

Strengthening the Security – Development Nexus:

Conflict, Peace and Development in the 21st Century



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Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?

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Executive Summary

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become commonplace to assert that peace and development are intimately linked and that the United Nations (UN) and other international actors need to address the twin imperatives for security and development through integrated policies and programs. Shedding its early definition as “post-conflict reconstruction,” the term “peacebuilding” has broadened its scope in the 1990s to encompass the overlapping agendas for peace and development in support of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction.

While there has been some progress at both the international and country levels to operationalize peacebuilding, the results are ad hoc, tentative and uneven. This paper examines peacebuilding practice since the 1990s with a view to understanding achievements made to date, as well as identifying outstanding political, institutional and operational challenges. The paper argues that the window of opportunity that had opened in the 1990s enabling the UN and other international actors to begin dealing with security and development through integrated peacebuilding approaches might close in the changed international climate after September 11, 2001, unless serious efforts are made to move the peacebuilding agenda forward.

Peacebuilding at the International Level: There have been five important developments supporting the new peacebuilding agenda:

Normative Developments: Throughout the 1990s, a more comprehensive normative framework began to take shape, which recognized that peacebuilding is an important area of international concern. The security agenda was broadened to include human security, with global campaigns to ban anti-personnel landmines, to regulate small arms and light weapons, and to create an international criminal court. Human rights, justice, reconciliation, humanitarian protection, good governance, and rule of law were increasingly accepted as important dimensions of peacebuilding.

Policy Developments: An impressive number of policy initiatives gave impetus to the need to promote human security alongside state security. Conflict prevention, the uses of development assistance to address violent conflicts, more effective peace operations for peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction became officially declared goals and objectives at the international level.

Operational Responses: In response to a series of ethnic conflicts, complex humanitarian emergencies, civil wars, state failures and genocide, the UN and other international actors launched a growing number of multi-dimensional humanitarian, peacemaking and peacekeeping operations, and undertook transitional administrations in Kosovo and East Timor.

Institutional Reform: There was considerable institutional re-organization throughout the international system. New departments and coordination mechanisms were created at the United Nations. Similarly, many governments and donor agencies established conflict prevention and peacebuilding units. Several multi-governmental and non-governmental peacebuilding networks were created. Regional and sub-regional organizations were restructured or their mandates broadened to address violent conflicts. The creation of the International Criminal Court in 2002 capped the peacebuilding and human security agendas.

New Institutional Arrangements: With an ever increasing number of crises around the world, new types of institutional arrangements were constructed to deal with different conflicts. Involving a variable geometry of functional collaboration among a changing set of actors (such as the “coalitions of the willing” or the “UN plus” models), these flexible institutional alliances sought to respond to increasing demand for international assistance.

Peacebuilding at the Country Level: While seeking to enhance their own capacities to respond to violent conflicts, international actors also sought to address the root causes of civil wars and other violent conflicts on the ground through various strategies:

Review of the Impact of Development Strategies and Aid on Conflict: Conventional development strategies and models increasingly came under scrutiny. Closer attention was paid to donor roles and responsibilities in ignoring the sources of violent conflicts, or in directly or indirectly contributing to the exacerbation of conflict through their programming.

New Sectoral Programming: Innovative programs were initiated in support of non-traditional sectoral areas such as post-conflict reconstruction, governance, security sector, transitional justice and rule of law.

New Models of Collaboration: There was growing recognition that, going beyond new sectoral programming, external and internal actors needed a common peacebuilding framework to guide their collective efforts. Unified UN missions and multi-donor trust funds were created to facilitate joint planning and closer alignment of efforts, especially in post-conflict peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding Evaluations: Concurrently, there were serious efforts to track the impact of new peacebuilding approaches and strategies through evaluations and “lessons learned” studies.

Moving the Agenda Forward: The growing international consensus and collaboration since the 1990s around the new peacebuilding agenda was shaken after September 11 and further undermined by the U.S. war on Iraq. The peacebuilding agenda faces several major challenges in the current international environment:

Political Challenges: The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq not only signaled a revival of predominantly military approaches to security; they also led to deep cleavages within the international community about the legitimate use of military power. As the world’s sole

superpower, the U.S. has taken a strongly unilateralist approach which has created dangerous rifts within the Security Council and portends the derailment of the multilateralist consensus about the importance of conflict prevention and peacebuilding that was gaining ground at the United Nations in the aftermath of the Cold War.

Institutional Challenges: Despite several dramatic failures during the 1990s, the UN had come to be considered a key instrument in legitimizing international intervention in the domestic affairs of states in support of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. With the war on Iraq, the UN’s relevance and credibility are in grave jeopardy, yet there are no other international institutions that can play a global role in pushing forth the peacebuilding agenda.

Operational Challenges: Meanwhile, there is continuing need to improve the effectiveness and impact of ongoing peacebuilding programs and activities. These require the deployment of a new generation of international staff with a better understanding of the interlinkages between development and security, and the ability to work in difficult conflict contexts.

Aligning Priorities and Resources: The current distribution of global resources for peace and security on the one hand, and for socio-economic development on the other, reflects distorted international priorities in favor of military expenditures. If conflict prevention and peacebuilding are to address the deep-rooted structural problems that fuel violent conflicts, new and creative ways must be found for generating resources for peacebuilding. Moreover, the role of the UN’s development agencies, bilateral donors, and the Bretton Woods institutions in influencing peacebuilding outcomes in the 21st century need to be considered as part of the Monterrey Process on Financing for Development.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become commonplace to assert that peace and development are intimately linked and that the United Nations and other international actors need to address these twin goals through concerted and integrated policies and programs. Shedding its early definition as “post-conflict reconstruction,” the term “peacebuilding” has broadened its scope in the 1990s to encompass the overlapping agendas for peace and development in support of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction. Yet, peacebuilding remains an amorphous and evolving project that continues to be tested, contested, and challenged by many quarters.*

This paper starts with an effort to bring some clarity to the basic assumptions underlying the new peacebuilding agenda—focusing specifically on the links between security and development at both the international and domestic levels. It then reviews peacebuilding practice that developed in the 1990s, and finally, it examines the challenges that confront the international peacebuilding agenda during the first decade of the 21st century.

It is a dangerous undertaking to view international affairs in ten-year slices. It is even more dangerous to try to summarize a decade of peacebuilding practice which remains a work in progress. However, the international peacebuilding agenda is an ambitious project that carries with it the promise of important changes in international priorities and institutions that have evolved in the last sixty years. Thus, it becomes a special challenge to understand its achievements and identify the obstacles it faces—especially since the special window of opportunity that made it possible risks being closed in the post-September 11 environment unless serious efforts are made to move the agenda forward.

* The term “peacebuilding” entered the international lexicon with former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace*, where it was identified as one of several instruments available to address violent conflicts. Initially, it was defined quite narrowly as post-conflict “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict.” However, it was gradually expanded to refer to integrated approaches to address violent conflict at different phases of the conflict cycle. Thus, conflict prevention and peacebuilding are often considered two sides of the same coin.

I. Security and Development after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War ushered in a new era in international affairs. Not only did the threat of a military confrontation between the two Cold War power blocs dissipate with the collapse of the Soviet Union, but many protracted proxy wars of the Cold War era also ended with the withdrawal of the external support that kept them fueled. The dominant security doctrines of the Cold War had averted war on a global scale, opening the door for the settlement of other lower-level wars and armed conflicts.

However, the anticipated peace dividend did not materialize for hundreds of millions of people around the world. Instead, the early 1990s was a period of intense insecurity, ethnic conflict and genocide, deadly violence with overwhelming civilian deaths and casualties, widespread suffering, and massive refugee and population flows within and across borders. There was a disconnect between the peace that was to arrive with the end of the Cold War and the insecurity that prevailed in many countries and regions.

This inevitably led to a rethinking of international priorities in the immediate post-Cold War era, including the separation between development and security concerns, between inter-state and intra-state conflicts, and between the international and the domestic spheres. The concept of peacebuilding—bridging security and development at the international and domestic levels—came to offer an integrated approach to understanding and dealing with the full range of issues that threatened peace and security.

During the Cold War two parallel but separate sets of architecture were established to address socio-economic development on the one hand, and peace and security on the other. Promoting socio-economic

well-being and addressing basic human needs lay within the sovereign domain of nation-states and was supported by a range of international agencies including the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the socio-economic organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations. Poverty, social injustice, extreme vulnerability, inequality, disease, hunger and civil and political rights were considered areas of domestic jurisdiction and received international support through official development assistance or humanitarian aid.

Meanwhile, the lion's share of international financial resources as well as political and military efforts was devoted to the preservation of peace and security, which was narrowly conceived as the protection of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and vital interests of nation-states. Both at the national and international levels, an elaborate system of security doctrines, instruments and institutions was created to deal with conflicts among states and between the two power blocs. Created as the highest organ for the protection of international peace and security, the United Nations was quickly relegated to a minor role as other security organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact were created outside the UN's framework.

The end of the Cold War offered an opportunity for international actors to revisit dominant conceptions of security and development at both the international and domestic levels, and to devise integrated and coherent policy instruments and programs to address violent conflicts from a peacebuilding perspective.

At its core, peacebuilding aims at the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, the consolidation of peace once violence has been reduced, and post-conflict reconstruction with a view to avoiding a relapse into violent conflict. Going beyond the traditional military, diplomatic and security approaches of the Cold War era, peacebuilding seeks to address the proximate and root causes of contemporary conflicts including structural, political, socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors.

Not all development impacts the security environment. Conversely, not all security concerns have ramifica-

At its core, peacebuilding aims at the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, the consolidation of peace once violence has been reduced, and post-conflict reconstruction with a view to avoiding a relapse into violent conflict.

tions for development. Where the two come together—to cause, perpetuate, reduce, prevent or manage violent conflicts—is the appropriate terrain for peacebuilding at the domestic or international levels. Lying at the nexus of development and security, peacebuilding requires a willingness to rethink the traditional boundaries between these two domains and to expand these boundaries to include other related issue areas such as defense budgets, international trade and finance, natural resource management and international governance, insofar as these may impact on the occurrence of violent conflicts. Peacebuilding also requires a readiness to change the operations and mandates of existing political, security, and development establishments. Most importantly, it requires the ability to make a difference on the ground in preventing violent conflicts or establishing the conditions for a return to sustainable peace.

II. Peacebuilding in Practice: Responses at the International Level

Most of the violent conflicts that confronted the international community in the aftermath of the Cold War were not products of power relations among states. Instead, they arose from and found fertile ground primarily in countries with poor governance, ethnic or religious tensions and structural inequities—issues falling within the development arena.

From an international or macro perspective, peacebuilding therefore meant that the elaborate doctrines, strategies and institutions that were developed during the Cold War to deal with issues of international peace and security were inadequate for dealing with many of these conflicts. Instead, appropriate strategies

had to be found to deal with a new range of problems: civil wars, state failure, natural resource conflicts, complex humanitarian crises involving drought, poverty, HIV/AIDS, the spill-over effects of intra-state conflicts, the operations of non-state actors or global criminal networks fueling armed conflicts through their control of arms, drugs, finances, or illicit trade.

In other words, it was recognized that what happened within the sovereign domain of states had an impact on international peace and security, especially as a result of the cumulative processes of globalization. With the security arrangements and controls of the bipolar world greatly eased, the forces of globalization quickly traversed national borders, linking the local and the global in positive as well as negative ways. Trade, aid, private investments, cross-border movement of arms and populations, and global political, legal or criminal networks had immediate and direct impacts at the domestic and global levels. Advances in information and communication technologies brought the local to the global consciousness, and in turn exposed the local consequences of global actions and institutions. New non-state actors were thrust upon the international stage to demand action on a whole range of issues. Human rights, environmental protection and social justice had both local and global dimensions that could not be dealt with through either domestic or international policies or instruments. The international stage was set to take a holistic look at the complex problems ailing the global community beyond the stability of the international system and the security of states.

At the macro level, the response to the new peacebuilding agenda was fragmented, ad hoc and incremental. In retrospect, however, certain important developments can be identified, including the emergence of the United Nations as an important arena for, and an active supporter of, peacebuilding. As a result, the general overview provided below focuses largely on the United Nations while highlighting selected initiatives by other international actors.

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Normative Developments

Throughout the 1990s, there was a gradual elaboration of an expanded normative framework for international affairs under the UN umbrella. In the early part of the decade, a series of international conferences sought to generate a global agenda on issues ranging from population and sustainable development to human rights and gender. These conferences served to underline the importance of multilateral approaches to addressing global problems and affirmed the role of the United Nations as an important instrument of global governance. The Millennium Declaration gave expression to the deepest aspirations of the global community and provided a plan of action to deal with the world's most persistent problems.

In tandem with developments at the United Nations, several governmental and non-governmental actors championed a number of issues which came to be subsumed under the new "human security" agenda. The campaigns to ban anti-personnel landmines, to regulate small arms and light weapons, and to establish an international criminal court were part of the emerging international commitment to human security. The landmines campaign and the call for an international criminal court led to new international treaties which were ratified in record time.

Meanwhile, the Security Council saw an expansion of the range of issues brought before it, including human rights abuses, protection of civilians in war, small arms, and natural resources in armed conflict. Perhaps the most remarkable among the issues the Security Council considered was HIV/AIDS as a security threat. Since many of these issues had traditionally been viewed as falling within the sovereign domain of member states, the Security Council's willingness to consider them represented an important development. Breaking away with its tradition of dealing with individual crises, the Council passed a number of thematic resolutions on such issues as human rights, small arms, and children and armed conflict. Subsequent Council resolutions were drafted to take into account these international commitments. In line with its new interest in human security, the Security Council devoted an increasing proportion of its deliberations to crises in Africa. It also began

employing traditional instruments such as sanctions in novel ways in an effort to end various conflicts.

The international public reaction to the tragic conflicts around the world led to growing calls for “humanitarian intervention” in sovereign states, causing considerable unease among the UN’s member states. Although the United Nations refrained from dealing with it formally, the report published by the independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) entitled *Responsibility to Protect* was groundbreaking, offering a normative framework for humanitarian interventions.

In short, throughout the 1990s, a more comprehensive normative framework began to take shape, which recognized that human security and peacebuilding are areas of legitimate international concern. It also served to legitimize both coercive and consent-based activities in support of those goals—although the military interventions in Kosovo and Afghanistan stretched the limits of the newly emerging normative framework.

Policy Developments

At the United Nations, a series of policy documents underpinned the new security agenda. *An Agenda for Peace* (1992) forcefully linked the imperatives for peace and development and identified the various instruments for linking them. The *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace* (1995) and *An Agenda for Development* (1995) went further in elaborating these linkages. These were followed by a series of high level reports, including Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s report on *Prevention of Armed Conflict* (2001) and the August 2000 *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (otherwise known as the Brahimi Report after the Panel chair, UN Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi). In July 2003, after considerable political groundwork and heated debate, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on conflict prevention, clearly signaling its cautious acceptance by the UN’s member states.

Outside the United Nations, the single most important policy initiative was the formulation and publication of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance

Committee’s *The DAC Guidelines: Helping Prevent Violent Conflict* (1997), which was supplemented in 2001. The *Guidelines* were pathbreaking in offering donors new ways of thinking about how to address violent conflict; they provided both the rationale and the conceptual framework for linking development and security. The OECD DAC’s work was influential at both the multilateral and national levels, preparing the ground for further policy development. For example, the communiqué issued after the December 1999 meeting of G-8 Foreign Ministers committed the G-8 to conflict prevention by serving as a catalyst for assisting other relevant actors as well as taking concrete steps to deal with specific issues including child soldiers, mercenaries, illicit conflict trade, organized crime and weapons proliferation.

Key governments began to revise their own security and development policies with a view to incorporating peacebuilding objectives by bringing together relevant departments and ministries responsible for defense, trade, foreign affairs and development assistance. Ironically, the National Security Strategy of the United States, published in September 2002, is perhaps the most comprehensive document in establishing the linkages between military, diplomatic and developmental objectives and instruments.

Operational Responses

The 1990s witnessed a series of violent crises, each of which required a range of operational responses. The Security Council, whose activities had been paralyzed due to the predictable vetoes of the superpowers from 1945 to 1989, became the primary arena for international efforts in crisis management and peacebuilding. With only eleven vetoes from 1990 to 2001, the Council considered and authorized a series of peacekeeping operations. Currently the UN is running thirteen peacekeeping operations and twelve peace and political missions in post-conflict societies. Two types of UN missions deserve special attention since they represent peacebuilding in practice.

Multifunctional Peace Operations: These missions are radically different from traditional peacekeeping operations since they involve a combination of military and civilian tasks and are often deployed in

contexts where there is little peace to keep. Instead, they are part of a broader commitment to ending wars and promoting longer-term peacebuilding through a mix of instruments and tools. Some ninety countries have been involved in UN peace operations, providing over 40,000 political and military personnel. In light of the tragic failure of several of these missions, the Brahimi Report was commissioned to provide an in-depth critique of the conduct of these operations since it is recognized that demand for these types of missions is unlikely to decrease in the coming years.¹

Transitional Administrations: Transitional administrations are considered the most complex operations undertaken by the United Nations since they involve direct UN administration of territories and populations in the absence of a sovereign government. Kosovo (1999–) and East Timor (1999–2002) are the two main examples of transitional administrations, with Afghanistan (2002–) representing a hybrid case. There is considerable research and analysis documenting the shortcomings, as well as the achievements, of these unique missions. What is remarkable, however, is that the UN agreed to undertake them and, in the case of Kosovo, has continued its engagement with no definite end in sight.²

Despite their rising numbers, the UN-led peace missions were inadequate to meet rising demands. As a result, other international or regional organizations, including NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as individual governments, assumed active roles in responding to selected conflicts through special arrangements, such as the NATO-led operation in Kosovo, the provision of the Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG), the British intervention in Sierra Leone, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and the more recent Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). These missions were generally launched in support of UN-endorsed resolutions, even when they were not directly enforced or implemented by the UN.

Concurrently, regional organizations began to strengthen their own rapid response capabilities. For example, on the European side, consistent with efforts

to design a common European security and defense policy, the European Union began to develop an autonomous capacity to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises and to develop the necessary non-military capacities in support of the EU's commitment to conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding.

Institutional Reform

A range of institutional reforms throughout the international system accompanied the above changes in policy and practice. There were numerous proposals for fundamental overhaul of the UN system to respond to new challenges. Predictably, these quickly ran into political obstacles among the UN's member states. With little likelihood of political reform, there were several waves of bureaucratic reforms that led to the creation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Although each of these departments continued to have separate mandates and functioned largely in isolation from the UN's development agencies, various ad hoc mechanisms were established to encourage inter-departmental and inter-agency cooperation or collaboration, such as the Executive Committee for Peace and Security (ECPS).³

There was a corresponding revision of institutional structures within individual governments and inter-governmental organizations. Major aid agencies and foreign affairs departments established conflict prevention or peacebuilding units, such as the Post-Conflict Unit at the World Bank, the Office of Transition Initiatives at USAID, the Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Department at DFID, and their counterparts in other donor capitals. There was a serious effort on the part of several Western governments to align their foreign, security, and development policies and programs to respond to the conflict prevention and peacebuilding agenda. Perhaps the most innovative effort was undertaken by the United Kingdom government, which created two multi-departmental funding pools, the Africa Pool and the Conflict Pool, to support peacebuilding activities as part of a common governmental strategy.⁴

Simultaneously, new inter-governmental networks, such as the OECD DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development, and the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction (CPR) Donors' Network, were created to build upon and further consolidate innovations among donor countries. These were complemented by national or regional NGO networks in Europe and North America, including the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee, both of which established close relations with their governmental counterparts.

Regional and sub-regional organizations also found their mandates greatly affected by conflicts in their regions. In Africa, for example, where there were few robust security institutions, organizations whose primary mandates were economic development or regional integration were tasked with conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) established its Conflict Management Unit; sub-regional economic development organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), ECOWAS, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) stepped in to address the mushrooming conflicts in their regions. The more recent creation of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) represent significant innovations by African governments to deal with the continent's security and development problems in an integrated way.

No single initiative reflects the new mood at the international level better than the process that led to the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC). During the Cold War, it would have been unthinkable for the United Nations to mobilize the political will to create the ICC. But the Rome Treaty was signed in 2002 and the new court was created with unusual speed, giving international legitimacy to the human security and peacebuilding agenda.

New Institutional Arrangements

The range and complexity of the crises that erupted in the 1990s, as well as the increasing demand for international intervention, put a serious strain on the capacities of the United Nations. Moreover, after tragic failures in Somalia and Rwanda, there was growing

reluctance at the Security Council to undertake additional peace missions on its own. As a result, new types of institutional arrangements were created to deal with different conflicts. These involved a variable geometry of functional collaboration among a changing set of actors, such as the "coalitions of the willing" or the "UN plus" models involving a lead nation and/or regional partner organizations. For example, the international presence in Kosovo rested on a four-pillar structure involving the UN, NATO, the EU and the OSCE. Inevitably, these hybrid arrangements have led to important questions about the implications of the regionalization of peacebuilding and the emergence of a hierarchy of regional crises and responses in the new international order.⁵

III. Peacebuilding in Practice: Responses at the Country Level

The Cold War did not only distort the international agenda, it also distorted the domestic priorities and prospects of many developing countries. One of the most profound legacies of the Cold War is that the post-colonial struggles for national liberation that led to the creation of many newly independent states did not also lead to economic independence. In fact, many newly established states, closely aligned to one of the two superpowers, became client states, depending heavily on external military assistance and economic aid for their survival. National governments that attempted radical reforms, such as Iran and Guatemala, saw their efforts quickly blocked when these reforms threatened the vital interests of the superpowers or their allies. Non-aligned states that sought to preserve some degree of independence from the East-West conflict, such as Egypt and Indonesia, found themselves trapped in a futile arms race to ensure regime stability and security. State security institutions, including armies, police and intelligence forces, amassed great power and the lion's share of resources while basic socio-economic needs were left unaddressed. Unrepresentative, corrupt or repressive governments that failed to address the most basic needs of their populations were nonetheless artificially propped up in the name of international peace and security. The disconnect between political/security priorities and developmental goals could not have been greater.

Created in the early years of the Cold War, the international development aid system further reinforced the gap between the political/security interests of governments and the socio-economic needs of their populations. Many governments were rewarded for their political allegiances through military or development assistance despite their dismal domestic records.

The end of the Cold War and the resultant disengagement of the major powers from countries that had been in the frontlines of superpower rivalry exposed the vulnerability of many post-colonial states. Deprived of external support, a number of states were seriously weakened and began to implode. The reasons for the hollowing-out of the state and its institutions in these contexts could no longer be ignored. A closer look at crisis countries revealed a dangerous mix of factors: failed economic policies which had often been vigorously supported by donor governments or international financial institutions; over-stretched social services that could not cope with population growth, rapid urbanization, or pandemics such as HIV/AIDS; corrupt, repressive and self-serving governments or shadow states run by criminal networks; and widespread poverty, marginalization and absence of hope for the future.

Peacebuilding at the country level posed special difficulties in light of the strong injunctions against external intervention in the sovereign affairs of states. The new international agendas for conflict prevention, humanitarian intervention, transitional administrations and post-conflict reconstruction were received with varying degrees of suspicion or outright rejection by many governments. Some were concerned that the peacebuilding agenda represented a new “mission civilisatrice” and feared that the ascendancy of liberal market economies would further marginalize them. From a radically different perspective, other governments feared that the new international focus on violent conflicts would detract from the commitments made to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by diverting scarce financial resources for political purposes. Still other governments expressed skepticism about the double standards and the emerging hierarchy of priorities in certain regions, such as the Balkans, in the post-Cold War environment.

Despite these political sensitivities, the linkages between security and development came to the fore in many developing countries in light of their dismal records in providing either security or development to their populations and also as a result of domestic and external pressures. At the country level, peacebuilding meant supporting policies, activities, programs, and projects which would allow war-prone, war-torn, or post-war countries to transform and manage their conflicts without violence in order to address longer-term developmental goals. International actors have embraced a range of policies and strategies to support peacebuilding at the country level.

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Review of the Impact of Development Strategies and Aid on Conflict

The peacebuilding agenda was launched at a time when socialist or command economies were largely discredited and the Washington consensus on market liberalization reigned largely unchallenged. Nonetheless, with many developing countries experiencing violent conflicts, there was a proliferation of research examining the links between violent conflicts and failures of development. Going beyond a narrow concern for aid effectiveness, new research (often funded by donor agencies) explored the destabilizing consequences of globalization; the role of trade, investments and the private sector in conflict zones; and the failures of land reform, structural adjustment policies and financial crises contributing to social unrest and civil wars. There was growing evidence of the complex interplay between failed development strategies, the impact of globalization, the expansion of global criminal networks, and civil wars. This led to a better understanding of the political economy of armed conflicts and the need to tailor development strategies with a view to preventing violent conflicts and promoting peacebuilding.

It is too early to point to any radical changes in development policies. However, there is growing interest even in the bastions of liberal orthodoxy, like the World Bank, in paying closer attention to the “conflict trap.”⁶ Given the role of international financial institutions and donor agencies in shaping development strategies around the world, any rethinking of development policies from a peacebuilding perspective is bound to have long-term repercussions in conflict-prone, conflict-torn, and post-conflict countries.

Similarly, the pervasiveness and intensity of intra-state conflicts and complex humanitarian emergencies have led to a re-assessment of existing donor agency policies and instruments of aid. Traditionally, development actors have adopted one of three approaches in dealing with conflict. The predominant approach has been to work “*around conflict*”—treating it as a “negative externality” to be avoided. In cases where the conflict has not been avoidable, development agencies have either stopped their development assistance or resorted to humanitarian assistance, or have tried to continue their work “*in conflict*” while trying to minimize conflict-related risks to their programming. In exceptional cases, development actors have deliberately worked “*on conflict*” by acknowledging and setting out to address the interlinkages between conflict and development programming.⁷

Recent research, including the pioneering studies on “Do No Harm,” the OECD DAC study on the incentives and disincentives of development assistance, and various conflict analysis frameworks or peace and conflict impact assessment (PCIA) methodologies, have generated compelling evidence that development aid is neither neutral nor necessarily peace-inducing.⁸ As a result, and in line with the aforementioned OECD DAC guidelines, there have been pioneering efforts on the part of some donors and UN agencies to undertake “conflict-sensitive development.”⁹

New Sectoral Programming: Supply vs. Demand-driven Approaches

The rethinking of mainstream development models for promoting peacebuilding led into areas that were traditionally beyond the realm of development

assistance, such as governance, human rights, justice and reconciliation, demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration, and security sector reform. Donors and international agencies responded to the challenge of peacebuilding primarily by designing and implementing new projects, activities and programs.¹⁰

Many of these programs were supply-driven and were developed by international actors whose roles and mandates were overtaken by profound changes in the international environment in the 1990s and who wanted to carve out a new niche for themselves. Concurrently, there was a smaller set of demand-driven programs and projects which evolved as ad hoc responses to emergent crises or conflicts when conventional approaches proved inadequate or inapplicable.¹¹

Human rights organizations, development NGOs like OXFAM and CARE, regional economic organizations such as SADC and ECOWAS, and even the international financial institutions, including the World Bank, have begun to identify ways in which they could better implement their current mandates or expand them in order to respond to the multiple peacebuilding requirements of conflict-torn, conflict-prone or post-conflict countries. Notwithstanding internal debates, there has been a significant shift in thinking on the part of many humanitarian aid agencies to identify a peacebuilding role for humanitarian actors in complex political emergencies.¹²

There are three sectors where international actors have begun to design and develop new programs and activities or have revised their ongoing programs to respond to peacebuilding objectives. These are governance, security sector, and rule of law. Programming in these sectors is largely experimental in nature and not integrated either vertically within each sector or horizontally across the three sectors. Even more problematically, they are often treated as technical problems to be solved instead of part of a larger peacebuilding framework. Nonetheless, they are important in highlighting how the development and security agendas can be linked at the programming level.

Governance Programming: Governance shapes a society’s capacity to reconcile conflicting interests and

manage change peacefully; it thus lies at the heart of conflict prevention, resolution and management. Yet, traditionally neither development nor security agencies concerned themselves directly with governance. With a series of weak, failing or vulnerable states, both development and security communities have begun to develop an interest in governance programming. The UN is increasingly aware of the need to integrate governance issues into its diplomatic, peace-making and peace-enforcement operations through the provision of technical assistance for constitution making, election monitoring, and public sector reform. Similarly, international development agencies are giving greater weight to governance issues through support for democratization projects, elections monitoring, civil society support, transparency and anti-corruption initiatives, as well as conflict resolution programming.

Security Sector Programming: Traditionally, the security sector fell within the exclusive domain of political and security institutions. However, development actors have increasingly moved into areas such as security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and the protection of vulnerable and war-affected populations. Recognized as central to peacemaking, peace implementation and post-conflict rebuilding, security is now defined to include both military and non-military threats such as criminal violence and the economic activities of peace spoilers. In tandem, there has been a growing interest in addressing security issues through a fundamental restructuring of security institutions such as the police and the army, and instituting civilian oversight to advance democratic control and accountability. A great deal of work, both practical and analytical, has been undertaken in the past decade in the area of security sector reform.

Rule of Law Programming: Rule of law has emerged as another new area of programming, embracing multiple aspects such as the promotion of human rights, constitution-making, transitional justice mechanisms, and legal and penal reform. While its centrality to peacebuilding is acknowledged, its links to governance and security programming are still not fully understood or adequately exploited. Instead, there has been a proliferation of rule of law initiatives and

activities in peace operations, in post-conflict reconstruction, and in supporting governments to strengthen their legal institutions without a longer-term peacebuilding agenda.

Beyond Sectoral Programming: New Models of Collaboration

While the programming innovations described above are important, they are insufficient to yield sustainable peacebuilding outcomes. Peacebuilding is ultimately a political exercise and one of the main challenges that all external actors face is how to influence that political process in a constructive way. Peacebuilding requires a fundamental rethinking of the terms of engagement between the “internationals” and national or sub-national actors, including governments, communities, NGOs, and other social or political groups in conflict zones. It is not obvious that this type of fundamental rethinking has begun to take place despite the impressive policy statements and guidelines emerging from the United Nations and the OECD Development Assistance Committee’s work on conflict, peace and development cooperation. With few exceptions, there is little evidence that peacebuilding as political engagement is being mainstreamed into the thinking, planning or operations of the key donor agencies, or that it is being taken on board effectively by governments of recipient countries.

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In addition to its political sensitivities, one of the most serious limitations in moving the peacebuilding agenda forward at the country level is the lack of a common peacebuilding framework that can guide multiple external and internal actors. In cases where there is a unified UN mission as in Sierra Leone or Afghanistan, this problem is partially addressed. However, in conflict or post-conflict contexts where governments are weak or dysfunctional, the presence of multiple

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Compounding the lack of a common peacebuilding framework, the new programming areas which involve greater intrusion in the domestic affairs of states require engagement with a new cast of actors and appropriate mechanisms among external and internal actors. Perhaps the most useful tool in this regard is the multi-donor reconstruction trust funds that were created to align donor and national government priorities. Nonetheless, despite much rhetorical progress, it is difficult to demonstrate that there has been a fundamental change in the power relations between donors and recipients, especially in conflict contexts.

Fundamentally, development assistance has not changed at the core, and practical instruments such as conflict analysis tools or peace and conflict impact assessment methodologies remain experimental. Despite lip service being paid to the centrality of local ownership of peacebuilding, it is not clear that international actors have developed effective strategies for assessing local needs, setting priorities, allocating resources and establishing accountability.

Thus, one of the overarching challenges is how to go beyond established patterns and relationships between donors and recipients to achieve peacebuilding outcomes.

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Peacebuilding Evaluations

Ultimately, peacebuilding needs to be judged by its outcomes rather than its objectives. The United Nations system, donor governments, regional organizations, international NGOs and other international actors have individually and collectively started to document what are collectively called “Policy Guidelines,” “Lessons Learned,” and “Best Practices” in peacebuilding. These include, for example, sectoral studies on key components of the new peacebuilding agenda such as peace implementation and peace enforcement; security sector reform; truth and reconciliation; gender and peacebuilding; governance and participation. They also include operational lessons on inter-agency collaboration and coordination, institutional and individual skills development and training, new funding mechanisms, timing of interventions and exit strategies.

However, peacebuilding evaluations remain an underdeveloped area.¹³ Unless there is growing evidence that changes in programming, institutional reform, and more effective collaboration and coordination among different actors serve to promote conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction, the peacebuilding agenda will not be sustainable politically or in terms of deploying the necessary resources. There are compelling reasons why it is difficult to evaluate peacebuilding. Nonetheless, given the recent demands for aid effectiveness and new models (such as the Millennium Challenge Account) to reward countries with a strong performance record, countries in conflict zones might be penalized for their poor development performance, further exacerbating their developmental and security problems, unless there is robust evidence that peacebuilding makes a difference on the ground.

IV. Moving the Agenda Forward

The growing international consensus and collaboration in the 1990s on the importance of the peacebuilding agenda were shaken by September 11 and further undermined by the U.S. war on Iraq. After September 11, there has been a rapid return by numerous countries, and most importantly the United States, to state-centric conceptions of security with human

security, conflict prevention and peacebuilding moving to the back of the international agenda.

Yet the key lesson of the 1990s is not that state-centric security is unimportant. On the contrary, the failed and failing states that came to threaten peace and security in the last decade clearly demonstrated the need for viable states that can protect their own security and that of their populations. The key lesson of the 1990s is that many of the new threats that confront the international community do not lend themselves to traditional security approaches and require integrated, longer-term strategies.

One of the most dangerous consequences of the renewed focus on state-centric security is the willingness of the U.S. and some other governments to consider retreating from hard-gained commitments to human rights, good governance, and rule of law.

However, both in Afghanistan and in Iraq military responses have crowded out effective strategies for peacebuilding. Similarly, the war on terror is treated primarily as a military threat. Yet terrorism is a diffuse, multifaceted threat, perpetrated mostly by mobile non-state actors. While it utilizes military tools, its primary targets are civilian and it is designed to create psychological damage. Most significantly, terrorism grows exceptionally well in environments of underdevelopment, political repression, poor governance, social injustice and deep-rooted grievances. None of these conditions are amenable to traditional security instruments. While terrorist activists can be pursued and dealt with through police or military methods, terrorism itself needs to be addressed through socio-cultural, economic and political instruments to transform the conditions that allow terrorism to grow and terrorists to operate.

Taking a narrow view of terrorism and many of the new threats that confront the international community in the 21st century would be a great error. Already, military priorities and responses have dwarfed other priorities on the international agenda. Cleavages

between the United States and its allies and other key players have relegated other crises such as the DRC or Liberia to the sidelines. The international resources allocated to Afghanistan and Iraq are at the expense of unmet needs and emergencies in other parts of the world—especially in Africa.

One of the most dangerous consequences of the renewed focus on state-centric security is the willingness of the U.S. and some other governments to consider retreating from hard-gained commitments to human rights, good governance, and rule of law. There is growing evidence that countries around the world are asked to redouble their efforts in the fight against terrorism through the use of traditional security instruments. Security agencies that were gradually being brought under democratic oversight and accountability are, once again, given the green light to place state security above other concerns. Military establishments, intelligence services, and defense budgets are being generously rewarded through foreign aid. Meanwhile, long-term investments in peacebuilding are diverted to increasing military expenditures. The prospects of an integrated security and development agenda is challenged on several fronts:

Political Challenges

As the world's sole superpower in a unipolar world, the United States embraced a unilateral policy of preemptive use of force after September 11. This has not only created dangerous cleavages within the Security Council and caused serious strains in trans-Atlantic relations. It has also weakened the multilateralist consensus that was gaining ground at the United Nations on the limits of military force in international affairs and the expanded concept of collective security. These developments are likely to undermine the credibility and relevance of the United Nations as a universal organization with global reach and legitimacy, especially in the Arab and Muslim world, where some of the new security threats currently emanate from, as well as in Africa, where human security remains a major area of concern. The High Level Panel established by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to address the crisis in international security can play an important role in leading to a collective understanding

of, and commitment to, both a human and global security agenda. Without concerted, serious and sustained efforts to address the political challenges described above, the world is likely to be an even more insecure place in the coming years.

Institutional Challenges

The institutional challenges relate to the role of the United Nations in international affairs as well as its relations with other regional or international organizations. Despite its dramatic failures and shortcomings during the 1990s, there was a growing consensus that the UN provided the key instrument for legitimizing international intervention in the domestic affairs of states. Yet the U.S.-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated the limits of the United Nations in playing an effective role in “first tier” security problems. In many ways, the UN is being left to deal with the world’s neglected conflicts while important security problems are addressed outside the UN. The creation of a multi-tier security architecture, with the United States and major powers turning to other fora such as the G-8 or NATO, might again relegate the UN to a secondary role in the security area. This is ultimately bound to further weaken the UN’s already limited institutional and financial resources and capabilities.

The institutional reform issues require serious attention. The UN Secretary-General’s High Level Panel is expected to examine the key institutional challenges to revitalizing the United Nations. Over the years, there have been numerous proposals for UN reform. Instead of generating another reform proposal, the Panel would do well to focus on identifying ways of garnering the necessary political will to move ahead with UN reform.

Concurrently, serious efforts are needed to strengthen other regional or international institutions, especially the newly created African Union and NEPAD, to ensure that African conflicts do not fall off the international agenda. The G-8 and other donors have expressed their commitment to these institutions. However, both institutions need to demonstrate to the donor community as well as to their publics how they intend

to address the developmental and security challenges on the continent.

However, beyond strengthening existing institutions, there needs to be a fundamental review of the current division of labor between political, security and development institutions and agencies at the national and international levels. The international architectures for security and development that were created in the immediate years after World War II are anachronistic at the start of the 21st century. The international aid system is particularly problematic as it has increasingly come to be shaped by donor priorities and vested constituencies instead of the needs of recipient countries.

Similarly, at the international level, the absence of a rapid reaction military or civilian force at the service of the United Nations remains a serious shortcoming with grave consequences. The lack of accountability at the international level for colossal acts of omission or commission by the Security Council and other international organs has become an area of serious debate. There are numerous initiatives examining new models of global governance, but the political challenges described above have made it even harder to reach agreement among the UN member states about how to reform the existing international institutions or consider creating new ones.

Operational Challenges

The third set of challenges relate to operational issues. There is overwhelming evidence that the United Nations as well as other actors who deal with issues of conflict prevention, conflict management, and post-conflict reconstruction are seriously under-resourced and suffer from a serious disconnect between policies promoted at headquarters and the implementation in the field. There is urgent need for the deployment and training of a new generation of staff who have a holistic understanding of the new range of developmental and security challenges confronting the international community. There is also need for more effective mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration among diverse actors and institutions with different mandates. This has to be supplemented with

better capacity for strategic analysis and knowledge management, as well as better planning and delivery of peacebuilding programs on the ground. The development of more rigorous and reliable evaluation methodologies is essential for this purpose.

Aligning Priorities and Resources

The final set of challenges deal with strategic priorities and resources which are intimately linked. The current distribution of global resources for peace and security on the one hand, and for socio-economic development on the other, reflects the distorted international priorities of the Cold War era in favor of military expenditures. New and creative ways of generating resources for the twin goals of peace and development are already under consideration, including ways of tapping into the global wealth being created through the immense forces of globalization such as the Tobin Tax. More important than additional resources is the need to manage these resources from a strong conflict prevention and peacebuilding perspective. In this regard, the roles of the UN's development agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the Bretton Woods institutions in influencing peacebuilding outcomes in the 21st century need to be part of the Monterrey Process on Financing for Development.

Conclusion

An unusual window of opportunity opened in the 1990s which provided the international community

with the promise and the potential for addressing the global search for security and development through integrated peacebuilding approaches. That window of opportunity risks being closed while international attention again turns to issues of hard security. The advances made in the 1990s are not unimportant, but they are fragile enough to be reversed. The challenges described above require serious attention and commitment by a wide range of actors, including the member states of the United Nations, national governments, and non-governmental organizations and institutions. It would be a great mistake to underestimate the significance of the normative, political, institutional and operational changes that have been undertaken since the 1990s and to allow these gains to be overtaken by the climate of fear that has marked international affairs since September 11. The case has to be made continuously that development and security need to be mutually reinforcing—especially when many of the threats that confront the international community emanate largely from failures of development.

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Endnotes

- 1 William J. Durch, et. al., *The Brahimi Report and the Future of UN Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: The Henry J. Stimson Center, 2003).
- 2 The most comprehensive work to date on transitional administrations is by Simon Chesterman, *You, the People: Transitional Administration, State-Building, and the United Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). On Kosovo, see William O'Neill, *Kosovo: An Unfinished Peace* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002). On East Timor, see Ian Martin, *Self-Determination in East Timor: The United Nations, the Ballot, and International Intervention* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001).
- 3 For a very insightful account of the institutional changes at the United Nations to bring the UN's conflict management and development work in alignment, see Michele Griffin, "The Helmet and the Hoe: Linkages Between United Nations Development Assistance and Conflict Management," *Global Governance* 9:2, 2003.
- 4 DFID has commissioned an evaluation of the Conflict Pool and Africa Pool which should be available in early 2004. It will be interesting to learn to what extent the two pools have been able to overcome distinct institutional cultures to support a set of initiatives that reflect a common strategy.
- 5 See Michael Pugh and Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, eds., *The United Nations and Regional Security: Europe and Beyond* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003).
- 6 See Paul Collier, et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2003).
- 7 Jonathan Goodhand with P. Atkinson, *Conflict and Aid: Enhancing the Peacebuilding Impact of International Engagement: A Synthesis of Findings from Afghanistan, Liberia and Sri Lanka* (London: International Alert, 2001).
- 8 Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999); Peter Uvin, "The Influence of Aid in Situations of Violent Conflict" (Paris, OECD Development Assistance Committee, Informal Task Force on Conflict, Peace, and Development Co-operation), available at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/pdf/synth_fin.pdf>.
- 9 Cynthia Gaigals with Leonhardt, M., *Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development: A Review of Practice* (London: International Alert & International Development Research Centre, 2001), available at <<http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/pubdev/develop.pdf>>.
- 10 The United Nations has recently released a report by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (A/58/382) entitled "Review of Technical Cooperation in the United Nations." It reviews the nature of technical cooperation in all of the UN's numerous departments and agencies with a view to identifying how their mandates and functions overlap. The annexes on peacebuilding and rule of law programming cover some fifteen types of activities ranging from DDR to legislatures, elections, crime and drugs. These are delivered by a multitude of agencies, including UNDP, DPA, DPKO, UNHCR, UNIFEM and others. It is difficult to understand the comparative advantage of each program or agency, and even more difficult to determine how these discrete programs contribute to a common purpose.
- 11 Elizabeth M. Cousens and Chetan Kumar with Karin Wermester, *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001).

- 12 Manuela Leonhardt, *Conflict Impact Assessment of EU Development Co-operation with ACP Countries: A Review of Literature and Practice* (London: International Alert & Saferworld, 2000).
- 13 The peacebuilding evaluation literature is growing rapidly. Evaluation studies can be grouped into distinct categories: a) project evaluations; b) program/sectoral evaluations; c) country-level evaluations and d) impact evaluations. There are several useful annotated bibliographies which provide an overview of the different types of evaluation studies. Most recent among these is a study by Swedish Sida, Evaluation 00/37:1, entitled "Assessment of Lessons Learned From Sida Support to Conflict Management and Peace Building: State of the Art/Annotated Bibliography." In addition, there is a growing number of reviews of donor activities and lessons learned in different areas. The most recent ones were published by the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands on "International Human Rights Assistance" by William G. O'Neill; "International Electoral Assistance" by Benjamin Reilly, and on "International Media Assistance" by Ross Howard. Collectively, they provide interesting insights into donor objectives, activities, experiences and lessons learned.

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