Panel Discussion: Panelist Presentation 2
Challenges in UN Integrated Missions
– the perspective of Non-UN humanitarian agencies -
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From this October, I was appointed as an Advisory Board Member of UN CERF Advisory Board Members and with this occasion I was in Geneva about 2 weeks ago and then I was visiting OCHA Geneva Office and I was exactly discussing this integration policy with some OCHA's officials.

She put it in a very interesting way, when I asked that neutrality or independence of humanitarian assistance in integrated mission, she said, "You know, life is messy." That was her expression to describe these things and this correlates that in this morning General Gordon said, "We are not in vacuum, we are in living in complex, chaotic world." This is a kind of conclusion of my presentation. There will be no single silver bullet against these issues, but I will try to discuss about some points.

1. Current Status of UN Integrated Missions (as of Nov. 1, 2012)

First, I would like to give you some overview of integrated missions. Currently, as of November this year, the number of countries where resident coordinator, most of them are UNDP officials. They are stationed in 129 countries. Most of them are non-OECD countries. There are 129 countries where that resident coordinator exists. Among these 129 countries, where resident coordinator holds the post of humanitarian coordinator, it is only 32, and among these 32 countries, DSRSG, which Professor Kamino explained, holds the post of resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator, namely, integrated mission is only 11.

When we are talking about integrated mission, it seems that entire world is occupied by integrated mission, but not. Of course the place that integrated missions are deployed, they are very, very important places. But on the ground and to the NGOs, the integrated mission is kind of a special place. Not so many Japanese NGOs work in the place where the integrated missions are deployed.

2. Definitions in This Presentation: Who Are the Humanitarian Actors?

Then also, I would like to make some definitions in this presentation. Who are the humanitarian actors? Here, I mentioned that the agencies related to humanitarian assistance are, UN agencies are UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, all these agencies, plus IOM, although they are not UN agency. I mean, non-UN agencies are ICRC, IFRC, National Red Cross societies, and NGOs. Among these humanitarian actors, there are different interpretations of humanitarian principles. Especially, I would like to mention about independence.

3. Different Interpretations of Humanitarian Principles: Esp. "Independence"

For UN agencies, the famous UNGA Resolution 46/182 in 1991, it said, humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality, and impartiality.   These three are the important principles for UN agencies, whereas for ICRC and NGOs, one more important principle is independence.   In most of the cases, independence is not really mentioned, but for us, independence is something.   Of course these principles are not primarily moral values, but rather a means to secure access to those who suffer the brunt of conflict and violence and to enhance the effectiveness of aid.

Then, I will show you a very interesting difference in terms of the notion of independence. For example, donor government, Japanese government has issued Humanitarian Aid Policy of Japan last year.   This is issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.   They said that the government of Japan respects the basic principles of humanitarian assistance which are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.   The principle of independence is to maintain autonomy and which is completely different, although we are using the same word of independence, but for us that independence is more or less institutional independence.   This is also a very strong notion of ICRC.

4. Challenges in Integrated Mission: the Perspectives of Non-UN Humanitarian Agencies

Then, what are the challenges in integrated mission.   Especially I would like to talk about from the perspectives of non-UN Humanitarian agencies.   It is often said that this is a push for coherence with an integrated UN mission.   This is a challenge for us.   General Gordon explained that primacy of political affairs, of course that the hierarchy of priorities inherent in the coherence agenda and these are blurring boundaries between humanitarian action and military actions and this is sacrificing humanitarian space or shrinking humanitarian place or this results in erosion of humanitarian space in the name of greater good, that is the political purpose.   Then also, we feel that it resulted in declining the respect for IHL, International Humanitarian Law.   Of course, all of them resulted in insecurity of humanitarian aid workers.

5. Measures Taken by Non-UN Humanitarian Agencies

What we do for these situations?   Some measures are taken by non-UN Humanitarian agencies. Notably ICRC, they are not taking part in the, for example, cluster system as well as integrated mission from the very beginning.   These are from that there are severe needs to maintain the independence.   For NGOs, it is not like the ICRC, but we are also not taking part in or secede from the integrated mission.   What does this mean?   Of course in a way if we are away from integrated mission, yes, at least we can try to preserve our humanitarian space.   But in practice,

we are kind of marginalizing humanitarian agenda in the integrated mission because we are away.

Then also I would like to mention that this integrated mission has close connection with a cluster approach and for Japanese NGOs, there is some controversy. For example, I would like to mention about Japan Platform Mechanism. Japan Platform, JPF, is a mechanism composed of Japanese NGOs, *Gaimusho* or Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and *Keidanren* or Japan Business Association. Those NGOs, currently 36 Japanese humanitarian NGOs are member of Japan Platform. To be a member of Japan Platform, we are asking them to sign the Code of Conduct which makes a top priority of these humanitarian principles. Also, when the JPF member NGOs sends a proposal for funding, Japan Platform Secretariat is asking, is your paper in good coordination with cluster approach, are you a member of UN Cluster Approach. If we say, my organization is working in Afghanistan and Haiti, but we are not in the cluster approach, then the Secretariat said that you are not kind of entitled because it means you are not coordinating with other agencies at all. In a way, the Japan Platform is forcing Japanese NGO to be a member of cluster approach. It means to be integrated mission too. But, in most of the cases we are not really aware of this fact because we need money. This is a reality, but when we think that sometimes this cluster approach results in that sacrificing our neutrality or our independence.

- **Safety and Security Measures**

Then, also that measures are taken for safety and security issues, of course we are trying to avoid misbehavior such as obvious displays of rich equipment. You know that rich equipment, including automobiles, computer, or mobile phone and also clothing, for example, in Afghanistan if you wear jeans or if you are female and if you do not hide your hairs, it is making bad messages. Avoiding misbehavior is a principle.

Also, that we are taking sensitive nationalities approach of expatriates. In most of the cases, if you are the Japanese NGO members and if you are dispatched as a member of Japanese NGOs, it will not create many problems. But if you are Americans or American NGO who are in Iraq, of course this has some messages. This year one ICRC expatriate from UK was kidnapped in Pakistan and then he was killed, unfortunately, and I have heard that this is the first case of murder related to kidnapping of ICRC's 150 years' history. Of course they have lots of causalities, but all the victims of kidnapping were released after a long negotiation for them. This is the first case the victim of kidnapping was killed. There are many explanations, but one of those will be nationality, maybe, so this nationality issue will be very important and also religious and gender sensitivity.

Then this is a very classic thing, but low profiles approach was introduced nowadays. It used to be like this that if you are a member of ICRC with Red Cross, you are not attacked. If you are a NGO member and if you put logos of your organization on the cars' side, you are not attacked. But this is kind of a myth. Then, we are trying to keep our profiles as low as

possible, especially in the Afghanistan.   For example, 20 years ago in Bosnia we are using that Toyota Land Cruiser, but now in Afghanistan we are trying to use local old car so that we are not seen as western humanitarian agencies.   These kinds of low profiles also we are taking.

Of course, defense walls, armed military escort, although this is a last resort.   But many people were saying that this kind of defense walls, huge walls, but it does not help in the longer senses.   No matter how high our walls may be, they can attack it if they want to do.   This kind of defense walls does not help in the end.

We are also applying the remote management system or remote control system with local staff.   The prerequisite of this is that national staff is safer than international staff. International staff is kind of targeting.   This international staff will be out of the country and then local national staff are staying in the country and doing the operations.   But, this is causing a serious ethical and accountability problem right now.   This is also the myth that national staff is safer than international staff.

Yes, it is true but now in Afghanistan, local staff is also attacked because he or she is working for NGOs, whether it is western or it is Asian or NGOs is kind of western idea for some local non-state actors.   Even local staffs are not safe anymore.   It means if we are applying Remote Management System, it means that we are just sacrificing local staff's life to keep us alive.   This is kind of a very serious problem.

Also, accountability problem exists.   Remote Management System is not just a management.   We are leaving a huge amount of money, cash because when we operate we need cash on the ground.   Then, we are paying local staff US $500 or US $1000 per month. Then, we are leaving like US $10,000 in cash or US $100,000 cash using in that month.   This is also sacrificing the safety of local staff as well as we are kind of losing accountability to our donors.   This Remote Management System is kind of a good practice, but it does not serve everything.

Then finally that ICRC's acceptance approach, they are trying to act only with agreement of all parties and they are trying to have open dialogue with all weapon bearers.   Then, they are saying that dialogue and proximity are keywords and sometimes which resulted in that some dangerous situation, but still ICRC's acceptance is a key for the safety and security.

6.   Positive Impacts of Being Inside of the Integrated Mission

Having said that, is there any positive impact of being inside of integrated mission?   If you are inside of the integrated mission that your independence or impartiality or neutrality or safety will be sacrificed, is there any good point?   This is what I was talking with OCHA officials last month and she said, "If we are in the integrated mission, there will be a possibility of humanizing political space and then that mainstreaming humanitarian agenda.   If we are outside of integrated mission,

we are escalating that marginalizing humanitarian assistance. On the other hand, if we are in that we can make some influence and then humanizing political space." It might sound just a playing of words, but still it might have some good message.

Secondly, as I mentioned, I am the member of the advisory board of CERF. CERF is a pooled funding, which are targeting UN agencies and their respective NGO implementing partners in the very severe crisis or forgotten crisis. In order to get this money, you have to be in cluster and you have to be in kind of integrated mission. I will tell you, this is not the real answer of my presentation, "Life is messy and then we are living in complex, chaotic world."