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Ari Kerkkänen, Hannu Rantanen
& Jari Sundqvist

Building Capacity for the Palestinian Civil Police: EUPOL COPPS and Communications Project

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Abbreviations

BCI	Palestinian telecommunications operator
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
COPP	Co-ordination Committee of International Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force
COTER	EU counter terrorism program (code name)
CPCC	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability
DFID	Department for International Development
DoP	Declaration of Principles
ENP	European Union Neighbourhood Policy
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUBAM	European Union Border Assistance Mission
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EUPOL COPPS	EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
ICT	Information and communication technology
IDF	Israel Defence Force
LWB	Long Wheel Base
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PA	Palestinian Authority
PASC	Palestinian Armed Struggle Command
PCP	Palestinian Civil Police
PCPDP	Palestinian Civil Police Development Programme
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PMC	Project Monitoring Committee
PMT	Project Management Team
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PPPM	Palestinian Police Project Memorandum
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TIPH	Temporary International Presence in Hebron
UN	United Nations
UNC	Unified National Command of the Uprising
U.S.	United States

Building Capacity for the Palestinian Civil Police

The EUPOL COPPS and Communications Project

Ari Kerkkänen, Hannu Rantanen & Jari Sundqvist¹

This article reviews EUPOL COPPS, and the developments leading to its establishment as an EU security and defence policy effort to contribute to the stability in the region. The primary aim is to analyse and evaluate the Communications Project implemented by EUPOL COPPS in terms of capacity building within the framework of the Security Sector Reform (SSR). The question of adherence by the mission to human security principles is also revisited on the basis of the principles of the Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group. Launching an ESDP mission in the Palestinian territories was no uncomplicated matter, but the establishment of the ESDP mission itself in the Palestinian territories can be regarded as a significant development for EU security and defence policy. Operationally, the most significant task of EUPOL COPPS was to enhance radio communication of the Palestinian Civil Police during the initial phase of the mission. The project approach utilised in EUPOL COPPS proved to be a useful crisis management approach, easily tailored to meet a particular need, manageable, transparent and economic. Moreover, it provided a useful and deployable link between civilian crisis management missions and development aid. Linking of bi-lateral projects in support of ESDP civilian crisis management should be encouraged.

1 Introduction

The European Union Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (henceforth EUPOL COPPS) is the first mission within the framework of the European Security

¹ Ari Kerkkänen is Director of CMC Finland, Hannu Rantanen is Research Director of the Emergency Services College and Jari Sundqvist is Research Coordinator at CMC Finland. The article was finished in Summer 2008. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the Crisis Management Centre Finland.

and Defence Policy (ESDP) in the context of the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The mission was officially launched at the beginning of 2006², almost simultaneously with the second ESDP mission in the same political and geographical setting, namely the European Union Border Assistance Mission (EU BAM) in Rafah.³

The Oslo Process, beginning in 1993, and some years later the Roadmap to Peace, launched in 2003, laid the foundation for the feasibility of EU crisis management operations in the Occupied Territories of Palestine. There is abundant justification for EU participation in the crisis management of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The EU Commission has been the largest donor to the Palestinian territories (€550 million in assistance in 2007).⁴ The EU is an active member of the Roadmap Quartet – the other members being U.S., Russia and the UN – and has participated in several coordination forums, in particular in the field of judiciary and security reform. Israel and the Palestinian territories, within the wider Middle East, fall under the European Union Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).⁵ The EU has a Strategic Partnership with the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries⁶, the objective of which is to promote the development of a common zone of peace, prosperity and progress.⁷ Stability in the Middle East is of paramount importance for Europe.

This article reviews EUPOL COPPS, a small mission of some 30 international staff members, and the developments leading to its establishment as an EU security and defence policy effort to contribute to the stability in the region. The primary aim of this article is to analyse and evaluate the Communications Project implemented by EUPOL COPPS in terms of capacity building within the framework of the Security Sector Reform (SSR).⁸ The question of adherence by the mission to human security principles is also revisited on the basis of the principles of the Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group, led by Professor Mary Kaldor.⁹ The SSR itself, including its legislative reforms, lies outside the scope of this study.

² Council Joint Action 2005/797/CFSP .

³ On 15 November 2005, Israel and the Palestinian Authority concluded an *Agreement on Movement and Access*, including agreed principles for the Rafah crossing (Gaza). The Council Joint Action 2005/889/CFSP was agreed on 12 December 2005. <http://www.eubam-rafah.eu/portal>.

⁴ The EU i.e. the Commission and member states is, with an annual contribution of US 400 million, the largest donor. For example, the Commission co-chaired the Palestinian Donors Conference in December 2007 and announced the sum of €440 million (\$650 million USD) for the Palestinians for 2008 (European Commission Press Release 17 December 2007).

⁵ Commission of the European Communities 2003, 3.

⁶ Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Palestinian Authority, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan.

⁷ Commission of the European Communities 2003, 3.

⁸ SSR in the Palestinian Territories has been dealt with by Roland Friedrich (2004).

⁹ The Madrid Report (2007, 9–10) outlines the main principles of the Human Security Concept, consisting of the primacy of human rights, legitimate political authority, a bottom-up approach, effective multilateralism, an integrated regional approach and clear and transparent strategic direction.

The Communications Project, as stated above, will be at the core of this study. The purpose is not only to evaluate the content and scope of the Project, but also the approach as such, which reflects a new development within ESDP missions.¹⁰ EUPOL COPPS is reviewed on two levels:

1. on the political and strategic level, as the first ESDP crisis management mission in the very heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,
2. and on the practical and operational level, as a means to building the capacity of the rule of law within the Palestinian territories through the Communications Project.

One of the central functions of the Project was coordination between donors and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in delivering an enhanced communication network for the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP). The core objective, however, concerns not the technical details of the Communications Project, but the lessons learned from the Project. The latest developments in the Palestinian territories following the Hamas takeover of the Gaza strip in June 2007, resulting in a *de facto* division between the Fatah-lead West Bank and the Hamas controlled Gaza Strip, will be taken into account within the analysis.

A functioning system of communication is of the utmost importance for each and every organisation; for modern police and security structures, which are the cornerstones of the rule of law in every state and society, such a system is crucial. Effective command and control cannot be achieved without a properly established and maintained communication system operated by trained staff. It is impossible to secure either political or operational control of forces in charge of day-to-day security and public order in the Palestinian territories without operational communications. The very specific setting of a society in a process of state formation, which is evident in the Palestinian territories, presents an additional challenge to maintenance of the rule of law.

EUPOL COPPS is also an example of the process whereby a bilateral project turns into a fully fledged ESDP mission.¹¹ The Communications Project was initiated and initially financed by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). The initial report drafted by the DFID, based on the Palestinian Police Project Memorandum (PPPM), states that assisting the PCP to realise their full potential and build an effective, accountable and modern police service is an immense task.¹²

In fact, EUPOL COPPS already represents the second generation of international assistance to the PCP since the Oslo Accords of 1993. Extensive international assistance

¹⁰ A project-based approach is also planned for the new EULEX Kosovo; ESDP rule of law mission in Kosovo.

¹¹ There is a more recent example of a bilateral mission turning into an ESDP mission in Afghanistan, where EUPOL Afghanistan has been launched in the summer of 2007 on the basis of a German-led bilateral police project.

¹² Mclvor 2004, 4. The PPPM draft of 18 September 2003 was produced for the DFID by a team of specialist consultants.

was channelled to the Palestinian police prior to the outbreak of the *Second Intifada* in 2000. The onset of the Oslo Process witnessed a multitude of international donor programmes delivering equipment and training to the PCP, even paying their salaries.¹³ This assistance was provided both on the basis of bi-lateral agreements and also by international organisations like the UN.¹⁴ The European Union became increasingly involved in this assistance during this period. The *Second Intifada* derailed the process of developing the PCP and led, among other things, to the partial destruction of the infrastructure, including buildings and complexes, of the PCP.¹⁵

The source material for this study consists of unclassified documents stored at the EUPOL COPPS office in Ramallah along with interviews of the key personnel of the mission and the PCP during a field visit to the Palestinian territories and Ramallah in April 2007.

The main limitation of the study is the restricted number of interviews of the Project's end-users about their experiences with the improved communication system. This kind of analysis, however, should only be carried out after a longer time-span since the inception of the project. All results concerning the Project's impact remain indicative only at this stage.

2 Setting the stage for the Palestinian Police

2.1 Policing before the Oslo Accords

The establishment of a policing operation and a credible, accountable and functioning police force in a non-state setting, amid territorial fragmentation, within an extremely complicated and vulnerable political context and political transformation, presents a huge challenge. This was and still is the reality facing the PCP.

¹³ A comprehensive account of international assistance in the 1990s is given by Brynjar Lia in his newly published book from 2007: *Building Arafat's Police. The Politics of International Assistance in the Palestinian Territories after the Oslo Agreement*. Ithaca Press.

¹⁴ Regarding the coordination and implementation of training assistance, the UN played an important role by seconding successive UN police training coordinators from the beginning in September 1994. They constituted the UN's response to the PLO's request for police training assistance, addressed to the UN Secretary-General at the time of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) signing ceremony in Washington, DC. The response to this request subsequently crystallized into an informal donor group that formed the basis of the first UN-coordinated police aid efforts for the Palestinian police. Beginning in mid-1994, the UN group implemented a wide range of police training programmes, reflecting the prevalent view among the donors that more training was their main vehicle for police reform and the promotion of democratic policing. As Lia (2007, 322–323) observes, the political and institutional framework for police reform was not ideal as the donors were lacking, for example, monitoring teams on the ground which could have given advice and follow-up on a daily basis.

¹⁵ Mclvor 2004.

The process of establishing a recognised police force commenced with the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) in September 1993 between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). The DoP stipulates the establishment of a strong police force in order to guarantee public order and internal security for the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.¹⁶ Annex II of the Declaration states, in relation to the agreement on the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, that arrangements for the assumption of internal security and public order will be responsibility of the Palestinian police force, consisting of police officers recruited locally and from abroad (holding Jordanian passports and Palestinian documents issued by Egypt).¹⁷

Policing of the Palestinians is not a new phenomenon by any means, although its history is limited and sporadic. Palestinian Arabs were serving in the Palestine Police during Mandatory Palestine, together with Jewish inhabitants as well as British citizens.¹⁸ The concept of a Palestinian police force has been on the agenda as part of an Arab-Israeli agreement on the Occupied Territories since the occupation of the Palestinian territories by Israel in 1967.¹⁹

Palestinian Arabs gained considerable policing experience in the Occupied Territories within the Israeli Police. Almost half of the Israeli police force in the Occupied Territories was Palestinians. Nearly all of them quit at the beginning of the *First Intifada*, following the call to resign issued by the Unified National Command of the Uprising (UNC) in March 1988.²⁰ These professionally trained police officers formed the core of the new Palestinian police. However, the role of Palestinian police officers trained formerly by the Israeli Police was marginalised and minimised following the Oslo Accords.²¹

¹⁶ DoP 1993, Article VIII: Public order and security. The strong Palestinian police force was also supported by the Israeli authorities as an early empowerment (Lia 2006, 99–100).

¹⁷ DoP 1993, Annex II: Protocol on Withdrawal of Israeli Forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area. This annex also stipulates concerning training that those who participate in the Palestinian police force coming from abroad should be trained as police officers.

¹⁸ Shepherd 2000, 66. For example, the Palestine Police Force, which was set up in 1926, had the following composition in 1930: British 692; Muslim 1396; non-British Christian 301; and Jewish 327.

¹⁹ Lia 2006, 93.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 141–142.

2.2 Policing following the Oslo Accords in 1993 and international assistance

The history of the Palestinian police since the Oslo Process has been analysed in detail by Brynjar Lia.²² In his research, Lia concludes that the many flaws of the Palestinian police in terms of organisational structure, chain of command, internal discipline and coordination, and mechanism of accountability have been the result of the PNA's non-state reality and consequent policing dilemmas.²³ Lia states that the Palestinian police have seen themselves more as a vehicle for achieving national independence than as a non-political law and order agency.²⁴ From a legal and political standpoint, the Palestinian police was far from being a national police force in an independent state. The greatest anomaly was the fact that it was not established to provide security and render services for the people among whom its members were recruited, and on whose territory it exercised control, but to ensure improved security for a foreign state (Israel) and its citizens.²⁵ This dimension as a provider of extra-Palestinian security was only emphasised in the formulation of the Roadmap for Peace in 2003.²⁶

As early as 1978, the Camp David Framework foresaw the establishment of a local police force as part of an autonomy agreement for the West Bank and Gaza Strip.²⁷ In August 1992, Palestinian and Jordanian police experts met to discuss preparations for a future Palestinian police force, envisaged at a strength of some 20,000 Palestinians, assuming responsibility after an Israeli withdrawal.²⁸ A Police committee was set up at Orient House, which conducted feasibility studies and planning.²⁹

On orders from the PLO leadership, two police committees were set up in the Occupied Territories, one for the West Bank and another for the Gaza Strip, to supervise police preparations.³⁰ On 21 September 1993 the PLO began calling for police recruits in the Occupied Territories, and 14 recruitment offices in nine Palestinian towns were opened for this purpose.³¹ More than 2,000 Palestinian recruits were accepted into the Palestinian police. They were formally inducted into the police only after the

²² Lia 2006; Lia 2007. During the British Mandate, Palestinian Arabs served in the Palestine Police and had certain self-policing functions during the Arab Revolt in 1936–1939, as well as during the insurgency in Gaza in 1969–1971, in Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan in 1968–1970 and in the Palestinian guerrilla state in Lebanon in 1969–1982. The Palestinian Armed Struggle Command (PASC) served as a local police force in the refugee camps. The *First Intifada* in the Occupied Territories starting in 1987 was the next chapter in Palestinian self-policing, now transferred from the refugee camps of Lebanon to Palestine itself (Lia 2006).

²³ Lia 2006, 309.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 429–430.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 269.

²⁶ U.S. Department of State 2003.

²⁷ Lia 2006, 119.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 98.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 118–119.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 133.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 134–135.

exile-based police force arrived in May 1994.³² The PLO's emphasis was on a military aspect of national security, as National Security Forces were to be much stronger than the modest number of police units (3,000 in the Gaza Strip, 650 in Jericho and 3,000 in the West Bank).³³

The Civil Police³⁴, also known as the "Blue Police", was inaugurated in May 1994, and grew into one of the largest and most important branches of the Palestinian security structures. Its strength was an estimated 10,500 men in 1997, with 6,500 in the West Bank and 4,000 in the Gaza Strip. The Civilian Police had also a special Female Police Department with about 350 policewomen in 1997.³⁵ The Civilian Police experienced the fastest growth in all branches after deployment, becoming the second-largest branch of the Palestinian police in 1997, the National Security Forces remaining the largest. In 1996–1997, the Civilian Police staffed 18 police stations in the main cities and 25 stations in West Bank villages. It employed from 8,000 to 11,000 personnel, with an officer core of more than 1,000. By the year 2000, its total strength had increased to 14,000, and 23 specialised departments had been formed.³⁶

International aid played a fundamental role in the establishment of the Palestinian police. The PLO's financial crisis together with the high cost of creating an entirely new police force from the very beginning meant that the PNA quickly became heavily dependent on donor assistance for developing and maintaining its police force.³⁷ Consequently, international assistance and donors stepped in following the Oslo Accords. Arafat, for example, called on the UN to supervise the training of the Palestinian police in the Occupied Territories in September 1994, an idea that was strongly opposed by Israel.³⁸ As the occupying and colonial power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel viewed the Palestinian police through the prism of its territorial interests in the Occupied Territories and the omnipresent threat of terrorism. The dominance of Israel over the PNA hindered the ability of foreign donors to offer the Palestinian police relevant assistance.³⁹

In any case, donor pledges were numerous but the slow pace of disbursement and delivery emerged as the fundamental problem during the first wave of deployment in the summer and autumn of 1994. To coordinate the multitude of donor pledges

³² Ibid., 144–145.

³³ "Palestinian document on the police (in Arabic)", *al-Quds*, 8 November 1993, 7, quoted in Lia 2006, 183.

³⁴ In addition to Civil Police, other official security agencies under the PA are the Preventive Security, the Civil Defence, the National Security, the Presidential Security, the Military Intelligence, the Naval Police, and the General Intelligence. In addition to the official agencies, a number of semi-official agencies operate such as the Special Security, the Military Police, the Border Police and the Special Forces (Friedrich 2004, 36–41).

³⁵ Lia 2006, 318–319.

³⁶ Lia 2007, 246–247.

³⁷ Lia 2007, 25.

³⁸ Lia 2006, 145.

³⁹ Lia 2007, 2.

and programmes, the multilateral body Co-ordination Committee of International Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force (COPP) was established at the Cairo donor meeting on 24 March 1994.⁴⁰ This can also be regarded as a prelude for the future EUPOL COPPS, and the selection of this particular acronym for the EU mission reflected in part an attempt to highlight what had worked at the COPP and build on the COPP concept.⁴¹ COPP had representatives from the United States, Russia, the EU, Norway, Japan, Egypt, the PLO and Israel, and its simple mission was “to speed up the mobilisation of international assistance”.⁴²

Inclusion in COPP was important for the EU, as the EU wished to substantiate political returns for being the largest aid provider in the territories. In addition, it considered its regional involvement an important testing ground for the new Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).⁴³ In April 1994, the EU foreign ministers’ meeting supported a resolution to spend ECU 10 million (\$11.3 million USD) “in order to contribute actively and urgently to the creation of a Palestinian Police force”. In fact, the police funding resolution was hailed as “one of the first actions taken by the Union under the Maastricht treaty’s second pillar Common Foreign and Security Policy”.⁴⁴

Within the donor community, Norway gradually adopted a leading role in the mobilisation and coordination of the police aid, primarily responding to PLO wishes rather than actively seeking such a role for itself.⁴⁵ But it was the United Kingdom which played the most crucial donor role from the European Union. According to the Arab and Israeli press, the UK had promised to contribute by “providing special electronic equipment” and also assistance in the areas of “restructuring, communications, training, and planning” in this early stage of donor support. The British police aid package, however, fell far short of Palestinian expectations.⁴⁶ Assistance in the field of

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴¹ Mclvor, email to Ari Kerkkänen on 28 May 2008.

⁴² Lia 2007, 44. The Oslo Police donor conference had previously taken place on 20 December 1993. At this conference the PLO’s representative Dr Nabil Sha’ath and Israel’s representative General David Agmon stressed that the PLO and Israel were in broad agreement on the basic principles concerning the police force and called upon donors to start their aid efforts immediately with regard to training and equipment (Lia 2007, 34)

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 64–65. Later the EU involvement was followed by adopting Joint Action 97/289/CFSP on an EU counter-terrorism programme for the PNA on 29 April 1997. The new EU counter-terrorism programme was code-named COTER and was supposed to use existing facilities in Gaza and Jericho and not aim to build new training centres. One important focus of COTER was to help the Palestinian intelligence services build an organisation with both intelligence gathering and analytical capabilities. Also a bilateral PNA-EU security understanding was concluded, providing for a joint security committee that was to meet regularly in order to assess Palestinian counter-terrorism efforts and review cooperation. The agreement was concluded in April 1998 during Prime Minister Tony Blair’s visit to the Middle East (Lia 2007, 301, 304–305).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 28–29.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

communication remained, as seen in the later project initiated by the DFID, the primary interest and expertise of the British contribution to the assistance programmes.

It appears that the United Kingdom was the only major EU country with a strong interest in the police sector and possessing both the necessary resources and also the political strength and will. As a strong indication of its interest in the Palestinian police, the UK spent some £5 million British pounds in aid during 1994 and committed and dispersed new grants for police aid purposes nearly every year for the rest of the 1990s. The UK also provided one-sixth of the total EU aid to the PNA, which included sizeable contributions to the Palestinian police. The UK also offered a wide range of training courses in, for example, senior management training, riot control, drug control and counter-narcotics, community policing, forensic techniques, English language and counter-terrorism.⁴⁷

Donor activities did not raise concerns only in Israel; the donor community itself was wary of providing the Palestinian police with certain types of expertise. One example of a training course, that caused hesitation, concerned expertise in exposing document forgery. Donors feared that such expertise might fall into the hands of international smuggler leagues, which forged documents for illegal refugees, or might be used by militants to smuggle suicide bombers into Israel. The problem of what kind of expertise the donors should transfer to the Palestinians was also raised in regards to communication equipment, and in this area Israel intervened to ensure that the Palestinian police were unable to get their hands on advanced equipment that Israel would be unable to monitor.⁴⁸ This attitude of the Israeli authorities only intensified following 9/11.

In the light of the communication equipment crisis, COPP made efforts to mitigate the situation with temporary measures. At COPP's suggestion, the Motorola communication system used by the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), an international observer mission in Hebron whose mandate expired on 8 August 1994, was transferred to the Palestinian police and became its first field communication system. This system included two repeaters and some 95 radio sets. After some consultations, the Norwegian MFA agreed to allocate about \$11,500 USD to upgrade the system with three more base stations in order to enhance its efficiency in the Gaza Strip.⁴⁹ On 4 January 1996, during a visit to Gaza by Jeremy Hanley, the British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, a donor agreement was signed for establishing a communication network for the Civil Police in the West Bank at an estimated cost of \$2 million USD. The equipment was successfully delivered and installed just ahead of the forthcoming Palestinian elections.⁵⁰

Many conclusions drawn concerning the problems faced by the donor community in assisting the Palestinian police resembled those challenges faced first by the bi-

⁴⁷ Ibid., 257.

⁴⁸ Lia 2007, 271.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 92.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 93.

lateral police assistance programme by the DFID, and after its merger into the ESDP mission, by EUPOL COPPS itself. The main challenges, especially in terms of delivery, can be summarised as follows: donors were slow in their decision-making; the Israelis were intentionally delaying delivery by bureaucratic hold-ups or at border crossings; and the PLO was slow to produce the information required to release donor assistance. Aid efforts were also hampered by Palestinian-Israeli disputes over radio frequencies and other security-related matters.⁵¹ The conclusion of Dr John Jenkins, the British Consul General, about the impact of the international donor assistance was that both multilateral and bilateral aid channelled into security assistance had produced very limited results. He further stressed the importance of channelling international assistance through a clear mechanism.⁵²

2.3 The Second Intifada and its aftermath

The outbreak of the *Second Intifada* in September 2000 constituted a major setback for the Palestinian police and everything that had so far been established and developed, especially within the Civil Police. Police infrastructure suffered heavily due to Israeli attacks. Some 45 police buildings and complexes across the West Bank and Gaza Strip were destroyed, including the Forensic Laboratory at Police Headquarters in Gaza City and the police complex at Ramallah. Communication systems were also targeted. There were few if any repeater stations left intact, resulting in radio coverage limited to a radius of a few kilometres from base stations. These base stations were generally vehicle radio sets mounted on control room desks.⁵³ Inevitably, the rule of law capacity of the PCP was seriously hampered.

The Roadmap had envisaged accountability for the Civil Police, Civil Defence and Preventive Security lying with the Minister of the Interior. Presidential Decree No.12 of 2002 stipulated that the Police, the Preventive Security and the Civil Defence are under the command of the Ministry of Interior.⁵⁴ The implementation of these provisions collapsed with the Abu Mazen government in 2003 and they were never effectively implemented, resulting in a situation in which the Civil Police, Civil Defence and Preventive Security were nominally accountable to the Minister of Interior, but their respective heads sat on the National Security Council chaired by President Arafat. Dr Khalil Shikaki, Director of the Palestinian Centre for Policy Survey and Research (PSR), made the assessment in 2006 that the ongoing security reform process, the restructuring of forces and the reorganisation of all security forces into three agencies were not being seriously implemented.⁵⁵

This state of affairs was observed also by Jonathan Mclvor, Police Adviser in the DFID lead capacity building project for the Palestinian Civil Police and later the first

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁵² Jenkins in *Palestinian Security Sector Governance. Challenges and Prospects* 2006, 26.

⁵³ Mclvor 2004, 10. Also the Public Order, Traffic and Criminal Investigations Department complex at Der El Balah, rebuilt since 2001, was destroyed for the second time.

⁵⁴ *Palestinian Security Sector Governance. Challenges and Prospects* 2006, 45.

⁵⁵ Shikaki in *Palestinian Security Sector Governance. Challenges and Prospects* 2006, 20.

Head of Mission of the EUPOL COPPS, who observed that overt political control and the absence of a mechanism to hold the Chief of Police accountable for the conduct and performance of the police militated against effective policing.⁵⁶

The rationale of international donor assistance to the Palestinian police had to be reassessed as a result of the *Second Intifada*. The political and security fragility had left many efforts during the post-Oslo period in ruins, and donors must have perceived that investing in the Palestinian Territories in general, and in the Police in particular, was like sewing wind.⁵⁷

3 EUPOL COPPS

The Roadmap published in mid-2003 formed a new framework for the post-Oslo era. The Roadmap, presented to Palestinian and Israeli leaders by Quartet mediators, envisages consolidation of all Palestinian security organisations into three services which should report to an empowered Minister of the Interior. The focus of the security paragraph in the Roadmap is that, instead of enforcing the rule of law in the Palestinian territories, the Palestinian Security apparatus confronts all those who are engaged in terror and dismantles terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. Furthermore, it is declared that the PNA must “undertake visible efforts on the ground to arrest, disrupt, and restrain individuals and groups conducting and planning violent attacks on Israelis anywhere.”⁵⁸ There has been an acknowledgement that a restructured, properly equipped and trained Palestinian Civil Police service and Public Order force are crucial to this process. It was within this framework that the EUPOL COPPS was conceived and delivered by the bilateral DFID project and financed, to a large extent, by Denmark and Norway.

⁵⁶ Mclvor 2004, 8.

⁵⁷ The *Second Intifada* and its consequences also led to a re-evaluation of the EU’s role in PNA security affairs. A degree of scepticism was expressed in EU capitals with regard to assisting the Palestinian police when the latter appeared to be directly involved in the fighting. Counter-terrorism aid was replaced by EU attempts to introduce unofficial security monitors on the ground. An EU monitoring unit with multinational participation was set up in the PNA-ruled territories to report on and assist in efforts to conclude a ceasefire. However, Israel strongly resisted the move, seeing it as a covert attempt to introduce international observers or peacekeepers. Relations between the EU and Israel also deteriorated as a result of Israel’s destruction of the EU donations to the PNA and the Palestinian Police, notably surveillance equipment, communication systems and an expensive forensics laboratory. In late 2002, the EU was still maintaining its special adviser’s office, but its role was reduced to maintaining contacts with the Palestinians, gauging the possibilities for restarting police training and updating EU member states on the situation on the ground. (Lia 2007, 306)

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of State 2003.

3.1 *The Initial Communications Project and its rationale*

The DFID deployed a team of consultants following the publication of the Roadmap in mid-2003. The purpose was to assess what assistance might be given both to help the Palestinians meet their obligations under the Roadmap for effective and restructured Palestinian Security Services” and to develop the PCP as an element of good governance.⁵⁹ Project planning was further triggered by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s announcement in December 2003 of unilateral disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. This would mean an urgent need for capacity building within the PCP.⁶⁰ As a first step, a Police Advisor was appointed on a six-month contract in mid-April 2004 to plan a possible development project.⁶¹ The DFID led the UK commitment to the PCP and, as the initial assessment states, the UK was in turn seen by the European Union as the leading nation in security sector issues.⁶²

The Project fact-finding was carried out in 2004 by initial visits to police establishments and police commanders from Jenin to Hebron in the West Bank and Gaza City to Rafah in the Gaza Strip.⁶³ An Adviser’s Office was established at Police Headquarters in Gaza City. The Project started as the audit and inspection of vehicles procured by the Ministry of Interior for the Civil Police as a result of an assistance grant by DFID of \$1 million USD agreed in June 2003, and a task related to Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams as a proposal to provide them with four fully equipped Long Wheel Base (LWB) Land Rovers and Helmets/Visors/Protective Vests.⁶⁴ The UK had also supported the establishment of a Central Operations Room in Ramallah, responsible for co-ordinating the actions of a number of Palestinian security agencies.⁶⁵

The team produced a Palestine Police Project Memorandum (PPPM) outlining proposals for a three year, £5 million sterling project programme of support to the PCP in *Phase One*, with consideration of longer term support in *Phase Two*.⁶⁶ The aim of this support was to address both the security concerns of Israel, particularly in combating the threat posed by terror organisations, as well as the needs of the Palestinian people for improved safety and security. A final Project document was not produced or officially adopted owing to the ramifications of the collapse of the Abu Mazen government in September 2003.⁶⁷ The draft remained, however, an important document⁶⁸ and the DFID focused on the latter objective, seeing reform of the civilian police as a critical component of strengthening overall governance in Palestine.⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Mclvor 2004, 5.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 6, 14.

⁶¹ Ibid., 6.

⁶² Ibid., 4.

⁶³ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 6–7.

⁶⁵ PPPM 2004, 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁷ Mclvor 2004, 5.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁹ PPPM 2004, 11.

The Project Memorandum states that support for the Palestinian police was widely recognised as having the potential to contribute to the improvement of the lives of the Palestinian people, by reducing crime and insecurity and helping create the conditions for economic recovery.⁷⁰ This already demonstrates a good understanding of the human security approach in the planning phase of the Project. The Project Memorandum further states that the police and other security services suffer from a crisis of legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of Palestinian people. This is not only due to their inability to counter the Israeli threat, but is equally related to the lack of internal accountability and the failure to provide for the safety and security of the population.⁷¹ A survey conducted by the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces reveals that Palestinian respondents were most unhappy with the performance of the security forces in fighting against corruption, in preventing violence against women, and in preventing damage to property.⁷²

The initial report proposed a twin track approach to providing assistance whereby an Operational Plan (medium term) would run alongside a Transformational Plan (long term) over a period of three years. The Operational Plan would deliver on a day-to-day basis, whilst the Transformational Plan would be concerned with organisational change and long term effectiveness.⁷³ The initial report already predicts a possible role for the European Commission in a coordination mechanism.⁷⁴ Jonathan Mclvor, appointed as Police Adviser, concludes in his assessment that an effective and competent Civil Police service will contribute in large measure to Israeli security in the long term.⁷⁵

Indigenous efforts were also undertaken following the publication of the Roadmap. The Abu Mazen government produced two strategy plans in July 2003. These were The Action Plan of the Ministry of Interior on the Managerial and Organisational Level, focusing on creating an independent policing structure under the Ministry of the Interior and rebuilding training and operational facilities, and The Ministry's Plan to Control and Organise the Palestinian Street, focusing on cooperation and coordination between the various security agencies.⁷⁶ Unfortunately for this development, the Abu Mazen government collapsed on 6 September 2003 and with it a number of reforms upon which the Project had been predicated.⁷⁷

The PCP, built in the post-Oslo period, consists of some 18,000 PCP personnel: 12,000 of them were deployed in Gaza, of whom some 3,100 were Public Order Police. Some 6,000 were deployed in the West Bank, 1,000 of whom were Public Order Police. The organisational structure revealed gaps in the Command and Control

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷² Bocco et al. 2006, 35.

⁷³ Mclvor 2004, 4, 15.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

structures. Command and Control is a key issue for the Civil Police, not only in terms of organisational structure, but also in terms of internal communication, taking into account the paucity of radio systems and information technology and the inability of the senior commander to move freely within and between the West Bank and Gaza Strip.⁷⁸

In terms of public order capacity, of the 4,100 Public Order Police, 3,100 were deployed in the Gaza Strip and the remainder at various locations in the West Bank. They were found to be lacking appropriate accommodation, vehicles, communications equipment, personal protection equipment, long handled batons and riot shields.⁷⁹ Training facilities were assessed as poor, whereas some potential was found at middle management level.⁸⁰ The PCP had a functional command structure with very few written documents, guidelines and rules. Police officers in their missions are led with vocal commands and instructions given by their superiors.⁸¹ Moreover, it was discovered that police officers are not trained or instructed to make independent decisions in the field.⁸² Only about 5% of crimes end up being investigated, and court as well as police training does not include crime investigation. Investigations are carried out only by order and guidance of higher level justice officials.⁸³

Mclvor's observations in undertaking the initial assessment were that little attention had been paid to the safety and security needs of the Palestinian citizenry, which should be the primary concern of the Civil Police. Capacity building in the past had been skewed towards Israeli security needs.⁸⁴ The PCP seemed to lack legitimacy; it seemed to many citizens that there was a sense of purposelessness within the police activities, which did not create confidence.⁸⁵ This conclusion was spelled out in a Project Memorandum drafted a few months later on the basis of Mclvor's assessment. There was a degree of lack of legitimacy and credibility of the Palestinian police and other security services, not only due to inability to counter the Israeli threat, but equally related to the lack of internal accountability and a failure to provide for the safety and security of the population.⁸⁶ In fact, the fear of internal insecurity due to the activities of local armed groups has gradually increased in Gaza.⁸⁷

Communication equipment had already been pinpointed by donors as the weakest point in the equipment of the Palestinian police during the first wave of international

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸¹ Interview of Suleiman Khatib, ICT officer, 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

⁸² Presentation at Jericho Police School, 29 March 2007.

⁸³ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

⁸⁴ Mclvor 2004, 9.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁸⁶ PPPM 2004, 3.

⁸⁷ Bocco et al. 2006, 14, 29.

assistance in the 1990s.⁸⁸ At that time, for example, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany had come forward with promises of communication equipment, but the failure to reach agreement on the frequency issue presented the most significant obstacle, causing the British government to ship a number of previously pledged police patrol vehicles to the Palestinian police without radio communications systems. Israeli authorities also physically removed police radios from a number of Spanish police cars donated in 1995.⁸⁹

As immediate priorities, the initial report drafted by Jonathan Mclvor proposed the following action plans: Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Support to Public Order and Counter Terrorist Units and refurbishment of training facilities at Jericho.⁹⁰ Thus this proposal was mainly made up of technical, material and training assistance. Mclvor further concluded that if the goal for civil policing is to create an effective and accountable police service capable of delivering on security and safety for both Palestinians and Israelis, which also secures and maintains public confidence in the rule of law, then a comprehensive and strategic development plan will be required.⁹¹ This led to the formation of the twin track approach with emphasis on shorter term operational needs and longer term transformational objectives.

The Palestinian Police Project Memorandum of November 2004 contained a risk assessment according to which the probability of having no political counterpart on the Palestinian side, and PNA accountability as well as oversight remaining unclear, was assessed as medium, also resulting potentially in medium impact on the project.⁹² The impact of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza resulting in a breakdown of law and order was assessed as highly probable, with a high impact on the Project.⁹³ The risk assessment further states with high probability that rejectionist groups would gain ground as a result of a heavy-handed Israeli response. Likewise, the probability of internal conflict within the PNA was assessed as high.⁹⁴ Since later developments following Hamas' ascent to power caused political turmoil within the territories, the

⁸⁸ Lia 2007, 90. At the COPP meeting on 6 April 1994, a joint communication system, to be used by joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols, was agreed upon. Spain provided a \$ 130,000 USD grant to finance the equipment, which was put in place in mid-July 1994. An internal Palestinian communication system was not forthcoming with the same promptness. This was one of the Palestinian police's greatest handicaps as they moved into the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Severe delays in the delivery of communication equipment were caused by a number of factors. The most important obstacle was Palestinian-Israeli disagreement on radio frequencies to be used by the Palestinian Police. The Israeli authorities insisted on their 'right' to monitor all radio communication by the Palestinian Police, and refused to grant a range of frequencies, which would complicate surveillance. The PNA wished to set up a closed radio system in order to evade Israeli eavesdropping. Attempting to arrange a compromise, COPP recommended that the Palestinian Police accept an open radio system for traditional law enforcement operations, in which communication is less sensitive, and postponed the issue of closed radio systems, but to little avail. (Lia 2007, 90–91)

⁸⁹ Lia 2007, 92.

⁹⁰ Mclvor 2004, 19.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁹² PPPM 2004, 24.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

Project risk assessment was a professional and realistic one, predicting quite correctly the possible future path of development. As a mitigating factor, the memorandum states that irrespective of the high probability of internal conflicts, without effective policing the outcomes were likely to be even worse.⁹⁵ The Project Memorandum's final assessment was that there was a high probability that the Project would not fully achieve its purpose and objectives.⁹⁶

3.2 From bi-lateral project to fully-fledged ESDP mission – Establishing EUPOL COPPS

The EU Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EU COPPS) served as a bridging phase between the bilateral UK-Palestinian Police Support project and EUPOL COPPS, launched at the beginning of 2006. On the basis of the bilateral programme, EU COPPS was established in April 2005 within the office of the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, Marc Otte.⁹⁷ The establishment of the EU mission was further prompted by the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in August 2005, and its establishment had already been envisaged in the PPPM drafted in November 2004.⁹⁸

Several recognised factors contributed to the establishment of EU COPPS. The Israeli withdrawal strengthened the need for more effective civil policing in the areas falling under the sphere of the PNA. Supporting the PCP was perceived as a contribution to improving the lives of the Palestinian people by reducing crime and insecurity. The EU had already, in the declaration of the European Council on 17–18 June 2004, stated its readiness to support the PNA in taking responsibility for law and order, especially acknowledging the requirement to support improvement of civil police and law enforcement capacity.⁹⁹ The conclusions of the Council of the European Union on 3 October 2005 emphasised the importance of Palestinian security sector reform and the co-ordination of international effort in this regard. They further underline the EU's commitment to continued and enhanced support for the PCP through EUPOL COPPS.¹⁰⁰

EU COPPS consisted of four EU Police experts headed by Chief Superintendent Jonathan McIvor, and its office was based in the building of the Palestinian Ministry of the Interior in Ramallah, with a satellite office in Gaza City. The Office's role was to provide support for both immediate operational priorities, and longer-term transformational change management.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Ibid., 27.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 28.

⁹⁷ EU COPPS & PCPDP Factsheet.

⁹⁸ PPPM 2004, 4, 12. Endorsed by the GAERC (the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council).

⁹⁹ EU Council Secretariat Factsheet 2005; EU Presidency Conclusions, Brussels, 17–18 June 2004.

¹⁰⁰ EU Council Press Release 3 October 2005.

¹⁰¹ EU Council Secretariat Factsheet 2005.

During this bridging phase, the Palestinian Civil Police Development Programme 2005–2008 (PCPDP) was produced jointly by EU COPPS and the PCP with input from the PNA. Its content was mainly the result of planning workshops held in Jericho in April 2005.¹⁰² The PCPDP sets out its objective as the establishment of a “transparent and accountable police organisation with a clearly identified role, operating within a sound legal framework, capable of delivering an effective and robust policing service, responsive to the needs of the society and able to manage effectively its human and physical resources”.¹⁰³ The PCPDP came to serve as a blueprint for building a modern, democratic and accountable police service and as a framework for donor assistance.¹⁰⁴

The PCPDP, and also the objectives of EU COPPS, were clearly founded on the initial assessment carried out by Jonathan McIvor. The Transformational Plan aimed at fundamental organisational change, while the Operational Plan envisaged raising operational capacity and performance in the shorter term.¹⁰⁵ The DFID approach of providing support to the Palestinian police through a co-ordinated donor mechanism was strongly welcomed by the EU, and eventually culminated in endorsement of the idea to establish EU COPPS under the auspices of the EUSR.¹⁰⁶

At this stage financial assistance and police training were provided by Spain, the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark. Norway was co-funding the Police Communications Project with Denmark to enhance communications capacity in Gaza and to build new infrastructure in the West Bank.¹⁰⁷ An agreement between Denmark, PNA and EU COPPS concerning communication equipment for the PCP was signed on 2 July 2005. This agreement stipulates EU COPPS as an implementing agency, which shall manage the implementation of the Project, including proactive engagement with the Israeli authorities for the release of equipment from customs, and ensure that procurement, including delivery, installation, warranty maintenance and training, is undertaken in a timely way.¹⁰⁸

EU COPPS was transformed into the EUPOL COPPS by the EU Council Joint Action of November 2005.¹⁰⁹ This established an EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories under the ESDP, stating that the Mission would have a long term reform focus and provide enhanced support to the PNA in establishing sustainable and effective policing arrangements.¹¹⁰ The Joint Action was based on a draft Concept of Operation dated 7 October 2005, and preparations for launching the mission were followed by the drafting of an Operation Plan on 30 November 2005. The Joint

¹⁰² EU COPPS & PCPDP Factsheet.

¹⁰³ Quoted in EU COPPS & PCPDP Factsheet.

¹⁰⁴ EU Council Secretariat Factsheet 2005.

¹⁰⁵ EU COPPS & PCPDP Factsheet.

¹⁰⁶ PPPM 2004, 12.

¹⁰⁷ EU Council Secretariat Factsheet 2005.

¹⁰⁸ Agreement 2005a.

¹⁰⁹ Council Joint Action 2005/797/CFSP.

¹¹⁰ EU Council Press Release 14 November 2005.

Action stipulated that the operational phase of the Mission would start not later than 1 January 2006. The mission would have a three-year mandate, and would assist in the implementation of the PCPDP, advise and mentor senior members of the PCP and criminal justice system and also co-ordinate EU and international assistance to the PCP. Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, appointed Jonathan Mclvor as Head of EUPOL COPPS¹¹¹ for the Palestinian Territories on 16 November 2005.¹¹²

The Mission Statement sets objectives for the ESDP Police Mission. The main objective was to contribute to the establishment of sustainable and effective policing arrangements under Palestinian ownership in accordance with best international practice, in co-operation with the European Commission's institution building efforts as well as other international efforts in the wider context of Security Sector and Criminal Justice Reform. To meet this objective, EUPOL COPPS was to advise and closely mentor the PCP, and specifically senior officials at District, Headquarters and Ministerial level, assist the PCP in implementation of the PCPDP, co-ordinate and facilitate EU Member State assistance, and – where requested – international assistance to the PCP, and advise on police-related Criminal Justice elements.¹¹³ The Mission Statement reiterates objectives already set forth in the initial assessment of the DFID carried out by Jonathan Mclvor in 2004. The desired end state for the mission was the existence of a police organisation with sufficient capacity, which is both transparent and accountable with a clearly defined role, which operates within a sound legal framework and which is capable of delivering an effective and robust policing service responsive to the needs of society and of effectively managing its human and physical resources.

Elements included in the EUPOL COPPS structure were: Police Head of Mission (assisted by a Political Adviser and a Security Officer), Advisory Section, Programme Co-ordination Section and Administration Section. The Programme Co-ordination Section was given the crucial task of coordinating and facilitating EU donor assistance, and, where requested, international donor assistance, to the PCP within the framework of the PCPDP, and of designing and formulating projects as required.¹¹⁴

Incidentally, the official establishment of EUPOL COPPS coincided with the Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006, which brought victory for Hamas and led to the formation of the Hamas-led government. This new political setting complicated the objectives set for the new mission in supporting the Palestinian police, as the Hamas-led government was boycotted by the Quartet and the

¹¹¹ The EU Council Secretariat Factsheet dated November 2005 spells out the aims and scope of EUPOL COPPS. The mission would have approximately 33 unarmed personnel seconded mainly from EU Member States, and the financial reference amount intended to cover expenditure related to the Mission until the end of 2006 would be €6.1 million euros as common costs.

¹¹² Statement of Cristina Gallach, Spokesperson of Javier Solana, 16 November 2005.

¹¹³ Council Joint Action 2005/797/CFSP.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

international community because of its refusal to meet Quartet conditions. Hamas consequently took over control of the Ministry of Interior, the police forces of which the ESDP Mission had been commissioned to support. Funding of the PNA would have automatically been taken as support for Hamas, which was placed under international sanction. The freshly launched ESDP mission was not, however, called off. The difficulty created by Hamas control of the Mol was circumvented as follows: the President's Office, belonging to Fatah and not subject to sanctions, became the owner of the communication system and the Palestinian telecommunications operator BCI EUPOL COPPS system provider partner was committed to avoid linking the system with any fraction not under the control of the President's Office. This arrangement guaranteed continuation of the donor support.¹¹⁵

Hamas itself established the new Special Executive Force, which periodically raided the police headquarters for public order equipment and eventually succeeded in replacing the PCP as the de facto police in Gaza.¹¹⁶

The Quartet in its statement on 20 September 2006 encouraged greater donor support to meet the needs of the Palestinian people, with a particular emphasis on security sector reform.¹¹⁷

3.3 EUPOL COPPS Communications Project description

At the beginning of 2000, the PCP had medium to good quality information and communication technology (ICT) equipment in some districts (Gaza and Ramallah), which was however insufficient to cover all departments. Some other districts were particularly poorly equipped (Bethlehem, Jenin), and in other districts (Jericho, Hebron) no equipment was available.¹¹⁸

The Palestinian security agencies, including the PCP, were all suffering at that time from a shortage of communications equipment (radio, telephone, computer systems). The shortfall appeared geographically to be much worse in the West Bank than in Gaza. The agencies were equipped with different radio systems which were often incompatible with each other. Many of the devices were found to be old, neglected or damaged. In many areas police relied on their own mobile phones.¹¹⁹

The PNA made efforts to remedy this situation and in September 2000 imported through Ben Gurion Airport three new radio trunking systems which were to be installed in the police districts of Hebron, Nablus and Jenin. Owing to the *Second*

¹¹⁵ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹¹⁶ Kaldor & Faber 2007, 9.

¹¹⁷ Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace, 20 September 2006.

¹¹⁸ *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police* 2005, 1–2.

¹¹⁹ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

Intifada, Israeli authorities refused release of this equipment, which has since then remained stored at the airport.¹²⁰

The armed conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, including several Israeli attacks on the infrastructure of the PCP, especially during 2001–2003, damaged not only buildings but also all kinds of communication equipment and antenna masts. Geographically the conditions in Palestinian territories are very different: the West Bank is very mountainous or hilly, and therefore needs more antennas than Gaza, which is flat. Accordingly, a damaged antenna in the West Bank had more impact on communication capacity than a damaged antenna in Gaza.¹²¹

The equipment left undamaged by the Israeli attacks was partly functional. It was mainly very old radio equipment of different brands, which led to incompatibility of communication equipment. Some radios were inoperative because of a shortage of batteries or spare parts. In some West Bank districts, the police might have had some radios, but communication with patrolling police officers was nearly impossible due to the limited antenna coverage from base stations, which were generally vehicle radio sets mounted on control room desks.¹²²

Within the Palestinian police, the administration of communications was delegated to a very small unit of people with technological backgrounds. There seemed to be a gap between the police officers and engineers. The police officers would have liked to have more equipment and the engineers more elaborate technical tools. Nobody seemed to be in charge of the actual needs assessment.¹²³

The difficult operating environment also made it problematic properly to discuss and agree upon the content of the Project Memorandum with the main Palestinian counterparts – although the close working relationship which had been established earlier between the PCP leadership and the Police Adviser meant that many of the ideas presented were already familiar. The view was taken that although there were clearly risks associated with not having gone through a fully consultative project design process, the urgency of the situation demanded a more “fit-for-purpose” approach.¹²⁴

The Communications Project was part of a larger assistance programme, and its purpose was mostly technical capacity building, although there were the stated objectives of building public confidence and overall credibility of the PCP and other security forces.¹²⁵ To start with, EUPOL COPPS decided to carry out an overall audit of the communication infrastructure, covering not only the PCP but all security forces,

¹²⁰ *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police* 2005, 1.

¹²¹ *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police* 2005, 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²³ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹²⁴ PPPM 2004, 13.

¹²⁵ EU Council Secretariat Factsheet July 2005.

in order to conduct a detailed audit of the current state of the PCP communication infrastructure, to assess the communication capacity in the other agencies, to identify the current and future communication needs of the PCP and to recommend an appropriate communication strategy to meet the needs of the PCP as part of a security agency's broad integrated communication network.¹²⁶

The audit was carried out by a German expert in April 2005, and a report was submitted to EU COPPS on 21 May 2005.¹²⁷ The main weakness of the audit was that the operational analysis was not carried out, which made the needs assessment less accurate.¹²⁸ On the basis of this expert's findings, EUPOL COPPS made decisions on activities to be undertaken on short-, mid- and long-term objectives. The short-term plan was to build a radio network based on HF long range radios in combination with VHF/UHF short range radios and repeaters to make the security forces, especially the PCP and National Security, operational as soon as possible. In the mid-term (1–3 years) the existing trunk radio solutions should be linked to more sophisticated technology. A nation-wide analogue radio network could be built to cover the growing or already existing needs of the security agencies. The long-term plan would be created by developing a common Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy to ensure that all activities and needs of all Palestinian security agencies would be harmonized.¹²⁹

The PCP was using Motorola, but other systems were also in use. None of these systems functioned perfectly and their coverage was inadequate. EUPOL COPPS was convinced that the Motorola analogue system was good and worth up-grading, and the decision was made to implement this.¹³⁰

To sum up, the objective set by EUPOL COPPS was to increase the capacity of the existing analogue system in order to meet the requirements of 100% coverage cover of Gaza and the West Bank and to upgrade the number of radio users at district levels.¹³¹

The Project objectives were outlined in the development plan as follows: a full communication network for the PCP in Gaza, a full communication network in six of nine districts in the West Bank with a limited local communication network in the remaining three districts, technical capability for the PCP to link up with communication network of National Security Forces, more than 100% increase in handheld radio capacity and 60% increase in base station radio capacity, upgrading of already existing radio equipment through various accessories and, finally, an

¹²⁶ *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police 2005*, 2

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹²⁸ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

enhanced capacity to operate equipment delivered under the Project through developing education and training.¹³²

The Project was put together with a Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) and a Project Management Team (PMT). The functions of the PMC were to be responsible for the achievement of the project result and to channel resources needed for implementation of the Project to the PMT. The PMC was the decision-making body and accountable to the partner organisations. All partners were represented on the committee. The PMC had 5 members consisting of representatives of the PCP, Danish Representative Office, a representative from UK Global Conflict Prevention Pool GCPP/UK Department for International Development DFID and EUPOL COPPS. The PCP Head of Planning and Technical Department chaired the meetings. Decisions were taken by consensus of the five members. The PMC decided the composition and size of the PMT. Both PMC and PMT were planned to meet as necessary and allowed to invite consultants and others to participate in meetings as required. The function of the PMT was the practical implementation of the project. Its responsibilities included ensuring that activities were implemented as described in the Project document and in accordance with the schedule as decided by the PMC. The head of PMT team was a Project Manager from the PCP. His responsibility was to report to the PMC. The EUPOL COPPS Police Adviser would mentor and support the PMT in its role in the project.¹³³

3.4 Stakeholders and beneficiaries

Several stakeholders and beneficiaries can be identified in the Communications Project with varying roles and activity levels. In the following these groups are divided into four categories: *Actors* are the groups who have had a leading and coordinating role at some time or during some part of the process; *Donors* are the groups within the international community who have been funding different parts of the assistance activities; *Beneficiaries* are the actual end-users and their customers within the Palestinian community; *External actors* are groups who have not taken part in the actual assistance, but have had significant roles in the background.

The main actors were the United Kingdom, EUPOL COPPS, the EU Special Representative and the Palestinian telecommunications operator BCI. The UK has played a very active role in assisting the Palestinians through the years, enjoying a good position within the security sector owing to the high level of trust it has gained from both parties to the conflict, as well as from important external actors such as U.S. and Egypt. Israel explicitly accepted the UK's role in strengthening the Palestinian security apparatus in the formal Disengagement Plan¹³⁴ adopted by the 16th Knesset at the end of 2005. The UK had a leading role in the establishment of EUPOL COPPS, producing initial surveys and coordinating the assistance efforts which followed. The leading agency within the UK was the DFID.¹³⁵

¹³² *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police* 2005, 4.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 4–5.

¹³⁴ *Disengagement Plan of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon - Revised*, 28 May 2004.

¹³⁵ PPPM 2004, 15.

The BCI, owned by Said Baransi, can also be seen as an external actor or even as a beneficiary. The BCI was chosen on 14 July 2005 by EUPOL COPPS to be the contractor supplying communications equipment to the PCP.¹³⁶ Its role has been quite comprehensive, and without BCI's commitment and active participation in planning and problem-solving, the Project would not have been successful.¹³⁷

The UK, Denmark and Norway were the main donors of the Communications Project with their explicit wish to contribute to the overall aim to establish a transparent and accountable police organisation.¹³⁸

The direct beneficiary of the Communications Project was the PCP.¹³⁹ Within the PCP the following groups can be identified: leadership, end-users, technical staff and the training centre. All of these brought slightly different approaches and emphases to the project, but not contradictory ideas.¹⁴⁰ Indirectly, the whole Palestinian population must be regarded as the beneficiary, because the Project Proposal from the very inception of the Project clearly states that one of its objectives is to contribute to improving the lives of the Palestinian people by reducing crime and insecurity. The direct objective of the Project was to build the communication capacity of the PCP in order to improve command and control for all police operations as such, but with the short term focus being on the Israeli disengagement.¹⁴¹

External actors to the Project included the U.S., with the U.S. Security Coordinator playing an important and vital role in obtaining the release of stranded equipment from Israeli custody¹⁴². Israel as the occupying power of the Palestine had and still has a significant role in everything that happens within Palestine, and their interests also had to be taken into considerations in this Project. Israel was not actively trying to halt the Project, but also never saw any benefit coming from it.¹⁴³ Israel has continued to see the PCP as a threat, and thus the freedom of movement of the PCP is not guaranteed; in fact, the opposite is mostly the case. PCP representatives are given no priority in passing through roadblocks even if they are on an urgent police mission.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁶ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹³⁷ Letter from Said Baransi to Henrik Stiernblad on the PA Radio Communication Network, 1 March 2006.

¹³⁸ Agreement 2005b. Denmark's share was to provide up to DKK 5 million (approx. \$800 000 USD) and Norway's up to NOK 3 million (approx. \$450 000 USD).

¹³⁹ There are also other Palestinian security organisations which have had the opportunity to exploit the telecommunications system but the effects of this are somewhat vague, and thus they are not considered as beneficiaries in this study.

¹⁴⁰ Interviews 27 and 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁴¹ *Communication Equipment for Palestinian Civil Police 2005*, 3.

¹⁴² Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹⁴³ Interview of Jonathan McIvor, Chief Superintendent, 8 March, London.

¹⁴⁴ Interview of PCP representatives, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

Other external actors include Egypt and Jordan, which are important players on different levels of the Palestinian society. Egypt, in particular, was initially seen as a key player concerning issues relevant to Gaza, and has thus been considered as a potential actor in providing support to the Palestinian security services. Given the absence of assurances from the Israeli side about the safety of Egyptian personnel to be deployed to deliver assistance on the ground, the role of the Egyptians (as well as Jordanians) has remained quite small.¹⁴⁵

3.5 Project implementation

The Communications Project can be divided into four phases. *Phase One* concentrated on the building of communication capacity. The work started in mid-June 2005, and the main part was accomplished by October 2005. The contract with the BCI included maintenance for six months, delivery of equipment and the following installations on the sites: erection of a new and higher antenna mast in Khan Yonis, Gaza, and installation, optimization and testing of a Smartnet trunking system. This Smartnet trunking system had already been paid for by PNA, and had spent some 3–4 years in storage in Gaza under control of the PCP. The contract also included erection of antenna masts in Hebron, Nablus and Jenin and installation of fully-equipped sites with trunking system and repeaters in each location with a one-year warranty – although the equipment had been bought and paid for by PNA in September 2000 and since then stored at Ben Gurion Airport. In addition, the contract included the erection of pipe tower antennas and installation of new fixed repeater stations in the towns of Jericho, Tulkarem and Qualkilia to relieve pressure on the main trunking system and to provide flexibility, and the purchase and distribution of 600 GP 240 radio handsets, 50 GP 280 radio handsets and 90 base stations. Also, the purchase of accessories, including batteries, antennas and chargers, the education and training of personnel in the correct use of the purchased equipment, as well as the training in correct procedures for radio communications, were stated in the contract.¹⁴⁶

Following *Phase One*, the BCI arranged a six-day training course at BCI facilities in Ramallah at the end of November 2005. The course was tailored to meet the requirements of the PCP and the objectives set by the EUPOL COPPS mission to enhance the radio communications capabilities of the PCP officers, and to give them the needed skills to train police users and to carry out first aid maintenance. Trainees were from the radio communication department of the PCP, and all were engineers. The participants were generally satisfied with the outcome of the course.¹⁴⁷

Phase Two was a follow-up to improve the existing communication infrastructure in Gaza, and the work was launched in late October 2005.¹⁴⁸ It had become apparent that in Gaza City area, the existing 14 channels were insufficient for effective

¹⁴⁵ PPPM 2004.

¹⁴⁶ Interview of engineer Mohammed Tamimi, PCP, and officer Suleiman Khatib, ICT, 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁴⁷ BCI Training Course Report, 3 January 2006.

¹⁴⁸ *Communication infrastructure improvement phase 2 2005*.

communication. This was primarily because other security organisations than the civil police were using the same communication system. The system was overloaded with the result that delays were created and effective communication hampered. For this reason, EUPOL COPPS decided to prepare a project proposal, in collaboration with the PCP, on radio channel capacity expansion in Gaza City Smartnet Trunking Radio System. The project was intended to result in improved communication infrastructure in Gaza City with reduced queuing when using the system. There was an agreement that that BCI would order, deliver and install the necessary upgrade equipment at the Smartnet Trunking System site in Gaza City.¹⁴⁹

It had already been anticipated during the planning phase that the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) would perhaps prevent communication equipment entering PNA territories. This actually happened, the equipment was not released by the Israelis, and therefore some equipment was moved from Bethlehem to Gaza.¹⁵⁰

Phase Three of the project was effectively a maintenance contract of the system after the expiry of the maintenance part of the initial phase. After somewhat lengthy negotiations, the contract with the BCI came into effect at the beginning of December 2006 for a period of one year.¹⁵¹

Phase Four was a continuation of activities without any additional formal agreements. The main concerns of the Project Management Committee were the optimisation of the system, training issues and, above all, spare parts and batteries.¹⁵²

Maintenance constitutes a continual problem. Maintenance of the radio network is meant simply to keep the equipment functional. The most recent purchase was made two years ago, which also indicates that all the batteries are at least two years old. Their working time is about 10 minutes.¹⁵³ From May 2006 until December 2006, no resources were available for maintenance of the network. Simultaneously, the U.S. supported financially the Presidential Guard, which now has new radio handsets and base stations with functional maintenance.¹⁵⁴ To remedy this worsening situation, the maintenance contract for the period from 1 December 2006 until 30 November 2007 between EUPOL COPPS and the BCI was signed in November 2006.¹⁵⁵ The objective of this contract was to ensure that the PCP continues to have radio communication capacity to exert command and control over police operations. This was to be achieved by the BCI providing technical service and maintenance of the existing radio network and all portable, mobile and base radios in use by the PCP.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁹ Interview of Said Baransi, managing director of BCI communications company, 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁵⁰ Interview of Jonathan McIvor, Chief Superintendent, 8 March 2007, London.

¹⁵¹ *Maintenance of Palestinian Civil Police Communications Infrastructure* 2006.

¹⁵² Project Management Committee minutes, 7 March 2007.

¹⁵³ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Maintenance of Palestinian Civil Police Communications Infrastructure* 2006.

¹⁵⁶ Interview of Said Baransi, Managing Director of BCI communications company, 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

The Hamas victory in the Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006 also had a negative impact on the future plans of the Communications Project, but small scale improvements have been ongoing since the transfer of power.¹⁵⁷ As the BCI contract was coming to its end in spring 2006, the decision was made to carry out a post-procurement audit of the Project. EUPOL COPPS contracted Hart Security UK Limited to provide an independent communication expert to conduct the post-procurement audit for the Communications Project. The audit was carried out during two weeks in March 2006, and the result praised the BCI for its competence and level of technical expertise.¹⁵⁸ The expert visited all the Trunked systems in the Gaza Strip and West Bank and had meetings with Said Baransi. EUPOL COPPS was recommended to continue using the BCI as the contractor for the communication network.¹⁵⁹

EUPOL COPPS records of the contract were found to be satisfactory, and the documentation was present, correct, and up-to-date, with files in systematic order. The expert recommended the agreement to be amended to include the provision by the BCI of a monthly Status Report at the same fixed date every month to EUPOL COPPS.¹⁶⁰

The report also found satisfaction of donor representatives to be excellent. As in the previous audit, the importance of maintenance was emphasised. If the equipment is not maintained properly, it does not function properly. It appeared that the attitude of the PCP reflected a failure to understand the importance of maintenance.¹⁶¹

3.6 Project results

Said Baransi as the system provider lists the EUPOL COPPS short term Communications Project results as follows: the Project provided the Palestinian security agencies with much better voice communication, 100% coverage in the Gaza Strip, and 60–70% coverage on the West Bank, an incremental improvement in both the PCP and NSF command and control capabilities, support of the interoperability between the PNA Security Forces, improved motivation of the PCP and increased credibility of the PNA Security Forces.¹⁶²

The PCP has 8 radio networks built with Motorola equipment: Jericho, Jenin, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus and two in the Gaza Strip. The networks are positioned without general planning. Their coverage area is excellent and has a lot

¹⁵⁷ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁵⁸ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹⁵⁹ HART Security UK Ltd 2006b; 2006a.

¹⁶⁰ HART Security UK Ltd 2006b.

¹⁶¹ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹⁶² Letter from Said Baransi to Henrik Stiernblad on the PA Radio Communication Network, 1 March 2006.

of overlap. The result might have been more efficient by concentrating resources on two or three networks.¹⁶³

Databases such as criminal, weapon and vehicle registers constitute the backbone of efficient police work. The PCP has connected the compilation of these registers with digitalising the radio networks.¹⁶⁴ At the moment, the present level of registers, by which each police station has its own registers based only on knowledge from its own area, is more an administrative than a technical problem.¹⁶⁵

Many handicaps were identified during the Communications Project that can be remedied by proper and professional training. The manner of communicating with radios is ineffective. Point to point discussions are long and informal, which strains the capacity of batteries and engages limited channel capacity. The coverage of main masts and repeaters is not utilised in cooperation. Police officers are not trained to shift from their own channels to channels of their neighbouring police station; most of the officers do not even know that this is possible. The ones who know are not in a position to make changes in policy. Radios are used like mobile phones for bilateral communication.¹⁶⁶

The technology delivered is quite appropriate, although towards the end of its life span in some respects. The PCP technology staff would be eager to utilise more modern digital, for example, TETRA technology, although there are no clear needs to justify this demand, taking into consideration that the level of digital repositories is very low within the PCP.

The HART audit states that the ComNet is current technology, TETRA capable and likely to remain this way for at least the next 5 years, and probably for longer, up to 10 years. The ComNet is scaleable and may be enhanced to include dual analogue/digital and digital equipment enabling digital encryption and the transfer of data/video, for example.¹⁶⁷

The Audit emphasises the importance of the PNA ensuring that adequate and appropriate security exists at the Motorola trunked system sites to prevent theft or loss of infrastructure. Similarly, the audit recommends that the PNA needs to become involved and take responsibility to ensure the training of all users of radios and/or equipment, especially in appropriate voice procedures.¹⁶⁸

Many training courses have been delivered by donor countries. Training continues to be seen as a priority and is being delivered by the PCP and NGOs on a daily basis.

¹⁶³ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁶⁴ Interview of engineer Mohammed Tamimi, PCP, and officer Suleiman Khatib, ICT, 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁶⁵ Interview of Henrik Stiernblad, former Deputy Head of Mission and Project Coordinator, 7 February 2007, Stockholm.

¹⁶⁶ Interview of Frank Kirby, Project Coordinator, 27 March 2007, Ramallah.

¹⁶⁷ HART Security UK Ltd 2006a.

¹⁶⁸ HART Security UK Ltd 2006a.

Facilities, however, are poor. There is a lack of teaching space and instructional equipment. The Training Centre at Jericho, although the completion of buildings is still taking place, could potentially be an important and valuable training asset. The majority of training needs are likely to be met by internal trainers, many of whom are exceptionally well qualified and experienced. In principle, any additional training should be delivered “in country”, as this is the most cost effective method and more likely to target the right people.

It is obvious that PCP ambitions for the communication network are higher than those achieved and enhanced through the Communications Project and currently in use by the PCP and other security factions within the PNA. Digitalising is the next step in radio network development. In addition, the PCP wants to acquire end-to-end encrypted communications.¹⁶⁹

4 Conclusions

4.1 *The challenge of the political context*

Owing to the extremely complicated political setting within a protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, launching an ESDP mission in the Palestinian territories was no uncomplicated matter. The mission was to be launched in an area that lacked recognised sovereignty while simultaneously going through a transition and institution building process. The Hamas ascent to power in Gaza further complicated matters by putting the second ESDP mission at the Rafah border crossing into limbo. As the security sector became *de facto* divided between the West Bank and Gaza, the ESDP mission dealing with security sector issues was doomed to become partially and temporarily ineffective. EUPOL COPPS continued to operate on the West Bank on the understanding and assumption that international sanctions imposed on Hamas and ministries under its control did not affect the legality of the ESDP mission as long as it operated under the auspices of the President’s Office.

One of the core successes of EUPOL COPPS has been the fact that the EU has succeeded in establishing a bridgehead for an international EU-led crisis management mission in the occupied territories. ESDP missions represent EU policy and a mission in the Middle East, volatile but geographically in close proximity to the EU, is of paramount importance, and not only in terms of EU security and defence. An EU crisis management mission increases EU credibility and political weight, and reinforces its position as the biggest donor for the Palestinian territories.

Consequently, the establishment of the ESDP mission itself in the Palestinian territories can be regarded as a significant development for EU security and defence policy. It has certainly also been welcomed by the Fatah-led Palestinian authorities as strengthening, albeit indirectly, political recognition for Palestinians and their aspirations of sovereignty. Israel has never given the mission full accreditation in line

¹⁶⁹ Interviews of PCP representatives, 27 and 28 March 2007, Ramallah.

with their traditional resistance and suspicion about international peacekeeping and crisis management involvement, not only in Palestine but in the surrounding areas as well. Lack of accreditation has no doubt hampered the operational activities of EUPOL COPPS. Politically, it was also an intelligent and well-conceived decision to concentrate on improving the PCP, thus focusing on the security of ordinary Palestinians, instead of going with the flow and supporting mainly U.S.-financed Palestine police training programmes within an overall framework of the fight against terror.¹⁷⁰ EU policy and the Project itself had a clear agenda from the very beginning which showed a healthy grass-roots and bottom-up approach.

4.2 Operational prospects and barriers

Operationally, the most significant task of EUPOL COPPS was to enhance radio communication of the PCP. Based initially on a bi-lateral UK–Palestinian project, the Communications Project demonstrated from its inception a very professional project planning capability taking into account many of the uncertainties prevailing in this extremely challenging political context. Already during the planning phase it was predicted that eventually there would be a different political order in Gaza, and its impact was quite correctly assessed. Mission planning, at least when analysed on the basis of documentary evidence, seems good in terms of quality. The Project target was justifiably chosen to be a police organisation in charge of everyday security for Palestinians. It was logically concluded that increased effectiveness of the PCP would contribute to increased security of Israel and Israelis alike. Improving radio communications for the PCP did not require installing secure communications, which would only have complicated the whole undertaking unnecessarily and made it even more suspicious from the Israeli point of view.

Capacity building was not only perceived in terms of improving technical capability, but also coupled with appropriate training for the police personnel using and maintaining communication systems. Although the lack of communication equipment and capability among the PCP was clearly demonstrated, the main obstacle to effective and operational communication seemed to lie in the inefficient manner of using communication. The ultimate aim of the project, rising above improving means and tools, was therefore the transformation of the operating and working culture of the PCP. It appears that an even more robust approach in the field of communication training would have been required in order to achieve the stated objectives.

The changed political reality brought the Project to a standstill in Gaza, where the buildings of the Ministry of Interior were also taken over by Hamas, while the Project continued its activities in the West Bank. While there is a credible evidence of

¹⁷⁰ At the beginning of 2007, the U.S.A. Security Coordinator appointed to assist the Palestinian President and strengthen his control over security forces has at his disposal some \$59 million USD, which is planned to be spent on strengthening the Presidential Guard. The risk, according to one observer, is that these other forces like the Presidential Guard or the Special Executive Force will lead to the establishment of more “quasi-military brigades” while weakening the PCP. (Kaldor & Faber 2007, 13)

increased communication capacity, it is more difficult to point to clear evidence of transformed working and operational culture. This will certainly take a much longer time, a decade at least, to achieve, and therefore this particular mission cannot be judged on the basis of apparently slow transformational change.

A different viewpoint on EUPOL COPPS, outside its regional and political context, is supplied by its position within the EU bureaucracy. It appears that the difficulties in establishing the mission were aggravated by the slow and complicated EU bureaucracy. It is unacceptable that important policy tools such as ESDP missions are in danger of losing their credibility because administrative and logistical support is not provided quickly and easily enough. Transparency is needed in all phases of the mission planning and execution, but this cannot be an excuse for endangering overall objectives of a mission that has been approved by all EU member states. Bureaucracy and modalities at EU level must be revised on the basis of this and other ESDP mission experiences in order to guarantee unhindered operational capability from the very beginning. In particular, the procurement process must be made, while certainly no less transparent than before, smoother and faster.¹⁷¹

Procurement in ESDP missions constitutes an issue that can impede taking action in a timely and speedy manner. Commission rules require competition in the procurement process, which in terms of accountability and transparency is certainly legitimate and necessary. A crisis and conflict situation may, however, demand a very quick response in procurement, too, in order to execute decisions made on the EU political level and by the member states. Therefore a gap may appear between the need and will to act quickly and the practical capacity to execute the political will because of the decision-making bureaucracy of ESDP missions. Jonathan Mclvor witnessed difficult and slow EU bureaucracy in action when the time was ripe for decision-making, and this hampered actual operational activity.¹⁷² Clear and transparent strategic direction, one of the Human Security principles, and in this case on the part of EU institutions, was unsatisfactory in this particular situation.

The same rigidity in selecting staff for the mission made a skill-based approach difficult. The skills and competences of the Project participants in the EUPOL COPPS were not in every respect appropriate to this type of project. The participants were experienced police officers experienced in legal matters, but not specialists in third world development work or telecommunications. The assumption of EU Member States was that the required mission personnel for an ESDP Police Mission like EUPOL COPPS can be found within the various member states' police services. This

¹⁷¹ Lessons from this and other ESDP missions have in fact led to re-structuring of DGE IX which is in charge of civilian crisis management at the Brussels level. Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) within the Council Secretariat has been operational as of autumn 2007 with the specific task of improving mission planning, administration and logistics. The coming years will show whether this re-structuring will lead to a long awaited improvement within the Council Secretariat.

¹⁷² Interview of Jonathan Mclvor, Chief Superintendent, 8 March 2007, London.

assumption proved to be incorrect, and the possibility of hiring specific civilian expertise in technology or project management, for example, from outside the various police services should be guaranteed.¹⁷³ A more systematic training of ESDP mission members would partly remedy inefficiency caused by unawareness of the ESDP culture, decision-making system and bureaucracy in Brussels.

The project approach utilised in EUPOL COPPS proved to be a useful crisis management approach, easily tailored to meet a particular need, manageable, transparent and economic. Moreover, it provided a useful and deployable link between civilian crisis management missions and development aid. Linking of bi-lateral projects in support of ESDP civilian crisis management should be encouraged.

4.3 Human Security principles as the Project framework

Professor Mary Kaldor, with her Human Security Study Group at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, has also reviewed ESDP missions deployed in the Palestinian territories against six principles of Human Security. There is no distinction between the Police and the Border (EUBAM Rafah) mission in her summary findings, but according to her study there are problems especially in the principles concerning legitimate political authority, clear and transparent mandate, effective multilateralism and integrated regional approach.¹⁷⁴

In contemplating these principles strictly from the Mission point of view, the picture is somewhat brighter. Mission and Project planning documents bear witness especially to the primacy of human rights, and to the Mission having been planned with clear objectives to enhance the capability of the PCP, which is primarily in charge of security issues concerning ordinary Palestinian citizens.

Legitimate political authority is perhaps the greatest concern in respect of this Mission, as while invited and welcomed by the Palestinian authorities and approved as a mission by all EU member states, the Mission never received recognition and accreditation from Israel. It was clear from the outset that this lack of full legitimate political authority would complicate the Mission itself. Moreover, the predicted but still unexpected political outcome from the Palestinian legislative elections at the beginning of 2006 divided Palestinian territories into two halves, whereby continuation of the Project in Gaza proved to be extremely difficult.

While the Mission had a clear and transparent mandate for itself, it lacked the significance to connect it properly with other EU actors' and agencies' operations in Palestine/Israel, as well as with EU involvement in the Quartet. Mandates must take into consideration better other EU and international actors in the theatre in order to cooperate and coordinate more effectively; such scrutiny also assists in defining the limits of mandates and spheres of cooperation.

¹⁷³ McIvor's e-mail to Ari Kerkkänen on 28 May 2008.

¹⁷⁴ The Madrid Report 2007, 20.

The fact that the PCP was the main recipient of the Project and the Mission itself, with its already stated objectives, demonstrates a good understanding of a bottom-up approach. There is evidence every now and then that civil society and its views are being considered and taken into account, but for a more profound engagement, a genuine bottom-up approach would require a wider engagement of the Palestinian civil society in different phases of the Project.

Effective multilateralism is to some extent evident in the Mission and its Project, especially close coordination with U.S. Security Coordinators and various donor countries. The U.S. consultation has been necessary in spite of the risk of being drawn into security sector development aimed not at increasing grass-roots level security but at implementing a more "politicised" security agenda. Many matters related to effective multilateralism and an integrated regional approach should be taken into account as early as the mission planning and mandate drafting phase, assuming all the time appropriate EU political support from Brussels.

Analysis of operationalisation of the Human Security principles by using EU and ESDP missions as a test case reveals some shortcomings in understanding the operationability of Human Security. It appears that the way in which these principles are operationalised and made usable by practitioners depends to a large extent on the level at which these principles are being operationalised. Using these principles as benchmarks on a planning and strategic decision making level seems to be easier than putting them into practice on the grass-roots level. The same principles do not necessarily resonate among those who are carrying out day-to-day crisis management activities in the field. Taking as example principles of effective multilateralism and integrated regional approach and then imagining how these would be implemented by a middle-level practitioner whose area of responsibility both in terms of mandate and region are limited. Therefore, when looking at EUPOL COPPS through the prism of the Human Security principles on the very strategic and EU decision making level, there seem to be gaps in effective multilateralism and integrated approach. These would of course be key factors for the overall success of the mission, but at the same time, they are not crucial for an individual practitioner who desires to abide by the Human Security principles by putting forward the agenda to protect people. This is to suggest that operationalisation of the Human Security principles requires a varied approach depending on the level at which they will be operationalised. Having said this, the operationalisation will only succeed if these principles are comprehensively taken into account on the strategic level. Therefore a top-down approach to operationalisation is necessary in order to create conditions for the bottom-up approach, one of the basic tenets of the Human Security principles.

EUPOL COPPS complies to a large extent with many Human Security priorities. Retrospective analysis strengthens the view that these major principles, some of them even further modified and revised, would serve as a tangible benchmarks from the planning phase of any ESDP mission onwards, continuing as a means to evaluate a mission during its lifetime, and establishing criteria to evaluate mission short and long term objectives after the end of the mission. Making these principles operational

requires however a different approach on the planning and strategy level from the grass-root practitioner level.

EUPOL COPPS is an ongoing mission and will be evaluated many times in the future. These conclusions suggest that in this small ESDP mission with its high political significance, operational goals have partly been achieved, but achievement has been hampered by the political development as well as by the need for more time-consuming transformational change. Human security principles are quite well followed by the mission itself, proving that principles proposed by the Madrid Report could be even more systematically followed by all ESDP missions, thus ensuring a more systematic and structured attachment to Human Security, and making Human Security standard practise, and very practical in a mission environment. Compliance with these principles on the strategic and policy making level that led to the establishment of this mission was less tangible and more vague.

Control over the security sector lies at the very heart of the internal power struggle between Fatah and Hamas over Palestine.¹⁷⁵ It is noteworthy that the trust in the PCP had fallen between July 2005 and May 2006 despite the fact that it had undergone an internationally assisted reform process during the previous 12 months. The reduced trust in the PCP indicates that, in the eyes of the public, recent reform and rehabilitation efforts had not been successful. In the search for an explanation, three assumptions must be considered: the reform process failed to produce tangible outcomes, it produced outcomes but not those valued by the public, and lastly, it produced the expected outcomes, but the public is unaware of them, because these had not been properly communicated.¹⁷⁶ It is also to be noted that any impact on the security sector in the PNA is difficult to achieve without simultaneous progress in the field of judiciary. Increasing efficiency of the police has no sustainable effect on overall security and feelings of security as long as a huge backlog of pending court cases exists.¹⁷⁷

The desired end state for the Mission was the existence of a police organisation with sufficient capacity, which is both transparent and accountable with a clearly defined role, operates within a sound legal framework, is capable of delivering an effective and robust policing service responsive to the needs of society and is able to manage its human and physical resources effectively. Good planning and establishment of the Mission produced a promising start, which was mainly hampered by the new political setting. The Mission end state is still far away, but this does not mitigate the usefulness so far of this particular mission, its overall significance and what it has already achieved.

¹⁷⁵ Crisis Group Middle East Report 2007, 5, 7.

¹⁷⁶ Bocco et al. 2006, 33–34.

¹⁷⁷ According to one estimate by a European diplomat there is a backlog of about 50 000 cases in Gaza alone. Crisis Group Middle East Report 2007b, 9, footnote 77.

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