New Wars and Humanitarian Crises* (Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), p.117.

¹⁷ Michael Maren, *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and Charity* (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

¹⁸ Shin-Wa Lee, ‘Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations on Humanitarian Action’ in *Unintended Consequences of Peace Keeping Operations* ed. by Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric Conig and Ramesh Thakur (Tokyo: United Nations Press, 2007), p.98.

¹⁹ Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid can Support Peace or War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p.136.

²⁰ Maren, p.219.

(UNITAF) to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid arriving in December 1992. TV cameras were waiting on the beaches when US marines landed,²¹ and also when former founding member of MSF, Bernard Kouchner, theatrically waded ashore with a sack of rice on his back.²² TV cameras were also there when dead US servicemen were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu in October 1993 after an unsuccessful attempt to capture leading members of a faction led by Somali warlord, Mohamed Farah Aideed. The Clinton administration withdrew US forces soon after.²³

IHNGOs in the Somalia intervention

The ICRC remained active in Somalia during the chaos of 1991-1992, a period when most other aid agencies had left due to the security situation. However, it hired and paid (in rice) armed guards with a consequent loss of 20 percent of its supplies in 1992.²⁴ Oxfam had withdrawn from Somalia in 1990, and was late to return in 1992. Upon their return, Oxfam were also initially forced to employ armed guards, prior to the military intervention.²⁵ Oxfam was slow to get involved with the intervention, but eventually broke with a long pacifist tradition in calling for and supporting intervention in Somalia.²⁶ MSF had opposed the intervention in Somalia and had argued that the intervening military forces, considering the complex and factionalised situation there, would end up engaged in “making war upon them (the people of Somalia), even if it did so in the name of halting a famine.”²⁷ Their predictions were realised in the fighting during 1993 between Somali warlords and the forces of UNOSOM. CARE actively lobbied for the military intervention. In October 1992, Philip Johnston, president of CARE, organised “a security co-ordination

²¹ Robert DiPrizzio, *Armed Humanitarians* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), p.46.

²² Ignatief, p.60.

²³ DiPrizzio, p.49.

²⁴ David P Forsythe, ‘The International Committee of the Red Cross and Humanitarian Assistance: A Policy Analysis,’ *International Review of The Red Cross*, 314 (1996), 512-531 (p.515).

²⁵ Michael Pugh, ‘The Challenge of Civil-Military Relations in International Peace Operations,’ *Disasters*, 25(4),(2001), 345-357, p.352.

²⁶ Vaux, p.21 and pp.149-155.

²⁷ Reiff, p.167.

mechanism for all NGOs, and this became the US-led Civilian-Military Operations Center (CMOC).²⁸ This is an early example of co-ordination between IHNGOs and military forces in a complex emergency. The IRC like fellow US based IHNGO CARE, and other NGOs belonging to the US NGO coalition Inter Action, advocated for the intervention through a petition to the US National Security Advisor in November 1992.²⁹ The IRC carried out food delivery in 1993, but also concentrated on water, sanitation and income generation programmes.³⁰

The forces of the military intervention were able to establish security allowing the delivery of aid alleviating the famine which was the original humanitarian objective.³¹ The IHNGOs, however, proved difficult for the UN to bring together under one organisational umbrella, both in terms of working with each other and in coordinating with the military for their own security.³² They were often also competing with each other for attention and resources.³³ The difficulty in getting IHNGOs to coordinate with the military also came from IHNGO concerns about losing their close contacts with the local population.³⁴ However, the political state-building objectives set by the UN for UNOSOM II undermined any initial success in establishing security for humanitarian agencies. The attempts to disarm and neutralise Aideed, in an attempt to remove a spoiler in the failing peace negotiations, led to the fighting that precipitated the US and ultimately UN withdrawal.³⁵ Revenge attacks by Aideed's supporters, who perceived UNOSOM II, and therefore IHNGOs involved with the UN, as

²⁸ David Laitin, 'Somalia: Intervention in Internal Conflict,' paper presented to the conference on Intervention in Internal Conflict: Insights for Afghanistan, (Greenbelt, MD, Dec 7, 2001), <<http://www.cissm.umd.edu/papers/files/somalia.pdf>> [Accessed May 6 2009], p.5.

²⁹ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia* (Sterling: Kumarian Press, 2009), p.81.

³⁰ Weiss and Collins, p.64.

³¹ Shin-Wa Lee, Unintended consequences, p.99.

³² Vaux, p.144.

³³ Vaux, pp.144-145.

³⁴ Francis Kofi Abiew, *From Civil Strife to Civic Society: NGO-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations. Occasional Paper No.39* (Ottawa, Ontario: Norman Patterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, 2003), p.9.

³⁵ Lee, *Unintended Consequences* p.99.

having now taken sides in the conflict, included an attack on aid workers from the IHNGO World Vision.³⁶

The Somalia crisis revealed the difficulty for the UN of coordinating military, political and humanitarian actors with competing goals, agendas and organisational structures.³⁷ The intervention in Somalia and the disparate operations and responses of humanitarian agencies was seen by some observers as an example of the need for better coordination of NGOs in such emergencies.³⁸ Resolving these problems would lead in the future to integrated missions and the development of political, military and humanitarian coherence. Although the UN in the Somalia intervention did not coordinate civil-military relations with NGOs as a whole, some individual troop contributing countries did. For example, Australian forces in Baidoa developed a Civil-Military Operations Team (CMOT).³⁹

Since the intervention of the early 1990s, many IHNGOs including CARE, MSF and Oxfam have relocated their base of operations outside Somalia, often to Nairobi in neighbouring Kenya, and few expatriate staff can work in Somalia due to continuing violence and insecurity. In October 2007 the situation had deteriorated so much that IHNGOs including CARE, Oxfam, Save the Children UK and World Vision International issued a joint statement regarding the lack of security and consequent lack of access to populations in need of assistance.⁴⁰ The ICRC continues operations in Somalia through the local Somali Red Crescent Society.⁴¹

³⁶ Abiew, p.15.

³⁷ Karin von Hippel, 'Blurring of Mandates in Somalia' in *Humanitarian Diplomacy: Practitioners and their Craft* ed. By Larry Minear and Hazel Smith (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007), p.317.

³⁸ Weiss and Collins, p.47.

³⁹ Michael Williams, *Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping, Adelphi Paper 321* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.63.

⁴⁰ Oxfam, 'International NGOs cannot adequately respond to the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in Somalia' (October 30, 2007)

<<http://www.oxfam.org/en/node/215>>[Accessed 8 May 2009]

⁴¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'The ICRC in Somalia 2009.'

<<http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/somalia?opendocument&link=home>> [Accessed 8 May 2009].

The intervention in Somalia had started out as a humanitarian venture, but the political agenda of state-building undertaken by UNOSOM II without sufficient force to back it up ultimately undermined the humanitarian operation. The ensuing withdrawal of UN forces resulted in a fragmented and failed state with no effective central government and a dire security situation that exists to this day. As the first humanitarian intervention of the post Cold War era, Somalia had revealed the difficulties of getting the humanitarians and the intervening military to coordinate. The advocacy for intervention, as exemplified by CARE, demonstrated that NGOs could influence state policy. This would lead to an exaggerated belief by some NGOs in their ability to influence events as later interventions would reveal. However, the first steps towards closer coordination were taken in the development of civil-military cooperation (CMC). It also revealed the dangers for IHNGO operations and their supposed neutrality when they were aligned with an intervening military in a failed state-building operation.

Bosnia 1992-1995

The disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s has been dealt with in detail elsewhere,⁴² but the war in Bosnia between the competing Bosnian Serb, Bosnian Muslim and Croat forces was the conflict that drew major international humanitarian attention and faltering UN intervention. Two important innovations in the relationship of military forces with humanitarian agencies that emerged in Bosnia were humanitarian corridors and UN safe havens. The effort to keep Sarajevo airport open for delivery of humanitarian aid and defending aid convoys exemplified the former.⁴³ The UN abandonment of the safe havens at Srebrenica and

⁴² See, for example, Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia*, (London: Penguin, 1995); Tom Gallagher, *The Balkans After the Cold War*, (London: Routledge, 2003).

⁴³ Dick A. Leurdijk, 'United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR),' in *Humanitarian Actions and Peace-keeping Operations: Debriefing and Lessons: Report and Recommendations of the International Conference, Singapore, February 1997* (London: Kluwer, 1997), p.75.

Zepa in 1995 made the latter an infamous black mark against the UN.⁴⁴ The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) proved to be seriously compromised by the inadequate troop numbers provided to carry out its mandate,⁴⁵ and the unwillingness of the US to become involved militarily for fear of being dragged into the quagmire of the Balkan wars following the debacle in Somalia.⁴⁶ The humanitarian focus of the UN and NATO roles until late in the war, in 1995, has been interpreted by some commentators as an alternative action allowing them to avoid serious military and political engagement to resolve the crisis which, in turn, undermined their credibility in attempting to bring the warring factions to a negotiated settlement.⁴⁷

The Bosnian crisis led to some innovations in terms of humanitarian actions by the military and in civil-military relations between UN forces and humanitarian agencies. In 1993 a Civil-Military Operations Centre (CMOC) was established in Bosnia to facilitate information sharing and coordination of UN agencies, NGOs and the military. This was a major innovation that has been employed in subsequent peace operations.⁴⁸ However, NGO-military relations were often strained by the difficulties faced by UNPROFOR in “conducting a peacekeeping operation in the middle of a war.”⁴⁹ As in Somalia, UNPROFOR troops protected aid convoys, which sometimes led to resentment from opposing factions and consequently attacks on aid convoys and humanitarian workers from paramilitary groups from all sides.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Regarding the issue of safe havens, see, for example, Paddy Ashdown, *Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace in the 21st Century* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 2006), p.33.; Terry, *Condemned to Repeat* pp. 30-32.

⁴⁵ Yasushi Akashi, former UN Under Secretary-General, Department of Humanitarian Affairs, DPKO, in *Humanitarian Actions and Peace-keeping Operations: Debriefing and Lessons* (London: Kluwer, 1997), p.83.

⁴⁶ Referred to as the 'Mogadishu Line,' there was a concern that US troops, if included in the UN peacekeeping operation, would move from protection of humanitarian aid to active combat, see, Weiss and Collins, p.89.

⁴⁷ Steven Burg, 'Intervention in Internal Conflict: The Case of Bosnia,' paper presented to the conference on Intervention in Internal Conflict: Insights for Afghanistan, (Greenbelt, MD, Dec 7, 2001), <<http://www.cissm.umd.edu/papers/files/burg.pdf>> [Accessed May 8 2009], p.8.; Ashdown, p.33 and p.145.

⁴⁸ Williams, p.37.

⁴⁹ Williams, p.43.

⁵⁰ Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions*, p.80.

IHNGOs in Bosnia

Due to these issues, as well as their stated impartiality, neutrality and contemporary experience in Somalia, the ICRC organised independent transportation and distanced themselves from UNPRFOR protection.⁵¹ However, attacks on humanitarian workers were another feature of internal wars fought by paramilitary or criminal groups that became evident in Bosnia. The ICRC withdrew from the country between May 1992 and late 1993 after one of its officials was killed by an attack on a convoy.⁵² Other major IHNGOS became subcontracting implementing partners to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and donor governments, and the number of international NGOs in the former Yugoslavia increased to 91 in 1993, while only 12 NGOs operated in Serbia, which furthered the perception that they were not impartial or neutral from the Serbian perspective.⁵³ For example, CARE undertook a major water purification project in Sarajevo funded by the Canadian government in 1994.⁵⁴ Events in Bosnia also revealed differences between the ICRC and MSF. The ICRC knew of the existence of Serb controlled concentration camps holding Muslim prisoners but did not reveal this at the time, although they were later revealed by journalists.⁵⁵ MSF was present at the fall of the UN safe haven of Srebrenica and later called for an enquiry into the events surrounding it that implicated the French government.⁵⁶ The IRC initially operated in Sarajevo in 1992, later it expanded to other centres in Bosnia. The IRC provided medicine, food and assisted with the evacuation of refugees.⁵⁷ From 1992, the IRC also operated in Serbia and Montenegro

⁵¹ Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions*, p.83.

⁵² Rieff, p.133.

⁵³ Weiss, pp. 83-84.

⁵⁴ CARE, 'Country Profile: Bosnia Herzegovina/Croatia,' <<http://www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/45.asp>> [Accessed 12 May 2009]

⁵⁵ Rieff, pp.148-149.

⁵⁶ Mediciens Sans Frontieres, 'Srebrenica, Five Years Later,' <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=report&objectid=EB906D4C-7CAF-4219-AE9D00DA465464B7&method=full_html> [Accessed 12 May 2009]

⁵⁷ Alton Kastner, *A Brief History of the International Rescue Committee* (New York: International Rescue Committee, 2001), p.17.

with Serb refugees fleeing from the Bosnian and Croatian wars.⁵⁸ Oxfam entered Bosnia in 1993 and concentrated on supplying clothing to the many internally displaced people. However, the refugees from Srebrenica were often more in need of counselling, emotional support and information about family members following the extreme trauma they had experienced.⁵⁹

The example of second hand clothing provided to people traumatised and displaced by a vicious civil war sums up a frequent criticism of the humanitarian intervention in Bosnia. The argument is that UNRPFOR, the UNHCR and the accompanying IHNGOs were providing the international community with an alternative to real political and military action to resolve the crisis; “the politics of rescue over policy,”⁶⁰ “a fig leaf for political and military inaction.”⁶¹ The bitter experiences of the interventions in Bosnia and Somalia would influence UN and US decision making in the crisis that emerged in Rwanda in 1994.

Rwanda and the African Great Lakes crisis

Underlying ethnic and political tensions, a legacy of Belgian colonial rule, set the scene for the Rwandan genocide of 1994 perpetrated by Hutu militias upon Tutsi and moderate Hutus.⁶² The tiny military presence of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) proved completely unable to prevent the slaughter of 800 000 people between April and July 1994, while the international community, including the UN, stood by.⁶³ The French ‘Operation Turquoise’ had UN authorisation, but came too late to stop the genocide.⁶⁴ In France, the media and NGOs

⁵⁸ International Rescue Committee, *The IRC in Serbia and Montenegro* <<http://www.theirc.org/where/serbia-montenegro>> [Accessed 12 May 2009], (para.3).

⁵⁹ Vaux, pp.171-172.

⁶⁰ Weiss, p.92.

⁶¹ Smillie and Minear, p.160.

⁶² Alain Destexhe, *Rwanda and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), p.71.

⁶³ See, for example, Adam LeBor, *Complicity with Evil: The United Nations in the Age of Genocide* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); James Kurth, ‘Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq: Legal Ideals vs. Military Realities,’ *Orbis* (Winter, 2006), 87-101, p.91.

⁶⁴ Destexhe, pp. 53-55.

including MSF had advocated military intervention. MSF, which had opposed intervention in Somalia and Bosnia, argued that the solution required political and military action rather than just humanitarian assistance.⁶⁵ The UN and US inaction on Rwanda, exemplified by the Clinton administration's careful avoidance of the word genocide so as to not be obliged to act under the UN genocide convention,⁶⁶ is believed to have been a reaction to the recent (October 1993) debacle in Somalia.⁶⁷ The Tutsi led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) retook most of Rwanda from the Hutu government in July 1994 and this in turn led to a massive displacement of one and a half million Hutu refugees along with those responsible for the killing, many of whom crossed into Eastern Zaire (later the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC).⁶⁸

IHNGO involvement in Rwanda and Zaire/DRC

At the onset of the carnage in early April 1994 most IHNGOs and agencies of the UN left the country. A notable exception was the ICRC which stayed on throughout the crisis.⁶⁹ The few MSF workers left in the country joined forces with the ICRC.⁷⁰ It was to the Hutu refugee camps in Eastern Zaire around Goma and Bukavu that humanitarian intervention was finally directed. The belated US led Operation Support Hope (OSH) was a military humanitarian operation and was coordinated by a CMOC which coordinated the activities of the military with NGOs and UN agencies.⁷¹ OSH, along with UNAMIRII, did improve security for IHNGOs who were, however, confronted with the problem that the aid they were now able to deliver was feeding killers from the Rwandan genocide as well as innocent

⁶⁵ Rieff, pp.167-168.

⁶⁶ Lee, p.101.

⁶⁷ Destexhe, pp. 49-51.

⁶⁸ Christopher E. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p.51.

⁶⁹ There is a first-hand account describing the period of April to July 1994 by the ICRC Head of Delegation in Rwanda in 1994, Phillippe Gaillard, in a speech given at the International Museum of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 2004, Phillippe Gaillard, 'Rwanda, 1994'
<<http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/5XKCA5?OpenDocument>>[Accessed May 12 2009]

⁷⁰ Weiss, p.103.

⁷¹ Weiss, pp.105-106.

civilians.⁷² Some IHNGOs including the IRC and MSF (France) withdrew from the camps because of this issue in 1995.⁷³

Co-ordination between UN agencies, IHNGOs and the military of OSH were considered to be “much improved on the Somalia experience.”⁷⁴ In the Rwandan capital, Kigali, the UN Rwandan Emergency Office (UNREO) was established by the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in the same location as the CMOC established by the US military. Liaison with IHNGOs was carried out through this centre.⁷⁵ Military personnel also provided logistical, information and transport support for UN agencies and IHNGOs. This even extended, in one case, to Irish soldiers wearing the T shirts of Goal, an Irish NGO, while carrying out work for them.⁷⁶

Military–NGO co-ordination during the period of OSH in July to September of 1994 and UNAMIR II from July 1994 to March 1996 presents evidence of the developing relationship between the two. In terms of a humanitarian intervention, UNAMIR I and most NGOs were powerless to do anything except stand aside or evacuate during the genocide. It should be noted that some NGOs were sending warnings of the impending genocide to the UN that went unheeded.⁷⁷ The aid delivered to the camps for Hutu refugees in Eastern Zaire had the unfortunate effect of also assisting the perpetrators of the genocide who then contributed to further instability, eventually contributing to the civil war in DRC.⁷⁸

The situation in the camps in Zaire demonstrated that belligerent parties would attempt to manipulate IHNGOs and their aid for military and political ends. The ICRC remained due to their neutral and impartial stance

⁷² Vaux, p.188.

⁷³ Terry, p.195.

⁷⁴ Trevor Findlay, ‘Background Paper: UNAMIR and the Rwandan Humanitarian Catastrophe’ in *Humanitarian Actions and Peace-keeping Operations: Debriefing and Lessons* (London:Kluwer,1997),p.185.

⁷⁵ Trevor Findlay, ‘UNAMIR and the Rwandan Humanitarian Catastrophe, p.186.

⁷⁶ Antonio Donini, ‘The Bureaucracy and the Free spirits: Stagnation and Innovation in the Relationship Between the UN and NGOs’ in *NGOs, The UN and Global Governance* ed. by Thomas Weiss and Leon Gordenker (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner,1996), p.97.

⁷⁷ Di Prizio, p.84.

⁷⁸ Terry, p.219.

regarding victims of violence. Representatives of CARE UK were divided about whether to pull out or remain in the camps.⁷⁹ Oxfam also debated pulling out but decided to remain in the camps due to the importance of water treatment, a speciality of Oxfam, to avoid cholera in the camps.⁸⁰ CARE, Oxfam and MSF (3 sections, not France) all signed a petition threatening withdrawal unless security and access to those in need improved.⁸¹ The exiled Hutu regime in the camps then quelled the violence since the withdrawal of IHNGOs would have compromised the regime's attempts to gain international standing and its ability to negotiate with the new government of Rwanda.⁸²

The late military intervention following the initial political inaction in the case of Rwanda led to aid being delivered to militarised refugee camps. This confronted IHNGOs with a dilemma about impartiality or deciding between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' victims and the contribution of humanitarian aid in fuelling or prolonging conflicts.⁸³

Kosovo

Kosovo was, until the events of 1999, the southernmost province of Serbia in the rump state of the former Yugoslavia. It shares a border with Albania, Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). However, the population of Kosovo consisted of 90 percent ethnic Kosovar Albanians vastly outnumbering the Serbian minority.⁸⁴ Violence escalated in the late 1990s as fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Serbian forces clashed, provoking a major Serb military crackdown which ultimately led to military intervention by NATO in 1999, resulting in an exodus of an estimated 820,000 refugees into Macedonia and Albania.⁸⁵ Following the end of the NATO bombing campaign, the Kosovar refugees

⁷⁹ Terry, p.197.

⁸⁰ Nick Stockton of Oxfam, interviewed by Terry, p.201.

⁸¹ Terry, pp.197-201.

⁸² Terry, p.177.

⁸³ Terry, pp.213-215.

⁸⁴ DiPrizio, pp.131-132.

⁸⁵ UNHCR, 'The Balkans: Serbia and Montenegro: Kosovo,' <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/balkans-country?country=kosovo&gclid=CLnZs5LwxpoCFQUwpAodJklisQ>> [Accessed 15 May 2009]

returned and reprisals provoked another refugee outflow of 230,000 Serb and Roma refugees into Serbia.⁸⁶ Unlike the interventions in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, the NATO intervention in Kosovo did not have UN authorisation.⁸⁷ This had implications for the stated neutrality and impartiality of IHNGOs, many of whom were based in the UK or US which were the lead nations in NATO involved in this operation. Following the Serb withdrawal, the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) occupied the province and divided responsibility for the five different regions of the province between the individual national military forces of NATO.⁸⁸ This arrangement has a similarity with the PRTs of contributing nations within ISAF in the current deployment in Afghanistan, with each nation's PRT having responsibility for a particular province. Compared to earlier interventions, the Kosovo conflict revealed IHNGOs had increasing misgivings about the deployment of military forces in a humanitarian role.

Military involvement in humanitarian relief in Kosovo

Despite the claimed humanitarian motives for the NATO intervention in Kosovo, there was less overt public support from major IHNGOs than had been the case in Somalia, Bosnia or Rwanda, and more questioning of the motives, effectiveness and implications for humanitarianism of the operation afterwards.⁸⁹ The UNHCR, the coordinating body for many major humanitarian agencies, was underprepared for the refugee flow into Macedonia that increased with the onset of the bombing campaign. This was partly due to the UNHCR not wishing to signal the expectation of the size of the refugee flow to the Milosevic regime in Yugoslavia or to alarm

⁸⁶ UNHCR, 'The Balkans: Serbia and Montenegro: Kosovo,'

⁸⁷ Michael Byers and Simon Chesterman, 'Changing the Rules About Rules? Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention and the Future of International Law,' in *Humanitarian Intervention; Ethical Legal and Political Dilemmas*, ed. by J.L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.183.

⁸⁸ Thomas Mockaitis, 'Reluctant Partners: Civil-Military Cooperation in Kosovo,' *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 15 (2004), 38-69, (p.46).

⁸⁹ See, for example, James Orbinski, 'Kosovo: Aid Under Siege Once Again,' (20 October, 1999),

<http://www.msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=0F722CC0-BF6A-11D4-852200902789187E&method=full_html> [Accessed May 18 2009]; Beatrice Megevand-Roggo, 'After the Kosovo Conflict, a Genuine Humanitarian Space: A Utopian Concept or an Essential Requirement?' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 837, (2000), 31-47.

authorities in Macedonia where a large proportion of the refugees would go.⁹⁰ In April 1999, early in the NATO bombing campaign, Sadako Ogata, the then UN High Commissioner for Refugees, asked NATO to coordinate humanitarian relief for Kosovar refugees.⁹¹ For the first time, the UNHCR accepted direct military assistance. Most donor government aid (from the intervening powers), however, was directed bilaterally through national aid agencies and military channels.⁹² NATO forces rather than NGOs initially took over the humanitarian relief operations in neighbouring Albania and Macedonia.⁹³ Sometimes, as a result of an emphasis on the transport and logistical strengths of the military and a lack of humanitarian aid experience in complex emergencies, there were inappropriate types of aid, air drops in the wrong locations, a lack of information about the health of refugees, little aid to Serb refugees and a lack of transparency about expenditure.⁹⁴ Regardless of these shortcomings, this indicates the readiness by 1999, compared to the start of the decade, of military forces to engage directly in humanitarian activities as part of their operations.

IHNGOs in the Kosovo intervention

Nearly all IHNGOs withdrew from Kosovo ahead of the NATO bombing campaign that lasted from March to June of 1999. The ICRC was the only agency able to gain access to provide aid to victims of the NATO bombing in Serbia as well as Kosovo during the conflict. This was due in part to its neutral stance and silence about Serb atrocities in Kosovo.⁹⁵ The dangers were still present; an ICRC vehicle struck a landmine in Kosovo, killing an Albanian doctor and wounding two others.⁹⁶ CARE was forced to withdraw just prior to the bombing campaign due to the deteriorating security situation. A representative of CARE Australia, Steve Pratt, was imprisoned

⁹⁰ Susan Woodward, 'Humanitarian War: A new Consensus?' *Disasters*, 25(4) (2001), 331-344, (pp.339-340).

⁹¹ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 2000), p.124.

⁹² Woodward, p.340.

⁹³ Rieff, p.204.

⁹⁴ Weiss and Collins, p.99.

⁹⁵ Fiona Fox, 'New Humanitarianism: Does it provide a Moral Banner for the 21st Century?' *Disasters*, 25 (4) (2001), 275-289, at 278.

⁹⁶ Steve Pratt, *Duty of CARE* (East Roseville, NSW: Simon and Schuster, 2000), p.109.

for five months by Serb authorities, supposedly for spying.⁹⁷ This was a very clear indication of the suspicion about the lack of neutrality that some NGOs faced. During 1998 MSF tried to draw attention to the Serb atrocities and conditions in refugee camps.⁹⁸ MSF was also forced to leave just after the start of hostilities, partly due to harassment by Serb security and paramilitary forces for the perception they were close to a Kosovar Albanian NGO, the Mother Teresa Society.⁹⁹ The IRC advocated the use of force against Serbia¹⁰⁰ and, with US government financial support, carried out food drops to civilians in Kosovo from the air in defiance of Serbian threats to shoot down the planes.¹⁰¹ With the return to Kosovo of Albanian refugees from Macedonia and Albania in the summer of 1999 the IRC provided clean water, clothing, cooking supplies and reconstruction assistance.¹⁰² It was less troubled about the ideological and ethical concerns regarding the humanitarian military intervention than was the UK based Oxfam which struggled with establishing a position regarding the military intervention. It had recommended the use of the 'threat of force' to British foreign secretary, Robin Cook, in 1998 prior to the war.¹⁰³ Later as the bombing was underway, Oxfam adopted a pragmatic approach, assisting in the refugee camps but avoiding making a public statement supporting the intervention so as to avoid danger to their staff still in Serbia, or opposing it and putting them at odds with the UK government and NATO, who they had to work with on the ground.¹⁰⁴

IHNGO reactions to the military involvement in humanitarian aid

Some British based IHNGOs made an effort to avoid direct involvement with their military in the refugee crisis in the surrounding countries. The ICRC (UK) resisted Department for International Development (DFID)

⁹⁷ Pratt describes this in detail in his book.

⁹⁸ Orbinski, para.3.

⁹⁹ Pratt, p.109.

¹⁰⁰ Rieff, 214-215.

¹⁰¹ U.N Wire, 'UN to Deliver Food to Starving People Inside Kosovo' (June 3 1999) <http://www.unwire.org/unwire/19990603/2968_story.asp> [Accessed 20 May, 2009], (para.3).

¹⁰² International Rescue Committee, 'The IRC in Kosovo' <<http://www.theirc.org/where/kosovo>> [Accessed 21 May,2009], (para.4).

¹⁰³ Vaux, p.21.

¹⁰⁴ Vaux, p.21.

requests to take on a refugee camp run by the British military in Albania.¹⁰⁵ CARE UK also raised funds publicly for its Kosovo operation so as to avoid donor government influence and assert its claim of impartiality.¹⁰⁶ MSF also lobbied against the sidelining of the UNHCR, which resulted in certain fundamental relief functions, especially the registration of refugees, not being carried out, as well as refusing NATO funding or working with the NATO run camps.¹⁰⁷ MSF also claimed that despite the huge financial and logistical resources behind the NATO built camps, the majority of Kosovar refugees were housed locally by the civilian population.¹⁰⁸ Oxfam called for greater co-ordination and coherence between NATO, UNHCR, donor governments and NGOs, especially with regard to refugee camps being established by donor governments and their militaries outside of UNHCR control. Oxfam was supportive of the use of NATO resources for logistics and transport, but urged UNHCR management of the refugee camps.¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

The history of military and IHNGO involvement in humanitarian interventions since the end of the Cold War reveals a relationship that has been at times complimentary and at others difficult or even conflicted. In Somalia the need for security led IHNGOs to seek military involvement to support the delivery of aid. In Bosnia IHNGOs were supported in delivering aid by a military force that did not have a mandate to stop the war or enforce a political settlement. In the Rwanda/African Great Lakes crisis the early imperative for military action to avert genocide was missed and the later intervention risked providing aid to those who carried out the genocide. In Kosovo military forces carried out humanitarian aid work while IHNGOs were conflicted about being involved with the war and its lack of UN authorisation and the consequent sidelining of the UNHCR.

¹⁰⁵ Pugh, p.354.

¹⁰⁶ Pugh, p.354.

¹⁰⁷ Orbinski, para.11.

¹⁰⁸ Orbinski, para.9.

¹⁰⁹ Oxfam GB, 'Humanitarian Response to Kosovo Refugee Crisis: Aid Effort in Danger of Failing,' (18 May, 1999) <<http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/Kosovo/Kosovo-Current%20News180.htm>> [Accessed May 20, 2009].

The early example of active lobbying by some IHNGOs for military action in humanitarian emergencies, for example, CARE in Somalia¹¹⁰ and Oxfam in Bosnia,¹¹¹ has been replaced by a concern on the part of IHNGOs about a loss of neutrality, co-option for political agendas and a loss of humanitarian space.¹¹² Nonetheless, since the Somalia and Bosnia interventions, IHNGOs and military forces have combined their actions more closely, especially through the military initiative of civil-military co-ordination and communications centres and staff dedicated to these tasks.

IHNGOs now also undertake development work, governance and capacity building programmes that support the state-building process, and this involves them politically as implementing partners for intervening states and new internationally backed governments. For example, today in Kosovo all of CARE's programmes deal with longer term issues that relate to state development such as democratisation, conflict resolution, economic growth and regional development.¹¹³

Oxfam's recommendation for the military to use its logistical advantages in the Kosovar refugee camps but to leave management of the camps to the UNHCR echoes current calls by IHNGOs for the military to concentrate on security in Afghanistan, but to let the IHNGOs provide aid and development assistance. This attempt by IHNGOs to fence off certain parts of aid work from military involvement but advocate for it in others is a recurring theme.

Issues in the IHNGO- military (GCS-Realist) relationship since 1990

Major themes that have come to the fore in the era of post Cold War humanitarian interventions include the tension between the need for

¹¹⁰ Laitin, p.5.

¹¹¹ Vaux, p.35.

¹¹² Beatrice Megevand-Roggo, 'After the Kosovo Conflict, a Genuine Humanitarian Space: A Utopian Concept or an Essential Requirement?' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 837, (2000), 31-47.

¹¹³ CARE, 'Kosovo: Country Profile,'

<<http://www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/70.asp>> [Accessed March 1, 2010].

security that can be provided for humanitarian workers and those in need of their assistance by the military of intervening forces and the desire of major IHNGOs to maintain impartiality and neutrality. The incidence of unilateral or coalition interventions such as in Kosovo and more recently in Iraq also demonstrate the divide between the UN and its agencies such as the UNHCR, with whom IHNGOs have worked in the past, and the militaries of non-UN authorised interventions as mentioned above. This also extends into the IHNGO emphasis on non state-centric GCS concerns such as human rights, human security and international humanitarian law. These are concerns for which IHNGOs have aligned themselves with the UN, and for which some, such as the ICRC, Oxfam, CARE and MSF have consultative status with the UN. However, the UN, as an international force, has often been sidelined by the US and its allies in the GWOT and it has become a target for opponents of the US since 2003 in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another tension is present in the cultures of IHNGOs compared with that of military forces and the respective strengths of the two sets of actors. The military have advantages in terms of transportation, security and logistics, while IHNGOs possess knowledge about the needs of those they are assisting and they often have longer-term involvement in the theatre of operations compared to the shorter length of military tours of duty.¹¹⁴

Within the IHNGO community there is debate about the development of a so called 'new humanitarianism'.¹¹⁵ This debate tends to divide between those who see an active political role in promoting human rights, democracy and liberalism as part of IHNGO activity and those who maintain the ICRC line of total neutrality and impartiality, even if this means being silent about human rights abuses and providing aid to all sides in a conflict regardless of perceptions of deserving and undeserving

¹¹⁴ Thomas R. Mockaitis, 'Reluctant Partners: Civil Military Co-operation in Kosovo', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 15, (2004), 38-69.

¹¹⁵ Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security* (London: Zed Books, 2001), pp.75-107; Fiona Fox, 'New Humanitarianism: Does it provide a Moral Banner for the 21st Century?' *Disasters*, 25 (4) (2001), 275-289.

victims.¹¹⁶ This indicates the fracture lines within the humanitarian movement as a whole about its flirtation with the power wielded by states; a power which has at times been used to advance humanitarian ends, but at other times, it has been the humanitarian cause that has been used to advance the political interests and agendas of states.

The example of Kosovo, the last (apart from the UN authorised intervention in East Timor) humanitarian intervention of the 20th century, may have led both IHNGOs and the military to believe that unilateral action and civil-military co-ordination would be effective in future interventions, where IHNGOs and military forces could provide relief aid and development in support of peace and state-building. However, the conflict was in Europe, it was won exclusively by NATO air power to avoid casualties to personnel,¹¹⁷ the per capita aid budget to Kosovo following the war was very high¹¹⁸ and the land area to be occupied by a large ground force was small.¹¹⁹ Although it may have seen the growth of military involvement in humanitarian emergencies and the questioning of humanitarian agencies about where they stood in these events, it was also an atypical case relative to the situation in parts of Africa or South Asia, such as in Afghanistan.

¹¹⁶ Fox, p.282.

¹¹⁷ DiPrizzio, p.135.

¹¹⁸ Donor response to the former Yugoslavia in 1999 was \$207 per person compared with \$16 per person in Sierra Leone, Thomas Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions*, p.150.

¹¹⁹ 10 887 Sq Km according to the Central Intelligence Agency, 'World Fact Book: Kosovo' <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html>> [Accessed February 15, 2010], which is about half the size of the state of New Jersey according to Mockaitis, p.39.

Chapter Five: The Context of Afghanistan to 2001

Given that the specific nature of the war and reconstruction in Afghanistan since 2001 differs from previous interventions, it is important that a cultural, geographical, political and historical background is given to provide a context to the current environment in which the IHNGOs and intervening military forces operate in Afghanistan.

Culture, ethnicity, religion and language

Afghanistan's existence as a state has largely relied on Islam to supply some cohesion to the ethnic groups that constitute it. The largest and most dominant ethnic group is the Pashtuns in the south and east of the country who make up about half the population.¹ The Durand line that marks the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is straddled by the Pashtun people. This ethnic group is divided by this border so they are approximately equal in number in southern Afghanistan and in the North West Frontier Provinces of Pakistan.² The next largest ethnic group, Tajiks, make up about one fifth of the population and are mostly concentrated in the north and west. A linguistic divide exists between these two groups although many Pashtun can also speak Dari, a variant of Persian that is spoken by Tajiks, as a second language.³ Other ethnic groups include the Hazaras who live in the central part of the country and who are Shia Muslims, which puts them at odds with the Sunni Muslims of the majority.⁴ Smaller minorities ethnicities represented in the central Asian republics to the north include Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Turkmen.⁵

Geography

Afghanistan is a large and mountainous country. The largest mountains are in the east, spreading out into mountain ranges and valleys to the

¹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of its People and Politics* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), pp.4-.5.

² Ewans, p.5.

³ Ralph H. Magnus and Eden Naby, *Afghanistan: Mullah, Marx and Mujahid* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 2002), p.13.

⁴ Magnus and Naby, p.16.

⁵ Magnus and Naby, p.17.

west, with deserts in the south and north.⁶ This factor, alongside its large size of 652,230 square kilometres,⁷ has made it a notoriously difficult country for invading forces, whether the occupying armies of Alexander the Great in 330BC, the British in the 19th century, the Soviets in the 1980s or the US and its NATO allies in the present day. When compared to the ostensibly successful military humanitarian interventions of the 1990s in Timor or Kosovo, Afghanistan's geography is significant for its larger size, and difficult terrain of mountains and deserts. This is a challenge to both military intervention and the operations of IHNGOs in terms of travel, communications and the potential for ambush.

Geopolitics and Afghanistan

Afghanistan's past has been marked by successive invasions due to its location between Russia, India (and now Pakistan), China and Persia (Iran) as it has been a corridor for invading armies into the Indian sub-continent, a buffer between the British and Russian empires in the 19th century and a Cold War battlefield in the 1980s. Today it is often considered the front line in the GWOT, pitting the US and its allies against Islamic extremists. Its recent history has been shaped by very realist state concerns, especially those of the US and USSR in the 1980s and regional powers such as Pakistan and Iran. Barnett Rubin has stated that Afghanistan has been "shaped by its interaction with the modern state system."⁸ Afghanistan's internal political history as a state, however, has been typified by only a weak sense of national unity and governments able to administer the urban centres but with very limited control over the conservative countryside and little success in improving health and education in those areas.⁹ Some degree of national unity has usually been most evident in resistance to invaders.

⁶ Ewans, pp.1-3.

⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, 'The World Fact Book: Afghanistan' <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>> [Accessed July 2, 2009].

⁸ Barnett Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (New York: Yale University Press, 2002), p.x.

⁹ Ewans, p.11.

Major features of Afghanistan's modern History

The 18th and 19th Centuries

In the mid 18th century conquests by a Pashtun warrior chief, Ahmad Shah Durrani, began the process that led to a recognisable Afghan state.¹⁰

During the 19th century, the British Empire came into contact with the Afghan tribes as the British took control of India. The British also became concerned about the expanding Russian empire to the north, and Persian Empire to the west, of Afghanistan, which was the area that separated these competing empires. The Afghan wars of 1839-43 and 1879-1881 were both fought by the British to prevent Russian influence or control over Afghanistan.¹¹ It was 19th century geopolitics that influenced events in Afghanistan at this time, especially the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the consequent expansion of the Russian and British empires into Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent respectively.¹²

20th Century attempts at reform

In the first half of the 20th century, Afghan monarchs attempted to introduce some modernising reforms.¹³ However, apart from improvements in the armed forces, other attempted advances in health, education and the welfare of women rarely extended beyond the main cities and often met with resistance from the traditional and conservative Islamic culture. King Amanullah, who ruled from 1919-1929, was the most ambitious in this respect, but he was eventually deposed for advocating ambitious social reforms including a proposal for universal education for women.¹⁴

After the Second World War and the partition of British India into separate Indian and Pakistani states, Afghanistan began to move into the Soviet sphere of influence. The creation of the state of Pakistan resurrected long

¹⁰ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History* (London: I.B Tauris, 2003), p.xv.

¹¹ Rasanayagam, p.xviii.

¹² Ewans, p.55.

¹³ Rasanayagam, p.14.

¹⁴ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press), p.222.

standing issues about the status of Pashtun tribal areas and the disputed Durand line between Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹⁵ During the Cold War, Afghanistan's governments proved adept at obtaining aid from both the US and USSR. US military aid to its new Cold War ally, Pakistan, combined with disinterest in Afghanistan in the 1950s helped to increase Soviet influence in Afghanistan.¹⁶ The development of a university in Kabul and the training of educated Afghan elites and military officers in the USSR also helped establish a small communist movement that would eventually take power in a coup in 1978.¹⁷

Soviet Invasion

Following the 1978 coup, the communist Khalq party attempted sweeping social reforms that met with armed resistance and they started to lose control of parts of the country. This situation was made worse by internal disputes and assassinations within the ruling party.¹⁸ Soviet concern about the consequences for their own Islamic republics of the precedent set by a possible Islamic takeover in Afghanistan, as had occurred in Iran,¹⁹ and the possibility of a new government in the buffer state of Afghanistan that may have been friendly to the US,²⁰ prompted the invasion of December 1979. Afghan Islamist resistance fighters, the mujahedeen, were actively encouraged and assisted by the US through Pakistan and its Inter Services Intelligence agency (ISI) resulting in seven resistance groups being fostered by Pakistan.²¹ The Soviet invasion proved costly, as the mujahedeen with US and Pakistani backing managed to deny the Soviet and Afghan armies control of the countryside. The US supplied 'stinger' missiles turned the tide in the mujahedeen's favour from 1986.²² The Soviets withdrew in 1989, but continued to supply the communist

¹⁵ Karl E. Meyer, *The Dust of Empire: The Race for Mastery in the Asian Heartland* (New York: Century Foundation, 2002), pp.108-111.

¹⁶ Meyer, pp.124-125.

¹⁷ Ewans, p.171.

¹⁸ Tanner, p.233.

¹⁹ Michael Griffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind: Afghanistan, Al Qa'ida and the Holy War* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), pp. 17-18.

²⁰ Tanner, p.235.

²¹ Ewans, p.213.

²² Tanner, p.266.

government in Afghanistan, which held out until 1992 when, following the end of Soviet aid, the mujahedeen captured Kabul and then virtually destroyed it in the following years as the various ethnic factions fought each other for control.²³

Civil war and the rise of the Taliban

This state of intermittent civil war continued among the competing mujahedeen groups until the rise of the Taliban. The Taliban had started in the southern province of Kandahar with Pakistani military assistance,²⁴ captured Kabul in 1996 and eventually gained control of 90 percent of the country by 2001.²⁵ The Taliban regime was notorious for its hard line interpretation of Islamic Sharia law and repressive edicts on women, enforcing strict dress codes and denying them access to employment, education and health care which led to conflict with the UN and some IHNGOs.²⁶

The fall of the Taliban in late 2001

Taliban relations with the international community and especially the US worsened in 1998 following the bombings of US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. The Taliban had, since 1996, provided sanctuary for Osama Bin Ladin and his Al Qaida terrorist training camps.²⁷ The terror attacks on the US on September 11th, 2001 led to the US bombing campaign and support for the Northern Alliance. The Northern Alliance consisted of former mujahedeen groups who had opposed the Taliban²⁸ and they retook Kabul in November 2001.²⁹

²³ Rasanayagam, p.142.

²⁴ Griffin, p.33.

²⁵ Tanner, p.285.

²⁶ Magnus and Naby, pp.206-208.

²⁷ Magnus and Naby, p.205.

²⁸ Tanner, pp.284-285.

²⁹ Griffin, p.307.

The IHNGOs 1979 to 1996

IHNGOs during the Soviet invasion

Cold War politics meant that western based IHNGOs, as in other theatres of the Cold War, tended to provide support to groups opposing the Soviets and their proxies. During the war, IHNGOs mostly operated in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan where large numbers of refugees had fled.³⁰ Some NGOs did carry out 'cross-border' operations, principally in mujahedeen controlled areas inside Afghanistan, although these tended to be smaller NGOs that had close ties to the resistance movements.³¹ US foreign direct aid to the Afghan mujahedeen was channelled through the Pakistani ISI. The ISI had a National Logistics Cell (NLC) which delivered both arms to the mujahedeen and "carried food and relief supplies for Afghan refugees in Pakistan procured by international humanitarian aid agencies such as UNHCR and WFP."³² It has been argued that the period of the Soviet invasion saw a lack of impartiality and neutrality from IHNGOs and left a "legacy of collusion between assistance and political agendas."³³

The militarisation of the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan served the purposes of the US and its Pakistani allies since the camps provided safe havens, recruits, food, medical supplies and a place to conceal weapons for the mujahedeen.³⁴ The Pakistani authorities also required that the refugees join one of the seven resistance parties that Pakistan backed in order to obtain assistance.³⁵

³⁰ Ewans, p.207.

³¹ Helga Baitenmann, 'NGOs and the Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid,' *Third World Quarterly*, 12 (1990), 62-85, p.71.

³² Rasanayagam, p.108.

³³ Antonio Donnini, 'Principles, Politics and Pragmatism in the International Response to the Afghan Crisis,' in *Nation-Building Unravelling? Aid Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donnini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield CT: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.122.

³⁴ Rudiger Schoch, 'UNHCR and the Afghan Refugees in the Early 1980s: Between Humanitarian Action and Cold War Politics,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27, (2008), 45-57, pp.50-51 and p.55.

³⁵ Schoch, p.52.

Only the ICRC and some smaller medical NGOs operated inside Soviet and Afghan government controlled areas of Afghanistan during the occupation.³⁶ Most major IHNGOs operated in the refugee camps with at least some knowledge that the camps had a dual function, since they also served as a base for mujahedeen operations, training and supply.³⁷ CARE officially suspended operations inside Afghanistan from 1980 to 1989, the period of Soviet occupation.³⁸ Within Pakistan, CARE and Save the Children Fund provided food, shelter, health care and assistance with the maintenance of the refugee camps.³⁹ The US administration actively funded NGOs, including CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Church World Services (CWS) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) that provided aid to these camps.⁴⁰

MSF was the first major IHNGO to carry out cross-border work inside Afghanistan in 1980 and it took a specific political position opposing the Soviet invasion.⁴¹ Rony Brauman who was chairman of MSF-France from 1982 to 1994 stated that MSF made a clear decision to side with the resistance, as did most major IHNGOs, and to denounce Soviet and Afghan government atrocities.⁴² Oxfam also carried out cross-border activities in the later 1980s but then suspended the aid due to the conflict between the conservative repression of women by the mujahedeen and Oxfam's support for women's rights, concentrating instead on aid within the camps in Pakistan.⁴³ This is a situation Oxfam would confront again during the Taliban era in Afghanistan. Fiona Terry suggests that the clear taking of sides by NGOs in this era was because they believed "there was a just cause against an identifiable 'oppressor.'"⁴⁴

³⁶ Donnini, p.120.

³⁷ Terry, p.55.

³⁸ CARE, 'Afghanistan Country Profile,' <<http://www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/1.asp>> [Accessed July 8, 2009],(para.1).

³⁹ Baitenmann, p.65.

⁴⁰ Baitenmann, p.69.

⁴¹ Terry, p73.

⁴² Mediciens Sans Frontieres, *World in Crisis: The Politics of Survival at the end of the 20th Century* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.xxii.

⁴³ Vaux, p,121.

⁴⁴ Terry, p.79.

It should be noted that information about specific activities of IHNGOs during the Soviet invasion period has been hard to come by. As Antonio Donini points out, the lack of documented research of this era indicates the lack of interest with which the politicisation of aid in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan during the cold war has been treated.⁴⁵ Smillie and Minear also note this “blatant politicization of aid went largely unremarked upon.”⁴⁶ The presence of IHNGOs in the camps and operating with the resistance inside Afghanistan also provided legitimacy for the mujahedeen cause,⁴⁷ which, considering events since the end of the Cold War, may help to explain why IHNGOs do not wish to examine their actions at the time too closely.

IHNGOs during the Afghan Civil War, 1992-1996

The Geneva Accords of 1988 which led to Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 meant there was an opportunity for IHNGOs to move towards reconstruction activities inside Afghanistan and away from the focus on the refugee camps in Pakistan.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, from 1988-1992, the mujahedeen factions also continued to attempt to exploit the aid agencies for their ongoing military and political ends and there was a continuing reluctance from the US and US backed NGOs to administer aid to government controlled areas.⁴⁹ With the fall of Kabul to the mujahedeen and the ensuing civil war among the victorious mujahedeen factions from 1992 to 1996 there was little room for humanitarian action. The civil war with its shifting alliances among mujahedeen groups, frequent attacks on civilian areas and widespread human rights abuses led to the comprehension among aid agencies of the pitfalls of the previous politically motivated aid that had been provided to the mujahedeen fighters. As a result there was a move towards more professionalism with

⁴⁵ Donini, ‘Principles, Politics and Pragmatism in the International Response to the Afghan Crisis,’ p.120.

⁴⁶ Smillie and Minear, p.81.

⁴⁷ Nicholas Stockton, ‘Afghanistan, War, Aid and International Order’ in *Nation-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donnini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.12; Donnini, ‘Principles, Politics and Pragmatism in the International Response to the Afghan Crisis,’ p.124.

⁴⁸ Smillie and Minear, p.83.

⁴⁹ Smillie and Minear, p. 84.

IHNGO staff arriving in Afghanistan with experience from other emergencies and conflict zones.⁵⁰ However, the warlord era heralded almost complete societal breakdown and greatly impeded the provision of aid.⁵¹

The UN and the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan 1996-2001

A significant development during the period of Taliban rule was the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (SFA). This was a UN centred initiative to present a united front regarding political, diplomatic and humanitarian actors in dealing with the Taliban. It was intended to “promote coherence between the assistance and political wings of the UN and its partner organisations” in an attempt to bring peace to Afghanistan.⁵² The ‘partner organisations’ included the major IHNGOs. The SFA was to a large extent the result of the UN and IHNGOs trying to learn from their experiences during the humanitarian interventions of the early to mid 1990s, especially the situation in the camps in Goma in Zaire (later DRC) in 1994-96, following the Rwandan genocide.⁵³ Specifically there was a concern about aid potentially fuelling conflicts and even ‘feeding the killers’ as had occurred in Zaire/DRC. Nicholas Stockton does not fail to point out the irony of this in light of the role of aid in sustaining the mujahedeen-controlled camps in the 1980s.⁵⁴

The lack of political interest from major powers and the UN towards Afghanistan in the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, aided the humanitarian agencies in being able to drive the SFA agenda, developing a consensus about the provision of aid and how to approach the Taliban regime.⁵⁵ The policy of dealing with the Taliban and their appalling record on human rights, especially the rights of women, was referred to as

⁵⁰ Donini, p.125.

⁵¹ Donini, p.119.

⁵² Mark Duffield, Patricia Gossman and Nicholas Leader, *Review of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan* (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, 2002),p.iii.

⁵³ Stockton, pp.18-19 and 21.

⁵⁴ Stockton, p.22.

⁵⁵ Donini, p.127.

'principled engagement.'⁵⁶ The role of local, grassroots development from below as opposed to imposing development from above and the utility of aid in negotiating with the Taliban were features of the SFA making it "a mechanism for aid to play a security role."⁵⁷

This conception of aid in a security role harks back to Boutros Ghali's 'Agenda for Peace' and the belief that aid and development could ameliorate the worst aspects of the insecurity caused by poverty, population growth, famine and oppression that contribute to conflicts.⁵⁸ Aid and development were starting to be viewed as mechanisms that could increase security, both for those in the immediate zones of instability, and potentially, those further away in developed societies. It should also be noted, however, that the SFA was an attempt to avoid the politicisation inherent in bilateral aid with its attached conditions from donor governments by developing a central and transparent system.⁵⁹ Consequently the SFA attempted to join the political and humanitarian aid efforts of the UN mission to allow for impartiality in its political approach.⁶⁰ It was an 'integrated mission' in that it was a "deliberate attempt to reduce disconnects between the peace-making, humanitarian and human rights functions of the United Nations."⁶¹ The SFA was the precursor to the current United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) which has been active since early 2002.⁶²

While recognised after the end of Taliban rule as an "imaginative and valuable attempt to deal with a serious problem"⁶³ and recognised as a potential strategy for the international community in future complex

⁵⁶ Donini, p.130.

⁵⁷ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.15.

⁵⁸ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 'An Agenda for Peace,' (1992), <<http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>> [Accessed Aug 2, 2009](para.13).

⁵⁹ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.8.

⁶⁰ Chris Johnson and Jolyon Leslie, *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace* (London, Zed Books, 2008), p.87.

⁶¹ Antonio Donnini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester, 'Introduction' to *Nation-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donnini, Norah Niland and Karin Weirmester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.3.

⁶² Donnini, Niland and Wermester, pp.3-4.

⁶³ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.42.

humanitarian emergencies,⁶⁴ there were also shortcomings with the SFA. A major criticism of the SFA was that it demonstrated that when attempting to engage with the Taliban, the international community as represented by the UN was unable to agree on unified policies or tactics.⁶⁵ This was especially apparent in the issues surrounding the Taliban edicts restricting the movement of female aid workers and the exploitation of the World Food Programme (WFP) policy on giving food to widows.⁶⁶ In these situations, individual IHNGOs sometimes pursued their own negotiations and operations in an attempt to still be effective when hamstrung by problems between the UN SFA and the Taliban.⁶⁷ The SFA brought into focus the dilemma that attempting to uphold human rights could impede the strictly humanitarian concern of providing aid regardless of attached preconditions such as adherence to international human rights norms and gender equality.⁶⁸ Other criticisms of the SFA approach are that it did not prevent ongoing conflict during the Taliban rule (with the Northern Alliance who would retake power in late 2001), improve the conditions of women or improve access to marginalised populations in need within Afghanistan.⁶⁹ The SFA also viewed Afghanistan under Taliban rule as a failed state which reinforced the pursuit of policies that avoided engagement with what government did in fact exist in favour of local grass roots development which effectively placed the UN and aid agencies as a de facto political opposition.⁷⁰

IHNGOs during the SFA 1996-2001

According to a UN observer visiting Kabul in 1999, “NGOs had become a de facto shadow government running many of the social services that the

⁶⁴ Alan Kreczko, ‘The Afghan Experiment: The Afghan Support Group, Principled Common Programming and the Strategic Framework,’ *Disasters*, 27 (2003), 239-258 (p.256).

⁶⁵ Johnson and Leslie, p.90.

⁶⁶ Johnson and Leslie, p.91.

⁶⁷ Donini, p.131.

⁶⁸ Stockton, pp.24-25.

⁶⁹ Stockton, p.26.

⁷⁰ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.11 and p.42.

Taliban and their predecessors were unable or unwilling to provide.”⁷¹ Oxfam had moved its centre of operations to Kabul within Afghanistan in 1996⁷² and was represented in the 1997 inter-agency mission to Afghanistan that led to the establishment of the SFA in 1998.⁷³ Save the Children and UNICEF initially suspended operations in Taliban controlled areas in response to the Taliban edicts against education of girls and women.⁷⁴ In relation to the SFA, MSF and some other NGOs were “sceptical of the UN’s coordination efforts because the UN was seen to have a political agenda” in its state building efforts,⁷⁵ although it continued to operate in Afghanistan. CARE worked within the SF and provided clean water to 400,000 people in Kabul in 1999.⁷⁶ Oxfam suspended operations on their work on the Loghar water treatment plant in Kabul in protest at Taliban restrictions on women. The situation remained deadlocked revealing the tensions between Oxfam’s official position on gender rights and its broad humanitarian objective of relieving suffering which was also reflected in divisions within the agency between supporters for and against the suspension of operations.⁷⁷ The ICRC adhered to its stated impartiality and neutrality and was able to maintain relations with the authorities during Taliban rule.⁷⁸ Both the ICRC and CARE also recognised and dealt with the corruption and shortcomings within their own feeding programmes, much sooner than was the case with the WFP.⁷⁹

Conclusion

Afghanistan is a large area of mountain and desert terrain with a harsh climate. It has a strong conservative Islamic culture, but with some

⁷¹ Paul O’Brien, ‘Old Woods, New Paths, and Diverging Choices for NGOs,’ in *Nation-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan* ed. by Antonio Donnini, Norah Niland and Karin Weirmester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.187.

⁷² Vaux, p.124.

⁷³ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.6.

⁷⁴ Johnson and Leslie, pp.84-85.

⁷⁵ Chris Johnson, ‘Afghanistan and the War on Terror’ in *Humanitarian Action and the Global War on Terror: A Review of Trends and Issues*, ed. by Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer (London: Humanitarian Policy Group, 2003), p.56.

⁷⁶ O’Brien, p.187.

⁷⁷ Johnson and Leslie, p.84; Vaux, pp.123-135.

⁷⁸ Duffield, Gossman and Leader, p.29.

⁷⁹ Johnson and Leslie, p.91.

variation such as between the Shia Islam of the Hazara in the central highlands and the Sunni Islam of the Pashtun majority of the south and east. The country has never had a strong central government and attempts at reform have usually precipitated armed resistance, such as against King Amanullah in the 1920s and against the communist Khalq in the 1970s and 1980s. The ethnic divisions have resulted in armed conflict in more recent times, for example, when their respective militias fought each other after Soviet withdrawal. The geography, climate, ethnic and tribal divisions have proved to be almost insurmountable problems for invading and occupying forces throughout history, especially as opposition to invading forces has been the one unifying force.

The IHNGOs mostly operated as part of the anti-Soviet struggle, in support of the mujahedeen and the refugee camps in Pakistan, in the 1980s. Later, during the period of Taliban rule and the SFA, they were able to exert some influence over UN and donor government policies and operate with a degree of operational freedom and security that they would not have after the 2001 intervention. Donor governments often relied on them for information about what projects to fund and the Taliban government, despite its periodic edicts, was less bureaucratic than today's Afghan government with its problems of corruption and competition for resources and influence.⁸⁰ Most importantly for the IHNGOs, they were not perceived by the Taliban and other armed groups as having taken sides in an armed conflict.

⁸⁰ O'Brien, pp. 188-190.

Chapter Six: The IHNGOs of interest to this study

Introduction

A brief background to the five major IHNGOs of interest to this study – the ICRC, IRC, Oxfam, CARE and MSF – is required, principally to understand their activities, involvement and policy positions regarding the intervention and state-building project in Afghanistan since 2001. The origins, principal activities, ideology and sources of funding for these five IHNGOs will be examined. The tensions of neutrality versus taking an active position regarding political and military matters, government influence and funding of the IHNGOs and the difficulty of upholding international humanitarian and human rights law without compromising activities and access to those in need are evident in the histories and actions of these agencies.

The organisations selected for this study share some common features such as national member organisations in donor states as well as the state of their origin, a stated commitment to neutrality and impartiality and previous involvement in humanitarian interventions during the 1990s. They have all released policy statements, briefing papers or reports in the media and through their own publications or websites regarding the current intervention in Afghanistan.

A typology of IHNGOs

The divide between these IHNGOs centres on short-term, apolitical humanitarian relief versus longer-term development that incorporates an ideological or political dimension. Abby Stoddard, in her typology for IHNGOs, divides them into ‘Dunantist,’ ‘Wilsonian,’ and ‘religious.’¹ The ‘Dunantist’ category is named after Henri Dunant who witnessed brutal 19th century warfare at the Battle of Solferino and wrote about it thereby inspiring the establishment of the Red Cross movement.² The ‘Wilsonian’ group of NGOs as outlined in Stoddard’s typology are named after

¹ Abby Stoddard, ‘Humanitarian NGOs: Challenges and Trends,’ in *Humanitarian Action and the ‘War on Terror’: A Review of Issues* ed. by Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer, (London: Humanitarian Policy Group, 2003), p.27.

² David P. Forsythe, *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.15.

Woodrow Wilson, the US president during the First World War and the driving force behind the formation of the League of Nations, and they tend to accept, more than the 'Dunantist' NGOs like the ICRC or MSF, the "compatibility between humanitarian aims and US foreign policy."³

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The oldest organisation dedicated to the alleviation of suffering in war is the International Committee of the Red Cross based in Geneva, Switzerland. Strictly speaking the ICRC is neither a non-governmental or inter-governmental organisation. What sets it apart from other IHNGOs is that it is the custodian of the legal framework of international humanitarian law and it has an international legal mandate to supervise conditions of detention in war.⁴ The International Red Cross movement consists of three pillars which are the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC and the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. In conflict environments the ICRC conducts the activities of the Federation and national movements.⁵ Nonetheless, many of the ICRC's core activities are very similar to other IHNGOs, especially MSF, who split from the ICRC as a separate organisation in the early 1970s.

The ICRC efforts in the First World War were on a smaller scale compared to its later operations⁶ and it has since been accused of allowing itself and its imagery to be used for propaganda purposes by the belligerents in that war.⁷ Similarly, the ICRC has been criticised for not speaking out against the holocaust despite knowing about the existence of the death camps

³ Stoddard, p.27.

⁴ David P. Forsythe and Barbara Ann J. Rieffer, *The International Committee of the Red Cross: A Neutral Humanitarian Actor* (London: Routledge, 2007), p.xii , p.3.

⁵ Phillip Spoerri, 'The ICRC's Humanitarian Activities in Afghanistan: Before and After 9/11: Presentation for the Seminar at Science Po (Paris) on 25.01.06,' <http://www.peacecenter.sciences-po.fr/pdf/spoerri_presentation.pdf> [Accessed December 2,2009], p.2.

⁶ Forsythe, p.32.

⁷ John F. Hutchinson, *The Champions of Charity: War and the Rise of the Red Cross* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

during the Second World War.⁸ A similar criticism was levelled at the ICRC during the war in Bosnia for their knowledge of and silence about Serb run concentration camps for Bosnian Muslim prisoners. One advantage the ICRC has in conflict situations is its clear mandate in international law for dealing with these situations, however it still needs to negotiate with belligerent parties for access to those in need.⁹

The core activities of the ICRC include the protection of civilians and prisoners of war, provision of emergency medical and health care assistance and the promotion of international humanitarian law.¹⁰ It is the core principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence¹¹ adhered to by the ICRC that have led to the criticisms of it remaining silent about issues like concentration camps. However, maintaining a neutral, impartial and independent position has also allowed the ICRC access to prisoners and populations in need when other agencies' neutrality, impartiality and independence has been compromised by their speaking out on, or being too closely involved with, the actions of governments involved in conflicts. The ICRC holds its independence as especially important¹² when compared to other humanitarian NGOs that may be compromised by their political stance on human rights, work as implementing partners for host governments or the UN, or by the potential influence of donor government funding.

The ICRC receives funding from "states party to the Geneva Conventions (governments); national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies; supranational organizations (such as the European Commission); and

⁸ Forsythe and Rieffer, pp.16-17.

⁹ Mike Toole, 'Frontline Medicine: The Role of Frontline Emergency Medical Groups in Emergency Relief,' in *Medicins Sans Frontiers World in Crisis: The Politics of Survival at the End of the 20th Century* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.17.

¹⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'ICRC Activities on Behalf of People Affected by War,' <<http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/activities?OpenDocument>> [Accessed July 20, 2009]

¹¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'The ICRC's Mission Statement' <<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/icrc-mission-190608>> [Accessed July 22, 2009]; Daniel Thurer, 'Dunant's Pyramid: Thoughts on Humanitarian Space,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 89 (2007), 47-61 (pp.56-58).

¹² Thurer, p.59.

public and private sources.”¹³ ICRC activities in Afghanistan were ranked as the third largest, at 73.1 million CHF (Swiss Francs), in terms of budget allocation in the ICRC 2009 budget.¹⁴

Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF) (Doctors Without Borders)

MSF was formed in 1971 (making it the most recent IHNGO in this study) as a result of disagreements within the ICRC during the Biafran war in Nigeria over the ICRC insistence on providing aid to both sides in the conflict.¹⁵ The principle difference was the insistence by MSF founder Bernard Kouchner that MSF would speak out and take an active position in regard to humanitarian crises and conflicts.¹⁶ MSF adhered to the slogan “soignez et temoignez (care for and testify).”¹⁷ This was at odds with the ICRC’s silence as part of its policy of neutrality and impartiality on political issues. Compared to the broad areas of humanitarian aid and protection outlined for the ICRC above, MSF has a tighter focus on the emergency medical assistance to civilians¹⁸ and primary health care.¹⁹

MSF has been through some major internal ideological changes. Kouchner later parted company with MSF and formed another NGO, Medecins du Monde (MDM), due to differences within MSF over his wish that MSF should work with states and actively promote humanitarian interventions.²⁰ References to him are absent from current information

¹³ International Committee of the Red Cross, ‘Financing and Budget,’ <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/section_finances_and_budget?OpenDocument> [Accessed July 20 2009] (para.1).

¹⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross, ‘ICRC Appeals 2009: Key Figures 2009’ <[http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/appeals-keydata-181108/\\$File/2009_Appeals_KeyData_COM_PR_Final.pdf](http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/appeals-keydata-181108/$File/2009_Appeals_KeyData_COM_PR_Final.pdf)> [Accessed 20 July 2009] p.3.

¹⁵ Smillie and Minear, p.14.

¹⁶ Rieff, p.83.

¹⁷ Adam Shatz, ‘Mission Impossible: Humanitarianism is Neutral or it is Nothing’ <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectId=E75B9E30-D338-48E6-99565A21285CF2DB&method=full_html> [Accessed December 18, 2009], (para.23).

¹⁸ Medecins Sans Frontieres, ‘About MSF: The MSF Role in Emergency Medical Aid,’ <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?objectId=130CB2BA-E018-0C72-097046C7C42A8573&component=toolkit.indexArticle&method=full_html> [Accessed July 20, 2009] (para.1).

¹⁹ Stoddard, p.26.

²⁰ Rieff, pp.97-98.

about the organisation on the MSF website. However, MSF still reserves the right to publicly confront those who commit human rights abuses by confronting the responsible actors themselves and “by putting pressure on them through mobilisation of the international community and by issuing information publicly.”²¹

MSF claims its position of neutrality and no government influence on its activities and policies through obtaining the majority of its funding from non-government sources.²² According to MSF, its income in 2008 came from both private donations and public institutions which include governments and intergovernmental institutions such as the EU and UN. However, public institutional income made up only about 10% of total income, while approximately 90% came from private donors and foundations.²³

The International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The IRC was formed in 1933. Its early history, especially the period of the Cold War, reveals political motivations that were often congruent with US government policy especially in the assistance of refugees from communist regimes that could aid US government intelligence about life behind the iron curtain and provide broadcasters for radio stations transmitting to communist countries.²⁴ The IRC started as a US based arm of the European NGO, the International Relief Association.²⁵ Its early focus was to rescue those in danger from the Nazis in Germany and later parts of Europe occupied by them.²⁶ During the Cold War the IRC was

²¹ Mediciens Sans Frontieres, ‘About MSF: The MSF Role in Emergency Medical Aid,’ (para.4).

²² About three quarters of MSF funding is from private donations according to MSF publicity material. Ann Parry, ‘Doctors Without Borders/ Mediciens Sans Frontieres’ (South Yarra, Victoria: MacMillan, 2005), p.10.

²³ Mediciens Sans Frontieres, ‘Audited Facts and Figures,’ <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?objectid=7EE7DFC5-15C5-F00A-255EF1E361C0EDAF&component=toolkit.article&method=full_html&mode=view> [Accessed November 20, 2009], (para.4).

²⁴ Eric Chester, *Covert Network: Progressives, the International Rescue Committee and the CIA* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), p.1.

²⁵ Alton Kastner, *A Brief History of the International Rescue Committee* (New York: International Rescue Committee, 2001), p.2.

²⁶ Kastner, pp.2-3.

concerned with assisting refugees from Soviet and Eastern Bloc countries,²⁷ which reflected the larger ideological concerns of the US government of that period.²⁸ In terms of helping refugees, the IRC was especially concerned during the Cold War era with assisting refugees who were intellectual, cultural and political leaders, students and professionals.²⁹

Today the IRC provides health care, clean water, shelter and education to displaced people in emergency and conflict environments. This includes programmes specifically aimed at reducing harm to women and children and advancing post-conflict development.³⁰ In 2004 the IRC was the lead agency coordinating NGOs in an international task force investigating the sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable women and children by UN and NGO workers.³¹ The IRC work in the area of post-conflict and reconstruction development includes social, economic and governance programmes.³² The IRC advocates the use of community based approaches to development and has been involved with the Government of Afghanistan's National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in attempting to promote community driven development in the difficult security situation in the south-east of Afghanistan.³³

The IRC receives significant grant and contract revenues from the US government, the EU and the UN. In 2008, grant and contract revenues for the IRC came to \$US 204.5 million out of a total revenue of \$US 260.7

²⁷ Kastner, pp.3-6.

²⁸ Chester, p.3.

²⁹ Kastner, p. 2,6.

³⁰ International Rescue Committee, 'Our Work: Responding to Crises' <<http://www.theirc.org/our-work>> [Accessed December 10, 2009], (para.2).

³¹ Vanessa Kent, 'Protecting Civilians from UN Peacekeepers and Humanitarian Workers: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,' in *Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping Operations* ed. by Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric de Coning and Ramesh Thakur (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007), pp. 44-68 (p.58).

³² International Rescue Committee, 'Post-Conflict Development' <<http://www.theirc.org/our-work/post-conflict-development>> [Accessed December 10, 2009], (paras. 7-9).

³³ Kimberly A. Maynard, *The Role of Culture, Islam and Tradition in Community Driven Reconstruction: The International Rescue Committee's Approaches to Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program* (Kabul: The International Rescue Committee, 2007), p.2.

million, that is 78.5 % of the total revenue.³⁴ Approximately half of the grant and contract revenue funding (\$US 96.6 million) came from US government agencies including the US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and USAID. The EU also provided just over a quarter (\$US 58.2 million) and the UN another \$US 28.1 million. The IRC is therefore dependent on the funding of US, EU and UN and this is acknowledged in its financial statement.³⁵

Oxfam

Oxfam International consists of a confederation of 13 national Oxfam organisations.³⁶ Oxfam was started in Britain as the 'Oxford Committee for Famine Relief' in 1942. This was during the Second World War and was in response to the plight of starving people in German occupied Greece which was under an allied naval blockade at the time.³⁷ Unlike the ICRC, Oxfam reserved the right to speak out on humanitarian matters, as it still does, although the position of the organisation on particular issues is liable to internal division and debate as revealed by Tony Vaux.³⁸ An important experience in the development of Oxfam, as was the case for MSF, was Oxfam's vocal support for the Biafran side in the Nigerian civil war and the realisation that in hindsight many of the aid agencies including Oxfam had been exploited by the Biafran leadership in aiding and providing legitimacy to one side which had compromised the stated neutrality and impartiality of the IHNGOs in the conflict.³⁹ Oxfam is a multi mandate agency that often provides a mix of both longer term development aid and emergency assistance. In Afghanistan, a situation Oxfam classifies as an emergency,

³⁴ International Rescue Committee, 'Annual Report, 2008,' <http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/irc_ar08.pdf> [Accessed December 14 2009], p.44.

³⁵ ³⁵ International Rescue Committee, 'Financial Statements, September 30th, 2008' available from <http://www.theirc.org/about/financial-information> [Accessed December 14, 2009], p.16.

³⁶ Oxfam, 'History of Oxfam International,' <<http://www.oxfam.org/en/about/history>> [Accessed July 28, 2009], (para.4)

³⁷ Oxfam, 'History of Oxfam International,' (para.2).

³⁸ Vaux frequently highlights examples of internal division within the leadership of Oxfam over issues such as the rights of women in negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan or whether to support or oppose NATO intervention in Kosovo.

³⁹ Maggie Black, *A Cause for Our Times: Oxfam the First Fifty Years*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.122-129.

it identifies the provision of clean water, sanitation, rebuilding of roads and bridges, education and advocacy (especially for women) as the principal tasks it undertakes.⁴⁰

Examination of the financial statements of the two largest Oxfam affiliate members, Oxfam GB and Oxfam America, reveal a difference in their size and sources of funding. Oxfam GB received 26.8 % of its funding from the UK government including the DFID and public authorities in 2007-2008.⁴¹ Oxfam America claims to refuse US government funding⁴² and obtained 58.8% of its funding from individual donations in 2007-2008.⁴³ Oxfam GB is the much larger organisation in terms of finances with an income of approximately 300 million UK pounds (\$US 500 million) in 2007-2008⁴⁴ compared with Oxfam America's income of approximately \$US 141.5 million (85 million UK pounds) in 2007-2008.⁴⁵ The combined expenditure of Oxfam International in 2007-2008 was \$US 828 million⁴⁶ which demonstrates the much more significant contribution of Oxfam GB, although it receives over a quarter of its funding from the UK government. Oxfam clearly takes a political stance on many issues surrounding humanitarian aid and economic development including economic justice, gender discrimination, human rights, climate change and unfair trade practices.⁴⁷

Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE)

Originally known as the 'Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe,' CARE is a US based IHNGO that has been active since the end of the Second World War. In its modern incarnation CARE specialises in

⁴⁰ Oxfam International, 'Afghanistan' <<http://www.oxfam.org/en/emergencies/afghanistan>> [Accessed August 4, 2009] (paras. 4-9)

⁴¹ Oxfam GB, *Annual Reports and Accounts 07/08* (Oxford: Oxfam GB, 2008), p.17.

⁴² Oxfam America, 'FAQs: How is Oxfam Funded?'

<<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/whoweare/financial-information/pages/faq/?searchterm=FAQs>> [Accessed November 16, 2009], (para.1).

⁴³ Oxfam America, *Annual Report 2008* (Washington DC: Oxfam America, 2008), p.25.

⁴⁴ Oxfam GB, *Annual Reports 07/08*, p.17.

⁴⁵ Oxfam America, *Annual Report 2008*, p.24.

⁴⁶ Oxfam America, *Annual Report 2008*, p.20.

⁴⁷ Oxfam International, *Annual Report 2007*, (Oxford: Oxfam International, 2008), pp. 4-6.

the delivery of food aid and logistics.⁴⁸ CARE claims to have a focus on the welfare of women and children and also on the “underlying causes of poverty so that people can become self sufficient.”⁴⁹ Other development activities CARE undertakes include agriculture, economic development and education.

CARE came into existence to deliver food to Europe during the US foreign policy initiative of the Marshall plan which was a US foreign policy reaction to Soviet encroachment into Europe.⁵⁰ Today the CARE international website does not mention the overt congruence between itself and US foreign policy that existed in earlier times, for example, during the Cold War in Europe or later the ‘hot’ proxy war between the Soviet and US backed forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s.⁵¹

In more recent times, CARE has taken policy positions that are less coherent with US policy than has been the case in the past. Notably, in 2007, CARE rejected the offer of \$45 million in federal US government funding due to concerns about the provision of US food aid which CARE and other NGOs believed was harming the economy and livelihoods of local farmers in developing countries.⁵² According to CARE’s 2008 financial statements, US government funding accounted for about a third of its income, of which the majority was in cash, with a smaller contribution through agricultural commodities.⁵³

Conclusion

The five IHNGOs examined here can be divided into two groups as outlined by Stoddard. The ICRC and MSF are Dunantist organisations with

⁴⁸ Stoddard, p.26.

⁴⁹ CARE, ‘What We Do,’ <<http://www.care.org/careswork/whatwedo/index.asp>> [Accessed August 4, 2009], (para.1)

⁵⁰ Stoddard, p.27.

⁵¹ Baitenmenn, p.69.

⁵² Dugger, Celia, ‘CARE Turns Down Federal Funds for Food Aid,’ *New York Times*, 16 August, 2007 ; Harrell, Eben, ‘CARE Turns Down U.S Food Aid,’ *Time*, 15 August 2007

⁵³ CARE USA, ‘Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2008’ <http://www.care.org/newsroom/publications/annualreports/2008/CARE_AFS_2008.pdf> [Accessed November 20, 2009], p.27.

an emphasis on short term humanitarian assistance. The ICRC remains strictly neutral and will not speak out on political issues, whereas MSF will do so. The Wilsonian IHNGOs, CARE, IRC and Oxfam are also known as 'multi- mandate' agencies because they carry out both humanitarian relief and longer term development work, dealing with the underlying causes of poverty and addressing human, civil and political rights issues.⁵⁴ This difference is significant when these agencies are involved with international interventions and a state-building process where there is ongoing conflict between an internationally supported government and an armed opposition, as in Afghanistan.

⁵⁴ Hugo Slim, 'With or Against? Humanitarian Agencies and Coalition Counter-Insurgency,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 23, (2004), 34-47, (p.35).

Chapter Seven: Aid and Development as Counter-Insurgency – Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

Counter-insurgency and humanitarian aid and development

Provincial Reconstruction teams (PRTs) have evolved as a result of military involvement in humanitarian aid/development and from counter-insurgency strategy. The counter-insurgency tactic of using aid, development assistance and reconstruction work to gain support from a population in a conflict zone away from supporting or being intimidated by insurgent groups can be traced back to the British tactics to ‘win hearts and minds,’ the phrase coined by Field Marshall Sir Gerald Templer, during the Malayan insurgency in the 1950s.¹ The US military attempted to employ similar tactics during the Vietnam War in the 1960s using Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development teams (CORDs).²

The military - humanitarian interventions since 1990 have occurred in a context of there being no broader Cold War ideological divide, but with the IHNGOs increasingly aware of military involvement with activities that they have previously regarded as their own. Short-term humanitarian relief such as the provision of emergency food aid and medical care as well as longer-term development projects such as the rebuilding of schools and medical clinics are activities IHNGOs claim should be based on the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence.³ However, these actions have now also become a feature of military activity in the post-conflict state building and reconstruction phase of operations by intervening forces, and in this context they are employed to further political objectives rather than meet humanitarian needs. The consequences for

¹ T.N Harper, *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.86, p.90, p.158; Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya 1948-1969* (London: Frederick Muller, 1975), p.379.

² George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam 1950-1975*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), pp.86, 90,158; Andrew Krepinevich Jr, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986),pp.217-18.

³ See, for example, the Mission Statement of the ICRC: The International Committee of The Red Cross, ‘The Mission,’ <http://www.icrc.org/HOME.NSF/060a34982cae624ec12566fe00326312/125ffe2d4c7f68acc1256ae300394f6e?OpenDocument> [Accessed 14 October, 2009].

those who do not qualify as deserving of military provided aid are clear in the US Army Counterinsurgency manual FM 3-24: “There is no such thing as impartial humanitarian assistance or CMO (Civil-Military Operations) in COIN (Counterinsurgency). Whenever someone is helped, someone else is hurt, not least the insurgents.”⁴

The context of post-Taliban Afghanistan

Following the capture of Kabul in November 2001 by the forces of the Northern Alliance, who were allied with the US led coalition involved in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to defeat the Taliban and Al Qaida, there was a period of more than two years during which intervening international forces had little influence beyond Kabul, while US and coalition forces principally concentrated on operations against Al Qaida and remnants of the Taliban in the south-east close to the border with Pakistan.⁵ In December 2001 the Bonn Agreement set out a plan for Afghanistan’s transition to democracy, but with little control over realities on the ground in Afghanistan. Compromises were made early on that co-opted former warlords and militia leaders into the new government and its institutions which would lead to problems of corruption and legitimacy for the Afghan government.⁶ The United Nations established the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)⁷ in March 2002 and mandated an international security assistance force (ISAF) which was initially only present in Kabul in 2002 and did not move to expand into the

⁴ US Department of the Army and Marine Corps Combat Development Command, ‘Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency’ (15 December 2006) <<http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>> [Accessed February 8, 2010], Appendix A: A Guide for Action, A-7, (p.193).

⁵ Chris Johnson and Jolyon Leslie, *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace* (London: Zed Books, 2008), p.31.; Barbara Stapleton, ‘A Means to What End? Why PRTs are Peripheral to the Bigger Challenges in Afghanistan,’ *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 10 (Fall 2007), 1- 49, (p.8).

⁶ Barbara Stapleton, *The Provincial Reconstruction Team Plan in Afghanistan: A New Direction?* (Bonn: Bonn Institute for Conversion, 2003), p.2; International Crisis Group, ‘Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve’ (February 6, 2008) <http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/145_afghanistan_the_need_for_international_resolve.pdf> [Accessed October 14, 2009], (p.3).

⁷ United Nations, *Security Council Endorses Establishment of UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for Initial 12-Month Period*, (28 March, 2002), <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2002/SC7345.doc.htm> [Accessed October 14, 2009]

north until 2004, the west in 2005 and finally the south and east in 2006.⁸ The PRTs were a part of the expansion of ISAF and Afghan government control militarily into the provinces that had languished under control of various warlords and militias since the fall of the Taliban. The Taliban themselves have managed a resurgence in the south and east since 2004 and the fighting that has ensued between them and ISAF, Afghan National Army (ANA) and Coalition troops continues into the present day and has worsened to the extent of eclipsing Iraq as the major foreign policy concern for the current US administration.⁹

Rationale and composition

Following the initial defeat of the Taliban, US forces established Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells in early 2002 which consisted of small groups of Civil Affairs (CA) officers who assessed the need for humanitarian assistance in their area, carried out small-scale reconstruction activities and liaised with UNAMA and NGOs.¹⁰ During 2002, some US CA officers and Special Forces soldiers operated in civilian clothes, in unmarked vehicles and carried out some relief and reconstruction activities with the military objective of gathering intelligence on Al Qaida and the Taliban.¹¹ The first PRTs were established in late 2002 and early 2003 in the provinces of Gardez, Bamian (NZ PRT), Konduz, Mazar-e-Sharif, Khandahar and Herat.¹² The initial US PRTs consisted of about 80 soldiers, some of whom were to provide security for the PRT staff ('force protection'), while others specialised in areas such as health or construction. There were also three US government and civilian agency representatives.¹³ The focus of the US PRT model was governance, force

⁸ International Crisis Group, p.5.

⁹ Simon Tisdall and John Vidal, 'Embattled Obama Faces Afghan Policy Choice,' *The Guardian*, 9-15 October, 2009, p.1.

¹⁰ Robert Perito, *The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: Lessons Identified* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2005), p.2.

¹¹ Michael J. Dziedzic and Col. Michael K. Seidl, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Military Relations with International and Non Governmental Organizations in Afghanistan* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2005), p.6.

¹² Perito, p.2.

¹³ Perito, p. 1.

protection and 'quick impact development projects' (QIPs).¹⁴ The governance aspect of PRTs was in the focus on capacity building of provincial government administrations and linking them to the central Afghan government.¹⁵ The force protection element of the PRTs was in regard to their own security as they were not mandated to provide security to either the Afghan civilian population or staff of UNAMA and NGOs.¹⁶ QIPs included such tasks as the rebuilding of schools and medical clinics with the political/ military objective of winning over the local population and gathering intelligence about insurgents. The QIPs therefore had a clear counter-insurgency motive in their 'hearts and minds' strategy.¹⁷

The expansion of national PRTs within ISAF

From 2003 onwards NATO took leadership of the UN mandated ISAF and gradually took over or set up PRTs across Afghanistan.¹⁸ These PRTs are under the leadership of various nations within NATO. In 2009, some 26 PRTs were operating in four regional command groups. PRT contributing nations are the US, UK, Germany, Sweden, Hungary, Norway, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Canada, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Turkey and the Czech Republic.¹⁹ It should be noted that Sweden and New Zealand are not actually members of NATO but come under NATO command through being part of ISAF. Of the 26 PRTs, 12 are under US control, two are under German control and all the other nations are represented by one PRT.²⁰

¹⁴ Perito, p.1.

¹⁵ Barbara Stapleton, 'A Means to What End? Why PRTs are Peripheral to the Bigger Challenges in Afghanistan,' *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 10 (Fall 2007), 1-49, (p.15).

¹⁶ Perito, p.7.

¹⁷ Stapleton, 'A Means to What End?', pp. 11-12.

¹⁸ NATO, 'NATO's Role in Afghanistan,' (2 October 2009) <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_8189.htm> [Accessed 14 October, 2009] (para.2).

¹⁹ NATO, 'International Security Assistance Force: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs),' (April 29 2009) <<http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/prt/index.html>> [Accessed 14 October, 2009].

²⁰ NATO, 'International Security Assistance Force: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).'

Due to the various national government concerns and agendas of the PRT home countries there is a lot of variety in terms of leadership, rules surrounding movement and engagement, sizes and types of activity they perform. Three main models of PRT have emerged. The US model has about 80 members including a few civilian representatives, there is a focus on QIPs and it is able to operate in hostile areas. The UK model is civilian-led, with about 100 members including 30 civilians, there is a focus on governance capacity building and it is able to operate in hostile areas. Lastly, there is a German model with both military and civilian leadership, about 400 members including about 20 civilians, a long-term development focus and these are operational in less hostile regions.²¹

Assessment of the performance of PRTs in Afghanistan

The PRTs in Afghanistan have had mixed results in terms of their effectiveness. A major problem for those wishing to assess their performance is the difficulty inherent in the security situation in Afghanistan. Some assessments of PRTs, such as that by Andrea Lopez, make the claim that they are in fact effective in enhancing the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan central government but that they have been hindered by a lack of funding, manpower and resources.²² Lopez claims “the PRTs are placing US forces directly among the people and having the military, in conjunction with international governmental organisations (IGOs), NGOs, and local workers and contractors,” and that this is building “political and social ties to the central government.”²³ Michael McNerney claims they are a flexible and useful instrument for stabilisation and reconstruction operations, but in the case of Afghanistan there needs to be more PRTs deployed for them to be truly effective.²⁴

²¹ Nima Abbaszadeh and others, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations* (Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2008), p.5.

²² Andrea Lopez, ‘Engaging or Withdrawing, Winning or Losing? The Contradictions of Counterinsurgency Policy in Afghanistan and Iraq,’ *Third World Quarterly*, 28 (2007), 245-260 (p.258).

²³ Lopez, p.155.

²⁴ Michael McNerney, ‘Stabilisation and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Are PRTs a Model or a Muddle?’ *Parameters*, 35 (Winter 2005/2006), 32-46,(p.44).

A study by Sebastian Rietjens of civil-military cooperation within the Netherlands' PRT in Baghlan province revealed some shortcomings. He found a lack of guidelines for military and civilian cooperation in the PRTs, a lack of awareness of other actors (including IHNGOs) operating in the same area, reconstruction activities that were supply rather than demand based and a lack of specific training of military staff in this type of work.²⁵ Touko Piiparinen identified organisational and national interest issues within the Norwegian PRT in Meyanmeh.²⁶ The organisational aspect related to the different 'mind sets' apparent in the civilian and military view of the success or otherwise of the Disarmament of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG).²⁷ The national interests of PRT contributing countries were identified in the differing focus and approaches they took to their reconstruction work.²⁸ Barbara Stapleton also identified the lack of unity in the different approaches of national PRTs²⁹ and suggested that the PRTs were only peripheral to the bigger picture in Afghanistan, especially the failure of the state building process.³⁰ This issue of how the PRTs fit into the overall political and military context of the intervention in Afghanistan needs to be explored further, since this has implications for the assertion that aid and development are merging with security to manage regions of the world that are experiencing complex humanitarian emergencies.

PRTs in the wider political and military context of the post-2001 intervention in Afghanistan

Considering that NATO's role in Afghanistan via ISAF and the PRTs is to "assist the Afghan Government in exercising and extending its authority and influence across the country,"³¹ it is of concern that the Afghan government is "mired in a deepening legitimacy crisis, the causes of which lay well beyond the limited capacity and resources of the PRTs

²⁵ Sebastian Rietjens, 'Managing Civil-Military Cooperation: Experiences from the Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan,' *Armed Forces and Society*, 34 (2008), 173-207, (pp.199,204).

²⁶ Touko Piiparinen, 'A Clash of Mind Sets? An Insider's Account of Provincial Reconstruction Teams,' *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2007), 143-157.

²⁷ Piiparinen, p. 155.

²⁸ Piiparinen, pp.151-54.

²⁹ Stapleton, 'A Means to What End?' p.47

³⁰ Stapleton, 'A Means to What End?' p.48.

³¹ NATO, 'NATO's Role in Afghanistan,' (para.1).

meaningfully to address.”³² Barbara Stapleton, the political advisor to the Office of the EU Special Representative in Afghanistan, made the point about the legitimacy crisis of the Afghan government in 2007. The recent Presidential elections and the highly contested re-election of President Harmid Karzai amid allegations of electoral fraud have brought this issue into even sharper focus.³³

Before exploring the reactions of IHNGOS to the development of the PRT strategy it is worth examining the role of PRTs within the wider international nation-building project in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Following the initial overthrow of the Taliban by the Northern Alliance, essentially a grouping of resurgent mujahedeen forces that had previously been engaged in the war against the Soviets and had fought each other during the Afghan Civil war from 1992-1996,³⁴ there was only a light ISAF presence of 4,800 troops located in Kabul during 2002 and without instructions to expand control into other parts of the country despite requests to do so from the transitional Afghan government and the international aid community.³⁵ Some estimated 200,000 armed men under various warlords controlled the interior³⁶ while the US led OEF pursued Al Qaida and Taliban in the south-east near Pakistan.³⁷ The US did not want to commit extra men and resources, specifically its airpower, which would be required to back up the ISAF expansion, and initially blocked plans for ISAF expansion.³⁸ The need for US air power for transport and air cover plus concerns about different intervening forces operating in the same areas and the dangers of friendly fire were suggested as reasons for this US reluctance to initially support ISAF at the time.³⁹ Another likely reason

³² Stapleton, ‘A Means to What End?’ p.3.

³³ Ian Pannell, ‘Afghan Election Fraud is Unearthed,’ *BBC News*, Updated 18 August, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8207315.stm> [Accessed 15 October, 2009]

³⁴ Alexander Thier, ‘The Politics of Peace-building: Year One: From Bonn to Kabul,’ in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.44.; Tanner, p.303.

³⁵ Thier, p.40.

³⁶ Thier, p.40.

³⁷ Johnson and Leslie, *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace*, p.31.

³⁸ Thier, p.51.

³⁹ Stapleton, ‘A Means to What End?,’ p.10.

for the conservative deployment by the US to Afghanistan was the looming war in Iraq that would start in March of 2003.⁴⁰ Equally, delays in ISAF deployment and the emphasis on US operations in pursuit of Al Qaida and the Taliban may have suited the governments of other troop contributing countries wishing to avoid potential casualties that would not be popular with their own constituencies.⁴¹

PRTs, in their first years especially, were an attempt to spread the influence of ISAF in support of the new Afghan central government without substantial international military commitment, aside from US and UK forces engaged in direct combat with the Taliban and Al Qaida, using a “light footprint” as the UN Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi called it in 2002.⁴²

This can be seen as part of a wider international state-building process that has evolved in response to the humanitarian crises and interventions of the 1990s that Nicholas Stockton has referred to as “peace- building lite.”⁴³ This approach to state-building places an emphasis on building local capacity rather than reliance on massive international aid distribution because of the potential for it to be misused and/or fuel conflicts such as was the concern in Goma in Zaire in 1994-1996, and the use of reduced, but targeted, “smart aid.”⁴⁴ In the post-Taliban era Afghanistan, the PRTs reflect a similar minimalism to what has evolved in the humanitarian aid sector, they have a wide array of tasks including security, reconstruction and improving governance yet are small units with limited manpower and resources.

⁴⁰ Stapleton, ‘A Means to What End?’, p.3.

⁴¹ Johnson and Leslie, p.37; International Crisis Group, p.13.

⁴² The phrase used by Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) Lakhdar Brahimi to the UN Security Council February 6th, 2002. United Nations Security Council, ‘S/PV.4469,’ < <<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Afgh%20Spv4469.pdf>> [Accessed October 15th, 2009] p.3.

⁴³ Nicholas Stockton, ‘War, Aid and International Order,’ in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), pp. 21-27.

⁴⁴ Stockton, pp.19-20.

IHNGO criticism of PRTs

Security is an issue for IHNGOs both in terms of their own security being compromised by the blurring of the lines between themselves and military actors and the perceived failure of PRTs to provide a security environment within which the IHNGOs can operate with some degree of safety. The PRTs' contribution to the security situation in Afghanistan has been questioned by critics from the IHNGO sector who claim the security situation for civilians and aid workers has deteriorated considerably since 2002.⁴⁵ Paul O'Brien and Paul Barker from CARE International (Advocacy Coordinator and Country Director respectively), pointed out in 2003 that security would be the fundamental issue for Afghanistan in the following five years and that potential threats to it existed from the Taliban, warlords within the new government, the lack of internal security forces and external interference especially from Pakistan and Iran.⁴⁶ They believed the PRTs were a "distraction from more serious discussions about country-wide security" since they had "neither the resources nor the mandate to engage seriously in either reconstruction or security."⁴⁷

A frequent concern expressed by the IHNGOs is that the aid and reconstruction work of the PRTs has confused both the Afghan population and the insurgents in terms of differentiating between military and aid workers.⁴⁸ This blurring of the lines has led to civilians and AOGs associating IHNGOs with the international military and Afghan government

⁴⁵ Johnson and Leslie, p.3.

⁴⁶ Paul O'Brien and Paul Barker, 'Old Questions Needing New Answers: A Fresh look at Security Needs in Afghanistan,' in *Confronting Afghanistan's Security Dilemma: Reforming the Security Sector*, ed. By M. Sedra (Bonn: Bonn International Centre for Conversion, 2003), p.18.

⁴⁷ O'Brien and Barker, p.20.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Nellie Bristol, 'Military Incursions into Aid Work Anger Humanitarian Groups,' *The Lancet*, 367 (2006), 384-386, ; Save the Children, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian-Military Relations in Afghanistan* (London: Save the Children, 2004), Fabrice Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism: A Deadly Confusion,' (December 16 2004)

<http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=762E8B7B-2F5F-448A-8EC26F2039794E54&method=full_html> [Accessed November 30, 2009].

either directly or suspecting them of providing intelligence to, or otherwise covertly operating with, these forces.⁴⁹

IHNGO criticisms of PRTs beyond the blurring of the roles issue have identified the questionable quality of the work done by the PRTs and especially by the contractors hired by the PRTs to implement their projects.⁵⁰ A briefing paper prepared by NGOs including CARE, the IRC and Oxfam identified this issue.⁵¹ The country director of the IRC in 2009 pointed out that there has been a “prioritisation of contractors versus NGOs as the US government or foreign governments have attempted to deliver programmes to scale, and their strategy for delivering the scale was through contractors. They are now seeing the scale is at the expense of efficiency and quality.”⁵² Other criticisms are that the PRT projects do not create a sense of “local ownership” or “buy-in,”⁵³ become targets for the insurgents,⁵⁴ are an inefficient use of funds,⁵⁵ and that there is an overall lack of consistency and coherence across the different national PRTs.⁵⁶

The quarterly reports of the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) make it very clear that attacks against aid workers have generally increased, especially since 2006,⁵⁷ although slightly reduced in 2009 compared to 2008, and with a shift towards a majority (70%) of the attacks being

⁴⁹ Christian Aid, *The Politics of Poverty: Aid in the New Cold War* (London: Christian Aid, 2004), p.41, pp.48-49.

⁵⁰ Oxfam, ‘Afghanistan: Development and Humanitarian Priorities,’ (January 2008) <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/afghanistan_priorities.pdf> [Accessed October 18, 2009], (p.9).

⁵¹ Action Aid et al, ‘Caught in the Conflict: Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan: A Briefing Paper Prepared by Eleven NGOs Operating in Afghanistan for the NATO Heads of State and Government Summit, 3-4 April 2009 (3 April, 2009) <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/bp_caught_in_conflict_afghanistan.pdf> [Accessed October 18, 2009], (p.13).

⁵² Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

⁵³ Action Aid et al, ‘Caught in the Conflict,’ p.14.

⁵⁴ CARE, Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan,’ (September, 2009) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2009/11/Knowledge_on_Fire_Report.pdf> [Accessed February 10, 2010], (p.35); Oxfam, ‘Afghanistan: Development and Humanitarian Priorities,’ p.9.

⁵⁵ Action Aid et al, ‘Caught in the Conflict,’ p.14.

⁵⁶ Action Aid et al, ‘Caught in the Conflict,’ p.15.

⁵⁷ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, *ANSO Quarterly Data Report – Q.3 2009* (Kabul: ANSO, 2009), p.9.

carried out by Armed Opposition Groups (AOG) with political as opposed to criminal motives.⁵⁸ Some IHNGOs have stated there is a clear link between the blurring of the roles of PRTs and NGOs leading to politically motivated attacks by insurgents against aid workers. Nathaniel Raymond from Oxfam America argues that the security of aid workers and the people they are trying to help in Afghanistan is threatened by this blurring of the lines by PRTs, since the aid workers are perceived as part of the political or military agenda (as the PRTs are) of intervening powers or the Afghan government.⁵⁹ A survey of NGO staff in Afghanistan conducted by CARE and ANSO in May 2005 asked NGO staff to identify factors they believed led to the deterioration in the security situation. The factors they identified and the percentages of staff that chose them were:

- Presidential elections - 21 %
- Poppy eradication- 12%
- Worsening perceptions of NGOs - 11%
- Increase in criminal activity - 7%
- Blurring of the lines between military and humanitarian actors- 5%.⁶⁰

It is worth noting that the study was conducted before the fighting season started in earnest in 2005, but for the NGO staff surveyed at that time the blurring of the lines was less of a concern than a number of other security factors.

The loss of humanitarian space

The term humanitarian space has been used in relation to actual physical spaces such as safe havens or humanitarian corridors,⁶¹ but in terms of IHNGOs operating in conflict zones it refers to the stated principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality that are claimed to govern IHNGO

⁵⁸ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, p.1.

⁵⁹ Nellie Bristol, 'Military Incursions into Aid Work Anger Humanitarian Groups,' *The Lancet*, 367 (2006), 384-386, (p.385).

⁶⁰ ANSO and CARE, 'NGO Insecurity in Afghanistan,' (May 2005) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/20050505_ansocare.pdf > [Accessed January 24, 2010], (p.5).

⁶¹ Hikaru Yamashita, *Humanitarian Space and International Politics: The Creation of Safe Areas* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

actions and that are recognized in humanitarian law and the ICRC Code of Conduct.⁶² The Sphere Project, that sets minimum standards for IHNGO principles and standards, includes the principles of neutrality and impartiality,⁶³ although not independence as is included in the ICRC Code of Conduct. These principles are also important in the way IHNGOs are perceived by both those they provide assistance to and by belligerents in conflict situations. Whereas security is an ever present operational concern for IHNGOs in conflict environments, it is their maintenance of humanitarian space that they often hold as their main shield against potential attack.

The degree to which the stated loss of humanitarian space for IHNGOs is a result of the activities of military actors such as PRTs engaging in aid and reconstruction work causing a blurring of the lines needs to be compared with other potential factors that may compromise their claims to neutrality and therefore their security. The perception from the point of view of AOGs that IHNGOs broadly represent western political, social and cultural intervention and appear allied with and in support of the state-building project of the international community in Afghanistan is a potential factor. IHNGO involvement with the current Afghan government, with its inherent issues of corruption and legitimacy, are other factors in the shrinking of humanitarian space and security for IHNGOs. In attempting to distance themselves from these factors IHNGOs conversely make themselves easy or 'soft' targets for both politically motivated and criminal attacks.

The fatal attack against MSF in 2004 leading to MSF withdrawing from operations in the country reveals more than one explanation for what has led to the seriously compromised security situation for IHNGOs. It was

⁶² Bruce Biber, 'The Code of Conduct: Humanitarian Principles in Practice' Updated 20 September 2004 < <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/64ZAHH>> [Accessed October 26, 2009] (para. 3)

⁶³ The Sphere Project, 'Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response: Principles' <http://www.sphereproject.org/content/view/25/84/lang_english/> [Accessed October 26, 2009],(para.1).

blamed on a corrupt local police commander,⁶⁴ an example of the problems caused by the politically expedient inclusion of former warlords and militia into the new Afghan army and police. However, the Taliban also claimed responsibility for the attack claiming aid workers were working for the US occupation⁶⁵ and MSF blamed both the Afghan government for not investigating the potential involvement of its own appointees while also blaming the attack on the blurring of the lines between military forces and aid workers.⁶⁶ Fabrice Weissman, Research Director for MSF, also apportioned some of the responsibility for this onto the aid community itself in allowing its impartiality to be compromised through association and work with the UNAMA and interim Afghan government.⁶⁷

Conclusion

Military involvement in aid and reconstruction activity has a clear tactical, strategic and political agenda, whereas IHNGOs believe aid should be provided solely on the basis of need. This is an intractable issue at the heart of the ideological difference between the two groups. The IHNGOs in this study have all attempted to distance themselves from direct involvement with the military because of the lack of impartiality, neutrality and independence of military provided aid. They have criticised the most visible form of military provided aid and reconstruction work, the PRTs, for compromising NGO security through blurring the perceived roles of military and aid actors in the eyes of Afghan civilians and AOGs. They have also criticised the PRTs for the poor quality of the work of the contractors they employ, for creating projects that become targets for insurgents, for not involving communities in the project decision making, for being inefficient and expensive and, and ironically, for not providing better security for

⁶⁴ Gorik Ooms, 'A Simple Yet Crucial Demand,' (December 5 2005) <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=F75BF43C-E018-0C72-090DF543190C86E3&method=full_html> [Accessed November 30, 2009], (para.28).

⁶⁵ Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism' (para.1)

⁶⁶ Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism,' (para.3).

⁶⁷ Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism,' (paras.4,7 and 8).

civilians and NGOs.⁶⁸ A common request from IHNGOs has been for the PRTs, since they are military entities, to concentrate on establishing a secure environment within which the NGOs can operate. This view is exemplified by Save the Children which stated in 2004: “civil-military teams should exploit their comparative advantages in the areas of security and, specifically, by ensuring a security environment conducive to reconstruction and humanitarian activities undertaken by other actors.”⁶⁹

Although it is clear security conditions have worsened for NGOs, the single issue of the blurring of the humanitarian-military distinction by PRTs does not fully explain the serious deterioration in the security environment for IHNGOs. For the international community, including both PRTs and IHNGOs, the assumption that they were operating in a post-conflict environment in support of a new and accepted government proved to be premature when they were confronted by a growing insurgency, a government struggling for legitimacy and control, faltering international commitment and the principal military power, the US, distracted by a new war in Iraq in 2003. The activities, proportion of expatriate and national staff, security concerns, and press and policy statements of the IHNGOs in Afghanistan chosen for this study need to be examined to put them into the wider context of the international intervention and state-building model that has been employed there since 2001.

⁶⁸ Action Aid et al, 'Caught in the Conflict,' pp.13-18.

⁶⁹ Save the Children, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian-Military Relations in Afghanistan*, p.48.

Chapter Eight: The IHNGOs in Afghanistan from 2001

The humanitarian situation at the end of Taliban rule

Kabul fell to the forces of the Northern Alliance on November 13th 2001 and by early December they had also captured the last Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. Prior to the events of September 11th 2001 the international humanitarian assistance presence in Afghanistan was very light with approximately 200 expatriate staff from international NGOs and 60 from the UN.¹ In advance of the US and Northern Alliance war against the Taliban that started in October 2001, international staff of most UN agencies and NGOs had been evacuated from the country as the Taliban could not guarantee their safety with the onset of the war.² At the same time, the UN and aid agencies were concerned about the potential humanitarian crisis that would be caused by the war coinciding with winter, and the drought and famine that had gripped Afghanistan since 2000.³ The dropping of food aid parcels by the US Air Force in an attempt to present a humanitarian side to the US war against the Taliban was heavily criticised by IHNGOs as being ineffective and dangerous in that the food parcels resembled cluster bombs and sometimes landed in mine fields.⁴ Oxfam, MSF and Save the Children criticised these food drops and also pointed out the issue of the blurring of lines between humanitarian and military action,⁵ a claim that would appear repeatedly in the IHNGO – military relationship in Afghanistan.

¹ Donini, 'Principles, Politics and Pragmatism,' p.136.

² Weiss, p.162.

³ United Nations, 'Press Release AFG/145 ORG 1336: In Afghanistan, A Population in Crisis' <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/afg145.doc.htm>> [Accessed December 4, 2009].

⁴ Kate Clark, 'The Struggle for Hearts and Minds: The Military, Aid and the Media' in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.90.

⁵ Weiss, pp.162-163.

The resurgence of the international aid community

In early 2002 a “mushrooming aid industry” arrived in Kabul.⁶ The development of the Afghan Transitional Authority mandated by the Bonn Agreement of December 2001⁷ plus the growth of the international military (ISAF) and assistance presence in Kabul through 2002 and 2003 created “the Kabul bubble,”⁸ but with the international aid presence growing progressively thinner away from the Afghan capital.⁹ In 1999 there had been 46 international NGOs operating in Afghanistan, by November 2002 this number had grown to 350,¹⁰ clear evidence of the IHNGO community’s growing interest in and involvement with the early phase of the state building project in the Afghanistan. This aid rush occurred as UN agencies and NGOs arrived to implement the aid and reconstruction planned for Afghanistan and competed with each other for media visibility and/or contracts. Donor governments met in Tokyo in January 2002 and pledged nearly \$US 2 billion in aid to Afghanistan,¹¹ however later in the same year the new Afghan Transitional Government was already complaining of the failure of some of the pledges to materialise,¹² thus heralding the beginning of rapid disillusionment within Afghanistan with the international reconstruction effort. Ultimately NGOs would become scapegoats for these problems and be seen as responsible in the eyes of the Afghan government and the Afghan people for the failure of any perceptible improvement in their lives in the years following the 2001 intervention.¹³

⁶ Clark, p.93.

⁷ For an analysis of the Bonn agreement see; J. Alexander Thier, ‘The Politics of Peace-building: Year One: From Bonn to Kabul,’ in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), pp.46-49.

⁸ Donini, ‘Principles, Politics and Pragmatism,’ p.137.

⁹ Donini, ‘Principles, Politics and Pragmatism,’ p.137.

¹⁰ Johnson and Leslie, p.224.

¹¹ Nicholas Leader and Mohamed Haneef Atmar, ‘Political Projects: Reform, Aid and the State in Afghanistan,’ in *National-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, ed. by Antonio Donini, Norah Niland and Karin Wermester (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2004), p.173.

¹² Sultan Barakat, ‘Setting the Scene for Afghanistan’s Reconstruction: The Challenges and Critical Dilemmas,’ *Third World Quarterly*, 23 (2002), 801-816 (p.811).

¹³ Antonio Donini, ‘Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,’ *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2007), 158-172 (pp.163-167).

The increase in the numbers and influence of both international and Afghan NGOs from 2002 to 2004 was largely the result of these agencies being the preferred means of delivering bilateral and UN funded humanitarian aid due to the lack of the new Afghan government's capacity to do this.¹⁴ In the early post-Taliban era the IHNGOs' methods of delivering aid and reconstruction assistance also often bypassed traditional elements of Afghan society such as shuras (village committees) and tribal elders as they did not embody the liberal values inherent in the new democratic and human rights focused vision the international community now held for Afghanistan.¹⁵ The influx of new aid workers, some of whom lacked knowledge of Afghanistan's conservative Islamic culture, led to problems with how their lifestyles were perceived by the local population, the quality of their work due to an emphasis on speed and quantity, competition among NGOs for visibility in aid projects and additional security concerns as the NGOs spread out into the countryside.¹⁶ The aid agency influx also had detrimental effects on the local economy. Many remaining skilled staff in the Afghan government left for much higher paid jobs in international NGOs and the UN¹⁷ and rents in Kabul boomed as UN and NGO staff paid for accommodation at much higher rates than could be afforded by local residents.¹⁸ The aid money pouring into the country was often not benefitting the majority of citizens while a few made large profits from the influx of aid money by working for the UN and NGOs or by renting out buildings at inflated prices to NGO and UN staff.¹⁹

¹⁴ Jude Howell and Jeremy Lind, *Civil Society with Guns is Not Civil Society: Aid, Security and Civil Society in Afghanistan* (London: London School of Economics, 2008), p.13.

¹⁵ Howell and Lind, p.15.

¹⁶ Johnson and Leslie, pp.224-225; Howell and Lind, pp.16-17.

¹⁷ Katarina Ammitzboell, 'Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations on the Host Economy from a People's Perspective,' in *Unintended consequences of Peace Keeping Operations* ed.by Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric Conig and Ramesh Thakur (Tokyo:United Nations Press,2007), 69-89, p.77.

¹⁸ Ammitzboell, p. 85.

¹⁹ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview, Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

The politicisation of the humanitarian action in Afghanistan since the 2001 intervention

The fundamental problem faced by IHNGOs in the post-Taliban era has been their position within the wider political objectives of the international intervention and state building process in Afghanistan and the impact this has had on their operations and security. Compared to the time of the Afghan Civil War or the period of Taliban rule, when they had considerable autonomy,²⁰ they are now, although often unwillingly, politically embedded within the international US and NATO led intervention. They represent western values also championed by the intervening forces, especially in terms of their positions on gender issues and human rights. Their “visions of the good society and what it might look like in Afghanistan and Iraq have much in common with the Coalition’s.”²¹ The IHNGOs that are involved with longer term development projects as well as providing humanitarian aid have also inadvertently positioned themselves politically alongside the longer term development goals of the international intervention and the new Afghan government in the eyes of AOGs and the Afghan people.²² The immediate humanitarian relief objectives of the ICRC and MSF have enabled them to distance themselves from alignment with the development objectives of the Afghan government and international forces, but this has proved no guarantee for them against attack.

The operational reality for IHNGOs

UNAMA was intended to be able to coordinate political action and humanitarian aid at a strategic level,²³ but the operational realities on the ground for both UN agencies and local and international NGOs were often much more difficult. In 2002-2003, local and international NGOs often moved into areas that were accessible while missing out other places that were actually more in need of their assistance. This was due to both

²⁰ Smillie and Minear, p.96.

²¹ Slim, 'With or Against?', p.35.

²² Antonio Donini, 'Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,' 158-172 (pp.160-181).

²³ Johnson, 'Afghanistan and the War on Terror,' p.57.

security concerns and problems in communication, transport, lack of experienced staff and resources.²⁴ Interestingly the early PRT deployments of 2002-2003 were also often to provincial capitals that already had some degree of security such as Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamiyan. This brought into question their effectiveness and the criticism from NGOs that they were competing with them and causing confusion for the local population about military and humanitarian actors, leading to the blurring the lines between the two sets of actors.²⁵ According to an expatriate IHNGO staff member currently working in Afghanistan, the period from 2002 to 2004 was better overall for security for IHNGOs than in the years that have followed, especially since 2006.²⁶ However attacks on aid workers started in earnest in 2003 with 12 NGO staff killed, and this escalated in 2004 with 24 staff killed.²⁷ The deteriorating security situation prompted a coalition of NGOs to advocate for the expansion of ISAF forces beyond Kabul in an open letter, "Afghanistan a call for security," to NATO in June 2003. CARE, IRC and Oxfam were signatories, but the ICRC and MSF did not join in making this call.²⁸

Expatriate and national staff

After an initial influx of expatriate staff in the immediate aftermath of the 2001 war, most IHNGOs have maintained and further increased Afghan national staff while reducing expatriate staff. For example, the IRC had fifty expatriate staff in 2002 and 2003, but by December 2009 this number was down to four, while the organisation has nearly 400 national staff.²⁹ The ICRC has maintained a larger number of expatriate staff in Afghanistan. In 2009 it had 115 expatriate staff with a correspondingly larger number of

²⁴ Johnson, 'Afghanistan and the War on Terror,' p.58..

²⁵ Jake Sherman, 'Afghanistan: Nationally Led State-building,' in *Building States to Build Peace* ed. by Charles T. Call and Vanessa Wyeth (Boulder: Lynne Reiner, 2008), p.317.

²⁶ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the International Rescue Committee in Afghanistan. Interview by telephone, December 8, 2009.

²⁷ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office/ CARE, *NGO Insecurity in Afghanistan* (Kabul: ANSO/CARE, 2005), pp.3-4.

²⁸ Action Aid et al, 'Afghanistan: A Call for Security,' (June 17, 2003) <<http://www.icva.ch/doc00000995.htm>> [Accessed December 10, 2009].

²⁹ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

about 1262 national staff.³⁰ According to CARE, 99 percent of its 900 staff in Afghanistan are Afghan national staff, with only eight to ten expatriate staff.³¹ This reduction in expatriate staff, while maintaining or increasing national staff, not only reflects the difficult security environment for most NGOs in Afghanistan but is also in keeping with the NGO policies of local participation and involvement in development plus the advantages of acceptance and communication that local staff can achieve with their own people. International NGOs are seeking a lower profile and have taken down signs and flags even in Kabul, where expatriate staff are still present. Travel by road for expatriate staff is often too dangerous and national staff travel in unmarked vehicles or public transport to access populations in need.³² Consequently it has been the national staff of the international NGOs that have been the most frequent targets of violence against humanitarian workers in Afghanistan. All 19 fatalities due to armed attack against NGOs in 2009 in Afghanistan were national staff.³³

The IHNGOs in Afghanistan: 2001-2009

The ICRC

The ICRC evacuated all expatriate staff from Taliban controlled Afghanistan in September 2001 ahead of the US bombing campaign and war that would oust the Taliban.³⁴ National staff of the ICRC remained throughout the US bombing campaign that destroyed ICRC food

³⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'The ICRC in Afghanistan' <<http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/afghanistan?OpenDocument>> [Accessed January 14, 2010], (para.4).

³¹ CARE, 'Afghanistan Special Report,' <<http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/> [Accessed December 10, 2009], (para.5.).

³² Antonio Donini, *Feinstein International Centre Briefing Paper: Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat* (Massachusetts: Feinstein International Centre, 2009), p.7;

³³ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,' (January 2010) < <http://www.afgnso.org/2009/ANSO%20Q.4%202009.pdf> > [Accessed February 3, 2010], (p.8); Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat* p.7.

³⁴ Nick Danziger, 'The Afghan Way,' *The Magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* (2002) < http://www.redcross.int/EN/mag/magazine2002_1/index.html > [Accessed January 14, 2010], (para.6.).

warehouses in Kabul,³⁵ but expatriate staff had started to return by mid November 2001 with the overthrow of the Taliban.³⁶

The first expatriate humanitarian aid worker to be killed in post-Taliban Afghanistan was an ICRC staff member in March 2003 in Uruzgan province in the south of the country.³⁷ The ICRC has maintained a large presence in Afghanistan, and since it provides humanitarian assistance in areas of conflict, it is increasingly required, and the organisation has been active in the country since the era of the Soviet invasion.³⁸ More recently, an Afghan national staff member was killed by a bomb explosion in Kandahar in August 2009.³⁹

Compared to the other IHNGOs examined in this study, the ICRC has managed to maintain the most neutral, impartial and independent position in the Afghan conflict. This can partly be explained by the ICRC's direct focus on humanitarian relief as opposed to the longer term development work engaged in by most other IHNGOs which consequently involves them to some extent with the Afghan government and international forces who are the direct opponents of the Taliban. The ICRC has made few statements about the concerns often expressed by other IHNGOs relating to military provision of aid and reconstruction work. Making criticisms of military strategy would be at odds with the organisation's need to have access to the wounded and to prisoners. However, in 2004 following attacks against ICRC staff in Afghanistan and Iraq, the ICRC operations director Pierre Krahenbuhl did identify PRTs and the military

³⁵ Griffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, p.285, p.300.

³⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'ICRC Annual Report 2001: Afghan Conflict: Afghanistan', <[http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/5CHL2G/\\$FILE/AFGHANIS_AR_2001.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/5CHL2G/$FILE/AFGHANIS_AR_2001.pdf?OpenElement)> [Accessed January 14, 2010], (p.163).

³⁷ Indira A.R Lakshmanan, 'Red Cross Worker Slain in Afghanistan, Resurgence Seen in Extremist Activity,' *Boston Globe*, 29 March 2003, p.A6.

³⁸ Phillip Spoerri, *The ICRC's Humanitarian Activities in Afghanistan: Before and After 9/11: Presentation for the Seminar at Science Po (Paris) on 25.01.06.*

<http://www.peacecenter.sciences-po.fr/pdf/spoerri_presentation.pdf> [Accessed December 2, 2009], p.5.

³⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross, 'Afghanistan: Massive Explosion in Kandahar Leaves ICRC Staff Member Killed,' (August 26, 2009)

<<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/afghanistan-news-260809!OpenDocument>> [Accessed December 4, 2009].

instrumentalisation of aid as presenting risks to the ICRC in its operations and of the perceptions of it held by populations in regions of conflict.⁴⁰

The ICRC's position has also allowed them to be an intermediary between the belligerent parties especially in negotiations concerning prisoners. An example of this was the Taliban approach to the ICRC regarding negotiations for the release of South Korean hostages taken by the Taliban in 2007.⁴¹ Regardless of the ICRC's standing in international law, its utility for this kind of negotiation suggests another reason why it has some degree of acceptance from the armed opposition. The ICRC has consequently been able to negotiate with all belligerent parties and this has reached the extent that in December 2009 they were able for the first time to visit ANA soldiers held as prisoners by the Taliban.⁴²

The ICRC undertakes emergency medical and humanitarian relief in Afghanistan but has stopped any longer term development programmes in the country due to the potential association with the Afghan government or international forces that these may present in terms of compromising the ICRC's neutrality, impartiality and independence.⁴³

MSF

MSF had 70 expatriate staff and almost 400 national staff in Afghanistan in 2001 and it withdrew its expatriate staff ahead of the war in September of that year.⁴⁴ Like many other aid agencies at this time, MSF was also

⁴⁰ Pierre Krahenbuhl, Address to the High Level Humanitarian Forum, Palais de Nations, Geneva, 31 March, 2004. 'Humanitarian Security: A Matter of Acceptance, Perception, Behaviour.' <<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/5xsgwe?opendocument>> [Accessed January 17, 2010], (para.14).

⁴¹ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview with the author Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

⁴² International Committee of the Red Cross, 'Afghanistan: First ICRC Visit to Detainees in Taliban Custody,' (15 December, 2009) <<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/afghanistan-news-151209?opendocument>> [Accessed January 18, 2010].

⁴³ Antonio Donini, 'Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,' *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2007), 158-172 (p.163).

⁴⁴ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Current Map of MSF missions in Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (September 24, 2001),' <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=828%20&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 18, 2010], (para.2).

concerned about the war exacerbating the already dire conditions of famine and drought that existed in the country.⁴⁵ During the war MSF was vocal in its opposition to the use of humanitarian food aid drops from the air by the coalition forces saying that these were inefficient and that MSF was concerned about the “clear risks in associating humanitarian aid with military operations.”⁴⁶ During the US bombing campaign the Executive Director of MSF-USA, Nicholas Torrente, gave a speech to a joint hearing of the US Congressional South Asian Affairs Subcommittee and Terrorism Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee outlining MSF’s concerns about the integration of humanitarian and military operations such as access to those in need and the potential for aid workers to be targeted.⁴⁷ This is worth noting as MSF is the first IHNGO that most clearly expressed concerns about the blurring of the roles of military and humanitarian actors and their actions, well before the establishment of PRTs and other forms of military-humanitarian counter-insurgency operations in post-Taliban Afghanistan. The concern about military involvement in humanitarian action is one of the central pillars of IHNGO criticisms of PRTs and other forms of counter-insurgency that combine military action with aid and reconstruction.

Between 2002 and 2004 MSF undertook a range of humanitarian relief activities in Afghanistan including feeding centres, programmes for new mothers, vaccination and health care programmes, mobile clinics in remote areas, clean water, sanitation and programmes against specific diseases including tuberculosis and leishmaniasis.⁴⁸ Other problems that MSF dealt with in the 2002 to 2004 period included the pressure on

⁴⁵ Medecins Sans Frontieres, ‘Current Map of MSF missions in Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries,’ (September 24, 2001)

⁴⁶ Medecins Sans Frontieres. ‘MSF Raises Concerns About US Air Drops and Rejects the Link Between Humanitarian and Military Action,’ (October 9, 2001) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=860%20&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 18, 2010], (para.6).

⁴⁷ Medecins Sans Frontieres, ‘Speech: The Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan,’ (October 10, 2001) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/article.cfm?id=1346&cat=speech>> [Accessed January 18, 2010],(paras.18-19).

⁴⁸ Medecins Sans Frontieres, ‘Activity Report: 2002 >2003,’ <<http://www.msf.org/source/ar-web/2003/programmes.pdf>> [Accessed January 18, 2010], p.74.

refugee camps and health care facilities of the repatriation of 1.5 million refugees from Pakistan and Iran. This pressure was further increased by people who were newly displaced as a result of continued fighting and the ongoing drought.⁴⁹

MSF international staff started to return to Afghanistan from mid November 2001 and by the end of November there were more than 50 international MSF staff back in the country, specifically in the major cities and provincial centres.⁵⁰ By October 2003 MSF's staff had increased to 107 expatriates and 1380 Afghan nationals.⁵¹ MSF was outspoken about the deteriorating security situation in 2003 and identified a number of issues it believed were contributing to the problem including the slow expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul. MSF, however, was not a signatory to the combined NGO letter that included CARE, IRC and Oxfam, in June 2003 that urged the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul to improve the security situation in the rest of the country.⁵² Reasons for the decline in security identified by MSF included the lack of Afghan government capacity and funding,⁵³ the reluctance of ISAF to deploy outside of Kabul⁵⁴ and, most concerning for aid agencies, the identification of aid workers by the population and armed opposition with the international military forces and the Afghan government. According to MSF the "politicization of aid, advocated by the international community (with the tacit acceptance of many NGOs)"⁵⁵ was

⁴⁹ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: One Year On: A Special Report from Kandahar,' (October 7, 2002) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=868%20&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 19, 2010].

⁵⁰ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'More than 50 International MSF Aid Workers Inside Afghanistan,' (November 30, 2001) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=832%20&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 19, 2010].

⁵¹ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: Neither Safe nor Stable,' (October 15, 2003) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=896%20&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 19, 2010], (para.22.)

⁵² Action Aid et al, 'Afghanistan: A Call for Security,' (June 17, 2003) <<http://www.icva.ch/doc00000995.htm>> [Accessed December 10, 2009].

⁵³ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: Neither Safe nor Stable,' (October 15, 2003) (para.5).

⁵⁴ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: Neither Safe nor Stable,' (October 15, 2003) (para.7).

⁵⁵ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: Neither Safe nor Stable,' (October 15, 2003) (para.6).

exemplified by the acceptance of major Afghan Government reconstruction contracts by some NGOs.

However, if NGOs, trapped in the need for funding and visibility, accept to become the private contractors of states anxious to delegate political responsibilities, they shouldn't be surprised if they are seen as responsible for any possible failure of the reconstruction process, and they will also have to share responsibility for the loss of independent humanitarian space in the country.⁵⁶

MSF also predicted more attacks against aid agencies who presented 'soft targets' to the growing insurgency. Tragically this proved to be true for MSF itself. The organisation withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2004 after five of its workers, three expatriate and two Afghan national staff, were brutally murdered in one attack in Badghis province in the supposedly safer northwest of the country in June of that year.⁵⁷ MSF found itself in a difficult position in that it had rejected coordination by, or involvement with, the Afghan government and international forces but it also demanded that the Afghan government bring the killers to justice while rejecting the position of other IHNGOs such as CARE that had called for ISAF to improve security.⁵⁸

MSF returned to operations in Afghanistan in 2009, resuming work in hospitals in Kabul and Helmand province.⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that while MSF cautiously resumed work in one hospital in Lashkargah, the capital of the embattled province of Kandahar, they mentioned the numerous other medical facilities in the province that have been rehabilitated by ISAF and that are now also targets for the armed

⁵⁶ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: Neither Safe nor Stable,' (October 15, 2003) (para.11.).

⁵⁷ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: MSF Leaves Country After Staff Killings and Threats,' (December 16, 2004) <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=F446039F-4965-4FB0-9D21CF4C695F80C9&method=full_html> [Accessed January 19, 2010].

⁵⁸ Volker Heins, *Non-governmental Organisations in International Society: Struggles Over Recognition* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), pp.134-135.

⁵⁹ Medecins Sans Frontieres, 'Afghanistan: MSF Returns After 5 Years,' (October 9, 2009) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=4000&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 19, 2010].

opposition. On the one hand these medical facilities have been improved or repaired by the military with their technical capacity, suggesting the usefulness of the military in aid and reconstruction work, and yet this also makes the medical facilities targets for the insurgents.⁶⁰ Another point regarding the politicisation and securitisation of aid made by MSF and other IHNGOs is that this demonstrates that funding and reconstruction work is going to areas where there is fighting, such as Helmand and Kandahar in the south, rather than to other areas and populations that may be in more need of it.

CARE

CARE had two expatriate staff in Afghanistan who were evacuated during the fighting in October and November 2001 and 420 Afghan national staff who remained in the country during the war.⁶¹ The delivery of food aid was seen by CARE as a priority and consequently before the onset of the US bombing campaign, a group of IHNGOs including CARE issued a public statement calling for all belligerents in the conflict to recognise the need for international organisations to deliver food before the onset of the war and the harsh Afghan winter and to allow space for these deliveries to proceed.⁶² By late October 2001 CARE was considering cross-border food delivery from Pakistan in the south and Tajikistan in the north and by airlifts that they wanted to identify as separate from the US military humanitarian aid deliveries also being made at this time.⁶³

With the fall of the Taliban, CARE quickly identified security as directly related to the humanitarian situation. Involvement with the intervening

⁶⁰ Doctors Without Borders, 'Empty Hospital Beds in the Capital of Helmand Province, Afghanistan,' (December 10, 2009) <<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=4112&cat=field-news>> [Accessed January 19, 2010], (para.12.).

⁶¹ Maurice Tamman, 'Islamic World: Relief Agencies: Workers Brace for Human Disaster' *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, October 9, 2001, p. A.11

⁶² ACTED et al, 'Working to Solve the Crisis in Afghanistan: A Joint NGO Statement,' (October 5, 2001) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/a_statement2.asp> [Accessed January 20, 2010].

⁶³ CARE, 'Afghanistan: Options for Humanitarian Access' (October 25, 2001) <<http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/afghanistanpolicy2.asp>> [Accessed January 20, 2010], (pp.2-4).

military forces was inevitable and CARE started to draft guidelines for this eventuality advocating the humanitarian effort remain under overall civilian control and calling for an international force for “peace-keeping and/ or humanitarian purposes” that would come from countries not directly involved in the war against the Taliban.⁶⁴ CARE also attempted to delineate the respective roles for humanitarian agencies and the military, suggesting the military focus on training Afghan security forces, disposal of mines and unexploded ordinance, repairing roads and runways and airlifting aid into inaccessible locations while local and international relief agencies did the actual delivery of aid.⁶⁵ This separation of roles is still a frequent recommendation from most IHNGOs in relation to their concerns about the quality of work, blurring of roles and overall politicisation of aid caused by the military delivery of assistance. This continued to be a theme that ran through many of CARE’s policy statements and press releases in the years following the end of Taliban rule.⁶⁶

Despite its non-governmental position, CARE did make statements about, and advocate for, political and military action. It advocated for the formation of a “broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative” government.⁶⁷ While a functioning government was a clear pre-condition for future stability and reconstruction, CARE’s support for the international intervention and state-building agenda and consequently the new Afghan government would prove problematic if the government did not achieve broad acceptance and armed opponents came to identify the organisation with the government and its international backers. CARE also called for the extension of ISAF beyond Kabul to improve the security situation for

⁶⁴ CARE, ‘Priority Issues in the Aftermath of the Taliban Retreat: CARE Policy Analysis and Advocacy Options,’ (November 19, 2001) <<http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/afghanistanpolicy3.pdf>> [Accessed January 20, 2010], p.3.

⁶⁵ CARE, ‘Priority Issues in the Aftermath of the Taliban Retreat: CARE Policy Analysis and Advocacy Options,’ (November 19, 2001) pp.3-4.

⁶⁶ CARE, ‘The Need for a Clear Distinction Between Humanitarian Program and Military Activities in Afghanistan,’ (March 20, 2002) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/03202002_distinction.asp> [Accessed January 20, 2010].

⁶⁷ CARE, ‘Priority Issues in the Aftermath of the Taliban Retreat: CARE Policy Analysis and Advocacy Options,’ (November 19, 2001) p.5.

the Afghan people and for aid workers through 2002 and 2003. Security was especially a concern at that time in the north where government and international forces were absent. Paul Barker, director of CARE in Afghanistan in June 2002, made the point that “whatever the cost of expanding ISAF, the cost of not doing so will be far greater in the long run.”⁶⁸

The faltering of the international commitment to Afghanistan was also highlighted when CARE pointed out in September 2002 that only 5 percent of the aid that had been pledged at the international donors’ meeting in Tokyo in January 2002 had been delivered and no large infrastructure projects had been undertaken.⁶⁹ When the UN Security Council did mandate an expansion of ISAF in October 2003, CARE also recommended that the PRTs focus on security sector reform rather than on reconstruction and that they be renamed ‘Provincial Security Teams.’⁷⁰ CARE also noted that the new German PRT at that time was deployed to Kunduz province, where no attacks against NGOs had been recorded.⁷¹ This demonstrates a disconnect in terms of priorities between donor governments and their PRTs with those of NGOs in terms of how the two groups want to see military forces deployed and aid money spent.

CARE has experienced a number of security incidents in Afghanistan. A CARE office in Logar was ransacked in May 2005 during riots that a CARE staff member described as “anti-government, and, to a certain extent, anti-NGO riots.”⁷² The staff member from CARE also described the

⁶⁸ Paul Barker, quoted in ACBAR, ‘NGOs Express Concern Over the Security Situation and Call Upon the Security Council to Support the Expansion of ISAF’ (June 20, 2002) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/06212002_release.pdf> [Accessed January 20, 2010] (para.7).

⁶⁹ Ludwig W. Adamec and Frank A. Clements, *Conflict in Afghanistan: A Historical Encyclopaedia* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), p.215.

⁷⁰ CARE, ‘CARE Welcomes UN Decision to Expand Afghan Peacekeeping’ (October 16, 2003) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/10162003_afghanistan.asp> [Accessed January 21, 2010], (para.3).

⁷¹ CARE, ‘CARE Welcomes UN Decision to Expand Afghan Peacekeeping’ (October 16, 2003) (para.7.).

⁷² CARE staff member interviewed for the United States Institute of Peace, Afghanistan Experience Programme, (July 17, 2005)

deterioration of security for NGOs that had occurred through 2004 and 2005.⁷³ In May 2005 an expatriate staff member of CARE was kidnapped.⁷⁴ In May 2006 its office in Kabul was ransacked and burned during riots sparked by a fatal traffic accident involving a US army truck. CARE played down the possible anti-NGO sentiment behind the attack stating it was the location of the NGO's office that led to the attack.⁷⁵ However, anti-foreigner and anti-NGO sentiment was also believed to be an element of the frustration over unemployment and the slow progress of reconstruction that fuelled the riots. Afghan government resentment towards some aid agencies had grown due to competition between NGOs and the government for funds from international donors which had led to criticism from Afghan government ministers, notably the head of the Ministry of Planning in 2003 and 2004, who claimed they would become targets to be attacked for wasting money.⁷⁶ The lack of popularity of NGOs with Afghans at a local and government level for the slow reconstruction process was also identified by staff of CARE.⁷⁷

Resentment towards NGOs was also growing among Afghans disillusioned by little tangible improvement in their livelihoods and angered by the perceptions of corruption, wealth and culturally insensitive lifestyles of NGO staff.⁷⁸ CARE has maintained a light expatriate footprint which dispels, at least for them, some of the criticisms levelled at the "expat-heavy" NGOs.⁷⁹ In 2004 it had eight expatriate staff and 800 Afghan

<<http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/histories/afghanistan/34.pdf>>

[Accessed January 21, 2010], (p.6).

⁷³ CARE staff member interviewed for the United States Institute of Peace, Afghanistan Experience Programme, (July 17, 2005)(p.6)

⁷⁴ BBC News, 'Abducted Italian Makes Contact' (May 18, 2005)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4556735.stm> [Accessed January 21 2010].

⁷⁵ Carlotta Gall, 'After Riots End, Kabul's Residents Begin to Point Fingers,' *New York Times*, 31 May 2006, p.A.12.

⁷⁶ Carlotta Gall and Amy Waldman, 'Under Siege in Afghanistan: Aid Groups Say their Effort is Being Criticized Unfairly,' *New York Times*, 19 December 2004, p.1.20.

⁷⁷ CARE staff member interviewed for the United States Institute of Peace, Afghanistan Experience Programme, (July 17, 2005)(p.7).

⁷⁸ Antonio Donini, 'Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,' *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2007), 158-172 (p.166).

⁷⁹ Donini, 'Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,' (p.165).

national staff,⁸⁰ and today it claims to still have 99 percent local staff out of its 900 staff in Afghanistan.⁸¹

Most of CARE's current work in Afghanistan has a longer term development focus. In an effort to avoid aid dependency, by 2003 CARE was operating cash for work schemes in Kabul wherein recipients received payment for work such as collection of rubbish, sewing of school uniforms and teaching hygiene courses to families.⁸² Of the ten major CARE run projects in 2009 in Afghanistan outlined on its website, one provides emergency food relief, while three are for rehabilitation programmes including housing for returning refugees and six are for development projects including assistance for widows in Kabul, secondary schools for girls and programmes for young mothers.⁸³ The development projects demonstrate a central concern of CARE's policy and programmes which is the welfare of women and girls, and this is especially significant in Afghanistan considering the harsh Taliban policies towards women and the generally conservative nature of Afghanistan's Islamic culture. An example of CARE's policy focus on the welfare of women was a survey and report it conducted and released in September 2005 outlining expectations and concerns held by women towards the upcoming parliamentary and provincial council elections held that month. CARE referred to the elections as "yet another important milestone in the country's long road to full democracy."⁸⁴ The statement positions CARE as clearly having a stance regarding the governance and democratisation of the country and therefore also aligning it with the internationally backed state-building project and Afghan government. The complex, insecure and heavily politicised situation in Afghanistan with AOGs attacking this process put IHNGOs like CARE in a difficult position when trying to walk

⁸⁰ Carlotta Gall and Amy Waldman, 'Under Siege in Afghanistan: Aid Groups Say their Effort is Being Criticized Unfairly,' p.1.20.

⁸¹ CARE, 'Afghanistan: Special Report,' (para.5).

⁸² Adamec and Clements, p.117.

⁸³ CARE, 'Afghanistan: Country Profile'

⁸⁴ CARE, 'Afghanistan Parliamentary and Provincial Councils Elections: Greater Challenges, Greater Promise' (September 16, 2005)
<http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/20050916_afgelections.pdf>
[Accessed January 21, 2010]. (p.1).

the line between neutrality and impartiality and support for a political ideology such as liberal democracy.

A significant Afghan government programme that CARE is a facilitating partner for is the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) run through the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and funded by the World Bank.⁸⁵ CARE, the IRC, Oxfam and other NGOs and UN agencies work through the NSP to assist Community Development Councils (CDCs) with planning, implementing and managing reconstruction programmes. The CDC's reconstruction projects fit within the model of locally driven and community-based development favoured by CARE and the organisation undertakes these programmes in six provinces.⁸⁶

The International Rescue Committee (IRC)

Prior to late 2001 the IRC ran its programmes from across the border in Pakistan.⁸⁷ The IRC undertook emergency relief food aid, rural rehabilitation programmes and cash for work schemes to returning refugees and internally displaced people in the north and west of Afghanistan following the end of Taliban rule up to March 2003.⁸⁸ The security situation was, even then, the primary obstacle to the implementation of these programmes.⁸⁹ During the winter of 2001-2002

⁸⁵ Kimberly Maynard, 'The Role of Culture, Islam and Tradition in Community Driven Reconstruction: The International Rescue Committee's Approach to Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program,' (March 2007)

<<http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/IRC-NSP-PAPER-FINAL.pdf>> [Accessed January 21, 2010], (p.9).

⁸⁶ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development: National Solidarity Programme, 'Facilitating Partners (FPs),' (November 20, 2008) <http://www.nspafghanistan.org/facilitating_partners.shtm> [Accessed January 24, 2010].

⁸⁷ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

⁸⁸ International Rescue Committee, 'Program Performance Final Report for Emergency Response to IDP Crisis- Afghanistan,' (2003)

<http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABY646.pdf>

[Accessed January 24, 2010]. (pp.1-3).

⁸⁹ International Rescue Committee, 'Program Performance Final Report for Emergency Response to IDP Crisis- Afghanistan,' (2003), (p.9).

the IRC was able to deliver food aid to the famine affected Hazarajat region of central Afghanistan using fleets of donkeys.⁹⁰

Since 2003 the IRC has been focusing on longer term development projects especially within the NSP and also with education and child protection programmes within the respective Afghan government ministries and with funding from USAID.⁹¹ This is reflected in the IRC's spending in Afghanistan which, by March 2007, was on governance (34%) and health (32%) followed by education and child protection (19%), training (12%) and HIV (3%).⁹² The IRC's emphasis on community based education had, by August 2007, enabled the integration of 500 community based schools into the Afghan education system.⁹³

From 2003 onwards the IRC was involved in implementing the NSP with the Afghan government in the south-eastern provinces of Khost and Logar⁹⁴ and now also in Nangahar in the southeast plus Herat in the northwest.⁹⁵ The southeast of Afghanistan was, and still is, a difficult region for the government and NGO operations. Factors such as its proximity to the Pakistan border, its largely Pashtun ethnicity and an ongoing insurgency meant the NSP was going to be a challenge for the IRC to implement as the NSP has a political dimension in extending the influence of the Afghan government through the MRRD. The IRC has focussed on community driven development through consultation with the CDCs, although it has identified disconnects between the CDCs and the

⁹⁰ International Rescue Committee, 'Field Workers Under Fire: Delivering Aid in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Other Danger Zones – IRC Briefing From The Field,' (27 October, 2009 <http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/FieldWorkersUnderFire_IRCBriefing.pdf> [Accessed January 24, 2010] (p.10).

⁹¹ International Rescue Committee, 'In Afghanistan: Education and Child Protection,' (August 2007) <<http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/2007/070822-irc-afghanistan-education-and-cp.pdf>> [Accessed January 24, 2020].

⁹² International Rescue Committee, 'International Rescue Committee in Afghanistan,' (March 2007) <http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/2007/1-irc-overview-w_photo-18mar.pdf> [Accessed January 24, 2010].

⁹³ The International Rescue Committee, 'In Afghanistan: Education and Child Protection,' (August 2007), (para.2).

⁹⁴ Kimberly Maynard, 'The Role of Culture, Islam and Tradition in Community Driven Reconstruction: The International Rescue Committee's Approach to Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program.' p.18.

⁹⁵ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development: National Solidarity Programme, 'Facilitating Partners (FPs).'

central government, a problem that has increased with the insurgency and the government's legitimacy problems.⁹⁶ Community driven development that has been promoted by the IRC has been found to work best in relatively stable environments.⁹⁷ As the insurgency against the Afghan government and its international backers has stepped up, the IRC has attempted to find ways of maintaining involvement with the NSP while also trying to distance themselves in the eyes of the local communities from direct association with the central government.⁹⁸ To promote this, the IRC has been using community outreach programmes consisting of Afghan national staff and including a Mullah who leads the community in prayers and speaks to the community about how the IRC's programmes are consistent with Islamic teaching and the Koran.⁹⁹

The IRC has been subjected to serious attacks in 2007 and 2008. A national staff member and his driver were killed in Logar province in July 2007,¹⁰⁰ and three expatriate female staff and their driver were killed in another attack in Logar in August 2008.¹⁰¹ The Country Director for the IRC said in December 2009 that the security situation had seriously deteriorated since 2006 with large parts of the country, especially in the south and east, becoming inaccessible to expatriate staff and increasingly so to national staff as well, with travel by air necessary due to the dangers of ambush presented by land travel.¹⁰²

Oxfam

During the war to remove the Taliban in October 2001, Oxfam, like other IHNGOs, expressed concern over the combination of humanitarian aid

⁹⁶ Kimberly Maynard, 'The Role of Culture, Islam and Tradition in Community Driven Reconstruction: The International Rescue Committee's Approach to Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program,' (pp.21-22).

⁹⁷ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

⁹⁸ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

⁹⁹ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

¹⁰⁰ International Rescue Committee, 'IRC Staff Member Killed in Logar Province, Afghanistan,' (18 July, 2007) <<http://www.theirc.org/news/irc-staff-member-killed-logar-province-afghanistan-4273>> [Accessed January 24, 2010].

¹⁰¹ BBC News, 'Aid Women Killed in Afghanistan,' (13 August, 2008) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7558076.stm> [Accessed January 24, 2010].

¹⁰² Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

drops with the US bombing campaign. The policy director of Oxfam at that time stated “our view is no air drops, no leaflets...just give the UN the means to do its job.”¹⁰³ According to a press release from January 2002, Oxfam was “working through both Afghan staff and partners” in the delivery of emergency food aid.¹⁰⁴ It also expressed concerns about the security situation and called for effective coordination between donors and the Afghan interim government and NGOs.¹⁰⁵

In the immediate aftermath of the end of Taliban rule, Oxfam focused on food for work and reconstruction projects such as schools, roads and clinics.¹⁰⁶ An Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS) survey in 2003 revealed the majority of Oxfam’s projects in Afghanistan were focussed on food security (7) and food aid (6) followed by community development and education (5 projects on each).¹⁰⁷ From 2001 to 2007 Oxfam worked on water distribution and sanitation projects in the southern provinces of Zabul and Kandahar as well as water and roading projects in the central province of Daikundi (Uruzgan) and Badakshan in the far northeast.¹⁰⁸ Oxfam’s activities are now focussed on capacity building of community driven development, gender equality and fostering Afghan civil

¹⁰³ Michelle Wrong, ‘Mixing Arms and Aid Raises Fears: Afghanistan Aid Agencies Deeply Troubled,’ *The Financial Times*, 6 October 2001, p.03.

¹⁰⁴ Oxfam International, ‘Oxfam Briefing Note: Afghanistan’s Crisis is Far From Over,’ (January 23, 2002)

<http://publications.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam/display.asp?K=002P0010&sf_01=cat_class&st_01=740&sort=SORT_DATE/d&m=65&dc=101> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (p.3).

¹⁰⁵ Oxfam International, ‘Oxfam Briefing Note: Afghanistan’s Crisis is Far From Over,’ (January 23, 2002), (pp.2-3).

¹⁰⁶ Oxfam International, ‘Afghanistan,’ (2010)

<<http://www.oxfam.org/en/emergencies/afghanistan>> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (para.4).

¹⁰⁷ Afghanistan Information Management Services, ‘International NGOs Sectoral Activities in Afghanistan – February 2003,’ (February 2003)

<http://www.aims.org.af/services/database/wdwww/documents/maps/int_ngos_sectoral.pdf> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (p.1).

¹⁰⁸ Oxfam International, ‘Afghanistan,’ (2010)

<<http://www.oxfam.org/en/emergencies/afghanistan>> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (paras.6-7).

society.¹⁰⁹ Like CARE and the IRC they are also involved in the NSP, though only in Daikundi province at present.¹¹⁰

In May 2002 Oxfam released a briefing paper regarding the role of aid and the GWOT and presented a ten point plan for international action, number one of which called for the international community to fulfil its commitment to rebuild Afghanistan.¹¹¹ The language of this document clearly places aid and development at the heart of the international security agenda when it states “Afghanistan highlighted the need to deal with the root cause of conflict and insecurity” and that “addressing fundamental injustices is not only a moral imperative; it is also in the security interests of the world community.”¹¹²

A bomb exploded outside Oxfam’s offices in Kabul in November 2005 and it has been unable to work in Helmand province in the south where British troops were, and still are, fighting the Taliban insurgency.¹¹³ However, relative to the other agencies in this study, Oxfam has been fortunate in having no recorded expatriate or national staff fatalities due to attacks on its workers.

Oxfam has been vocal regarding policy issues in Afghanistan. Alongside CARE and the IRC it supported the combined NGO call for expansion of ISAF in 2003.¹¹⁴ In 2007 it made a submission to the UK House of Commons Development Committee inquiry into development assistance in Afghanistan regarding issues such as aid effectiveness, governance,

¹⁰⁹ Oxfam, ‘Oxfam’s Work in Afghanistan in Depth,’ (July 2008) <<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/afghanistan.html>> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (paras.4-6).

¹¹⁰ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development: National Solidarity Programme, ‘Facilitating Partners (FPs),’ (November 20, 2008).

¹¹¹ Oxfam International, ‘Words to Deeds: a New International Agenda for Peace and Security: Oxfam’s 10 Point Plan,’ (May 2002) <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/bp14_peace.pdf> [Accessed January 26, 2010], (p.4).

¹¹² Oxfam International, ‘Words to Deeds: a New International Agenda for Peace and Security: Oxfam’s 10 Point Plan,’ (May 2002), (p.3).

¹¹³ Alan Beattie, ‘UK Foreign Policy Hits Relief, Says Oxfam’ *Financial Times*, 11 April 2007, p.6.

¹¹⁴ Action Aid et al, ‘Afghanistan: A Call for Security,’

health and education.¹¹⁵ It has also expressed concerns about PRTs, stating that they have gone beyond their security role by engaging in development work to the detriment of the Afghan government and NGOs, they have blurred the distinction between humanitarian and military actors and that the work they have done has been of questionable quality.¹¹⁶

Common themes and areas of divergence for IHNGOs in Afghanistan 2001-2009

Attacks against staff in a compromised security environment

All of the five organisations have experienced some degree of violence directed at them, from attacks against their offices and the projects they work on through to kidnapping and targeted killing of both national and expatriate staff. The IHNGO in this study most dramatically affected by these attacks was MSF since it not only lost five staff in one attack, but, as a consequence, it withdrew from all operations in the country from 2004 to 2009. The ICRC and IRC have also lost staff, but have stayed operational in the country. CARE has experienced kidnappings and attacks against its offices. Oxfam's operations have been affected by security threats but without fatal attacks against its staff.¹¹⁷ An increase in attacks, especially in the last three years, against NGO staff has been part of the deteriorating security situation in the country. The Country Director for the IRC stated that the security situation had grown worse since the fighting season (approximately April to October) in 2006 and that 2009 had been

¹¹⁵ Oxfam, 'Submission to the House of Commons International Development Committee Inquiry: Aid in Insecure Environments: Afghanistan,' (December 2007) <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/071212_idc.pdf> [Accessed January 29, 2010].

¹¹⁶ Oxfam, 'Afghanistan: Development and Humanitarian Priorities,' (January 2008) <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/afghanistan_priorities.pdf> [Accessed January 29 2010], pp.8-9.

¹¹⁷ This is not an exhaustive or complete record of attacks against these organisations. Information about major security incidents involving the IHNGOs in this study was located through news reports, the websites of the specific IHNGOs and the interviews with the CARE, ICRC and IRC staff members. An e-mail request was also made to the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) regarding serious attacks and kidnappings of staff of the specific NGOs, but they have confidentiality agreements with the NGOs and are unable to supply information about attacks on individual NGOs.

the worst yet.¹¹⁸ In terms of the impact of insecurity on NGOs, the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) reported that in 2009 the incidence of attacks against NGOs had doubled since 2007.¹¹⁹

Opposition to the intervening military's involvement in aid and reconstruction work

All the IHNGOs surveyed have made statements objecting to the use of aid as a means of counter-insurgency that advances military and political goals. IHNGO concerns about this were first apparent in the objections to the use of humanitarian aid air drops during the Coalition war against the Taliban in 2001. Since then IHNGOs have continued to express concerns about PRTs and other forms of military provided aid and reconstruction work. The problems the IHNGOs identify with the military involvement will be summarised for analysis in the next chapter. The major themes briefly are threats to IHNGO security due to the blurring of military and humanitarian roles, concerns about the quality of the work done by the military and contractors and the prioritising of money and reconstruction work to regions for political objectives rather than out of need.

Involvement with the Afghan government as implementing/facilitating partners

CARE, the IRC and Oxfam as multi-mandate agencies carry out development work and all three undertake projects with the Afghan government. The National Solidarity Programme is a major example of this, as are other projects in education, health and infrastructure such as water and sanitation. MSF and the ICRC avoid most development activities and focus on short term medical and health care while keeping independent from the central government. However the ICRC does provide education in International Humanitarian Law to the ANA.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

¹¹⁹ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,' (January 2010) < <http://www.afgnso.org/2009/ANSO%20Q.4%202009.pdf> > [Accessed February 3, 2010], (p.10).

¹²⁰ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview with the author Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

Divergence in IHNGO policy positions and statements

The clearest divergence between the humanitarian relief IHNGOs (ICRC and MSF) and the multi-mandate IHNGOs (CARE, IRC and Oxfam) is in their respective positions on political and military issues. The ICRC and MSF have not openly advocated expansion of intervening military forces for security purposes, whereas the other agencies have. MSF has however made clear statements opposing military involvement with humanitarian assistance,¹²¹ in line with the CARE, IRC and Oxfam positions while not being part of joint NGO statements that have either called for ISAF expansion¹²² or opposed the military use of aid as a counter-insurgency tool.¹²³

Conclusion

One issue is very clear from the perspective of all IHNGOs in Afghanistan; the security situation for aid agencies has deteriorated greatly in the last nine years.¹²⁴ There have been attacks against all the IHNGOs regardless of their multi-mandate or humanitarian focus. For example both MSF (emergency medical aid) and the IRC (multi-mandate, aid and development) have been the victims of fatal armed attacks. All the organisations have expressed concerns about military involvement in aid and development work, often identifying it as undermining their own security and acceptance by the local population as well as questioning its efficiency and quality.

¹²¹ Fabrice Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism: A Deadly Confusion,' (December 16, 2004)

<http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?component=article&objectid=762E8B7B-2F5F-448A-8EC26F2039794E54&method=full_html> [Accessed February 5, 2010].

¹²² Action Aid et al, 'Afghanistan: A Call for Security,' (June 17, 2003), CARE, IRC and Oxfam were signatories.

¹²³ CARE, Oxfam and five other NGOs recently released a joint paper opposing military delivered aid in Afghanistan: Action Aid et al, 'Quick Impact, Quick Collapse,' (January 2010) <<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/quick-impact-quick-collapse-jan-2010.pdf>> [Accessed February 8, 2010].

¹²⁴ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,' (January 2010), (p.10); Antonio Donini, *Feinstein International Centre Briefing Paper: Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*; Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

However, other factors compromising IHNGO security need to be considered besides the blurring of the lines issue. One important development is the spread of the conflict in Afghanistan in the last three years which means that NGOs and AOGs are coming into contact with each other more often.¹²⁵ Negative perceptions that are held by Afghans of NGOs have been identified and these have been linked to a wider disillusionment with the international backed state-building project, government corruption and a lack of tangible improvement in peoples' daily lives.¹²⁶ Deliberate, politically motivated targeting of NGOs by AOGs has also been identified by ANSO and it has even been suggested the AOGs are differentiating in who they attack.¹²⁷ Other global political factors, such as the invasion of Iraq in 2003 in the continuing GWOT, also influence events in Afghanistan. Attacks against the UN and the ICRC occurred in both Iraq and Afghanistan after the 2003 invasion of Iraq.¹²⁸ The Iraq war also took international, especially US, military and financial attention away from Afghanistan for some years,¹²⁹ and this also contributed to the worsening security scenario there.

The situation for IHNGOs in Afghanistan, therefore, now needs to be put back into the wider context of military intervention and post-conflict state-building in the era of the GWOT. The ongoing conflict there indicates that the international community as whole may have, prematurely and optimistically, assumed the situation had stabilised. As Antonio Donini suggests, both donors and aid agencies "willingly accepted the notion that Afghanistan was in a post-conflict situation, and therefore the role of external actors, including NGOs, was to support the government."¹³⁰ The government they have supported has serious legitimacy and corruption

¹²⁵ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.7.

¹²⁶ Antonio Donini, 'Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,'

¹²⁷ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,' (January 2010), (p.5).

¹²⁸ An ICRC worker was killed in March, 2003 in Afghanistan, shortly after the start of the invasion of Iraq, and following threats from militants to step up attacks there because of the Iraq invasion, see, Phil Reeves, 'Red Cross Worker Killed in Afghanistan' *The Independent* (29 March 2003) <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/red-cross-worker-killed-in-afghanistan-592695.html>> [Accessed February, 15 2010], (para.10).

¹²⁹ International Crisis Group, 'Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve' (p.3).

¹³⁰ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.3.

issues and is backed by a heavy international military presence that is set to increase in 2010.

Chapter Nine: IHNGOs in Afghanistan – State-Building and the New Humanitarianism

The use of aid and development action as part of counter-insurgency strategy by international forces leading to the blurring of the lines between aid workers and the military has been singled out by IHNGOs as a major reason for the IHNGOs' loss of security, acceptance and access in parts of Afghanistan.¹ This study has argued that the problem has deeper roots and other contributing factors. These are:

- The overlap of political values shared by IHNGOs and states;
- The emerging role of IHNGOs in the process of state-building since the end of the Cold War;
- The adoption of features of humanitarian action by states to further their political ends;
- The use of aid and development activity by, and the assumed role of humanitarian actors within, military counter-insurgency strategy;
- The assumption by humanitarian, political and military actors that the conflict had ended.

The blurring of already thin lines: State security and human security

At a fundamental and philosophical level there is a set of values about development, democracy and human rights that are shared by both western intervening states and western based IHNGOs.² Therefore IHNGOs and states tend to want the same overall outcomes for an intervention such as peace and some form of liberal democratic

¹ See, for example, Action Aid et al, 'Caught in the Conflict: Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan,' p.6; CARE, 'Key Messages on the Present Situation in Afghanistan (February 3 2004) <http://www.care.org/newsroom/specialreports/afghanistan/02032004_key_afghanistan.pdf> [Accessed February 10, 2010], (p.2); Christian Aid, 'The Politics of Poverty,' (p.48); Nellie Bristol, 'Military Incursions into Aid Work Anger Humanitarian Groups,'; Fabrice Weissman, 'Military Humanitarianism: A Deadly Confusion,'; Oxfam, 'Troop Surge in Afghanistan Must Not Endanger Civilians,' (April 3 2009) <<http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2009-04-03/afghanistan-troop-surge-must-not-endanger-civilians>> [Accessed February 10, 2010], (para.12.).

² Hugo Slim, 'With or Against?', p.34.

government that recognises basic human rights. The realist concern for security drives the state, while the quest for human security drives the IHNGOs. The means by which humanitarians and states achieve these ends however are more contested.³ IHNGOs want a clear separation of military and humanitarian action,⁴ while the military want to deploy the two things together as part of counter-insurgency strategy.⁵ The assumption that Afghanistan was a post-conflict environment where IHNGOs consequently politicised themselves by direct involvement in government and donor state programmes has also contributed to their security problems.⁶ IHNGOs have been caught up in a rapidly spreading conflict,⁷ in which their security has been severely compromised by the perception that they are part of the state-building project that is opposed by a growing insurgency.

State-building and new humanitarianism

These problems flow from the position IHNGOs now find themselves in as part of the management system for areas of instability and conflict around the world. A feature of this management system is the new model of state-building and humanitarianism that has evolved with the interventions of the 1990s that emphasises a lighter, but integrated, aid, political and military footprint.⁸ Also referred to as coherence,⁹ or the comprehensive approach,¹⁰ this development has the aid community and military forces concerned with achieving results but with less staff deployed (less expatriate staff in NGOs, small troop numbers in PRTs) winning local acceptance (NGO community outreach, PRTs winning hearts and minds)

³ Hugo Slim, 'With or Against?' pp.36-37.

⁴ Action Aid et al, 'Quick Impact, Quick Collapse,' (p.5).

⁵ US Department of the Army and Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 'Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency' Chapter Two: Unity of Effort: Integrating Civilian and Military Activities, (pp.43-56).

⁶ Antonio Donini, '*Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.3.

⁷ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,' (January 2010), (p.1).

⁸ Nicholas Stockton, 'Afghanistan, War, Aid and International Order,' pp.18-21.

⁹ Overseas Development Institute, Humanitarian Policy Group, 'Coherence in Crisis: Re-examining the Relationship Between Humanitarian and Political Responses to Conflict Related Crises,' (March 12 2003) <<http://www.odi.org.uk/hpg/meetings/coherence.pdf>> [Accessed February 20, 2010].

¹⁰ Stephen Cornish and Marit Glad, '*Civil-Military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches* (Oslo: Norwegian Atlantic Committee, 2008).

and building local capacity (NGO training programmes, international forces training the ANA/ANP). The NGO side of this humanitarian synergy with the political and military has been referred to as “new humanitarianism”, which involves the “integration of human rights and peace building into the humanitarian orbit; the ending of the distinction between development and humanitarian relief; and the rejection of the principle of neutrality.”¹¹ The multi-mandate IHNGOs therefore have increasingly become involved in activities beyond short-term humanitarian relief. The involvement of these IHNGOs in advocating for or against, and participating with, military humanitarian interventions since the end of the Cold War has further involved them politically in the “international community’s world ordering agenda.”¹²

IHNGOs within the state-building project in Afghanistan

The conflict setting post-Taliban rule has placed the IHNGOs in a dilemma, as some have demonstrated both support for, and criticism of, the state-building and liberal democratic process advanced by the new Afghan government and intervening forces, or have attempted to remain entirely neutral. The multi-mandate IHNGOs advocated for the expansion of ISAF forces as a means of improving security but they have also attempted to fence off assistance activities as the preserve of aid agencies. A tension exists in that they recommend the military focus on security and security sector reform, but the PRTs, Coalition and ISAF counter-insurgency strategy has a focus on ‘hearts and minds’ operations and aid is clearly a tool or even a ‘weapon’ in this endeavour.¹³

The multi-mandate IHNGOs, CARE, IRC and Oxfam, have all worked as implementing/facilitating partners with the UN and the Afghan government to some extent, especially in the NSP, health and education programmes. These programmes have been identified as the most successful by the

¹¹ Fiona Fox, ‘New Humanitarianism: Does it Supply a Moral Banner for the 21st Century?’ *Disasters*, 25 (2001), 275-289 (p.276).

¹² Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.8.

¹³ Action Aid et al, ‘Quick Impact, Quick Collapse,’ (pp.1-2).

IHNGOs,¹⁴ but they have also been targeted by the AOGs.¹⁵ The ICRC has been able to maintain some acceptance from the armed opposition,¹⁶ which may be due to its role as an intermediary in negotiations surrounding hostages, prisoners and the wounded.¹⁷ MSF has remained politically apart from intervening states, the Afghan government and other IHNGOs, but it withdrew after the serious attacks against it in 2004.

The role of external states in state-building

Donor and intervening states also have a role in the new light footprint model of state-building. The PRTs are an example of this, in that they were an attempt to extend ISAF without deploying large numbers of staff and resources.¹⁸ The PRTs with their individual national mandates and caveats allow contributing states to keep control of where they are deployed, channel aid through these units, and also to present their actions to their domestic populations with a humanitarian and development face.¹⁹ PRTs, with their combined military and civilian component and wide range of military and development activities, are an extension of the comprehensive state-building approach deployed at the provincial level.²⁰

Development policy is now seen as part of security, trade, and foreign policy for many OECD states. This is well summarised by this report to the NZ government on NZAID's mandate and policy settings:

Along with foreign policy, trade policy and security/defence policy, OECD governments are increasingly seeing development policy as a key part of their range of external interventions. Maximum effectiveness of each element and maximum coherence among all elements of the

¹⁴ Action Aid et al, 'Quick Impact, Quick Collapse,'(p.4).

¹⁵ CARE, 'Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan: Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation.'

¹⁶ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.6.

¹⁷ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview with the author Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

¹⁸ Johnson and Leslie, *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace*, p.38.

¹⁹ International Crisis Group, 'Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve' (p.13).

²⁰ Stephen Cornish and Marit Glad, *Civil-Military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches*, p.12.

external intervention tool-kit is highly desirable to achieve foreign and security policy goals in an efficient way.²¹

PRTs: The acceptable face of state-building at home and overseas

From a state-centric viewpoint, military involvement in overseas interventions reflects on that state and its military forces internationally and at home. For example the recent controversy over NZ SAS involvement in incidents in Afghanistan prompted the NZ government to break with tradition and acknowledge SAS actions since reports and photographs of them were appearing in the international and local media.²² If the actions of its military overseas can be presented by a government in a more humane light, for example PRTs providing aid and demonstrating friendly relations with the local population, this may be more acceptable to a domestic constituency concerned about potential casualties and the falling popularity for their military involvement supporting a struggling foreign government. For example, in 2007 the NZ PRT in Bamiyan was reported by the NZ media to have “built a boys' school, five police stations, bridges, a new hospital ward and a water supply system.”²³ The positive public relations aspect of these deployments helps to explain the move into NGO-type activities by the militaries of intervening states which has consequently encroached on the humanitarian space for IHNGOs. The importance of these deployments and how they are presented in the domestic politics of intervening states was clearly demonstrated by the recent collapse of the Dutch government over the question of the continuing deployment of their forces in Uruzgan province. The Dutch have had a considerable 21 fatalities in Afghanistan since 2006. The governor of Uruzgan, however, was reported in the media highlighting

²¹ New Zealand Government, ‘Cabinet Material on Changes to NZAID: NZAID’s Mandate and Policy Settings: Annex 1’ (May 7 2009) <<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/CAB%20paper%203%20annex.pdf>> [Accessed February 25, 2010], (p.1)

²² New Zealand Herald, ‘Government to Reveal Details of SAS Deployments,’ (January 26, 2010) <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10622392> [Accessed February 12, 2010].

²³ Greg Ansley, ‘Defence Analysts Say We Do What We Do Well,’ *New Zealand Herald* May 7 2007 <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10438180> [Accessed February 12, 2010], (para.4.).

their assistance role: "they are constructing bridges, schools, roads and assisting in many other educational projects."²⁴

Aid and development as counter-insurgency

The IHNGOs have identified military involvement in aid and reconstruction work in much of their writing and this would suggest they see it as the principle reason for the shrinking of their humanitarian space. A briefing paper to NATO about the situation in Afghanistan from CARE, IRC, Oxfam and eight other NGOs, released in April 2009, stated that the NGOs wish to "preserve the civil-military distinction, which is essential for the security of humanitarian actors and their ability to deliver assistance to people in need".²⁵ As an example of this, the country director of the IRC pointed out that the fighting, and therefore lack of access, tended to move around corresponding to Taleban and IF/ANA movements, "we are not in Helmand and Kandahar as an organisation it's a war zone," but, "we are in Paktia, Loghar and Khost which have the same levels of Taliban presence and control but not quite such pronounced fighting yet."²⁶ This is indicative of the asymmetric and intermittent nature of the conflict and the difficulties for IHNGOs in maintaining consistent access to, and acceptance by, those in need.

The Coalition/ISAF counter-insurgency strategy includes a role for NGOs in its phased "shape, clear, hold and build" strategy.²⁷ The early phases are supposed to be completed by the IF and ANA and the build phase by civilian agencies including NGOs. "Once the district is secured, the theory goes; the UN and its agencies, the government, and the NGOs come in to

²⁴ BBC News, 'Dutch Cabinet Collapses in Dispute Over Afghanistan,' (February 20 2010) <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8525742.stm>> [Accessed February 22 2010], (para.8).

²⁵ Action Aid et al, 'Caught in the Conflict: Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan,' (p.6).

²⁶ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

²⁷ Catherine Dale, 'War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Military Operations, and Issues for Congress,' (January 23 2009) Congressional Research Service <http://fhq.osd.mil/intlhealth/pdfs/Afghanistan_War_%28CRS_20JAN_2009%29.pdf> [Accessed February 15, 2010], (pp.26-27).

transform physical security into more durable human security.”²⁸ However, PRTs²⁹ and private contractors³⁰ have often been employed in the most difficult areas to provide reconstruction work.

Post-conflict reconstruction: One model does not fit all

While convergence of military and humanitarian ends, despite disagreement about the means, may have existed in an intervention such as in Kosovo, there are fundamental differences in the case of Afghanistan. The Kosovo intervention, for example, occurred in a small geographical space and the 90% ethnic Albanian majority supported the expulsion of Serbian forces, therefore resistance was minimal to intervention after Serbian withdrawal, and NGOs could engage without being seen as part of the occupation forces. As Mark Duffield suggests “post-intervention demands place great responsibilities on civilian aid personnel and draw them directly into volatile and exposed political processes,”³¹ and this is very much the case in Afghanistan. The country is much larger than Kosovo,³² there is a long history of conflict and ample access to arms,³³ there is a large armed group evicted from power that is still fighting, gaining recruits and support,³⁴ and the central government remains weak.³⁵

The assumption by political, military and assistance actors in Afghanistan that they were operating in a post-conflict environment after December

²⁸ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.3.

²⁹ Catherine Dale, ‘War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Military Operations, and Issues for Congress,’ p.26.

³⁰ Catherine Dale, ‘War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Military Operations, and Issues for Congress,’ p.63.

³¹ Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War*, p.130.

³² Afghanistan’s 652,230 sq km cf Kosovo’s 10,887 sq km, CIA Fact Book, ‘Kosovo’ <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html>> [Accessed February 15, 2010].

³³ Cate Buchannan and Robert Muggah, *No Relief: Surveying the Effects of Gun Violence on Humanitarian and Development Personnel* (Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2005), pp.36-38.

³⁴ In 2007 there was estimated to be between three and ten thousand fighters, this number has likely grown since then. Greg Bruno and Eben Kaplan, ‘The Taliban in Afghanistan,’ (August 3 2009) <<http://www.cfr.org/publication/10551/#p1>> [Accessed February 15 2010], (para.5).

³⁵ International Crisis Group, ‘Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve’ (pp.8-9).

2001 has contributed to the security problems faced by IHNGOs up to the present day. The early endorsement of the new government despite its inclusion of former warlords, lack of control over the countryside and a thin or non-existent international military presence to support it has had serious consequences.

The slow deployment of ISAF, the cautious approach of NATO troop contributing countries after the fall of the Taliban, and the US distraction with the wider GWOT and the war in Iraq all allowed the security environment to further deteriorate. These factors meant IHNGOs could not operate under the umbrella of military implemented security, and instead the insurgency has spread with greatly compromised operating conditions for IHNGOs.

The consequences for IHNGOs of state-building in a politicised and ongoing conflict

Loss of humanitarian space and access in a spreading conflict

Compared to the present situation and the escalation in numbers of attacks against NGO staff, the Taliban period was safer for aid workers.³⁶ An ICRC staff member interviewed for this study had spoken to fellow staff that had been present during Taliban rule who believed that security for NGOs was better in that time.³⁷ This is not to say Taliban rule in any way was inherently better for NGOs, there was a lot of confrontation over human and gender rights issues, but most of the country, apart from the frontlines with the Northern Alliance, was not experiencing ongoing insurgency and conflict with external intervening forces as was the case in the Soviet and now post 2001 periods. By late 2009 ANSO stated that there had been attacks against NGOs in every province in the country and estimated that AOGs were able to “control or exert effective influence over 40-59% of the country” and “maintain a permanent presence in 80%, and

³⁶ Antonio Donini, ‘Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan,’ (p.163).

³⁷ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview with the author Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

have a presence in at least 97%.”³⁸ Access to those in need has clearly been compromised by the security situation with large parts of the country inaccessible to aid agencies.

Other actors involved in development and reconstruction

It is important to note that NGOs receive only 10-15 percent of donor aid to Afghanistan.³⁹ In regard to the host of private contractors, PRTs and government agencies involved in development and reconstruction that are receiving much of the rest of that funding, the country director of the IRC stated “there are a lot of people out there trying to win the hearts and minds through programming inputs with massive variance on quality.”⁴⁰ This is indicative of a change in the nature of aid and development, who provides it and why. A lack of security and the move towards privatisation and managerial approaches in post-Cold War interventions have led to the arrival of new private for profit actors⁴¹ operating in the space that was once the preserve of IHNGOs.⁴² Private contractors, both local and international, are moving into the space left by IHNGOs due to security, their refusal to be coordinated with political and military action, or the prioritisation of donor funds to where their militaries are operating. As an example, contractors are often hired by PRTs, and IHNGOs have frequently criticised the expense and quality of their work.⁴³

Options for IHNGOs in the ongoing conflict environment

The consequences of the integrated state-building approach in a conflict situation have led IHNGOs to examine their operational security procedures and their wider policies in Afghanistan and internationally.

³⁸ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, ‘ANSO Quarterly Data Report: Q.4, 2009,’ (January 2010), (p.11).

³⁹ Stephen Cornish and Marit Glad, *Civil-Military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches* (Oslo: Norwegian Atlantic Committee, 2008), p.18.

⁴⁰ Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009.

⁴¹ Nicholas Stockton, ‘Afghanistan, War, Aid and International Order,’ p.29.

⁴² Roisin Shannon, ‘Playing With Principles in an Era of Securitized Aid: Negotiating Humanitarian Space in Post-9/11 Afghanistan,’ *Progress in Development Studies*, 9 (2009), 15-36, (p.27).

⁴³ Action Aid et al, ‘Caught in the Conflict: Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan,’ (April 3, 2009), (p.13); Bob Kitchen, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan, Interview, December 8, 2009; Barbara Stapleton, ‘A Means to What End? Why PRTs are Peripheral to the Bigger Political Challenges in Afghanistan,’ (p.23).

Changes in operational security

Many IHNGOs have developed training in security procedures for personnel, sometimes delivered by private security contractors (PSCs).⁴⁴ Other actions have included moving in convoys, increased physical security around offices, and outsourcing to other contractors. Remote management, wherein expatriate and senior staff manage programmes, but are not physically present, results in more risks for national staff.⁴⁵

Withdrawal of assistance or of organisations

During Taliban times NGOs, such as Oxfam, halted work on projects in protest at the Taliban's harsh edicts against women,⁴⁶ and the UN and other agencies withdrew staff during periods of danger, such as following the 1998 US missile strikes.⁴⁷ MSF withdrew entirely from Afghanistan following the killing of five of its staff in 2004. Most IHNGOs however, have remained despite deteriorating security and attacks, since withdrawal will not assist those in need and possibly private contractors and other military and government actors would replace them if they did withdraw. A coordinated withdrawal or temporary suspension of activity by a coalition of the major national and international NGOs would have a negative impact on the population or the government and likely be seen as a victory by the AOGs and open up space to AOGs, the military and/or private contractors.

Security personnel and private security contractors (PSCs)

The IHNGOs have now employed dedicated security staff, though their roles tend to be concerned with training, assessment and operating procedures rather than explicitly acting as armed guards. The IRC, for example, now has five dedicated security positions within the organisation,

⁴⁴ Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update: Trends in Violence and the Operational Update*, (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2009), p.7.

⁴⁵ Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update: Trends in Violence and the Operational Update*, p.3 and pp.8-9.

⁴⁶ Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist* pp.124-136.

⁴⁷ Chris Johnson and Jolyon Leslie, *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace* p.112.

although they also need to have had five years experience in the humanitarian sector.⁴⁸

PSCs have been employed by IHNGOs including CARE and the ICRC in other theatres such as in DRC.⁴⁹ However, PSCs tend to be employed for staff training and risk assessment rather than direct armed protection.⁵⁰ Paid armed security is a problem for IHNGOs as it is at odds with their non-profit and nonviolent principles.⁵¹ Also, they are concerned that direct armed security actors could contribute further to conflict and PSCs are often employed by intervening states and their contractors, so there is a danger of the PSCs also being a politicised force.⁵²

Interagency reporting and security monitoring

Regular reporting of security incidents, monitoring, updates and analysis of trends in the security environment are provided to NGOs through the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO).⁵³ This kind of information can help NGOs to make decisions regarding where and when they operate with regard to the security environment.

A coalition umbrella for humanitarian action separate from development

Humanitarian agencies could operate under an umbrella organisation with its own logo, separate from politicised development. This humanitarian 'consortium' would adhere strictly to the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence as does the ICRC. For multi-mandate agencies there

⁴⁸ International Rescue Committee, 'Field Workers Under Fire: Delivering Aid in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Other Danger Zones – IRC Briefing From The Field,' (p.18).

⁴⁹ Christopher Spearin, 'Humanitarians and Mercenaries: Partners in Security Governance?' in *New Threats and New Actors in International Security*, ed. by Elke Krahmman (New York: Palgrave, 2005), p.52.

⁵⁰ Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update: Trends in Violence and the Operational Update*, p.4.

⁵¹ Christopher Spearin, 'Humanitarians and Mercenaries: Partners in Security Governance?' in *New Threats and New Actors in International Security*, ed. by Elke Krahmman, p.53.

⁵² Caroline Holmqvist, *Private Security Companies: The Case for Regulation* (Stockholm: SIPRI, 2005), p.20.

⁵³ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 'About ANSO' <http://www.afgnso.org/index_files/Page368.htm> [Accessed February 24, 2010].

would be the option for their short-term relief activities to be channelled through this grouping and apart from their state-building development work. This approach met with success in Cambodia in 1979, when European NGOs such as Oxfam and the Red Cross decided to bypass Cold War politics and the UN's non-recognition of the post Khmer Rouge government by forming a consortium of humanitarian NGOs.⁵⁴

Conclusion

As the list of options suggests, there is really “a dearth of viable options to keep staff secure in the most volatile contexts, where humanitarian aid is most needed.”⁵⁵ The consortium idea is the most innovative idea that has been recommended and could be combined with use of the media in the region and dialogue with all belligerents in an effort to take back some humanitarian space.⁵⁶ Overall, the light footprint model of state-building and the development of new humanitarianism have paved the way for the integrated or coherent approaches that have been implemented in Afghanistan. However, when intervening forces who share common development goals with, and who are based in the same western states as, IHNGOs become belligerents in an ongoing conflict, this severely compromises the IHNGOs' security.

⁵⁴ Brian Walker, 'NGOs Break the Cold War Impasse in Cambodia,' in *Humanitarian Diplomacy: Practitioners and Their Craft*, ed. by Larry Minear and Hazel Smith (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007), 133-152, (pp.136-138).

⁵⁵ Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update: Trends in Violence and the Operational Update*, p.7.

⁵⁶ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.9.

Chapter Ten: Conclusion

Summary

Realism, GCS and post-colonial Marxist criticism

This study has outlined the development of three principle theories that help explain the relationship between states and NGOs: realism, GCS and post-colonial Marxist analysis. The first emphasises state security and national interests. The second champions human security, human rights, and state sovereignty being conditional on how states treat their citizens. The third is critical of imperialism by states and by the western based universalism of GCS and its cooption into the national, realist, interests of western developed states.

Post-Cold War humanitarian interventions

The interventions of the 1990s demonstrated how the state based concern with power and security highlighted in realist theory had involved NGOs, explained by the more recent theory of GCS, in the management and mismanagement of humanitarian crises and interventions. The Marxist post-colonial critique identified the merging of these two sets of actors into a new form of imperialism that combines state interests and the furthering of neo-liberal economics and democracy with aid and development implemented through NGOs. This coherence or integration of IHNGOs into the political security agenda of the developed western states has had its most stark test in the brutal conflict in Afghanistan since 2001.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan presents a particularly difficult environment for NGOs and military actors, in terms of its geography, climate, ethnic divisions, weak central government and long history of conflict. The few solidifying features of the Afghan state include its Islamic religion and tendency to unite against foreign invasion. IHNGOs have been involved in and around Afghanistan in the last thirty years of conflict. Most, with the exception of the ICRC, were politically part of the US and Pakistani backed Cold War effort supporting the mujahedeen against the Soviets in the 1980s, while

later operating with some degree of autonomy in the 1990s prior to the 2001 war. The US and its allies, the former backers of the war against the Soviets, are now the occupying forces. The new internationally backed Afghan government has had serious issues related to corruption and the cooption of former warlords. The ISAF was also slow to deploy beyond Kabul in the first few years following the end of the Taliban regime. These factors have fuelled resentment and provided space for a growing insurgency and a corresponding deterioration in the security situation that continues to the present day.

The IHNGOs

The five IHNGOs chosen for this study can be divided into the Dunantist ICRC and MSF, who focus on short-term humanitarian relief aid and the Wilsonian, multi-mandate CARE, IRC and Oxfam, that provide both short-term humanitarian aid and longer term development. These agencies' development goals, sometimes also shared by intervening donor governments, have a focus on removing the underlying causes of poverty and inequality. Involvement by the multi-mandate agencies with governments, especially in providing longer-term development in an intervention where there is continued armed opposition, has the potential to impact negatively on their access, acceptance and security. The ICRC is funded by states that are party to the Geneva Conventions, while MSF is largely independently funded. Both these organisations focus on short-term humanitarian aid.

PRTs: The role of military provided aid and development

PRTs exemplify the evolution of a state-building model that combines military counter-insurgency, development, aid and reconstruction. The use of PRTs in Afghanistan supports the thesis that development aid and security are merging to secure unstable regions. PRTs with limited manpower and resources were intended to fill a number of gaps in the political, military and development vacuum following the 2001 regime change. PRT tasks included development, reconstruction, extending the legitimacy and control of the Afghan government and security sector

reform. The PRTs were intended to do this with few personnel and have been spread thinly over Afghanistan. The attempt to win acceptance and intelligence through the PRT's use of quick impact projects has made aid and development a counterinsurgency tool. The PRTs have been heavily criticised by the IHNGOs for blurring the lines between humanitarians and military actors, the poor quality of some of their reconstruction work, and for prioritising aid and development for political ends rather than providing it on the basis of need as espoused by IHNGOs.

Consequently, PRTs have further shrunk the neutral space that IHNGOs are already struggling to maintain because of the politicisation of their activities as part of the security and state-building process within which they are operating. Conversely, the PRTs have not greatly improved security for much of the population and the IHNGOs. While the military would like IHNGOs to coordinate with them as part of counter-insurgency strategy by providing aid and development to areas cleared of insurgents, the IHNGOs have attempted to remain distinct from this project.

IHNGO experiences in Afghanistan since 2001

Over the last nine years there have been many, sometimes fatal, attacks against IHNGO staff. In the case of one IHNGO, MSF, this resulted in complete withdrawal from the country between 2004 and 2009. While IHNGOs have focussed on the blurring of the lines between aid workers and the military that they identify as being caused by military involvement in aid and development, this study argues other factors have contributed to the deterioration of their security.

They are caught in an ongoing and spreading conflict where they are perceived to varying degrees by the AOGs as involved with the international and Afghan government state-building agenda. Multi-mandate IHNGOs champion democracy, human and gender rights; values also shared by the intervening governments and opposed by the AOGs.

State-building and the new humanitarianism

IHNGOs that act as implementing and facilitating partners with international and Afghan government programmes further involve themselves in a politicised situation, wherein they are part of the wider integrated or coherent approach to state-building that has developed since the 1990s. This version of state-building envisions political, military and humanitarian action working in a complimentary synergy.

State-centric realism and GCS's cross border universalism and concern with human security have been united by this coming together of the light footprint version of state-building and new humanitarianism's focus on development, rights and the underlying causes of poverty. Another factor that has impacted on IHNGOs in the state-building process has been the growing use by government and military forces of private for profit contractors to undertake development work that closely resembles that of NGOs.

The consequences of merging security with aid and development

This study has identified the merging of security concerns with aid and development as part of the post-Cold War and GWOT security agenda. The recognition by the UN in the 1990s that aid and development could help reduce the factors that lead to conflict and instability and improve international security has now been incorporated into the foreign and security policies of developed western states.¹ IHNGOs have become one aspect of this through their support for democratic governance, human rights and implementation of donor funded programmes. However, due to IHNGO unwillingness to be coordinated or controlled directly by states, and their wish to maintain their independence, donor state aid and development is increasingly being channelled through direct aid to governments in post-conflict states, and through donor states' militaries,

¹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 'An Agenda for Peace,' (1992)
<<http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>>[Accessed March 3, 2010].

and national and international contractors.² The IHNGOs run the risk of sidelining themselves in these crises through their resistance to cooperation with the intervening states.

The space for IHNGOs to be neutral, impartial and independent has shrunk. This is due to the realist state-centric concern with security that now envisions the security of the state as being predicated on securing populations in other countries from the worst excesses of poverty, violence and inequality that lead to trans-border security threats such as terrorism and organised crime. Aid and development are the means, alongside military force, used to achieve this, and IHNGOs often have a role in its implementation. Combined with this, IHNGOs, since the end of the Cold War, have advocated for and against interventions, worked with and stood apart from military and political action, and developed a new humanitarian approach that now has a political agenda due to the experiences of the 1990s. This approach sets up IHNGOs as the ideal implementing partners who can work to improve the human security in unstable or post-conflict regions thereby reinforcing the wider security concerns of the intervening states.

The consequences of state-building for IHNGOs in Afghanistan

The state-building project in Afghanistan has severely compromised the security of the multi-mandate IHNGOs. They have been caught in a dilemma where they have supported the establishment of a new government and called for international forces to extend security for their operations, but the deployment of international forces was slow and on a small scale relative to other interventions.³ This involvement with a light-footprint approach to state-building has involved IHNGOs in filling a vacuum in development, especially in areas like education, health and

² 10-15% of international aid funding goes to NGOs in Afghanistan according to Stephen Cornish and Marit Glad, *Civil-Military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches*, p.18.

³ 55 000 troops were deployed to Bosnia in 1995, 4500 were deployed to Kabul in 2002, International Crisis Group, 'Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve' (p.4).

governance, for example the NSP in Afghanistan, and developing the capacity of the new or transitional government. They now find themselves, although unwillingly, at odds with the insurgents who are attacking the Afghan government, international forces, and now also the IHNGOs.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

The role of PRTs

The PRT concept has been deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq. Aside from the criticism from IHNGOs regarding the confusion about military and humanitarian actors, PRTs have attempted to be many things to the various interests in the Afghan conflict. They have been a way for smaller states, or states unwilling to deploy large numbers of troops in a fighting role, to contribute civil-military units that are acceptable domestically and internationally. They have varied in composition, size and activities and have been tasked with reconstruction, hearts and minds QIPs, security sector reform, improving governance and extending Afghan government legitimacy and control. They have also been spread thinly with each team generally only 100 to 150 personnel in strength. If they were to specialise in one main task that exploited their security role, they would be more effective and this would lessen the pressure on the humanitarian space for IHNGOs. Improving security is the role that IHNGOs would prefer them to focus on, and away from aid and development.

PRTs and state-building

The PRTs' composition, activities, size and deployment reflect the wider light-footprint model for state-building. They combine military and civilian staff in an integrated approach, they are expected to bring security and reconstruction but have small numbers of staff to achieve this, they operate according to their respective donor states' wishes and, like NGOs in the 1990s, they are peripheral to wider military or political outcomes that could ultimately end the conflict. They also appeal to the vision of military humanitarian intervention that grew in the 1990s, as the combination of

military, civilian, security and development roles puts into practice the idea of armed humanitarians. In the absence of security, with IHNGOs unable to operate, PRTs can take on the development role in the build phase of counter-insurgency operations, but this is predicated on the area having been shaped, cleared and held by actual combat units, indicating that hard security and politics still dictate the realities on the ground in Afghanistan.

Implications for the use of PRTs in the future

The PRT concept, while currently embedded in occupation and counter-insurgent conflicts, will be useful for UN humanitarian intervention and peace-keeping operations. Currently PRTs are deployed in two conflicts that are to do with the US and its allies' GWOT rather than UN interventions. The PRT model will be useful in state-building in future UN integrated missions in post-conflict or post-natural disaster settings, such as in the recent earthquake in Haiti, where security is necessary to support emergency aid and reconstruction and to oppose looters and criminals.

IHNGOs

Implications for IHNGOs in zones of conflict

The implications for IHNGOs in actual conflict zones, as opposed to post-conflict settings, are that they can either continue to attempt to distance themselves from the political and military situations in which they operate or accept a pragmatic approach that recognises there are situations when they need to support the political and military action that will allow them to recommence operations. IHNGOs are finding they cannot operate in an actual war zone where their non-belligerent status is not recognised by one side and, therefore, the security that is required for their activities in these settings can only be achieved by military force or a political settlement that halts the conflict.

The humanitarian/development divide

The divide between humanitarian and multi-mandate agencies is significant in this context since the humanitarian agencies are able to

claim they are not complicit in the agenda of state-building, while the development aspects of multi-mandate agencies have a clear vision of states, societies, rights and political systems that are required to achieve long term and sustainable livelihoods for the populations they assist.

In Afghanistan, the humanitarian relief agencies, the ICRC and MSF, have been the victims of fatal attacks. However, there is documented longer-term acceptance of, and dialogue with, the ICRC compared to other agencies in Afghanistan. This has been found to be a trend in other conflict situations as well,⁴ and indicates that the ICRC has been able to establish a credible, although not total, acceptance from those opposed to internationally backed governments and the forces that support them.

Options for IHNGOs

Options for IHNGOs that wish to operate independently from the state-building agenda include tightening operational security, withdrawal or suspension of activities, use of PSCs for training and security assessments, and interagency sharing of security updates and analysis of trends so as to be aware of potential security threats. The acceptance strategy is still the one practiced by most IHNGOs, in that they seek to be protected from insurgent or criminal attack by the community they operate in, since their work is valuable and the community has a long-term stake in the agency and its projects. Unfortunately in the highly politicised environment of Afghanistan this approach has been limited in its effectiveness.

The dilemma of IHNGO development aid in a conflict situation

IHNGO development aid within an ongoing conflict is a complex problem. The nature of development, how it is done, how it is prioritised, who does it, where it is done and who it is done for make it inherently political. When there is intra-state political conflict, those engaged in development become politicised and implicated in the conflict by default. If it becomes

⁴ See Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update: Trends in Violence and the Operational Update*, p.3.

an armed conflict, development aid becomes a military resource with the potential to be exploited by one side and targeted by opponents.

Truly non-governmental development

For IHNGOs to undertake development activity and be truly neutral in a conflict situation they would need to seek funding outside of the donor state model, remain neutral towards state-building and the actions of governments, and engage with all actors involved in the conflict. Their decisions about who to assist would need to be strictly needs based. If this hypothetical scenario occurred there are interesting issues surrounding whether they would be tolerated by belligerents, including intervening forces supporting the state-building project. The other major implication for this approach would be the likely drastic reduction in an organisation's funding and political influence. This would, however, enable IHNGOs to more truly claim they were independent of state influence and of any particular political or social agenda.

MSF, although a short term medical aid IHNGO, presents a model in its neutral, non-political stance, independent funding and volunteer basis. An IHNGO that promoted grass roots, community development without borders would be a way for GCS to avoid state politicisation of development aid. While the project would be working towards growth that was compatible with, and parallel to, long-term state aims, it would be independent from directly working with the state. Mark Duffield argues that NGOs in relation to the developed state security agenda are trapped in a "hopeless enmeshment," but he also points out the importance for development to move past the "liberal inclination to prejudge those who are different."⁵ Independent development that was tailored to the local, cultural and social situation it existed in, and that focussed on improving the material comfort of peoples' lives in ways they understood and agreed to presents one option. It is an option that would question the cultural and political role of IHNGOs, but they have already started this process in

⁵ Mark Duffield, 'Development, Security and Unending War,' p.231 and p.234.

promoting community driven development. The most difficult thing for IHNGOs that undertook this path would be the relinquishing of any real or perceived political influence on the actions of states: to be truly non-governmental.

Acceptance that development is inherently political

With regard to longer-term development work, the most likely path for IHNGOs is to accept that military security is required when a conflict is still ongoing and the forces in opposition to state-building are attacking the development process, of which IHNGOs are a part. IHNGOs did advocate the implementation of ISAF security throughout the country in 2003 and 2004 and, ultimately, an improved security environment implemented by international and Afghan forces is going to better serve their goals for social development and human rights than a return to Taliban rule. It is unlikely that IHNGOs will willingly agree to be a part of the build phase in counter-insurgency operations as the military would like, since this would give some credence to the AOG claims that they are agents of the occupying forces.

A humanitarian consortium

A way forward that is reflected in the relative success of the ICRC's acceptance with all parties to the conflict would be the development of a new humanitarian consortium. Humanitarian NGOs and the humanitarian wings of multi-mandate IHNGOs could come under this umbrella, distinct from state-building development with a strict focus on short-term, non-politicised relief work. This organisation would be accompanied by a corresponding media campaign outlining its neutrality, impartiality and independence to civilians, belligerents and political actors in the country and the region.⁶

⁶ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.9.

Areas for further study

This study has drawn out the consequences of the post-Cold War, and now GWOT, coming together of aid and development within the security agenda of western developed states and the consequences for IHNGOs.

Areas for further study include:

- The ICRC has, according to the literature⁷ and an interview⁸ been the organisation that has maintained the most acceptance with all belligerents including the AOGs. Scrutinising the reasons for this by reference to a specific study would provide examples of, and implications for, the establishment of a humanitarian consortium based on similar principles to the ICRC.
- A comprehensive study of post-Cold War and GWOT state-building would enable the development of a typology of interventions and relate the different intervention types to the consequences for aid agencies that deploy in these environments. For example, the differences between the Kosovo and Afghanistan interventions.
- Further study of the extent of the inclusion of coherent or integrated approaches into the aid, development, foreign and security policy of donor states would improve understanding of how widespread and effective they are.
- National and faith based NGOs were left outside the scope of this study and present an area for further research in terms of their experiences in the new state-building paradigm compared with secular IHNGOs.

⁷ Antonio Donini, *Afghanistan: Humanitarianism Under Threat*, p.2.

⁸ Kevin Baff, Armed Forces Delegate, ICRC, Afghanistan. Interview, Hamilton, NZ, January 8, 2010.

- The New Zealand government stated in 2009 that it will phase out its PRT and pass the work over to civilians and aid workers.⁹ The phase-out process of a PRT and the hand-over to civilians and potentially NGOs would be a useful study for the implications for future phasing out of PRTs due to their redundancy, military withdrawal or a political settlement.

⁹ Claire Trevett, 'SAS Will Face Stronger Taleban' *New Zealand Herald*, August 11 2009, <<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/afghanistan/news/article.cfm?id=12&objectid=10589940>> [Accessed March 1, 2010].

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