

CIMIC Cell, a key player in MNC NE Operations

Written by AG

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Civil-Military Co-operation is a key strand of military operations within our headquarters, but it must not be seen as a single functional area.

The environment for military operations has changed dramatically during the last two decades. Massive battles of armies equipped with tanks are very unlikely after the fall of the Soviet Empire. Crisis Response Operations covering the full range of military operations from combat operations to humanitarian relief in the same area of operations – the so-called "Three-Block-War" are far more likely. The importance of the integration of the factor "Civil Environment" into planning and conduct of military operations has increased. Population, refugees, displaced persons and civil authorities of the country the military is operating in, they all have to be taken into account by commanders and their staffs. Furthermore an ever-increasing number of International Organisations (IO), Governmental Organisations (GO) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) are working in the same area as the military. It is the task of the Civil-Military Co-Operation element (CIMIC) in military headquarters on all levels to concentrate on this important field of activity. NATO defines CIMIC as "the co-ordination and co-operation, in support of the mission, between the NATO commander and civil actors, including national population and local authorities, as well as international, national and non-governmental organisations and agencies." In practical terms on operations this means for the CIMIC Cell in MNC NE Field Headquarters to provide a proper assessment of the civil situation to the commander and his staff, to set up a working liaison structure with the civil

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key-players on MNC NE level, for example provincial or national government authorities and field or country offices of major IO/GO/NGOs. On the tactical level and within means and capabilities, especially in situations where IO/GO/NGOs are not yet available, it even might become necessary for the military to embark on projects in support of the local population. CIMIC is a key strand of military operations within our headquarters, but it must not be seen as a single functional area. CIMIC strives to include its share into the effect-based approach to operations in MNC NE with the ultimate aim to achieve the desired effects necessary to fulfill the commander's mission.

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