

The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre

Suzanne Monaghan

President

The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

e-mail: smonagha@peaceoperations.org

Suzanne Monaghan is the President of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre located in Ottawa, Canada. She joined the PPC in October 2005 bringing over 30 years of diversified and progressive experience in the federal public service in a variety of policy and program portfolios. During her public service career, Suzanne held senior leadership positions in a number of departments. Her last ten years as a human resources executive were focused on provision of strategic policy direction aimed at capacity building and improved organizational performance. Before arriving at the PPC, she was the Chief Learning Officer for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from 2001-2005, and before that, Director General responsible for the large training organization with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency from 1996-2001.

FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO COMPLEX

A black and white photograph taken on the Egypt-Israel frontier in the late 1950s shows two Canadian soldiers perched on a tank observing the negotiated peace through binoculars. These peacekeepers could easily distinguish the two sides in the conflict by their uniforms. They could count on people knowing and playing by ‘the rules’ – they were dealing with trained military. They did not have to win the hearts and minds of local populations – they had been invited by the parties of the conflict to keep the peace. This was the norm in post-WW II conflict and early international peacekeeping missions – a lightly or unarmed UN military force invited to keep a negotiated peace or ceasefire between two states which had consented to outside intervention.

Much has changed since Lester B. Pearson and Dag Hammarskjöld engineered this first UN peacekeeping mission to the Suez. Conflict increasingly revolved around identity. A marked shift occurred from inter-state conflict involving military to intra-state conflict involving all segments of society. Non-state actors with access to stockpiles of small arms made available by the end of the Cold war became parties to conflict. With no side having a monopoly on force, conflicts became lower in intensity and of longer duration. These complex political and social emergencies where violence is used as a means of effecting change resulted in unimaginable humanitarian catastrophes.

Photographs taken over the past two decades tell a very different story than that witnessed by Canadian soldiers in the first UN peacekeeping mission. Mass civilian graves in the former Yugoslavia, sub-machine gun toting child soldiers in the Congo, roads paved with bodies in Rwanda, casualties from suicide bombings in Afghanistan and tens of millions of

displaced people reflect the realities of contemporary conflict. Resolving these conflicts has challenged defined parameters and turned traditional peacekeeping on its head.

Military intervention remains a critical element of a peace operation but is no longer sufficient to create and sustain peace over the longer term. An expectation now exists that war-torn societies will be rebuilt and launched on the road to self-sustainability. Hence peace support operations today are vastly more ambitious – and therefore more complex and difficult – than those of earlier times.

A NEW TRAINING CENTRE EMERGES

The disastrous outcomes of UN peace operations ventures in places such as Somalia and Rwanda underscored the need for change. It is in the wake of these ventures that the Government of Canada established the world's first civilian-managed peacekeeping training centre – The Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre Inc. commonly known as the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC). Created as a not-for-profit organization in 1994, the PPC was mandated to support and enhance the Canadian contribution to international peace, security and stability by conducting research and providing advance training and educational programs to serve the international community.

Predating by 10 months a UN resolution encouraging Member States to create “peacekeeping training centres, on a national or regional basis as deemed appropriate for military and civilian personnel”, the PPC's cornerstone was the concept of the *New Peacekeeping Partnership*.¹ Alex Morrison, the PPC's founding president, was a strong advocate of interdisciplinary cooperation. He understood that future peacekeeping missions would be headed by civilians and recognized that to achieve any degree of success these missions would require the talents of civilians from a range of occupations.

The PPC pioneered research in and training on this integrated, multidisciplinary approach to contemporary conflict and peacekeeping. By applying a broader definition to peacekeeping, the PPC took into account the full spectrum of the conflict cycle from the escalation of hostilities to post-conflict peacebuilding. This definition encompassed all actions designed to enhance international peace, security and stability authorized by competent national and international organizations and undertaken cooperatively and individually by military, humanitarians, civilian police, and other interested agencies and groups. Included were conflict resolution, peacemaking, peace restoration, peace enforcement, peace monitoring, peace building, peace operations, peace support operations, preventive diplomacy and actions of a similar nature.

To properly prepare individuals to participate effectively in contemporary peace operations, PPC programs were and continue to be designed to be international and interdisciplinary. They focus on providing the knowledge, but more importantly the skills

¹ The New Peacekeeping Partnership was the term applied to the military, government and non-government agencies dealing with humanitarian assistance, refugees and displaced persons, election monitors, and civilian police, among others, as they worked together to improve the effectiveness of peace operations. Interestingly, this definition goes beyond governmental interagency approaches and includes a wider civilian engagement.

required to operate in multicultural, multidisciplinary, integrated peace and conflict environments. To enhance understanding among the principal actors in peace operations, the PPC's education and training audiences are a mix of individuals drawn from the military, police and civilian organizations. Since 1994, over 15,000 individuals from these three principal sectors representing 140 nations have participated in PPC learning events delivered in 31 countries and in five languages.

The PPC's training has evolved and matured over the years. Content is adjusted regularly based on cutting-edge research on contemporary peace operations. Cross cutting issues such as ethics, culture, gender, children, environment, and health are interwoven into the training as they emerge. In 2005, the PPC adopted new activity-based adult-learning methodology which is widely praised for achieving superior results to traditional approaches. Among its benefits are deeper learning, more versatile studying methods, increased retention and recall and stronger knowledge application skills.

A critical element of the PPC's training is the Exercise program which uses an intricate, richly textured, fictional scenario 12 years in the making as a backdrop for its activities. Participants are immersed in a realistic operating environment. They are made to act and react to a variety of situations and crisis and to interact with other players including media and international, government and non-government organizations to name a few. PPC exercises provide organizations like NATO and foreign military that work in high-risk environments, or whose members are expected to enter harm's way to practice their craft in a physically and psychologically safe environment. In this environment, the cost of an error is measured by learning opportunity rather than the loss of human life or the destruction of scarce resources.

An early attempt by the PPC to help build international capacity for peacekeeping training was the establishment of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC). In 1999, the PPC expanded its capacity building activities to include regional, sub-regional and national institutions and organizations. Funding from the Canadian government allowed the PPC to focus on two institutions in Africa, the École de maintien de la paix in Mali and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana.

A shortage of civilian police trained for peace operations led to a project also financially supported by the Canadian government to build capacity of West Africa countries to contribute civilian police. Contributions from targeted countries rose from a few hundred in 2004 to over 2,500 by 2007. Based on this success, similar efforts are now underway in Central and South Africa as well as the Maghreb with funding from the Canadian government. These capacity building efforts will become increasingly important as the shortage of trained civilian police available for peace operations becomes even more acute in the coming years.

Gender, in particular women's participation in peace operations, has been a major component of the PPC's programming in Africa with exciting results. Five of six countries targeted in the West Africa Police Project have developed and adopted national policies to include women in peace operation deployments. One has created an all-women unit and for the first in history, women were accepted into the Gendarmerie in Mali and Senegal. Roundtables hosted by the PPC served to highlight the value, challenges and opportunities of increasing the participation of women and identify specific actions for the way forward.

Being a not-for-profit organization provides the PPC with the ability to offer the peace operations community a neutral space for discussion of difficult and at times controversial issues. The tension between the military and humanitarian organizations over the militarization of humanitarian aid was the subject of a public debate and two day workshop. Theorists, policy-makers and practitioners from academia, defence, diplomacy, industry and humanitarianism debated how to best manage international, multidisciplinary responses in complex peace and conflict environments. The result was a book entitled *Helping Hands and Loaded Arms: Navigating the Military and Humanitarian Space*. It provides an international perspective for decision-makers and practitioners interested in framing theory, policy and practice in the context of global peace and security.

As a neutral convener, the PPC has also been able to engage previously unheard voices in discussions about UN peacekeeping doctrine reform. At the request of the UN, the PPC brought representatives from a number of NGOs, UN agencies, the Canadian Forces, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police together with officials from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations to discuss the latest draft of the doctrine. This led to the conclusion that major troop and police contributing countries also needed to be engaged in the process to balance what has been overwhelmingly western perspectives. A roundtable in Jordan organized in collaboration with the Jordan Institute for Diplomacy and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (Sweden) provided this opportunity.

Since its inception, applied research has played a critical role in ensuring that the PPC remained ahead of developments in the evolving peace and conflict environment. The focus has always been to serve as a nexus of theory and practice ensuring that the peace operations community was provided with the latest, best and most relevant information. Its Pearson Papers series has examined a range of subjects from public information campaigns in peace operations to measure of effectiveness.

An important element of its research program has been the PPC's association with the Cornwallis Group. Since 1996, the Cornwallis Group has brought together researchers, analysts and practitioners to tackle emerging issues related to obtaining and maintaining peace and stability in the world. They have made and continue to make a significant contribution to the international peace operations community.

The PPC was and remains today one of only a handful of organizations offering a full range of training, capacity development, public education, and research programs that reflect the complexity, multidisciplinary and international realities of contemporary peace operations. With a "failed state index" that identifies some 60 countries as dysfunctional because their government does not effectively control its territory or provide basic services to its citizens or the country is experiencing some kind of internal unrest it unlikely that the need for what the PPC has to offer will abate in the foreseeable future.

THE PPC OF THE FUTURE

The PPC has set an ambitious course for the future. With the goal of increasing the number and professionalism of Canadian and foreign military, police and civilians able to function effectively in complex multidimensional peace operations, the PPC is developing an even

more comprehensive slate of training products. Taken in combination, these courses will provide individuals with the opportunity to become certified peace professionals.

Civilians are playing an ever growing role in peace operations; yet training for these individuals is at best sporadic and at worst non-existent. The story almost everywhere is that the military train the military and police train police. The PPC will expand its reach with civilian audiences targeting training offerings to meet existing and future needs as well as providing opportunities to train alongside military and police. The goal is to help address the training imbalance within the peace operations community.

Increasingly, police are recognized as critical to peace operations in facilitating the transition from conflict to peace. The UN has identified a serious deficit in police trained for complex peace operations at a time when demand is predicted to soar. The PPC will over the course of the coming years, seek to deepen its capacity building in Africa and to extend into other regions such as the Americas and Middle East. Women in peace operations will continue to be a critical element of the PPC's programming regardless of geography.

The PPC's capacity building methodology is underpinned by solid research and informed by practical experience. It continues to be field tested and refined. Documenting the process and best practices and incorporating the latest research will result in another tool for use by the international peace operations community.

Peacekeeping training institutions have multiplied since the 1994 UN resolution calling for their creation. With the establishment of the IAPTC in 1995, the PPC sought to improve coordination among organizations. In response to the call at the 2008 G-8 Summit in Heiligendamm for increased cooperation, the PPC is well placed to serve as a global hub, convening institutions around such issues as common standards and best practices.

Canada has a strong peacekeeping tradition but the collective memory continues to cling to images that are not congruent with contemporary realities. Through a public outreach program the PPC will encourage an informed national dialogue on international peace operations with particular emphasis on the multidisciplinary approach that characterizes the new peacekeeping. The goal is to foster greater public understanding of how Canada's engagement in peace operations supports and advances values of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

Continued investments in applied research will ensure that PPC's activities are current, relevant, accurate and informed and draw on domestic and international expertise and experience. Over the medium to long term, the PPC's applied research program will analyze peace operations to identify trends in the evolution from peacekeeping to the full spectrum complex peace operations, identify benchmarks of success and document best practices and examines implementation of integration through interagency cooperation including provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) and integrated missions. The goal is to provide current and future generations of peace professionals with the theoretical constructs and the practical knowledge and skills they will need for successful peace operations.

FAITH AND RESOLVE

The following words by the PPC's namesake, Lester B. Pearson, are possibly truer today than when delivered over half a century ago,

Of all our dreams today there is none more important - or so hard to realize - than that of peace in the world. May we never lose our faith in it or our resolve to do everything that can be done to convert it one day into reality.

Through their efforts, the PPC board of directors and staff seek to keep alive the hope of a more peaceful world and to equip individuals, groups and organizations who work towards that goal to be the very best they can be.