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This paper provides background for the development of recommendations regarding interaction between the UN and civil society to enhance action for conflict prevention. It was finalized at the end of May, 2004 for use in events considering civil society and conflict prevention.

An earlier version was prepared for the preparatory process for the International Conference "The Role of Civil Society and NGOs in the Prevention of Armed Conflict" planned for the UN in 2005.[1]

The original version was presented at a Seminar on Civil Society-UN Interaction for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (New York, February, 2004).

"We must be intensely aware of the changes in the international security environment. The challenges to peace and security today are predominantly global. While they are not necessarily or entirely new, they take place in a new context and have far-reaching effects. They require complex and collective responses, which are possible only if the web of multilateral institutions is adequately developed, and properly used."[2]

Kofi Annan. September 6, 2003.

Introduction

As the nature of conflict has changed, governmental and civilian interest has grown in civilian conflict prevention, peace building and the importance of civil society organizations (among them NGOs) in that process. Civil society organizations can be instrumental to the prevention of conflict and to building political support for global action to support prevention.

There are, as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan pointed out at the inception of the 2003 session of the General Assembly, both "hard" threats to peace and "soft" threats like poverty, child mortality and HIV/AIDS. Prevention of conflict involves action against both types of threats, and Annan noted that the soft threats affect most of the people of the world and, therefore, "we should focus on those essential threats."

Conflict prevention occurs, not so much in multilateral meetings in New York or Geneva, but on the ground, in specific situations with differing

variables and time lines. However, multilateral institutions can assist in setting the framework for conflict prevention, resolution as well as recovery, and can influence the direction and scope of resources and personnel made available for the effort.

This paper concentrates primarily on the multilateral level, but should be considered in concert with studies of response and strategy at the national and regional level.

Despite the late 20th Century promise of a peace dividend, and the commitments of governments for a new millennium, the global context has become, if anything, more difficult. The Secretary-General noted that the international system has been "shaken" and that the consensus that allowed the virtually unanimous endorsement of the Millennium Declaration and its vision may no longer exist. Addressing a UN-sponsored civil society consultation in September, 2003, the former Argentine Chancellor Dante Caputo summarized the global scene following the invasion of Iraq. The invasion alienated the ambition of an international system of democratic rights, revealing that economic and military powers dominate international relations. That power is concentrated in the G-8 and the "G-1". We are experiencing a conjunction between globalization and the revival of imperialism. In this context, Caputo suggested, we must fight to transform the UN from a relationship among states to a genuine system of relationships between nations. In this context a central question would **be how to accomplish a joint effort to regain the legitimacy of the UN as a global governance system and to hinder the humiliation of this system by one powerful actor?**[3]

The potential and future of multilateralism is in question. At the same time conflicts and wars are, by some governments, increasingly viewed through the lens of response to terrorism. The predominant response— whether to civil or regional conflict or terrorism —has been military. Military and security budgets escalate. The fight against poverty, disease and environmental ruin languishes.[4]

Seldom have we known as much about the roots of conflict (and the contexts which encourage terrorism). From the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, through the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty and the Commission on Human Security the links between peace and development, respect for human rights and care of the environment have been re-iterated. The recent irreconcilable differences in the Security Council over Iraq, among other factors, have led the Secretary-General to commission a further study (see below) on current challenges and issues of security and the reform of the international system.

The challenge and opportunity for civilian networks (and allies in government and multilateral institutions) to re-frame and re-tool their approach is considerable, but a great deal of research and expertise is available. Further, experience regarding effective strategies and tactics for accomplishing change at a multilateral, or regional, level is considerable.

This paper concentrates on examples and lessons from a variety of multilateral processes. It utilizes the reflections of civil society organizations as well as official bodies. However, the dynamic relationship between process, policy content and objectives for change must be kept constantly in mind.

Processes may be defined by the institution or the issue in question. However, one of the findings from some recent processes (the land-mines treaty process, for example) is that success may mean breaking out of an institutional box. Another learning is that alliances across often formally separated sectors may be essential to success. The specificity and difference defining particular conflicts must of course be kept in mind when any "lessons" from external experience are reviewed.

Finally, there is the simple possibility that the change objective may be transformative rather than incremental in nature, and that what is desired is a different or new institutional arrangement, a transformed distribution of power.

Multilateral Theatres: The United Nations

Recent history and context

"…the nature of conflict has shifted. We see fewer inter-state wars and more civil wars. And

we observe the growing importance of non-state actors in both fomenting and prevent conflict. Even within societies rent by internal divisions, there are always people working for peace on the ground.

The Secretary-General's appeal for NGOs to hold an international conference to discuss their role in the prevention of armed conflict comes as a golden opportunity for the Conflict Prevention community to consolidate its rapid development."[5]

The potentially central role of civil society organizations is cited by the Secretary General of the UN in his report **Prevention of Armed Conflict**, which, in para. 143 cites the following contributions of NGOs:

- Non-violent avenues for addressing the root causes of conflict at an early stage
- Important means of conducting track II diplomacy
- Studies of early warning and response opportunities
- Advocates in raising the international consciousness of particular situations and in helping to shape public opinion.

To these are added the contributions of academic and research institutes, and collaborative efforts between UN bodies and a variety of NGOs in various sectors, including UNIFEM and the Department of Disarmament Affairs. The success of such processes as the Land-Mines Convention (Ottawa, 1997) is one of the significant results of collaboration. The Secretary-General further notes the importance of encouraging the cooperation of the private sector in prevention of conflict, welcoming the Security Council initiative to "name and shame" individuals and business that break sanction or contribute to conflicts.

The contribution of civil society is essential, as well, to the accomplishment of these objectives, as noted by the General Assembly in its **Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace** (General Assembly res. 53/243)

Women's essential role in peace and security was recognized on October 31, 2000 by the Security Council in **Resolution 1325** (see below), which provides a "comprehensive framework within

which women's protection and their role in peace processes can be addressed."[6]

A number of these and many other elements of efforts for a more peaceful world are agreed to in **Security Council Resolution 1366** (30/8/01). The resolution specifically highlights the role of women in conflict prevention, requesting greater attention to gender perspectives in the "implementation of peacekeeping and peace-building mandates as well as in conflict prevention efforts." It also recognizes, in its preamble, the "role of non-governmental organizations, civil society actors and the private sector in the prevention of armed conflict."

The Secretary-General's report builds on themes established in his Millennium Report "We the peoples…" to the 2000 General Assembly, and on commitments made by Heads of State and Governments in the **United Nations Millennium Declaration** (res. 55/2 of the General Assembly, 8/9/00, particularly paras. 8, 9, 10).[7]

The planned 2005 Conference on Civil Society and Conflict Prevention, organized in response to Recommendation 27 of the SG's report on **The Prevention of Armed Conflict**, will be situated in the midst of a UN calendar that includes:

- reviews of the implementation of the Financing for Development Conference and progress to the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals
- 10-year reviews of the Beijing Women's Conference and the Cairo Population Conference.

Opportunities for policy linkage and coalition-building in advance of these events are many.

Recognizing the limits of the UN's capacity to implement the intentions of its Charter and to encourage governments to honour and implement their commitments in such agreements as the Millennium Declaration, as well as challenges which has emerged with the new century, the Secretary-General announced (23/9/03) the formation of a **High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change** with a focus on security threats, peace and reform of the international system.[8] The panel will focus on policy issues including not only terrorism and weaponry but also such non-military threats to

human security as famine, poverty and disease. The panel could offer an opportunity for civil society input and for constructive dialogue. Further, its work and report should contribute to the success of the 2005 Conference. (a section on the panel's work can be found later in this paper).

United Nations Experience with Civil Society: under review, The Cardoso Panel of Eminent Persons

With regard to the overall context of civil society and its roles with the UN, it will be useful to monitor, and possibly to respond to, the report of the **Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations** Relations with Civil Society, headed by Brazilian ex-President F.H. Cardoso. The report is expected in May, 2004. Conflict prevention networks may have submitted evidence and recommendations to the panel, and some have had the opportunity to participate in regional and specialized consultations.[9] It will be important to review its findings in terms of further implications for civil society-UN relations in general, and this pre-Conference process and 2005 Conference and resulting recommendations for action, in particular.[10]

In establishing the ground for its work, the panel published a Background Paper with an "inventory" of existing practices in UN-CSO relations. This inventory examines the evolution of practices, the importance of the decade of conferences in the 1990s, formal and informal relationships, examples of innovative practices and a future-oriented survey of major challenges, concerns, problems and discrepancies. The paper also includes a summary of recommendations made to date by various "key actors".

Examples of engagement

The paper's survey of innovation includes a series of diverse examples:

- The **Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)** with its agreed framework of "Major Groups", nine defined constituencies who participate, not merely observe ongoing processes. Following the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) provisions for Sustainable Deve-

lopment Partnerships (multi-stakeholder coalitions with a public commitment to achieving specified sustainable development targets) has been added. It should be noted that the extensive engagement of various sectors of civil society is in part due to sustained lobbying and substantive engagement by CSOs organized in the CSD Steering Committee over a number of years.

- The **Commission on Human Rights (CHR)** which invites and receives confidential reports from various CS actors; has, in some cases, optional protocols which permit individual access on human rights violations. "NGO participation in the CHR is well defined, strongly regulated, and highly politicized. Nevertheless, the engagement is an example of direct inputs by civil society into the implementation and monitoring of significant international instruments." There is a 50 year history of engagement by such organizations as Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists as well as a host of specific sectoral and national human rights organizations. The development of human rights organizations and networks in the Americas and their increasingly effective advocacy has been analyzed effectively by American scholars.[11]

- The **Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)** has involved the leaders of five NGOs in its Inter-Agency Standing Committee since 1991. This body meets quarterly to make policy recommendations on humanitarian issues and emergencies. In part this is a recognition of the importance of on the ground cooperation between non-profit and governmental agencies and of the situational intelligence and accumulated experience of the operational NGOs.

- **UNAIDS**, set up to coordinate the work of the various UN agencies on HIV/AIDS is the first UN organization to include non-governmental actors in its governance structure. Five NGO representatives join 22 governments and 8 UN agencies in its Programme Coordinating Body. Associations of people living with HIV/AIDS

are represented. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) is a collaborative partnership involving and even wider range of organizations.

- **UNDP** has established a "policy of engagement" including an ongoing UNDP-CSO Advisory Committee which connects with the agency at a senior management level, and which includes conflict prevention and peace-building in its consultative agenda. UNDP is moving to establish local and regional CSO advisory committees as a regular feature of its approach.[12]
- ECOSOC's **Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues** has half of its 16 members appointed by the President of ECOSOC on the basis of nominations from indigenous peoples' organizations.

To this list might be added the Global Environment Facility and the UN's Global Compact which involve non-governmental actors in several ways, largely advisory to either inter-agency, state and Secretariat decision-makers.

Despite these zones of innovation, some of the principal organs of the United Nations remain relatively "underdeveloped" in their relations with civil society actors.

Zones of challenge

The **General Assembly** has heard from CSOs and developed procedures for accreditation and engagement in the context of preparation and celebration of World Summits and Conferences since 1993. These procedures have continued in "Plus 5" events. Only in 2003 did it develop in a regular Assembly session, an "inter-active" dialogue on the follow-up to the Monterrey Financing for Development Conference. Some civil society networks have undertaken renewed interest in the potential of the General Assembly in at least two dimensions. One is the possibility of using the Assembly and its General Committee —a group of 28— as a central body to coordinate international business, and bring greater 'clout' to the economic, environmental and social agendas so instrumental in creating a world secure for its all its inhabitants.[13] The *other* is the potential for utilizing the General Assembly, through its

capacity to resolve to act "United for Peace" as an agent for conflict prevention or resolution with a broader base than the Security Council. For those concerned with bringing greater democracy to international governance, both these ideas, neither of which require difficult Charter amendment, are worthy exploration.

The **Security Council** has been the scene of some limited advances —relatively limited but positive— relevant to conflict prevention.

It has invited CSOs to brief it on several occasions. These briefings have, however, been labelled as "informal" and held outside the regular meeting room, in a practice which has come to be known as the "**Arria Formula**". These meetings can be initiated by one or more ambassadors of member states. To be effective they need to attract high level participation, to have the capacity to involve people from the field and to have sufficient time for preparation that CSOs and others can be effective participants.

Much work remains to be done and NGO coalitions and working groups have been developing and proposing recommendations for reform for some time.[14]

The NGO Working Group on the Security Council —a continuing New York-based body— has initiated as many as 30 smaller meetings per year between CSOs and individual ambassadors, officials of foreign ministries or high-level UN personnel. As it describes itself "the Working Group does not claim to be representative in any formal sense, but it does have powerful legitimacy, since it contains many of the largest and most effective international NGOs working at UN Headquarters in such fields as humanitarian relief, human rights, global governance, women's rights, disarmament and the like. Four WG member organizations have won the Nobel Peace Prize."[15]

1325

Perhaps the most significant Security Council-related experience is that which brought about Resolution 1325 which deals with women, peace and security (October 31, 2000). This path-breaking resolution officially endorses the inclusion of civil society groups, notably women, in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements,[16] was the result in good part of the efforts of a relatively small but persistent coalition, the working group on Women and Peace and Security. As two participants described the process: "Under the Namibian Presidency [of the Security Council], the Coalition, working closely with the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and UNIFEM towards the open session, or Arria Formula, helped to identify and bring the experiences and expertise of civil society into the sacred realm of the Security Council."[17]

Having achieved Resolution 1325, organizations and networks can utilize the implementation of the resolution to open a variety of further doors, and as participants have put it "use those words and those stacks of papers to jam the doors permanently open."[18]

The Cardoso panel's Background Paper admits that some important successes have been achieved outside the UN, pointing to work on HIV/AIDS, the Jubilee 2000 anti-debt initiative, achievements in lobbying the World Bank on accountability and the evolution of the World Social Forum.

The Paper credits civil society "pioneers" in developing new partnerships and models of participation, resulting in a shared sense of ownership. It cites the following **factors contributing to success**:

- Providing timely information to civil society about the inter-governmental process
- Aiming for meaningful interaction and dialogue, not just public relations
- Emphasizing both informal and formal interaction for learning and trust building
- Acknowledging the diversity of civil society and seeing benefit in bringing this diversity into the inter-governmental decision ma-

king process.
- Working with and respecting self-organized mechanisms of civil society
- Interpreting flexibly UN rules on participation and making them better understood by civil society
- Developing an attitude of openness within the secretariat staff
- Allocating human and financial resources for enhancing participation
- Encouraging secretariat staff and leadership to interact with civil society directly and listen seriously to their ideas, experiences and criticisms
- Seeing participation as an enhancement of the inter-governmental process.

Additional examples and lessons learned are presented below.

Cardoso and beyond

Where is the Cardoso panel likely to lead? The Cardoso panel report (hereafter "the report") is not public at time of writing, however interviews with the panel secretariat and the contributions of panel member Birgitta Dahl (Sweden) to the Dublin European Conference on the Role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict provide some sense of what the recommendations may be.[19]

Birgitta Dahl, in Dublin in April, outlined the challenges the panel had faced and sketched the orientation of its recommendations. She noted that the panel argues for three paradigm shifts:

- From an institutional focus and culture which is essentially inter-state, to a much more inclusive and flexible approach emphasizing multi-stakeholder, inter-constituency and networking initiatives, extending well beyond the UN's history as a convening forum.
- A greater focus on country-level alliances and coalitions responsible for implementing the MDGs and much else, with UN country-level facilitation. The object is to "get things done"
- Addressing "democratic deficits", for example reversing the perceived marginalization of parliaments, moving beyond the dominance of foreign relations in the executive

power within states. The panel will attempt to find a way to engage parliamentarians more directly in the UN, to give them a voice.

In overall terms, the panel's report will take an approach that emphasizes inclusion, which focuses on accessibility and transparency in global governance, with clearer roles for civil society and easier access for citizens in general. Opening the UN to greater recognition of global public opinion as it makes decisions follows.

To do this means that the UN's major formal structures need to be opened up, and that processes which both attract high-level participation and informal exchanges, roundtables, hearings and other initiatives (see Financing for Development, below). The panel has heard a good deal about global policy networks and will try to place the UN in their midst. The positive experience of the Land Mines Treaty, the exercise of civil society pressure and public opinion eliciting a response to AIDS and opposing war are examples on which civil society organizations concerned with conflict prevention can utilize to their benefit in shaping engagement with the UN.

An emphasis on partnerships for responding effectively to global challenges will be a thread running through the report. The proving ground for new partnerships is likely to be efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals but not only that. The UN should be seen, the panel is likely to say, as a body which promotes and catalyzes new partnerships.

Conflict prevention civil society organizations will be interested in the extent to which the panel recommends changes in the practices of the Security Council. It is likely that the recommendations will concentrate on what can be done to strengthen the informal practices, the Arria formula engagements, etc.

As Birgitta Dahl noted at the Dublin conference, the panel will respond to what it perceives as a global "democratic deficit" and recommend strengthening the global role of parliamentarians by establishing the equivalent of global "parliamentary committees" on key global challenges.

To these ends the panel will seek some organizational changes, aiming to establish a cross-institutional entry point and accreditation procedure lodged with the General Assembly. It will seek a specific high-level officer, under the Secretary-General to coordinate UN relations not only with civil society organizations, but parliamentarians, business and others. It will also recommend this sort of strengthened liaison role at country level, stimulating and enabling multi-sectoral dialogue.

Some initial reflections

The likely release of the panel's report in mid-2004 should be an occasion for close scrutiny and active response by civil society organizations seeking to engage with the UN in conflict prevention. Such panel reports, unless taken up by interested constituencies and finding some lead UN agencies and support in some key national ministries, can, we know from experience, simply fall "stillborn from the press" and gather dust.

If civil society organizations with a conflict prevention mandate want an expanded hearing in UN bodies, the recommendations of the Cardoso panel provide an occasion which should not be missed, a moment to engage allies, inside and outside government and the UN itself, in considering ways to enhance engagement with civil society in policy, decision-making, implementation and evaluation.

The idea that a global inter-parliamentary committee focused on conflict prevention may be one way of translating the general proposal of the panel into a useful mechanism for advancing the civil society conflict prevention agenda. Clearly the panel's initiative regarding parliamentary collaboration is likely to face a good deal of resistance, so why not attempt to build support for at least one test case?

Clearly, partnership can be an important element in responding to global challenges whether in environment, development or prevention of conflict. It must be noted that there is a great deal of ambiguity and "looseness" in much of the discussion of partnership in UN circles. As Ann Zammitt points out in her useful and wide-ranging study of UN-Business Partnerships "if a common approach to partnerships does exist, it seems to be

'anything goes'. For example, there is little evidence to show that progress has been made on finding "a common understanding for the scope and modalities of partnerships to be developed as part of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development".[20]

Clarity about the different nature of various types of "partner" organizations, their objectives, interests and resources is key. Clarity of the relative power of different partners is as important in UN relations as in gender relations. Zammitt argues that the current variety of UN-business partnerships are unlikely to make a significant contribution to development and may actually "be counterproductive". She puts the emphasis on the transcendence of appropriate development objectives and promotes a strategy of clear social and economic goals, a development-centred economic framework, within which partnerships may be defined.

Groups seeking to develop new partnership arrangements with the United Nations for conflict prevention should benefit from Zammitt's emphasis on the development context, the need for clarity in roles and expectations and her detailing of the diverse ways in which one sector —private business— has exercised extensive influence in diverse aspects of the UN family.

The Cardoso panel report will be unlikely to advance matters if its recommendations are perceived to embody only the interests of northern CSOs. It is incumbent on southern organizations to engage with the proposals and evaluate the extent to which their interests and objectives are embodied or served in its recommendations, and campaign accordingly.

Also consider…

Two further comments regarding institutional relations with the United Nations at the global level emerge.

While a number of departments, agencies, funds and programmes have established regular ongoing mechanisms for liaison with CSOs, including participation in programme decision making, advice to senior management, consultations, roundtables and hearings, it would appear that **a regular ongoing mechanism for relations between conflict**

prevention CSOs and the Department of Political Affairs is yet to be developed. If this is, in fact, the case, a dialogue to develop a mutually-effective format or practice should be initiated.

CSOs, particularly those dealing with development, economic and social issues have long made effective and productive use of the services of the **United Nations Non-Government Liaison Service (NGLS)**. Their advice on a number of the issues of CSO-UN relations is valuable, their liaison and support an element in the effectiveness of many non-governmental initiatives at the United Nations.[21]

Linking Conflict Prevention and Development

Civil Society preventing and confronting conflict

The basis for linkage and coalition building does not need to be invented. The Secretary-General's **Prevention**… report, like his Millennium Report engages a series of sectoral issues including food security, health, gender, development assistance, human rights and political action. The role of civil society in a number of these is affirmed.

More recently the report of the Commission on Human Security **Human Security Now** (New York, 2003) examines such factors as migration, economic security, health and education as essential to protection and empowerment for human security.[22] Again, the potential for civil society contributions are cited. Close connection with populations, advocacy for policy change regarding poverty and inequality, education and other development programs, combating disease, seeking fair trade…all can build security. "Promoting human security within a framework of protection and empowerment requires an enhanced role for civil society supported by more resources, " the report declares, "A global initiative for human security is dependent on how well the international community mobilizes and harnesses the energy, commitment and creativity of the NGO sector and other social actors." The Commission looks forward to a "**global alliance**" of public, private and civil actors, developing norms, integrated activities and

monitoring progress and performance. Such a loose alliance would bring together groups working "for peace, governance, human rights, humanitarian assistance, development, poverty reduction and other freedoms that pertain to human security." It cites funding initiatives aimed at promoting human security. The Commission looks forward to a "core group" that "would link disparate human security actors in a strong global alliance around the United Nations and the Bretton Woods organizations" which would seek to ensure adequate resources for human security.

The importance of the link between economic justice and the prevention of conflict has been further documented in the 2002 report of the World Bank **Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy**.[23] The report emphasizes the importance of designing development strategies appropriate to potential conflict situations. Further, measures at the level of global economic policy frameworks may also be key. The economic crashes in such countries as Indonesia in the late 1990s are disastrous in themselves and may heighten the risk of conflict. Conflicts over the control of natural resources, their development and "rents" from that development as well as associated corruption are frequent today. Measures that increase public transparency and scrutiny of natural resource revenues may, for example, contribute to reduction of tension. The Bank's report cites as precedents for international action the Kimberley process on regulation of the diamonds trade, the OECD-wide criminalization of the bribery of government officials and the international ban on anti-personnel landmines. The first and third of these are also examples of the fundamental role of civil society organizations and initiatives is raising the priority of particular problems and contributing to the intellectual and political development of responses.

The Millennium Development Goals: opportunities and limitations

The MDGs offer a number of occasions/ opportunities at the national level and in multilateral institutional calendars for raising issues of concern to conflict prevention networks and inviting linkages with related issues and networks concerned with them.

The development of analysis in accessible terms of the relationships between the problems and challenges addressed by the goals and agenda for conflict prevention is an early priority. Much of this exists, but efforts to distil and popularize and to make economical linkages with ongoing discussions of the Goals and the MDG campaign are a priority.

The Goals can and should be unpacked in conflict prevention terms:

- **Poverty**, and its constituents including inequitable access to land, resources, employment and other sources of security is fundamental.
- **Disease, particularly HIV/AIDS** is contributing to current failure of state services, economic insecurity and fear.
- **Environmental degradation** contributes to struggles over resources, migration, etc.
- **Resources for development: Grotesque levels of military expenditure** are a cancerous enemy of investment in basic human services and economic development that provide the basis for security.

This labour is relevant and opportune, and can be done with reference to the ongoing calendar of MDG-related events at the multilateral level. Groups and networks at the national level are already engaged, to some extent, in such enterprises, but can be encouraged and supported by international networks.

At the same time, plans for the development of an international event in 2005 dealing with conflict prevention need to take into account the results of the increasing body of research and evidence arising from the implementation of the MDGs, by multilateral bodies like the World Bank and UNDP, by the Millennium Project and by CSOs, and bring that forward in the agenda and considerations of the 2005 conference.

There is a clear limitation in the linkage with the MDGs that has to do with lack of direct reference to peace and conflict prevention. As the World Bank report further notes, "reducing the global incidence of civil war is not included as a Millennium Development Goal". Here the **Millennium Declaration** is an essential frame of reference. Additional

reference can be made where necessary to other relevant international commitments through the UN back to the Charter itself.

Policy linkage

To date, two orientations to MDG monitoring and evaluation have developed among civil society organizations.

The first parallels efforts by the Secretary-General and the UN itself, that is to **apply indicators and targets and measure country performance against the Goals**. This effort has already resulted in detailed evaluations right down to the level of municipal governments in the Philippines. It has also resulted in the development of additional or more refined indicators in such areas as gender. The international Social Watch network is developing a report on progress for publication 2005.A wide variety of CSOs are involved in these efforts, although they may be uneven in depth or adequacy, country by country.

In an address to an MDG seminar coincident with the High-Level Segment of the General Assembly in October, 2003, TWN leader Martin Khor, emphasized the importance of the **context of economic conditions and policy** for the success of efforts for the MDGs.[24] Governments may have the best will in the world, but if commodity prices for major exports plunge, they will have few resources to apply and the situation of their citizens may plunge as well. Further, the bias of policy implemented by multilateral economic institutions through loan conditionalities and international commercial agreements may such as to weaken the ability of states to plan and successfully implement strategies for economic and social development. For example, the priority placed on debt service payment and/or reduction may lead to a radical reduction of state expenditure at a moment when civil conflict or potential conflict requires greater state intervention. Thus research and evaluation on the relationship of macroeconomic policy conditions and their implications for MDG progress and related contributions to the prevention of conflict is useful.

A natural extension of these approaches is to elicit self-evaluation by governments, parti-

cularly those of wealthy nations. Denmark and presently Sweden have moved to evaluation (and make public) their own performance in the light of the MDGs. Developing country governments (many if not all) have responded with reports on progress to and through the UNDP. In some cases governments and/or the UNDP may invited CSO participation in monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes, and efforts to encourage this must be pursued.

Governments have been and are unlikely to undertake public evaluations of the macroeconomic policies that condition the **context**. The process of reporting, review and evaluation in the UN offers slightly greater opportunity. Reports by the Secretary-General can (but do not necessarily) include critical evaluation. An examination of the existing annual reports on the MDGS, the targets and indicators included, might be used as a basis for developing recommendations and advocacy for more adequate coverage of linkage issues in upcoming reports, particularly that for 2005.

Building Initiatives

Changing processes, the United Nations and innovation over time

"Strengthening civil society's engagement with the UN isn't just about better implementation of UN policies and programs. It is about how to attune the UN to the needs and aspirations of ordinary people, how to perceive more sharply the challenges to be tackled, hot to generate the political will and public support for meeting these challenges."

Fernando Henrique Cardoso[25]

The UN's role as a convenor, not only of states, but of mixed groups of state and non-state actors has been increasingly strategic. It has succeeded in setting enough processes in motion that it has met increasing resistance by some states.

The more than 150 world conferences held in the last three decades of the 20th Century were characterized by an increasingly extensive and active engagement of civil society organizations. The World Summits of the 1990s Vienna, Rio, Cairo,

Beijing, Copenhagen, etc., were each characterized by a large presence of civil society representatives. Whether as participants in parallel CSO forums, observers and lobbyists at inter-state conferences or increasingly as members of state delegations, CSO representatives have exerted significant influence.[26]

These global conference processes have resulted not only in declarations and programmes of action. They have provoked, for example:

- **new international agreements**: the environmental treaties which emerged as a result of the Rio "Earth Summit".
- **ongoing CSO formations to lobby follow-up processes**: – the NGO Steering Committee to the Commission on Sustainable Development, following the Rio "Earth Summit" and the International Facilitating Group on Financing for Development (IFG) following the Monterrey conference.[27]
- **the creation of new international institutions**: the establishment of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) following the UN Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972) and the formation of UNIFEM, created in response to the 1975 World Women's conference (Mexico City).

CSOs concerned with follow-up processes have involved a variety of mechanisms and techniques. Among the most common are:

- The formation of an ongoing civil society mechanisms to monitor implementation of conference agreements at the national or multilateral level, including the organization of either an ad hoc or continuing group or committee, with or without funding and staff, to pursue follow-up processes and organize occasions for broad international CSO engagement. The NGO Steering Committee relating to the Commission on Sustainable Development facilitated participation of NGOs in ongoing UN processes, acted as lobbyists, sought to minimize obstacles to greater participation by CSOs in the UN and negotiated the shape

of multi-stakeholder dialogues accompanying UN follow-up processes.[28]

- Engaging in evaluation of national and/or multilateral implementation through publication of occasional or regular "report-cards" on performance. Perhaps the most developed of these mechanisms is the Social Watch, which has published annual evaluations of Copenhagen Summit Social Development and Beijing Women's Conference implementation since 1995. These reports are prepared primarily by diverse national level "platforms" or coalitions of CSOs who examine their own government's performance, and by a central secretariat which solicits overview evaluations of the multilateral scene. More than fifty country platforms participate. Reports are now published in seven languages and utilized by participants in lobbying at both national and multilateral levels.[29] Women's organizations, like the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) have undertaken similar evaluations on a more limited basis. The publication of reports and evaluations may serve to increase the sophistication and effectiveness of participating groups, but is not seen as an end in itself, but as the basis for ongoing advocacy and alternative policy development.
- Participation in governance, policy and implementation management has emerged in some institutional follow-up processes. For example when UNAIDS was created in 1996 with the mandate of coordinating the efforts of seven international agencies responding to the pandemic, it's oversight body, the Program Co-ordinating Board (PCB) was constituted with tripartite membership: co-sponsoring official agencies, donor and recipient country representatives and CSO representatives (in this case specifically including people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs).[30]
- National engagement by coalitions, often sectorally defined (environment, women, social development, human rights) has led to a variety of national consultative mechanisms related to policy dialogue. With regard to national participation in multilateral negotiations, some govern-

ments —Brazil, Canada, Norway, Philippines— have, with regard to some if not all negotiations, included CSO representatives in their official delegations, as observer or advisory members in most cases.

Financing for Development: a recent relevant process

The process of development and follow-up to the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development offers several suggestive aspects in the context of the development of the proposed conference on conflict prevention in 2005. The Monterrey "Consensus" recognizes "that peace and development are mutually reinforcing". "Upholding the Charter of the United Nations and building upon the values of the Millennium Declaration" it states, "we commit ourselves to promoting national and global economic systems based on the principles of justice, equity, democracy, participation, transparency, accountability and inclusion."[31]

With regard to **UN-CSO relations**, the development of the conference was characterized by predominantly positive relations between the institution and the CSOs. One contributing factor was the disposition of the section of the UN Secretariat responsible for the project, and their commitment to CSO engagement and participation. This posture was supported by specialized and sympathetic liaison staff and the collaboration of the UN-NGLS. This official capacity was paralleled by a relatively open international CSO umbrella committee which was developed out of the large caucus of NGOs which had self-identified by participating in preparatory processes. This CSO body has reformulated for continuing follow-up as the International Facilitating Group for Financing for Development (IFG).

From the point of view of **policy development** three elements (two of which were new) were important.

- A **CSO conference**, held, in this case, before rather than parallel to the official event. This Global Forum offered a series of tracks for in depth discussion and preparation on issues on the FFD agenda. Relevant UN,

IMF, World Bank and other institutional, academic and NGO experts contributed extensively to the success of the event. A synthetic drafting process based on the various tracks or "tents" as they were called, developed a declaration of position at the conclusion of the event. Such Forums have in one form or another been characteristic of virtually all of the major UN conferences of the 1990s.

- **Policy hearings**: relatively early in the process the Secretariat collaborated with CSOs (an in a parallel process with the private sector) in organizing policy hearings at the UN. These were open to all delegates. CSOs were encouraged to present a limited number of in-depth policy proposals related to the overall agenda. These were presented in day-long hearings at the UN, were entered in official records of the preparatory process and a version edited by UN staff was later published as a book. This opportunity challenged CSOs to move beyond exhortation and 'laundry-lists' of proposals, toward proposals in depth. It encouraged collaboration between CSOs and academics and research institutes. It raised the level of debate, and the capacity of a number of CSOs to engage in depth. It also encouraged collaboration on priorities by the CSOs.

- **Roundtables**: within the conference itself, in fact taking almost two days of its deliberations, multi-stakeholder roundtables were chaired by government and multilateral leaders (such as Koehler of the IMF and Mbeki of South Africa) to address broad policy issues. Government ministers attending the conference took part, as did a number of high level officials of multilateral institutions. A limited number of CSOs and private sector representativeds took part in each session. This in turn not only offered the opportunity to insert and engage on particular policy proposals, but encouraged a level of coherence and collaboration among the CSOs participation. The CSO umbrella group that had organized the Global Forum, was engaged by the UN Secretariat in nominating the CSO participants in the roundtables. It

also managed a process whereby participants in the roundtables discussed their priorities and focused their proposals prior to participation.

With regard to ongoing work, the Financing for Development process offers a number of opportunities that parallel and overlap those relating to the MDGs in particular. Each spring, in concert with the Bank/Fund meetings in Washington, the ECOSOC holds a **high level meeting** with representatives of the Bank, the Fund and the WTO. It is encouraged that Ministers (largely of Finance and/or Development) who attend the Washington meetings, also participate in New York. These high level meetings include multi-stakeholder roundtables on subjects relevant to the implementation of the FFD "consensus". CSOs, via the IFG and with the collaboration of UN-NGLS and the Secretariat, nominate participants and take part in preparation for the roundtables. Preliminary hearings have also been held offering another opportunity to present analysis and proposals through the ECOSOC.[32]

The FFD process has also involved **General Assembly review**, inaugurated in October, 2003, in a High-Level segment, which included hearings for CSOs and the private sector, roundtables and a full day of "informal interactive dialogue" in the General Assembly, in which both private sector and CSO representatives had the opportunity (albeit relatively limited) to speak. Some evidence of their suggestions appears in the official reports of the meeting and an overlap in CSO priorities and those embodied in a draft resolution by the delegation of St. Lucia can be seen.

From the point of view of UN-CSO relations this latter format is notable as it engages CSOs, which still lack official **accreditation** to the General Assembly, in the process of deliberations of the regular session of the GA, albeit in "informal interactive dialogue". Nevertheless, these sessions, together with ongoing relations and advocacy with delegates in GA committees, permit the advancement of substantive proposals. For example, an "expert group" organized by the IFG with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, developed a policy paper on the **reform of global governance institutions**. This paper was circulated to delegations, lodged on the UN FFD web-site, circulated during debate, the focus of an afternoon seminar

open to delegates, officials and CSOS and was utilized as the basis for several interventions in hearings and roundtables.[33]

Johannesburg and the "plus tens"

Events reviewing the implementation of the commitments made by the global conferences of the 1990s, so-called +5s and +10s have been rather mixed in terms of achievement or frustration. The Geneva 2000 Special Session reviewing the results of the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development (WSSD 1995) lacked the high-level clout and relatively clear commitment against poverty that was exhibited at Copenhagen.

The ten year conference reviewing commitments made at the Earth Summit (Rio de Janiero, 1992), held as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) noted the ongoing gaps between developed and developing populations and the continuing suffering of the environment, as well as the costs and benefits of accelerating globalization. The entrenchment of disparities is a present danger. Its political declaration includes brief reference to the threat of armed conflict and the illicit trade in arms, among a number of severe dangers. Its plan of implementation notes that "peace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as well as respect for cultural diversity, are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all." The plan is extensive and detailed and touches on many areas closely related to the origins of or avoidance of conflict: resources, land, environmental security, health, trade, poverty. The potential links are not, by and large, drawn out, but the possibility of linking conflict prevention themes and the plan of implementation in detail remains.[34] As pointed out above, the follow-up processes to Rio and Johannesburg embody a more elaborate and diverse approach to civil society engagement, through a series of "Major Groups". The Johannesburg conference also committed countries to strengthening the ongoing Commission on Sustainable Development, which has a long history of CSO engagement.

The Beijing Platform for Action will celebrate 10 years in 2005. The UN Division for the Advan-

cement of Women (UNDAW) is coordinating the development of a Global Review of Beijing + 10 in 2005. With regional economic commissions the DAW has planned a series of regional meetings to solicit perspectives on implementation, achievements and obstacles.[35] The 2005 meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women could be a key site for engagement of women's networks and the process to the 2005 Conflict Prevention Conference.

Negotiating new agreements

One of the chief claims to influence by CSOs in recent years has been their contribution to the negotiation of new international agreements and the creation of the political climate in which they can be ratified and implemented.

The creation of new international agreements can often follow rather tortuous pathways, meaning that the art of evading blocks and resistances is an extremely valuable resource.

The story of the negotiation of the **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**, which entered into force on September 11, 2003 extends for more than a decade. The call for such an agreement began during negotiations for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBC) in the late 1980s.

The first step was a weak clause in the Convention calling for an examination of the need for a protocol on trans-boundary movement of living modified organisms. This led to a declaration of a Panel of Experts established by UNEP that such a protocol be negotiated, in spite of clear opposition by the United States. There were attempts to bury the issue, but public pressure increased. The "south" wanted an agreement, the US was opposed. Research bodies and academics played key roles supporting southern delegations with information and well chosen inputs. CSOs played an "awakening role" as the negotiations continued, reinforcing public support for an agreement, publicizing the case for an agreement and the concerns of southern delegations. Supportive CSOs played a "tremendous" role in offsetting the disruptive interventions of the US who wanted to scuttle the agreement. They networked and distributed information, they provided financial and material support for events and workshop, they even helped some delegates from poor or small countries to travel to key negotiation venues. The alliance of southern, particularly African, representatives and CSOs also had to face increase corporate involvement in the negotiations and nasty propaganda against the agreement and those favouring it.

The Biosafety Protocol was agreed in Montreal in January, 2000.[36] Again CSOs were in the halls, on the streets and in the press. It still took a further three and a half years to gain the support of 50 parties (countries) for the Protocol, permitting its coming into force.[37]

The story of the Protocol illustrates the importance of alliance-building between elements of governments and CSOs sharing a common concern or objective, bridging North-South gaps, utilizing the access to information and resources which each has. It also indicates the importance of persistence and patience, utilizing a variety of institutional bodies and channels over a decade or more and of perseverance in the face of powerful state and corporate interests.

These lessons are well-known in many conflict prevention and peace networks who share the history of the construction of the campaign to ban antipersonnel mines and the resultant Ottawa Treaty as well as the negotiation of the Rome Treaty and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

The establishment of the Court itself is not the only factor to be kept in mind, but the quality and content of the agreements which established it. Within the overall campaign many "battles" over particular issues —such as child soldiers, the rights of women and gender related crimes— had to be engaged. The role of CSO networks with specialized knowledge and concern operating in alliance over time was essential. One evaluation of the campaign lists at least nine separate elements in the mandate and operation of the court which was advocated by civil society and recognized in the agreement.

The magic which resulted in the new institution involved many elements. "The able leadership of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, the Chair of the Drafting Committee and the President of the Ple-

nary Assembly, the synergy, dynamism and focussed advocacy efforts of NGOs mobilise within the CICC [Coalition for an International Criminal Court] and the quiet diplomatic efforts of the like-minded States helped stir a rather complex and difficult negotiation process to fruition."[38]

Reflecting on the international Campaign to Ban Antipersonnel Mines, Stephen Goose of Human Rights Watch notes that such efforts are part of a "new diplomacy" which focuses on norm building, the rules of the game so to speak. In this new enterprise "partnership pays" —CSOs working with UN agencies, international humanitarian bodies, sympathetic governments, etc.— at both a strategic and a tactical level. It can mean breeching traditional adversarial postures and building working alliances between government/non-government actors. The formation of a core group of like-minded governments dedicated to the particular project is essential.

While CSOs can and must play an instrumental role in building public support and mobilizing it, CSOs also need to be **"inside" the process** as well. In the case of the land-mines effort, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) was given a formal seat at the table in all the diplomatic meetings leading up to and during the actual negotiations. Goose argues that **"non-traditional diplomacy can work."** It meant taking the land-mines negotiations out of their traditional site and into a more "ad hoc" locus. In the case of these negotiations, **consensus was rejected**, negotiators refused to allow one country to hold up others. They strove for consensus and a vote never occurred, with a rule requiring two-thirds majority to make changes in the text. The CSOs and the core group of governments worked very hard to ensure **geographic diversity** and gain a sense of ownership of the process in each region.[39]

Lessons learned...

A brief study of the campaign to ban anti-personnel mines outlines extremely useful lessons regarding coalition-building and campaigning.

- International context and timing really matter.

- CSOs gain credibility if they can provide expertise and documentation based on experience and research.
- Articulate your goals and message clearly and simply.
- Focus on human impact, whether costs or benefits or both.
- Maintain a flexible structure.
- Be inclusive and diverse.
- Speak with one voice.
- Importance of core leadership and committed workers.
- Clear and consistent communication is an irreplaceable element of success.
- Organizational expertise as well as issue expertise is important.
- Always have an action plan and deadlines.
- Utilize all forums to promote your message.
- Always follow-up and follow-through.[40]

While CSOs have learned a good deal in the past decade, governments may also have learned lessons, not all positive for the next phase of agreement and institution building for peace. They may seek no repeat of achievements like the ICC or the Mine Ban Treaty. "It is clear that many governments still do not feel comfortable with increased citizen involvement in defining national and international security and in seeking new ways to result global problems." Nevertheless these campaigns indicate the potential for small and middle powers working with civil society and moving agreements which historic speed.[41]

The Panyarachun High-Level Panel

The announcement of a **High-Level Panel to Study Global Security and Reform of the International System** could offer a fresh opportunity for presentation of concerns, key examples and policy recommendations from civil society organizations. The Panel will be headed by former Thailand Prime Minister, Anand Panyarachun and will have 16 members.

Mandate

The panel responds to two inter-related sets of issues: the consequences of "9/11" including counter-terrorism, the doctrine of pre-emptive in-

tervention, the concept of humanitarian intervention and human security; and the place of the UN in an era with the emergence of one super power, its "enforcement" action without the sanction of the Security Council and the spread of globalization.

The terms of reference focus the panel on the "field of peace and security". However the field is to be "broadly interpreted", "that is, it should extend its analysis and recommendations to other issues and institutions, including economic and social, to the extent that they have a direct bearing on future threats to peace and security.

The panel will meet every two months until its report in November, 2004. IT is supported by a small secretariat and a resource network of 30 scholars.

The panel faces a number of challenges, some of them institutional:

- The Security Council has expanded into areas not foreseen in the UN Charter, without change to the basis of its membership.
- The General Assembly has lost direction and authority.
- ECOSOC was envisaged as an economic and social equivalent to the Security Council but is not effective operationally.
- While the International Atomic Energy Agency deals with nuclear matters there is no equivalent agency on biological weapons. While the MDGs address development issues, there is no equivalent framework for nation building in post-conflict situations.

The panel must also deal with "threats" as experienced today, for example:
- Infectious diseases
- Poverty
- Environmental degradation
- Migration

The panel must evaluate not only the threats but the existing policies and mechanisms to deal with them, and recommend change.

Such a broad mandate touches a broad potential spectrum of civil society bodies.[42]

Engagement

Unfortunately the terms of reference make no explicit reference to civil society. The panel is not unique in this respect. The Zedillo panel preparatory to the Monterrey Conference, while including at least one civil society leader in its makeup (which the Panyarachun panel does not) made no efforts, despite requests for consultation from NGOs, to engage civil society input. The Cardoso panel on UN-Civil Society relations has been, as is required by its mandate, an exception, as has the ILO's high-level Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization.

Given the purview outlined in its mandate, the Panyarachun panel must touch on many of the issues linking conflict prevention, peace and development outlined above. It is thus incumbent on those preparing the 2005 Conference to seek some form of engagement, as soon as possible.

Advice, Influence and Decision-Making

If the likely thrusts of the Cardoso high-level panel are accepted, we are likely to see greater experimentation with involvement of civil society and other sectors in UN processes. Much of this is liable to build on the examples we have outlined above: Financing for Development, Sustainable Development and, perhaps, the Global Compact.

The emphasis is likely to be on participatory processes of presentation, exchange, debate, multi-stakeholder forums. This, of course, raises questions of impact and accountability. Even if the UN is able to attract a higher level and more diverse clientele, what is to guarantee that it won't simply be an enhanced "talk shop"? What standards of behavior, what measures of impact should be applied? Here, again, Ann Zammitt's review of the recent experience with business partnerships raises vital questions and makes at least some initial suggestions.

Certainly, based on experience on the civil society side, several initial elements which might contribute to success can be put forward:

- Changes in the reporting of roundtables and hearings to provide greater specificity and detail.
- Regular monitoring and review of the passage of recommendations and proposals through the UN system, and the extend of their impact on decisions, agreements and, even, treaties.
- Support for, including financial support for, inter-CSO bodies who act as facilitators and networkers with regard to particular ongoing processes like the Financing for Development or Sustainable Development efforts, and for agencies like the Non-Government Liaison Service who facilitate institutional/non-institutional information, communication and engagement.
- Further experiments with CSO representation in full capacity on decision-making bodies in the UN family.

These processes largely deal with advice and substantive input into deliberative processes in the UN, but not with direct engagement in decision-making, the ability to propose agenda, to vote or abstain from voting, to direct funds.

It should be noted that a number of CSOs have been more directly involved (still largely in an advisory capacity) as members appointed to the official delegations of their countries in conference and commission sessions. This is a practice not restricted to northern governments like Norway or Germany, but in which governments like those of the Philippines or Brazil have taken part.

As pointed out above, there are a few limited instances where civil society organizations are directly and officially engaged in decision-making structures of UN agencies. One of the clearest examples is UNAIDS.

Where this has occurred there are a number of factors which may have contributed, many of which have been outlined in cases described above and considered by the Cardoso panel. For instance:

- There may be a moral case for inclusion, as for example, the presence of representatives of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWAs) in the top programme group of UNAIDS.
- There may be a rationale in inclusion based on education, engagement or involvement in implementation of the constituent groups, as for example in the presence of leading business and a few international labour representatives in the Secretary-General's Advisory Council to the Global Compact.
- There may be a perceived need for the sort of information and intelligence which groups with grass-roots linkages can provide to programme implementation or granting of funds.

Where advisory processes or engagement in decision-making have been advanced, it is usually because of a catalytic combination of elements outlined in some of the cases described in this paper. For example:

- The existence or development of a clear interlocutor or centre within the institution which seeks linkage on a continuing basis with the relevant CSOs and the development of a facilitating coalition or umbrella on the CSO side, which is democratic enough to be sustained by the diversity of CSOs engaged in the issues or process.
- At least a few sympathetic members of country delegations who will pursue liaison and support engagement and transparency.
- Careful leadership and persistence in cultivating officials, political leadership with UN bodies, delegations in building an effective relationship and mutual trust.
- Sufficient funds, whether provided by government agencies, foundations, CSOs or UN liaison or official bodies to sustain a continued presence and facilitate equitable regional and gender representation in ongoing processes.
- A process within CSO constituency bodies (whether through orientaton and preparatory sessions, assemblies or councils, etc.) to discuss and build consensus on at least lead common objectives and priorities.

With regard to the details of representation through official channels and utilization of existing processes, the Non-Governmental Liaison Service of the United Nations (NGLS) has recently published a brief and very useful guide to Intergovern-

mental Negotiations and Decision Making at the United Nations.[43]

Other Theatres

Regional dynamics

Issues arising from regional conflict prevention experiences are explored in other papers in the preparatory process for the 2005 Conference. Testimony presented to the Cardoso panel indicates that relationships between the UN and CSOs on regional terrain is extremely uneven and in need to review and re-development.

- Asian CSOs indicated that "the engagement of CS with **UN country offices** is often an experience of frustration". It has been noted that there "is no standardization at the moment about ho UN missions should engage with civil society in the field." This can mean that the tone of relations is very personality driven.
- US CSOs noted that there are both good and bad practices with UN **"transitional" missions** such as those in Kosovo and East Timor. The key representative in East Timor was seen as a "champion of engaging civil society". The UN in Kosovo is seen as "very closed. Many groups are having difficulty gaining access to the UN, and feel intimidated by UN staff not to raise challenges."
- In the process of preparing **country reports** on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for UNDP, civil society in some countries feels invited and engaged, in others it is marginalized.

The consultative process has elicited recommendations for enhancement of relations as well as listing some problems and irritants. For example:

- UN central NGO focal point personnel suggest more effective retention and circulation of best practices regarding participation.
- Asian CSOs envision a much more active role for regional UN bodies, facilitating

NGO accreditation, implementing multi-stakeholder dialogues at the regional and national levels, facilitating government/CS dialogue through creation of legitimate interactive space, facilitating NGO/CS registration processes at the national level, within a rights framework involving freedom of association.
- New York-based NGO leaders suggest the creation of NGO focal points in regional economic commissions or similar UN offices "with adequate staffing and other resources to play an effective facilitating role"
- Latin American CSOs note that the ""millennium goals" can be used as an important framework to activate the relationship at the national level and advance both the coordination between the different UN bodies and ties to civil society."[44] UNDP as well as national and regional CSOs have already organized regional and sub-regional consultations on the MDGs, and the pattern is likely to be elaborated in 2004-2005. These venues can offer a very useful locale for deepening and consolidating links between development, gender, environment and peace-building agendas.

Recommendations arising from the consultations suggest broad initiatives which could enhance regional and national climates. The idea of a UN role in defending and enhancing freedom of association, the rights of civil society organizations, for example by appointing a Special Rapporteur on participation rights, etc. The idea of a CS advocate at the top of the UN hierarchy, as well as the provision of more resources for capacity building for effective participation, for travel necessary to participation, and greater support for the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) are all cited as positive steps.[45]

Regional Economic Commissions, potential for enhanced relations

Although participation in the regional commissions currently requires ECOSOC NGO accreditation, some innovation is occurring.

The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) developed the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, much of which was drafted by environment and development NGOs with the consent of governments. Civil society actors are formally part of monitoring and implementation of the Convention.[46]

The World Banks, Conflict and Prevention: Intimately involved

"…unless the politics of peace are allowed to reshape economic policy, both will fail. That is, the soundness of policies can be judged only in light of the political economy of peace. …The broad outlines of a peace-friendly agenda at the IFIs [International Financial Institutions] are clear. The costs of vilent conflict, and the benefits of its prevention, should be brought into the decision-making calculus. …the incentive structure at the IFIs should be amended to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

If the IFIs are to invest wisely in peace, they must reconstruct themselves."[47]

The increased interest of the World Bank in conflict prevention, its conflict analysis tools, the relationship of its analysis to ongoing processes like Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Country Assistance Strategies, together with its complex history of relations with civil society organizations all weigh in favour of close examination and engagement by CSOs concerned with conflict prevention at a number of levels.

The World Bank views conflict and development as intimately connected, as it states, "poverty is both a cause and a consequence of conflict."[48]

The impact of the policies and resource use of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and the creation or prevention of instability is a rich subject for debate. The World Bank is also extensively involved in post-conflict reconstruction (a significant part of its original mandate) in such situations as Afghanistan, the Great Lakes and Iraq.[49]

The World Bank has developed a Unit responsible for Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction within its Social Development Department. The Unit recently changed its name from "Post-Conflict" to "Conflict prevention and Reconstruction" a suggestive move. The World Bank has established partnerships with a variety of United Nations programmes, with the African and Asian development banks, with regional organizations like ASEAN, ECOWAS and the OAS, and a number of NGOs and Research Centres. It has established a Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network.

The range of World Bank activities relating to conflict prevention is extensive, and too diverse to be analyzed in this paper. Recently the World Bank undertook an initiative which was focused on one of the key areas of causation of conflict, that of resource extraction – oil, gas and mining. This initiative provides a useful case study of the strengths and weaknesses of the World Banks current engagement.

The Extractive Industries Review (EIR): A case in point[50]

The contribution of competition for control of natural resources, the income from their use and the distribution of benefits is one of the key roots of conflict in many regions. The World Bank recognized the strategic importance of the sector and in 2000 launched an Extractive Industries Review to examine its own role in extractive industries, in consultation with key "stakeholders". Dr. Emil Salim, former Indonesian Minister of the Environment was invited to head the review. The mandate of the review set it in the context of the World Bank's mission for poverty alleviation and the promotion of sustainable development. The final report of the EIR was completed in December, 2003.

The involvement of the World Bank in oil, gas and mining is extensive. It involves, for example, a la4rge loan to the pipeline that will bring oil from Azerbaijan to the Mediterranean coast of Turkey and the development of oil fields in southern Chad and a pipeline to loading facilities in Cameroon.

From the EIR's report ('Towards a Better Balance', December 2003):

"Increased investments have not necessarily helped the poor; in fact, oftentimes the environment and the poor have been further threatened by the expansion of a country's extractive industries sector."

"The World Bank Group does not appear to be set up to effectively facilitate and promote poverty alleviation through sustainable development in extractive industries in the countries it assists."[51]

EIR has culminated the consultation process by presenting World Bank President James Wolfensohn with a letter and the final report, titled "Striking a Better Balance: The Extractive Industries Review" on January 15, 2004. The global review was completed in two and half years with active engagements from representatives of the civil society, industry, government and academia. The Review's final recommendations are derived from extensive field study and skilled research and the team was also willing to listen to many witnesses of grave human and ecological consequences of misguided World Bank projects, programs, and activities.

The EIR report includes a valuable assessment of the many controversial issues that surround extractive industry projects —including human rights abuses, corruption and governance issues, social upheaval, environmental pollution, and poor economic performance. The EIR addresses these interrelated issues by proposing a series of recommendations that are structurally and substantively related. It argues that there is still a role for the World Bank in the extractive industries but only if its interventions allow these industries to contribute to poverty alleviation through sustainable development and only if certain conditions, namely human rights standards, pro-poor public and corporate governance and much more effective social and environmental policies, are present. The EIR

also found that support for coal and oil projects, as well as projects in critical natural habitats and areas of conflict does not contribute to the World Bank's key mandate of poverty alleviation, and therefore recommended the that the World Bank Group phase out financing these types of projects and reallocate funds towards renewable energy.[52]

There has been a worldwide response to the Review, ranging from the Government of Peru, to the US Department of Treasury and many groups around the world. Numerous civil society organizations have embraced the draft report, arguing that it adequately represents the views of many civil society participants in the regional consultations which were carried out during its compilation, as well as reflecting the inputs of the communities most affected by the extractive industries' projects. Religious leaders (the Religious Working Group on the World Bank and IMF)[53], as well as Nobel Prize laureates such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Rigoberta Menchu Tum have recently added their voices in urging the World Bank to follow up and agree to the recommendations put forward by the EIR draft report. Other organizations that are urging the report's adoption are American Rivers, the Center for International Environmental Law, EarthWorks/Mineral Policy Centre, Environmental Defense, Friends of the Earth, the National Wildlife Federation, World Wildlife fund, World Vision, the Sierra Club and many more. They urged that the work of the World Bank and the IMF must be held accountable to human rights standards, must be implemented with the people's full consent and knowledge of the process.[54]

The CEE Bankwatch Network has also urged the adoption of the report arguing that the report also has application for the EBRD, primarily as several of the projects examined were partly financed by the EBRD, but also because it looks in great detail at the issue of sustainable development, which is part of the EBRD's mandate. The Network argues that the implementation of its recommendations will be a first step in the evolution of the World Bank and other RDBs into institutions that prioritize people.[55] They also recommend that the EBRD look into some of the key areas put forward in the report, such as the issue of access to information, revenue sharing, human rights standards, labour standards, establishment of no-go zones etc.

However, a recently leaked report from the World Bank Group, available at http://www.bankwatch.org/index.html, examines all the recommendations put forward by the EIR and shows that the World Bank Group management intends to ignore a number of key recommendations proposed by the Extractive Industries Review.[56] NGO fears that the World Bank did not organise the stakeholder consultation process in good faith would appear to be confirmed.[57]

In building a broader and more comprehensive coalition for conflict prevention and the 2005 Conference, the engagement of CSOs who focus on International Financial Institutions, many of which are Washington-based, should be an instrumental step.

Approaches for 2005

This initial contextual survey suggests some possible steps forward:

- Consolidation for organizational and popular use of policy linkage and analysis.
- Development of desired policy initiatives at the multilateral level, together with a marshalling of relevant studies and examples.
- Development of a two-way inter-action with other existing policy streams, injecting and linking conflict prevention concerns and objectives, and strengthening developmental, social and environmental elements in conflict prevention processes.
- Concentration on the development of specific objectives for action at the multilateral level, leading to proposals for commitments to be advanced with governments and their leaders in 2005.
- The possibility of developing a resolution on conflict prevention and the role of Civil Society in conflict prevention and peace-building could be developed through the Conference in 2005, through advocacy with governments and ultimately approved via the Security Council on the pattern of 1325.
- The issue of resources for diplomacy (both inter-state and track II), political analysis (and intelligence) and the roles of special

representatives and other UN instrumentalities should be an essential part of strategies and proposals.

Preliminary recommendations:

- The question of whether and to what extent to utilize opportunities for linkage between the global preparations for the Civil Society and Conflict Prevention Conference and the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (MDGs) is an important strategic option which should be discussed and decided by conflict prevention networks.
- The author suggests that reference to the Millennium Declaration should be carefully integrated in linkage between the conflict prevention and MDG agendas in order to both honour the broader commitments of 2000 and to enhance emphasis on conflict prevention, peace and human rights. Ongoing efforts to link the achievement of peace and development are essential.
- Conflict prevention networks should utilize existing opportunities to a) establish linkages and b) inject analyses and policy recommendations, including those developed through the Financing for Development process, in particular the spring high-level ECOSOC-BWI-WTO meetings and related events (hearings, etc.) and the periodic reviews of FFD by the General Assembly. Such initiatives should begin early in 2004 at the latest.
- Utilizing experiences and models drawn from other departments and agencies efforts should be undertaken to develop an ongoing regular liaison mechanism between the Department of Political Affairs and conflict prevention CSOs.
- Immediate action to seek commitment to, formats for and time-tabling of inter-action with the Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Reform.
- Consideration of the report of the Cardoso High Level Panel on Civil Society-UN relations (expected May, 2004) for any implications for the research report and conference planning.
- Plans for 2005 should include links between

the projected conflict prevention conference and developing plans for General Assembly review of progress on the Millennium Goals and possible events dealing with global governance and human security.

• Engagement with multilateral financial institutions and regional banks should be integrated into plans leading to the world conference, and links with CSOs who focus on interaction with those institutions should be established as soon as possible.

Notas

1. See explanatory material on the UN engagement, conference and preparatory process in ECCP, *Conflict Prevention Newsletter*, 5:2. and 6:2. Utrecht, ECCP, December, 2002 and November, 2003. see also various updates at www.euconflict.org

2. Wurst, Jim (2003). "Annan Links Fulfilling Millennium Goals to Greater Security" U.N. Wire, Monday, September 8.

3. Zarco Mera, Carlos (2003). *In Search of Mechanisms to Strengthen the Relationship between the Civil Society and the United Nations (UN): Summary of the Latin American Summit on the 2nd of September, 2003.* www.un.org/reform/consultation-list.htm   See also the remarks of former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, that "the international community has taken notice of the fact that American power is accompanied very naturally by the desire to use it, whether or not it is in violation of international law and the United Nations Charter." Boutros-Ghali, Boutros. "Democratise Globalisation before Globalisation Denatures Democracy."

4. The "west" is about to fail it target in the fight against poverty, UK Chancellor Gordon Brown has warned. "Brown and Bono call for doubling of aid cash" *The Guardian Weekly*. London. February 19-25, 2004 p. 1.

5. "Rationale", *Conflict Prevention Newsletter*. 5: 2. ECCP, Utrecht. December, 2002.

6. Felicity Hill, "The Elusive Role of Women in Early Warning and Conflict Prevention".

7. See www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html

and a variety of links including MDG Net available through www.undg.org. MDG implementation country reports at www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports.html. See also We the peoples… 2004, a report on civil society engagement with the MDGs, via www.wfuna.org

8. See "Secretary-General Names High-level Panel to Study Global Security Threats, and Recommend necessary Changes" UN Press Release SG/A/857 04/11/2003 www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/sga857.doc.htm

9. See for example the reports of consultations meetings and briefings undertaken by the panel at www.un.org/reform/consultation-list.htm. A great variety of procedural proposals are contained in these consultation documents as well as blunt concerns regarding access, lack of corporate memory and fuzziness of UN policy and practice in such areas as dealing with the private sector.

10. See "UN System and Civil Society —an inventory and analysis of practices" May, 2003 and various other background documents at www.un.org/reform/panel.htm

11. Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink (1998). *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics.* Ithaca, Cornell University Press.

12. See, for example, UNDP (2001). *UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A policy of engagement*, New York, UNDP. www.undp.org/cso

13. Martens, Jens (2003). *The Future of Multilateralism after Monterrey and Johannesburg.* Dialogue on Globalization. Occasional Paper No. 10. Berlin, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, October.

14. For a summary of recent meetings see *Special Meetings between NGOs and Security Council Members*, www.globalpolicy.org/security/mtgsetc/brieindx.htm

15. *NGO Working Group on the Security Council: Information Statement.* (July, 2003) www.globalpolicy.org/security/ngowkgrp/statements/current.htm also interview with John Clark, staff head, High-Level Panel, New York, February 13, 2004.

16. Poehlman-Doumbouya, Sara and Felicity Hill (2001). Womens International League for Peace and Freedom, "Women and

Peace in the United Nations", *New Routes: A Journal of Peace Research and Action.* 6:3. www.peacewomen.org/un/UN1325/WomenandPeaceinUN.html. The Coalition included Amnesty International, The Hague Appeal for Peace, International Alert, International Peace Research Association, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

17. Poehlman-Doumbouya (2001).

18. See for example, WILPF, *Implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security.* A document dealing specifically with gender and early warning systems.www.peacewomen.org/resources/Early_Warning/Implementing1325.html

19. Birgitta Dahl (2004), panel member and former speaker of the Swedish Parliament was both a plenary speaker and working session resource person at the Dublin Conference, March 31-April 2.

20. Ann Zammitt (2003). *Development at Risk: Rethinking UN-Business Partnerships*, A Joint Publication by The South Centre and UNRISD. Geneva.

21. See for example NGLS, *United Nations System: A Guide for NGOs.* 10th Edition, Geneva and New York, January, 2003 ngls@unctad.org (Geneva), ngls@un.org (New York).

22. Commission on Human Security (2003). *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People.* www.humansecurity-chs.org

23. World Bank (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy.* http://econ.worldbank.org/prr/CivilWarPRR/

24. Khor, Martin (2003). *Bridging the Global Economic Divide: Proposals for Millennium Development Goal 8 on Global Partnership for Development.* Penang. TWN.

25. *Keynote Speech by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Chair of the Panel on UN-Civil Society Relations, at the DPI-NGO Annual Conference.* New York, 8 September, 2003. www.un.org/reform/speech2.htm

26. For an overview of this history see, for example, Foster, John W. and Anita Anand, eds.,

(1999)*Whose World is it Anyway?: Civil Society, the United Nations and the multilateral future.* Ottawa, UNAC, see also Schechter, Michael G.(2001). United Nations-Sponsored World Conferences: Focus on Impact and Follow-Up. Washington, Brookings Institute Press. The United Nations Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) is currently undertaking research on the World Summits of the 1990s and civil society engagement, including case studies in six countries, examination of impact on global activism and a study on preparatory and follow-up processes. www.unrisd.org.

27. The Montreal International Forum (FIM) has published a series of case studies of such developments, see, for example, Lavoie, Mario, ed (1999). *Civil Society Engaging Multilateral Institutions: At the Crossroads.* Montreal, FIM or McCarthy, Maureen (2001). Turning U.N. Agreements into Action: The Role of Civil Society in the Monitoring and Implementation of Multilateral Agreements. Montreal, FIM. www.fimcivilsociety.org a very brief inventory of "modes of CSO influence in the UN is available at www.un.org/reform/pdfs/modes.htm

28. Howell, Megan (1999). "The NGO Steering Committee and Multi-stakeholder Participation at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development" in Lavoie, Mario, ed, *Civil Society Engaging Multilateral Institutions: At the Crossroads.* Montreal, FIM.

29. Social Watch (2003). *The Poor and the Market: Social Watch Report 2003.* Montevideo, ITeM. www.socialwatch.org

30. Altman, Dennis (1999). "UNAIDS: NGOs on Board and on the Board" in Lavoie, Mario, ed, *Civil Society Engaging Multilateral Institutions: At the Crossroads.* Montreal, FIM.

31. The "Monterrey Consensus" (A/CONF.198/11) can be found at www.un.org/esa/ffd/

32. The continuing Financing for Development office within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs maintains a useful web-site which includes sub-sections for civil society and private sector statements. See www.un.org/esa/ffd/

33. Adaba, Gemma et al. *A Political Agenda for*

the Reform of Global Governance. Found as Outcome Paper of the IFG Working Group on Global Governance at www.un.org/esa/ffd/1003-hearing-CS-statem.htm

34. United Nations (2002). *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development*. Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002. A/CONF.199/20.

35. See, for example, www.wedo.org/protect/htm

36. Egziabher, Tewolde Berhan Gebre (2000). "Civil Society and the Cartegena Protocol on Biosafety" in Brown, Patricia and Alex Simard, eds., *Promoting Human Security: Civil Society Influence*. Montreal, FIM. www.fimcivilsociety.org

37. www.biodiv.org/biosafety/default/aspx

38. Almeida, Iris (1999). "Civil Society and the Establishment of the International Criminal Court" in Lavoie, Mario, ed, *Civil Society Engaging Multilateral Institutions: At the Crossroads*. Montreal, FIM.

39. Goose, Stephen (2000). "The Campaign to Ban Antipersonnel Mines – Potential Lessons" in Brown, Patricia and Alex Simard, eds., *Promoting Human Security: Civil Society Influence*. Montreal, FIM. www.fimcivilsociety.org A more critical view of the land mines process can be found in Chapnick, Adam (2003). "The Ottawa process revisited: Aggressive unilateralism in the post-Cold War world", *International Journal*, (Ottawa, Summer).

40. Based on Goose, Stephen (2000).

41. Goose, Stephen (2000).

42. Memo from Pera Wells (2004). WFUNA, based on a briefing by Sir Kieran Prendergast of the High-Level Panel. Feb.20.

43. UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service with Gretchen Sidhu (2003). *Intergovernmental Negotiations and Decision Making at the United Nations*. New York and Geneva, United Nations.

44. The proposals mentioned above are drawn from those recorded in summaries of consultations available in *Consultation meetings and Briefings held by the Cardoso Panel*. www.un.org/reform/consultation-list.htm

45. Ibid.

46. *UN System and Civil Society-An Inventory and Analysis of Practices. Backgroun paper for the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations Relations with Civil Society*. May, 2003. www.un.org/reform/pdfs/tlp9.htm

47. Boyce, James K. (1998). "Aid for Peace: Can international financial institutions help prevent conflict?" *World Policy Journal*. 15:2. New York, Summer.

48. "Post Conflict" The World Bank DevNews Media Center. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0, content MDK:20042303~menu…

49. See for example, World Bank (2002). "Conflict, Peacebuilding and Development Cooperation: The World Bank Agenda" Background Note, The World Bank, Washington, October.

50. This case study was prepared by Mejlina Modanu of Carleton University and the North-South Institute, Ottawa, Canada.

51. From the EIR website at www.eireview.org

52. "World Bank rejects recommendations of external review", News Release, February 9, 2004, available at http://www.halifaxinitiative.org/index.php/Home/529

53. http://eireview.info/doc/pressrelease.pdf

54. Also available on the EIR website.

55. *Letter to the EBRD EDs on the EIR implications for the Banks´s internal policies and operations* (January 26, 2004), available at http://www.bankwatch.org/

56. The Halifax Initiative claims that some of the recommendations that the World Bank aims to ignore include obtaining prior informed consent of local communities affected by extractive projects as a precondition for financing, phasing out lending in support of oil and coal and to focus its scarce development resources for renewable energy, ensuring the establishment of indigenous peoples' land rights as a condition for project finance and many more. (http://www.halifaxinitiative.org/index.php/Home/529)

57. www.bankwatch.org/index.html. See also the Halifax Initiative News Release.

Abstract

Links for life. Opportunities for More Effective Civil Society Engagement with the UN System

This paper begins with an examination of the recent expanding debate regarding conflict prevention and the increasing profile of civil society in the development of effective responses to the potential for conflict. It continues by examining recent activity at the level of multilateral organizations, principally the United Nations, in interaction with civil society groups, and of lessons that can be drawn from that experience.

The paper examines potential linkages between conflict prevention objectives and the current multilateral focus on the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It provides a brief examination of the role of multilateral and regional banks in the field. The paper concludes with a few initial recommendations for those concerned with civil society effectiveness in contributing to conflict prevention.

Resumen

Vínculos de vida. Oportunidades para una participación más efectiva de la Sociedad Civil en el sistema de la ONU

Este documento comienza con un análisis del debate recientemente en expansión respecto de la prevención de conflictos y la creciente participación de la sociedad civil en el desarrollo de respuestas efectivas al potencial de conflictos. Luego analiza las actividades recientes de las organizaciones multilaterales, principalmente las de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas en interacción con agrupaciones de la sociedad civil y las lecciones que surgen de dicha experiencia.

Asimismo, se analizan las posibles vinculaciones entre los objetivos de prevención de conflictos y el actual enfoque multilateral en la Declaración del Milenio y en los Objetivos de Desarrollo de la ONU para el Milenio (MDG). Asimismo, se analiza brevemente el rol de los bancos multilaterales y regionales en este campo. Finalmente, se elaboran algunas recomendaciones preliminares para aquellos interesados en lograr una contribución efectiva de la sociedad civil en la prevención de conflictos.

Sumário

Associações para a vida. Oportunidades para um engajamento mais efetivo da Sociedade Civil com o Sistema das Nações Unidas

Este artigo começa com um exame do prolongado debate recente sobre a prevenção do conflito e o crescente perfil da sociedade civil no desenvolvimento de respostas efetivas ao potencial para o conflito. O texto continua com o exame da recente atividade no plano das organizações multilaterais, especialmente as Nações Unidas, em interação com grupos da sociedade civil, e das lições que podem resultar dessa experiência.

O trabalho examina as vinculações potenciais entre objetivos de prevenção e o atual foco multilateral presente na Declaração do Milênio e nas Metas de Desenvolvimento do Milênio (MDGs). Isto nos proporciona um breve exame sobre o papel dos bancos multilaterais e regionais no tema. O artigo conclui com algumas recomendações iniciais para aqueles que se preocupam com a efetividade da contribuição da sociedade civil na prevenção de conflitos.

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