

DECLASSIFIED

Reference 0581 0000 001

Secretary of State

aw 27/2

FROM:

Ext:

DATE: 27 February 2003

CC: PS/PUSS
PS/Suma Chakrabarti
Nicola Brewer
Barrie Ireton
Richard Manning
Peter Grant
Carolyn Miller
Graham Stegmann

Alistair Fernie

Thanks to Suma for maintaining our position on the need to keep the UK's global values up front

To: 1. Michael Mosselmans (Agrees)
2. PS/Secretary of State

CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES - DFID POSITION

Issue

To seek policy guidance from the Secretary of State on the scope of DFID co-operation with UK (and potentially other) military forces in support of UK Government objectives in a complex humanitarian emergency.

Recommendation

2. It would be useful to have a steer from the Secretary of State on the extent to which she is minded to maintain the approach adopted in Kosovo and developed since, particularly in Afghanistan. This approach:

- utilises deployed UK and/or allied military forces to assist vulnerable populations directly when the humanitarian capacity to deal is insufficient to meet needs;

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

- provides funding to the military for Quick Impact Projects which contribute to the security and stability of the environment thus facilitating humanitarian, recovery and development programmes and enabling legitimate political developments to take root;
- seconds to UK military forces a humanitarian specialist to advise the Commander on the humanitarian/development implications of specific military courses of action; and, applicable to all of the above,
- retains the flexibility to decide, on a crisis by crisis situation, the degree of cooperation with combatant military forces whose operations may, or may not, be endorsed by the UN.

3. The Secretary of State will wish to be aware that this approach is not universally accepted as good practice by some humanitarian actors including within DFID. These views are presented in more detail in paragraphs 10 and 11 of this submission. I thus **recommend** that in due course there be an internal "brainstorming" meeting with the Secretary of State on this subject to allow interested parties to express their opinions.

Timing

4. Given current developments the necessity of clarifying DFID's general approach is urgent. Guidance from the Secretary of State will also assist in the drawing up of a position paper on DFID's approach to working with the military and generic procedures for DFID/Military engagement in theatre.

Publicity

5. None immediately or specifically although, such is the interest of the humanitarian community in these issues, it is to be expected that DFID's position will become publicly known.

Background

6. The UK military's recent engagement in quick impact projects dates from the signing of the Dayton Accord in 1995 when the then ODA agreed to

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

provide funding to the military in the British area of operations in Bosnia¹. Under the direction of a humanitarian adviser, the programme was designed to underpin the peace process and encourage the return of displaced ethnic minorities to their homes. This programme continued under DFID until July 2001 but over its 6 year life span was regularly reviewed and amended to reflect lessons learned and suit the changing environment. Many of the UK's current senior officers (including General Mike Jackson and General John McColl) served in this area and were first exposed to the work of DFID through this programme.

7. Amongst the lessons learned were the military strengths (management of bricks and mortar and engineering type projects) and weaknesses (social development, capacity building) and the dangers of conditionality. Given that the military were already in theatre (thus covering overhead and personnel costs) all funds allocated for the programme were expended on the projects themselves and provided excellent "implementing partner" value.

8. In crises since Bosnia, notably Kosovo, East Timor, Macedonia and most recently Afghanistan DFID has worked alongside military forces. We have provided:

- Funds to the military to enable them to provide emergency assistance to those in need until the capacity of the humanitarian community was able to take over. For example in early April 1999 the UK's 101 Logistics Brigade provided camp facilities for the exodus of refugees fleeing from Kosovo into Macedonia. DFID agreed to fund the additional material costs required for the camp construction and provided a DFID Specialist with knowledge of the region to work with the military.
- Funds for quick impact projects to **contribute to stability by providing tangible and rapid evidence (small recovery/reconstruction projects) of international commitment**

¹ Multi national Division, South West (MND SW) the only divisional area to cover both the

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

and prospects for a better future. Such funding was provided to the military in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Particularly in the latter campaign many in the humanitarian community were dismayed that any DFID funds were allocated in such a way viewing the military as a competitor for finite funds and feeling that it was an encroachment into their "territory". Similarly the military felt frustrated that DFID was not willing to release funding on the basis of force protection or hearts and minds. This was eventually resolved by ensuring, for stabilisation purposes, that all military QIP projects would address needs but not necessarily the most pressing humanitarian ones (eg public buildings repair, labour intensive road repair etc). Such stabilisation activities still had to conform to DFID project identification and implementation guidelines prior to funding authorisation. It would be desirable to get a steer from the Secretary of State on whether she is content that we should continue handling military QIPS in this way.

- Humanitarian Advisers to advise the military on the humanitarian implications of military action. In the case of DFID funding being made available to the military the Humanitarian Adviser additionally supports the forces in the identification, management, monitoring and reporting of projects.

9. DFID has traditionally worked with the military in peace support roles – with KFOR, INTERFET (East Timor) and ISAF. These forces are always in uniform and co-operation with them presents less problems though sensitivities remain. The extent to which DFID can work with troops engaged in a combatant role is more problematic as these forces are regarded by some as a party to the conflict and association with them may render humanitarian workers more vulnerable and affect the negotiation of access to civilians in need. Nonetheless insecurity may render combatant troops the only body available to address needs – potentially immediate lifesaving needs or basic needs which will contribute to stability – e.g. repairing a school, restoring essential services. It would be useful to get a steer from the

Federation and Republica Srpska.

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

Secretary of State on whether she is content that DFID retain its flexibility on whether it chooses to work with combatant forces and determine its policy on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Secretary of State. I recommend that any military forces that DFID funds to carry out humanitarian or stabilisation projects on its behalf will wear uniform at all times in the delivery of that assistance to prevent a blur in the identification of military personnel as distinct from civilian humanitarian workers.

10. The reasons why caution must be applied in dealing with combatant forces are also viewed by many in the humanitarian community as applying to working with any military forces deployed in an area. Close association with the military may limit access to vulnerable populations by preventing negotiated movement across confrontation lines and may diminish an organisation's ability to present itself as impartial and independent. The military cannot be present on both sides of a conflict. Assistance on one side of the front line is logically equivalent to reduced assistance on the other. It will thus reduce an organisation's ability to deliver assistance on the basis of need alone and result in an inequitable distribution of assistance. It is important to protect the capacity to work on all sides of a conflict, providing assistance according to need. This requires a respectable distance to be maintained between humanitarian agencies (and, some argue, their funders) and the military, particularly when that military is not acting with an explicit Security Council mandate.

11. Funding the military will also, by implication reduce the amount available for use by humanitarian organisations and thus reduce the amount of assistance that is available for equitable distribution according to need (given that military forces will be perceived by many to be a party to the conflict and thus not able to operate in certain areas). Any association between military hearts and minds objectives (not a DFID reason but potentially a by-product) and humanitarian assistance will also blur the distinction between both and affect the humanitarian principles of independence and impartiality. Some in the humanitarian community and in

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

DFID also argue that the military is not competent to judge or intervene to address humanitarian needs; and are expensive and ineffective.

12. DFID's existing approach has been predicated on the premise that if we are to achieve our stated objectives of the millennium development goals we must also tackle the causes of conflict and as a first step promote a secure and stable environment conducive to reform and political, economic and social development. This is a more political agenda but should not be seen at odds with the work of the humanitarian organisations. DFID is still able as a donor to fund organisations who will keep their distance from the military if that distance is deemed so necessary to ensure access, equitable allocation of resources and security of humanitarian workers. Indeed the same considerations would have to be considered by any DFID directly implemented programme in a crisis area. We have taken the view that this should not prevent DFID from working alongside the military when it is appropriate to do so in pursuit of DFID's and the UK Government's objectives.

The Way Ahead

13. If the Secretary of State is minded to maintain the approach adopted in Kosovo and Afghanistan, work will be taken forward to produce a DFID position paper on its approach to working with the military in complex emergencies. In addition generic guidelines (which can be tailored to suit specific crises) will be drawn up to support the military in the identification, implementation, review and reporting of appropriate projects for DFID support. These will steer the military towards its particular strengths and provide guidance on common pitfalls and sources of additional advice. Both these documents will be used to assist in the education of military forces undergoing training on the various staff courses or pre-deployment to develop a broad understanding of DFID's humanitarian and wider objectives.

DECLASSIFIED