The Humanitarian Security Environment Today
Thursday 17th November 2005
9:15 – 10:30

"There is no greater sorrow on earth than the loss of one's native land."
—Euripides, 431 B.C.

UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

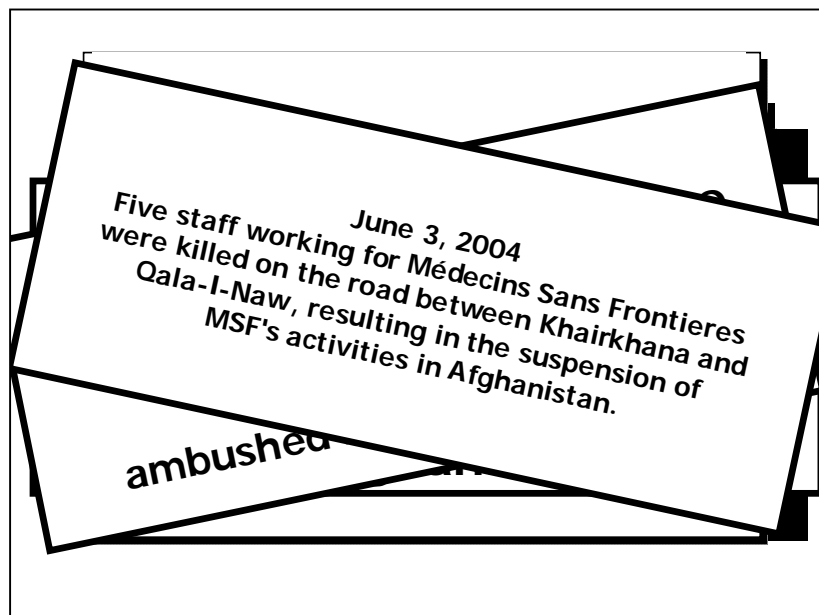**John Campbell**
Training Coordinator
Tokyo

Practical Security in Conflict Zones

Objectives

- Illustrate the importance of practical security in conflict zones

- Means to address the threat

- How to make it safer

June 3, 2004
Five staff working for Médecins Sans Frontieres were killed on the road between Khairkhana and Qala-I-Naw, resulting in the suspension of MSF's activities in Afghanistan.

ambushed

Trends in Security

Killings and severe injuries of the staff members lead to the withdrawals of NGOs from the conflict regions due to too big of a risk to manage. However, these incidents often occur due to the "management" of the security operated by the organizations, such as lack of security and overconfidence. Since avoidable incidents often happen due to the lack of management quality, the authority should always make a hard decision, such as a decision of evacuations and withdrawals, when it comes to the security of the staff members.

"…In particular, the UN security system failed adequately to analyze and utilize information made available to the system on threats against UN staff and premises."

Report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of UN Personnel in Iraq of 20 October, 2003 (Ahtissari Report)

Field Office Atambua after killing of 3 staff members. 2000

> "Decisions on starting such operations must be based on a thorough assessment of the risks, the degree to which running these risks may be warranted by humanitarian imperatives, and the political context. This assessment should be formally recorded."

Recommendation #1 from Report of the Inquiry into the Deaths of Three UNHCR Staff Members in Atambua, Indonesia, on 06 September 2000

Samson Aregahegn | Carlos Caceres | Pero Simundza

Threats

Angola	Chad	Macedonia	BiH	Pakistan
South Africa	Chile	Indonesia	SL	Senegal
Sudan	Egypt	Myanmar	Oman	Rwanda
Afghanistan	Niger	Guatemala	Bolivia	Palestine
Cambodia	Lao	Equador	Serbia	Sierra Leone
Sri Lanka	Nepal	Vietnam	USA	UK
Bangladesh	India	Uzbekistan	Bolivia	Japan

Threats by Regions

What kinds of threats are out there?

(Participants' personal experiences in each region and other threats that can be anticipated)

Examples:

Weapons, making promises, ex-soldiers, "being a woman", traffic accidents, landmines, ethnic tensions, resentment against "foreigners", "terrorists", "unknown", crimes (arm robbery), "environment" (i.e. high altitude, lack of quality medical services etc.), military conflicts (example: Rwanda, Hutus and Tutsis conflict), earthquakes (Japan)

Sources of information

- National staff
- Partner agencies and NGOs
- Security Forces (regular and irregular)
- Government interlocutors
- Community leaders
- The Media
- The Diplomatic community
- Refugees (beneficiaries)
- Other…

→ If you are not given the information you need for your operations, then go look for it yourself!

→ Follow the advice from authority in general, but do not always trust the overly exaggerated information!

International Crisis Group

crisisgroup.org

UN Security Phases

1. Precautionary: Be on alert. UN Staff request security clearance

2. Restricted Movement: Higher alert. Travel authorised by senior management

3. Relocation: Essential staff only – families evacuate

4. Emergency Operations: Mostly all out except those directly concerned with emergency, humanitarian relief operations or security matters. National staff may remain

5. Evacuation: All remaining internationally-recruited UN staff & consultants required to leave

---

What security risk management *is*…

- **A systematic and analytic process of identifying threats to your staff, assets and programmes, and actions to reduce the risk and mitigate the consequences of attack.**

- **A management tool to support decision-making**

- *Mostly something you are doing already! You do it without thinking – the more experienced you are the more readily this is a fact.*
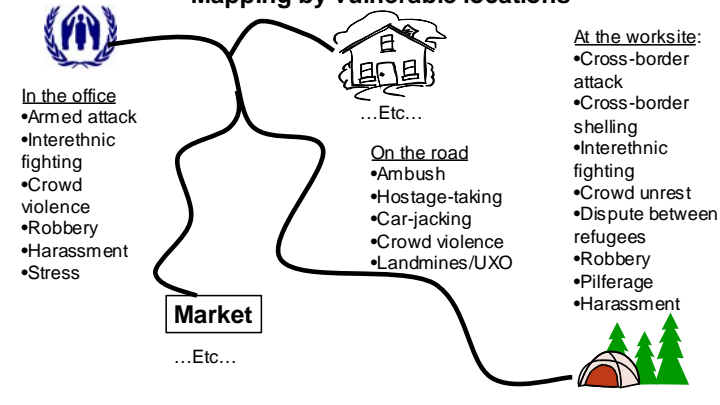
Security risk management is NOT

- **A magic answer to convince others that the situation is safe.**

- **A procedure that will save you from getting hurt**

- **Rocket science !**

Security risk assessment: four good reasons

- It leads to better risk management decisions
- It heightens staff morale confidence
- It provides a common language among partners, leading to common understanding and concerted action
- It supports accountability

Ways of viewing the threat

Mapping by vulnerable locations

…Etc…

In the office
- Armed attack
- Interethnic fighting
- Crowd violence
- Robbery
- Harassment
- Stress

Market

…Etc…

On the road
- Ambush
- Hostage-taking
- Car-jacking
- Crowd violence
- Landmines/UXO

At the worksite:
- Cross-border attack
- Cross-border shelling
- Interethnic fighting
- Crowd unrest
- Dispute between refugees
- Robbery
- Pilferage
- Harassment

Ways of viewing the threat

By potential sources

The population

- Armed attack
- Interethnic fighting
- Crowd violence
- Hostage taking
- Robbery
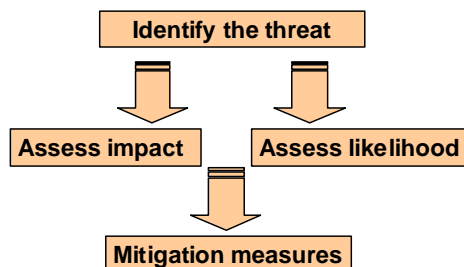- Harassment and intimidation

- Crowd unrest or violence
- Individual disputes

Extremists

- Terrorist attack
- Inciting of crowd violence
- Kidnapping
- Harassment and intimidation

Threat assessment

Identify the threat

Assess impact   **Assess likelihood**

Mitigation measures

BEFORE

Threat	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Extreme Risk
Direct Bomb at Building				■
Collateral Bomb Damage				■
Local Demonstrations			■	
Local Occupation		■		
Refugee Demonstration				■
Occupation by Refugees				■
Assault by Refugee				■
Refugee suicide			■	
Natural Disaster				■

Lowering the Level of Risks = Threat Management

→ One must adapt him/herself to the ever-changing "current" situation (because the threats are always changing like everything else, depends on time and places etc.)

→ Staff members should be constantly informed with the possible threats and risks. (The more the better, but it should be periodical: daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

→ What kind of impact do these changes have on the operation and threat management? How do they affect (political/authority changes, economical changes, societal changes etc.)

AFTER

Threat	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Extreme Risk
Direct Bomb at Building			■	
Collateral Bomb Damage	■			
Local Demonstrations	■			
Local Occupation	■			
Refugee Demonstration			■	
Occupation by Refugees		■		
Assault by Refugee		■		
Refugee suicide		■		
Natural Disaster			■	

Impact vs. Probability Graph

Example (Nepal):

- Maoist-takeover (High Impact – Low Probability)
- Earthquakes (High Impact – High Probability)
- Accidents (High Impact – Medium Probability)
- Crimes (High Impact – High Probability)
    → **Q**. How does one lower the level of impact and probability of each threat?
    → **A**. Through threat management mitigating threats, threat assessments.