

**Strategic Planning
for United Nations
Peacebuilding Operations**

by

**Donald M. Kennedy
B. Eng., Civil Engineering,
Royal Military College of Canada, 1972**

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**School of Urban and Regional Planning
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban planning and warfare are related. The destruction wrought by military conflict generates the requirement for repair or reconstruction. Some nations have viewed the rebuilding as an opportunity to correct many of the things that were wrong with the previous urban plan. Devastated countries usually require assistance in stimulating the recovery process. Today, it typically becomes the responsibility of the United Nations Security Council to mobilize the resources for nationbuilding.

These UN peacebuilding missions can help relieve suffering and restore a nation's hopes. When the world joined in a crusade to assist Sarajevo in the Spring of 1994, it demonstrated that the UN can plan and coordinate such complex endeavours. However, the premature end of productive implementation after only four months also showed that, for continued success, all warring factions must support the intentions of the restoration plan. The Bosnian Serbs brought the mission to a halt because they had a political agenda that was not satisfied by the humanitarian aims of nationbuilding. Perhaps the UN misread the Serbs or perhaps the risk was necessary in order to take advantage of an opportunity. In either case, the strategic planning process for Sarajevo could have been improved to avoid the dislocation of the implementation phase. While future conflicts will not involve exactly the same circumstances as Sarajevo, a baseline strategic planning model is required that can be tailored as required to suit the needs of specific peacebuilding situations. This report provides a recommended model, as well as, measures that can be taken to adapt it for each mission.

Planning has many manifestations. In order to describe the models and approaches suited to UN nationbuilding, it is necessary to determine how strategic planning relates to the generic planning function within the confines of the overall management process. Having established these relationships, the components of a generic public process, based on the venerable Harvard Model (circa 1920) are described in order to lay the foundation for a templating exercise involving the case study situation - Sarajevo.

Sarajevo represents the most recent and complex UN attempt at peacebuilding. The UN assessment of the conflict and action plan for restoring essential services in the city indicate that some form of strategic planning was involved in the deliberations. Yet,

it can be shown that the planning process was not thorough, and the baseline conditions were not sufficiently stable for the introduction of the action plan for the city's restoration.

As a result of the analysis of the Sarajevo case study in the context of a generic public planning process, it can be concluded that the following baseline conditions are needed:

There must be both a military and political agreement between the warring factions before plan implementation can be effected.

The plan must contain a "strategy of consequence" to ensure the combatants honour their original commitments to peace.

The UN must remain totally unbiased in all its dealings in order to establish and maintain its credibility with the stakeholders.

The UN must allow its planners at all levels the flexibility to use innovative planning approaches and organizational structures that promote a creative planning environment.

The main recommendations of the report are:

The Bryson strategic planning model provides a suitable foundation for adaptation with other creative approaches.

Each organizational level in the hierarchy should conduct some form of strategic/operational planning. The degree of strategic or technical content will vary on a sliding scale depending on where in the hierarchy the planning team is. The higher the level, the greater the degree of strategic content. The guiding principle is that all plans must be coherent in relation to one another.

The selected "plan for planning" must fit into a rationale peacebuilding "plan for managing". No plan can be created in isolation of the other management functions.

The stakeholder analysis should not be curtailed due to the urgent nature of the situation. One might take corner-cutting risks with other complementary analyses, but the stakeholder interests and powers are too potentially disruptive to treat superficially.

The peacebuilding master strategy should be comprised of a package of mutually supporting component strategies, including: communications, stakeholder, financing,

coordination, public relations, programming and implementation strategies. The nationbuilding plan must then be coordinated with the in-theatre peacekeeping and relief missions.

While public participation is extremely important to improve stakeholder commitment, the amount of participation in the process must be balanced with the need to demonstrate physical program successes.

The UN must seek alternative funding solutions. The policy of bilateral donations takes too much control away from the implementing team. The policy also promotes selfish economic interests amongst the donors.

None of the foregoing recommendations will be simple to incorporate in the strategic management process for peacebuilding. Even if they are included, there are no guarantees that they will be effective in every situation. However, if these recommendations are trialled in future nationbuilding operations, then they can be further evaluated and perhaps refined in order to improve the overall process.