

TASK 10

DEVELOPING WIDER SETS OF RESPONSES WHERE THE PARTIES REFUSE TO CONSENT TO AN EVEN-HANDED 'PEACEKEEPING' APPROACH

Task

- 132 The concept of strategic coercion combines the use of economic sanctions with long-range forceful strategies to pressurise 'rogue states' to accept the demands of the international community. Furthermore, new approaches such as electronic interventions (aimed at public opinion) are being developed to reach into the target state and disrupt sensitive facilities.
- 133 Without a real variety of techniques and instruments of coercion and deterrence, the international community will continue to have difficulty influencing conflicts within a state. In strategic coercion, the intervention techniques are designed to support diplomatic conflict resolution strategies. Public acceptance of those strategies is not guaranteed, however. Furthermore, the use of coercive measures to induce parties to accept a settlement may cause resentment when the same powers attempt to mediate at a later stage. The discussion in syndicate therefore focused on a single question:
- *What are the consequences for doctrine in the use of strategic coercion in early attempts at conflict resolution?*

Summary of points made in discussion

- 134 Strategic coercion should be authorised and co-ordinated at the highest level – by the UN Security Council, ideally. Regional attempts – such as the East African Co-operation (EAC) sanctions against Burundi – are likely to be discredited and fail. Although such actions can be taken relatively lightly, the effects of non-military strategic coercion can be just as devastating as those of military action, and therefore such actions should be planned and evaluated just as carefully. The more dramatic the proposed effects of this coercion, the higher the level of international co-ordination and authorisation that is necessary. Sound evaluation is once again essential and, as with PSOs, this raises questions about how to analyse the costs, benefits and general efficacy of strategic coercion. Particular attention should be paid to the African experiences thus far.

- 135 It is obvious that a government or group of governments opting to use such instruments compromise their impartiality, something that may create problems if they hope to conduct a military peace operation in the same area. This implication needs to be factored into broader policy on intervention, as well as into evolving military doctrine for PSOs.
- 136 Increasingly, technology makes it possible to target individuals – faction leaders, for instance – for non-military coercion (travel bans, freezing of bank accounts, etc.). This aspect also merits further exploration: Who should be targeted, why, and to what effect? At the operational level, attention must be paid to the implementation of strategic coercion – effective instruments must be developed to monitor and deal with non-compliance with sanctions regimes, including the actions of non-state actors.

Unfinished business/Recommendations for further research

- 137 The very nature of the topic led to the syndicate raising more questions, rather than providing answers. In terms of future research, however, participants were able to frame a simple but far-reaching question: Are the emerging methods of deterrence and strategic coercion available to the international community effective and valid in the African context?