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Security - a threat to the world?

Contents

3 **Humanitarian action and the "War on terror"**
Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer

8 **Human security - constraints and possibilities**
Adele Mugford

13 **Local ownership of Truth Commissions**
Shane Quinn

16 *Sweden takes a closer look*
Security vs. Development
Tore Samuelsson

18 *Decade to Overcome Violence:*
Special focus on the USA
Kristina Lundqvist

20 **LPI News**

23 **Reviews and Resources**

25 **Northern countries and Southern Africa**
Björn Ryman

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Security vs. development

How secure do you feel in your environment? A difficult question. *Security* has got innumerable interpretations. The concept Human Security, initially launched by the UN in the 1990s, and well received in both civil society and governmental circles, is under threat. Over the last few years, particularly due to "11 September" (2001), political and military security thinking has largely influenced political agendas over the world. This issue of New Routes is highlighting security vs. development.

UK-based researchers Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer at the Humanitarian Policy Group speak about the War on Terror and its implications for humanitarian organisations.

The issue of security vs. development is top priority in many government offices. Recently, Ruth Jacoby, Swedish Director General for Development Cooperation warned: "There is a real threat of seeing scarce aid resources 'grabbed' by the security agenda."

The article Human Security – the Conceptual "Modern Prince" underlines the importance of human security as a guiding principle for development. Adele Mugford looks at the issue "through the lens of a Canadian living in Europe".

We will certainly get back to the issue of security in conflict transformation and conflict prevention in coming issues of New Routes. Your reflections and contributions are most welcome!

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Humanitarian action and the "War on terror"

Since "9/11" there have been armed interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and a deepening of links between security and aid, including humanitarian aid. The "war" against terrorism has become constructed along religious lines, and is stretching the appeal to universal values and norms. These trends have implications for humanitarian organisations, their relationships with victims and belligerents and with the governments that fund much of their work.

Over the past couple of years, the Human Policy Group (HPG) has run a project that aims to step back from the detail of specific aspects of humanitarian policy and practice, and to look at the broader trends in the humanitarian sector. We have chosen the theme of the global war on terrorism - GWOT, as it is sometimes unattractively known - and its implications for the humanitarian community.

As in the previous year's report, we have done two things. First, we have pulled together various strands from other, related work within HPG and a review of the broader literature. Second, we have commissioned a set of papers by other international commentators on some key themes. Each of these is reproduced as a chapter in the main report, and three of them are summarised in HPG Briefing Papers.

This presentation reflects on some of the main themes and issues emerging from this analysis. It covers four main areas:

- Definitions of terrorism and the global war against it
- International legal issues
- The humanitarian implications of prosecuting the GWOT
- The increasing linkage between the humanitarian agenda and peace-building.

Before going on to explore these themes, one observation and one caveat. The observation is that, while 9/11 changed many aspects of the international landscape fundamentally, it has not changed everything. HPG's analysis suggests that, while the object of the security agenda might have changed substantively, much of the framework for its implementation is familiar, and was established during the 1990s. Specifically, the framework for human security established at least since the mid-1990s provided for a much more interventionist international culture, and a much closer integration between aid and security objectives.

These trends were seen as largely uncontroversial so long as they were designed to achieve 'humanitarian' objectives. Many aid organisations adapted themselves well before 9/11 to the new opportunities posed by the human security agenda, embracing a role in conflict reduction and in advocacy in relation to politico-military strategies for managing crises states. The events of 9/11 challenged the assumption that there was a global consensus on the determinants of security, and by implication the role of development in its achievement. This has led to a perhaps belated recognition that treading across the aid-politics divide is now a much more controversial business.

The caveat, or perhaps omission on our part, has been that we have looked rather squarely at the GWOT, or at least its main theatres. What this has to say about the Liberias or the DRCs is as yet unclear. Undoubtedly, there are and will be implications, but that has not been the main focus of the analysis.

Any attempt to understand the implications of the GWOT must start with an attempt to define what terrorism actually is. The difficulty in doing so reflects, of course, the fact that the term is contested, and there is no internationally accepted definition. In broad terms, it is understood to mean: the deliberate or reckless killing of civilians, or the doing of extensive damage to their property with the intention of spreading fear through a population, and communicating a political message.

Of course, such practices are not the unique preserve of al-Qa'eda or other non-state actors. States frequently behave in much the same way. As Gearty argues, terrorism is increasingly defined in terms of its being anti-state. Thus, states that oppose it are necessarily counter-terrorists. This, of course, tells us little about the morality or legitimacy of either. In the aftermath of 11 September, terrorism was elevated from the status of criminality to a threat to international peace and security.

The Global War on Terrorism is closely associated with US security interests. President Bush talking to departing sailors at Mayport Naval Station, Florida. Photo: J. Scott Applewhite/Pressens Bild

The looseness of the language is reflected in the fact that a wide range of conflicts have been relabelled as terrorist and counter-terrorist operations. From Chechnya to Palestine to Colombia and Zimbabwe, the threat of terrorism has been invoked to justify state security interventions. However, how states choose to define the conflicts in which they are embroiled does not guarantee that they will figure in the Global War on Terrorism: while the geography of the terrorism may be global, the conflict is closely associated with US security interests.

Because the Global War on Terrorism has no clear temporal or spatial limits, and no single identifiable 'enemies', it will be hard to know when it is over. As the US National Security Strategy states, its Global War on Terrorism 'will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy'. Not only does the war have no clearly demarcated spatial and temporal limits, but it is also 'fought' in many different ways: from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan to support for the existing counter-insurgency operations of key allies such as Colombia to intensifying policing and immigration controls.

From a legal perspective, this means that International Humanitarian Law (IHL) may or may not apply on the many different fronts on which this war will be prosecuted. As such, therefore, the Global War on Terrorism relies on mobilising resources, not only in the military sphere, but across domestic and international policy.

In Europe, immigration policy, including asylum policy, has become linked to the security agenda (incidentally releasing new sources of funding for refugee agencies, including UNHCR). In the UK, the government published a set of Campaign Objectives, and EU heads of state agreed to the introduction of a counter-terrorism plan of action which defined over 60 objectives covering foreign policy, home affairs, judicial cooperation and financial and economic policy. In the

US, the creation of a Department of Homeland Security has sought to link domestic and international counter-terrorist efforts.

What Mark Duffield has called the securitisation of aid has continued. In the US, for example, development cooperation has for the first time been elevated to one of the three pillars of the national security strategy. In both the UK and the US, the issue of failed states has attracted renewed policy attention, often at high political levels. This is in turn informing aid initiatives such as that of the World Bank in relation to so-called 'poorly performing countries'.

Religious undertones

Despite assurances from Western politicians that the GWOT is not a war against Islam, it has of course been centred on responding to the threats posed by extremist Islamic organisations. Further, the values for which the GWOT is being fought are those associated with a secular, "modern" West. This has important implications, in terms of humanitarian action and whether and how it can genuinely appeal to universal values and norms, as opposed to being (and being seen to be) instrumental in Western foreign policy interests.

In a recent Development Assistance Committee publication, the issue of religious schools, in particular the Islamic madrassa, is raised. The document argues that 'while making up for grave lacunae in national education systems, often providing free or subsidised education, food, clothing and books ... some of these schools provide very few practical skills or knowledge and teach, from an early age, intolerance and extremism as well as hatred of "corrupting Western influences".

One of the important implications of the GWOT for the humanitarian community has been its effects on the international legal framework within which humanitarian actors have to work. In the case of Afghanistan, there was a clearly established legal framework that provided for the Coalition's intervention in the country and the ousting of the Taliban regime. While there were issues in terms of the conduct of the conflict, its legal basis was not contested. Despite problems in the prosecution of the war itself, in many ways the UN system can be seen to have worked quickly and well to provide a legal framework within which the first phase of the war on terrorism could be fought.

Iraq, of course, was different. The US and the UK invoked the right to pre-emptive strike, the legal basis of which remains highly contested, not least because weapons of mass destruction have not been found. Many humanitarian NGOs advocated against the war on these grounds, not only or primarily in terms of its humanitarian effects. As such, the boundary between peace activism and humanitarian action became blurred.

From a traditional humanitarian perspective, the legality, let alone the legitimacy, of the conflict is neither here nor there. However, the deep cultural, financial and even political links between humanitarian actors and the US and the UK in particular, has made it difficult in practice for many humanitarian organisations to distance themselves from issues regarding the legality of the conflict, and to position themselves as independent of Coalition forces.

Important also, of course, have been the very different constitutional arrangements that have followed in the wake of regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the former, the UN was accorded a key role, and the transitional administration of Hamid Karzai granted international recognition. However, the interim administration remains contested within Afghanistan and exerts little effective control outside the capital, raising questions regarding how agencies position themselves in relation to it.

In the case of Iraq, the UK and the US remain as occupying powers, with no clear strategy for the formation of a national government. The responsibilities of the occupying powers are clearly defined in the Fourth Geneva Convention. Again, there are difficult questions regarding how external actors, including NGOs, position themselves in relation to the occupying powers. Are they sub-contractors to states fulfilling their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, or are they independent humanitarian actors?

The demands of the new security agenda have also been seen to legitimise reinterpretations of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. The denial of prisoner-of-war status to 'unlawful combatants' held in Guantanamo Bay is the most obvious example. In his contribution to the HPG report, Chaloka Beyani documents shifts in standards of respect for human rights, and the closure of the Afghan-Pakistan border which precluded refugee outflows.

Underpinning these measures to redefine the rules, it has been argued that this is a necessary and understandable reaction to a series of threats that equally fail to conform to the norms of international behaviour. As Beyani notes with respect to IHL, the fact that opposition forces are not complying with the laws of war does not justify their violation by defending forces. The cumulative effect of these shifts in the interpretation of the various legal instruments makes for a high level of instability and unpredictability in international relations and in the conduct of war, and therefore for the positioning of international actors within it.

Both the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts have had a significant impact on the volume of aid funding flowing through the 'system'. In the case of Afghanistan, appeals for food aid leaped from a requirement to support three million people to support for seven million. In terms of funding, it is extremely difficult to quantify the real shift in cash terms before and after 9/11, but the $1.4 billion disbursed in 2002

Military involvement in the delivery of humanitarian assistance is an increasing trend world-wide, in this case from Kosovo. Photo: Pressens Bild

clearly dwarfed previous humanitarian aid programmes. In Iraq, World Food Programme alone appealed for 51.3bn, equivalent to 20 percent of the global humanitarian aid budget in 2002. The Department for International Development earmarked £210m, nearly double its total humanitarian aid budget in 2001.

While assurances have been given that this level of investment will not detract from humanitarian operations elsewhere, these sudden shifts indicate a continued willingness on the part of agencies and donors alike to make major decisions regarding humanitarian need and resource allocation on the basis of scant evidence. The indirect effects of this in terms of the surge capacity needed to spend such huge sums of money alone would bear further investigation.

Arguments about the legality and legitimacy of the war on Iraq also affected the ability of the humanitarian community to prepare for it. In its report on the issue, the International Development Committee noted that, in both the UK and the UN, preparedness was slowed because of political fears that to make such preparations would signal that war was inevitable and so undermine diplomacy. Similar constraints did not apply to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Such political obstacles to preparedness are not new. What was then the government of Zaire refused to countenance contingency planning measures by UNHCR in 1994 in preparation for the influx of thousands of Rwandans into the country. Similarly, Macedonia in 1999 refused to accept contingency planning for a major refugee influx from Kosovo. What was different in Iraq was that these political blockages were associated with the same governments that are the primary supporters and financers of humanitarian action.

A 'virtuous circle'

In both Afghanistan and Iraq, access for international organisations was very poor during the main fighting and has not increased significantly; indeed, it has

deteriorated. Both conflicts have deepened the pre-existing trend of increasing military involvement in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and its protection. In Afghanistan, the controversy regarding armed soldiers, delivering humanitarian assistance dressed in civilian clothing, was particularly visible. More broadly, the creation of provincial reconstruction teams has integrated security and aid issues, in the hope of establishing a 'virtuous circle' of providing security to enable rehabilitation and so, it is hoped, enhance security. How this model progresses will be important as it is supported by an increasing number of donor states, and may be seen as worth replicating elsewhere.

In Iraq, particularly in the early days of the conflict, many units were involved in the delivery of assistance. As Beyani notes, Umin Qusar and Basra became designated as military targets for the purpose of delivering humanitarian assistance. The ability to provide secure humanitarian access is thus recognised to be key, not only to fulfilling obligations under IHL, but more broadly to legitimise intervention to domestic publics and internationally. Both the UK and US governments have used military units as a channel for the disbursement of humanitarian aid funds.

In different ways, each of these issues raises questions regarding how humanitarian organisations, including NGOs, can position themselves in relation to the GWOT. Abby Stoddard's chapter provides an interesting approach to analysing how NGOs have related historically to their 'home' governments. Equally, Jonathan Benthall analyses how Islamic charities relate to state and non-state political actors. In different ways, both point to the difficulties of positioning humanitarian action 'outside' a conflict in which humanitarian organisations are deeply embedded, culturally and financially.

Benthall's analysis outlines how the idea of coherence between military, political and humanitarian policy is not the sole preserve of modern Western democracies. Non-state actors such as Hamas and Hizbollah are working as multi-mandated organisations - with both military and charitable wings. In the case of these and similar Islamic organisations, these integrated approaches have, of course, attracted a high degree of censure from the West, including efforts to scrutinise and sanction flows of funds into Islamic charities allegedly associated with terrorism.

Very few organisations had formulated formal policy statements with regard to the Global War on Terrorism, as opposed to particular sub-conflicts of it. It is not surprising, perhaps, that many agencies have not done so, for they are positioning themselves not only in relation to their governments but also in relation to the general public and the media. As Stoddard notes, navigating the politics of the GWOT is very complex and does not make for easy advocacy.

There is an interesting question as to whether it is possible to establish a shared dialogue within and across the different cultural, religious and political traditions within the humanitarian 'community' grounded in an appeal to universal values. Both Benthall and Stoddard note that clustering humanitarian debate around technical norms may seem promising. However, within both the Islamic and secular humanitarian community there are concerns that to do so would strip humanitarian action of its political identity and meaning.

In both Afghanistan and Iraq, the process of regime change was extraordinarily swift. What has proven much more difficult is establishing a secure and legitimate framework for political transition. For humanitarian actors, this has raised difficult questions: are they there to treat the continued symptoms of political turmoil, or are they there to assist in building the peace? This represents an important set of issues, but these could, so far, not be fully researched. The future monitoring trends will therefore focus on the issue of how humanitarian aid 'links' with wider peace-building and developmental agendas in politically unstable situations.

In her contribution to the present report, Chris Johnson notes the tensions that have inevitably emerged as aid agencies have sought to tread this difficult line. On the one hand, the Afghan authorities feel undermined because so little aid is being channelled through them, while many agencies claim to be playing a role in rehabilitation. On the other hand, many agencies are uneasy about how they have become seen as part of a wider process of building a state, the legitimacy of which remains contested. Underlying all of this is the fundamental difficulty of building peace in the midst of a major counter-terrorist operation.

In Iraq, the complexities are more intense. As in Afghanistan, aid, including humanitarian aid, has been portrayed as contributing to soft security. This implies associating aid with the occupation. To different degrees in both Iraq and Afghanistan, agencies have had to respond to the constitutional vacuum associated with transitional and occupying authorities. In this context, decisions about the ownership and coordination of humanitarian aid necessarily become very fraught, as do questions regarding the accountability of humanitarian action.

Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer

This article is an edited summary of Joanna Macrae's and Adele Harmer's presentation at Overseas Development Institute (ODI). A comprehensive report: Humanitarian action and the "global war on terror: a review of trends and issues" is available at Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI, London. www.odi.uk

Human security - constraints and possibilities

It is said that without democracy and development there will be no security.[1] Arguably the reverse is equally true – that no democracy or development can be realized without security. This raises a number of questions about the notion of security in terms of its meaning and for whom in which context.

This article aims to contribute to the current discussions surrounding the concept of human security, seen through the lens of a Canadian at present living in Europe, in connection with Antonio Gramsci's concept of the "modern prince" and the search for "new principles of social justice". Stephen Gill writes:

"Beyond resistance, what the left and other progressive forces need to do is to reconsider their criteria of action and of political agency and how to synthesise and channel the potentials for resistance into a creative political project that has a new form of the modern prince as its mobilising myth. We need to ask, in other words, what will be the new principle(s) of social justice that will act as both a criterion for judging the adequacy of policy that can challenge the counter-myths of progress and endless accumulation and consumption associated with neo-liberalism."[2]

We in the West are told that the global security context has changed as a result of the end of the Cold War, economic (neoliberal) globalization, and post 11 September 2001 (9/11). The result has been a mixture of a reduction and an increase of state and individual security threats. While much of the world during the 1990s has experienced a heightened form of "market discipline" that can be characterized – with reference to Stephen Gill – as "a form of organized chaos with its "many morbid symptoms"… [particularly] the greater social polarisation and a general crisis of the state and political authority" (Gill, 1997), this time was seemingly absent of any inter-state threats in the West. Subsequently, this seemed to allow for a wider scope of the political, economic and social issues contributing to global insecurity. More specifically, the international community was reintroduced to the concept of 'human security'[3], with the Canadian government and the European Union (EU) incorporating a human security approach at the level of policy.

National security and conventional military action are inadequate for guaranteeing people's security.

At the same time, there exist a number of definitive constraints surrounding mobilization around the concept of human security, and putting policy into practice remains contentious. Yet, by addressing both constraints and possibilities, this essay further aims to underline the usefulness and importance of human security as a guiding principle that should be mainstreamed by both foreign and domestic nation state and intergovernmental institutional policies. Thus, following a discussion of the concept of 'human security,' I will present both constraints that may and/or do pose a challenge to effective mobilization around the concept, and details of positive, real indications of its realization as a feasible approach within international relations. I will then conclude with a brief summary of the importance of a human security approach as a means to democratic development and social economic justice.

From individuals to people

The concept of human security notably resurfaced in a 1994 Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which links human security to seven specific, yet interconnected, security areas: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political (Axworthy, 1999). Although dismissed by many as ineffective on account of its breadth, the concept nevertheless brought to light of the need for a shift of focus onto individuals or for a people-centred security approach, which not only challenges the narrow understanding of states and international organizations as the only actors in international relations, but this further provides a forum for

When nations let weapons speak louder than people, human security and development are often put aside. Photo: Reuters

security issue discussions that transgresses the eurocentric nation state.

Arguably this is an important feature whereby so-called 'failing states' can potentially receive more targeted and presumably more effective development assistance to address human security issues head on. At the same time, focussing on human security will also contribute to the realization of effective democratic state governance, and national and global security in general by virtue of their interdependence with human security.

Dr. Björn Hagelin and Elisabeth Sköns of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute have also explored human security and submit four identifiable, overlapping approaches to employing the concept within international relations. These approaches include: the 'basic needs' approach; the assertive/interventionist approach; the 'developmentalist' approach, with an emphasis on local ownership of development; and the 'new security' approach, which identifies a series of new threats – drugs, small arms, terrorism and the trafficking in people – resulting from the opportunities that malignant forces have been able to exploit in the process of globalization.[4]

Former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, presented a concept paper to the Summit of the Americas in April 1999 entitled: "Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World." In this paper, Axworthy provides the beginnings of a useful definition of human security. He also sets out a rationale for a human security approach and clarifies human security's relationship to national security and human development (Axworthy, 1999). Immediately important to consider in light of both the human security concept and the Post-

Cold War context in which we are located, is the change in the nature of security threats for people and for states. by the people – will be better equipped and willing to protect its citizens in appropriate, citizen-centred ways.

Ideally, national/state and human security are mutually reinforcing.

While inter-state security threats are generally said to have declined, paradoxically, Axworthy notes that many people are in fact experiencing an *increase* in security threats. Moreover, in light of both 9/11 and root causes of intra-state conflicts, it becomes increasingly clear that national security - "the protection of territorial integrity and political sovereignty from external aggression" (Axworthy, 1999) - and conventional military action are inadequate for guaranteeing people's security.

In brief terms, Axworthy explains that human security is about "safety for people from both violent and non-violent threats" (Axworthy, 1999). While from a foreign policy perspective this requires a shift in focus and approach from territory or state to people-centred, it does not mean excluding or ignoring the nation-state. Ideally, national/state and human security are mutually reinforcing. Yet human security must arguably be understood as a precursor or at least requisite for national and global security.

This ordering of security is not entirely understandable using Axworthy's Hobbesian description of the human security parameters of the provisions for a 'freedom from' both fear and want. Yet, Dr. Sven Grimm of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) takes the concept one very crucial step further to include empowerment of people or, the "freedom to act on one's own behalf" and that of others who need support.[5] Thus, by empowering people and societies according to contextually specific needs, the democratic state – government for and

Grimm and Axworthy's conceptualisations would seemingly require a combination of all four approaches, where both base their human security notions on human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and highlight the importance of its conceptual span, which stretches across all geographical areas, including both developed and developing countries (Grimm 2003; Axworthy 1999). Thus, in spite of the lack of a commonly agreed-upon approach at this point and time, it is significant that politicians, international intergovernmental organizations, and academics are all engaging in this conceptual dialogue, which is both important and necessary prior to possible mobilization. Equally noteworthy is the Canadian government's and the EU intergovernmental organization's agreement (at the EU-Canada Summit in Lisbon of June 2000) to jointly and independently promote a human security approach.[6] Human security as a guiding principle for both domestic and international relations has not yet been mainstreamed, however, and it faces a number of challenges.

Five challenges

First, the security agenda has changed since this EU-Canada Summit as a result of 9/11, where realizing "security" today translates into anti-migration and anti-terrorism laws. The resulting sanctioned infringements on a number of fundamental freedoms and human rights within the so-called developed countries (DCs), including the detention of Arabs and Muslims without access to a lawyer, are cause for serious concern, not to mention indications of regressive domestic and foreign policy-making decisions. In terms of the developing world, the post-9/11 policy implications have not only led to stepping back from DC commitments to eradicating poverty. Actions taken by the U.S. - specifically the indefinite detention of foreign nationals in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the U.S. Patriot Act - have suddenly provided justification for human rights abuses to dictators around the world.[7]

Second, both Canada and EU countries have been subscribing to neoliberal economic imperatives. Providing major tax cuts, reducing public services and implementing privatisation initiatives within their own borders point to a prioritisation of trade and foreign investment over concerns for human security. These manoeuvres have come and continue, despite, for example, indications of growing disparities of wealth reported in a 1996 UNDP *Human Development Report,* "which noted that 358 billionaires had combined assets that exceeded the total annual income of 45 per cent of the world's population, that is of 3.2 billion people…" (cited in: Gill, 1997). Considering the major role that Western states and international Western institutions play in supporting this inequitable concentration of wealth, the fact that narrow economic interests have primacy over concerns for global human security is not necessarily surprising.

Western nations' priorities are further 'clarified' with a comparative look at commitments to dedicate 0.7 percent of their respective GDPs to Official Development Assistance and the concurrent commitments by the EU countries, for example, to commit 1.24 percent of their respective GDPs to the "Stability Growth Pact"[8] for greater economic growth in Europe. The fact that percentages of developed countries' GDPs have been shrinking since the 1970s when Development Assistance Committee countries'

contributed 0.4 of one percent in 1970, as compared with 2001 figures showing 0.23 of one percent[9], raises further questions and concern. What does become clear, however, are the links between internal and external government policies, where the last twenty years in industrialized nations reveals a reduction in public spending, concomitant increase in tax cuts and sharp rise in corporate profits (as indicated by the UNDP report), and reduced ODA percentages.

Third, the fact that "Canadian officials are currently engaged in extensive discussion with the United States on how ballistic missile defence (BMD) might protect Canadians and how Canada might link to the ground-based, mid-course interception"[10] warrants concern. As Ernie Regehr astutely highlights with reference to a promise made by Prime Minister Paul Martin, it is crucial for Canada to be included in Washington's exploration of military measures affecting North American defence (Regehr, p.4). Partaking in such discussions will prove useful, "provided they are conducted on the basis of technological and political realism", where they reveal the overwhelming negative implications to BMD. These include: the unlikelihood that BMD technology will ever be capable of providing comprehensive protection from an intercontinental ballistic missile-borne nuclear threat, which currently does not exist, and that even such narrow and severely limited defence pursuits as with the BMD will in fact serve to make people and the world *less* secure (Regehr, 4).

Moreover, "mutually-beneficial security cooperation between Canada and the United States neither depends on, nor is advanced by, the Canadian embrace of BMD" (Regehr, 4). Concern emerges in light of the recent political history under former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien with the decision not to support the United States in the war on Iraq and the subsequent polarization of Canadians around this decision, coupled with the fact that Canada's defence policy remains open to such a commitment.[11] In an effort to distinguish both himself and his leadership, it is conceivable that current Prime Minister Paul Martin will decide to support the United States this time round.

Fourth, the concept of human security is at risk of being weakened within the European context with respect to the EU's pursuit of greater coherency amongst its foreign, security and development policies. While coherency is important and has the potential to provide for improved policy development and implementation, foreseeable problems could emerge where development cooperation and human security initiatives must stand alongside narrow security, defence, commercial and foreign policy objectives, generally stemming from the more dominant strategic and, I would add, economic interests, the capacity to maintain a genuine balanced/integrated approach - requires significant political will. At a time where the very lack of political will has become a common critique of EU policy practice, the prospects for balance are questionable. In short, coherency under the narrow conceptions of trade and war-on-terror security objectives that currently appear to be dominating the European agenda (BOND, 7) suggests a weakening of the possibilities in applying a broader and deeper human security approach.

Fifth, the recent calls by Western governments for a growing partnership between the private sector and (human) development echo World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies and approaches and cause concern for at least three reasons. One, private sector and sustainable human development operate from completely different objectives - profit vs. the well-being of people and the environment.

Private sector and sustainable human development operate from completely different objectives.

Two, there is a lack of DC legislation and/or enforcement of sustainable and socially responsible private sector involvement in developing countries. And three, as in the case of export processing zones, private sector involvement with development has thus far produced uneven results, by and large ranging from dismal to no improvement for people and countries as a whole (International Labour Organization, 1998). An example of this is "a delimited geographical area or an export-oriented manufacturing or service enterprise located in any part [of a developing] country, which benefits from special investment-promotion incentives, including exemptions from customs duties and preferential treatment with respect to various fiscal and financial regulations"[12].

Human and global security

Agreeably, there are a number of serious challenges facing the possibilities for adopting what Hagelin and Sköns describe as a "broader" and "deeper" conceptualisation of security in the name of human rights, human development and global security more generally. Coupled with the fact that the concept of human security "is still under development [where] there is no general agreement on its specific coverage, that is, what type of economic, political, environmental and epidemiological problems are to be included," (Hagelin & Sköns, 2002), concrete international mobilization around and application of a human security approach is not necessarily on the horizon.

However, the fact that Canada, Japan,

Norway and Switzerland have already incorporated elements of human security thinking into their foreign policies (Hagelin & Sköns, 2002) is not insignificant. Moreover, key international institutions, including the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations (UN) can be seen to be increasingly operating from a human security perspective. While the WB and IMF have shifted focus from increasing growth to poverty alleviation, the UN began pursuing a concerted integrated approach to conflict situations in the name of achieving peace as of 1988 (Hagelin & Sköns, 2002).

Other indications that a human security approach is not completely farfetched can be found in connection with the varied levels of both support and staunch opposition to the United States military intervention in Iraq by the global public and individual nations alike, as well as in the recent report following public consultations surrounding Canada's foreign policy review and the EU's recent development and adoption of a various human security approach components in the *European Security Strategy* – "A secure Europe in a better world". Equally notable is the Japanese initiative to establish an international Commission on Human Security, which represents an important preliminary step to institutionalising the concept.

Gramsci wrote:

"The modern prince, the myth-prince, cannot be a real person, a concrete individual. It can only be an organism, a complex element of society in which a collective will, which has already been recognized and has to some extent asserted itself in action, begins to take concrete form."[13]

Although there are constraints to realizing human security as a mobilizing organism, there are also indications of 'collective will' taking 'concrete form.' Thus, in spite of the negative effects of economic globalization, and of George Bush's attempts to re-polarize the world around the 'war-on-terror'[14], as well as to exacerbate nuclear proliferation pressures with the pursuit of ballistic missile defence capabilities, there remains potential as well as concrete examples of mobilizing the international community around the concept of human security with respect to addressing the root causes of conflict and achieving social economic justice.

Where a human security approach is premised upon human rights and is people centred as a means of addressing the freedom from fear and want, and the freedom to act on one's own behalf within particular contexts, adopting such an approach as a central pillar to both public and foreign policy making will generate fertile conditions for sustainable democratic, economic and social development generally. However, if human security is to be realized on a level akin to Antonio Gramsci's modern prince, those with the immediate cultural capital/capacity must take up the individual and collective responsibilities of and as local-global citizens.

Adele Mugford

[1] Howard Mollett, ed. "Introduction," *Europe in the World: Essays on EU foreign, security and development policies* (London: BOND, 2003) p. 7.

[2] Stephen Gill [1997] "Gramsci, Modernity and Globalization" (International Gramsci Society Online Article, January 2003 at: http://www.italnet.nd.edu/gramsci/resources/online_article/articles/gill01.shtml).

[3] The notion or underpinnings of 'human security' seemingly emerged as early as the 1860s (with the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross) and were formalized in the 1940s with UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Geneva Conventions. Lloyd Axworthy, "Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World," Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada 1999 found at: http://www.summit-americas.org/Canada/HumanSecurity-english.htm).

[4] Björn Hagelin and Elisabeth Sköns, "The military sector in a changing context," *Sipri Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press, 2003) p.287.

[5] Dr. Sven Grimm, "Human Security – Placing Development at the Heart of the EU's External Relations," (Dóchas Irish EU Presidency Project 2004, found at: http://www.dochas.ie/Working_Groups/Presidency/BriefingPaper.pdf).

[6] European Union, "Statement on Human Security: Peace Building and Conflict Prevention," (EU-Canada Summit, Lisbon 26 June 2000, found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/canada/summit_06_00/hum_sec_stat.htm).

[7] The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "Carter Chides U.S. on Rights," (found at: http://home.earthlink.net/~acisney3/id58.html).

[8] Romano Prodi, "Europe: adding value, changing quickly," speech given at the London School of Economics in London, 19 January 2004 (found at: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEPublicLecturesAndEvents/pdf/RPRodiTranscript.pdf).

[9] Judith Randel and Tony German, "Global Humanitarian Assistance Flows 2003: An independent report on humanitarian aid flows," (Development Initiatives 2002, found at: http://www.reliefweb.int/cap/ToTBinder/Hum_Financing_Studies/hum_financing_gha2_FEB03.pdf).

[10] Ernie Regehr, "Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence," (Liu Institute for Global Issues, December 2003, found at: http://www.ploughshares.ca/CONTENT/ABOLISH%20NUCS/BMDLiureport.pdf) p. 4.

[11] DND Policy Group, "Chapter 5 – Canada-United States Defence Cooperation," *1994 White Paper on Defence* (found at http://www.forces.gc.ca/admpol/eng/doc/5117_e.htm).

[12] International Labour Organization, "Export processing zones: Addressing the social and labour issues," (can be found at: http://www.transnationale.org/pays/epz.htm).

[13] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, cited in: Stephen Gill [1997] "Gramsci, Modernity and Globalization" (International Gramsci Society Online Article, January 2003 at: http://www.italnet.nd.edu/gramsci/resources/online_article/articles/gill01.shtml).

[14] On 21 September 2001, George Bush made the following statement in a speech directed at the international community following the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001: "Every nation and every region now has a decision to make … Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." Scott Fornek, "You're with us or against us, Bush says," *Suntimes* (http://suntimes.com/terror/stories/cst-nws-main21.html).

Local Ownership of Truth Commissions

In the aftermath of violent conflicts, the processes of building up state institutions, establishing a transparent legal system and installing a viable system of democracy form cognisant parts of peace implementation measures, as well as peace-building in the long term. But, these structures alone will not suffice in handling issues that have previously divided warring groups. What role do Truth and Reconciliation Commissions play in the efforts to build a sustainable peace?

In order to facilitate the peaceful make-up of democratic, legal and social structures, emphasis on co-operation and interaction are determining factors for the success of any post-conflict peace initiative. In other words, the concept of reconciliation is a vital contributing factor to the process of moving beyond deep-rooted conflict.

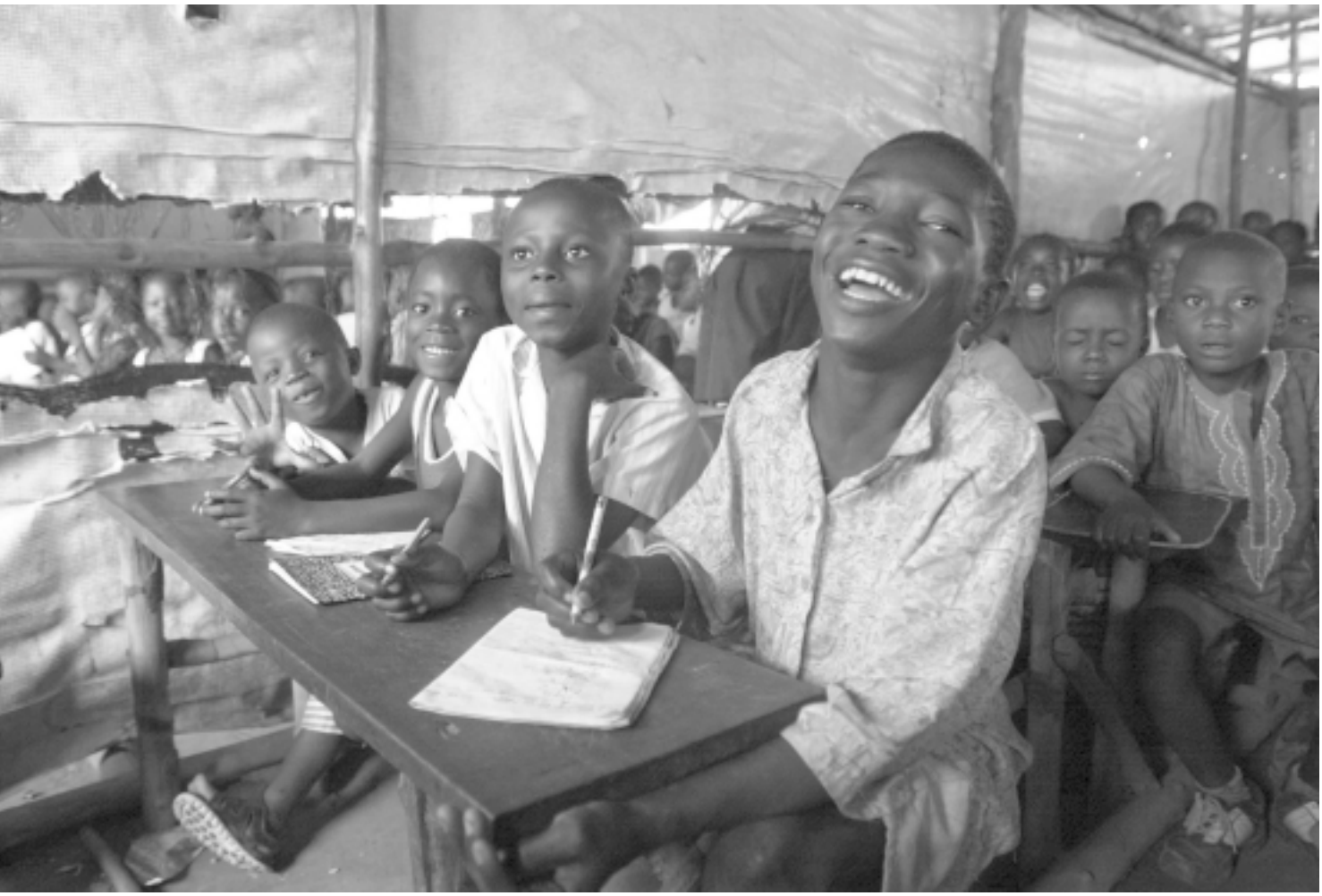
In an effort to achieve reconciliation and regain some semblance of co-operation, nations that have endured prolonged violent conflict often choose to revisit the past. The process of reconciliation then becomes a means to smooth the transition to democracy and to allow a certain level of justice to prevail. By granting amnesty to the perpetrators of past crimes in return for telling the truth, countries such as South Africa and Argentina have managed to address victims' grievances through a long and intricate healing process. However, there is no set model to apply to every circumstance. In East Timor, the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation does not grant amnesty for more serious crimes such as rape, murder and torture, choosing instead to impose suitable sentences. This is not to say that every country should follow the lead of East Timor. Each country should be ready to adopt a process that is both home-grown and manages to establish interrelationships that can contribute to a durable peace.

Delving into the past and bringing abuses to light can have a profound effect on a nation that has emerged from a period of violence and injustice. In South Africa, the dealings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) were broadcast on state television, thereby including the nation as a whole in the process – not just the perpetrators – and allowed the people themselves to reflect on past events. Although the results of TRCs imposed from the top down, such as the one in South Africa, cannot be underestimated as a tool for democratic transition, there tends to be an all too apparent readiness for donors and practitioners to apply this model in other conflicts, whatever the circumstances. There was pressure to have a TRC in Bosnia after the end of hostilities, but there is ongoing debate as to whether this is the right way forward. There was a general unwillingness of many sections of the population in Bosnia to aggravate the already tentative peace, as the scars of war had still not healed. What worked well in some countries does not necessarily mean that the same results will be attained elsewhere. All conflicts have their own criteria and do not readily fit in to certain models and definitions.

Traditional peace practices

In most cases, the goals of prospective TRCs tend to be hampered by insufficient funds or by donors that are unhappy with the relatively slow pace in getting these commissions up and running. Would it not be more pertinent then, to look to a more traditional way of achieving reconciliation by putting a bottom-up initiative into practice? Priscilla B. Hayner, programme director of the International Centre for Transitional Justice in New York, acknowledges the impact of TRCs in general, and particularly in South Africa, but she also signs up to the idea that traditional healing practices could be more effective in the long run and lead to more credible results. Hayner highlights the case of Mozambique, where there was no effort made to set up a TRC, as people in general were uninterested in revisiting the past, preferring to concentrate on the future. Rather than embrace an institutional approach to reconciliation, more traditional ways of dealing with the actions of former soldiers and the pain caused by war were used on a local level. In villages, these traditional cleansing rituals were instrumental in bringing about a national healing process without any top-down decision being made or the implementation of any legislature.

This is not to say that top-down initiatives are necessarily bad things. At



Recognizing the past and looking forward are equally important aspects of peace-building. Kids in a refugee camp near Bo, Sierra Leone, seem to enjoy their lessons at school. Photo: Peter Williams/WCC

a glance, these initiatives – if they involve the national population – can be a way of engaging in mass reconciliation, particularly if the whole process can be broadcast on television, as was the case in South Africa. In Sierra Leone, the TRC has been in the spotlight recently, as it is nearing completion of its activities. At the start of the process, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was heavily involved in implementing measures, but clashed with the TRC over management and organisational procedures. As a result, donors became disillusioned and tended to hold back on any credible funds.

Would the TRC in Sierra Leone not have benefited then from a more locally-based traditional approach by spreading the responsibility amongst traditional or religious leaders, as these latter were a constant driving force for reconciliation during the actual conflict? The answer is probably: yes. It would have effectively sent out a message that the healing process can be Sierra Leonean-owned. Besides, it would prove that decentralisation of resources is a positive development after decades of centralised misrule and marginalisation of the provinces. Further, instead of becoming embroiled in organisational difficulties, the OHCHR could have acted more in a facilitating role by overseeing activities and gently nudging the process along. This would have given the whole reconciliation process more credence in the eyes of the victims seeking justice, particularly as the head of the TRC, Bishop Humper, does not possess the same presence or mandate as Archbishop Tutu did during the democratic transition in South Africa. Instead, the results of the TRC are generally perceived to be inadequate.[1]

However, there are other problems that arise during a reconciliation process, particularly when a TRC has to operate alongside a Special Court, as is the case in Sierra Leone. This can create competition for funding between the two initiatives. As it stands today, the Special Court receives several times the amount of funds as the TRC, even though it only has a small number of indictees to contend with. In his article from Concord Times, the Sierra Leone daily, the journalist Lans Gberie points out that reconciliation surely needs a TRC, "whose work is more exhaustive than the limited focus of the Special Court [and which provides] an historically accurate recording of the

causes of the war, as well as the cathartic effects of public confessions and narratives of victims", which would have a more profound effect on the future of Sierra Leone.[2]

Grass roots approach

In the long term, as the TRC winds up its activities, donors will most probably shift their focus away from Sierra Leone. In that sense, it would be wise that the momentum built up by the work of the TRC should be harnessed by traditional and religious leaders working on a local level. Even if these leaders were not the principle actors in the work of the TRC to date, it would nonetheless have two advantages. Firstly, it would herald a return to the traditional structures that were present before the conflict started and give a renewed sense of stability based on old social values and norms, which Sierra Leone is largely bereft of after the war. Secondly, it would allow the communities most affected by the violence to adopt a more grass roots approach instead of the TRC being a top-down initiative directed solely from Freetown.

As other countries that have been enmeshed in violence gradually move toward peaceful resolution of their conflicts, there is a tendency to view reconciliation as the cornerstone of any durable peace. After the recent positive upturn of events in the peace process in Somalia, the focus has been on how to cement the progress already made. Although it remains to be seen whether the process has the wherewithal to counter various factional leaders' attempts to derail it, measures for reconciliation have already been provided for in the form of the Committee for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CCRR). This committee envisages that sustained efforts at reconciliation at community level will eventually trickle up to the policy-making arena of the national level. Although a TRC for Somalia remains a subject for debate in the future, the CCRR represents a more immediate starting point for Somalis to move forward after years of interminable conflict.

In essence, both top-down and bottom-up initiatives at reconciliation are essential, but only if they work in tandem. There also remains the logic that each country and the conflict it has experienced should be taken for what they are: contrasting events occurring with varying causes, and not all are therefore receptive to attempts to establish TRCs. However, if responsibility for running truth commissions is delegated to traditional or religious leaders in local constituencies, the reconciliation process can become another stepping stone towards guaranteeing stability. There is not much evidence so far that this will become the norm in post-conflict societies, but the benefits of a more local approach to such a vital part of a nation's rebuilding process cannot be underestimated.

Shane Quinn

[1] ICG Report, *Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: a Fresh Start?*, 20 December 2002, p. 2
[2] Lans Gberie, "The Three-Sides Story to Sierra Leone's Peace", in the *Concord Times*, 15 January 2004

Sweden takes a closer look

Security vs. Development

The Swedish government will commission a study on Security and Development. The Secretariat of the Expert Group on Development Issues, EGDI, has in a concept paper pointed out central questions. Ruth Jacoby, Director General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, recently cautioned participants in a workshop at the Fifth Annual Global Development Conference in New Delhi: "There is a real threat of seeing scarce aid resources 'grabbed' by the security agenda." Below is a summary of the Swedish perspectives.

In her concluding keynote address, Ruth Jacoby pictured security and development as intersecting in three ways: (i) security and development should have shared objectives: freedom from fear and freedom from want are indivisible; (ii) insecurity is development in reverse: it depresses all macroeconomic variables; (iii) development promotes security: research has shown that lack of development is often associated with state failure and violent conflict. Strategies for effective poverty reduction must be a central part of efforts to achieve a safer world – and vice-versa.

Ruth Jacoby, Director General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Photo: MFA

Policy research findings deserve more effective dissemination. The gaps between research and policy, the academic community and the world of practice, the security community and the development community must be bridged. The challenge is huge. Trust must be nurtured, a common language found and an "all of government" approach adopted. This is the meaning of policy coherence. In a complex and interdependent world, security and development challenges cannot be addressed effectively in a compartmentalized way. Policy makers must get out of their respective silos.

This has implications for development cooperation. First, development policy should move away from the concern to maximize economic growth of nations toward the realization of the human potential of all poor persons. Aid agencies, however, should continue to work through governments and rely on civil society groups and the creativity of the private sector, while the individual should become the new "unit of account". Second, strategies for poverty reduction should incorporate the security dimension more explicitly than in the past. Third, a larger share of official development assistance (ODA) should be directed to conflict-prone and post-conflict countries where the needs are very great. Fourth, security sector reform should be accepted as a legitimate area for development cooperation. Fifth, new approaches to aid delivery are needed where conflict is rampant or incipient, governance is weak and policies are distorted.

No easy answers

There are no easy answers. In weak states, the project approach may have some merit and non-state actors may provide convenient vehicles for development assistance. But enclave interventions must gradually be folded into regular government structures and domestic ownership secured. In all situations, assistance agencies must get the sovereignty issue right. The state has a responsibility to protect its citizens. But when the state fails, there is a rationale for external intervention. Egregious human rights violations must be stopped. But is there a rationale for external intervention to protect citizens also from

widespread crime? What would be the legitimacy of such intervention? What instruments should be used?

Caution is warranted, especially on the funding front. There is a real threat of seeing scarce aid resources "grabbed" by the security agenda. Funding of peacekeeping or military interventions could potentially wipe out ODA budgets. Donors should not renege on the commitments they made at Monterrey. Changing the definition of ODA at this time would undermine the credibility of the commitments made to increase aid budgets to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. As the notion of development expands, however, to incorporate security, so should the volume of development aid.

Ruth Jacoby concluded her intervention in New Delhi as follows:

- Security, just as development, is a global public good. It is well worth financing for the welfare of the entire world community. Rescuing Liberia from its misery is a case in point. Supporting Africa in taking charge of its security destiny through the African Peace Facility of the European Union is another current example. More funding would be justified to meet these and similar needs.

Freedom from fear and freedom from want, if security and development go hand in hand.

Study on security and development

Anders Jägerskog at the EGDI secretariat explains that the Swedish initiative to study security and development should be seen in the context of the new development bill (Shared Responsibility – Sweden's Policy for Global Development). The bill identifies conflict management as one of two areas (the other is global public goods) in need of deeper analysis. Conflict management is of central importance and closely linked to other development efforts. Hence the question of security, which in turn is closely linked to conflict management, is also a central part of development policy.

The aim of the study is to find ways for conventional security policy and development efforts to be integrated more effectively. The study will be based on relevant security and development thinking and pinpoint the areas in which the respective discourses converge. A central aim is to identify suitable development instruments and tools that could be used in the work to prevent violent conflict. Central areas for the study are:

- **Peacebuilding and conflict prevention** as an integrated approach to both security and development aspects
- **Security/insecurity for nations and citizens;** where do the concepts converge? The study will discuss possible conflicts of goals between national and human security and implications for the security sector (the military) and for development co-operation
- **Stability and change** as development is a question of social change which also affects power structures within societies; there might be a conflict of goals between a democratization process and stability

The study will start in late summer and is expected to be finished in the spring of next year.

Tore Samuelsson

Decade to Overcome Violence:

Special focus on the USA

The Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) 2001-2010, initiated by the World Council of Churches (WCC), is approaching its midterm. Activities to promote peace and seek reconciliation are going on around the world in churches, ecumenical organisations and local congregations.

"The power and promise of peace" is the theme for activities to be carried out this year, which will have a special focus on the USA. This is the third year in a row that the DOV is targeting a particular region. In 2003, the focus was on Sudan while in 2002, it was on Israel and Palestine. The choice of the US focus was made by the WCC Central Committee in August 2003 on the basis of the courageous opposition of US churches to war in Iraq, and their efforts to alleviate suffering at home and abroad. The Committee also evoked what it saw as the unchallenged power of the US, as well as national problems of poverty, violence and racism.

Global peace with justice

"The vitality and creativity of peace and justice work in the United States is a resource for the global ecumenical family," the general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia told some 600 representatives of US churches and faith-based organizations.

Speaking at the opening of the second annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice, held in March in Washington, DC, the WCC general secretary told the gathering that "in many ways you have been on the leading edge of advocacy work."

In that context, Kobia explained, the 2004 focus on the US of the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) is "an opportunity to highlight the contributions which US churches and movements have made to the cause of peace", as well as an occasion for churches worldwide to express solidarity with churches in the United States.

He also shared with the gathering his dream of a new US foreign policy "based on peace-making", which he defined in the words of the general secretary of the US National Council of Churches, Rev. Bob Edgar, as "internationally engaged," and "committed to collective security through arms control, deterrence, disarmament and international cooperation".

At a subsequent gathering, Kobia met with 16 leaders of African-American churches. He praised these historic churches for having been "in the forefront of planning and of launching the Decade to Overcome Violence in the United States," and expressed his hope that the DOV, which during 2004 is focusing on the US, will resonate with African-American congregations and people.

"The challenge of living in a world with one dominant superpower" was also addressed by the WCC general secretary. While recognizing that it is sometimes difficult to encourage US churches to challenge their government "without sounding like we are bashing the United States", Kobia insisted that "US churches, including African-American churches, have a heavy responsibility" that goes beyond their borders. "We know you are working to confront your government. We want to be supportive of your efforts and to encourage you to do more," he said.

DOV features in World Social Forum

Churches world-wide have mobilized in diverse ways to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which this year focused on the theme "My peace I give to you" (John 14:27). The Week of Prayer is jointly organized by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and traditionally falls between 18-25 January.

Delegates attending the Fourth World Social Forum (WSF) in Mumbai, India, joined church and ecumenical leaders from dozens of countries in the St Thomas Cathedral in central Mumbai on 18 January for a worship service. The event was organized by the National Council of Churches of India (NCCI). NCCI general secretary Rev. Dr Ipe Joseph said that the church in India is "uniquely blessed with the opportunity of hosting the national and global ecumenical community" for the World Social Forum and the Week of Prayer at the same time.

During the WSF a seminar organized by the WCC on "Religious resources to overcome violence" was held. "India is going through enormous insecurity because religion is being used for violence," Siddhartha, a member of an inter-religious group working for peace and justice in Bangalore, told the audience. On the more positive side, he noted that religious communities in a multi-religious nation are challenged to work towards a "hermeneutic of hope", that is, to reinterpret their different religious traditions to lift up the values of peace and justice in their core messages.

The seminar was moderated by Dr

Guillermo Kerber from the WCC International Relations team. In his opening remarks, Kerber suggested that religion has played an ambiguous role in conflicts at the national and international levels. While it has often fuelled conflicts, at other times, it has made important contributions to overcoming violence.

Christian-Muslim youth conference

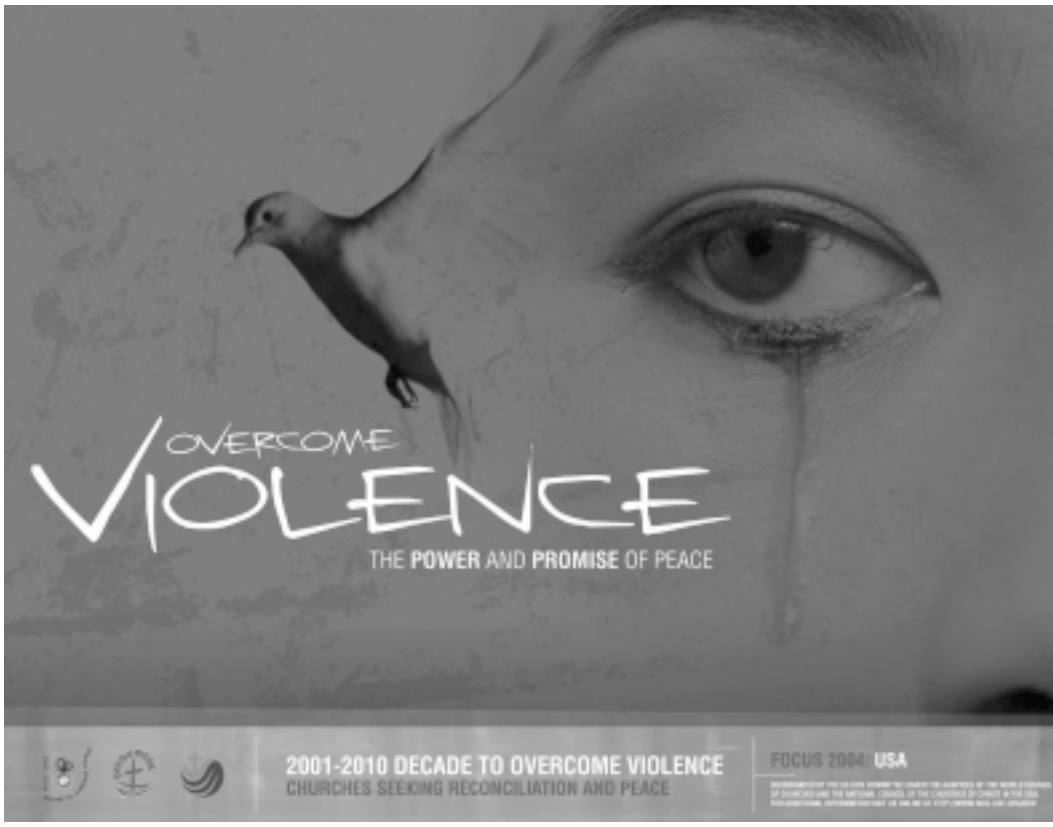
"Building a Vision: Youth for Peace" was the theme of a conference held in Bikfaya, Lebanon, at the end of January. The conference was organized by the Youth Program of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in cooperation with the World Council of Churches' Youth Program. Participants represented Christian churches and Muslim communities from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Switzerland, Germany and Kenya.

In the opening session, Rev. Dr. Riad Jarjour, MECC General Secretary, reminded the participants of the pioneering role of MECC with regard to dialogue between Christians and Muslims. He stressed that "when justice is applied in the Middle East, peace will prevail" and that "there is no other way for Christians and Muslims than to live together in peace, mutual coexistence and citizenship".

In a symposium session, Mr. Walid Ikhlasi, a writer from Syria, and Mr. Samir Morcos, an Egyptian Copt, talked about the "Dialogue or Clash of Civilizations and Religions". They emphasized that the true situation is more one of "dialogue" than "clash". Religions can play the role of bringing civilizations together and spreading good values in the world. The "clash of civilizations" often has a more political than religious connotation and reflects political interests.

Protection or intervention

At a public forum entitled "The responsibility to protect", two advocates for peace and human rights outlined principles for international intervention where violence or genocide threatens basic human rights. The forum was part of a WCC International Affairs and Advocacy Week, held in New York in November last year.



Poster from the Decade to Overcome Violence, which in 2004 has a focus on the USA. Photo: Photo Oikoumene/WCC

"The goal of international efforts is to prevent incidences of violence *before* they occur," said Gleyn Berry, Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations minister councillor, referring to modern-day examples as the killing fields in Cambodia and the genocidal slaughter of innocents in Kosovo and Rwanda. "The underlying principle is to move nations and international bodies toward recognition of internationally recognized norms and laws, so that neither prevention nor intervention is ultimately necessary." he explained.

The other speaker at the Forum, Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser, WCC general secretary up to 2004, urged participants to employ the WCC's concept of "protection" over "intervention". This shift in terminology "broadens the perspective by adopting the wider principle of 'human security' over against the narrow understanding of 'national security'," he suggested.

Raiser posed some crucial questions on the use of force on the international level. "Who makes the assessment that human security in a given state is endangered to such an extent that protection becomes a concern for the international community, and on the basis of what criteria?" he asked.

A military intervention "causing disproportionate numbers of civilian casualties and vast damage to civilian infrastructure in violation of the Geneva Convention cannot be considered 'humanitarian,'" Raiser argued. Any military protection must be "proportional" to the scale and scope of the conflict, and "even military protection for humanitarian action can compromise its objectives," he warned.

Fact-finding and compilation: Kristina Lundqvist

Sources: wcc-coe.org/pressreleasesen.nsf
www.mecchurches.org/posandpress/news

LPI News

Religious NGOs met in Paris

- Many NGOs working in the humanitarian field are either based in or related to religion. There is much talk about religion, about churches and NGOs, but no study or scientific research seems to focus on NGOs that come from the churches and are working for churches. How and where do they work? What are they doing at the international or local level? Why are they working like that? How is their action influenced by religion, or how do they influence the way religion is acting?

Claudette Werleigh, Director of the Conflict Transformation Programme of Life & Peace Institute, reflects on some of the issues brought up at the conference *NGOs linked to religious bodies*, which she attended in Paris at the beginning of February.

The conference was arranged by the French Association of Social Sciences of Religions and the French Association of Political Sciences. Many of the participants came from universities in France but also from other European countries and the USA and Canada. The majority of the topics were about Christian churches and organizations, but other religions, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, were discussed, too. Within Christianity a lot of denominations were studied: Protestant, Evangelic, Fundamentalist, Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, as well as ecumenical organizations like LPI.

- The definition and classification of "religious NGOs" is not self-evident. Is there, for example, a difference between non-governmental organizations and civil society? There are organizations working with different issues like peace, environment, development, or with different methods, as activists or with lobbying and advocacy. There is a need for clarification and classification of the religious NGOs, and that work has started but has to continue, says Claudette Werleigh.

Some centuries ago, most of the vitality of the Christian churches was to be found among people in Europe. There were missionaries going from Europe to people in the South to Christianize them and to do charity work. Since then, there has been a lot of political and economic struggle and reorganization in many European countries. A lot of social matters and other things that organizations used to fight for have been taken on by political parties.

Now there is a strong religious movement in the South with many young people preparing themselves to become priests, pastors or nuns. People from the South are coming as missionaries to the North. A topic discussed at the conference was what influence has been brought to the churches and to religious organizations.

- A lot of people are motivated to engage in different kinds of organizations, says Claudette Werleigh. But in the northern hemisphere, there is a general trend, felt among most NGOs, that people, especially youth, are more committed to a certain issue, like environment, peace or human rights, than loyal to a particular organization. The religious inspiration to join and support an organization is felt to be weakening.

Claudette Werleigh made a presentation at the conference, reflecting her experiences as Secretary General of the Catholic organization Caritas in Haiti, 1976-87. During these years, the local organization became more internationalized and was involved in the confederation as a member of Caritas Internationalis. That brought some new dynamism into the organization and made it possible to broaden the contacts within Central and Latin America and the Caribbean region. What experiences from the local and national context has the organization brought to the international body? was one of the questions brought up in Claudette Werleigh's presentation.

- The participants at the conference felt that the subject of "religious NGOs" has not been studied enough. But we know that by doing that, we will equip ourselves to serve and perform better. We have to see that an evolution is going on, and realize that concepts and reality are being transformed. It will be an interesting task in the future to explore what change religion brings to NGOs and what NGOs bring to religion.

Ten thousand books to one hundred universities

During its twenty years of existence, the Life & Peace Institute has published about 65 books and reports on different subjects within research on peace and reconciliation. Thanks to a generous grant from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an opportunity has now emerged to increase the usefulness of these materials. Related to these opportunities, new contacts with academic institutions in different parts of the world will be established.

A recent evaluation on the research work carried out by LPI indicates that a great deal of the publications produced have proven to be relevant in today's peace and reconciliation work. The publications have, however, been produced in very limited numbers due to financial constraints. The aim of the newly started Publication Project is to offer a selection of LPI publications, free of charge, for teaching purposes to about 100 universities and high schools primarily in Africa but also in Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. The project is mainly carried out during 2004.

A selection of 10-20 titles will be made and, when necessary, slightly revised or updated. To increase their

LPI staff from Uppsala, Nairobi, Bukavu and Brazzaville enjoyed the good conference facilities at the Sida centre. From left: Ann-Louise Fredrikson, Tharcisse Kayria, Runo Bergström, Shane Quinn, Tarekegn Adebo, Jérôme Gouzou, Seraphin Ngouma, Hans Romkema, Basil Nyama, Johan Svensson, Susanne Thurfjell, Florence Odour, Elija Moirongo, Nono Mwavita. In front: Tore Samuelsson, Ulla Vinterhav, Claudette Werleigh, Kristina Lundqvist, Berkti Berhane. Photo: Maria Nordlander

usefulness, a number of them will be translated into French or Spanish. Discussions concerning the selection are going on in the different LPI offices. A group of appropriate persons will be approached to assist with updating and revision of the respective titles. Another important task is to identify and establish contact with the appropriate educational institutions that would be interested in this project.

The core team of the project is Tore Samuelsson, Selin Amirthalingam and Kristina Lundqvist at LPI Uppsala and Basil Nyama at LPI Horn of Africa Programme.

Strategic planning

LPI senior staff from Uppsala as well as the programmes in Horn of Africa, Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo have met for team-building and strategic planning at the Sida Civil Society Centre in Härnösand in northern Sweden. The 20 participants, representing 11 nationalities, identified strategic priorities for the Institute in the coming 3-5 years. Future collaboration with the centre was also discussed with the Director Roland Stenlund and Ingvar Rönnbäck, programme officer Conflict Management and Humanitarian Cooperation.

Evaluation Somalia and DRC

Sida has commissioned an impact evaluation of the LPI programmes in Somalia and DRC (Kivu provinces). The task for the heavy weight academic evaluation team is to look for impact, particularly in Somalia after a decade long bottom-up peacebuilding programme in the 1990s. It is also going to look at LPI's methodology as well as measurable indicators and methods of evaluating peacebuilding projects. Sida is investing considerably in conflict management projects: 800 million SEK to 156 projects in 2002 only. The evaluation report is expected in June.

Tools for Peace – postponed

The interfaith conference Tools for Peace, originally planned for June, has been moved to November 21-24. Location of the global conference will most likely be Stockholm. Invitations to some 150 selected participants from all world religions will be sent out in June. A website, www.tools-for-peace.net is opened to gradually provide information about the initiative. The organizers of the conference are

Brazzaville Resource Group. From left: Chantal Maryse Itoua Apoyolo, Joachim Mbanza, Louise Bakala Koumouno, Runo Bergström and Seraphin Ngouma (LPI representatives in Brazzaville), in front Bébène Ndamba, Samuel N'Sikabaka. Photo: Tore Samuelsson

the three main religious bodies in Sweden, Christians, Muslims and Jews together with Life & Peace Institute and SweFOR (Swedish chapter of International Fellowship of Reconciliation). Documents and photos from the pre-conference arranged by LPI in Uppsala in October 2003 are available on website www.life-peace.org

Consultations with Congolese resource group

The "Groupe de Resource" – key actors in the LPI-supported peacebuilding programme in Congo Brazzaville has recently visited Sweden for seminars and meetings. The participants in the group represent various academic professions and connections in the Congolese society. They are all engaged in the post conflict work and reconciliation from their various church affiliations. The workshop in Sweden was both an evaluation of a seminar with Congolese diaspora in Paris, and planning for future peacebuilding work. During their weeklong visit, the group and representatives from LPI had meetings with Sida, the Centre for Crisis and Trauma at Danderyd Hospital, various churches, and Swedish media.

El Salvador mission

A two-person team from LPI will, at the request of Iglesia Bautista Emanuel, and in collaboration with the Swedish church-based NGO Diakonia, participate in the international observation of the Presidential election in El Salvador March 21. LPI board member Rev. Andrew Kirk and Communications Director Tore Samuelsson will also discuss possible future peace research and peacebuilding work in El Savador and Central America with church partners and the regional office of Diakonia.

New Master's degree in Uppsala

LPI is embarking on new research and education programmes on the theme 'Religion in Conflict and Peace Building'. The educational part includes cooperation with Uppsala University and the Sigtuna Institute on launching a Master's degree programme, which will begin next autumn. The planned research aims to make a comparative analysis of inter-faith actions and living to be drawn from case studies of various sites in the Sudan, Ethiopia, Israel/Palestine and Sri Lanka.

Reviews and resources

Youth and wars

Throughout the broad discussion on youth and wars, and particularly in light of recent events in Liberia, there has been a significant amount of literature covering issues of child soldiers in conflicts dotted around the globe. Included in most debates is the idea that disgruntled youth become part of "social banditry" due to social exclusion or lack of opportunity in the labour sector. These are the prevailing arguments in the conflicts in West Africa, where vicious acts of violence were carried out on civilians by drugged-up youths wielding automatic weapons. In turn, these acts echo the views of Robert Kaplan when he asserted his ends of the earth hypothesis in 1994 about theories of over-population and the lack of ideology on the part of those initiating the violence.

Fortunately, the debate tends to encompass other more plausible viewpoints than the abovementioned. In the RAWOO[1] working paper of 2003 entitled **"What Happens to Youth During and After Wars?, A Preliminary Review of Literature and an Assessment of the Debate"**, we get a diverse picture of why youths may become embroiled in war. Although conflicts over mineral resources, such as diamonds, may have an indirect consequence on the marginalisation of youth in African societies, it is the breakdown in areas such as the division of labour, education and provision of services that undermine any notions of stability prior to the outbreak of war.

The review makes some pertinent recommendations in gaining a better grasp of the role of youth in wars. Although there is a large amount of literature on the Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone) and the Mayi-Mayi (Great Lakes Region), nobody has actually carried out any research amongst their ranks during a conflict. Further, it is a valid point that we must move away from the practice of trying to place certain wars into specific theoretical models, and then dismissing them as wars of "social banditry" if they do not fit. Essentially, guerilla war does not have to fit a model to assume legitimacy, a fact which seems to divide the theorists and those in development organisations who prefer a more practical and simplified approach.

This review is a welcoming development in the ongoing research on the increasingly worrying trend of youth involved in war. Although much ground is covered in the research on this topic, the impression is that we are still finding it difficult to put into practice. Finalising demobilisation and disarmament of armed youth, as has happened recently in Sierra Leone, may bring an end to the propensity to commit harmful acts of violence, but if the root causes of why youth join up in armed groups are not addressed, weapons can always be found elsewhere.

Shane Quinn

[1] Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council

Children's rights in Peru

Cathrine Terreros and Anna Tibblin: ***Putting children's rights on the local agenda: The experience of the Demuna model in Peru,*** Save the Children Sweden, 2003

This 58-page publication documents Save the Children Sweden's experience of being involved in the creation of a system of Demunas in Peru during the last decade. In the area of children's rights, Peru provides an interesting example which ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990, and which adopted a new Child Code based on a rights perspective two years later. The new law stipulated the creation of defence centres with the specific aim of safeguarding children's rights. In this context, Save the Children Sweden introduced the idea of municipal child defence centres (Defensorías Municipales del Niño, Demunas) that would offer free and rights-based assistance to children and their families in the local community. While the first six Demunas opened in 1993, ten years later there are 600 Demunas, spread all across the country. The Demunas give free guidance and help concerning how to solve conflicts on children's rights issues. In this sense, Save the Children Sweden suggests that the Demunas are promoting access to justice for poor and vulnerable people.

The publication is interesting as it demonstrates how the UN CRC, more than ten years after its adoption, may have some concrete and positive effects in a country such as Peru. While most of the children in Peru still lack basic rights such as education, health and security, Save the Children Sweden claims that the establishment of Demuna centres has implied a major achievement of having institutionalised the protection of children's rights into the municipal structure. It is estimated that the Demuna centres have dealt with 300 000 individual cases since their inception in 1993. The Demuna system has also had consequences outside Peru, as it has been used as a source of inspiration and as a model for similar systems in other Latin American countries.

The publication has a very accessible format and is short, clear and easy to read. It tells about the Demuna experience in a narrative tone, and includes some concrete examples of what the Demunas have done in individual cases. A positive aspect is that some children

The rehabilitation of child soldiers is an urgent matter for the whole community and, thus, the whole society. Photo: Koen Vlassenroot/LPI

are given the opportunity to express their views on the Demunas. The publication also points to some general lessons learned from the experience, for example about governance aspects, the relation between Save the Children Sweden and its partner organisations in Peru, and the effects the existence of the Demunas have had on children.

While this publication comes from a development co-operation perspective, it may still be relevant for those working in fields, dealing with peace and conflict, as it indicates the benefits and problems of creating and institutionalising a rights-based approach in general, and a children's rights approach more specifically. This is useful, as ideally the issue of children's rights should also be on peace and conflict agendas.

This publication is the first in a series of publications about Save the Children Sweden's work in the area of Good Governance in the best interest of the child, and it can be ordered from Save the Children Sweden's Online Bookshop at www.rb.se/shop

Jenny Svensson

Liberian child soldiers

Teferi Sendabo: ***Child Soldiers. Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration in Liberia***, Life & Peace Institute, 2004

The use of child soldiers continues to be a global problem. While the rehabilitation and social reintegration of former child soldiers constitutes a right stipulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is seen as an important security measure, in practice it has often been neglected or inadequate. The methods on how rehabilitation and reintegration should be carried out are contested, and more empirical research is needed on the issue. This research report by Dr. Tefari Sendabo tries to bridge the knowledge gap. During 2002, Sendabo visited Liberia to do a research study within Life & Peace Institute's project "Rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers in Mozambique and Liberia". The findings are presented in this final research report, which is currently in print and will be available from LPI during this spring.

In order to find out how to achieve a proper rehabilitation of child soldiers, Sendabo stresses the need to examine and understand the multifaceted reasons for children's participation in war. Hence, Sendabo sets off by discussing the problem of child soldiers generally, and then looks more specifically at the Liberian case to explain why and how children become participants in war. Using methods such as questionnaires, participant observation and interviews with some former child soldiers, families and other community members, Sendabo tries to learn more about the actual rehabilitation and reintegration process in Liberia. He seeks to identify local mechanisms used by communities to cope with rehabilitation and reintegration, and presents some local views on how this best can be brought about.

Sendabo also looks at a number of factors obstructing the process of rehabilitation and social reintegration for child soldiers and for the society as a whole. The report includes some testimonies from former child soldiers and other community members. These examples from different life stories are illuminating in order to get some understanding about the seemingly incomprehensible context in which children participate in war, and how they can become functioning members of the society after this experience.

One of the key lessons learned is that the participation of children in war to a great extent depends on the social status of the family. Consequently, as long as basic needs are not met within the family and the society, children may continue to fight to acquire food, shelter, clothing and security by other means. An important aspect in rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as in prevention, is thus the need to incorporate the marginalized into society. Related to this is the significance of thinking about rehabilitation and social reintegration, not only in terms of the child soldiers in isolation, but more as a process that needs to involve all those who have in some way or other been affected by the war: former child soldiers as well as other

children, families, other community members and the society at large. As there is no single general solution or prescription on how to achieve rehabilitation and reintegration, Sendabo emphasises the pressing need to develop contextually appropriate methods and strategies on rehabilitation and social reintegration.

In Liberia's current context of tentative peace after the most recent civil war ended in 2003, the issue of child soldiers remains vitally important. Their successful rehabilitation and social reintegration is crucial, not only for the future of these individuals, but also for the future of Liberia as a whole.

Jenny Svensson

Unique linkage: Northern countries and Southern Africa

Much learning and knowledge is stored in Uppsala, Sweden. Besides the old university, there are several research institutions, for example the Life & Peace Institute and Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (the Nordic Africa Institute, NAI). NAI was created in 1962 by Africanists who enlisted the support of the University and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Apart from having the largest collection of books on Africa in Scandinavia, it also publishes books on Africa, and the four books below have recently been published by this Nordic Africa Institute.

The Nordic countries and Africa – old and new relations. Ed. Lennart Wohlgemuth. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala 2002. 55 pp

From the five Nordic countries, contributions were given to the Institute on its 40-year anniversary in 2002. They are collected in a handy volume: The Nordic countries and Africa. The authors are experienced participants in the exchange between the Nordic countries and Africa. For each country, a brief history is given of the old contacts dating back to the 17th century. Although not colonial powers, attempts were made by the Nordic countries to establish colonial influence on African soil. Denmark had a special role in present day Ghana. Swedish botanists, inspired by Carl von Linné, made a catalogue of the South African flora. Finnish missionaries, led by Rauttanen, translated the Bible into Oshiwambo in Namibia. Such stories of old relations provide the background for the new relations.

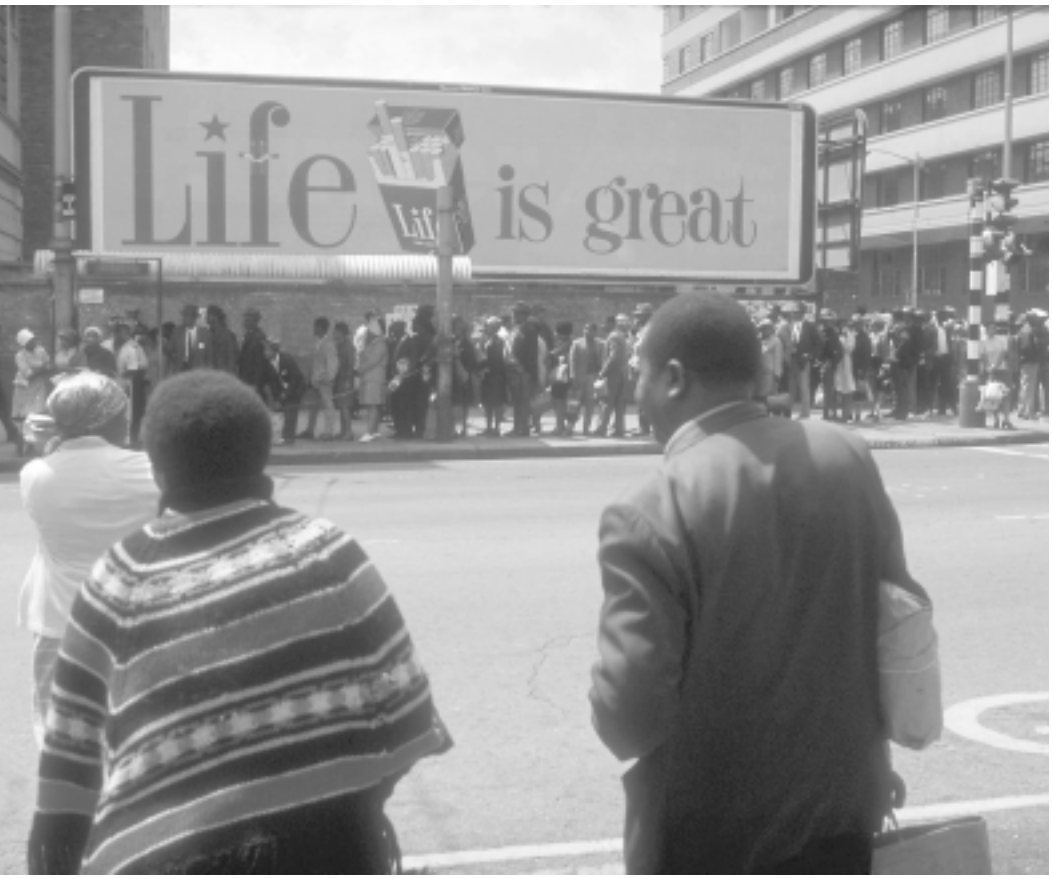
Academics usually like to compare and see differences between countries and cultures. Regarding the Nordic countries it is more productive to try and see the similarities. Developments within the Nordic countries show striking similarities in their approaches to Africa. In the 1960's all five countries built up aid and development agencies, which have a similar history: Sida, Danida, Norad, Finnida. As far as southern Africa is concerned, the Nordic contribution was the largest during the anti-apartheid struggle. The support of the development plans of Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda were of such vast proportions that perhaps it was too much. At any rate, the Nordic model of a socially well-planned egalitarian society did not take roots in the African context.

Sellström, Tor: ***Sweden and national liberation in Southern Africa. Vol I: Formation of a popular opinion 1950–1970.*** Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala 1999. 540 pp

– Vol. II: Solidarity and assistance 1970–1994. Uppsala 2002. 912 pp.

Tor Sellström has written 1 400 pages on a 44 year history of national liberation in Southern Africa from a Swedish perspective. Apparently there are similar volumes to follow from Norway, Finland and Denmark. It is a remarkable achievement in contemporary history. Although not professing to be a historian by trade or following any favored scientific theory, Tor Sellström has managed to put together a fascinating story from the 1950's until 1994, when finally fair elections put a democratic parliament and government in place in South Africa. This story has been told by many others, not least by Nelson Mandela himself. What is remarkable in Tor Sellström's achievement is that he manages to pull together half a century of links between both prominent and odd figures in the North and their counterparts in the South, to sort out a myriad of acronyms of both recognized and obscure liberation and solidarity movements, and finally to keep track of the political tactical play in many parliaments and governments. It all evolves into one of the most remarkable stories of liberation and solidarity of the last century. Will this century experience a similar story?

Tor Sellström's book serves as a rich source of information for this period. Protocols and notes, which were classified, are now available. He has also interviewed people in all concerned countries. Some of them are written on extensively. Most interesting is the consistency in the life long commitment of some of the leading actors. Gunnar Helander served as a Swedish missionary in Zululand. In the 1950's he became the main spokesperson in Sweden against the apartheid policy. He was a prolific author of articles and books. He stirred



The liberation process in southern Africa, and the international solidarity linked to it, is a remarkable story, probably unique in its kind. Photo: Leif Gustavsson/IKON

opinion. Another author is Per Wästberg, who was in Salisbury as a Rotary exchange student. He was expelled from Rhodesia and went to South Africa. His experiences made material for two of his first books on racial segregation, which sold remarkably well in many countries. He kept this profile in his long career, crowned with a membership in the Swedish Academy. Third among the early opinion makers is Herbert Tingsten, chief editor of the biggest Swedish daily newspaper and a political scientist. His travels and articles shaped public opinion on apartheid. Through this awareness the anti-apartheid coalition started to take shape.

Sellström stressed factually that this was much of a middle of the road coalition in Swedish society and not something reserved for the extreme left. Most of the youth and student organizations had information campaigns advocating a trade boycott of South African goods. It was a popular movement, mobilizing most Swedes. Opponents were the export companies and the Conservative party. Still, it took some time before the Social Democratic Party made sanctions a government policy. The fire to act came from the bottom up, from the youth and women's organizations. It was a movement of grassroots and it was a people to people phenomenon.

Another interesting story is the network of liberation leaders, who early on got to know Swedish society through studies or political work. Most of the top rank of all liberation movements pass through the pages, particularly their many visits to Sweden and the network they built with Swedish future political leaders. The future leadership of the three parties, Center, Liberal and Social Democratic, all had good ties to the leadership of the liberation movements in southern Africa already before 1969. This network held together and was able to tackle many a crisis ahead.

By this time all the recognized liberation movements were on the map in Sweden. This meant that it was ANC for South Africa and PAC was kept out in the cold, which was not the case in Norway. FRELIMO of Mozambique and MPLA of Angola became known fairly early. Campaigns against the colonial rule of Portugal were at times vehement. Savimbi of UNITA and Holden Roberto of FNLA tried in vain to receive recognition. Savimbi had in the 1960's support of the extreme left and in the 1980's of the right wing in Sweden. In Namibia SWANU was the first contact; only a few years later SWAPO was recognized, as the war developed in Owamboland. Both ZANU and ZAPU in Zimbabwe were well known from the beginning. Sweden tried to merge them in vain and followed the rivalries between and inside them closely. The development from just contacts to liberation movements to government support and policy was fairly straight and simple in Sweden.

Tor Sellström's books are written for people everywhere, not just Swedes who were involved. He explains to the reader how Swedish society works, the importance of people's organizations etc. He has also taken the pain to set the record straight on early Swedish involvement in southern Africa, particularly in South Africa – a story not very well recorded by Swedish academics. Most thrilling is his insight observation into the obscure operations of the IUEF and how it was infiltrated by the South African security. Craig Williamson was greeted as a hero by apartheid South Africa for his infiltration and his spying on the ANC activists. He was at one point drawn into the Olof Palme murder investigation. The whole organization seemed at times to be out of control and lost its transparency for those who gave support. Here Tor Sellström seems to portray things as they were,

withholding no unpleasant details. Ends seemed to justify dirty means and Sellström has the integrity to tell the true story from the documents available to him. If criticism should be made against the books, it is that his style of writing is bound to the sources available. There might be other sources and persons to interview, as is so with all writing of contemporary history.

On the international political scene Sellström makes one point very clear. The South African political rhetoric used the idea of Communist onslaught when describing of the liberation movements. This analysis was adopted by the US and UK governments. They branded the liberation leaders as terrorists. There was no recognition of them. Only the Scandinavian countries welcomed them officially and maintained relations on the highest possible level. The hands-off attitude of several Western governments and the constructive engagement policy of Chester Crocker at the US State Department showed itself to be very destructive. The Soviet influence grew where there was a gain to be made in the cold war race.

The ANC leadership was officially received in Sweden and Scandinavia 25 years before the US, UK and Soviet governments cared to receive them. They did too little too late for the liberation in southern Africa. What would have happened if the international community at the time of the Sharpville massacre 1960 had set its foot down and demanded a gradual change through UN sanctions? This never occurred. Instead, prolonged wars of liberation took place. ANC, born already in 1912 with a non-violent platform, was never accepted by the government in power, nor by the western democratic governments, which was a big tragedy. Its outstanding leader Albert Luthuli received the Nobel peace prize in 1961 and its extremely popular leader Nelson Mandela shared the prize in 1993. The three decades in between, when Mandela sat imprisoned, could have been put to better use and the world would have looked different. The struggle for liberation took its toll. It started with peaceful aims and it ended in a peaceful transition, when Nelson Mandela and his colleagues impressed a whole world.

This piece of contemporary history, a unique linkage between Northern countries and Southern Africa, will not reach the ordinary textbooks of history. These events are on the periphery, outside the center of normal political events. It is even shown in the autobiographies of some of the leading Swedish politicians, who all leave out this part of Swedish policy making. Tor Sellström has, through his two big volumes, seen to it that this period of a new type of foreign policy, based on people to people solidarity, is properly recorded and his story is worth reading. Do it in the light of the question: Will such solidarity be used again in foreign policy?

Re-examining liberation in Namibia. Political culture since independence. Ed. Henning Melber. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet 2003. 150 pp

In the latest book from the Nordic Africa institute, its director of research, Henning Melber, has edited some articles on recent political developments in Namibia. Melber is a Namibian, using German as his language, active in SWAPO and now living in Uppsala. The ten authors describe in different chapters the political culture and particularly its record on human rights, democracy and freedom. In one sense it is a sad story compared with the enthusiasm of the liberation struggle and the celebration of Independence, as written in Sellström's book. Namibia was a success story in the beginning of the 1990's. A solid Constitution, a multi-party system and many other aspects of a modern state were introduced. A spirit of reconciliation prevailed.

The authors use an academic critical method to discern the pattern of development in Namibia. What is actually the concept of liberation? Is its main aim just to oust the colonial power and its structures? Does it mean that those who fought the liberation war will be imbued with the privileges of power for good? Is there also space for liberation to develop into human dignity for all, into a well functioning society with space for different cultures? In this aspect the authors are unanimous: Namibia's post independence record does not fully recognize human rights, free speech and limitations of power. On the contrary too much power is concentrated in one party and one leader.

The sad story of the detainees in SWAPO prisons in exile is still an open wound in the nation. 'Let us forget and go on' seems to be the official version. Others want to know the truth first. This truth has never been established or recognized by those in power. Reconciliation is never achieved. Just as much as justice was a prerequisite for peace during the struggle for independence, just as much is truth a prerequisite for reconciliation. It is easy to find flaws in any government's record of achievements. The authors do write from an empathetic view to show where changes of attitude must be made. Human rights, transparency and power sharing are the main ingredients in the new record, which the government must strive for. The risk for the Namibians is that they will tread the same road as Zimbabwe has. It is a dismal record, which nobody likes. The people of Namibia and the friends of Namibia deserve a record in which the future struggle for economic, social and spiritual liberation is waged with an aim of sharing power instead of concentrating it.

Björn Ryman

Meet LPI Board President Biörn Fjärstedt

Bishop emeritus Biörn Fjärstedt, since summer 2003 living in Uppsala, Sweden, has been member of the LPI Board since 1993 and its President since 1997. New Routes asked him to tell the readers something about his background and about the driving forces behind his engagement for peace.

A higher degree in Latin and History was the nurtured vision, a reasonably dry framework for achieving free movement and a high school teaching position for financial support. Latin was changed for theology, and then all by itself, as it were, theology won my heart in full. I was offered a junior lectureship in New Testament Exegesis at the University of Lund. With six years of that as a back-pack, wife and two small boys, India became the next stop for a period of eight years - Tamilnadu Theological Seminary in South India - with a quick interlude for an assistant professorship in Uppsala and a dissertation for a doctorate in theology.

In 1976, a mission theologian with international experience was needed at the Church of Sweden Mission offices in Uppsala, and four years later I became the Church of Sweden Mission Director. With that I stayed for close on eleven years until I was elected, appointed and consecrated bishop of Visby in Sweden. During the years with the Church of Sweden Mission, I became involved with the World Council of Churches as a consultant in its departments for mission, theological education and dialogue with people of other faiths and ideologies. I chaired the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People and the Advisory Group to the General Secretary on Inter-religious Relations.

My family followed closely the Gandhian movement in India and was strongly anti-nazist during the 1930s and 40s. So, peace in favour of war and armament was part of my upbringing. My practical theological work over the years naturally strengthened that approach. And you don't live in India for a long time without being affected by its tradition of ahimsa, non-violence. For many years I was involved in, and an honorary president of, the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

You have a broad and deep experience of religious matters. Which role does, according to you, religion play in peace work?

Religion, as we all know, can be used for vested interests in conflicts. It is a strong component in natural human life, although secular Europe, ever since the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, has tried to neglect the role of religion in social life. Nowadays, it has become more and more clear that religion is a force to be reckoned with. It can, if we so want, be used for peace building and reconciliation. All main religious traditions have peace, together with truth and justice, as key concepts in their Holy Writs, in their liturgies, hymns and public prayers. The great problem is to let these strong basic values have a clear priority over ethnic or group interests and short-sighted worldly gains. That, however, requires long term educational work and a deep commitment to the values of the Kingdom of God and/or corresponding goals of other traditions, even non-religious humanistic goals.

How can the issues of religious dialogue be reflected in the work of the LPI? What does understanding between religions mean to the future perspective of peace between people and states?

I think most people know or wish that a dialogue between the religious traditions and their spokes-persons can be used for peace-building, conflict resolution and preventive work to develop understanding. But it doesn't help to simply be upset about misuse of religion. Religious leaders also have vested interests and get caught in conflicts patters. Fortunately, however, these interests and imprisonments are more local and community based than those of politicians on the world scene, warlords and secular actors. That is a "limitation" that can be used. Religious leaders are easily accessible and can be talked with. And when talking with one another, they recognize common basic values.

LPI Board President Biörn Fjärstedt. Photo: Jim Elfström

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