

Viable Cooperation in Civil-Military Relationships

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1. Introduction

During the last decade of the 20th century civil-military cooperation became a characteristic of humanitarian operations. In spite of positive results there are many instances to show that good working relationships between civilian and military actors do not come about naturally (Bollen, 2002). The complexity of civil-military relationships may account for the strenuous collaboration between civilian and military actors. This complexity stems from the following set of characteristics (Bollen & Vogelaar, 2000: 41-54):

Context-related characteristics.

The context of humanitarian operations is dynamic by nature. During the first stages of humanitarian operations, only a limited number of international humanitarian organisations are present. Often these organisations are not able to cope with the complex demands for help. The authorities in the host country usually lack the capacity to deal with the consequences of receiving and sheltering large numbers of refugees. However, during later stages, after the initial emergency situation has been dealt with, demand for and supply of help may change radically. Some degree of stability may set in and usually resources and (infra)structural support become more easily available (Frerks, 1999).

Organisational characteristics.

Civil-military alliances are temporary and cannot be coordinated by hierarchy. Representatives of both types of organisations differ in operating cultures, views on leadership, decision-making processes and the degree of autonomy on an operational level. Both sets of partners may question the appropriateness of working together (Wolfson, 1997: 43-52).

Task-related characteristics.

During the various stages of a humanitarian operation, i.e. the stages of reception, accommodation, repatriation and rehabilitation of affected area) the primary activities vary. Different humanitarian tasks require different sorts of expertise. Adding to the complexity are differing degrees of time-pressure and levels of interdependency between civilian and military co-workers, the non-routine nature of the tasks and their perceived importance (Meyerson, Weick & Kramer, 1996: 166-196).

Actor-related characteristics.

Civil-military interfaces are between partners who differ materially from each other. Apart from the goals they may share temporarily, they strive for different targets and are backed by different resources. Besides, both sets of partners are differentiated in terms of power. Because of discontinuities such as these, alliances between the military and civilian organisations are discordant by nature. Both trust and distrust in the partner's behaviour can manifest themselves at the same time (Long, 1989; 1999; Lewicki, MacAllister & Biest, 1998: 438-485; Winslow, 2001: 525-534). Moreover, the various groups of civilian actors appear to be divided amongst themselves about the appropriateness of collaborating with the military and about their motives for asking military support (Minear, van Baarda & Sommers, 2000).

The complexity due to this set of characteristics may lead to the premature dissolution of civil-military alliances. By this we mean that the alliance falls apart before both sets of partners have reached their shared humanitarian goals. In one way or another the civil-

military network has to remain *viable* for as long is necessary to reach the joint goals. Therefore, in order to achieve the mutual humanitarian goals, the complexity has to be effectively and efficiently distributed among the participants of the interorganisational civil-military network.

The **Viable System Model (VSM)** offers a framework for diagnosing and (re)designing the distribution of complexity in order to ensure the viability of an organisation. In order to remain viable, an organisation must have the potential to both adapt and realise the primary activities that constitute its identity (Beer, 1985; 1990; 1995). This potential, crucially, depends on the realisation of five interrelated functions. According to Beer, these five functions are necessary and sufficient for the viability of an organisation.

In this paper we have adopted the VSM to analyse the viability of an interorganisational civil-military network in the context of a humanitarian operation. More in particular, we will assess the viability of civil-military collaboration in the case of the operation Allied Harbour (1999), using the VSM as a template.

To this end, the remainder of this paper is divided into five sections. In section two, VSM is described, and, more in particular, the five functions required for viability and their inter-relatedness. Section three discusses civil-military cooperation processes that took place during operation Allied Harbour between the NATO-military forces and the authorities of the host country, the representatives of UN-aid organisations and NGOs. We will compare the reality of civil-military cooperation to the standards provided by VSM and identify potential problems that may thwart the viability of civil-military networks. In section four we will assess the viability of civil-military cooperation during operation Allied Harbour. Finally, section five presents a summary of the findings of the paper.

2. The VSM: functions and relations for viable cooperation ¹

In order to achieve the mutual humanitarian goals, military and civilian actors have to be able to form temporarily viable structures for cooperation. In this section we will describe the five functions, and the relations between them, that account for the viability of a civil-military interorganisational network

Function 1: primary activities

Function 1 consists of the collection of primary activities of a viable system. These primary activities constitute the system's *raison d'être* (Espejo et al., 1996: 110). For example, if the *raison d'être* of a civil-military network is to receive and accommodate refugees in the host country, its collection of primary activities can be providing shelter, food and water, basic healthcare and transportation. In the VSM each of the primary activities collected in function 1 is modelled to be a viable system. This means that each of these primary activities contains the functions needed for viability. This principle is called *recursion*.

The civil-military network that provided reception during the first stages of the humanitarian aid to Kosovar refugees in Albania in 1999 may serve as an example of recursion. The network as a whole (the first level of recursion) consists of four primary activities: reception, accommodation, repatriation and rehabilitation of affected area. Each of these primary activities (the second level of recursion) can be split up into tasks. For instance, the civil-military network concerned with reception, may be involved in the following tasks: safety and protection, registration of refugees, transport, construction of camps and camp management. Each of these tasks (the third level of recursion), in turn, may be split up into teams (the fourth level of recursion) with their own primary activities. Each level of recursion should both have the self-regulating capacity to adapt to developments in its particular environment and remain a part of

the larger viable whole. The freedom of the parts (e.g. safety and protection, registration of refugees) is constrained by the synergy of the whole (e.g. the network concerned with reception as a whole). In this way, the VSM not only deals with functions at one level of recursion but it also pays attention to the relations between different levels of recursion.

The existence of a collection of primary activities as such is insufficient to maintain the viability of the civil-military network. The primary activities need to be forged into the larger whole of the network. For this purpose, four additional functions are required: coordination, control, intelligence and policy.

Function 2: coordination

In a civil-military network primary activities may depend on shared resources, such as people, materiel, expertise and know-how, or the output of other primary activities. This dependency on shared resources makes the primary activities interdependent. In this case the allocation of these particular resources to a project in the primary activity 'reception' may require the revision of the allocation of these same resources to a project in the primary activity 'accommodation'. Without a function that supports the coordination of these interdependencies, both primary activities may become entangled in a process of oscillation between allocating and revising the allocation of these drivers and trucks to the various projects. It is the task of function 2 to prevent these oscillations. Function 2 facilitates the coordination of interdependencies between function 1-activities. Examples of function 2-activities are the design and implementation of shared civil-military planning systems, or the introduction of a language to discuss coordination problems in terms of the set of primary activities.

Function 3: control

The primary activities and coordination are necessary. However, they are not in themselves sufficient for the viability of a civil-military network. Each primary activity can still pursue its own goals without contributing to the realisation of the identity and strategy of the viable system as a whole. For this reason, Beer distinguishes a function that ensures *synergy* between primary activities. This function is called control. Its task is to translate the goals of the viable system (e.g. of the civil-military network as a whole) into goals for the primary activities (e.g. reception, accommodation, repatriation and rehabilitation) and to monitor the realisation of these goals. In this way, control takes care of the contribution of the primary activities to the realisation of the identity and strategy of the viable system. Control has three instruments to perform its task. First, it gives direct commands and receives direct reports from the management of the primary activities. Second, control can audit the management of the primary activities. The aim of these audits is to become aware of the problems the management of the primary activities face and to help to solve them. Third, control ensures the synergy of the primary activities by controlling the coordination effort by function 2.

Control not only focuses on the realisation of the identity and strategy of the viable system by its primary activities; it is also involved in the adaptation of its identity and strategy of the viable system. Because of control's knowledge about the *modus operandi* and problems of the primary activities, its second task is to review proposals for innovation produced by the intelligence function (see below) and to assess whether these proposals can be realised given the potential for change of the primary activities. To this purpose, control is involved in a continuous discussion about the feasibility of proposed innovations.

Function 4: intelligence

Functions 1 to 3 are necessary for the realisation of the identity and strategy of viable organisations. However, they still are not sufficient to guarantee organisational viability. To be viable also means to be able to adapt and to make adaptation possible, a fourth function is

required: intelligence. It is the task of intelligence to scan the environment of the civil-military network for relevant developments and to initiate adaptation in such a way that the primary activities stay aligned with them. For instance, usually the first stages of a humanitarian operation are referred to as the emergency situation. After the emergency situation has ended, most refugees will be sheltered and looked after appropriately. As a result, there is no longer a need for building refugee camps. The demands for help will change. Instead of a need for 'hands' there may now be a demand for specialist know-how, such as engineering. Intelligence should anticipate on contextual changes such as these, pick up any new developments, assess them and, if relevant, translate them into proposals for change.

Function 5: policy

Adding the intelligence function seems to complete the list of functions required for the realisation and adaptation of a viable organisation's identity and strategy. According to Beer, this is not the case. The reason for this is the specific focus of the control and intelligence functions. Control focuses on the *realisation* of identity and strategy of the organisation, while intelligence focuses on initiating *adaptation*. If the interaction between control and intelligence is not coordinated, three problems may occur. First, interaction is not sufficiently intense. Proposals for change are not assessed in terms of the organisation's potentials for change. Both the realisation and adaptation of the organisation's identity and strategy may grind to a halt. In the other two problems interaction between control and intelligence is intense, but one of the functions dominates the other. When intelligence dominates control, the organisation runs the risk of 'innovatism'. Innovative products or technologies are proposed and introduced that do not match the potential for change of the primary activities. For instance, the introduction of high-tech means for administration to centralise the distribution of humanitarian aid may not match with the way in which humanitarian workers carry out their primary activities in the camps. In the end such a domination of intelligence might even lead to the neglect of primary humanitarian tasks. When, on the other hand, control dominates intelligence, the organisation runs the risk of 'conservatism'. Proposals for innovation are rejected because of an obsession with current engagements and the projects in hand. For instance, the military may stick to their planning based on earlier stages of the humanitarian operation, even if reality dictates a change. To counter such problems, the VSM proposes a final function called policy. Policy has the tasks of co-ordinating the interaction between control and intelligence and consolidating its results in a (re)definition of the identity and strategy of the civil-military network. The identity and strategy of the civil-military network should fit developments in the environment as well as its potential for change. Policy completes the list of functions necessary and sufficient for viable cooperation.

Relations between functions

The VSM not only describes the functions needed for viable cooperation. It also describes the interactive relations that should exist between the functions and the characteristics these relations should have. For instance, the interaction between control and intelligence should be continuous, intense, balanced and detailed. Or the direct commands and reports between control and the primary activities should come in regular intervals and be aggregated.

From the perspective of their relations, the five functions of a viable system can be divided into *two* groups.

The first group, primary activities, coordination and control, deals with the *realisation* of the civil-military network's identity and strategy. Table 1 summarises the relations between the functions in this group (columns 1 and 2). Furthermore, it lists the requirements for interaction in terms of frequency, detail, standardisation and focus (columns 3 to 5).

<i>Related functions</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>Standardisation</i>	<i>Focus on</i>
Control – Primary activities	Direct commands and reports to and from primary activities	Regular intervals	Low	High	Management by exception of synergy of primary activities
	Audits of primary activities	Irregular intervals	High	Low	Creating awareness of and finding solutions to problems of primary activities
Control – Coordination	Monitoring and control of coordination by control	Regular intervals	Low	High	Contribution to overall synergy by coordination
Coordination – Primary activities	Coordination of interdependent primary activities	Continuous	High	Low	Supporting interaction between primary activities

Table 1: Relations between the primary activities, coordination and control

The second group, control, intelligence and policy, deals with the *adaptation* of the network's identity and strategy. This group of functions attempts to keep the civil-military network aligned with expected developments in its environment (Espejo et al., 1996). The relations between the functions in this group are summarised in Table 2.

<i>Related functions</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>Standardisation</i>	<i>Focus on</i>
Intelligence – Control	Generating finalised proposals for change	Continuous	High	Low	Balancing and integrating proposals and potentials for change
Policy – Intelligence and Control	Balancing contributions by intelligence and control	Continuous	Low	Low	Supporting interaction between intelligence and control
	Consolidating proposals for change	Irregular intervals	Low	Low	(Re)defining the network's identity and strategy

Table 2: Relations between control, intelligence and policy

The two groups are linked by *control*, which forms part of both groups. In the group that is responsible for adapting the civil-military network's identity and strategy, control reviews

proposals for change made by intelligence from the viewpoint of the capacity for change of the primary activities. In the group that focuses on realising the network's identity and strategy, control concentrates on synergy between the primary activities. In the next section we apply the VSM to analyse the viability of civil-military collaboration in the case of operation Allied Harbour (1999).

3. Civil-military cooperation in 'Allied Harbour'

3.1 Background

In the night of March 24 1999 NATO launched the first of a series of intense air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this way NATO aimed at putting a quick stop to the hostilities committed against the Albanian ethnic minority in Kosovo. By the end of the month the Kosovars fled en masse to Albania. The huge influx of refugees posed serious problems for the Albanian government, as a consequence of which the authorities in Tirana formally requested international support to cope with the refugee crisis.

On April 16 the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) commanded the execution of the humanitarian operation *Allied Harbour* and commissioned Lieutenant General John Reith (COMAFOR) to command the international NATO forces in Albania (AFOR). Initially, AFOR included 7,300 militaries from Belgium, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States. (Apart from these NATO member states, the governments of Austria, Saudi-Arabia and the United Arab Emirates decided bilaterally to send military contingents for humanitarian support).

In his mission COMAFOR emphasised the need for full cooperation between the military and civilian actors in order to achieve the humanitarian goals of the operation. This emphasis on civil-military cooperation was in accordance with current NATO CIMIC policy. However, by the time AFOR was fully operational, the **Emergency Management Group (EMG)** had already been established as the main platform for the management and coordination of the humanitarian aid in Albania. Instead of establishing military-led CIMIC centres, COMAFOR decided to attach his CIMIC officers to the EMG.

The EMG can be seen as the facilitator of the cooperation between the various civilian and military organisations involved in the humanitarian operation Allied Harbour. In terms of the VSM it can be said that the EMG focused on the primary activities of the civil-military network as a whole, i.e. the first level of recursion. The EMG facilitated viable civil-military cooperation in order to realise and adapt the civil-military network's identity and strategy to the changing demands and supplies for help.

In order for the EMG to facilitate viable civil-military cooperation, it had to be clear about the primary activities of the civil-military network as a whole. The EMG divided the humanitarian operation into four separate stages: reception, accommodation, repatriation, and rehabilitation of affected area.

We assume these stages to be the primary activities of the network as a whole.

Reception.

As a direct consequence of a humanitarian emergency people take refuge in neighbouring countries. During this stage the authorities of the so-called host countries are faced with problems due to the 'registration and reception' of the refugees. In order to be able to receive the refugees, the host country's government and the NGOs present may apply for additional military support to the United Nations and international governments.

Accommodation.

Often the facilities in the host country may not suffice to accommodate large numbers of refugees over an indefinite period of time. During this stage the provision of additional 'shel-

ter, infrastructure and community services' is necessary in order to realise acceptable living conditions.

Repatriation.

When peace and quiet in their home country are restored the refugees are expected to repatriate. During this stage the authorities of the host country and the UN-aid organisations are concerned that repatriation take place in an 'orderly and protected way'.

Rehabilitation of affected area.

Governments of host countries attach great importance to the outcomes of this last stage of the humanitarian operation. During this stage the emphasis lies on the 'assessment and the compensation of the damage' the host country may have suffered on account of the reception, accommodation and repatriation of the refugees.

3.2 Purpose

In order to assess the viability of civil-military collaboration in the case of operation Allied Harbour the following subsections explore the viability of each of the civil-military networks concerned with reception (subsection 3.3), accommodation (subsection 3.4) and repatriation (subsection 3.5). This is because by September 1 1999, i.e. before the stage of rehabilitation had set in, AFOR's mission had terminated. During the fourth stage of the humanitarian operation NATO militaries were no longer involved in civil-military cooperation processes.

We investigate the extent to which the five functions of the VSM and the relations between them account for viable civil-military cooperation in Allied Harbour. We base ourselves on the experiences of both AFOR militaries and civilian actors regarding their collaboration during operation Allied Harbour. These experiences were collected by means of open interviews with 23 respondents (AFOR- 8; UNHCR- 2; UNICEF- 1; OCSE- 2; NGOs- 4 and representatives of the Albanian government- 3) in Albania in July 1999 (Bollen, 2002).²

Table 3 (overleaf, on page 38) presents an overview of the primary activities that can be identified within the stage of reception, accommodation and repatriation of operation Allied Harbour. It is worth noting that we only pay attention to the primary activities by civilian and military actors that were carried out in unison. The primary activities performed by either the military or the civilian actors of their own accord will not be assessed in terms of their viability (see the dark grey-coloured boxes in Table 3).

3.3 Civil-military cooperation during reception

In this subsection we explore the viability of civil-military cooperation in the network concerned with reception. To this purpose we interpret the opinions of civilian and the military concerning their collaboration for each of the five functions of the VSM.

Function 1: primary activities

During reception we distinguish the following collection of primary activities: transport of refugees, transport of food and non-food, construction, and camp management (see Table 3, overleaf on page 38). This collection of primary activities constitutes function 1 of the viable system 'reception'.

Transport of refugees

- (Civilian) Co-ordinator UNICEF:
UNICEF has cooperated with AFOR on logistics and transport of refugees. Especially with the Dutch unit in Durres.
- (Military) Chief of Staff Dutch-Belgian CJTF-R:
We accompanied convoys of refugees from Kukes in the north of the country to the camps in the south.

Primary Activities	Reception	Accommodation	Repatriation
<i>Safety and protection</i>	+ (host country)	+ (host country)	-- (host country)
<i>Registration refugees</i>	+ (UNHCR)	+ (UNHCR)	+ (UNHCR)
<i>Transport refugees</i>	+ (UNHCR, bilateral / AFOR militaries)	+/-- (UNHCR, AFOR)	Organised: + (UNHCR, AFOR)
			Unorganised: + (NGOs, refugees)
<i>Transport food / non-food</i>	+ (WFP, ICRC bilateral / AFOR militaries)	+ (WFP, ICRC bilateral / AFOR militaries)	Organised: -- (WFP)
			Unorganised
<i>Construction</i> (e.g. roadwork, infrastructure, refugee camps)	+ (UNHCR, UNICEF, bilateral/AFOR militaries)	+/-- (UNHCR, UNICEF, bilateral / AFOR militaries)	Not relevant (residue caseload winterisation)
<i>Camp management</i> (e.g. health, education, community needs)	+ (NGOs, WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, bilateral / AFOR militaries)	+ (NGOs, WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, bilateral / AFOR militaries)	+ (NGOs, WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, bilateral militaries)

Table 3: Overview of primary activities in the stages reception, accommodation and repatriation of operation ‘Allied Harbour’

- + Task was performed during primary activity
- Task was not performed during primary activity
- +/-- Task performance gradually declined

Organised repatriation took place under the auspices of UNHCR and was protected by AFOR. Unorganised repatriation occurred when the refugees left the host country on their own initiative.

Transport of food and non-food

- (Civilian) Logistical officer WFP:
WFP puts in requests for logistical support at the EMG-logistical desk. They check with AFOR if it can be done ... We got a lot of cooperation from the Dutch army. They were the most present AFOR partners. They participated in Durres in daily meetings. They gave out locations for transport. The Dutch army gave us the largest military support.
- (Military) Transport co-ordinator Dutch-Belgian CJTF –R:
WFP is our main customer. From April 23 we have transported 3,000 tons of relief goods. The warehouses all over the country have been stocked. Contacts with WFP have run smoothly. Every other day we have a meeting on transport activities.

Construction

- (Civilian) Co-ordinator UNICEF:
To increase the shelter capacity the military have been necessary ... At first the camps built by the military were unacceptable. We expected the refugees to stay for over a year. Those camps would not do at all.
- (Civilian) Relief worker IMC:
Because the NGOs were not present at the beginning there was a need for military assistance in setting up refugee camps. They don't have the knowledge of setting up camps for refugees. They have no sense of community needs or refugees' needs. They build great long lines of tents, which prohibits any community spirit at all.

Camp management

- (Civilian) Relief worker Merlin:
The NGO I work for has been mainly involved with medical work in the camps ... I have been working with the US army in the camps. They were good at camp construction and logistical support ... The army wanted much higher standards of medical services. They provided for doctors 24 hours a day. In this part of the world that is unheard of. It was simply not necessary. Whenever you don't agree with the military they will try to force their opinion.

In each of the primary activities during reception civil-military cooperation occurred. In the primary activities of transport of refugees and of food and non-food both civilian and military partners agreed that the collaboration was to their mutual benefit. In the primary activities of construction and camp management some problems occurred.

In construction, initially, standards about the layout of refugee camps were not available to the military. As a result, the first camps were not adequate to shelter refugees over an extended period of time. According to representatives of UNICEF and UNHCR, as soon as their organisations provided the military with standards on the layout of refugee camps, the military followed these standards accurately. In other words, the necessary coordination took place on the level of the primary activities itself. As for the militaries' involvement in camp management, civilian relief workers felt the military lacked the necessary humanitarian expertise. Amongst others this became manifest in the military view on health care that exceeded the refugees' needs.

Function 2: Coordination

During reception the primary activities depend on shared resources. Whereas it is to be expected that interdependence will be especially high between the primary activities transport of refugees and of food/non-food, during reception each of the primary activities had to cope with the resources that were allocated to them. For this reason, potential problems with regard to sharing mutual resources were not experienced at this time by the civilian and military partners. They focused on performing their 'own' primary activity in the field. However, at

another level, i.e. the civil-military network concerned with reception, perceptions with regard to coordination differ.

- (Military) Liaison Officer and security officer for the OCSE:
Coordination between actors within the EMG was difficult. We did not know the location of the camps; neither were we aware of the exact numbers of refugees in the camps. The exchange of information between the aid organisations was troublesome.

We conclude that, whereas the primary activities in the field can be considered viable, the viability of the civil-military network concerned with reception was endangered by the lack of information needed for coordinating interdependent primary activities.

Function 3: Control

Control aims at the creation of synergy between the different primary activities. This means that control translates the goals of the civil-military network concerned with reception into targets for the primary activities and monitors the realisation of these targets. During reception the goal of the civil-military network was to provide approximately 250,000 refugees with instant relief. However, as the following opinions will make clear, this goal was not translated, in terms of direct commands, into operational targets for the primary activities. Therefore, shared operational targets were not available.

- (Civilian) Co-ordinator for the OCSE in the HIC:
At the beginning we needed camps fast. However, the completion date of the camps built by bilateral troops was never met. There was too much luxurious Western-European refugee relief. That is why everything took so long. In the beginning, help was too limited and too fragmented. There was no cooperation.
- (Military) UK CIMIC-officer:
I am with the EMG logistical and transport desk ... We have roadwork going on, but individual NGOs ask for connection roads between the highway and their camps, of which there are hundreds. They have no priority.

Without operational targets, the primary activities are operating almost fully autonomously. Thus, cohesion between them is hard to achieve. Synergy cannot develop, which in its turn may lead to sub-optimisation. Furthermore, from the first quotation above, it can be concluded that standards for coordination of the primary activities, the second instrument of control, were also lacking.

Moreover, the exchange of information from the humanitarian field to the control function, the so-called direct reports, was seriously impeded.

- (Military) German CIMIC-officer assigned to the HIC:
I have tried to develop a database based on the information about what was brought into the country by whom. This has been very difficult because you can't command the NGOs to deliver information. They just don't report and are accountable to no one.

The third instrument of control is the auditing of the management of the primary activities in order to become aware of the problems the primary activities face and help to solve them. According to the chairman of the HIC, also a member of the EMG, audits during reception pointed at the following problems:

- *There was friction with humanitarian workers ... in places where the military set up their own camps. Security was too strict in the Austrian camp. They were not letting anybody in or out. Other camps were too modern. These people don't need round the clock military field hospitals. They are not used to that at home ...*

- *AFOR should have been clearer about the total mileage of road works they were going to construct. The road from Kukes to Tirana is not improved as much as they promised and the road from Durres to Tirana has not been started on yet.*

Although aware of the problems, control could not help to solve them. Apparently, it did not command the means to solve these interorganisational problems.

Finally, within AFOR some of the military were convinced they did not possess all the resources needed to cope with the reception of the refugees effectively:

- (Military) Transport co-ordinator Dutch Belgian CJTF-R:
I think we are more of a combat unit than a humanitarian unit. Everybody is very much involved. But a humanitarian mission should consist of other resources. Instead of a battalion of Belgian Paratroopers we should have had three transport companies at our disposal... Now, only 120 soldiers on a total of 1,500 soldiers are available for humanitarian tasks.

This last quote points to the absence of an assessment of the demands for military assistance prior to the mission. This is confirmed by other Dutch militaries assigned to CJTF-R. As a result, during reception the control function was confronted with a goal that was not clearly defined, a lack of authority and information to command the primary activities and a shortage of adequate resources. We conclude that control could only contribute in a limited way to viable civil-military cooperation during reception.

Function 4: Intelligence

In order to be viable the civil-military network needs to be able to adapt to changing circumstances. Intelligence scans the environment of the civil-military network for relevant developments and to initiate adaptation in such a way that the primary activities stay aligned with them. Probably because of a lack of experience with humanitarian operations on this scale and scope, intelligence appears not to have been functioning effectively both at the level of the civil-military network as a whole and at the level of the primary activity construction.

- (Civilian) Co-ordinator of the OCSE at the HIC:
Everybody was overcome by the rapid developments with regard to the influx of Kosovars into Albania.
- (Military) German CIMIC-officer assigned to the HIC:
You could tell by the refugee camps that were constructed by the military without consulting the relief organisations first. There was too much luxury. The inhabitants of the camps could dispose of water and electricity, whereas the local population could not. As a consequence, the local Albanians' attitude towards the refugees turned aggressive. The military were not able to anticipate on these hostile feelings.

Function 5: Policy

Policy has the tasks of co-ordinating the interaction between control and intelligence and consolidating its results in a (re)definition of the identity and strategy of the civil-military network. From the above it has become clear that both control and intelligence could only make relatively small contributions to the viability of the civil-military network concerned with reception. Therefore, it can be expected that the amount of coordination of the interaction between both functions for viability has been limited. As a result, according to the military liaison-officer for the OCSE, the EMG was not able to perform its functions with regard to crisis management:

There were three goals to be met. Firstly, the EMG was supposed to manage the crisis... Secondly, the EMG was supposed to coordinate the activities of the aid-organisations and

thirdly the EMG had to provide a platform where representatives of the host country government, donors, the military and the aid organisations could meet. Only with regard to achieving this last goal, can the EMG be considered to have operated successfully.

3.4 Civil-military cooperation during accommodation

Accommodation began by the end of April 1999. The numbers of refugees had stabilised, shelter had been provided and the civil-military network concerned with accommodation was getting used to the crisis conditions. In this subsection we explore the viability of civil-military cooperation in the network concerned with accommodation. Again, we interpret the opinions of civilians and the military concerning their collaboration for each of the five functions of the VSM.

Function 1: primary activities

During accommodation the collection of primary activities in which civilian actors and the military cooperate is essentially the same as during reception (see table 3). In order to explore the viability of the civil-military network concerned with accommodation, we look whether changes have occurred in the opinions of the military and civilian partners with regard to their cooperation.

Transport of refugees and (camp) construction

- (Military) CIMIC-officer at CJTF-R:
Once the refugee camps were built and after we relocated the refugees from Kukes to the camps we had to beg for work with the aid-agencies. They were not desperate for our assistance any longer.

Transport food and non-food

No changes occurred.

Construction

Most camps had been completed by now and the attention was shifting towards road construction and the improvement of the harbour and airport facilities.

- (Military) Canadian CIMIC officer:
The aid-organisations did not fully get what they asked for. They wanted far more engineers. NATO nations, however, are very stretched for these specialists. The pool is shallow... Our intent is to continue engineer support to Kukes road. The problem is, all is well for NATO to say, "we will do this", but individual nations can pull out any time they want.

Camp management

- (Civilian) UNICEF:
The Dutch army in Durres designed playground materials. They went into town and got them made. I'm sure that if the refugees had stayed during winter many more projects like that would have been done. When they see the impact on refugees soldiers come up with very good ideas.

As in reception, in each of the primary activities during accommodation civil-military cooperation occurred. By now, the NATO military force was fully operational. At the same time, the number of civilian aid organisations present in the host country had increased drastically. Donors had provided these aid organisations with financial funding. The acute emergency situation had been dealt with. As a result, many civilian aid organisations felt they were able to cope with the demands for help without the need for military assistance. Secondly, it appeared that the military were not fully prepared for the changes in the demands for help. The demands had shifted from a need for 'hands' to a need for specialist know-how and expertise (e.g. engineering and transport). As a result, some of the military commanders were

faced with the problem of keeping their men and women occupied. Extending help to the Albanian population was sometimes regarded as a solution to this management problem:

- (Military) CIMIC-officer Dutch-Belgian CJTF-R:
Suddenly you are faced with the problem of finding work for 1,500 men and women... From the beginning, the attention has been focused on the refugees. The local population is in need of practically everything. We need Civic Action money to be able to do something on behalf of the local population. The Dutch military did not have these budgets. With the financial aid from their government, our Belgian colleagues have revised two school buildings, a police station and a gas station. Despite our shortage of funds, we have tried to be of assistance on a smaller scale.

We conclude that some of the militaries in the civil-military network concerned with accommodation turned to other activities outside the network, instead of the (primary) activities they had come for in the first place.

Function 2: coordination

During accommodation the primary activities still depended on shared resources. During this stage the transport capacity needed for the refugees gradually declined. From now on this capacity would be used on behalf of the primary activity 'transport of food/non-food'. As mentioned above, due to the changes in the demands for help, civilian aid organisations were now in need of specialist military support. However, AFOR could mostly dispose of large numbers of infantry and cavalry unable to fill the need for engineering and transport:

In accommodation, the mutual perceptions about the partners' cooperative behaviour were beginning to diverge. According to, the civilian aid workers the military were unable to fulfil their specific demands.

- (Civilian) Logistical officer WFP:
The army is for free, but the negative side is: you get no commitment, therefore, there is no reliability. They are bureaucratic, cannot change their planning fast enough if reality dictates changes; the destination to Kukes was very difficult because of the state of the roads. They bring along lots of troops, but they don't bring all the assets needed.
- (Civilian) aid-worker International Medical Corps:
We did not need 7,500 troops. We needed 500 engineers and 500 transporters.

The military, on the other hand, complained about the lack of understanding of their civilian counterparts:

- (Military) U.K. CIMIC-officer:
We have lots of infantry and cavalry available. They have helped building camps, schools and playgrounds. Now the demand is for engineers and chauffeurs, but those types of units are overstretched already. NGOs don't understand there are limits.
- (Military) U.K. CIMIC-officer:
Over 90% of the logistical requests was met. We offered contracts for the rest, but that would not do. People remember the 10% and they complain.

We conclude that the lack of a common language and a collective vision on civil-military cooperation during the humanitarian operation now begins to make itself felt. As a result mutual irritation and frustration between civilians and the military emerge.

Function 3: control

During reception the information exchange between control and the actors in the field, by means of direct commands and direct reports, hardly developed. Essentially, everybody in the field was concerned with performing their own primary activity in their own way. During

reception this lack of information sharing did not yet hinder the parties from carrying out their primary tasks. During accommodation, however, the absence of information led to problems in the coordination of demands and supplies for humanitarian aid.

- (Civilian) Authority of host country:

We wanted to build databases about the distribution of refugees over the country on behalf of local authorities. Also we wanted to have databases for customs to balance the needs and offer of humanitarian aid brought into Albania and databases about the way in which the aid was distributed over the country. It has not worked well, because it was difficult to get the information needed from the different organisations.

Moreover, after the emergency situation had been dealt with, the lack of shared goals and conflicting motives between the partner organisations became apparent at another level of the civil-military network: within the EMG.

- (Civilian) Authority of host country:

The main problem within the EMG is the management of the different cultures between the aid organisations. Getting the organisations to share the information between them was next to impossible.

Instead of paying attention to improving the cooperation within the primary activities, the attention of control now shifted to improving efficiency of (secondary) processes that could be controlled more easily.

- (Military) U.K. CIMIC-officer:

On the initiative of UNHCR and the Albanian government we have expanded the port. Until AFOR came in one to two ships a day could be handled. With our support this is now up to four to five ships a day.

- (Military) Dutch transport coordinator:

Loading and unloading cargo in the harbour caused us major headaches. The Albanian bureaucracy had a crippling effect. We proposed some measures to improve the efficiency. Now things are running more smoothly.

Function 4 & 5: intelligence and policy

As in reception, intelligence and policy did not contribute to the civil-military network concerned with accommodation. As a consequence, changes in the environment could not be anticipated. They were only noticed when they actually occurred. For as soon as Kosovo-Force (KFOR) declared parts of Kosovo to be a safe place to return to, almost overnight the refugees embarked on their spontaneous repatriation. Confronted with large numbers of repatriates, the authorities of the host-country and UNHCR had to decide quickly on a plan for organised repatriation.

3.5 Civil-military cooperation during repatriation

By the end of June 1999 rumour had it that Kosovo was a safe place to return to. As a result, many Kosovar refugees gathered their possessions in order to return to their homeland as soon as possible. Amongst them there were many that decided to rent their own transport. Having arrived in Albania bereft of all their goods, the refugees wanted to take along the aid contributions they had received. Sometimes relief workers in the camps supported the refugees on their journey back home. At the same time, however, the Albanian authorities and UN-aid organisations attached great importance to an organised repatriation. Otherwise, the safety of the returning refugees and those staying behind in the camps could not be guaranteed. Besides, the Albanian government had planned on keeping some of the humanitarian goods such as machinery, generators and hospital appliances for the use of the Albanian people.

Function 1: primary activities

During repatriation we identified only one primary activity in which civilian actors and the military collaborated: transport of refugees (Table 3).

Transport of refugees

On request of the Albanian government the CIMIC officer assigned to the EMG transport and logistical desk was heavily involved in organising plans for repatriation. According to both representatives of UNHCR and the Albanian Ministry of Transport civil-military cooperation during planning was successful:

- (Civilian) UNHCR logistical officer:
In repatriation it has been very useful to have military planning capacity. That saved us a lot of work.
- (Civilian) host-country:
In the repatriation cell within the EMG AFOR has been helping UNHCR. We produced a repatriation plan together with UNHCR and AFOR. Cooperation with AFOR has been very successful. Together we handled 400,000 refugees and we are still handling them back to Kosovo.

However, not all the civilian actors agreed upon the success and the effectiveness of the civil-military cooperation during repatriation. For instance, representatives of the WFP, who were dependent on military support in order to distribute their food supplies, felt they were thwarted in achieving their humanitarian goals by the priority AFOR extended to organised repatriation.

- (Civilian) Coordinator WFP branch office Tirana:
Instead of keeping to supporting functions only, AFOR is also in the policy-making function. AFOR takes over responsibilities from UNHCR. UNHCR were planning in the government for voluntary repatriation, but AFOR had already set up a logistical plan. They just took the initiative away from UNHCR. There is no consistency in promoting voluntary organised repatriation of only 600 people a day, whereas 15,000 a day are already repatriating spontaneously.
- (Civilian) Logistical officer for the WFP:
In the beginning AFOR gave a lot of help. Ever since organised repatriation has started, however, they have rejected many requests for transport capacity. So now we are getting trouble with our feeding pipeline into Kukes. I don't understand why AFOR is this pigheaded. They have the capacity for moving 3,000 people a day. They are only moving 800. That means they have capacity to spare for food transports. But they want to stick to their planning of repatriation, even though their trucks are empty.

Function 2: coordination

By now, the use of transport as a shared resource had become a major problem. Civilian actors that were involved in other primary activities than transport of refugees, felt they were hardly supported by the military at all. According to these actors, the military had prematurely disengaged themselves from the alliance, whereas the need for additional military assistance was still high.

The problems concerning the use of shared resources were not solved. In the beginning of September 1999 AFOR's mission was formally terminated. According to some of the military this was too soon as there still seemed quite a lot of work to do.

- (Military) Canadian CIMIC officer AFOR-HQ:
Now the civilians have a problem, because they do not know what is going to happen next. We do not have the answers. Our mission has run out. There is no definition yet about a next mission.

- (Civilian) UNHCR logistical officer:
UNHCR has a rehabilitation responsibility. But that also regards civil-military co-operation. There is a need for military security; a merging of civil development and peace support, because peace is very fragile here. It can break down at local level by accident or by economic problems. We should find a NATO presence with another mandate.

4. Assessing viability of civil-military cooperation

In this section we use the VSM to assess the viability of civil-military collaboration in operation Allied Harbour, on the basis of the empirical material discussed in section three. Firstly, we assess the viability of the group of functions that support the *adaptation* of the civil-military network. Subsequently, we will determine the viability of functions that support the *realisation* of the identity and strategy of the civil-military network.

The group of functions that support the adaptation of the identity and strategy of the civil-military network consists of policy, intelligence, and control. To keep the civil-military network aligned with relevant developments in its environment, intelligence and control generate proposals for innovations that redefine the network's current identity and strategy. Policy should facilitate and balance the interaction between intelligence and control and, finally, consolidate its results in plans for innovation

As our empirical data show, during the stages reception, accommodation and repatriation of operation Allied Harbour the functions concerned with adaptation were hardly performed by the civil-military network in any of the different stages (reception, accommodation and repatriation). At the same time, however, our data also make clear that the need to perform these functions did indeed exist. In the beginning, the partners neglected to form a collective identity and strategy for the civil-military network. A subsequent collective approach to the crisis was not developed. Without a collective identity and strategy it is difficult –even impossible– to scan the environment for relevant developments that might necessitate a redefinition of that identity and strategy of the civil-military network. As a result, the civilian and military partners could only run behind the environmental developments. Ultimately, the Kosovar refugees demonstrated their own skills in crisis management by organising their own repatriation before the civil-military network was able to plan for their journey back home.

Secondly, the group of functions supporting the realisation of the identity and strategy of the civil-military are control, coordination and the primary activities. The primary activities realise the (operational) goals derived from the civil-military identity and strategy. Coordination attempts to solve problems due to interdependent primary activities. To realise the identity and strategy of the civil-military network, control aims at maintaining the synergy and cohesion between primary activities. Its primary task is to translate the identity and strategy of the civil-military network into operational goals for the primary activities and to monitor and control the realisation.

In the primary activities we identified (transport of refugees, transport of food and non-food, construction and camp management) civil-military cooperation occurred frequently, often to the mutual satisfaction of both sets of partners. Whenever problems occurred, the tendency was to find solutions at the level of the primary activity itself. However, as our data show, there was hardly any interaction between the different primary activities. Coordination was impeded by the lack of information exchange. Finally, control had the impossible task of deriving operational goals from the civil-military identity and strategy for the primary activities. Impossible, as such an identity and strategy had not been formulated in the first place.

All in all, we conclude that whereas civil-military collaboration did occur, the civil-military network concerned with the stages reception, accommodation and repatriation of the humanitarian operation Allied Harbour was not viable. During operation Allied Harbour, the complexity was not distributed among the participants of the civil-military network. As a consequence, it was distributed among the participants of a collection of autonomous primary activities. At this level civilian and military partners had to cope with the complexity on their own.

5. Summary and conclusion

In this paper we set out to assess the viability of civil-military collaboration in the case of the operation 'Allied Harbour' (1999). To this end we used the Viable System Model developed by Stafford Beer as a template.

We conclude that civil-military collaboration in operation Allied Harbour did indeed occur during the stages reception, accommodation and repatriation. However, the civil-military network was not viable. During operation Allied Harbour, the complexity could not be distributed among the participants of the civil-military network. As a consequence, it was distributed among the participants of a collection of autonomous primary activities. At this level civilian and military partners had to cope with the complexity on their own.

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Notes

¹ Section 2 is based on Achterbergh, Beeres and Vriens (2003).

² These data were gathered to describe 'the ways in which collaboration processes [between civilians and the military in the case of Operation Allied Harbour] developed, the ways in which the unfamiliarity and the differences between the partners affected the alliances and the problems with regard to civil-military cooperation that were encountered' (Bollen, 2002: 248). The statements in the sections 3.3 – 3.5 are quotes (in italics) from these interviews.