



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF CIVILIAN POLICE AND RULE OF LAW

# General Information Fact Sheet



## Past Missions

- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Croatia
- East Timor
- Macedonia
- OSCE in Vienna
- Serbia & Montenegro
- Sierra Leone

## Present Missions

- Afghanistan
- Haiti
- Iraq
- Kosovo
- Liberia
- Sudan
- Palestinian territories:  
West Bank

## Background

A cornerstone of stable and democratic nations is a criminal justice system in which citizens broadly accept and voluntarily comply with the law. As part of the U.S. Government's mission to support the emergence of stable democracies, especially in areas that have suffered from years of civil strife, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Office of Civilian Police and Rule of Law Programs (INL/CIV) supports programs to help institutionalize sustainable criminal justice sectors, instill public trust in the Rule of Law and protect human rights. INL/CIV's support, often in cooperation with other nations or international bodies, is designed to promote the following institutions:

- Civilian police/law enforcement that prevents, detects and investigates violations of criminal law to identify, apprehend and assist in the prosecution of persons suspected of such violations;
- Public prosecutors to review evidence gathered in a case, make determinations regarding the appropriateness of initiating a criminal prosecution and presenting cases to the courts for adjudication;
- Courts that administer cases, set initial adjudication of guilt or innocence, and conduct appellate review of cases for final determinations of guilt or innocence;
- Prisons or correctional facilities designed to incarcerate and reform those convicted of criminal offenses.

Without a strong and functioning criminal justice system people may by default apply "street justice" acting as judge, jury and jailer while human and civil rights are ignored and violated.

In many countries in which INL/CIV mounts a stabilization and reconstruction mission, previous armed conflict has left the criminal justice system dysfunctional or even completely failed. In such cases crime and public disorder are likely to increase, the government cannot provide efficient services, and the economy cannot flourish. The prompt restoration of public order by non-repressive means, with an approach that includes efforts focused on the police, courts and prisons, is an essential component of post conflict stabilization.

## CIVPOL Rule of Law Programs

Initial civilian police (CIVPOL) missions in post-conflict environments focused almost exclusively on indigenous civilian police and placed little emphasis on other aspects of a host country's criminal justice system. It soon became apparent that by doing so, reform and developmental efforts were not as successful as they could have been, because other criminal justice components such as the prosecutors, courts and correctional organizations had not received commensurate support. Those elements needed reform or development assistance to

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function at a level equivalent to the police.

Accordingly, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), Office of Civilian Police and Rule of Law (CIV) was charged with working with all criminal justice agencies rather than simply the civilian police. INL/CIV now employs senior technical specialists in prosecutorial, judicial and correctional development as well as in the civilian police field. Wherever possible, CIV plans, develops and implements post-conflict reform or redevelopment programs that address each criminal justice system component to maintain equilibrium among all.

Decisions to deploy CIVPOL and/or Rule of Law programs in specific missions are made at the highest levels of the federal government based on consultations among the White House, Department of State, and other agencies. The responsibility for managing U.S. CIVPOL, Rule of Law and related issues generally rests with the Department of State.

### **The CIVPOL Mission**

CIVPOL from the United States and more than 50 other countries are deployed around the globe in support of international post-conflict stabilization and redevelopment operations. Their presence promotes peace and stability in areas recovering from conflict, and their efforts to reform and/or develop indigenous police forces into modern, democratically-oriented law enforcement services helps to ensure that peace and stability can be sustained even after international peacekeepers depart.

Many CIVPOL programs are sponsored by the United Nations (UN), but regional security organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or coalitions of interested countries, sponsor others. Today, more than 1,600 U.S. police are deployed next to their international counterparts in international CIVPOL missions.

The UN launched its first CIVPOL mission in the Congo in 1960, but CIVPOL did not become a major component of peacekeeping operations until the end of the Cold War. Since then, they have become an integral component of what were originally military peacekeeping operations.

CIVPOL missions vary. In some missions, officers perform typical law enforcement functions (patrol, investigation, etc.) in the absence of effective and fair indigenous police forces. In other cases, CIVPOL may be responsible for rebuilding, monitoring, and/or advising local police as they make the transition to democratic policing. In this capacity, CIVPOL may be directly involved in the entry-level, supervisory and managerial training and organizational development activities for a host country's police force.

### **The United States and CIVPOL**

The United States participated in its first CIVPOL operation in 1994 in Haiti. The United States led the multinational military intervention to restore the elected government of Haiti and sponsored a 20-country International Police Monitor (IPM) mission to help provide public security, maintain the rule of law, and establish a new Haitian National Police Service. The IPM mission transitioned to the UN in March 1995.

CIVPOL have become a vital tool of U.S. foreign policy. Only 50 American police officers participated in the Haiti CIVPOL mission in 1994. Since then, more than 7,000 experienced U.S. law enforcement officers and experts have participated in CIVPOL missions in: Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996-2002); the Eastern Slavonia region of Croatia (1996-2003); Palestinian territories: West Bank (2002-present); Sierra Leone (2003-2004); East Timor (1999-2007); OSCE Headquarters in Vienna (2002-2004); Haiti (1996-2000; 2004-present); Kosovo (1999-present); Serbia & Montenegro (2001-2004); Macedonia (2002-2004); Afghanistan (2002-present); Iraq (2003-present); Sudan (2005-present) and Liberia (2003-present).

This dramatic increase in U.S. participation in CIVPOL missions reflects the U.S. Government's recognition of the importance of criminal justice to restoring stability in post-conflict situations. While international military forces often are necessary to restore a secure environment following a major conflict, they generally are not, in themselves, sufficient for the long-term reestablishment of civil order where local institutions have broken down. CIVPOL not only assist international military forces in the short term by addressing and resolving civilian law enforcement issues, but also help develop the local democratic policing institutions that ultimately will be responsible for integrating with the host country's criminal justice system (prosecutor, courts and correctional services) and for providing law and order functions once the military and CIVPOL depart.



UN Formed Police Unit – Liberia (February 2007)