

Protection of Civilians AU Guidelines Drafting Workshop

7-11 Dec 2009, Queanbeyan, Australia

The Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence (the Centre), on behalf of the Australian Government and in conjunction with the Peace and Security Commission of the African Union (AU), convened the Protection of Civilians AU Guidelines Drafting Workshop in Queanbeyan, NSW, 7-11 December 2009. The purpose of the Workshop was to prepare AU draft guidelines for the protection of civilians (POC) in peace support missions for consideration at the **International Symposium on the Protection of Civilians in Conflict Zones** which will be held in Addis Ababa from 3-5 March 2010.

The POC Workshop was attended by 20 experts from relevant organisations. In addition to representatives from the AU and the Australian Government, participants included the United Nations (the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees), the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Henry L. Stimson Center, Griffith University and non-government organisations. Invited guests addressed the workshop, including the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM, MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, and the Hon. Justice John Dowd AO, QC, President of the Australian Section of the International Commission of Jurists.

The Workshop developed initial draft POC guidelines at the strategic and operational levels for AU consideration. At the strategic level the draft guidelines aim to assist the AU Peace and Security Council in preparing POC mandates for peace support operations. At the operational level the draft guidelines aim to assist the Africa Standby Force and Heads of Mission in the effective implementation of POC. The draft POC guidelines aim to enhance the development of consistent and effective POC protection objectives and mechanisms, in coordination with other protection actors, the host State, and local communities.

In preparing the draft POC guidelines the Workshop considered recent developments and best practices, including those reflected in relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the Council's annual ***Aide Memoire for the Consideration of Issues Pertaining to the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict***. [Read document here](#).

The Workshop also considered thinking from the recent independent study, ***Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks and Remaining Challenges***. [Read document here](#).