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German Foreign Office Training to Prepare Civilian Personnel for International Missions

"(Crisis) Prevention is something new which is based on a new set of values and calls for foresight and pro-active behaviour."¹ Against this background, it is a welcome development that the German federal government made crisis prevention a significant undertaking in their coalition agreement of 20 October 1998. In addition to the strengthening of the OSCE and the United Nations, "providing financial support for peace and conflict research, and creating networks for already existing initiatives", especially "the improvement of legal, financial and organizational prerequisites for the training and deployment of professionals and services to sustain peace (...)" are mentioned.² The topical nature of these passages became readily apparent, and are still relevant, during the search for the appropriate personnel for the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) in autumn 1998 when it became clear that there was a lack of qualified personnel in the Federal Republic of Germany. "While thorough and professional training of soldiers, police and diplomats for international missions has been a matter of course, when civilian experts were deployed training was not always realized and when it was it was very incomplete."³ Against this background the German Foreign Office tasked the Foundation for Science and Politics in Ebenhausen (SWP) with performing a feasibility study. This study was to examine the current preparation of non-military personnel in the Federal Republic and other countries for deployment in conflict prevention and peace missions and make the appropriate recommendations. The results of the first phase of this project appeared in the spring of 1999 and can be summarized essentially in the following six points:⁴

- 1 Ludger Volmer, Crisis Prevention in Europe and the Strengthening of the OSCE, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1999, Baden-Baden 2000, pp. 41-48, here: p. 48.
- 2 Aufbruch und Erneuerung - Deutschlands Weg ins 21. Jahrhundert. Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen [Departure and Renewal - Germany's Course into the 21st Century. Coalition Agreement between the Social Democratic Party of Germany and the Alliance 90/The Greens], Bonn, 20 October 1998, Chap. XI.5, pp. 57-58 (all quotations from German sources are translations).
- 3 Ludger Volmer, Vorwort [Foreword], in: Auswärtiges Amt [Foreign Office] (Ed.), Ausbildung für internationale Einsätze [Training for Deployment in International Missions], Bonn 1999, p. 7.
- 4 Cf. Winrich Kühne/Monika Benkler, Ausbildung und Rekrutierung von nicht-militärischem Personal für Konfliktprävention und Friedenseinsätze: Bestandsaufnahme, Erfahrungen und Empfehlungen für einen substantiellen Beitrag der Bundesrepublik Deutschland [Training and Recruitment of Non-Military Personnel for Conflict Prevention and Peace Missions: Stocktaking, Experiences and Recommendations for a Significant Contribution by the Federal Republic of Germany], Ebenhausen 1999.

1. For many years there have been broad and differentiated training programmes in Germany offered to military and civilian personnel for peace missions. The Federal Armed Forces hold their mission preparatory courses in the UN Training Centre at the Infantry School in Hammelburg established in 1994, the Verification Centre in Geilenkirchen as well as the German Armed Forces Staff College in Hamburg. Likewise since 1994 the "Carl Severing" Police Training Centre in Münster, an institution of the German Land North Rhine-Westphalia, developed concepts for the international deployment of law enforcement officers. In the civilian area, the THW (*Bundesanstalt Technisches Hilfswerk*, German governmental disaster relief organization), the study group "Project on Training for Civilian Conflict Management" - an establishment of German NGOs, the DED (German Development Service) and the GTZ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, German service company in international development co-operation) are active using their own concepts.
2. All mission training programmes include a well-founded basic section, a section for additional training and a course oriented to each specific mission. Programme length varies from one week (THW) to 16 weeks (NGOs).
3. The focus of all training programmes is very similar. Preparatory modules allow setting focal points, which because of the variety of the functions of civilian personnel in peace missions and peace-building activities are to be structured in a flexible and variable manner.
4. Personnel selected for missions should be motivated, socially stable and qualified professionals capable of fulfilling the demands made on them. The curriculum offers instructors as well as trainees the opportunity to assess whether it would make sense for an applicant to take part in an international mission. In addition, close co-operation between the military, police and civilian personnel (integrated approach) is required to eliminate communications problems and the lack of mutual understanding at the conflict location.
5. A multi-national group of course participants and lecturers is desirable as this would strengthen expertise in cross-cultural communication and simultaneously offer a praxis field. The lecturers should also be specialists from an academic background and have detailed knowledge of the mission environment. Practical relevance through training in small groups is desirable. In this manner, course participants will be able to combine theoretical reflection with practical exercises through participatory learning.
6. Finally references are made to the importance of mission advisory services (contact points) and debriefings without which it would be impossible to deploy civilian personnel in international missions. In addition, it was recommended that these measures be accompanied by a project

group, which backs the Foreign Office in an advisory function and whose composition reflects the "public-private partnership". Public-private partnership means the co-operation on an equal basis between organizations from the public sector (German Armed Forces, Police, Federal Border Guard, Foreign Office, THW, autonomous institutions maintained by the state like DED and GTZ) and private organizations akin to institutions managed by civil society (non-governmental organizations, church services).⁵

The SWP study continues by specifying the requirements and skills in the training and preparation of civilian personnel for deployment in peace missions:⁶

- general skills (basic courses),
- skills specific to a mission,
- professional skills (e.g. specialized courses on election monitoring, on human rights).

These recommendations have been utilized in the conceptional structuring of the preparatory programme and the various courses as well as the curricula.

The Courses and Course Types

On 1 July 1999 the Co-ordinator of Training to Prepare Civilian Personnel for International Missions began his work. Based on the recommendations in the SWP feasibility study and in accordance with future tasks the training programme is geared to deployment in OSCE and UN international peace missions. In addition to mission preparation, the courses serve the goal of the Foreign Office to build up a personnel reserve of qualified experts who, if the occasion arises, will be able to be ready for deployment at short notice. Consequently the number of courses and participants between July 1999 and June 2000 was correspondingly high.

There were a total of 227 participants⁷ in 13 one- and two-week courses preparing them for future tasks. These 13 courses were divided into:

- three basic courses,
- three courses on specific missions,
- three specialized courses on election monitoring,
- a two-day Duma election-monitoring course,

5 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 26.

6 Cf. *ibid.*, Part C. Anforderungen und Kompetenzen für die Ausbildung und Einsatzvorbereitung von nicht-militärischem Personal [Requirements and Skills in the Training and Preparation of Non-Military Personnel for Mission Deployment], pp. 31ff.

7 121 women and 106 men.

- a two-day preparation for a special operation (system of registration) in the UN mission in East Timor.

Moreover, two so-called pilot courses were held. The first took place from 19 to 30 July 1999 and marked the start of the Foreign Office training programme. Because of the special requirements of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which required personnel on such short notice, this course was conceived as a mixture of a basic course as well as a course on a specific mission. Another pilot project was a two-week EU basic course in English, which was held in co-operation with the course on "Humanitarian Assistance" at Ruhr-University Bochum. With the EU activities in non-military crisis management in mind, this course including students from all EU member states was the first effort towards the creation of a personnel reserve of qualified professionals at the European level.

In accordance with the three-stage preparatory concept an attempt was made to guarantee the most comprehensive training by giving the participants the opportunity to take part in the various course types on offer. The focus here was on participation in both a basic course and a course on a specific mission. For political reasons (Kosovo, Timor), during the first six months of the preparatory programme, courses on specific missions had to be implemented to cover UN and OSCE personnel requirements at short notice. Since the beginning of the year 2000, courses that build on and supplement each other have been put into practice on an increasing basis. This means that basic courses usually are to be followed by specialized or mission courses. Accordingly, up until the summer of 2000, 18 people had participated in two different courses. The plan was to increase this number steadily.

Applicants and Course Participants

By the end of June 2000 there were 1,532 applicants⁸ on the Co-ordinators list, who in principle were classified as acceptable candidates for the course based on their applications. The number of applicants up to then who had submitted written applications was about three times as high. Statistics on telephone enquiries have not been recorded but the latter also go into the thousands. Important information for applicants can be found in the brochure published by the German Foreign Office⁹ as well as at the Foreign Office homepage (www.auswaertiges-amt.de) which has been accessed several thousand times since the end of 1999. Very often intensive, and on the whole positive, media coverage has been the reason for submitting an application.

8 541 women and 991 men.

9 Ausbildung für internationale Einsätze - Informationen des Auswärtigen Amtes [Training for International Missions - Information from the Foreign Office], Berlin 1999.

The course participants are chosen by the Co-ordinator's Office in consultation with specialized departments at the Foreign Office according to the following criteria:

- vocational qualifications and/or a university degree,
- on-the-job experience,
- foreign language (written and spoken English and if possible a relevant language from the region where they will be active),
- relevant international experience and specialized knowledge of the region,
- capability and willingness to work with a team made up of many nationalities,
- physical and mental resilience,
- driver's licence,
- availability.

During the two-week courses, the Co-ordinator's Office and, *inter alia*, the lecturers use their observations and personal discussions to determine whether the participants fulfil the above requirements adequately. In addition, when participants apply, they are interviewed for each specific international mission.

During the reporting period, 207 German participants took part in the various preparatory courses being offered. In principle, course size should be around 20 people. 64 people took part in the three basic courses, 62 people took part in the three mission courses and 61 people took part in the specialized courses. 18 people took part in more than one course.

In the selection of course participants, the ages as well as the personal backgrounds of the applicants are taken into consideration so that the class composition is a "good mixture". The range of educational and professional qualifications is correspondingly large. Around two thirds of the applicants are political scientists and jurists, making up the largest single group. Around a third of the applicants have two different degrees or have a doctoral degree. A large number of the applicants, especially the younger ones, have had experience in a foreign country, which, *inter alia*, has been acquired through additional degrees or a study year abroad. The average age of the participants is between 35 and 40, which is due, among other things, to the rising number of employees in public service and retired officials (including soldiers).

A positive secondary effect of the courses is the emergence of a feeling of solidarity among the participants and later among mission members. The intensive counselling given to course participants and former course participants by the Co-ordinator's Office has led to the emergence of a kind of *esprit de corps*, which was found to be particularly useful during international missions.

The Co-ordinator and his Office are involved in setting up a qualified personnel reserve, which the Foreign Office can fall back on - if necessary at short notice - to satisfy the personnel requirements of international organizations such as the OSCE, the UN or other organizations. Because of the abundance of (overwhelmingly new) tasks and the huge number of courses (an average of one per month until June 2000) it would be a good idea if the number of personnel in the Co-ordinator's Office were increased.

By the end of June 2000, there were 33 participants¹⁰ deployed in OSCE missions and at least 13 more in UN missions (plus three United Nations Volunteers). 55 course participants were deployed in election-monitoring missions.¹¹ An increasing number of course graduates have found work in NGOs or political foundations (e.g. FES, Care, ASB).¹² Therefore, because many course participants have found work, one can assume that only around a fourth of the total (approximately 50 people) will be available at short notice for a long-term mission.

Curriculum and Staff

All courses are based on a module concept, i.e. the relevant course modules are compiled according to course type and mission objective, although overlaps are possible and sometimes even necessary. During the reported period the curricula of the various course types were adapted several times to new findings and new demands. This corresponds with the basic concept of keeping the training programme flexible particularly in its initial stages and being able to make the required adjustments whenever necessary and/or setting a focus. In this manner the recommendations of the "Civilian Peace Personnel Project Group" could be incorporated into the curriculum quickly. This also corresponds with the Foreign Office approach, which holds the course programme open in the sense of a "public-private partnership" and allows the experiences and recommendations of civil society to flow into the preparations. In addition, *police and military elements* are incorporated in the preparatory courses. Many missions act in an environment where security is critical with the strong or dominating presence of international military and/or police forces. The police and the German Armed Forces are therefore particularly involved in designing the programme sections on personal security leading simultaneously to the required civilian-military co-operation in the field. Moreover, on the periphery of these courses there are regularly opportunities for encounters with various other actors in missions abroad as

10 Including 14 women.

11 *Inter alia* on the occasion of the municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2000.

12 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung [Friedrich Ebert Foundation], Care-Deutschland e.V. [Care Germany], Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. [Association of Good Samaritans Germany].

well as, *inter alia*, with the participants of the courses of the "Civilian Peace Services" programme.

1. The curriculum of the basic courses is structured so that the participants are first offered basic knowledge and taught capabilities, which are indispensable for any possible deployment in an international peace mission - whether it be from the UN, the OSCE or another international organization. The participants also receive an impression of whether the work in an international peace mission would meet their expectations. In the course of the first twelve months the following curriculum for the basic courses was developed:

- status of civilian crisis prevention and the demands on a foreign policy including the related role of the Foreign Office,
- organization and structure of the UN and the OSCE and their peace missions,
- practical aspects of UN and OSCE missions,
- international humanitarian law,
- human rights and protection of minorities,
- tasks and role of NGOs, public institutions and international organizations in foreign missions,
- expertise in cross-cultural communication including crisis and conflict management,
- stress management,
- gender issues,
- security aspects.

In the interest of conveying general basic knowledge, the basic courses are to focus on theory. The course modules will however - as far as this is possible - be organized so that theoretical units will be alternated with practical units to, on the one hand, guarantee the necessary course dynamics and, on the other, create a connection between theory and praxis.

2. In contrast, the curriculum of the courses for specific missions contain mainly practical and/or praxis- and application-oriented modules, which are backed by *inter alia* role-plays. The curriculum for a Kosovo Mission course for example is compiled including the following modules:

- Balkan history and development of the Kosovo conflict,
- customs and traditions in Kosovo,
- current situation in Kosovo,
- UNMIK mandate and the mandate of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo,
- reality of UN and OSCE missions in Kosovo and in the Balkans

- expertise in cross-cultural communication, crisis and conflict management,
 - election preparation and monitoring,
 - introduction to project management,
 - stress in special risk situations,
 - training in four-wheel drive,
 - civil-military co-operation,
 - land mine awareness education, orientation exercises in the field and introduction to UN radio transmitting,
 - technical aspects of deployment, working with simultaneous translators, report writing, conduct towards the media.
3. The curriculum for the specialized courses is primarily oriented towards technical preparation and preparation on subject matter in special fields (e.g. elections, human rights, minorities, the media) and also includes praxis and application-oriented elements. The three one-week specialized courses for preparation, conducting and monitoring elections, for example, served primarily to prepare mission members for the municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the elections in Kosovo. They included the following modules:
- OSCE structures and institutions,
 - mandate and tasks of the ODIHR in the area of preparation, conducting and monitoring elections,
 - practical experience based on election monitoring in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
 - theory of election systems as well as German and international electoral law,
 - the threat of mines,
 - stress management,
 - expertise in cross-cultural communication: sensitization and personal conduct, personal security including preventive medicine,
 - technical aspects of deployment, working with simultaneous translation, report writing, conduct with respect to the media.

At the beginning of the training programme, the Foreign Office did not have a permanent teaching staff at its disposal, but first had to create one. To achieve this they made sure that as many different organizations and institutions (civilian, police and military as well as governmental and non-governmental) were involved to be able to have a basis for comparison and create a large and diverse teaching staff, making the implementation of a compact course programme possible. In addition to professional qualifications, an international background as well as experience in the UN and the OSCE belong to the fundamental selection criteria in choosing lecturers. This was also the

reason behind the recruitment of numerous lecturers from the ranks of the UN, the OSCE and/or the Council of Europe Secretariats as well as UN and OSCE missions. In this manner, the "right mix" of theorists and practitioners was to be achieved in the preparatory courses. In view of plans to offer the training programme internationally, care was taken to ensure that lecturers possessed good knowledge of the English language.

Furthermore, co-operation with numerous different lecturers led to the continual re-evaluation of individual course modules and if applicable their adaptation. In addition, this programme has been continually evaluated by comparing it with others offering preparatory courses in Germany and abroad. The Foreign Office strives to achieve a certain standardization in preparatory courses and in the individual curricula especially in the international context to improve co-operation between the members of international peace missions. In this respect, maintaining the training standards set by the UN and the OSCE (e.g. within the REACT framework) is also significant.

The "Civilian Peace Personnel Project Group"

The Civilian Peace Personnel Project Group is to meet two to three times a year to give advice and/or recommendations to the Foreign Office on the issues of recruitment, preparation and deployment of personnel in international missions. After the inaugural meeting on 1 September 1999 under the direction of the Minister of State in the Foreign Office, Dr. Ludger Volmer, the first working meeting under the direction of Ambassador ret. Dr. Wilhelm Höynck took place on 7 February 2000 in Bonn. The group has up to now focused on different points in the preparation of civilian personnel by the Foreign Office, in particular the curricula and the structure of the course programme. In a further meeting on 9 October 2000, the topics personnel recruitment and pool creation were in the foreground. The regular dialogue with the members of the Project Group - also between meetings - is an important element in the further development of the preparatory programme as well as the initiation and reinforcement of co-operation with other organizations in questions of recruitment, preparation and deployment of personnel.

Future Prospects

In the first year of training to prepare civilian peace personnel, the establishment of a course programme, its short-term adaptation due to new findings and requirements, a consolidation of the curriculum and the creation of a staff of lecturers were the main focus. Furthermore the relatively large number of courses and participants were to create the basis for a pool of qualified experts envisioned by the Foreign Office. On the whole, these goals have been

reached. The first evaluative meetings with lecturers and course participants as well as feedback from the UN and the OSCE on the deployment of course participants in international peace missions have shown that the preparatory courses were useful. On the whole, course participants feel better prepared also in dangerous and stressful situations and generally have less trouble becoming familiar with the complex environment of a peace mission. The UN and the OSCE have rated the Foreign Office preparatory programme positively and recognize they offer a contribution to *inter alia* improving the quality standards of international members of peace missions.

During the second half of the year 2000, another two basic courses, two specialized courses, two mission courses¹³ and one or two two-day debriefings were to take place. One of the basic courses was held in Berlin with international participants.¹⁴ This course was seen as the pilot course for further courses being offered to international participants in 2001.

The following seven courses with a total of around 20 participants each are planned for the year 2001:

- a) two basic courses for international participants (in English, length: two weeks),
- b) a basic course for EU students majoring in "Humanitarian Assistance" at the Ruhr-University Bochum (in English, length: two weeks),
- c) two specialized courses for international participants (one election and one human rights course, in English, length: one or two weeks),
- d) two courses on specific missions (Kosovo and the Caucasus, in English, length: two weeks).

In addition, debriefings for former and current mission members have been arranged. The courses in the programme for 2001 will not be held in such quick succession as during 2000 to be able to react to short-term developments and if necessary implement special courses as required.

The Foreign Office plans to steadily increase the percentage of international participants in the various courses (total capacity around 140 people).

In future, the focus will be on the following basic tasks:

- further maintenance and consolidation of the course programme; increase in staff,
- gradual changeover to English as the course language and full internationalization of the courses (the first international course was to take place in November 2000; the following countries were invited to take part: Poland, Romania, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Brazil, Jordan, South Africa and Japan),

13 Kosovo and Caucasus.

14 From 6 to 17 November 2000.

- intensification of co-operation with other international institutions offering training programmes,
- supervision by academic researchers and continual adaptation of the curriculum to new developments, e.g. the introduction of the REACT programme at the OSCE and the development of the EU non-military crisis management unit (a researcher has already begun work on this),
- further increase in the pool of qualified personnel,
- implementation of post-course and post-mission counselling/debriefings for former course and mission members (the first debriefing was to take place end of November 2000) and intensive contacts with "former" participants,
- development of a concept for active mission advisory services (contact points) for mission members,
- regular visits to the UN, the OSCE, the EU and various peace missions.

After a test phase of three years, a comprehensive evaluation of the programme has been planned, which is to be implemented by an independent external organization.