

First Quarter, 2003

# Global Future



*UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan*

**NGOs in conflict prevention**

*UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan*

**Development and Peace**

*Paul Collier, World Bank*

**Hope in a time of anxiety**

*Archbishop Peter Watson*

**Blessed  
are the Peacemakers**

**Human security in 2003**

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## In it together

**UNITED NATIONS** Secretary-General Kofi Annan points out in our lead article that 'effective conflict prevention is a long-term investment.' On that much there likely would be little disagreement. He and others in this issue go on to say that responsibility for preventing conflict lies not only with those traditionally considered responsible—governments, for instance, or the United Nations—but those in civil society, such as NGOs and development agencies.

'The conventional view of civil war was that its causes were essentially ethnic or political, so that conflict prevention was not the proper business of the development agencies,' says Paul Collier, director of the World Bank's Development Economics Research Group, in this issue. Not any more. 'The costs of preventing large-scale violent conflict through promoting development are modest relative to the terrifying consequences of global insecurity.'

According to these and other contributors, the scope of what is involved in conflict prevention needs broadening. Direct and indirect factors must be considered. How does HIV/AIDS figure into the equation? What lessons for preventing conflict can we learn from grassroots efforts to foster reconciliation and restoration in Rwanda since the genocide?

'Successful conflict prevention also requires all sectors in society to do their part,' the Secretary-General adds. 'NGOs in particular can offer non-violent avenues for addressing the root causes of conflict at an early stage.'

The long-term, behind-the-scenes work of preventing conflict may not be glamorous, and usually doesn't make headlines. But it cannot be neglected. And, for it to be effective, it must include not only those in the spotlight, but all of us. ■

— Randy Miller

# The role of NGOs in conflict prevention

Kofi Annan

prevention is like asking a teenager to start saving for a pension.' Such cynicism is misplaced. But unless the government and people of a country are genuinely willing to confront the problems that may cause conflict, there is not much that even the best-informed and most benevolent outsiders can do.

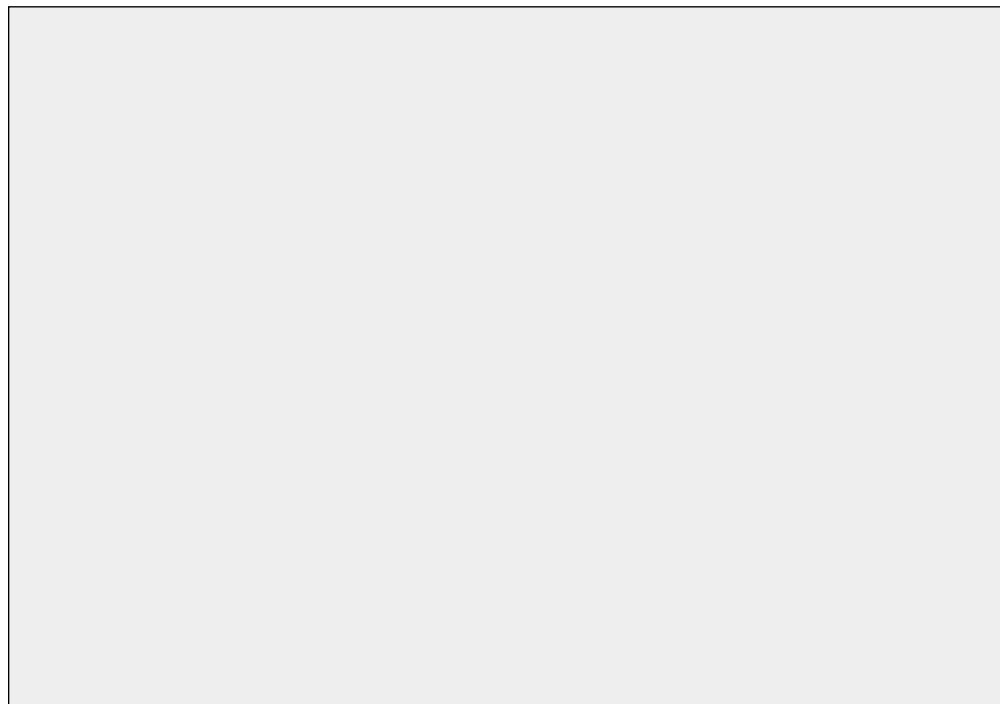
## Only option

The exercise of political will is closely linked to the way states define their national interest in any given crisis. As the world has changed in profound ways since the end of the cold war, our conceptions of national interest have failed to follow suit. A new, more broadly defined concept of national interest would make it easier for states to come together in the cause of preventing conflict among and within states. Indeed, in confronting a growing number of challenges facing humanity, the collective interest is the national interest, and collective action is often the only viable option.

Second is resources. This means there must be appropriate resources for the diverse and complex tasks that prevention entails. Among those resources should be strong regional institutions, which with their local knowledge and networks can play an effective role in bringing parties back from the brink of conflict and toward a peaceful resolution of their disputes.

My own efforts have focused on third-party mediation in disputes that have yet to become conflicts, on personal diplomacy aimed at persuading political leaders to seek compromise in preference to conflict, and on ensuring that all the representatives of the international community involved in a particular conflict present a uni-

BRIAN SNYDER (C) REUTERS 2002



*'Unless the government and people of a country are genuinely willing to confront the problems that may cause conflict, there is not much that even the best-informed and most benevolent outsiders can do,' says United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, stressing the need for internal political commitment.*

**THERE IS NO CAUSE** more central to the work of the United Nations, no mission whose success is more important to fulfilling the vision of our Charter 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war', than that of conflict prevention. In recent years, the organisation has become increasingly determined to focus more attention on this mission—for example, through Security Council visits to areas of potential armed conflict; increased use of fact-finding and confidence-building missions; more frequent reports to the Security Council on serious human rights violations and on other situations that threaten political stability, such as ethnic, religious and territorial disputes, poverty and underdevelopment; and by drawing up regional

prevention strategies that seek to address the long-term structural root causes of conflicts.

No one doubts that prevention is desirable. What some question is whether it is feasible. Two factors are critical:

## **The biggest obstacles to effective prevention are the attitudes and priorities of the states themselves.**

First is political will—the willingness to invest political capital today in order to prevent the crises of tomorrow. It is sometimes said that 'convincing politicians to invest in conflict

fied position to the parties.

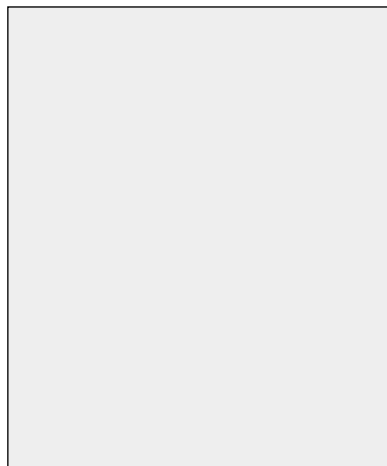
Yet the biggest obstacles to effective prevention are the attitudes and priorities of states themselves. States threatened by conflict frequently refuse to admit that they have a problem, or to accept external assistance. And many states that would be well placed to assist are reluctant to intervene. Those in the first group fail to see the problem, and are offended by offers of help. Those in the second either do not see the danger that problems afflicting their neighbour might also spread to them, or are unwilling to confront their neighbour with unwelcome but necessary pressure and advice. Political leaders have also found it very hard to sell prevention policies abroad to their publics at home, because their costs are palpable and immediate, while the benefits—usually an undesirable or tragic event that does not occur—are more difficult to convey.

### Root causes of conflict

Effective conflict prevention is a long-term investment. While the proximate cause of conflict may be an outbreak of public disorder or a protest over a particular incident, the root causes are more likely to be found in poor governance, socio-economic inequities, systematic ethnic discrimination, denial of human rights, disputes over political participation, or long-standing grievances over the allocation of land, water and other resources. Addressing these underlying circumstances requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses both short-term and long-term political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes. Where no legitimate means of addressing such problems exist, an environment is created in which peaceful solutions can lose out to extreme and violent alternatives.

Indeed, it is not just violent conflict we are trying to prevent; we also want to avert a recourse to violence in general. Some observers have made a link between poverty and terrorism.

But the poor have enough burdens without being considered likely terrorists simply as a result of their poverty. At the same time, it is essential to understand that 'draining the swamp' of terrorism, as some have



PHIL SEGAR (C) REUTERS 2002

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

called it, requires more than attacking its sources of funding and support. It requires addressing those grievances which terrorists find useful to exploit for their own ends.

Successful conflict prevention also requires all sectors in society to do

### Successful conflict prevention requires all sectors in society to do their part—not just governments.

their part—not just governments, but also civil society, the private sector, news media, and others in a position to make a difference. NGOs in particular can offer non-violent avenues for addressing the root causes of conflict at an early stage. They can be an important means of conducting diplomacy when governments and international organisations are unable to do so. International NGOs also provide studies of early warning and response opportunities, and can act as advocates in raising international aware-

ness of particular situations and in helping to shape public opinion.

A number of United Nations bodies have begun to develop programmes of collaboration with NGOs in the field of peace and security—for example, to help gender-based NGOs in Africa to build up their capacity for conflict resolution; or, in the field of disarmament, to build on the gains achieved in banning anti-personnel landmines. Recent years have also seen the growth of international and regional networks of NGOs that deal with conflict prevention and resolution issues, and efforts are being made to systematically link NGOs, academic experts and other sectors of civil society to the United Nations and other international and regional organisations. Training courses in early warning and preventive measures offered by the United Nations Staff College are available to NGOs on a limited basis.

At the same time, even NGOs that may not have an explicit mission in conflict prevention are showing a willingness to re-examine their missions—to put on a 'prevention lens'—to see how they might assist, and to ensure that, at least, their activities 'do no harm'. And of course, religious organisations have a vital role to play because of the moral authority they carry, especially in places where religion itself, or religious differences, are used to inflame the feelings of one community against another.

In my 2001 report to the Security Council on conflict prevention, I urged NGOs to organise an international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field. Such a conference would offer a valuable opportunity to focus on practical means of working together on the national, regional and global scale. Conflict prevention is everybody's business. ■

*Kofi Annan is Secretary-General of the United Nations.*

# Development and peace

Paul Collier

**CIVIL WAR** is disturbingly common in developing countries, but until recently it was not seen as a development issue other than through its consequences. The consequences are indeed alarming. Local populations suffer increased mortality and poverty, and spill-overs spread disease and decline to neighbouring countries. The consequences now evidently extend much further beyond the borders of civil war countries: territory outside the control of a recognised government—which is a consequence of civil war—provides safe haven and training facilities for international terrorism, such as al-Qa’ida in the Taliban territories of Afghanistan, and the IRA in the FARC territories of Colombia.

The conventional view of civil war was that its causes were essentially ethnic or political, so that conflict prevention was not the proper business of the development agencies. Recent research at the World Bank and elsewhere has called this conventional view into question. We have investigated the major systematic risk factors that have led to civil war over the last 40 years: the findings are quite surprising. Ethnic and political characteristics of a society do not seem to have very strong effects on the risk of war. Some ethnically diverse societies such as Tanzania and Kenya have avoided war whereas some homogeneous societies, such as Somalia, have not. Similarly, some authoritarian societies such as North Korea have avoided war whereas some democratic societies such as Sri Lanka have not. Nor does military preparedness appear to be effective: high military expenditures do not seem to reduce the risk of civil war and indeed may even be counter-productive. By contrast, the risk of civil war is strongly linked to the economy. Conflicts are

much more likely in low-income countries: a doubling of per capita income roughly halves the risk of civil war. Wars are also more likely during periods of economic decline. Finally, they are more likely in countries that are dependent upon natural resource exports, such as diamonds, drugs or oil.

## Dramatically more risk-prone

There are many reasons why poor, declining, resource-dependent countries are dramatically more risk-prone. Partly, it is simply easier for a rebel organisation to thrive in such conditions: it can finance itself by looting natural resources, and it can hire recruits very cheaply. For example, one Latin American guerrilla group raises around US\$500m each year from its drug business and uses this to finance an army with around 18,000 fighters. Although most rebel organisations have big budgets, they do not need to attract mass support: one major guerrilla group is attracting less

than one citizen of its country for every two thousand. In most societies violent causes of whatever sort—worthy, ugly or just plain crazy—could attract this modest scale of popular support. The crucial conditions for civil war arise where such causes can be generously financed and face low costs while being opposed only by weak and ineffective governments. In low-income, declining, resource-dependent societies the state is indeed likely to be weak and ineffective. For example, many state officials will typically have been corrupted by bribes associated with resource rents.

The countries most at risk are those low-income societies that have already had a civil war. Far from a war being an effective—albeit last resort—means of resolving a conflict, it

**There are many reasons why poor, declining, resource-poor countries are dramatically more risk-prone.**

leaves societies much more vulnerable to further conflict. They can become stuck in a ‘conflict trap’. This is partly because violence exacerbates hatreds, but perhaps more importantly, during



JOHN SCHENK/WORLD VISION

war there is a build-up of semi-criminal organisations that are well-equipped for violence and have an economic interest in a reversion to unrest. The international community is now routinely involved militarily and politically in post-conflict societies, but it is only just beginning to understand the implications of the economic transformation that is involved in re-establishing peace.

If our objective is building a more peaceful world, these results are very hopeful. Difficult as economic development is, it is much more straightforward than to change the ethnic composition of a society or to turn it into a genuine democracy. Of course, the risk of civil war can never be eliminated through economic development—wars occasionally break out in middle-income countries. However, the rare wars in such countries tend to be much shorter than those in low-income countries. Globally, the incidence of civil war can be substantially reduced through rapid growth and the better governance of natural resources. I discuss these objectives in turn.

### **Unfashionable**

During the 1990s, growth became unfashionable in parts of the development NGO community. Partly, this reflected well-directed concerns that growth needed to benefit the entire society and not just an elite. However, it may also have reflected a complacency that growth would happen anyway. The downturn in the world economy, and its serious consequences for growth in low-income countries, has reminded us that growth is difficult. It takes a combination of policy and institutional reform on the part of developing countries, and public and private capital inflows from developed countries. Economic reform is difficult, but in high-risk countries, including those that are post-conflict, it is vital. The Bank now recognises that reform cannot be achieved by imposing conditions on an unconvinced society, and so the challenge of reform

becomes a matter of empowering those groups within the society that are struggling to achieve national development.

In this process of empowerment, the development NGOs can be highly influential for good or for ill. They can help build the constituency for reform by highlighting the step-by-step process by which development has been achieved in other, more successful, societies. Or they can weaken the constituency for reform by portraying development failure as the exclusive responsibility of external actors. In the past, the development agencies have

### **The broad patterns underlying the risks of civil war suggest that prevention is in part a development issue.**

not directed sufficient financial assistance to high-risk countries, especially those post-conflict. Typically, aid now floods into post-conflict countries during the first couple of years, but then rapidly tapers away. Peace hits the television screens and politicians hit their checkbooks. Unfortunately, recent research suggests that this is the wrong phasing of post-conflict development assistance. Aid has its biggest impact during the middle of the first post-conflict decade. Over the whole decade, aid is insufficient, but that which does arrive, comes too soon to be very effectively used.

### **Diversified economy needed**

The risks of conflict and poor governance associated with natural resource dependence imply that where possible it is sensible for an economy to be diversified. However, this is at best a long-term objective and so it needs to be complemented by a more rapidly effective solution. The example of Botswana, a diamond-dependent economic and political success, demonstrates that resource dependence does not need to be a

curse. The international community can do a lot to reduce the risks currently associated with resource dependence, and in December the Bank convened a workshop in Paris to discuss the options. One point of intervention is to improve the tracking of the trade in commodities as pioneered by the Kimberley Process for diamonds. Curtailing the trade in 'conflict timber' is an obvious next step. A second point of intervention is better reporting and monitoring of the revenues from natural resources to ensure that they actually reach the government budget. 'Publish what you Pay' and the 'Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative' are important current examples of this approach. A third possibility is better scrutiny on the part of the international banking system to curb money laundering from illicit natural resource revenues. A fourth is to extend and replicate the governance model for the Chad-Cameroon pipeline. A fifth approach is to cushion the shocks currently caused by price volatility, by pooling and shifting the risks so that they are not borne by low-income natural resource exporters.

Obviously, civil war is not just driven by economics. Each situation is distinctive and must be approached accordingly. However, the broad patterns underlying the risks of civil war suggest that prevention is to a considerable extent a development issue. The costs of preventing large-scale violent conflict through promoting development are modest relative to the consequences of global insecurity: they are costs a prosperous world can readily afford. To a large extent, we have failed to pursue this option for the simple reason that it was not realised how effective it is likely to be. When compared with military strategies for prevention, development comes very cheap. On current analysis, it is also more effective. ■

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*Paul Collier is Director of the World Bank's Development Economics Research Group.*

# Will conflict prevention remain a distant dream?

Matthew Scott

**EIGHT YEARS AFTER** the Rwandan genocide, hundreds of human skeletons litter the floor of Ntarama Catholic Church in Nyamata, Rwanda. The church is both an emotional cenotaph for the people of Rwanda and an enduring testimony to the failure of international conflict resolution. Violent conflicts still fester in Africa's Great Lakes Region, and

indeed on every continent. It seems little has changed since 1994. From the UN Security Council to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation; from the Economic Community of West African States to the European Union, the conflict management approach persists, largely powerless to prevent such massacres from happening again. Despite the self-evident

truths that conflict prevention saves lives, promotes prosperity and costs less than sending peacekeepers, the victims of violent conflict remain hostage to a failure of international resolve. While most conflicts in the world provide ample early warning to the vigilant, the political will of nation states to prevent violent conflict is sorely lacking.

## Cultural norm

Several recent attempts to assign responsibility for the massive civilian casualties in the violent conflicts of the past decade have also identified policy solutions to prevent them. Both the UN Secretary-General's June 2001 Report on Prevention and the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) seek to build a 'cultural norm' of prevention. Both approaches argue that the prevention of violent conflict is eminently attainable. In fire-fighting terms, what is required is a fundamental shift away from fire management toward fire prevention. In peace-building terms, this requires adopting the human security approach.

## The victims of violent conflict remain hostage to a failure of international resolve.

Like modern fire-fighters, the global peace and security apparatus must learn to spend less time actually fighting fires and more time educating the public on fire safety and implementing fire-proofing measures that save lives: safer building codes, sprinkler systems, safety exits and smoke detectors. In this respect, the European Union's proposed Rapid-Response Facility is simply a faster fire engine. A much more profound shift is needed in order to: prevent chronic poverty from breeding violence; embrace faith-based peace-building; control the



NEIGEL MARSH/WORLD VISION

Skulls at the Ntarama Catholic Church in Nyamata recall Rwanda's gruesome history.

exploitation of natural resources, especially when it fuels violent conflict; enact the lessons of successful disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes; and restrict and reform the global trade in small arms.

The Secretary-General's Report and its subsequent implementation focused on these matters, particularly on improving internal UN conflict analysis. Though nearly every UN 'lessons learned' exercise has highlighted analytical weakness, many member states dismissed the recommendation for increased early warning capacity as 'intelligence-gathering' in disguise, and refused to pay for it. Simply improving early warning, however, is the equivalent of buying a faster fire engine. The introduction of the Secretary-General's report clearly signalled that only UN member states themselves can bring about the necessary paradigm shift toward prevention: 'The primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national governments, with civil society playing an important role.' In other words, not only is courageous political will needed to bring about a human security approach, but NGOs need to figure more prominently in it.

### **A country's sovereignty**

The report of the ICISS similarly addresses the question of civil society involvement, but more centrally tackles the root problem of comprehensive conflict prevention: When is it acceptable to override a country's sovereignty to save its own people from imminent death? According to the ICISS, the answer is to define security in terms of a 'responsibility to protect' human life rather than as narrowly defined state interest. The ICISS has succeeded in reviving the human security approach by arguing that sovereignty is not a political *carte blanche*, but a dual responsibility: first, to respect the sovereignty of other states in accordance with Article 2 of the UN Charter, and second, to protect the basic rights of all citizens

within the state. In bravely attempting to draw a line in the sand between zealous interventionism and *laissez-faire* internationalism, the ICISS quite self-consciously revived the ancient just war tradition.

First elaborated by St. Augustine, a Fifth Century North African bishop, the just war principles drew on Christian understandings of the value of human life. The just war approach acknowledges reluctantly that armed intervention may be necessary to protect civilians from imminent slaughter, but only if that intervention has a just cause, a right intention, legitimate authority, reasonable prospects of success, and is entered into as a last resort. The intervention itself must furthermore be proportionate and

### **When is it acceptable to override a country's sovereignty to save its own people from imminent death?**

able to discriminate between civilians and combatants. As a Christian humanitarian organisation, World Vision has intentionally inherited this tradition. The organisation will never call for the use of force. However, when mandated by the UN Security Council as a last resort, the interposition of reputable and professional armed forces between innocent civilians and those intent on harming them has been proven to save lives. Such peacekeeping meets the tests of just war when it seeks to protect civilians, that is, if it remains intent on human security.

In this same ancient Christian tradition, peace is defined not merely as human security, but more substantively as the presence of equity, wholeness and justice. The biblical notion of *shalom* (more accurately translated as *sulh* in Arabic) captures the essence of human security and a great deal more. *Shalom* implies the presence of justice, where evildoers are punished. It

also connotes the presence of forgiveness, typical of successful truth and reconciliation processes. *Shalom* assumes the presence of economic opportunity for all, and the absence of crushing poverty. *Shalom* calls for right relationships of hospitality between neighbours and with strangers; it does not foster ethnic or religious hatred.

It would be a tall order indeed for the international community to go this far in embracing such spiritually profound concepts of peace. But the international community must at least make the human security shift. We cannot afford to repeat the clumsy, late and inadequate responses that have been typical of regional and multilateral efforts to date. As the Secretary-General and the ICISS have elaborated, the responsibility to protect sovereignty and human life together is a weighty one. Working together with civil society, the human security approach will target development assistance to eradicate the kind of crushing poverty that breeds violent conflict. A shift to human security will seek to restrict and reform the supply of small arms that abounds in war zones, while NGOs work at the grassroots level to reduce the demand for such weapons. A human security approach will equip governments to control their own natural resources and mandate those governments to distribute the profits equitably among the people. It will quickly disarm, demobilise and reintegrate former combatants in the aftermath of a peace settlement. In order to prevent future genocides, international peace-building policy must abandon the false promises of hard security based solely on national self-interest, and embrace the human security approach that benefits all. Lest we have another Ntarama Catholic Church to remind us of the failure of true conflict prevention. ■

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*Matthew Scott is World Vision's policy advisor for Emergencies and Conflict, and manager of World Vision's United Nations Liaison Office in New York.*



# The impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa's security

Nigel Marsh

**THIS IS THE SEASON** for security scares, so let's imagine a crazed dictator unleashes a new disease, with a long time-lag between infection and death to ensure further spread, yet killing most who contract it in their prime. After 20 years, 40 million people are dead, with 6 million more infected each year. It ruins economies, devastates societies, and even threatens governments.

What wouldn't we do, what wouldn't we spend, to confront that evil?

Unfortunately, we don't need to imagine the disease, and we don't need some twisted malefactor to unleash it—Human Immuno-deficiency Virus came to us two decades ago, apparently quite naturally. All those effects we've imagined, and more, are our reality today.

What is not real is the hope that the world might respond to the disease with the same energy that it would to any other security threat.

Is HIV a security threat? If you don't live in parts of Africa most heavily affected by HIV, you are forgiven for questioning whether a virus can be associated with deepening poverty, social breakdown, crime, cross-border insecurity, struggles for resources and perhaps even war. But increasing numbers of experts see just those effects, now and in future.

Emerging diseases, most notably HIV, were the first health issue to excite the interest of the United States government's Central Intelligence Agency.

In January 2000, the CIA reported<sup>1</sup> on the crisis of AIDS in the world, and the risk that this would lead to a crime and insecurity meltdown in several nations. White House spokesman Jim Kennedy said AIDS 'has the potential to destabilise governments [of

African or Asian nations, which makes it an international security issue.' Half of all deaths from infectious disease in the world will be caused by AIDS by 2020, according to the analysis.

The CIA followed this up with a report in September this year<sup>2</sup> on five countries with growing HIV problems, and which between them have 40% of the world's population: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Russia, India and China. 'The rise of HIV/AIDS in the next-wave countries is likely to have significant economic, social, political, and military implications,' it decided.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that the CIA reports focused on the



SCOTT KELLER/WORLD VISION

*In 16 African nations you may easily find families of children living with a single parent, or grandparents, or entirely alone.*

degree to which HIV and other pandemic disease 'will endanger US citizens...and exacerbate...instability in key countries and regions in which the United States has significant interests.' Focusing on American interests is its job. But for those with a direct concern for development in the regions

most affected by HIV, the implications for security (and for much else besides) are grim.

Why should a disease threaten security? Let's take a look at Africa, where most people living with HIV and AIDS will be found (until, perhaps, 2010, when Asia takes over the mantle). The answer is two-fold: AIDS

**AIDS exacerbates the factors associated with civil disorder, and reduces the capacity of authorities to cope.**

exacerbates the factors associated with crime and civil disorder, and reduces the capacity of police forces and armies to counteract such lawlessness.

This is a continent that is already hugely underdeveloped, where the great majority of the population lives on less than US\$2 a day. Food security is tenuous in some regions, government and rule of law too often imperfect or missing altogether. Add the devastation caused by AIDS, and you rapidly and progressively find further generalisation of poverty, an increase in inequality and the erosion of social capital. Absolute poverty, relative inequality and reduced social cohesion are all indicators for crime (and also, incidentally, for further increases in HIV rates<sup>3</sup>).

## Food shortates

Already we see nations in southern Africa suffering food shortages. This is, in part, caused by the deaths from AIDS of many labouring adults in a largely rural economy. The only question is how important a factor the virus has been, relative to drought and poor government. If, as we suspect, it is one of the most important factors, this is a food emergency that is not going away quickly; indeed, it is likely to spread.

The majority of those who die of AIDS-related illness are adults in their

20s and 30s, though many babies also die. The disproportionate loss of parents means lots of children left behind. In 16 African nations you may easily find families of children living with a single sick parent, or grandparents, or entirely alone. This last situation will get worse; with so many parents dying, there will not be so many grandparents available in a decade.

Many of these children are turning up in cities, a subsidiary epidemic of street children. HIV has left Africa with half as many orphans again as it would otherwise have had; by 2010 it will have twice as many<sup>1</sup>. Even where orphans are taken into extended foster families and the increasingly illusory 'extended family', the food and emotional input for all the family's children is spread thinner, increasing overall child vulnerability further.

What sort of adults will these children become? Tens of millions will watch loved ones around them pass away painfully, share in the generalised clinical depression in their communities, suffer increased hunger as caregivers fall too sick to farm, stay home to work in gardens, see teachers die, and miss their childhood. They will pine for love and protection, and never soak up the socialising lore of their cultural history. They may hear about a rich world where AIDS has been controlled, they will wonder if it is true that drugs exist that could have helped their parents, and they will continue to see the lifestyles of their richer peers flaunted in their faces.

### **Armies in dire straits**

If they do decide that social structures, governments and laws have not helped them, and set out to help themselves, through crime and prostitution, or by joining the burgeoning ranks of rebel militias largely composed of children, who will stop them? African newspapers occasionally report complaints by senior police officers that more policemen are dying than can be trained. Reliable figures are hard to find, but Africa's armies seem to be in a dire situation,

too. One study<sup>5</sup> looked at several African armies and found HIV prevalence between 40% and 60%—a figure that bodes ill for future national security and peacekeeping operations.

Unless the world decides to tackle the problem at its roots, and vigorously, it is hard to come up with good reasons to justify optimism for Africa's future security. Looking at the generally reluctant way the world is failing to fund the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), a US\$10bn initiative launched by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, it is tempting to believe that we still have not recog-

### **What could be done? In Africa, the critical problem is the lack of money with which to tackle the issue.**

nised the full scale of the tragedy unfolding around us.

What could be done? In Africa, the critical problem is the lack of money with which to tackle the issue. There are some badly affected countries that have better resources than others. In South Africa, Botswana, Kenya and Namibia, for instance, a more vigorous government effort to provide anti-retroviral drugs, health support, facilities for orphans and better pensions for the elderly caring for children are both possible and helpful.

But in these countries, and more so in other sub-Saharan African nations, the scale of the problem dwarfs the finance available. It is a disgusting travesty of human justice that the developed world continues to take crushing debt repayments from nations with higher than 5% HIV prevalence. It is iniquitous that world trade rules are slanted against these nations, suppressing their potential to raise more income to tackle problems by themselves. Corruption in African nations, often carried on at a high level with the knowledge and participation of Western companies and govern-

ments, is a haemorrhage of resources needed by the peoples of nations ruled by kleptocrats. That there continues to be any discussion at all that trade-related property rights somehow trumps the needs for life-sustaining drugs in the poorest continent in the world will be used by future historians to judge our age.

Just think about the degree to which our common human moral stock is diminished if we allow a generation of Africa's children to grow up in increasing despair and loveless poverty; neglected, rootless and disempowered. Shame on us if we have to join the CIA in selfishly calculating the impact on ourselves before we respond. The long-term consequence of HIV in Africa may very well be increased crime and security problems; but the imperative to do something to mitigate the awful consequences of this disease rightly belongs at a much deeper level than that—in our compassion and humility, not in our fear and self-interest. ■

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*Nigel Marsh is Communications Manager for World Vision East Africa.*

1. 'The Global Infectious Disease Threat and its Implications for the United States' <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/nie/report/nie99-17d.html>.
2. 'The Next Wave of HIV/AIDS: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Russia, India, and China' [http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/other\\_products/ICA%20HIV-AIDS%20unclassified%20092302POSTGERBER.htm](http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/other_products/ICA%20HIV-AIDS%20unclassified%20092302POSTGERBER.htm).
3. *AIDS In The 21st Century*, Alan Whiteside and Tony Barnett
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# UN peacekeeping in the future

David Malone

The IPA<sup>1</sup> (International Peace Academy) and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) organised a half-day seminar on 29 October 2002, with the support of the government of Norway, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of UNDPKO. Entitled 'Past, Present and Future Challenges in Peacekeeping', the seminar reunited current and previous Under-Secretaries-General and several highly reputed Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) in a review of the past 10 years in UN peacekeeping history

This event brought together more than 170 participants from the UN Secretariat and Permanent Missions to the United Nations, as well as representatives of the academic world, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the media, to examine the lessons learned during a decade of 'second generation' peacekeeping and the UN management of complex crises.

The first panel, 'The Challenge of Running Peacekeeping Operations: Personal Reflections', was chaired by David Malone, President of the International Peace Academy.

**SUCCESS** in peacekeeping operations can only be achieved through a collective effort on the part of a broad range of actors, including regional organisations, NGOs, and UN agencies. As a political process, peacekeeping takes time and requires the constant support of the corps of Member States. And though the United Nations has the legitimacy and, arguably, the duty to take care of failed states and crises, especially in Africa, a military capacity equal to the task must back this legitimacy. If the Member States truly wish to support an effective peacekeeping capability, they must be prepared to supply adequately equipped soldiers.

Underlying the most successful peacekeeping operations is a clear, credible, and achievable mandate. A

confusing mandate only leads to confusion on the ground. The mandate must ensure unity of effort, of vision, and of political control. In order to be relevant, it should be developed in close consultation with experts from the field and must make use of lessons learned to ensure the establishment of realistic operational goals. The underlying political objective of a mission should drive every aspect of the operation, but it should also be isolated from the day-to-day fire-fighting that most missions experience over time.

## Learning from mistakes

The United Nations has not yet truly embraced the idea that it can learn from either its mistakes or its successes. In this context, the experience gained by UN staff serving in field missions is an invaluable resource. Failing to utilise this resource to improve the planning, implementation, and conduct of future

UN operations does a disservice both to the United Nations and to the nations for which it seeks to provide assistance. The UN Secretariat very seldom receives feedback and lessons-learned reports from the Member States. The process of improving the United Nations' capacity to engage in peacekeeping must be a collaborative process with input not only from the

**Success in peacekeeping operations can only be achieved through a collective effort on the part of many parties.**

offices of the United Nations, but also from the Member States, NGOs and other organisations with field experience.

A peace operation will be most effective when it operates under unified control, in the case of the United Nations, meaning that it is integrated exclusively under the orders of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), to whom the Security Council should have furnished precise movement and operational orders. Separating lines of com-



LYDIA REYNOLDS/WORLD VISION

mand through different pillars within an operation or across military and civilian lines causes confusion, is often counter-productive, and puts the overall goals of any UN operation at risk.

In addition to these operational controls, the SRSG should have a strong hand in administration, including the power to hire and fire. Particularly in situations where the United Nations is attempting to build or rebuild faith in the rule of law, it is important that UN staff not give the impression that they are somehow above the law. The SRSG must therefore have the authority to engage in appropriate disciplinary action where necessary.

Peacekeeping operations, particularly complex peace operations such as those in Kosovo and Afghanistan, are not, in themselves, a solution to conflict. Such solutions ultimately depend upon the local population. Greater effort must therefore be made to link exit strategies with medium-term peacebuilding processes. The key to this is the process of Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DD&R). Future peacekeeping operations must incorporate DD&R into the mission plan or risk former areas of conflict falling back into chaos.

### Rule of law is key

At the same time, the United Nations has to show a greater commitment to security sector reform, rule of law strategies, and improved civil-military co-operation in peacekeeping. Better co-ordination, both at headquarters and in the field, is necessary, and the Secretariat's strategic guidance and support in this area is crucial. Rule of law is a key to the future development of successful peacekeeping operations. Rule of law must be placed as the centrepiece of



*Today, maintaining international peace and security cannot be separated from protecting the security of civilians.*

practically every peacekeeping mission. Without it, a credible exit strategy is inconceivable—international military forces cannot leave, the economy cannot recover, democracy remains a façade, and corruption and criminalisation become entrenched.

Today, maintaining international peace and security cannot be separated from protecting the individual

### Greater effort must be made to link exit strategies with medium-term peacebuilding processes.

security of civilians. The United Nations must put the protection of civilians at the centre of its peacekeeping and peace-building activities; the fact that civilians have become primary targets of hostilities needs to be fully reflected in current peacekeeping

doctrine. Protection of civilians is a matter of upholding respect for human rights and humanitarian law. Failure to do this could seriously undermine the credibility of UN peacekeeping efforts.

In the future, the United Nations should go back to basics—concentrating on norm-setting, standards, and political support—and simply accept that regional organisations will do more of the actual peacekeeping in the future. The role of regional organisations should be emphasised more, particularly in the African context; there has been some improvement lately, but increasingly there is a need to formalise co-ordination between the UN Secretariat and the main regional organisations.

Understandable and achievable mandates, good leadership, clear organisational structures, modern strategic planning, and the political will of all Member States are necessary for success in UN peace operations.

Complex crises cannot be the affair of the United Nations alone, but must involve, in a methodical way and under its leadership, the set of actors in the international system. With the Security Council serving as the orchestra conductor, peacekeeping, now more than ever, must be a collective effort. ■

*David Malone is President of the International Peace Academy.*

1. International Peace Academy (IPA) is an independent, international institution dedicated to promoting the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts between and within states through policy research and development. For more information: [www.ipacademy.org](http://www.ipacademy.org).

# Civil wars need civil peace

Paul van Tongeren

*Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations recognises the contributions that non-governmental organisations can provide to the goals of the United Nations. NGOs can contribute to the maintenance of peace and security by offering non-violent avenues for addressing the root causes of conflict at an early stage. Moreover, NGOs can be an important means of conducting track II diplomacy when governments and international organizations are unable to do so. [...]*

*I urge NGOs with an interest in conflict prevention to organise an international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field.*

—Report of the UN Secretary-General on Prevention of Armed Conflict, Recommendation 27 (June 2001).

**WE ARE LIVING** in worrying times. Besides the tense situation in the case of Iraq, there are more places than ever that are far from stable and peaceful. Take, for example, Afghanistan, Israel and Palestine, Chechnya, or Congo. The list is endless. This is not news.

What worries me, however, is that after the attacks on the United States in September 11, 2001, any government around the world is able to sell conflicts or wars as countering acts of terrorism, and they want us to believe that the only way to deal with terrorism is military action.

The tragic paradox is that, until just recently, the United Nations, G8, and regional organisations such as the EU, OSCE, African Union, and governments started to acknowledge and appreciate the concept of civilian conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and the role of civil society and NGOs in it.

This seems an obvious role, because as the nature of conflicts

changed—fewer wars between states and more within states—so did the ways to prevent and resolve them. These civil wars cause massive suffering and gross violations of human rights among the population, often crushed between the warring parties. These warring parties often have a direct interest in the continuation of a conflict and have mobilised large groups for their fight. The practice of the last decade shows that sustainable peace is not likely to come from their side. On the other hand, in the same societies in conflict there are also groups that do want an end to the conflict and are striving for sustainable peace. These include women's groups, religious and youth groups, or NGOs working for development and peace. The position of these groups is, however, often weak, because they are not backed by force, and therefore are often neglected in peace processes.

Being stakeholders in a (potential) conflict, a logical consequence should be that these civil society actors are stakeholders in the peace process as well. There are numerous roles NGOs

can play in this respect. The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict concluded that 'NGOs have the flexibility, expertise and commitment to respond rapidly to early signs of trouble. They witness and give voice to the unfolding drama, and they provide essential services and aid. Not least, they inform and educate the public, both at the national level and worldwide, on the horrors of deadly conflict, and thus help mobilise opinion and action.'

***In societies in conflict there are also groups that want an end to the conflict and are striving for sustainable peace.***

Now, after September 11, there is a risk that non-violent conflict prevention is disappearing from the political agenda again. It is my belief that now is the moment we, working in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, have to take a stance against this worrying development, and show, or better, prove that there are alternative ways to prevent and resolve conflicts.

To be able to prove this, it is necessary to analyse the roles civil society actors could play, to collect examples of best practices, raise awareness and support for these important



Children in Takhar Province, in Northern Afghanistan, walk close to unexploded ordnance.

actors, and enable them to play their role in peace processes.

To give one example: a number of civil society organisations, in co-operation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), lobbied successfully for a resolution on Women, Peace and Security, which was in the end unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council in October 2000. This resolution pleads for participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, gender perspectives and training in peacekeeping, the protection of women, and gender mainstreaming in United Nations reporting and implementation mechanisms.

In other fields, large UN conferences on the environment and sustainable development (Rio and Johannesburg in 1992 and 2002), human rights (Vienna, 1993), and women (Beijing, 1995), mobilised tens of thousands NGOs. There is a clear trend of civil society organisations organising themselves to have a greater impact on (inter-) governmental policies.

The field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding is however still quite weak and there remains a good deal of work to be done to put pressure on policymakers to put the money where their mouths are. But there might be an opportunity to change this.

In June 2001, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan published the report 'The Prevention of Armed Conflict'. This report repeats the importance of the prevention of armed conflict, and emphasises the important role civil society has to play in this respect. In this report, Kofi Annan urges 'NGOs with an interest in conflict prevention to organise an international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field.'

The ECCP replied to this invitation and developed, in co-operation with many partners, proposals to take

this invitation forward. In his letter of response, Kofi Annan stressed the importance of broad (regional) participation, inclusiveness, ownership and a real participatory process leading to the conference at the United Nations. I couldn't agree more, because this participatory process in itself could be the basis of a conflict prevention and peacebuilding movement.

Kofi Annan's recommendation offers us a platform to highlight the role civil society actors can play, and to put non-violent conflict prevention back on the international political agenda. Furthermore, he stresses the importance of building bridges and creating mechanisms of concrete co-operation between NGOs and the United Nations and Regional Organisations. This is a true challenge for us.

### Common platform

A crucial element of our proposals is that we did not want to stick with only one conference at the United Nations. We propose that in each region—that is Asia, Africa, Europe, Middle East, and North and Latin America—research is being done and preparatory conferences are being organised. The lead for this regional process should be in the hands of the organisations or networks in the regions themselves. The output of these regional processes should feed into a Global Action Programme, which should be the basis of discussion at the final conference at the United Nations.

The overall objective of this programme would be to develop a common platform for effective action in conflict prevention from the community to the global level. It should aim to explore the role of civil society and NGOs in the prevention of armed conflicts, to improve the interaction between civil society and the United Nations, regional organisations and governments, and thereby to achieve a more integrated and coherent approach to conflict prevention. In addition, it should strengthen regional

networking and establish regional conflict-prevention networks composed of key NGOs, sub-regional networks, practitioners and academics.

One of the envisaged goals is a UN action plan or protocol on conflict prevention in its broadest sense, possibly embodied in a Security Council Resolution, which will guide the international community as it seeks non-violent solutions to armed conflict in the decades ahead. On the other hand, as I stressed above it should be equally important to broaden our constituency and to educate the people at large on the possibilities of non-violent conflict resolution. For this, a peace promotion campaign is needed on a national and an international level.

In September, we sent out letters to 140 NGOs world-wide with an interest in conflict prevention and peacebuilding to ask for their input and participation. The response from many organisations was heartwarming. Several governments expressed their intention to support the programme financially. This is a very promising start, which strengthens my belief that there is now a clear momentum for this endeavour.

I would like to conclude with a quote from the Carnegie Report 'Preventing Deadly Conflict', in which the Carnegie Commission comes to the conclusion that 'prevention of deadly conflict is, over the long term, too hard—intellectually, technically, and politically—to be the responsibility of any single institution or government, no matter how powerful. Strengths must be pooled, burdens shared, and labour divided amongst actors.'<sup>1</sup> ■

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*Paul van Tongeren is Executive Director of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention.*

1. 'Preventing Deadly Conflict: Executive Summary of the Final Report', Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1997.

# Effective development requires security

Roberta Cohen

**POST-WAR AFGHANISTAN** is an unfortunate but telling example of how lack of security in a country can undermine economic development. In large measure because of the poor security in many parts of the country, agencies charged with Afghanistan's reconstruction and development have been reluctant to carry out major road building, establish communications networks, repair irrigation systems, and undertake land reclamation projects.

The Tokyo donors' conference in January 2002 that pledged US\$4.5 billion for reconstruction over a five-year period failed to emphasise the critical importance of a secure and

**For women, lack of security has undermined their ability to integrate into Afghanistan's economic and political life.**

stable environment for achieving economic and political development. Nor did President Bush, when speaking of a Marshall Plan for Afghanistan, mention the need to bolster public security in the country. This unnatural separation of development and security goals has produced what one observer called a Catch-22: 'Without security, the money for reconstruction won't come. Without reconstruction, the Afghan government can neither support nor protect its population.'<sup>1</sup> According to Afghanistan's Foreign Minister, 'It is only logical that without adequate security, reconstruction and investment will stall, encouraging the illicit narcotics and arms sectors to flourish again.'<sup>2</sup>

It comes as no surprise that to date, less than half of the funds

pledged by donors in Tokyo for Afghan reconstruction in 2002 have been received, and the funds that have arrived have gone largely to relief, not reconstruction and development. Slow bureaucratic procedures and red tape account for some of the delay; so too does Afghanistan's absence of infrastructure. But a major deterrent



JAMES EAST/WORLD VISION

*Much of Kabul was ruined during years of fighting, especially during the 1990s, when rival mujahadeen groups fired on civilian areas. Many families still live amid the rubble.*

is the lack of security. Development programmes simply cannot go forward in the rural areas when it is unsafe for engineers, truck drivers, merchants, international investors and technicians to travel there freely. 'When we go outside Kabul,' staff members of the United States Agency for International Development told the author, 'we must do so with military escort.'

About 40% of the 2 million returning refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) have crowded into

Kabul, Herat and other cities because it is there that they can find a modicum of security and work. As a result, slums have sprouted up around the capital and tremendous pressure has been placed on its already weak infrastructure. Of those who do return to their villages, many uproot again because of unsafe and unsustainable conditions. Most serious is that this failure to return home has slowed up the rebuilding of farms and the replanting of crops, both urgently needed to restore Afghanistan to food self-sufficiency and free it from dependence on international relief.

For women, lack of security has

undermined their ability to integrate into the economic and political life of the country. Women outside Kabul are reported to be afraid of harassment or attack if they don't wear their burkhas, if they take jobs outside the home, if they participate more fully in civil society. The Minister for Women's Affairs pleaded before the United Nations Security Council in April to expand the UN's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) outside Kabul. Security, she said, is the



Refugees carry supplementary rations from a food distribution site near Herat.

main prerequisite for women's broader participation in public life. Afghanistan's development will certainly be crippled if more than half the population is not able to participate.

The Minister for Women's Affairs is right. ISAF, the UN force, should be enlarged from its 5000 troops and allowed to assume protection functions outside of Kabul. This would

**Long-term stability can only be assured through reconstruction and development in a secure environment.**

lend authority to the new central government until a national army and police are put into place, help deter criminal elements, and show the seriousness of the international community in bringing stability and development to Afghanistan. But the Bush administration has actively blocked the creation of an effective international force on the grounds that it would distract from its overall military purpose of defeating the Taliban and al-Qa'ida. Its overwhelming fear of

becoming bogged down in 'nation building' has made it reluctant to acknowledge the deteriorating security situation in the country.

US military priorities have also led to the arming and financing of warlords, or 'regional governors' as they are euphemistically called, because of their help in the war against the Taliban and terrorism. The impact of supporting them has been to undermine the government of President Hamid Karzai, as well as the efforts of the development community to strengthen the central government and foster democratic local government.

Support channelled to warlords has other consequences as well. In many areas of the country dominated by the warlords, especially in the north, there have been cases of humanitarian and development workers being kidnapped, robbed, raped and killed—often by armed groups aligned with or protected by the warlords. Between January and August, the UN documented more than 70 'incidents' involving aid agencies, including cases of rape, looting and firing on UN vehicles.<sup>3</sup> The United States and the United Nations periodically

have to shut down their aid programs because of outbreaks of violence between feuding warlords.

The bright spot on the horizon is that the United States has begun to understand better the link between security and reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. To bolster the central government's authority, the United States is training an Afghan army while Germany has begun to train a police force. In the meantime, US special forces and civil affairs specialists are beginning to shift from exclusively focusing on terrorism to trying, in partnership with newly trained Afghan troops, to defuse local conflicts, mitigate inter-factional fighting, and help with the building of roads, schools and other development projects. Most notably, the US Congress has just voted to spend US\$3.3 billion over the next four years for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

More is needed, however, since Washington still refuses actively to promote ISAF's expansion or contribute troops to it even though President Karzai, UN officials and aid agencies all say this is crucial to improving security and development throughout the country. It is time to recognise that the war on terrorism will not be won through military means alone. Long-term stability can only be assured through reconstruction and development in a secure environment. That applies not just to Afghanistan, but to other countries in conflict as well. ■

*Roberta Cohen is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, where she co-directs the Brookings-SAIS Project on Internal Displacement.*

1. Ian Connacher, 'U.S. Afghan Exit'. NOW Magazine, online edition, 1 August 2002.
2. A. Abdullah, 'We Must Rebuild Afghanistan', Washington Post, 24 October 2002.
3. Country Profile on Afghanistan, Norwegian Refugee Council, Global IDP Database, 26 October 2002.



# Walking a tightrope in Colombia

Edgar Flórez Pinilla

**TRYING TO IMPROVE** conditions for those coping with poverty and injustice is never easy. It is especially difficult when, no matter what you do, you are misunderstood, criticised, or worse. That is the situation for us in World Vision Colombia, where, despite our struggle to remain neutral in our work with the poor, we are sometimes seen as assisting the opposing side.

Working with private organisations in civil society, we strive for change in repressive attitudes and culture, as well as in public policies that reflect and sustain those attitudes.

We do this work because we are driven by the conviction that all human beings are equal and have the right to enjoy life and develop to their fullest potential. This is our conviction as followers of Jesus Christ.

To some, the basis of our convictions about human rights and justice are cause for concern. Those who are religious—particularly, those who are fundamentalist—often view our presence and our work as a threat to certain traditional values, a challenge to the status quo. This way of thinking can generate crusades that range from slander to physical attack.

Of course, even in the realm of religion, there are varying viewpoints. Some think our interventions are not progressive enough when it comes to critiquing the prevailing system, while for others, our actions are seen as extremely revolutionary and liberal. One thing that is clear is that this kind of work requires a great deal of patience and tact.

The political realm is no less complex or varied. Politicians have divided the world into right and left. Our

work is viewed with suspicion from both sides. To those on the left, our actions are perceived as right-wing; to those on the right, we are pro-leftists.

Each side wants to have influence over the large impoverished and marginalised groups that make up the majority of Colombia's population. Every faction wants to attract them and become stronger by virtue of their numbers. Some irregular military groups with an ideological background find the work that some NGOs are doing to be beneficial, so they protect them. Of course, every group attempts to assign its own political



*A member of World Vision's Rapid Response Team speaks with flood victims in Putumayo, Colombia.*

meaning to these activities, either to foster belief in their own model or to discredit the opposite one.

The tension that arises when groups struggle for control over the general population breeds a simplistic logic reflected in the notion that 'whoever is not with us is against us'. Frequently, this way of thinking is displayed by governmental forces. However, it is possible—although not easy—to stand apart from these perspectives and retain independence

and impartiality while supporting the poor and those who find themselves caught in the middle of this tension.

There is another factor that both sides are mindful of in all of this: how they are viewed by the outside world. Humanitarian, emergency and development organisations sometimes are seen as a channel for sending messages to the world. Despite the neu-

**Each side wants to influence the impoverished groups that make up most of Colombia's population.**

trality and independence of most of these organisations, they can become targets of information management that accompanies armed conflicts. It represents something of a political minefield for such organisations. Just one wrong step, one thoughtless act, and the consequences can be terrible.

The working environment in Colombia seems more dangerous than ever. Or maybe it's just that our perception has broadened. Adopting proactive positions and attitudes in the face of injustice and inequity has always triggered the rage of those who thrive on it, who are, for obvious reasons, the ones interested in preventing things from changing.

The state of affairs can change if we take our role as peacemakers seriously. This is the time for action. Passivity and the fear of taking risks only contribute to the problems. In this interconnected world, it is not possible to live in peace unless we accept our responsibility to act in support of an equal and just life for all. ■

*Edgar Flórez Pinilla is Director of World Vision Colombia.*

# Building hope in a time of anxiety

The Most Reverend Peter Watson

**AUSTRALIANS**, like many people around the world, are not in good shape. The loss of so many, including Australians, Balinese and others in the Bali bombing, and the recent death of two students in a classroom at Monash University, have had a great impact on us as a nation. It is certain-

HIV/AIDS pandemic with more than 28 million people infected, 14 million orphans and the prospect for millions more deaths the future is indeed bleak. The Afar community in Ethiopia, facing famine after another year of drought, is anxious about the future. They share a fear of another devastat-



MARY KATE MACBACH/WORLD VISION

*Saba Saba, 13, sits with his friend and classmate, Mohammed Atia, 13, who was struck by Israeli sniper fire as he stood on his family's balcony in Beit Jala, next to Bethlehem.*

ly a time of anxiety and tension. That will be exacerbated as we face one of the worst periods of drought in recent history.

But we are not alone in this anxiety. We share it with citizens of the United States where, a year on from September 11 and in the aftermath of the recent events in Washington, DC, there is a similar lack of hope. In the Middle East, for both Israelis and Palestinians, the ongoing conflict brings acts of violence and retaliation by one side against the other. And then for the people on the African continent living in the midst of the

ing famine with other communities across the region and with the people of Southern Africa.

It is in the face of such anxiety that people seek refuge on our shores, only to be placed in detention in remote Australia. Indigenous Australians continue to seek acknowledgement and the redress of past injustices, dispossession and removal as they strive to heal the wounds in their community.

Where do we find hope at a time of widespread despair? I welcome the increasing number of voices urging that war and conflict are not appro-

appropriate answers. As we have seen in many places, they can only lead to entrapment in a spiral of violence.

As we seek a path through the many challenges and anxieties, I join with those voices, urging that the appropriate response to terror is through strengthening the rule of law. I draw strength from the responses to times of terror by the people of Rwanda and South Africa as they strive to rebuild their nations by seeking justice based on truth-telling, not revenge. We urge that 'the war against terror' be engaged by using and strengthening the international and national institutions that seek to identify those responsible for such acts and bring them to trial. An important priority is that the parties to the International Criminal Court work to ensure it is operating effectively to uphold the rule of law internationally, and so reinforce national legal processes and institutions.

There is similarly a growing recognition across the globe of the urgent challenge to the international community and national governments to address the scourge of poverty in a world in which more than 1.2 billion people live on less than US\$1 a day. In September 2000, our Australian Prime Minister John Howard joined other national leaders at the United Nations General Assembly in signing the Millennium Declaration. Those who signed made a commitment to standards against which to measure progress toward a more just global society, the Millennium Development Goals. The priority goal is that by 2015 the proportion of the world's people living on less than US\$1 a day is reduced by half. To achieve this, the leaders recognised the need to ensure universal primary education, gender equality, improve maternal health and reduce child mortality. If each of these standards are to be achieved, the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria must also be scaled up, and access to clean water and sanitation and a sustainable approach to the process of development be achieved.

I continue to urge the Prime Minister and his government to join other leaders in honouring that commitment through the pursuit of policies and actions that contribute to international efforts to ensure these goals are realised. Continuing commitment to debt relief and the opening up of markets for the exports of the least developed countries are welcome. The commitment of resources for efforts to ensure increased access to clean water and sanitation in the poorest countries were also recent welcome initiatives. We look forward in next year's National Budget to a commitment to an increased level of Overseas Development Assistance that would reflect the increase in giving by ordinary Australians in recent years. I would welcome such a commitment as Australia might join other donor governments who have pledged increased commitments to appropriately directed ODA.

It is my feeling that this loss of hope in a contemporary age of anxiety can be attributed fundamentally to the changes brought on by the processes of globalisation. I note an emerging consensus about the necessity of appropriate strategies to man-

age a global community in which continuing and misplaced attempts to defend national sovereignty contribute to conflict and uncertainty, and limit progress toward the strengthen-

***This loss of hope can be attributed primarily to changes brought on by the processes of globalisation.***

ing of international governance. The two must be held in tension as the rule of law is upheld and promoted by both national and international institutions. In this regard, I welcome the commitment of the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to the Ethical Globalisation Initiative, which aims to secure support for ethical globalisation and to secure adequate resources to build national protection systems in human rights.

If the new global order is to serve citizens across the world equitably, national governments must take decisions which recognise the common interest we share. It is my fear that the

common interest may well be eroded when nations like my own step back from International Treaties already ratified, or by their reluctance to ratify the newest treaties which address matters of common concern. As Professor Peter Singer has argued, 'How well we come through the era of globalisation (perhaps whether we come through it at all) will depend on how we respond ethically to the idea that we live in one world. For the rich nations not to take a global ethical viewpoint has long been seriously morally wrong. Now, in a era of global terrorism, its also a danger to their security.'! ■

*The Most Reverend Peter Watson is Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne and President of AngliCORD.*

I. Peter Singer, 'Our priorities have to be trans-global', in *The Canberra Times*, November 15, 2002.

## Offering a Different Perspective on Development

### Local Ownership, Global Change: Will Civil Society Save the World?

Edited by Roland Hoksbergen and Lowell M. Ewert

Our increasing awareness of how important local ownership, local participation, and local involvement are to global well-being makes it essential that we understand and harness the power of civil society.

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# Development aid and conflict mitigation

Bill Lowrey

**IN KALIMANTAN** Province in Indonesia, Dayak and Madurese community members, following violent ethnic clashes that had left hundreds dead, built a 'Peace Road.' The idea was initiated by the community to provide support for a school for their children, access for their produce to markets, and a means for the two communities to work side-by-side and rebuild trust while labouring on a common task. The road-building material aid provided by World Vision supported a community ready to invest its human and social capital in a conflict-mitigating development project. Action research in this locale has revealed significant outcomes. However, this community must be understood within the macro context of a conflict-prone state where external actors can destabilise the best efforts of local people.

Destructive conflict and development seem on opposite ends of a spectrum. But the spectrum has disappeared. Most violent conflicts in today's world are intra-state rather than inter-state. Frequently, communities and militia do battle with each other within many countries, at times co-opting the military forces of the state. Most of these conflicts take place within developing countries. The competition for resources in a resource-poor country is a root cause of conflict. The new reality is that conflict can arise in the midst of development and in a matter of days or months destroy the effort of decades of development work. 'Well established development structures were not able to prevent genocide'<sup>1</sup> in Rwanda and raised questions about whether development is sustainable if it does not incorporate long-term strategies to prevent violent conflict and build relationships across the divi-

sions of humanity. Such strategies must link the global and the local. Development aid requires analysis of people's context in their micro-communities, the leveraging of influence through inter-relationship of neighbouring development communities, the macro-context of conflict within the state, and the global context with trans-national actors who are both state and non-state. A failure of community development programmes to consider these conflict contexts and incorporate conflict mitigation and peacebuilding within the framework of development may have serious consequences. In addition, it is necessary for global institutions that work at macro levels to recognise the critical role that local development organisations play in building networks of relationships that can mitigate violent communal conflict.

A starting point for development aid is to 'do no harm'. A core reality is that all aid programmes, whether relief or development, micro or macro, interact with the conflicts of that community or state. The resources that are transferred, including both materials and skills, represent significant wealth and power. Parties to a conflict frequently seek to use aid and development resources for their own purposes rather than for the good of the community. Programme staff who are engaged in the development process communicate ethical messages by what they say and do, and according to how agency policies are practised. These messages may stir conflict or can strengthen the forces of peace. In every community there are dividers and tensions that can be exacerbated, and also connectors and local capacities for peace that can be strengthened. The 'Do No Harm' (DNH) or 'Local Capacities for Peace'

(LCP) framework provides a basic methodology for analysis of the conflict context and the aid/development programme. When employed, it assists development workers in designing programmes that are sensitive to the conflict issues and can strengthen local capacities for peace.<sup>2</sup> Applying the DNH/LCP assessment framework to a development process is a starting point in the integration of conflict mitigation and peacebuilding with development. This methodology has now been implemented with demonstrable results in micro-level projects around the world. It is time to apply the core concepts at the macro level as global institutions and state-to-state development aid try to leverage their transfer of resources in ways that can mitigate conflict and strengthen capacities for peaceful development.

Conflict mitigation, peacebuilding and development share a common purpose in pursuing a preferred future. The vision for each and the methods used are similar and simultaneous. Mitigating conflict must be integrated within good development practice. Then development aid contributes toward a vision of peace as a preferred condition in which: 1) communities value and use effective mechanisms to resolve conflicts without violence; 2) there is a presence of mutually beneficial and respectful networks of relationships at all levels of society and across all differences; and 3) there is an environment where people create and sustain institutions that honour truth and beauty, show mercy, practice justice, and contribute to the common good. ■

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*Bill Lowrey is Director of Peacebuilding and Reconciliation for World Vision.*

1. 'The Challenge of Linking Aid and Peacebuilding', by Manuela Leonhardt in *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide*, Ed. Thania Paffenholz and Luc Reyckler, Lynne Rienner, 2000.

2. Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.

# NGOs and conflict prevention in Central Asia

Jonathan Goodhand

**IN A CONTEXT** of declining human security and a possibly a growing threat of militarised conflict or violent social conflict, what role can non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play in conflict prevention? The answer to this question depends partly on how one defines human security. Is security understood as purely the prevention of militarised violence? In which case it belongs within the realm of 'high politics', the preserve of state rather than non-state actors like NGOs. Or can security be more broadly defined and

**Poverty, exclusion and repression have turned borderland areas such as Ferghana Valley into incubators of grievance.**

involve more positive dimensions, including access to justice, political participation and sustainable livelihoods? This may take us into the 'low politics' of society and the domain of a much broader range of actors, including NGOs. Tensions between these differing understandings of security have played themselves out in Central Asia over the past decade and have been reflected in diverging and sometimes contradictory international policies toward the region. In the post-September 11th reordering of the geo-political landscape, these contradictions have been heightened.

## Declining human security

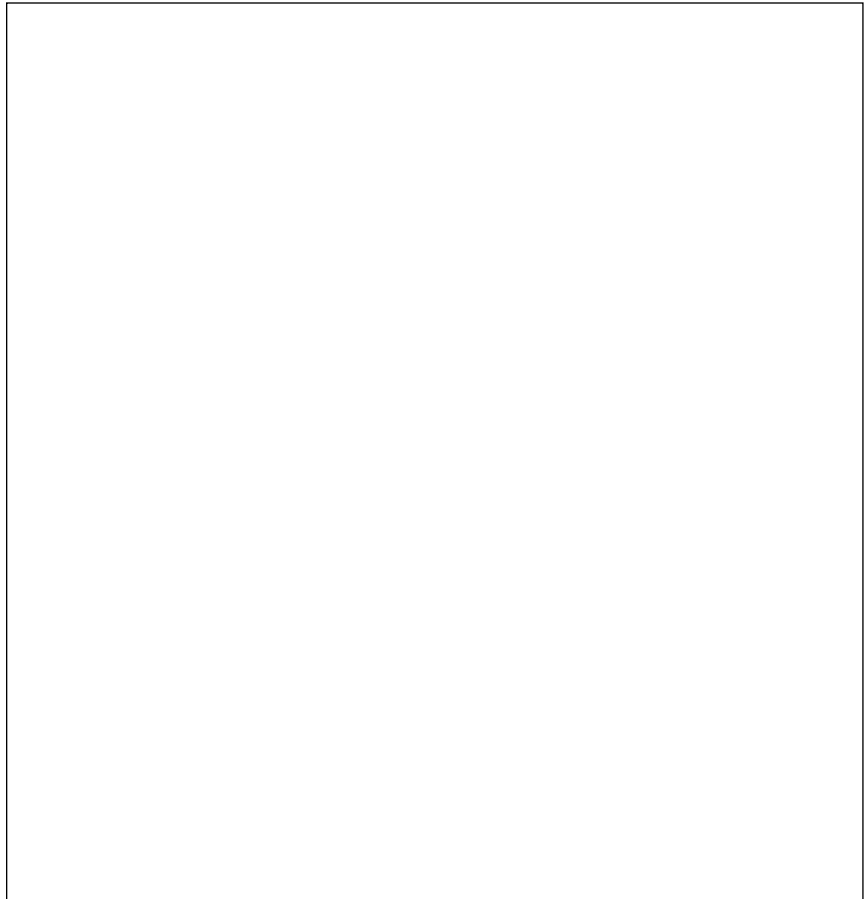
The Ferghana Valley is located in the interstices of the former Soviet republics of Krygyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It is 350 km long and 100 km wide. Because of a complex mix of factors, the Ferghana Valley has

been viewed as a potential flashpoint and incubator of violent conflict. Whilst the causes and dynamics of security/insecurity vary, between and within the different Central Asian republics, some common patterns can be identified. First, there are security concerns at the regional and inter-state levels. As well as the de-stabilising influence of Afghanistan, the Central Asia republics have had to contend with a legacy of unresolved issues from the Soviet era relating to the definition of borders, and resources such as water, which straddle these borders.

Second, non-state actors, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

(IMU) and Hizb ut-Tahrir, are challenging the legitimacy of the state and, in the case of the IMU, its monopoly over the means of violence. Such groups have access to funding, particularly with the growth of a criminalised parallel economy in the region. They also have a steady stream of new recruits, aided in part by growing state repression.

Third, there is the threat of societal violence as a result of the profound human distress caused by the political and economic transition. Secure entitlements to employment, pensions, education and health care provided during the Soviet period have been eroded. Literacy levels are declining and levels of inequality growing. Poverty by itself may not be a cause of conflict, but horizontal inequalities, such as deprivation that coincides with group identities such as ethnicity, may be mobilised by political entrepreneurs. This has happened in the past—for example, in Osh in



GREG LOWMYER/OKLD VISION

Southern Kyrgyzstan in 1992—and remains a threat today.

Borderland areas such as the Ferghana Valley may be particularly vulnerable to instability. They are ‘contested zones’ where the greed and grievance dynamics are most likely to play themselves out. Poverty, exclusion and repression have turned them into incubators of grievance. Their borderland status also means they have become zones of opportunity where the drug economy, for instance, flourishes beyond the control of the state. They have also had an historically ambiguous relationship with the state and have become a magnet for potential dissidents.

### The role of NGOs

How have international policies accounted for and interacted with the dynamics of security/insecurity in the region? If one adopts a broader definition of human security, certain policies have made the context less secure. For instance, particularly since September 11th, there has been increased and unconditional support for military aid, counter-terrorism, narcotics and border controls in Central Asian regimes. A shift in focus toward hard security and ‘greed’ as a motivation for violence, at the expense of policies designed to address grievance, may accelerate the dynamics outlined above. Development policies may also have inadvertently opened up opportunities for self-enrichment or ‘greed’—poorly conceived privatisation programmes have played into the hands of rent-seeking elites, which in turn contributes to the growing grievances of the excluded majority. Dogmatic policy prescriptions about state reform have contributed to the legitimacy crisis of the state by undermining core welfare functions, such as health and education.

Therefore, conflict prevention responses have tended to be guided by a very narrow conceptualisation of ‘security’, while development responses have often been ‘conflict blind’.

What role can NGOs play in such a context? Can their activities contribute to conflict prevention or management? Donors certainly seem to think so. They have encouraged NGOs to extend their focus beyond ‘development’ or ‘civil society strengthening’ into conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Ferghana Valley has become the focus for a ‘cottage industry’ of conflict analysts, mediation experts and conflict-related NGO programmes.

NGOs, it is argued, have distinct comparative advantages—including responsiveness, flexibility, outreach, etc.—enabling them to address societal grievances in borderland areas. NGOs may be less constrained by sovereignty issues than governmental

### **Dogmatic policy prescriptions about state reform have contributed to the legitimacy crisis of the state.**

or inter-governmental organisations, and can work across borders building links between border communities. One programme taking such an approach is funded by Swiss Development Co-operation and involves a Kyrgyz and Tajik NGO partnership. It focuses on water and land issues, since both have the potential to lead to violent conflict and often require collaboration across borders. There is a dual aim of responding to concrete needs, while building capacities to manage conflict. In the longer term, the programme aims to support the development of local governance—it is assumed that by strengthening the ‘voice’ of communities, they will be able to make greater demands on the state, ultimately leading to greater responsiveness and accountability.

What do we know about the impact of NGO programmes on the dynamics of conflict and peace in the region? The short answer is very little.

Tracing and attributing impacts is notoriously difficult, particularly if you look beyond the local level at impacts on human security in its widest sense. Do multiple interventions at the micro level—for example mediation over water or land disputes—have a cumulative impact? To an extent, such interventions may ‘conflict proof’ communities in the sense that they may be less vulnerable to manipulation by political entrepreneurs.

However, anecdotal evidence suggests that NGO programmes are ‘less than the sum of their parts’ because they are often piece-meal, based on short-term project funding, and consequently have only transitory impacts. NGOs do have an important role to play in borderland areas, particularly in the area of information collection and early warning, but one should keep their role in perspective. There has been a tendency in Central Asia to support them on ideological grounds rather than on hard evidence of performance. USAID, for example, has made it a point of principle to avoid working with government, in the belief that ‘civil society’ (which in practice has meant NGOs) and the market will lead the transition to a market economy and democracy. As our analysis above suggests, violent conflict is likely to be the result of particular synergies between ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’.

The state is at the heart of these processes; states that have been systematically undermined as a point of policy are less able to mediate tensions, manage conflicting interests and redistribute public and private goods. Ultimately, human security in the region will depend on the development of energetic, strong developmental states. ■

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# Violent conflicts and civil society

Andrea Bartoli

**AFTER MORE THAN** ten years of peace in Mozambique, many lessons have emerged that the international community should learn and follow. First, we must view violent conflicts from the victim's perspective—those affected directly by wars. No matter how carefully we try to tame it, violence always ends up controlling those trying to wield it. We must allow the voice of victims to remind us of the terrible human price of armed violence. Confronting the suffering of victims is the starting point of peace.

The second lesson is that actors who appear less powerful than others are actually in a better position to rule

their lives and orient their own future toward peace. Legitimate and recognised political leadership will meet the needs and interests of many, especial-

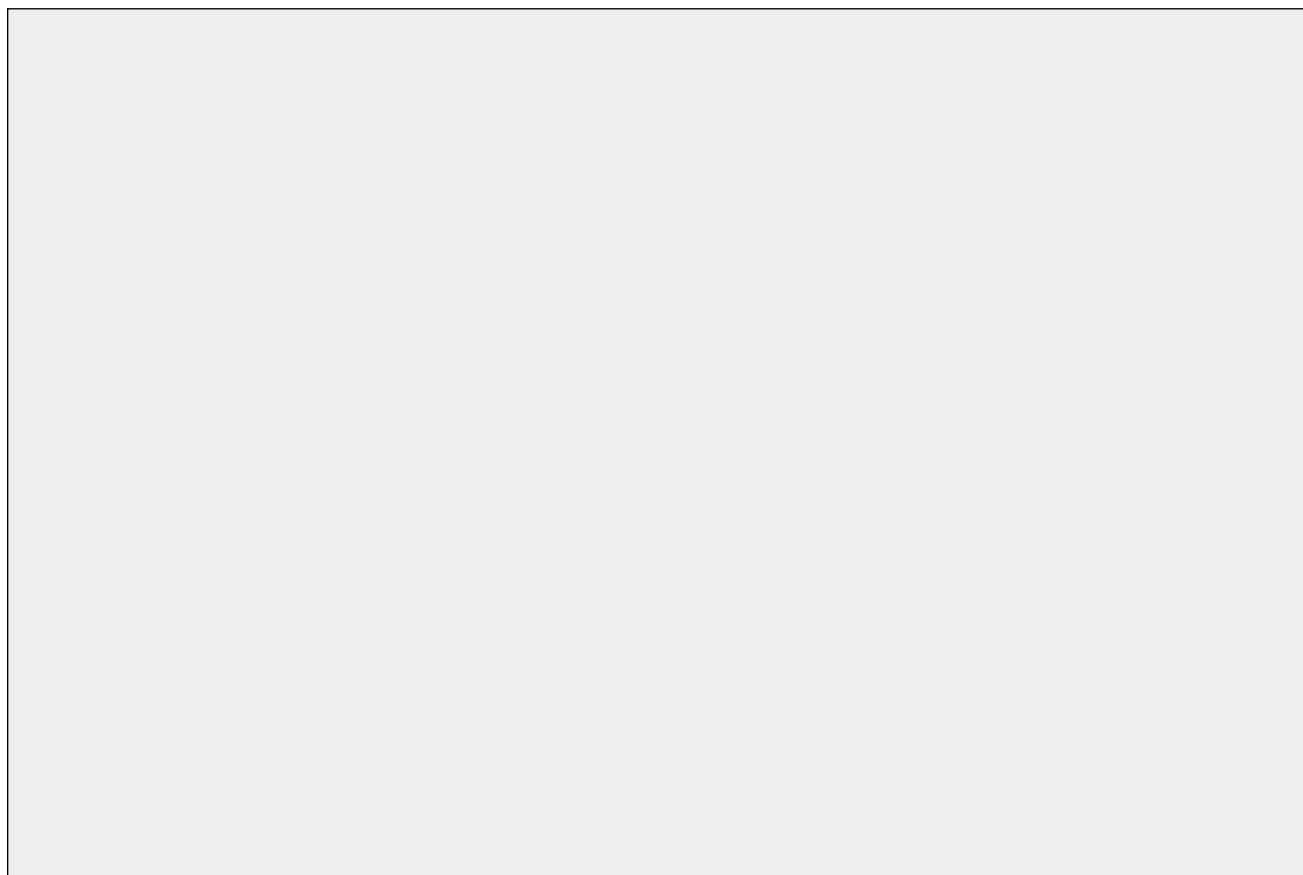
**Several trends have moved the United Nations in the direction of greater interaction with civil society.**

ly the poor. The marginalised need a voice, a representation mechanism, and a forum, in which their demands can be considered.

Third, local political leadership must find synergy with civil society and the international community to achieve results that are acceptable and widely supported. Sustainable peace processes depend on grassroots support. While states may be wary of civil society organisations, a respectful dialogue enables different dimensions of vibrant societies to express themselves in ways that contribute to a cohesive social fabric. The language of this co-operation is a renewed understanding of human rights.

## Still in the making

The United Nations is an organisation of states. Members are states recognised by other states. Civil society was not formally present at the United Nations' constitutive moments in San Francisco and New York, and the manner in which the United Nations interacts with civil society is still in the making. However,



CAREN FROUZ (C) REUTERS NEWS SERVICE, 2003

*Displaced Iraqi Kurds stand in front of their tent at a refugee camp in northern Iraq, set up for internally displaced Kurds.*

by adopting unprecedented measures such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has taken an extraordinary step in creating a political framework in which civil society can manifest itself. At the same time, by identifying civil society actors as key partners in times of crisis and as contributors in the face of global dilemmas, the United Nations has, de facto, promoted the development of a more experienced civil society. While the United Nations still maintains its state membership, several trends have moved it in the direction of greater interaction with civil society. At the moment, no global issue can be addressed without reference to the work of millions of scholars, activists, and the representatives of thousands of non-governmental entities who are committed to those concerns. Large gatherings on different subjects—from ecology to development, from racism to human rights—have been shaping the public debate and frequently defining the very agenda of the international community, both at the state and non-state level.

### **First wave of awareness**

The work of the Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict represented the first wave of new awareness among academics, think tanks and scholars that the changing nature of conflict in the post-Cold War world required a preventive orientation to reducing the outbreak and impact of armed violence. The United Nations led the second wave of the debate by calling upon its own agencies and bodies, regional organisations and Member States to move from ‘a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.’ Secretary-General Annan’s commitment to making prevention a priority, the release of the Brahimi Report in 2000, followed by the 2001 Report on Prevention of Armed Conflict, and most recently, the publication of ‘The Responsibility to Protect, the Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty,’ all

helped to move prevention onto the forefront of the world’s peace and security agenda.

The events of September 11, 2001 moved terrorism to the top of that agenda and pushed conflict prevention into the shadows. However, as the global community continues its work to address the immediate threats of terrorism, the long-term shift to a preventive approach to peacebuilding and conflict management has never been more relevant. Before the momentum from the first and second waves of the prevention paradigm shift are lost, a third wave of awareness-raising, debate, and committed

### **Already, some member states have taken the lead in helping to move the prevention agenda forward.**

action is urgently needed. This wave must move the discussion of prevention from the academic and institutional level to the member states and local capacity level. Already, some member states have taken the lead in helping to move the prevention agenda forward. However, leadership ‘from the ground up’ is also now needed.

Many civil society groups and NGOs are already actively engaged in conflict prevention initiatives with their communities and in partnership with others. However, best practices, lessons learned, and opportunities for co-operation are not transmitted to the grassroots, national, regional, and eventually international UN system. As the Secretary-General has noted, prevention is first and foremost the responsibility of governments and should be undertaken in a ‘home-grown’ manner. Working together, civil society and government actors can create new space for national capacity-building in conflict prevention.

Because of the somewhat contentious relationship between civil society and the nation state, NGOs

are challenged to take the lead in offering a forum for engaging their own membership and the governments with which they must co-operate on issues of national and civil security. This forum must be one of positive co-operation, practical action, and movement-building. It must be created through a process that can build on the positive outcomes of the first two waves of the prevention debate, advance the discussions and commitments a step further, and link actively with the international system, regional organisations, individual governments, and partners at the local level.

### **Beginning of the third wave**

The proposed NGO conference on prevention, suggested by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention in early 2002, is the first attempt to create such a process and forum. It represents the beginning of the third wave of the prevention movement and, at the same time, is the confirmation of an inclusive trend that is transforming the United Nations as an organisation. The United Nations is comprised of states, but these states may benefit from an open and inclusive dialogue with many actors to positively resolve issues of their proper concern. The United Nations has changed dramatically since its inception, and the civil society movement is committed to make that change an even more significant feature of the international community’s public system.

It is my hope that, learning from Mozambique, many of us will find the energy to focus on prevention helping many, especially among states, to find the ways to conceive and implement a credible system of prevention. ■

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*Andrea Bartoli is the founding director of the Centre for International Conflict Resolution at Columbia University and, as a member of the Community of St. Egidio, participated in Mozambique’s civil society-led peace process.*



# The European Union in the peace process

Lt. Gen. Rainer Schuwirth

**WHEN THE BERLIN WALL** fell, the dynamics of global security changed forever. Unfortunately, this change did not reduce global conflict. On the contrary, conflicts previously suppressed by the former East-West confrontation emerged in regions that previously appeared stable. And, as states increasingly are linked with each other by virtue of transport, trade and communications, this interdependence can spread the effects of instability and violence swiftly across frontiers to neighbouring states.

Emerging crises and conflicts facing the international community are becoming increasingly complex. In most cases, military force alone is not enough to restore peace and security. Indeed, military operations have become more multi-functional, and often are carried out alongside a wide range of civilian actions. At the same time, the activities of humanitarian-oriented civilian organisations have increased considerably.

## Core priority

Today, the need for a unified effort among all available civil instruments, police and military forces in response to such crises is greater than ever. And the promotion of non-violent settlement of conflicts needs to be a core priority. This is certainly true for the European Union. The benefits of effective conflict prevention to human life, political stability, national and community budgets, trade and investment will far outweigh the efforts invested. The new European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) capabilities serve this purpose, and complement many traditional EU crisis prevention and management tools, such as development and humanitarian aid. Within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), they can

be applied to support stability and prevent the outbreak of violence.

It has been a logical step for the European Union to develop crisis management capabilities, including the military dimension, to effectively support its Common Foreign and Security Policy. Following the principal political decisions taken in 1999, and an energetic implementation phase, ESDP could already be declared partly operational<sup>1</sup> at the EU summit in Laeken in December 2001. And full operation within the scope of the Petersberg tasks<sup>2</sup> is envisaged for 2003. The relevant civil and military structures for effective decision-making have been created, including a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee and a Military Staff.

Based on voluntary contributions from EU Member States, the military capabilities will comprise up to 60,000 troops, as well as additional air and maritime assets, deployable within 60 days (some at much shorter notice) and sustainable for at least one year. On the civil side, capabilities within four priority areas are being developed in parallel to be ready in 2003: Police (5,000 police officers), Rule of Law (200 prosecutors, judges, prison staff), Civil Administration (pool of experts) and Civil Protection (2000 rescue service personnel on short notice, including assessment teams on very short notice).

## Key challenge

Employing this range of EU civilian and military instruments in a coherent and co-ordinated manner will be the key challenge facing the European Union in future crises. Since the causes and consequences of conflicts usually are complex, there is the need for appropriate complex responses. The

need for a systematic approach for the co-ordination of any civilian and military actors involved in crisis management is obvious. The primary role for military forces in such a situation should be to create and maintain a secure environment, allowing the civilian efforts and programmes to be executed safely. In addition, military forces could possibly support civil organisations in certain tasks—e.g.: delivering humanitarian aid—if these organisations do not have the means to carry them out. However, to avoid a lingering engagement, taking on such tasks should be seen as an exemption rather than a rule.

The particular strength of ESDP—the parallel and balanced use of civil and military crisis management capabilities—should be exploited to the utmost extent possible. This requires substantial co-ordination and co-operation, both within the organisation as well as with outside actors, and on all levels. ESDP and new capabilities such as police, rule of law, civil administration, civil protection and the military add to the traditional range of instruments available for crisis management. This will allow the European Union an effective approach with a careful balance between civilian and military assets should there be need for action. ■

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*Lt. Gen. Rainer Schuwirth is Director of the European Union Military Staff in the Council and the European Union.*

1. EU is now able to conduct some crisis management operations; EU will be in a position to take on progressively more demanding operations as the assets and capabilities at its disposal continue to develop; decisions will be taken in the light of the circumstances of each particular situation.

2. These tasks comprise humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (TEU Art. 17.2). Named after the place where the Western European Union (WEU) formulated the tasks in June 1992.

# Christian humanitarianism in times of conflict

*(World Vision staff with expertise in advocacy, development programmes and peacebuilding developed this brief statement at a recent meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. The staff members felt it important to bring together a number of World Vision public policy positions related to Christian humanitarianism.)*

**AS A CHRISTIAN** international humanitarian organisation working in some 100 countries, we are profoundly concerned with trends in relation to our common human security. These trends have been especially pronounced in the first years of the new millennium. We affirm the need for World Vision to partner with churches worldwide to transmit the Good News of the reconciliation and peace of Christ to a world wracked by violent conflict, poverty and acts of terror. We seek to overcome hostility by modelling non-violence and reconciliation, following the example of Christ. In keeping with Christian tradition, World Vision defines peace not only as the absence of violent conflict, but also as the presence of equity, wholeness and justice.

We therefore submit the following concerns and affirmations as a call to action to the Church and to political leaders.

## Speaking to injustice

We affirm that World Vision's Christian humanitarian mission inevitably has political implications and that silence concerning injustice can itself be a statement or can be understood as acquiescence. World Vision is committed to the concept that people and organisations at every level of society have the right and responsibility to speak out strongly for peace and justice, truth and mercy.

We reject silence in the face of injustice, knowing that silence is interpreted as the language of affirmation in decisive times. Further, we reject the use of threats and fear designed to silence questions and criticism of political actions and inaction.

## The rule of law

World Vision has embraced international conventions forged over many decades that codify human rights and affirm the responsibility of people and states to protect those rights. This 'rule of law' must work to create a more just and secure world. Multi-lateral mechanisms provide the best means to achieve sustainable peace and human security. The poor and marginalised are best served when these mechanisms represent the collective will and best instincts of the international community.

We reject the belief that 'might makes right', knowing that unrestrained power corrupts, and recognising that the least powerful people have the right to be heard.

## Violent conflict is not inevitable

We affirm that the life of Jesus and the testimony of the Scriptures, reflected in the Core Values of World Vision, identify God's persistent and special concern for the oppressed and the marginalised, regardless of their beliefs or ethnicity. World Vision's Christ-centred concern for the poor is recognised and acknowledged by the various cultures and communities of faith among whom we work. In working for peace and justice, World Vision is composed of, and partners with, people representing the civilisations of the world. World Vision witnesses on a daily basis, and always seeks to affirm, positive examples of people living peacefully and working together for common good.

We reject the conclusion that there must inevitably be a clash of civilisations, knowing that such a belief can be self-fulfilling and therefore contributes to unnecessary conflict between cultures. We urge all who are actively engaged in peacebuilding to do everything within their power to influence their public officials to pursue just and diplomatic solutions to conflicts.

## All persons bear the image of God

We affirm that all people are made in the image of God and also carry the brokenness

of humanity. No person should be denied the dignity that God accords to all human beings. World Vision accepts the major international political instruments that enshrine human rights, and calls on all states to observe and implement these rights, thereby providing protection and security to all people.

We reject any attempt to demonise people of any ethnic group, state, religion or culture, knowing that such propaganda is used to dehumanise others, to create enemies between peoples and to create a pretext for war.

## Protection of civilians and use of military force

World Vision never advocates for the use of military force. In rare cases, however, the interposition of armed forces with a mandate to protect civilian populations may be appropriate if all peaceful avenues have been exhausted. Such interventions should protect innocent lives and only be initiated for legitimate humanitarian reasons.

We reject military action for any reason other than the protection of civilians. Humanitarian objectives must not be used as a false justification for military intervention whose true objectives are political, military or economic in nature.

## Loyalty to God's kingdom

We affirm that followers of Jesus Christ have no higher loyalty than their commitment to God and the values of God's kingdom.

We call on Christians in all vocations, including positions of political leadership, to ensure that their actions are consistent with the values of God's kingdom. Policy and action must consider the good of all humanity, not just the good of one state or group of states. Christian humanitarian organisations must maintain a careful, critical stance in their relationships with governments whose objectives are often driven by national interest and domestic politics, rather than the values that Jesus demands of his followers. ■

# Our neighbours include all of humanity

Dean Hirsch

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**ON A RECENT WEEK** in my home city of Los Angeles, 20 people were murdered, most of them by handguns. In fact, Los Angeles now has the dubious distinction of becoming the murder capital of America.

In the neighbourhoods where most of the killings occurred, people have put metal bars over their windows and doors. They don't venture out at night. And when they do go out during the day, they're careful about where they go, how they talk, what they wear, and who they look in the eye.

***They don't venture out at night. And when they do go out during the day, they're careful about where they go.***

This culture of anxiety, fear and heightened security is not unique to Los Angeles. Around the globe, people live in fear of being attacked, of explosions at discos in Bali, of suicide bombings at beach hotels in Kenya, or of hostage takers at theatres in Moscow. Israel is building a thick, concrete wall through its midst in the illusion of halting violence. The United

States has created a huge new government department of Homeland Security charged with protecting the country from domestic and international terrorism.

Embassies of many Western nations have become heavily fortified compounds while citizens of developing nations, especially Muslims, are denied visas and are subject to arbitrary arrest abroad. Security forces compile long lists of potential suspects while security agencies employ ever more guards to protect private property and privileged persons.

Yet, despite this investment in security, much of the world feels increasingly fearful, powerless and insecure.

This issue of Global Future explores some of the reasons for our insecurity and our fear. It also suggests some answers.

As a Christian, I recall the words of the angel announcing the birth of Christ. 'Do not be afraid', the angel said, 'for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.' (Luke 2:10)

The good news of Jesus Christ is that through His incarnational ministry and continuing presence we can find a new relationship with God and with other people. It is a message of

love reaching out to all humanity. It teaches that, in addition to loving God, we must love our neighbour as ourselves—without caveats. This emphasis on the well-being of others is shared by many faiths and by all people of good will.

***The challenge in the message is realising that, in today's world, our neighbours include all of humanity.***

The challenge in the message of loving God and loving neighbour is practicing it. And realising too that, in today's world, our neighbours include all of humanity.

It is love of God and love of neighbour that casts out fear and liberates us from the idolatry of security. It is love of God and love of neighbour that moves us to understanding, compassion and justice. It is love of God and love of neighbour that can create the peace that all of us so dearly desire. ■

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*Dean Hirsch is International President of World Vision.*

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**WORLD VISION** is a Christian relief and development partnership that serves more than 75 million people in nearly 90 countries. World Vision seeks to follow Christ's example by working with the poor and oppressed in the pursuit of justice and human transformation.

Children are often most vulnerable to the effects of poverty. World

Vision works with each partner community to ensure that children are able to enjoy improved nutrition, health and education. Where children live in especially difficult circumstances, surviving on the streets, suffering in exploitative labour, or exposed to the abuse and trauma of conflict, World Vision works to restore hope and to bring justice.

World Vision recognises that poverty is not inevitable. Our Mission Statement calls us to challenge those unjust structures that constrain the poor in a world of false priorities, gross inequalities and distorted values. World Vision desires that all people are able to reach their God-given potential, and thus works for a world that no longer tolerates poverty. ■



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