

**11th EADI General Conference, "Insecurity and Development"
Bonn, 21-24 September***

**Challenges for Post-Conflict Peacebuilding:
How to Proceed after the Millennium+5-Summit**

Saturday, 24 September 2005, 11.15 – 13.00 h

Panel, organized by the German Development Institute (DIE), Bonn,
and the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF), Duisburg

Session Report (by Thomas Fues and Tobias Debiel)

Panelists

Dr. Gerd Junne, Professor, Department of Politicology, University of Amsterdam
Joy Ogwu, PhD, Professor, Director General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs
(NIIA) and member of the Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations,
University of Lagos

Dr. Necla Tschirgi, Vice President, International Peace Academy (IPA), New York
Ortwin Hennig, Ambassador, Commissioner for Crisis Prevention in the German Federal
Foreign Office, Berlin, and responsible for building up the police forces in
Afghanistan and Iraq.

Convenors:

Dr. Tobias Debiel, Executive Director, Institute for Development and Peace / Institut für
Entwicklung und Frieden (INEF), University of Duisburg (Rapporteur)

Dr. Thomas Fues, Senior Fellow, German Development Institute (GDI) / Deutsches Institut
für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn (Chair)

“Challenges for Post-Conflict Peacebuilding” is a rather timely topic which has gained relevance through the most recent World Summit in New York. The panel tackled in particular ‘post-conflict peacebuilding’ – an issue that reflects more than many others the relevance of the security-development nexus. This topic had raised major attention among policy-makers and within the academic community after the publication of Boutros-Ghali’s Agenda for Peace in 1992 and his Agenda for Development in 1994.

Armed conflicts are major obstacles to economic development and put extreme pressure on social cohesion. Paul Collier et al. (2003) pointedly argued that civil war is “development in reverse”. But even in countries where violence has ended or a formal peace settlement has been concluded the populations are faced with the massive task of rebuilding their nations. In this post-conflict phase, the state’s

* EADI = European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes, EADI’s 11th General Conference „Insecurity and Development – Regional issues and policies for an interdependent world“, was held from 21 – 24 September 2005 in Bonn. For reports and findings in the field of peacebuilding see <<http://insecurityforum.org/category/peacebuilding/>>.

authority has often collapsed completely, while warlords, gang leaders and other thugs continue to hold the population at ransom. What remains of the government has often lost its legitimacy because it has failed to provide its citizens with security or prosperity. In an overwhelming number of cases, post-conflict phases are thus periods of precarious and chaotic transition rather than the more ordered progress previously envisioned at the conference tables. Post-conflict societies run a very high risk of being caught in the "conflict trap" (Collier et al. 2003). Empirical studies estimate that between 40 to 50% of post-conflict societies slide back into armed conflict within the first five years after war's end.

International efforts to support "countries under stress" in their post-conflict phase have recently gained increasing attention. The analysis of sector policies and case studies has produced important lessons learned (Junne/Verkoren 2005). "Making states work" has become an imperative for international engagement in war-torn countries as well as in countries at risk (Chesterman et al. 2005). At the same time, the "liberal philosophy" underlying most post-conflict interventions and aiming at the quick introduction of market democracies has been put into question (Paris 2004).

The High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes in its report "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility" (2004) stated unambiguously that the international community so far was not able to support post-conflict societies in a coherent and effective way. To overcome this deficit, the report recommended that a UN Peacebuilding Commission be established. In his report "In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All", published in March 2005, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to a large extent, adopted the recommendations of the High-level Panel.

Being held one week after the Millennium+5 Summit in New York, the session looked at the decisions taken there. The high-flying expectations concerning the Millennium+5-Summit, sure enough, have not been fulfilled. At the same time, the World Summit Outcome has produced some positive results, among them the announcement of an international "responsibility to protect", the transformation of the Human Rights Commission into a Human Rights Council and – maybe the major achievement – the intention to set up a Peacebuilding Commission until the end of 2005. The core function of this intergovernmental advisory body would be to facilitate the assistance for the transition from war to peace. A new Peacebuilding Support Office, located in the Secretariat, would link the Commission to the overall UN System. Taking these decisions into account, the panel dealt with the following questions:

1. Has the international community so far applied an appropriate approach to support post-conflict peacebuilding and the stabilization of fragile states?
2. Which lessons can be learned from recent experiences?
3. Does the UN system need new institutions to react coherently to the threats posed by "countries under stress" and what should be the next steps in this reform effort?

Prof. Gerd Junne, Professor of Political Science at the University of Amsterdam and co-editor of "Postconflict Development" (Junne/Verkoren 2005), opened the round of presentations by highlighting three primary challenges with regard to the nexus between security and development:

- How to rethink development theories to better take account of the role of violent conflict in a large number of poor countries?
- What new place in the international division of labour can be found for countries emerging from conflict so that they do not become permanently dependent on external assistance?
- How to solve fundamental dilemmas in the economic, security and political fields, which prevent long-term stabilization?

Prof. Joy Ogwu, Director General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and member of the Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations, added an „African Perspective“ and spoke on the daunting challenge of peacebuilding in West Africa, which must also be seen as a global task. She pointed to the link between peace and justice and underlined the need to eradicate the sources of conflict. Small arms and light weapons are a major reason for death and insecurity in the region. The potential for violent conflict through armed sections of the population (murderous gangs) should not be underestimated and needs urgent attention as a preventive measure. Any global institutional structure for peacebuilding should integrate regional arrangements, particularly in the case of the African Union.

Dr. Necla Tschirgi, Vice President of the International Peace Academy (IPA), New York, focused on the results attained at last week's Millennium+5 Summit. She has been involved in several studies revisiting achievements, limitations and challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding, commissioned among others by the IPA in New York, the War-torn Societies Project in Geneva and International Development Research Centre of Canada. According to Dr. Tschirgi, the wording on the Peacebuilding Commission contained in the Outcome Document leaves many questions open on which an international consensus could not be reached yet. It will be important during the ongoing session of the General Assembly to bring back on board the convincing proposals spelled out by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. A problem for consensus building in the General Assembly has been so far, that the Peacebuilding Commission is treated as bargaining chip by certain states, even though everybody agrees that it is a good idea.

Besides Dr. Tschirgi, **Ambassador Ortwin Hennig**, Commissioner for Crisis Prevention in the German Federal Foreign Office and responsible for implementing the German Action Plan on Crisis Prevention, reported from the negotiations in New York. He underlined the interest of the German government in the Peacebuilding Commission. It would fill an important gap within the international structures and provide an institutionalized forum for addressing the interlinked challenges of peace and development. In his view three key questions still need to be resolved:

- What would be the institutional linkages of the Commission? Will it be set up by the General Assembly, the Security Council or both?
- To whom and how would the Commission report? The German government favors a sequential approach: first to the Security Council, then to General Assembly.
- What would be the final formula for its composition? The way it is envisioned at present the Commission certainly would be much more representative than the Security Council. Germany is very content to be assured a seat on the Commission.

The **debate with the audience** covered a broad range of issues related to peacekeeping on the ground and on the international level:

- It was generally noted that there needs to be a strong focus on prevention, early warning and early action. The Commission is only mandated to deal with post-conflict situations. However, there is a provision in the Outcome Document that a country can approach the Commission and request support.
- There is a fear that the Commission will be in the danger of overstretching. How could it possibly deal with all relevant cases, present and in the future? There is no guarantee that the Commission will be an automatic success or add any value at all. Lots of serious risks and shortcomings remain that need to be addressed in the General Assembly.
- At this stage it would be premature to extend the concept of the Commission to the regional and sub-regional levels but the UN Peacebuilding Commission should closely cooperate with existing mechanisms of this kind.
- Several speakers emphasized the necessity and use of the Peacebuilding Commission engaging with civil society organizations in an organized and institutionalized fashion. The German government is committed to be active in this regard, also with a view to involve the business sector.
- The idea of simulation exercises to test how the Commission might work in concrete circumstances like Burundi was introduced by Ms. Tschirgi and supported by Mr. Junne who would check into the possibility of the University of Amsterdam getting involved.
- Finally, the need for economic growth and social development in order to address the root causes of violent conflict were heavily underlined, in particular with regard to the hundreds of millions of unemployed urban youth in developing countries. They will only be able to find useful employment if their countries are integrated into the world economy moving beyond traditional patterns, e.g. expand in the global production networks of the services sector.

Further Reading:

- Annan, Kofi, 2005: In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All. New York, N.Y.: United Nations (March 2005).
- Chesterman, Simon/Michael Ignatieff/Ramesh Thakur (Eds.) 2005, Making States Work: State Failure and the Crisis of Governance. Tokyo; New York: United Nations University Press
- Collier, Paul et al., 2003: Breaking the Conflict Trap. Civil War and Development Policy. Washington D.C.; World Bank.
- High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes, 2004: A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility. New York, N.Y.: United Nations (December 2004).
- Junne, Gerd/Willemijn Verkoren (Eds.), 2005: Postconflict Development: Meeting New Challenges. Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner.
- Paris, Roland, 2004: At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict Cambridge, UK et al.: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneckener, Ulrich/Silke Weinlich, 2005: The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission: Tasks, Mandate, and Design for a New Institution. Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP Comments 38, September 2005).
- Tchirgi, Neclâ, 2004: Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Revisited: Achievements, Limitations, Challenges. New York: International Peace Academy (7 October 2004, prepared for the W'SP International/IPA Peacebuilding Forum Conference).