CHAPTER 5
CIMIC, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

1. **General.** Civilian military co-operation is critical to the success of Peace Support Operations given that nowadays, civilians are the main victims of armed conflicts. Therefore, there is a need for security forces to be adequately sensitised and educated in their obligation to abide by all aspects of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the Law Of Armed Conflicts (LOAC) and international human rights law. Additionally, peace-keepers need to realise the increasing enforcement of individual responsibility against the perpetrators of serious human rights abuses, as demonstrated notably by the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Peace-keepers have to be aware that it is within their mandate to protect civilians affected by armed conflicts. To ensure this protection, peace-keepers will need to assist and co-operate with the actors involved in the application of human rights and humanitarian law, such as the United Nations and other public international organizations, the ICRC and relief and human rights NGOs.

2. CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation/Coordination) is concerned with the harmonisation of civilian and military relations within a theatre of operations. The immediate aim is to fully coordinate civilian and military activities to support humanitarian projects and to achieve the maximum support for the operation, at the expense of any opposition. CIMIC is also concerned with co-ordinating and maximising the use of resources designed to remedy the deprivation and suffering of the populace, concurrently with reconstruction activities. CIMIC is furthermore designed to enhance the credibility of the PSO force, to promote co-operation and consent for the operation and to persuade the parties to the conflict and the uncommitted members of the host nation that their best interests lie in peace. It is the task of the CIMIC branch to provide the Commander with the formal interface between ASF and concerned organisations and authorities. The less formal, but equally important role of improving community relations with the local population is the responsibility of all members of ASF.

3. CIMIC covers a wide range of activities and this could among others include:
   a. Area surveys
   b. Identification of host nation resources
   c. Reconstruction assistance
   d. Coordination with other actors in the mission area

4. However, ASF should also be prepared for requirements in terms of security, protection, and timely well-adjusted logistical support.

5. Civil-Military Projects provide the linkage between security regeneration and, the desired steady state conditions that define the campaign’s objectives. The guidelines and assets established within the overall regeneration programme and projects, in support of the local community, may be conducted independently by the military, but more usually in conjunction with civilian agencies, utilising local firms and facilities. Assets should be co-ordinated at unit level and integrated into the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) that will, in turn, be matched with the Comprehensive Mission Plan. CIMIC Projects may cover a wide range of activities within local communities and, as such, should be directed by local authorities where these exist. Such projects will often require assistance from military
specialists such as Engineers, Medical, Military Police, Special Forces and Logistic Support. Typically, such projects could involve digging of wells, the reconnection of water and electricity grid systems (where they exist) and the rebuilding of schools, hospitals and a communication network as experienced in Liberia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. These activities should be conducted as part of a wider plan directed and coordinated by lead aid agency. Their advice will be essential to ensure that military activities do not create a dependency culture, which will hinder long-term peace building efforts and a return to normalcy.

6. General Principles

(1) Command Direction. The direction of CIMIC activities is a Force Commander’s responsibility. CIMIC efforts need to be focused to achieve a “force multiplier” effect in consideration of the desired end state. Special attention must be paid to ensure consent, impartiality and force protection. Commanders and Staff officers at every level should be continually aware of the efficient use of CIMIC personnel.

(2) Economy of Effort. ASF’s CIMIC activities will be carried out in circumstances where the civil population faces an inadequate infrastructure and widespread shortages of essential goods and services. ASF’s resources are finite; therefore care must be taken to preserve military capability. Creating long-term civilian dependence on ASF must be avoided. Once created, withdrawal or reduction of resources will strain civil-military relations, retard the growth of civil authority, and may cause lasting damage to public confidence in ASF.

(3) Military - civilian Relationships. The relationship between military and civilians depends on co-operation and co-ordination.

(4) Humanity. The inherent dignity and basic human rights of individuals must be respected and protected.

(5) Impartiality. Humanitarian assistance should be provided without any bias. Relief efforts must address individuals and groups who are suffering, without regard to nationality, political or ideological beliefs, race, religion, sex or ethnicity.

(6) Neutrality. Humanitarian relief should be provided without bias towards any of the parties to the conflict regarding political, military, religious, geological or ethnic controversy which has given rise to the suffering.

(7) Impartiality versus Neutrality. Impartiality should not be confused with neutrality. Doing so limits the potential to exercise initiative and flexibility and it promotes passivity. Impartiality requires a degree of judgement while neutrality does not. The conduct of ASF’s humanitarian action should be impartial to the parties but never neutral in the execution.

7. Psychological Aspects. The successful conduct of CIMIC activities depends on the co-operation of all parties involved. The perceptions of concerned civilians and other factions are critical to continued co-operation and success of mission objectives; and must be understood and taken into account during the planning and execution phases. The consideration of psychological aspects will help to ensure that perceptions are accurate and to promote positive attitudes, emotions, opinions and behaviour towards ASF.

8. Addressing the problems of rumours, misinformation and des-information must be seen as an integral part of ASF objectives. This can be accomplished by providing
information and messages directly to key communicators without filter (i.e. local leadership, media etc.) and must be co-ordinated with PIO. Proper psychological application will project a favourable image of a unit’s capability within ASF and will broaden the impact of cooperative actions and activities between ASF and the various other actors (UN agencies, GO’s, IO’s, NGO’s etc) in the AOR.

9. **Common Goals.** Established relationships need to be maintained. This can be difficult during actual or threatened hostilities. To achieve co-operation, the relationship must be able to survive disagreements, setbacks and compromises. The basis for effective co-operation is to share common goals. Common goals must be established and recognised and commanders at all levels must integrate them into their courses of actions.

10. **Consent.** Every effort must be made to secure the willing consent of civilians with which ASF are dealing; coercion may have a similar effect to consent, but it achieves poor results and will not endure. Loss of consent can occur suddenly, for reasons that seem trivial, and commanders at all levels must be prepared to spend time and energy in its pursuit and retention.

11. **Liaison.** The cultural and structural differences between military and civilians require an investment in time and understanding to overcome. Most civilians, with whom ASF will deal, pursue their own priorities to a large extent. Indeed, some may take the view that co-operation and independence is mutually exclusive. The key to alleviating these difficulties is to maintain open and constant liaison.

12. **Transparency.** The tension between political, military, humanitarian and other components of a Civil-Military relationship will, at times, inevitably lead to confusion and misunderstanding. These tensions will be aggravated by political bias, media inaccuracy or distortion and poor communications. Transparency is vital in preventing and defusing such potentially volatile situations, because it instils trust, increases confidence and encourages mutual understanding.

**TASKS AND FUNCTIONS**

1. **General:** CIMIC covers a wide range of activities, from sustaining life to assistance in restoring governance. However, CIMIC functions can be divided into “Out of Theatre” and “In Theatre” functions.

2. **Out of Theatre (mainly in the pre-deployment phase):** CIMIC staff prepares ASF personnel to deal with civilian conditions in the possible area of operations. Guidelines (Code of conduct, SOP and others) for close co-ordination should also be established.

3. **In Theatre (operational phase):** In accordance with the Force Commander’s intent CIMIC staff, in co-operation and co-ordination with the “Humanitarian Coordinator” or respective lead agency (see diagrams 1 and 2), secures effective Civil-Military Co-operation in the execution of the overall Mission plan taking into consideration the following
   a. **Planning.** Plans should include time phasing of resources and prioritising resource expenditures. Civil-Military efforts should be brought into an advantageous symbiosis. Services provided to civilians should be clearly articulated and included in the plan.
   b. **Communication.** Effective and constant communication is one of CIMIC’s fundamental functions. In many situations, there will be little or no public communications infrastructure. Road, rail, and air transport will be
infrequent and dangerous, and many civilian organisations will be reluctant to enter military facilities.

Nevertheless, without communications at every level of command, effective co-operation is impossible. CIMIC should both provide and keep open the means to communicate, within the operational capabilities of ASF. Measures may include the establishment of easily accessible CIMIC centres, the exchange of Liaison Officers, regular meetings, the provision of interpreters and use of compatible communications equipment.

c. **Information.** CIMIC also works as a Civil-Military information exchange. It provides guidance and information to Commanders and Staff with up-to-date information on civilian organisations and population and vice versa; but timing, content, and audience must be widely co-ordinated to support the overall aim as well as ASF operational tasks.

d. **Co-ordination.** Despite good liaison, it is inevitable, given their differing motives and cultures that conflict will arise between the military and civilian sides of a co-operative venture. CIMIC’s function is to enable proper co-ordination of activities between the two groups to avoid such a conflict. Practical measures can be taken (i.e. the co-location of HQs with key civilian organisations or/and the creation of common boundaries) but they will not always be acceptable.

e. **Assessment.** Commanders need to know, how their troops and their operations are viewed from the civilian perspective. CIMIC functions as the Force Commander’s eyes and ears, in conjunction with G 2, and in this regard provides continuous assessment of civilian perceptions.
Diagram 1: Outline of possible Civil-Military command, co-operation and control in a Complex Humanitarian Emergency Response
Diagram 2: Planning in a CIMIC Functional Organisation

**Section 2: ORGANISATION**

**GENERAL**

CIMIC is a Commander’s responsibility. It competes for resources and priorities in the same way as all other command functions. To be effective, however, CIMIC must develop close working relationships with other staff members who interact with the CIMIC function.

**CIMIC CELL/BRANCH**

The size and the specific organization of the CIMIC cells/branches will vary from sector HQ to sector HQ, and will also depend on the mission.

In ASF HQ, CIMIC branch is consisting of 7 people as shown in Annex A. CIMIC Branch personnel responsibilities are in Annex B.

CIMIC staff is not necessarily from specialist background. However, they must have broad military experience and be capable of explaining military requirements to civilian organizations and vice versa.
**CIMIC CENTRE**

The CIMIC Centre shall be composed of civilians and military representatives of the mission. The actual organisation and location(s) will be dictated by the nature of the mission.

The primary purpose of the CIMIC Centre is to co-ordinate and facilitate humanitarian/democratisation efforts within the overall Mission plan. The main issue for the military, therefore, is to assist civilian planners in determining the capabilities and limitations of the military component for required assistance.

The CIMIC component serves both the CIMIC Centre and the military internal decision making process and basic co-ordination will be done at this level.

**CIMIC NETWORK**

In order to fulfil its aim, but also obtain the necessary co-operation, CIMIC personnel have to build up an extensive CIMIC network in their Mission Area with:

1. UN agencies
2. GO’s
3. IO’s
4. NGO’s
5. Civilian Authorities
6. Key Persons of local population

**Section 3: CIMIC MEETINGS**

**AIM**

The aim of CIMIC meetings is to share information and knowledge on CIMIC matters between civilian actors and ASF. The meetings are to be held on a regular basis at ASF HQ and also at Sector/Unit HQ level.

**CONFERENCES**

ASF CIMIC conferences will normally be held at least monthly. It will be chaired by G5 CIMIC, and will include CIMIC staff from the Brigade and all Sector/Unit HQs. The participation of concerned civilians will also be sought.

**BRIEFINGS**

Incoming CIMIC personnel will be briefed regarding the Mission Area and respective tasks. The briefings will normally be divided into an ASF general CIMIC briefing and a more detailed briefing held by the Sector/Unit HQs. Incoming commanders will also be briefed on their appropriate CIMIC responsibilities.

**Section 4: CIMIC REPORTS**

**GENERAL**

CIMIC reports are crucial means of providing reliable and consolidated information to the brigade staff, enabling the staff to:
1. Assess the CIMIC situation
2. Provide advice to ASF Commander
3. Forward reliable reports to higher headquarters
4. Anticipate future developments and to formulate appropriate solutions and recommendations

For the above-mentioned reasons the reports related to CIMIC must be submitted in a reliable, complete, accurate and timely manner.

**REPORTS**

The following reports are submitted to ASF HQ at the attention: of G5 by all subordinated units:

1. CIMIC DAILY SITREP (See Annex C)
2. CIMIC WEEKLY SUMMARY (See Annex D)
3. CIMIC AREA SURVEY (See Annex E)
4. Report of possible war crimes/breaches of human rights (See Annex F)
5. Prisoner exchange close out report (See Annex G)
6. Generic terms of reference for CIMIC LO (See Annex H)

Reports will be submitted by the transmission means necessary to reach the HQ by the time required. Preferred method is in written form (message, signal, or document). However, reports may be submitted verbally via radio or telephone when the situation requires it.

**Section 5: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

**GENERAL**

All agencies and organisations other than military units present in the Mission Area can be called civilian organisations. Each organisation, however, has differing purposes and work with different mandates, methods and objectives. Therefore a co-ordinated approach to common objectives between ASF and civilian organisations is necessary. This can be achieved by dialogue, consensus and the recognition of unity of effort. All mission personnel have the responsibility to know about the ASF view on Civil-Military Co-operation so that commanders will be able to identify CIMIC requirements in their daily work.

**AIM**

The most important function that ASF serves to civilian organisations is the provision of a secure environment and/or, depending on the mandate, protection and logistic support for their operations. Principally, these can be accomplished through the use of standard PSO techniques. (See respective parts of SOP Operations and SOP Logistics). More involvement, other than indicated above, will only be permitted in case of emergency or if the mandate allows, the scaling down of operational tasks.

**Section 6 HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY PLANNING**

**GENERAL**
During a humanitarian emergency, time constraints limit detailed mission analyses and expeditious course of action development. Estimates need to be completed shortly in order to address the emergency situation and ensure freedom of action. Contingency plans must therefore be developed in consultation with civilian players to ensure that units are prepared in the event of a humanitarian emergency in their mission area.

**Considerations and Preparations**

In order to prepare for potential humanitarian emergencies, units shall:

a. Conduct a general assessment of possible humanitarian emergency situations in their Mission Area (water supply, emergency rations and food stuffs, medical supply etc.); including the identification of the possible level of response by humanitarian organizations. Spreading of this information throughout the CIMIC network is imperative.

b. Determine the capabilities of their own CIMIC assets.

c. Estimate unit security, protection and response capabilities.

d. Consider communication capabilities.

e. Identify shortfalls (transportation etc)

**Section 7 HUMAN RIGHTS, HUMANITARIAN LAW AND WAR CRIMES**

**INTRODUCTION**

In general, the Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) aim at preserving human dignity and protecting those who are not, or no longer, directly taking part in a conflict. The rules that must be observed in war, even with regard to the enemy, are set out in the 4 Geneva Conventions (12 August 1949) and their Additional Protocols. The 4 Conventions of IHL cover the following areas:

a. Military Wounded and Sick; Medical Personnel and Chaplains.

b. Wounded, Sick, medical Personnel and Chaplains of Armed Forces at Sea and the Shipwrecked.

c. Prisoners of War.

d. Civilians in Enemy or Occupied Territory.

The framework of the LOAC provides that persons not directly taking part in hostilities and those put out of action through sickness, injury, captivity or any other cause must be respected and protected against the effects of war, and those who suffer must be aided and cared for without discrimination. The Additional Protocols extend and strengthen this protection to any persons affected by an armed conflict, and stipulate further that parties to the conflict and combatants shall not attack the civil population and civilian objects, and shall conduct their military operations in conformity with the recognised rules and by laws of humanity.

**PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Rendering assistance to and protecting non-combatants (unarmed civilians and unarmed combatants as a result of injury, incapacity or other reason rendering them hors de combat) in immediate physical danger has assumed fundamental importance in the light of recent experiences in conflict areas.
OBJECTIVE

One of the objectives of the Mission should be to assist unarmed civilians in immediate physical danger. The narrow prescriptions of mandates of PSOs and their limited resources and capacity should not provide an excuse for not providing assistance to vulnerable groups when and where it is possible, and an imperative to do so. Even though it will never be possible to help everybody in urgent need, it should still not be an excuse for helping no one.

BASIC RULES FOR ASSISTANCE

The provision of urgent assistance to vulnerable groups should be guided by the following basic rules:

a. **Look for Help.** Before rendering assistance, personnel should try to get help from the local authorities, from OHCHR, UNHCR or from the ICRC. When and where these agencies are unavailable, unwilling or unable to help, the mission should oblige to step in to help as necessary and possible.

b. **Treat Equally.** Once assistance has been rendered, personnel should treat assisted persons as they would treat members of the mission. A threat to vulnerable persons should be treated as a threat to the mission.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

Commanders and personnel should make use of their best possible judgement for the following actions:

a. **Threat Assessment.** It should determine whether or not assistance is necessary or/and possible.

b. **Impartial Approach.** Assistance should be rendered to non-combatants regardless of their allegiance or background.

c. **Discharge.** Discharge those who have received assistance as soon as they are out of immediate physical danger by endeavouring to put them under the care of sympathetic local authorities, OHCHR, UNHCR, ICRC or other sympathetic organisations.

 d. **Reporting.** As soon as practicable, the actions must be reported to:
   (1) The next immediate superior commander.
   (2) OHCHR/UNHCR/ICRC.

SCENARIOS

Even though all possible eventualities cannot be foreseen, some possible scenarios may be useful:

a. **Non-Combatants Seeking Entry into a Mission Facility.** Entry may be permitted if the requesting non-combatants are injured and/or in need of urgent medical assistance. Individuals should be admitted on the understanding that they will be moved out of the facility, as soon as it is safe to do so, and as soon as the individual’s condition has stabilised. Personnel should be satisfied that granting admission is unlikely to endanger personnel of the mission or over-stretch facilities.

b. **Non-Combatants Seeking Use of Transportation to Take Them Out of a Dangerous Area.** When approached by such persons, the person in charge of the facility may make vehicles available to non-combatants fleeing if he/she deems such an action
necessary to secure the physical safety of the requesting individuals. Individuals should be accepted onto AU vehicles on the following understanding:

(1) That they will be disembarked as soon as they are out of immediate physical danger.

(2) That the vehicles are subject to the normal checks made by the combatant forces over whose territory they are transiting.

(3) Report to the appropriate superiors any emergency assistance rendered, and inform UNHCR and ICRC of the action taken.

c. Mission Personnel Encountering a Situation in which Physical Violence is being used against a Non-Combatant. The senior commander or personnel present may render assistance, after which he/she may treat the attack as an attack on the personnel of the mission. ROEs will apply and the individuals then removed from the immediate vicinity under escort of the mission or be given the protection of the mission on the spot.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

It is well documented that of the 75% of all casualties in contemporary civil wars, women and children continue to be the main victims. This unprecedented victimisation of women and children in armed conflicts underscore the need for particular efforts to protect that group.

Guiding Principles for Best Practices.

a. General Principles. These principles derive from the acknowledgement that “the child, by reason of his/her physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before, as well as after birth.”

(1) Best interests of the child, especially regarding the protection and care necessary for their well-being.

(2) Non-discrimination, or the protection of the child against all forms of discrimination or punishment.

(3) Survival and development of the child based on the recognition of their inherent right to life.

(4) None participation in combat.

b. Key Military-Related Articles - Abuse and Exploitation.

(1) Torture and deprivation.

(2) Sexual Exploitation.

c. Key Military-Related Articles - Armed Conflicts. Respect of IHL:

(1) Non-recruitment and direct participation (employment) of children under the age of 18 years in armed hostilities.

(2) Protection and care in armed conflict.

NOTE: The Rome Statute defines conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years or using them actively in hostilities in both international and non-international armed conflicts as a war crime.
But the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child define a child as below 18 years of age. Art 22 of the African Charter explicitly states that States Parties .. "shall take all necessary measures to ensure that no child shall take a direct part in hostilities and refrain in particular, from recruiting any child". The same for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which many African countries have signed and ratified.

d. **Military-Related Key Articles - Family Relations.**

   (1) Non-Separation from parents.
   
   (2) Family reunification.
   
   (3) Illicit Transfer and Non-Return.

e. **Key Military-Related Articles - Rehabilitative Care.** Measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery, and social reintegration of child victims of neglect, exploitation, abuse, torture, cruelty, inhuman and degrading treatment and armed conflicts.

**Rules for Best Practices.** The following nine rules are aimed at best practices towards the protection of women and children in both armed conflicts and PSOs:

a. **Compliance with Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.** ASF personnel and members of other agencies must respect human rights law and abide by the norms and standards of the IHL, if they are to win public confidence and cooperation. Even though peacekeepers will be drawn from countries with diverse democratic and human rights levels and backgrounds, it is their obligation to uphold these principles themselves in order not to compromise their own moral authority and the conduct of operations.

b. **Accountability.** Mission personnel abuses of the rights of women and children must be vigilantly checked and sanctioned by mission authorities. In this respect, arrangements are to be made to document military marriages and children in the field in order to facilitate subsequent arrangements for family support, family movement and family reunification, as is the case in military marriages in home countries.

c. **Enforcement.** Considering that renegade warlords and combatants would continue to violate human and children’s rights for a number of reasons, a fundamental role of the military must be to firmly enforce compliance with the IHL and respect for human and children’s rights, and has always to be ready to act firmly to deter violations and arrest offenders in order to restore and maintain the mandate. They must also be prepared to conduct search and locate operations to rescue children from their abductors or abusers, and offer the necessary protection until they are handed over to appropriate civil society organisations and institutions for rehabilitation and reintegration.

d. **Monitoring.** As part of its enforcement role, peacekeepers have to set up mechanisms and a framework for monitoring and reporting violations of the rights of women and children. Action in this regard will provide information for the identification, arrest, detention, indictment and prosecution of persons suspected of violations of human and children’s rights.

e. **Liaison with Local Community.** Since local dynamics influence conflicts and peacekeeping operations, peacekeepers must liaise with, and involve local
communities in gender-sensitive programmes which take cognisance of the particular circumstances of the victims.

c. **Communication with War-Affected Civilians.** Particularly so, the real victims of armed conflicts must also be involved in programmes which seek to deal with the effects of the conflict on their social, psychological and physical well-being.

d. **Assistance, Co-operation and Co-ordination with Civil Organisations.** Peacekeepers must offer all the necessary assistance and protection to and co-operate with civil society, UN agencies and NGOs, who endure considerable hardships and danger to provide HA to needy women and children. Additionally, the mission should also recognise that the role of civil society organisations imparts more stability that in turn facilitates their PSO roles and functions.

e. **Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR).** A return to lasting peace will be difficult to achieve if deadly weapons remain at large in the society, especially in the hands of children with poor judgement and little or no civic awareness or sense of responsibility. The implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, therefore demands that the military expeditiously disarm and demobilise child-combatants as a matter of first priority. The military should capitalise on its attraction to children to carry out this role by providing recreational, educational and welfare facilities, including medical care. In all circumstances, child combatants should be segregated from adults in the DDR process and concentrated in children's centres or villages, subject to the need for children to remain with their parents and families when that is possible. Special attention should be given to the particular needs of girls. The military, however, should not usurp the role of civil organisations in this regard. They should rather assist and co-operate with them.

f. **Mine-Awareness Education and Clearance.** Since mines pose the greatest threat to women and children long after conflicts have been resolved, the need for mine-awareness education among women and children and mine clearance has to be given the necessary military and other resources and efforts. Specialised personnel will be equipped and funded to remove mines and explosives in order to minimise the danger that they pose to women and children.

**Prohibitions for Best Practices.** To reinforce the best practices the following prohibitions must be strictly enforced:

a. **Recruitment, participation and involvement of children in combat.**

b. **Exploitation of women and children.**

   (1) Chores as cheap batmen (labour) at cook-houses for swill and for pittances or meagre subsistence.

   (2) Aides and runners, such as sending and receiving messages, buying items from the market, etc.

   (3) Informants.

   (4) Go-between.

   (5) Torture.

   (6) Illegal adoption and irregular separation and transfer to home countries of soldiers.
(7) Sexual exploitation and promiscuity owing to deprived status.
(8) Improper marriage and migration.
(9) Rape and/or impregnation and irresponsible fathering of undocumented babies without adequate and official support facilities on departure of soldiers.
(10) Employment on military tasks, such as digging trenches, filling of rifle magazines, cleaning of weapons, etc.

**PROTECTION OF THE AGED**

The aged or older persons are defined by the UN as those aged 60 years and above, but regional or local variations occur in this definition. Older people are especially vulnerable in conflict situations and emergencies owing to a number of reasons, including “old” age, poor health and weakness, poverty, and abuse and neglect. In addition to these handicaps that make it difficult for them to survive the isolation and pressures of conflicts, older people may be unwilling to leave their homes and often care for younger dependents whose parents may be missing. They therefore need special care and tenderness to enable them cope with the situation and to be able to provide humanitarian support to dependent individuals in the society. The following are some **guidelines for best practices** to meet the special needs of the aged:

- a. Provision of shelter, fuel, clothing and medicare.
- b. Assistance with mobility.
- c. Equal access to essential services.
- d. Assistance with social needs: tracing family members, protecting from abuse, etc.
- e. Provision of support for self-help.

**COORDINATION OF REPATRIATION OF REFUGEES AND RELOCATION OF IDPs**

The repatriation of refugees and the relocation of IDPs will be organised by civilian organisations like ICRC or IOM and will be coordinated and supported by the military and civilian components (police, civil administration) in the mission.

**EVACUATION OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS**

A third country national is a person located within the conflict country(s) who is a citizen of a country other than the conflict country(s), or who has been residing in the conflict country(s) before the outbreak of hostilities, or who returned to the conflict country(s) after the outbreak of hostilities to begin residence. Caution and discretion may be required in attempting to discern the reasons why a third country national is in a conflict country(s). While some may be journalists who fall under another category, others may be mercenaries or adventurers trying to profit from the conflict. Ultimately, the status of these persons should be determined by their respective embassies where possible.

**LEAD AGENCY**

The UNHCR has lead agency responsibility for procedures for the evacuation and transport of third country nationals.
CONSIDERATIONS/ACTIONS

When absolutely necessary, the mission will deal with requests on a case by base basis. If and when approached by a third country national for transport/evacuation assistance:

a. Make no promises that resources can or will be used to evacuate/transport.

b. Direct the third country national to the nearest UNHCR field office. If this is not possible, follow procedures outlined below. Obtain the following:

(1) Evacuation application.
(2) Photocopies of all relevant passports and/or other travel documents, including spouse, children, etc. Examine all travel documents for date of issue, date of expiration and special visas pertaining to the conflict country(s). Check to see if the passport covers children also present. Difficulties may arise concerning persons with dual citizenship, and possible problems with children.
(3) If asked to process applications of family members, obtain full name, date of birth, place of birth and relationship to third country national, nationality and photocopies of complete passport or identification card.
(4) Have applicants fill out the Evacuation Waiver Forms.

c. Once all paperwork is completed, do the following:

(1) Make photocopies for the file.
(2) Pass the file to the nearest UNHCR field office.
(3) Inform the third country national requesting assistance that the process takes time and that the UNHCR will contact the appropriate national embassies.
(4) Follow up with UNHCR to determine their status in gaining approval for movement out of the conflict country(s).
(5) UNHCR is the executive agency for evacuation of third country national. Consequently, units and teams will allow the UNHCR system to process action in these cases. Exceptions may, however, exist where the national rules of units and teams may apply, even though this should be an extremely rare occurrence.

MOVEMENT OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS

It is highly probable that the UNHCR will require the assistance of the mission in moving third country nationals once approval for out of country movement has been obtained. Prior to movement, the UNHCR will retain responsibility for negotiating the safe passage of each third country national out of the conflict country(s). Units and teams can expect and are then authorised to conduct the following actions to assist the UNHCR in completing its mission:

a. Negotiation. Upon UNHCR request, assist in negotiation with parties/factions and with factions for movement of individuals within the AOR. This has proved successful on several occasions, but care must be taken in ascertaining the level of co-operative intent exhibited by the parties/factions.

b. Escort. Provide ground escort during road movement upon approval by mission HQ. Movement of third country nationals can have political and military
consequences in areas that may not be apparent in the AOR of one unit or team. All efforts must therefore be properly co-ordinated.

c. **Air Movement.** Movement of third country nationals by AU air assets, where available, is forbidden, unless otherwise granted by the SMR of the mission.

**FORBIDDEN ACTIONS**

The following, among others, are listed as unauthorised actions that may endanger AU personnel and personnel of co-operating organisations:

a. Issuing temporary AU ID card, allowing transport by both ground and air.

b. Smuggling persons out of the conflict country(s) on ground transport, primarily during convoy operations. This can be dangerous to the lives of the smuggled persons and can endanger the lives and missions of AU personnel.

The absence of firm AU policy on third country nationals may provide room for many actions without official political sanction. Utmost care must therefore be exercised in dealing with these cases, as they can lead to misconceptions between the parties/factions, and especially because unauthorised persons such as mercenaries and terrorists may attempt to abuse the AU facilities and arrangements.