



Research Report

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Issue: Restoring economic- and social stability in post-conflict countries

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Forum: Economic and Social Council

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Introduction

Since the beginning of history, conflicts have been a vital part of the way our world has been shaped up to the present time. Civil Wars have been something so common even in our modern, peace-seeking world. The international community's outlook on conflicts has drastically changed and is now directed towards reserving peace. Not only peace, however, lasting peace became an essential bullet point in the international community's agenda.

The knowledge about how global and regional organizations should behave in a situation of a post-conflict country is limited, due to the fact that every post-conflict nation has different needs to be met. The circumstances that lead to a conflict may vary. They can either be fueled by a misunderstanding, an issue left unaddressed and has thus been worsening throughout the years; or a more common issue concerning territory, ethnic identity, and even political differences. No matter the cause, the consequences of a conflict will always be appalling for both parties. Whether a conflict is violent or non-violent, subsequently, it will take a tremendous toll on the country's political and economic stability.

A major issue tackled by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the United Nations (UN), is the transition to peace in post-conflict countries, which mainly remains fragile and reversible. Large rates of unemployment and poverty etc, destroyed physical human and social capital, altered economic incentives and criminal networks and warlords are all consequences countries facing restoration of economic and social stability are often confronted with. Subsequently, states must focus on employment and ensure to reconstruct security, including economic security.

The United Nations has stated that many post-conflict countries fail to develop their employment opportunities, effective governance and security for their citizens and threaten their economic and social resilience. Therefore, it is of great importance for the United Nations to extend their hand in aim of restoring long lasting peace as well as economic and social stability within post-conflict regions.



Definition of Key Terms

Conflict

A conflict can be defined as a disagreement between two or more individuals, or it can reach the extent of fighting between two or more nations. The latter definition is the one that is most relevant to the issue at hand. A conflict can further be distinguished by being violent or non-violent.

Violent Conflict

A violent conflict is a conflict that involves two or more parties using physical force in order to resolve competing interests or claims. Although the term can often be used to describe violent conflict involving non-state actors, in most cases, it can be used to represent war, involving at least one government.

Non-Violent Conflict

A non-violent conflict is a conflict involving the exercise of proactive nonaggression in the pursuit of many things. This may vary from seeking compensation, securing virtue, or even agitating against injustice. The consequences of non-violent conflicts greatly differ from those of violent conflicts, which are explained above. The aftermath of non-violent conflicts mainly affect political stability, which often leads to political corruption or financial instability within the region. Moreover, it holds a series of long-term effects that may disturb the region for years to come, depending on the gravity of the damage.

Post-Conflict countries

A post-conflict country is often part of a larger region wherein the conflict took place. As soon as the open warfare conflict has come to an end, the term post-conflict country is used. These regions still remain tense for years after the war and can even relapse into a new conflict.

Social stability

A post-conflict country has the goal of attaining ability to function in various social situations within the satisfaction of the country's interest. To regain this social stability, countries first reconstruct their social status and hereafter aim to sustain their stable situation. In order to satisfy citizens and in that way preventing the relapse into another conflict, the nation must supply enough services such as stable governments and good law enforcement.

Economic stability

Economic stability within a country is significantly important for the nation in order to function independently, without necessity of the aid provided by organizations and other countries. A quality trading system between nations is one of the prime



elements to ensure economic stability. Necessary resources and other products are provided by nations within this well-functioning import export system, supplying the country's citizens. Furthermore, a stable funding system helping to rebuild organizations and the individuals' lives should be established, including a stable currency and government sustained aid.

Post-Conflict Aid

All financial, material and technical assistance provided to a post-conflict country can be defined as post-conflict aid. Although commonly provided by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), a country is also often helped by surrounding nations who are willing and able to. The United Nations (UN) plays a big role in providing post-conflict aid to nations together with its sub-bodies. Post-conflict aid includes many different ways, such as food, materials for the reconstruction of property, financial aid and other vital supplies. Organizations and nations assisting to a post-conflict country are even able to re-organize justice institutions and the government structures. These are all essential for the aim to restabilize a nation economically and socially post-conflict.

General Overview

The Origins of Peace-building

The United Nations promotes and supervises peace agreements and negotiations, as well as the implementation and outcome of said agreements, as one of the original goals of the United Nations. In 1992, the Secretary General of the United Nations used the term 'peacebuilding' in his Agenda for Peace and hereafter the term was officially recognized and used in all official documents. Peacebuilding was originally defined as 'an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'. As shown in this citation, peacebuilding was formed around the idea of a conflict cycle. From conflict preventive diplomacy, to the conflict, to peacebuilding and recovery being the end of the measures if correctly taken. However, the idea of it being a cycle, derived from the fact that if the conflict cycle is not completed, a relapse into conflict is more than likely in the near future.

In 2000, however, peacebuilding was redefined by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. This primarily led to confusion, as adaptation in many cases takes time. The newly announced definition was: "Peacebuilding are activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war." This definition gives a more detailed description on peacebuilding, insisting upon nations to not only have peace, but to also be rebuilt economically, socially and politically.



The UNDP

One of the main purposes of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the restoring of social and economic stability in post-conflict countries. For the United Nations working together with the state and development organizations is of great importance for the recovering and rehabilitation of the country. Helping nations grow their independency, the UNDP has created various reports stating ideas explaining how post-conflict countries can build on their existing economic and social elements. This way nations can regain primary responsibility on their own rehabilitation. In such reports, the objective is mostly to prevent relapse into conflict and furthermore lay the foundations for lasting peace and sustainable development.

In order to guide post-conflict countries through a successful recovery into economic and social stability, the UNDP has created a list of 'peace milestones': easing of hostilities and violence; signing of peace agreements; demobilization, disarmament and reintegration; return of refugees and internally displaced persons; establishing the foundations for a functioning state; initiating reconciliation and societal integration; and commencing economic recovery.

At the start of economic recovery, nations are often aided by others. Although this is of great use at the beginning, nations must be independent from there on out to be able to satisfy the needs of their longsuffering population.

The return to a pre-conflict economic state

As some nations long for their prior social stability, successful economy and governance system, they will try to return to this pre-war state. France and the United States both attempted this directly after World War Two, leading them to a flourishing economy and stabilization. However, not all countries have a pre-war state to long for. The growth-rate of the GDP per capita is often what is looked at in these cases. When this rate was low or negative pre-conflict, post-conflict nations will try a new approach to raise it with the help of other countries and organizations, doing everything to not relapse into the same growth-rate as before.

As many helping organizations mention, the recovery of post-conflict countries should be focused mainly on making a new political economy system, building back differently and better. To attain social and economic stability, countries offer necessities and privileges to their citizens, such as: public healthcare systems, education, employment, law enforcement and social security. However, if growth is the main focus, the chance that the management for the economic consequences is overlooked, is big. The risk in this situation would be the possible relapse into conflict.



Recent post-conflict restoring of social and economic stability

The United Nations has stated around 35 countries to be in a post-conflicts recovery state. The biggest part of these are low-income countries, making the restoring of the post-conflict countries' social and economic stability harder. Low-income countries have a harder time generating human and financial resources essential for humanitarian relief followed by the social and economic recovery. The post-conflict stabilization aid has improved immensely over the past years, with fewer relapses and better, more effective rehabilitation of nations.

MEDCs and NGOs are the main aiding groups involved in the recovery and re-establishing of post-conflict countries. As stated before, the independence of a country and its people is an important factor to ensure a relapse into conflict does not take place. The population should have the power to drive the recovery, by giving them say in decision making over where the funding will go to. All areas that suffered from the conflict should equally get help, preventing unfair treatment to certain groups of people. To ensure social stability, enough employment opportunities should be made available and poverty issues should be addressed. This will provide the population with enough opportunities to rebuild its social and economic state.

Major Parties Involved

European Union (EU)

The European Union is commonly known to involve themselves in post-conflict resolution missions, with as main objective to restore economic, social and political stability in the post-conflict countries. Instead of the main factors that fuel the conflicts, the EU tends to focus its interventions on economic and political frameworks while following a general pattern inspired by the United Nations. Socio-economic exclusion and social identity are issues that are consciously not involved by the EU, in order to ensure the focus on the establishment of a democratic government. The European Union has assisted the stabilization of the government in Cyprus, Georgia, Palestine and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) are nations containing a high living standard for their citizens. Various factors determine this, including: the birth and death rate, life expectancy, housing, infant mortality, literacy, and average income. In the issue of restoring economic and social stability, MEDCs are of great importance, as they provide a large part of the aid to post-conflict countries in order to rehabilitate their nation. The MEDCs are no longer required for aid once the post-



conflict region has rebuilt its systems to the point that it can sustain itself, without being in danger of a relapse.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands has integrated a plan into their International Relations and Security policies, composed of various tactics and ways necessary when aiding post-conflict nations in their rehabilitation. Issues ranging from social problems to the re-establishing of financial stability are all mentioned in the plan. Already, many actions have been taken as a follow up to their policies in countries such as Palestine and Uganda.

North Atlantic Treaty Association (NATO)

The North Atlantic Treaty Association is involved in various different international discussions, mainly those concerning a nation's sovereignty, nations under its supervision and issues threatening international peace and security. For this reason the NATO is actively involved in ensuring and sustaining peace in post-conflict regions. An example is the rehabilitation of Afghanistan which the NATO supervised and aided. The countries that form a part of the association all contributed different elements to ensure stability economically and socially.

Peacekeepers

Peacekeepers are there to ensure the peace in nations of conflict and post-conflict zones. As of this moment, thousands of UN Police officers are deployed in 12 UN peacekeeping and 6 UN DPA-led Special Political Missions. These missions are carried out with the function of making sure all the proposed and accepted guidelines of the UN are respected in the country. That way, these can be seen as a law enforcement or military of the United Nations.

Post-Conflict Research Center (PCRC)

The Post-Conflict Research Center (PCRC) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), based in Sarajevo of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which primarily aims to raise awareness on multimedia and educational projects. Their projects specifically target people in the Western Balkan area, where they incorporate education curricula in order to help the youth of the post-conflict region.

UNDP

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is part of the United Nations and it focuses on the countries which require aid together with their development. These countries include post-conflict countries, meaning that the UNDP plays a big part in helping with their rehabilitation and gaining stability. The services the UNDP provide are for example restoring livelihoods, shelters and government capacities. The UNDP



also work closely together with other organizations such as the World Bank to oversee the development of post-conflict nations.

The World Bank

The World Bank is an organization consisting of the governments of 184 member nations. Its main focus is supporting nations and others through financial aid. The World Bank has increasingly been involved in post-conflict rehabilitations, providing large funds to actions carried out by the United Nations. Some of the departments that the World Bank includes are the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), which focuses on poverty reduction; and the International Development Association (IDA), which provides interest-free loans to the world's 81 poorest nations.

Timeline of Key Events

1815 The topic of post-war recovery was first examined by David Ricardo. He claimed that the reorientation of capital flows towards peace activities was necessary.

1920 The league of nations leads the first international effort to rehabilitate post-war Austria.

1948 World Bank funded restoration of Europe after World War 2. At the same time, one of the most successful post-conflict initiatives was carried out: the Marshall Plan.

1994 The UN achieved a successful re-establishing of economic and social stability in El Salvador. Peace accords were signed in the post-conflict country.

May 2001 A Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, mainly aimed at post-conflict rehabilitation, was founded by the UNDP.

July 2009 -Jan 2011 Multiple resolutions specifically targeting post-conflict rehabilitation were passed by the UN Security Council.

February 2014 The UNDPKO publishes a policy to oversee and control the missions of the peacekeepers in post-conflict regions.



Previous attempts to resolve the issue

Using multiple attempts, the UNDP has previously tried to resolve the issue active in post-conflict countries. Together with the aid of organizations such as the World Bank and other nations, the UNDP was able to build shelters, work with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in order to increase a nation's independence by building up their own food source for the population and furthermore ensure opportunities for employment in the effected states.

Together with the UN, nations are constantly trying to find solutions to resolve the issue of restoring economic and social stability in post-war countries. The UN's Security Council has passed multiple resolutions, noting that peacebuilding is of critical importance as the foundation for sustainable peace and development in the aftermath of conflict. In 2014, a resolution was passed aiming to improve the guidelines adopted by the United Nations. The resolution highlighted for example the importance of security for the society to help restore social stability: "Stressing that reforming the security sector in post-conflict environments is critical to the consolidation of peace and stability, promoting poverty reduction, rule of law and good governance, extending legitimate State authority, and preventing countries from relapsing into conflict, and further stressing that, in this regard, a professional, effective and accountable security sector and accessible and impartial law-enforcement and justice sectors are equally necessary to laying the foundations for peace and sustainable development." (UN Security council-April 2014).

The Economic and Social Council has also come up with various resolutions on the issue, highlighting any gaps threatening to undermine peacebuilding. On one hand the resolutions aim to aid the economic restoration of countries, and on the other hand they aim to focus on the stabilization of the social part of the nation and the government within the nation.

Other approaches at ensuring economic and social stability include peacekeeping operations aimed at preventing a region to relapse into conflict during the restoration process. Such an approach includes a policy of the UNDPKO, expressing the policy of United Nations Police in peacekeeping operations.

Possible Solutions

The ECOSOC can address this resolution with means such as strict resolutions on the activity of United Nations peacekeepers in countries of post-conflict rehabilitation. These will be used to make sure that the peacekeepers help the nation to create security during the first stages and to further guarantee that the nation builds up its own police force together with other law enforcement.



Furthermore, it might be another solution to ensure that the system of establishing the 'peace milestones', created by the United Nations Security Council, are seen as the foundation for all restorations of economic and social stability, which remains our target in the issue. The 'peace milestones' could, however, be described more clearly and in a more detailed way to follow and apply. It is important to keep in mind that the milestones should be kept general enough to be able to address and apply to various different post-conflict countries, each with their own situations. The response to every situations varies greatly depending on the type of war issued.

Another important point to consider is the independence of a nation's economy. In order to re-establish a country's economy, supporting the state's banking system would largely be of difference. This way the nation is no longer dependent on other countries' funding, hindering its own economy. Allocating funding into developing national banks to make the nation less dependent on supporting countries, would be very much advisable.

To further increase the social stability of a post-conflict country, it is important to give their citizens say in the decisions being made. It is advisable to give the population of re-establishing countries the biggest part of the democratic power for example, by letting them decide the allocation of the funding into the different sectors. Not only will this increase the popularity of the government amongst citizens, it will also help stabilize the country socially, presenting the start of a stabilized government in the country.

Lastly, an effective resolution could be the revising of the different resolutions and agreements with regards to the UNDP's supporting programs for post-conflict countries. This will make sure that no sides are overlooked, ensuring that the programs created do not sidetrack into other disasters. The UNDP could frequently go over their projects and amend them when necessary, keeping them recent and relevant to all situations.

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