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## Conference news -ethnic inequalities and public sector governance

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# CONFERENCE

# NEWS

## Ethnic Inequalities and Public Sector Governance

*Report of the International Conference organized  
by UNRISD, UNDP Latvia and the Latvian  
Ministry of Integration  
25–27 March 2004, Riga*

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### Introduction

There is increasing recognition by scholars and policy makers that inequalities between groups constitute a more potent source for violent conflict than inequalities among individuals. When inequalities in incomes, wealth, and access to social services or political power coincide with group differences, ethnicity may assume importance in shaping choices and mobilizing individuals for collective action. Yet little is known about ethnic inequalities especially as they affect the public sector, which plays a central role in resource allocation and identity formation. The stability, legitimacy and effectiveness of the public sector may be undermined if it fails to develop mechanisms to regulate difference, inequality and competition.

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) initiated a project in 2002 to examine the complex ways ethnic diversity affects the constitution and management of the public sectors of multiethnic societies under formal democratic rule. Researchers analysed the structure of ethnic cleavages, including variations within each group; collected empirical data on four public institutions—civil service, cabinet, parliament and party system; examined the rules that determine selection to these institutions; analysed whether the distribution of offices is ethnically balanced

or uneven; and studied voter preferences in constituting these institutions. They also looked at the effectiveness of institutions and policy reforms for managing diversity and inequality. The research employed a typology that classifies countries according to their levels of ethnic polarization: those in which one ethnicity is overwhelmingly dominant; those with two or three main groups; and those in which the ethnic structure is fragmented. The last classification is further divided into two categories: cases of high levels of fragmentation and cases in which fragmentation offers a few large groups the potential to organize selective coalitions to influence access to the public sector. Fifteen countries were studied: Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Ghana, Fiji, India, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The findings of this research were discussed in an international conference organized in Riga, Latvia, from 25 to 27 March 2005 by UNRISD, the office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Latvia and the Latvian Ministry for Social Integration. The conference attracted about 80 participants, drawn from international organizations, governments, the diplomatic community in Latvia, the media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions.



In their opening statements, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rihard Pīks (whose statement was read by the UNDP Resident Representative, Gabriele Köhler) and the Minister for Integration, Nils Muiznieks, stressed the importance of the conference for sharing experiences on social integration, especially in light of Latvia's efforts at nation building and adoption of European Union (EU) laws on anti-discrimination and equality. In her own statement as UNDP's Resident Representative, Gabriele Köhler underlined the value of comparing a large number of countries to shed new light on ethnicity, integration, participation and representation in public institutions; and hoped the conference would not only improve policy makers' understanding of these issues, but that it would provide an opportunity to develop an international network on ethnicity and governance rooted in Latvia but reaching out to different parts of the world. UNRISD's Director, Thandika Mkandawire, stressed the importance of understanding ethnic inequalities when dealing with public sector reforms, which have tended to focus on managerial and fiscal issues. The research coordinator, Yusuf Bangura, discussed the main findings of the research.

### Research overview

The research highlights four main issues. First, it challenges a popular view that links ethnic diversity to pathological outcomes such as violent conflicts and undemocratic government. Although some recent quantitative studies do not find a strong correlation between ethnic diversity and conflict, or ethnic diversity and lack of democracy, UNRISD research suggests that the relevant issue is not the existence of diversity per se, but types of diversity, which can constrain or facilitate particular outcomes. Ethnic cleavages are configured differently in different social structures and are less conflictual in some countries than in others. The difficult cases are countries with bipolar and tripolar ethnic structures or cases where groups have formed selective ethnic coalitions, limiting the scope for bargaining and the promotion of multiple loyalties. Countries with these types of ethnic structures that are relatively stable have introduced ethnicity-sensitive institutions and policies to influence the composition of the public sector.

Second, contrary to liberal assumptions that privilege individual choices and capabilities in constituting public institutions, the research shows that it is difficult to achieve ethnic proportionality or inclusiveness in the

public sector if policies do not address this issue. Multiethnic societies that adopt ethnicity-blind policies tend to have highly unequal public sectors because of the unequal starting points of groups. This may be a product of history, market dynamics, resource endowments or past discriminatory public policies. Data on the composition of the civil service, cabinet and parliament suggest that relative balance has been achieved in countries that are highly fragmented (Papua New Guinea and the United Republic of Tanzania) or those with ethnicity-sensitive policies that are oriented toward proportionality (Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana and Switzerland). In Papua New Guinea and the United Republic of Tanzania, it is very rare for an ethnic group to have more than one member in the cabinet or top layer of the civil administration. Ghana, India, Malaysia and Nigeria have achieved some proportionality in some institutions because of ethnicity-sensitive policies. The remaining cases display varying levels of inequality and weak or non-existent policies on proportionality.

Third, the research challenges the recent focus on institutional engineering that underplays background conditions in shaping the choices of political actors. Politicians and citizens face different types of constraints in constituting the public sector. However well crafted they may be, institutions may have different levels of significance in different social settings. In this regard, the research questions two frameworks that have been held up as solutions to the governance problems of ethnically divided societies. These are majoritarian institutions that reward moderation in party behaviour and vote pooling while also encouraging adversarial politics; and consensus-based or power-sharing arrangements that seek to accommodate the ethnic segments. The research suggests that although the pulls of majoritarian rule and power sharing are very strong, they do not always pull in opposite directions. Formal consociational arrangements may not be relevant in unipolar ethnic settings or fragmented multiethnic societies, where governments may be ethnically inclusive under democratic conditions. They seem unavoidable in bipolar and tripolar formations or in multipolar settings with strong ethnic or regional clusters. Consociational arrangements have been practised largely in bipolar and tripolar settings: Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Malaysia and Switzerland.

Fourth, contrary to conventional ideas on ethnicity, fragmentation stands out as a powerful factor in

intergroup cooperation. An important policy implication is the need to weaken or manage polarity. Policy makers cannot turn all ethnically plural countries into homogeneous societies, short of creating 8,000 or more mini-states. Even such a policy of ethnic state creation may not be viable in a world of increasing migration and intermarriage. The research suggests that the best option for intergroup cooperation in divided societies may be to promote more fragmentation. Electoral rules and other incentives, including support for multiethnic associations, can be used to open up cleavages in groups that appear homogenous. The importance this study attaches to fragmentation comes close to respecting a major finding in political science that democracies are more likely to be stable in situations where resources, power and allegiances are widely dispersed.

### **Unipolar Ethnic Settings: Botswana and Lithuania**

The first substantive session considered presentations on public sector inequalities in unipolar ethnic settings. In such societies, it was hypothesized, the dominant group might feel less threatened by minorities. This might encourage fragmentation of group preferences and cross-ethnic cooperation. Even when minorities organize separately, the fragmentation of the dominant ethnicity might improve the influence of minorities in the public sphere, especially in situations where minority groups are regarded as indigenous.

Natalija Kasatkina and Vida Beresneviciute made the presentation on Lithuania, and Onalenna Selolwane presented the findings on Botswana. The Lithuanian ethnicity constitutes 83 per cent of the population in the country, and the Tswana in Botswana 70 per cent. The second and third largest groups in Lithuania (Poles and Russians) are only 7 per cent each. The second largest group in Botswana, the Kalanga, is 11 per cent and the third largest (the San or Khosa) is 3 per cent. The rest are very small groups. Even though both Lithuania and Botswana are unipolar societies, there are differences between them in terms of the way ethnic groups are perceived in the construction of the state system. Indigeneity, which is a strong element in Lithuania, is absent in Botswana. However, there is little ethnic polarization in the two countries. Feeling less threatened by minorities, Lithuania avoided the initial citizenship laws that, in the other Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia, discriminated against Soviet-era immigrants.

Most Lithuanian minorities are citizens. In Botswana, the internal fragmentation of the dominant Tswana group into five relatively equal groups raises questions about the existence of a Tswana identity and provides opportunities for active minority participation in the public sector. A multiethnic pact at independence granted the Tswana language official status (along with English). Today about 90 per cent of the population identify Tswana as their main language. However, this concession to the Tswana was made in exchange for equal distribution of resources among all groups. Only the small pastoral San or Khosan group feels excluded.

The dominant ethnicity is politically fragmented in the two countries, providing scope for intergroup cooperation. There are, however, differences between the two countries. In Lithuania, even though many minorities vote for the dominant ethnic parties, they have also organized separately in determining the composition of the public sector. However, most of the minority parliamentarians tend to be elected on the platform of the Lithuanian-led, Left-leaning parties; and minority parties sometimes participate in coalition governments even though individuals of minority backgrounds are rarely offered cabinet posts. In Botswana, on the other hand, minorities do not organize separately, and governments reflect the ethnic composition of the society. The ethnic profiles of both opposition and ruling parties in parliament are similar. Candidates from the three dominant Tswana subgroups and the second-largest group, the Kalanga, have occupied 69 per cent of the cumulative parliamentary seats of the main parties since 1965.

The state in unipolar societies may assume the features of a nation-state, affecting the composition of the public sector. This is the case in Lithuania where issues of indigeneity have affected access to the bureaucracy, parliament and cabinet. Even though minorities constitute 17 per cent of the population, they accounted for only 10 per cent of the parliamentarians in 2000. In 1985, before the country attained independence, minorities enjoyed a 21 per cent share; this declined sharply to 7 per cent in the first post-independence parliament of 1992. The situation is worse in governmental bodies, such as the cabinet and the upper reaches of the civil service. In the 12 governments formed since independence, only two individuals of minority background have served as ministers, and two as heads of civil service ministries. Kasatkina and Beresneviciute suggested a system of quotas as a

provisional means to encourage participation of minorities in elective bodies.

In Botswana, however, it is the dominant Tswana group that is underrepresented in key public institutions. Its share of senior civil service posts experienced a consistent decline from 60 per cent in 1965 to about 50 per cent in 2003; and its share of cabinet posts went up from 62 per cent in 1966 to 69 per cent in 1985 but declined to 61 per cent in 2000. A similar trend is observed for the parliament, where the Tswana share declined from 65 per cent in 1966 to 61 per cent in 1985 and 2000. The second largest group has consistently enjoyed high levels of representation in government. It accounted for the entire minority share of 40 per cent of the civil service posts in 1965 as well as 31 per cent and 24 per cent respectively of the national shares in 1975 and 2003. The merit-based policy of recruitment into the civil service in the early period of independence advantaged the Kalanga, who had a head start in education over all groups. It is only the highly marginalized San group that has not gained access to the parliament and cabinet.

## Discussion

The discussant, Ralph Premdas, pointed out that the problems of minorities are more clear-cut in unipolar societies than in other ethnic settings. He observed that the received wisdom in the past was that the majority should rule; but in the two countries, there is some effort to accommodate the interests of minorities. He further stated that the Lithuania case is one of decolonization in which ethnic relations have been affected by the former imperial power and by European Union regulations on minority rights. He stressed the point that the positive role of third parties or external agencies in setting standards of good behaviour and restraining states should be recognized in conflict management.

The discussion that followed addressed three main issues. One set of comments highlighted the fluidity of ethnic categories and the need for distinctions to be made between ethnic and sub-ethnic groups. One participant argued that, despite the fragmentation of the Tswana identity into several subcategories, it might still be possible to talk about a broader Tswana ethnicity, even though this is something that developed over the past 100 years. Questions were also raised about the role of economic growth in Botswana's stable ethnic relations and the marginalization of the San or Khosan group. Selolwane

replied that ethnic identification in Botswana has overlapping dimensions. The Tswana identity may be important for the ethnic subcategories when the issue is the perceived dominance of the second-largest group, the Kalanga, in the public sector and business. Sub-Tswana identities assume importance when the issue of Kalanga dominance is not central. Young people underplay the sub-Tswana identities, because they do not want to be reminded of their ethnic origins. The Khosa, she explained, are physically different and engage in economic activities that are also different from what the majority of Botswanans do for a living. All non-Khosan groups are Bantu and agropastoralists, whereas the Khosa are historically hunter-gatherers. The former also had centralized states whereas the Khosa did not. The development strategy pursued by the modern Botswana state is to introduce Bantu modes of activities to the Khosa: creation of chiefs, farming, agribusiness and large settlements for the provision of social amenities, a strategy resisted by the Khosa. She said that the Khosa are now a source of cheap labour and have lost most of their valuable land to ranchers and so-called developers.

A second set of comments addressed the importance of non-ethnic cleavages in unipolar societies. It was argued that in such societies, the main cleavage may not be ethnicity but one based on ideology or urban-rural differences, as the Botswana case demonstrates. The point was also made that most nation-states in the world are unipolar societies, with similar problems as those analysed for Lithuania and Botswana. The ethnic cleavage may become important when minorities are weakly integrated in the public sector, or when there is a major status reversal between the majority group and a minority group that was formerly dominant, as in Lithuania. Power sharing or co-decision making may not be relevant in such societies. The focus instead should be on the terms of inclusion of minorities in the political process. Participants addressed the tendency for minorities to drift to the private sector when faced with fewer opportunities for employment in the public sector. This may affect ethnic relations when governments privatize state-owned properties: the majority ethnic group may discover that minorities are already well entrenched in the private sector and are better placed to exploit the opportunities of privatization.

A third set of issues relates to the role of migration in ethnic relations in Lithuania, the viability of quotas to improve unequal distribution of minorities in elective

bodies and influence mono-ethnic political participation, as well as the specific demands of minorities. Kasatkina replied that there is a problem with the population census, so migration figures may not be accurate. However, Russians in Lithuania are typically a migratory group whereas Poles are permanent longstanding minorities. At independence, many Russians opted to go back to Russia even though citizenship was offered to everyone regardless of duration of residence. She observed that Poles want to be Lithuanians of Polish origin, whereas Russians want to be Russians in Lithuania. The problem of status reversal is a problem for Russians, who are not used to being minorities. The quota system recommended in the paper will not be popular in Lithuania and has never been debated, but she insisted that it is something worth pursuing if minorities are to be fully integrated in the public sector and more generally, in society.

### **Bipolar Ethnic Settings: Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Latvia, and Belgium**

In bipolar societies, when ethnicity is politicized, the division may run through the system, making it difficult to construct cross-ethnic alliances. Groups face each other directly and politics may be zero-sum. Fragmentation, if it occurs, may not be enough to promote accommodation or cohesion. Ethnicity-sensitive institutions may be needed to avoid conflict. Two sessions were devoted to the bipolar cases of Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Latvia and Belgium.

Jon Fraenkel presented the Fiji findings. Indo-Fijians were descended from Indian indentured labourers recruited by the British to work in the sugar-cane industries between 1879 and 1916. Their population grew rapidly in the twentieth century, attaining parity with ethnic Fijians around 1945. Indians owned more property in the towns than Fijians. Employment of ethnic Fijians in the sugar plantations was restricted; they were largely confined to their villages, producing other types of crops, and governed by a separate Fijian administration. Eighty-four per cent of the land is governed by customary tenure, which means that Indians who are non-indigenous cannot own land. However, a large portion of the fertile land is leased to Indian sugar-cane farmers. Because of the communal nature of Fiji's electoral system, its parliament has tended to reflect the relative population shares of the two groups.

Inequalities are sharp at the level of the cabinet and civil service. Between 1987 and 1990, the cabinet was on average 83 per cent Fijian and only 6 per cent Indian. Between 1990 and 1996, there were no Indians in the cabinet. Even when an Indian became prime minister in 1999, two-thirds of the cabinet members were Fijians. In 2001, Indians constituted only 5 per cent of the cabinet. There was relative parity in the civil service during the early independence period. However, after the coup of 1987, the Fijian share rose sharply. More than 60 per cent of civil servants are now ethnic Fijians, compared to 30 per cent Indian. Fijians constitute over 99 per cent of the armed forces and more than 85 per cent of the top civil service posts.

The 1997 constitution introduced radical reforms that combined the majoritarian preference voting system with power sharing. The goal of preference voting was to get political parties and voters to behave moderately; and that of power sharing was to ensure that parties with significant voter support (at least 10 per cent of parliamentary seats) get proportional seats in cabinet. The reforms did not produce the expected outcomes. The flow of the preference votes in the 1999 and 2001 elections was toward extremist, not moderate, parties, and the new Fijian party that won the 2001 elections refused to grant the Indian party its share of the seats in cabinet. According to Fraenkel, Fiji's experience questions the overemphasis in recent years on electoral engineering, which assumes that political problems can be solved simply by changing institutions. Even though some form of power sharing is required in Fiji, he argued, this should be based on informal pacts between elites of the two communities, taking their core interests into account. Fraenkel concluded that although it is important to get institutions right, it should not be at the expense of politics.

Ralph Premdas presented the findings on Trinidad and Tobago. There are two main ethnic groups: Afro-Creoles, who make up about 38 per cent of the population and arrived either as slaves or liberated Africans in the eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century; and Indians, who make up about 39 per cent of the population and arrived as indentured labourers largely in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century to work on the sugar plantations abandoned by Afro-Creoles after the abolition of slavery. Unlike in Fiji, Latvia or Belgium, there is a sizeable third group, a "mixed group population" (18 per cent), which holds the balance in

Trinidad and Tobago. There is an ethnic division of labour, with Afro-Creoles found mainly in the bureaucracy, professions and oil industries, and Indians in the sugar sector and business. Creole is the lingua franca, and about half of the Indians and most Afro-Creoles are Christians. There is a high level of fluidity and intergroup interaction in the public arena, with all groups sharing a common cultural bond. However, ethnic self-selectivity tends to inform settlement patterns, and groups tend to retain some residues of their original ethnic identities, which are perceived to be larger than they are in reality.

Because of the long rule of the Afro-Creole-led party, Afro-Creoles are overrepresented in the public service (42 per cent Afro-Creole: 34 per cent Indians), especially at the senior levels where, in conjunction with the mixed group, they account for more than 70 per cent of the positions. Seventy-two per cent of the defence force and 74 per cent of the police force are Afro-Creoles. The 10 parliaments between 1961 and 2002 comprised 56 per cent Afro-Creoles and 36 per cent Indians. Only one out of five prime ministers has been Indian. Between 1961 and 1991, in cabinets ranging from 17 to 22 members, there were between two and five Indians. In 1972, Indians accounted for only 11 per cent of the cabinet. The situation was reversed when an Indian became prime minister in 1995: Indians occupied 72 per cent of government posts, and only six ministers were Afro-Creoles. When an Afro-Creole regained power in 2001, Indian representation was reduced to two, and the Afro-Creole share jumped to 63 per cent.

The next session on bipolarity paired Latvia and Belgium. In Latvia, ethnic Latvians are 58 per cent of the population and Russians 29 per cent. Minorities, who mostly speak Russian, constitute 42 per cent of the population. As Artis Pabriks recounted in his presentation, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Latvia had a unipolar ethnic structure despite the pressures it faced from its more powerful German and Russian neighbours. Seventy-six per cent of the population was ethnic Latvian in 1920. Because of this unipolarity, it was relatively easy to govern Latvia as a nation-state, following its independence in 1918. This unipolar ethnic structure was transformed into a bipolar one under Soviet rule, as many Slavs migrated into Latvia. By 1989, the population share of ethnic Latvians had dropped to 52 per cent, and that of the Russian population had risen to about 35 per cent. The Russian

minority became hegemonic in an ethnically bipolar setting. A process of intense Russification took place, which affected the Latvian language and the structure of power and access in the public sector. At independence in 1991, the new Latvian leaders sought to convert the state to its prewar unipolar status through citizenship laws that required Soviet-era residents to apply for citizenship and pass Latvian language tests. By 2003, Latvians were 75 per cent of the citizens and Russians 17.9 per cent. Even though Latvia is moving in a unipolar direction as far as governance of its public sector is concerned, the ethnic structure itself is still bipolar. Pabriks rejected the idea of building a state on the principles of two communities because of the asymmetrical relations between Russians and Latvians. His preference is for a Latvian state that is grounded on a single community of liberal individual and democratic rights. He observed that there are no explicitly ethnic parties, even though that is the way citizens tend to vote; and the NGO sector is fairly mixed. Ethnic Latvians currently dominate Latvia's public sector. Even though minorities constitute 42 per cent of the population, they account for only 20 per cent of parliamentarians and are unrepresented in the cabinet, since minority parties have not been part of the governing coalitions. Ninety-two per cent of employees in the institutions surveyed are ethnic Latvians. However, minorities are better represented in the security ministries.

Kris Deschouwer presented the findings on Belgium. The Flemish majority was disadvantaged in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when French was the official language of communication. With a small majority of the population speaking only Flemish (Dutch), language gradually became a major political issue. Despite the fact that this conflict never became violent, it has been at the centre of many fierce debates and governmental instability. The country is divided into four linguistic territories: the Flemish-speaking region, or Flanders; the francophone region of Wallonia, which has a small German-speaking population in the east (recognized as a German-speaking territory); and Brussels, which was originally Flemish, but is now predominantly French and administered as a bilingual region. Today Flanders is the richer and more dynamic of the two regions. Consociational democracy has been used to contain conflict between the two communities. A large degree of autonomy is granted the contending groups, and issues of common interest are decided by consensus. Since 1978, national Belgian political parties

have ceased to exist as all parties are now regional. Belgium has made concerted efforts to create a public sector that strictly reflects the ethnic character of its population. Use of a proportional representation system has ensured that the parliament reflects the population shares of the two groups. However, both groups have the same number of ministers at the cabinet level despite the higher population of the Flemish, who are only compensated at the junior minister level where they enjoy a few extra positions. Decisions are always arrived at by consensus rather than voting. In the civil service, strict parity is enforced at the level of director and above. Below the post of director, the distribution reflects the relative population shares of the two groups.

### Discussion

One set of comments in the session on Fiji and Trinidad addressed issues of indigeneity, migration and the development of an ethnic division of labour. It was suggested that struggles based on indigeneity always have citizenship undertones. For example, even though ethnic Fijians do not articulate their grievances in terms of citizenship, the fact that they control the land and lay claims to leadership means that Indians have a secondary status as citizens. One participant describes it as a “settler-native” problem of the type that has affected ethnic relations in Southern Africa. In the South African context, however, it was argued that whites and Indians have been able to establish their legitimacy and rights to full citizenship, including access to land, by participating in the anti-apartheid struggles. The question was thus raised about the claims Indians are able to make in Fiji to counter the culture of indigeneity and enjoy full citizenship rights. The point was also made that public sector inequalities in both countries are relatively small when compared with other countries, and yet they have generated large political problems. It was stated that privileged minority groups sometimes have alternative ways of influencing the public sector even when they are not directly represented; and that many of the inequalities in the public sector can only be understood if the private sector is also brought into the picture. Inequalities may be a result of pre-established patterns of professional specialization. In addition, the discussant, Khoo Boo Teik, stated that consideration of the concept of governance should go beyond the issue of who is included in the public sector or the economy, and address the way different regimes of governance affect development policies. Questions were raised about why Fiji has avoided large-scale ethnic violence even when there are no cross-cutting issues

that bind the two communities together. It was postulated that the strategy of outmigration by Indians, many of whom have not stayed to fight discrimination, may account for the less violent outcome.

A second set of comments focused on electoral systems for promoting moderation. The view that electoral engineering cannot be used to stabilize divided societies was challenged. One participant argued that if the situation is intractable, it may very well be that electoral rules of any type may not be effective, but insisted that there is a need to recognize that first-past-the-post (FPTP) rules may reinforce divisions. Another contributor stated that the alternative vote did lead to moderation in campaigning in Fiji by encouraging parties to enter into forms of pre-election collaboration. This led to talk about coalitions and moderation, even if it was not always enough to defeat extremist parties. The point was stressed that under FPTP rules, if two communities confront each other, each sees in victory the total control of the government.

Fraenkel responded that Fijians object to the idea of an Indo-Fijian as prime minister, while Indians see a great deal of inequality, especially as they had attained some measure of parity in many public sector institutions before the 1987 coup. About 80,000 Indo-Fijians—approximately 20 per cent of the Indian population—have left since the coup. He believes this demographic change is likely to impact future politics, by altering the “equi-bipolar” character of the state, especially when coupled with the high birth rates of the Fijian population. The ethnic gap has widened in the civil service and cabinet. In addition, even though Fiji does not have cross-cutting cleavages, politics and everyday life are not always dictated by ethnicity. This may explain the low incidence of ethnic communal violence. He concluded that even though the FPTP electoral rule is a poor instrument for divided societies, it is not responsible for the ethnic divisions in Fiji. The deliberations that led to the adoption of the 1997 constitution attributed too much importance to the electoral system in creating ethnic divisions. The constitutional designers assumed that a change in the electoral system would resolve these problems; when this did not happen, another majoritarian system, the alternative vote was adopted. However, the 10 per cent rule in cabinet formation has ensured that small parties will be punished, and voters will be encouraged to support single homogeneous parties. It has reinforced ethnic polarity by squeezing small parties and weakening

intra-ethnic divisions. The Fiji Labour party got 66 per cent of the Indian vote in 1999; in the 2001 elections it got 75 per cent. The alternative Indian party is now largely defunct.

The discussion in the session on Belgium and Latvia also focused on institutional designs for expressing and managing identities in divided societies. The discussant, Wolf Linder, raised two substantive points in comparing the centralized majoritarian state system of Latvia with the federalist and consociational state of Belgium. He highlighted two contrasting notions of the state and of democracy. The first is the cultural nation, which posits that the identity of the state is based on the identities of people of the same language, culture and history. If minorities want citizenship, they must speak the language and practice the culture of the majority. In contrast, the political nation does not privilege any one language, culture or history. It can sustain multiple languages, cultures and histories. There are also two notions of democracy: majoritarian democracy, which disadvantages minorities; and consociation. By these categories, he believes, Belgium is a political and consociational nation, and Latvia is a cultural nation and majoritarian democracy. Despite the differences in Belgium, he does not believe the two communities would opt for separation because of joint interests in a number of issues, including social security and the problematic status of Brussels. He questioned Pabriks' preference for a unipolar Latvian state because, in the long run, Latvia as a member of the European Union would be more prosperous than Russia, the Russian population in Latvia would clearly prefer Latvia to Russia, and their claims to equal treatment would enjoy more legitimacy than at present.

These views set the stage for further elaborations and comments from the floor. First, there were concerns about how the federal state is financed in Belgium, and whether the two communities accept the principle of equalization. Questions were raised about the seeming assimilationist principles that lie behind notions of unipolarity in Latvia, and the need to develop core values around issues that are not culturally coded, such as democracy. It was argued that minorities will not give up their identities if the core value is defined as assimilationist core values of the majority. One commentator did not find any conflict between individual rights and group rights. He argued that even though most of the countries in the project are liberal democracies, individuals still aggregate their interests

along group lines. The possibility of changing identities in the context of EU integration was also raised. For instance, it was hypothesized that Latvian Russians may develop different aspirations from Russians in Russia in the long run; that the EU may have offered Belgium and Latvia an opportunity to weaken the rigidity associated with bipolarity; and that communities in both countries now have an additional layer of identity to their ethnic identity.

In his closing remarks, Pabriks responded that culture is important in defining a nation and a state. He argued that the reason it seems less important in Western democracies today is because the cultural issue has been settled with the creation of nation-states. He believes the Latvian state still needs to create its cultural identity. He also stated that the focus on liberal individualism is not the same as assimilation. Russians are not being asked to abandon their Russian identity but to add an additional one—a Latvian identity. He defended the policy of unipolarity as a core value for ethnic Latvians and stated that EU provisions will make it difficult for Latvia to discriminate against minorities, stressing that Latvia may well end up having more collective rights for minorities than the average EU state. He concluded on the need to increase the teaching of Latvian in Russian schools in order to promote more integration and underlined the significance of geopolitical factors in discussing ethnic relations in Latvia.

In his response, Deschouwer stated that culture is still central to the definition of the state in Belgium. Regions, and especially the northern region of Flanders, are cultural nations. The name Flanders refers to the language, which is Flemish. A Francophone Belgian who lives in Flanders will enjoy the same rights but will be seen as a stranger. Deschouwer stressed that the contradictory position of Brussels is the reason there have not been two separate states. Belgium is a double federation: the Flemish wanted communities and the Francophones wanted regions. The compromise was to have both, and in order to have both there has to be a Belgium. Separation will lead to decisions on what to do with Brussels: the Flemish would want it to be part of Flanders and the Francophones might want it as a separate state, which the Flemish would oppose. Thus, staying together is easier than splitting up. He also commented on the issue of financing the federation, which has been an issue of contention. Belgium operates an equalization policy, that is, all the regions are treated equally. Even though each region is free to spend its

money the way it likes, the money is distributed from a central pool. Therefore, the Flemish, with more people, a more affluent economy and higher incomes, feel they are subsidizing the French. This is also the case with social security: those with high incomes pay for those with less. He concluded that this is a source of frustration for the Flemish.

### **Tripolar Ethnic Settings: Bosnia, Switzerland, Nigeria and Malaysia**

Problems associated with bipolarity exist in tripolar settings: when ethnicity is politicized, differences may impact the system, constraining the formation of cross-ethnic alliances. In addition, members of two groups may collaborate against members of the third group, which may assume the status of a permanent opposition. Institutions may be needed to weaken polarity. Consociational institutions promoted stability in Switzerland and have helped to consolidate the peace in war-torn Bosnia. Nigeria and Malaysia have also been inching toward some form of consociational rule to manage their deeply divided societies.

Florian Bieber presented the findings on Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is a product of the civil wars that dismantled the Yugoslav state in the early 1990s. According to estimates, the postwar Bosniak population is 44 per cent, Serb 34 per cent and Croat 16 per cent. The war produced about 2.3 million refugees and internally displaced persons, most of whom were victims of the drive to create ethnically homogenous regions. Bieber reported that the cleavages are less sharp than in other societies as all three groups share a common language and similar traditions and cultures. However, Serbs are members of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Croats the Catholic Church and Bosniaks are Muslims. The Dayton peace accord that ended the war produced one of the most institutionally engineered countries in the world. The country is currently run by multiple power-sharing arrangements. At the state level, power is shared equally between the three communities. In addition to the state system, there are two entities: a Federation that is jointly governed by Croats and Bosniaks; and a Serb Republic, which is largely governed by Serbs. There is also a high representative, who oversees aspects of the Dayton accord. Most powers are delegated to the entities, and much of the remaining power is vested in the high representative. There has been, however, a trend toward strengthening of the

central institutions. Each community is equally represented in the presidency and wields a veto power. Not only is the ethnicity of the members of the presidency prescribed—one Croat, one Serb and one Bosniak—but members are also elected by the two entities separately. This has created the rather unusual situation in which Serbs in the Federation and Croats and Bosniaks in the Serb Republic are not “represented” in the presidency.

Bieber reported that two-thirds of the ministers at the state level have to be from the Federation and one-third from the Serb Republic. The Federation government has eight Bosniak ministers, five Croat ministers and three Serb ministers. In the Serb Republic, Serbs have eight ministers, Bosniaks five and Croats three. The composition of the first parliament reflected the relative population shares of the three groups. And the composition of the civil service in the two entities reflects the relative population shares of the three groups. Bieber argued that the consociational reforms have four major drawbacks. First, they have empowered extremist parties rather than cross-cutting parties. Second, the high representative wields supreme powers and can dismiss elected representatives without advancing any reason, thus distorting the power-sharing mechanism and the element of seeking consensus. Third, in a country where ethnicity was not a salient issue in social relations during communist rule, the territorializing of ethnicity and governance has overinstitutionalized ethnicity. This has blocked the development of cross-cutting forms of associational life. Fourth, the old elite that was responsible for the war has been entrenched by the reforms. They now cooperate very well because they compete for separate electorates in determining who should govern.

Wolf Linder and Isabelle Steffen presented the findings on Switzerland. Germans comprise about 70 per cent, French 22 per cent, Italians 7 per cent and Romansch less than 1 per cent of the population. The German group is itself internally fragmented into various dialects and traditions. Most of the cantons have a majority ethnic group. Linder and Steffen reported that religion and class, which cut across ethnic groups, were historically the main cleavages that defined conflicts. The 1848 constitution produced a federal state of 25 cantons with different historical, religious and cultural backgrounds. Importantly, the cleavages in these cantons

are in the main cross-cutting rather than reinforcing. For instance, French and Germans could be Protestant or Catholic, and, apart from the Jura area that was later carved out of the Bern canton, share similar socio-economic profiles. The Swiss power-sharing institutions are different from those in Belgium and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Swiss political parties are national, rather than ethnic. Today the four biggest parties that constitute the consociation win votes and seats in all linguistic parts of the country. The success of the Swiss model is due to the integration of structural minorities in the public sector; the large degree of autonomy enjoyed by the cantons, which have a strong say in federal legislation; the principle of direct democracy, which can be used by small groups to block the legislative process; and the high national economic achievement and relative socioeconomic equality between groups and cantons. The smaller groups, French and Italian, are slightly overrepresented in the Federal Council and the Federal Court. The German share of these two institutions is 57 per cent, that of the French 30 per cent and 29 per cent respectively, and Italian 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. The presidency rotates annually among seven members, at least two of whom must be French and one Italian. Representation in the National Council (lower house of parliament) and Council of States (senate) reflects population shares. There is also proportional representation in the federal administration, including the top management and expert committees. Germans account for 72 per cent of all personnel in the federal civil service, French 21 per cent, and Italians 7 per cent. Linder and Steffen pointed out that the principles that guide the provision of public goods and services are largely independent of the strategies for regulating ethnic cleavages. Benefits are strongly tied to contributions. The federal government can only intervene in cantonal affairs if cantons are unable to find a solution. The substantial autonomy enjoyed by cantons leads to wide variations in policies.

In the session that compared Nigeria and Malaysia, Abdul Raufu Mustapha presented the research findings on Nigeria, whose three main ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani (30 per cent of the population), the Yoruba (20 per cent) and Igbo (17 per cent). More than 340 other groups account for 33 per cent of the population. Each of the main groups is dominant in the three regions that governed the country in the early period of independence. Ethnicity correlated with patterns of party formation and voting behaviour before the stringent rules on party registration and government

formation were introduced. The pre-independence constitutional settlement gave the north 50 per cent of the seats in parliament. This built-in northern majority was reflected in the governance regime between 1959 and 1966. There was a slight change in the composition of the military cabinets between 1967 and 1979, following the creation of states and efforts at ethnic balance. Minorities enjoyed visibility in government during this period. However, a distinctly northern majority was reasserted in the Second Republic cabinet of 1979–1983. In quantitative terms, the Hausa-Fulani enjoyed dominance in the early 1960s and early 1980s; northern and southern minorities improved their share of government after 1967; and apart from the period of 1979–1983, the Yoruba have also been well represented in government. The only group that is underrepresented in the cabinet is the Igbo, which waged a secessionist war between 1966 and 1970. Today the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo and minority group shares of cabinet posts are highly proportional.

Since the civil war of 1967–1970, there have been concerted efforts to develop an inclusive and stable public sector through various schemes. The first has been the dissolution of the three colonially inherited federal regions into a decentralized polity that now contains 36 states and 775 local governments. The second has involved use of electoral rules—a minimum percentage of votes across the states—to produce governments that enjoy broadly national and majority support. The third strategy is use of “federal character” or affirmative action policies to constitute the civil service and educational institutions. This has come to include the demand for the presidency to rotate among the six geopolitical zones; and appointment of at least one federal minister from each of the 36 states. Key offices, such as the president of the Senate and speaker of the House of Representatives, have also been affected by the zoning principle. These reforms have radically transformed Nigeria’s public sector, especially at the cabinet level where there is now a high degree of balance. However, ethnic mobilization and communal violence remain real problems.

Khoo Boo Teik discussed the research findings on Malaysia where Malays are 64 per cent of the population, Chinese 27 per cent and Indians 9 per cent. Official classification adopts a bipolar category that divides the population into “bumiputera” or indigenous people, and non-bumiputera or non-indigenous people. During colonial rule, Malays were predominantly rural

and produced food crops; Chinese were urban and dominated labour in the tin mines and small enterprises; and Indians were deployed as labourers in the rubber estates. At independence, there were wide gaps in incomes, asset holdings and professional status between the three groups. This division of labour affected ethnic relations, as Malays, who were predominantly rural, complained of relative economic backwardness. In contrast, immigrant Chinese and Indians exploited the opportunities in the urban sector and were successful in commerce, education and the professions.

Khoo reported that political parties are openly ethnic in membership, interests and organization. A consociational pact unites the parties of the three main groups. Parliamentary seats are allocated according to the ethnic composition of the electorate, the ethnic profiles of constituencies and the relative strengths of the component parties in the alliance. The New Economic Policy adopted after the 1969 race riots aimed to eradicate poverty and ethnic inequalities. The Malay component of the governing pact became dominant as Malays monopolized policy making in the key ministries of finance and trade. The redistributive programme, which favoured the Malays, incorporated other objectives: high capacities for policy making and other modes of governance associated with East Asia's developmental states. The data suggest that the share of the combined Chinese and Indian share of cabinet posts declined between 1973 and 2003. Non-bumiputera are also underrepresented in parliament. However, in aggregate terms the combined Chinese and Indian share of civil service posts (30 per cent) closely mirrors their population share (36 per cent). The Malay account for 85 per cent of the administrative and diplomatic service, 68 per cent of the professional service, and 78 per cent of the support service. Khoo concluded that even though some targets have been achieved, the redistributive policy has reinforced the perception that the public sector, which is seen as inefficient, is for the Malays and the efficient private sector is for the Chinese.

### Discussion

Kris Deschouwer, discussant for the presentations on Switzerland and Bosnia-Herzegovina, underlined the problems of comparing the two countries since they have different histories, levels of development, and relations with neighbours and the international community. The international community is much stronger in Bosnia, whereas the Swiss not only adopt a

neutral stand in international affairs but are also relatively inward-looking, especially in their relations with the European Union. Furthermore, institution building has been top-down in Bosnia and bottom-up in Switzerland; and rules for cleavage management are rigidly formal in Bosnia and to some extent informal in Switzerland. He observed that the mixture of formality and informality provides more scope for flexibility in Switzerland. Swiss institutions have been developed over a long period, which has allowed for a period of healing of conflicts and cooling of passions, whereas Bosnian institutions are recent. Because of the long period of institutional development in Switzerland, it would seem that institution building is not a deliberate effort and that elites have internalized the rules, which is not the case in Bosnia, where politicians always have to be made aware of the rules. Additional comments from participants focused on redistributive policies and the status of foreigners in Switzerland, who constitute about a fifth of the population.

Linder replied that the Swiss system combines formal and informal rules. Federalism is formal, proportional representation is both formal and informal, and power sharing is mainly informal, although with some formal aspects. He stated that although informality is good, it is not free of costs. For example, for 10 years, two out of the seven federal council members were women. There were hopes that the number would increase to three in 2004, but the elections, in which the distribution of seats among the four governing parties was changed, resulted in only one woman representative. This happened because there is no written rule on proportionality. He argued that inequalities are a fact of life in federations. Efforts by the Swiss government to equalize are not enough to iron out the inequalities among the cantons; federalism imposes a limit to what can be done. He also stated that international intervention can aggravate ethnic conflicts and that federalism can prolong ethnic cleavages even when it helps to manage conflicts. He underscored the point that institutions in Switzerland were never built systematically; and that if today, politicians rarely take institutions lightly, it is because there is an equilibrium where no one can win by changing the rules. He also highlighted another problem in institutional development, which is its tendency to become a one-way street. Once federalism is granted, it cannot be taken back because the federal route will have to be followed for any amendments and will be blocked by potential losers.

Bieber's reply addressed three issues. First, he stated that although the international intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina was important in ending the war, the problem now is how to end the intervention. He did not believe there would be another implosion in Bosnia because ethnic relations have been territorialized, and settlements that have been reached favour the nationalist parties. There is also the restraining role of the EU and the realization that kin groups do not always get along under the same roof. For instance, it has been observed that Croats in Croatia prefer Serbs to Bosnian Croats. He affirmed that the main problem in Bosnia is that many people feel cheated by the new boundaries, which have dispossessed them of properties and rights, and turned them into minorities. He stressed that formal rules are required in divided societies such as Bosnia because agreements would not have been met when there was little trust between the actors. The problem is that the formal rules are rigid; a simple rule of including all parties in government would have been enough instead of one that stipulates the number of positions to be filled by all groups. This should have been left to politicians to sort out. He concluded that federal redistributive policies do not exist in Bosnia because of the poverty of the federal centre. Even the entities do not redistribute.

The chair for the session on Nigeria and Malaysia, Ukoha Ukiwo, highlighted the marked differences in outcomes between the two countries in terms of the way they have managed their inequalities and differences. He observed that Malaysia, which supports ethnic parties and overt discrimination in favour of one group, has been more successful in lifting people out of poverty and preventing violent conflict than Nigeria, which has tried to avoid ethnic discrimination and formation of ethnic parties. Participants observed that the acceptance of minority status by Chinese and Indians, and discrimination in Malaysia, may be linked to the non-indigenous character of the two groups, the benefits they enjoyed under the New Economic Policy (NEP) that limited foreign ownership of the economy and raised the Chinese and Indian shares to 40 per cent, high growth rates and the out-migration of Chinese. Khoo pointed out that high growth allowed the Chinese to rely on themselves, support the targets and lessen their grievances. In addition, the decision to bring Sarawak and Sabah (non-Malay) into the federation counterbalanced the Chinese threat to the population of Malay. Singapore's secession from the federation and the decision of Sarawak and Sabah to stay changed

the demographic character in the country in favour of bumiputera and weakened what would have been a Fiji type of equi-bipolarity. Sarawak and Sabah perceive themselves as equal to Malay—which has 11 states—and see the federation as three entities, not 13 states. The anti-poverty thrust of the NEP was also very important. There was a very large land resettlement programme, which, instead of redistributing land, opened up new land for many landless rural Malay peasants. Furthermore, under the export-oriented industrialization strategy, many rural Malays, particularly young women, were proletarianized. In many ways it solved the problems of rural unemployment and rural poverty. All of this was due to the superior state capacity of Malaysia. When the post-1997 financial crisis was ripping multiethnic societies in Southeast Asia apart, Malaysia was able to avoid an implosion.

Participants also addressed the thorny issue of Nigerian federalism, the negative effects of the Biafra war of secession, the military institution and privatization. It was pointed out that unlike in Malaysia, no ethnic group could lay claims to a primary, indigenous status in Nigeria. However, indigeneity emerges at the state level when citizenship is defined. An individual is a member of a state to which his or her grandparents were born. Although the country is changing from ethnic federalism, it has not been able to modify the citizenship rules in a way that would encourage full integration. It still uses indigeneity to build barriers despite the large-scale migration across the country. Mustapha highlighted two fundamental changes in Nigerian federalism: the old regions have lost their powers, leading to a more powerful centre; and the creation of states has privileged state territoriality over regionalism and, to some extent, ethnicity. In his opinion, indigeneity has not been reformed because some parts of the country feel it would reinforce the current inequalities: qualified southerners would migrate to the north and dominate the public sphere there. He also stated that the army was the first institution to experience quotas in its recruitment policies. However, Igbos have been disadvantaged in the army because of the civil war and the way promotions are made: up to the level of a colonel, promotion is based on merit; promotion above the level of colonel requires recommendations within the officer corps, which has very few Igbos. He reported that privatization is believed to favour the south, especially the Yoruba. Some states raise funds to buy state property on behalf of their indigenes in the hope of transferring these assets to their citizens in the future.

He concluded that despite the many problems, Nigeria's reforms have achieved a lot in terms of integration, citing the national youth service corps as an example.

### **Concentrated Multipolar Ethnic Settings: Ghana, Kenya and India**

Ghana, Kenya and India were discussed as concentrated multipolar ethnic societies. Even though these are societies with numerous ethnic groups, some of the groups are large enough to form selective coalitions in struggles for access to the public sector. This raises the possibility of exclusion or insufficient access for groups that are not part of a winning coalition. In the first type of concentrated multipolar settings, one group constitutes about half of the population. This may encourage smaller groups to form coalitions in order to contain the larger group, which may also form selective coalitions. If the dominant group fragments, political behaviour may resemble fragmented multiethnic settings in which ethnicity loses its potency in the public sector. The second type involves cases in which four or five of the numerous groups are relatively equal in size and constitute an overwhelming majority of the population. Elites of each group may feel they can govern by constructing selective coalitions. Electoral rules of FPTP in a presidential system of government may reinforce such choices. The third type is one in which the ethno-linguistic cleavage is interlinked with other powerful cleavages, such as caste and religion, which may be less fragmented than the ethno-linguistic divide. If these cleavages are cross-cutting rather than reinforcing, they may encourage centripetal forms of cooperation even when some cleavage-based parties are empowered. Consolidated multipolar ethnic settings can thus produce both positive and negative outcomes. They may be relatively benign, as in unipolar and fragmented multipolar settings, or malignant, as in politicized bipolar and tripolar settings.

Richard Asante presented the findings of the Ghana study. Ghana is a multiethnic society in which the Akan account for 49 per cent of the population, and three other large groups—Mole Dagbani, Ewe and Ga Adangbe—16.5 per cent, 12.7 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. This structure may encourage adversarial and ethnically selective coalition politics, as happened during the decolonization period and first few years of independence when the ruling party, Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, was pitted against a coalition

of ethnic-based parties representing Ashanti (a subgroup of the Akan), Ewe and northern interests. However, each one of the four large groups is internally fragmented. This later helped to produce an outcome that has made Ghana resemble a highly fragmented country. The largest fragmentation is among the Akan, who are divided into 20 subgroups. The Akan have not behaved as a cohesive political unit and cross-ethnic coalitions have been the norm.

Asante reported ethnic polarization in two areas: the Ewe-Ashanti divide, and the north-south divide. The Ewe and Ashanti are the two groups that have been the least flexible in their voting behaviour. These two groups score highly in the education index and have historically vied for dominance of the public sector. However, their combined strength is only about 27 per cent of the population. The Ashanti, who are 14.8 per cent of the population, have been unable to mobilize the rest of the Akan subgroups to follow their choices in seeking to govern the public sector. Therefore, even though the Ashanti-Ewe rivalry may be potent, it does not seem threatening to the body politic. The north-south divide assumes religious and material dimensions. The north, which is largely Muslim, is resource-poor and lags behind the south in most social and economic indicators. The north itself is fragmented and experiences serious communal conflicts, in which the central state has played the role of a neutral arbiter. Even though the Akan dominate the public sector, there is sufficient representation of the other three largest groups, and public policy is supportive of ethno-regional balance. The current dominant parties are not ethnic and voters' preferences have not systematically been ethnic.

Karuti Kanyinga presented the Kenya findings. In Kenya, there is relative equality in the population shares of the five major groups. The largest group, the Kikuyu, is only 21 per cent of the population, and the population shares of four others (Luhya, Kalenjin, Luo and Kamba) range from 11 per cent to 14 per cent. These five groups account for about 70 per cent of the population. Each of the five major groups has a majority presence in at least one of the eight regions of the country. Given the relative equality of the top five groups, each group feels it stands a chance to form a government if it can create a winning ethnic coalition. Each has tried to outbid the others, rendering difficult the formation of broad and lasting coalitions that will involve the participation of most of the large groups. Except for the 2002 elections, the big groups have not bothered to invest in

broad-based coalitions. Each group has formed its own party, expecting to bargain only after election results are known. The existing FPTP rule allows parties to win the presidency with a simple plurality of the votes if they are also able to muster 25 per cent of the votes in at least five of the eight regions. If none of the candidates gets 25 per cent in at least five provinces, the rule requires a second ballot round between the first two candidates with the most votes. Accordingly, most political elites have preferred to go it alone by relying on their ethnic base on the understanding that they would force a run-off and would at that stage seek alliances. However, in 1992 and 1997 the Kenya African National Union (KANU) had the advantage of incumbency and had access to patronage resources to construct a large coalition that helped it to meet the 25 per cent rule on regional distribution. The plurality rule ensured that KANU could govern even though it secured only 36 per cent and 40 per cent respectively of the votes in those two elections.

Despite the relatively equal population proportion of the five groups, only the Kikuyu and Kalenjin have been able to construct winning coalitions. When Jomo Kenyatta was in power (1963–1978), the Kikuyu in alliance with the Meru and Emba dominated the public sector; and when Daniel Arap Moi ruled from 1978 to 2002, the Kalenjin (fourth-largest group) became dominant. Between 1963 and 1978, the Kikuyu accounted for an average of 29 per cent of cabinet posts even though they were only 21 per cent of the population. This unequal and fluctuating distribution pattern is also observable in the civil service. During the Kenyatta period, 31 per cent of permanent secretaries were Kikuyu, and 6 per cent were Kalenjin. Of the remaining three major groups, the Luo had a share of 12 per cent, the Luhya 9 per cent and the Kamba 13 per cent. The Kalenjin assumed dominance under Moi, accounting for 21.6 per cent of permanent secretaries. Their share was 30 per cent during multiparty rule (1994–2001). The share of the Kikuyu dropped to 20 per cent during Moi's presidency. Between 1994 and 2001, the Kikuyu share was only 10 per cent. Data for ambassadorial postings also indicate similar trends, with the Kikuyu and Kalenjin assuming dominance depending on who the president was.

Yusuf Bangura summarized the India paper in the session that examined fragmented multipolar ethnic settings since the author, Niraja Gopal Jayal, was unable to attend the conference. India has more than 1,600

language groups, with the largest, Hindi, constituting about 40 per cent of the population. Most of the language groups are divided by a hierarchical caste system, with the Scheduled Castes occupying the lowest stratum. Eight per cent of the population is characterized as tribal, and there are about six major religions, with Hinduism accounting for 82 per cent of the population. These cleavages are in the main cross-cutting rather than reinforcing. Pan-Indian parties consistently captured more than 60 per cent of the popular vote between 1952 and 1991. However, the share of the popular vote going to the ethnic parties has risen to about 35 per cent in recent years. Federalism has helped to contain conflicts based on ethno-linguistic differences. However, the politicization of two cleavages—caste and religion—has affected the fragmented character of India's social structure. The discourse on caste has assumed a bipolar character—Forward Castes versus Backward/Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. The religious cleavage has also assumed a bipolar form—Hindu versus Muslims (who make up 12.12 per cent of the population)—with Hindu revivalist parties threatening to convert India into a unipolar society. There is relative balance in the linguistic/regional composition of the parliament, cabinet and civil service. Upper caste Hindus however, dominate the public sector, even though the redistributive policy that guarantees parliamentary seats and places in the civil service to lower castes has dented this dominance. More than four-fifths of the employees at the lower end of the bureaucracy are still of lower caste status. Muslims are poorly represented in parliament, but, until the formation of governments led by Hindu parties, their representation in the cabinet fairly reflected their population share. Reservation policies have not improved the socioeconomic status and public influence of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

## Discussion

Participants noted the different ways ethnicity impacts politics and the public sector in the various countries. Although at independence, minorities championed federalism in all countries, winning parties in Ghana and Kenya stifled it in the name of national unity. However, the banning of ethnic parties seems to have had a more positive effect in Ghana than in Kenya. Some participants suggested that differences in the quality of leadership in the two countries may have accounted for the different outcomes. It was noted that federalism is not a strong force any more, although decentralization is. It was also pointed out that despite

its intense ethnic rivalry and inequality in its public sector, Kenya avoided the series of military coups experienced in Ghana in the 1960s and 1970s. Participants also addressed the fragile nature of Kenya's current coalition and seeming reluctance by governing elites to recognize the volatility of strategies based on ethnic dominance and the need to make agreements stick.

Richard Asante affirmed that all governments in Ghana have been sensitive to ethnicity, including those formed by military regimes. Nation building has been central to the success of taming ethnicity in Ghana, and was especially so during the Nkrumah era. He reported that the new conservative party is less ethnic in its focus than its predecessor in the 1950s and 1960s. Kanyinga said that the weakness of civil society is at the centre of explanations for why Kenyan elites renege on commitments. Opposition parties were not interested in correcting historical problems, but in getting the ruling party out of power. Indeed, there was much corruption in the selection of delegates to the constitutional conference. As a result, sections of the new ruling coalition feel they can return to the old game of ethnic selectivity. Kanyinga believed, however, that this will further polarize Kenya as the other four groups are threatening to opt out of the alliance and campaign against what is increasingly perceived as a Kikuyu-dominated government.

### **Ethnically Fragmented Settings: United Republic of Tanzania and Papua New Guinea**

The seventh session examined cases of high levels of ethnic fragmentation. In such societies, no group is large enough to organize selective coalitions for hegemony under democratic conditions. Mainstream parties are likely to be multiethnic. It is even possible for a single party to appeal across the ethnic divides and win a majority of the votes. Ethnic loyalties and conflicts may instead be localized, implying that the central government may be able to assume a neutral status as mediator.

Ray Anere presented the case study of Papua New Guinea, which is the most ethnically fragmented country in the world. Its population of five million is divided into 826 ethno-linguistic groups. The relative population share of the largest group is 1.6 per cent, the second largest is 1.1 per cent and the third largest is 0.86 per

cent. The population share of the three largest groups is thus less than 4 per cent of the population. This implies that no one group is large enough to dominate the public sector. Political parties that compete for public offices are multiethnic and broad-based. There is relative balance in the "representation" of ethnic groups in parliament, political parties, the cabinet and the civil service. However, the party system is weakly institutionalized, individuals enjoy more importance than parties in electoral politics, and there is some socioeconomic inequality between regions and provinces, implying that some ethnic groups are better endowed than others. Even though there is no ethnic domination in the public sector, competition for access to the public sector is highly ethnic as voters support clansmen and women rather than parties. However, parties account for a larger share of parliamentarians than independent candidates. Much of the ethnic conflict is localized. There has been a high number of candidates (many of whom are independent), high turnover of governments, and local violence. The electoral system of FPTP and the parliamentary system of government in which members of Parliament can become ministers by switching sides may account for this outcome. Polarization has largely occurred in the region of Bougainville, whose ethnic groups believe they have different "racial" identities, customs and historical experiences from the rest of the country. None of the three "large" groups is in the current cabinet. And individuals from more affluent regions have not dominated parliament, the cabinet or the civil service. The composition of parliament reflects the population distribution in the regions and provinces. The cabinet, as well as heads of government or civil service departments also show much diversity. None of the three largest groups is represented in the current top layer of the civil service.

Julius Nyang'oro presented the findings on the United Republic of Tanzania, where the largest group, the Wasukuma, is only 13 per cent of the population; the second largest is 3.9 per cent; and the third largest is 3.6 per cent. Even the Wasukuma is a composite ethnic group made up of many sub-groups. There are about 120 ethnic groups in the country. The country has witnessed a high level of intermarriage and migration. Students from one region are sent to school in different regions, and administrators with a particular ethnic origin do not serve in their home regions. Unlike Papua New Guinea, the United Republic of Tanzania had a strong single party system at independence and a

nationalist ideology of egalitarianism that sought to raise the socioeconomic status of individuals irrespective of ethnic background. Ethnic politics was outlawed and Swahili was promoted as the national language. The ruling party had effective presence in all regions of the country. When multiparty politics were allowed in the 1990s, most parties were multiethnic, and fragmentation did not encourage proliferation of independent candidates. Most studies underscore the lack of potency of ethnic identity and behaviour in the United Republic of Tanzania. Political parties are multiethnic, and there has been relative ethnic/regional balance in the composition of the civil service, parliament and cabinet since independence. The largest and second largest groups are not represented at the top layer of the current civil service. It is rare for an ethnic group to have more than one member in the top cadre of the civil service and cabinet. Polarization has largely occurred on the small island of Zanzibar between Africans and Arabs (which Nyang'oro described as a political, not ethnic, conflict) and in conflicts between indigenes and Indians, as well as between nationals and foreigners in the privatization of public assets.

At the end of these presentations, the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative in Suriname, Max Ooft, briefed participants about the experience of Suriname, a multiethnic state in the Caribbean. Ooft reported that Suriname, with a population of 480,000, has four main ethnic groups. The largest (descendants of Indian indentured immigrants) constitutes 37 per cent of the population; the second largest (Creoles, who are a mixed group) accounts for 33 per cent of the population; the third largest (descendants of Indonesian indentured labour) accounts for 15 per cent of the population; and the fourth largest group (Maroons, an "unmixed" group of descendants of African slaves) accounts for 10 per cent of the population. Apart from these four groups, there are also an indigenous group of Amerindians accounting for 2–3 per cent of the population, as well as Chinese, Brazilians, Jews, Lebanese, Guyanese and Haitian immigrants. Groups tend to live separately and are divided into different religions: Hinduism, Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism) and Islam. Ooft stated that the interesting thing about Suriname is that even though there have been ethnic conflicts in the past and parties are organized along ethnic lines, since the military coup in 1990 and the transition to multiparty rule, parties have formed coalitions to govern the country. Although there is no formal pact on power sharing, most policies have to be

checked to ensure that no ethnic group or party in the four-party coalition feels discriminated against. The most excluded groups remain the Maroons and the indigenous peoples, both of which live in forested areas in the interior of the country.

## Discussion

The large number of ethnic groups reported for Papua New Guinea raised the question of whether the groups were clans or subunits of ethnic groups. It was also suggested that the lack of a nationalist movement in the country might be linked to the negative policies of the colonial power, Australia. The chair, Jon Fraenkel, informed the conference that there are important regional struggles in the country, the most significant being between highlanders and Papuans in Port Moresby, the capital. Ethnic groups in the highlands are composed of many small clans who do not see themselves as highlanders when they are in the highlands; the highlander identity becomes important only when they are in the capital.

Participants warned of the dangers of market-driven structural adjustment policies promoting inequalities and unravelling the United Republic of Tanzania's relatively benign ethnic relations. It was also suggested that the reason the United Republic of Tanzania has been stable was that pressures for social change during both decolonization and introduction of multiparty rule were very low in intensity. In this regard, it has been easy for a strong leader to mobilize the population under a single political party. Participants discussed the necessity of a systematic treatment of racial minorities (Indians and whites) and the problems of Zanzibar, whose ethnic differences with mainlanders may affect the long-term unity of the country.

One participant noted that parties in Suriname are both ethnic and ideological; each ethnic group has an ideological and ethnic party, and the coalition government has to manage these two tendencies. The point was further made that it is important to look at the traditions of intergroup relations prior to the design of institutions if policy makers are to understand why institutions work in some contexts and not in others.

In his closing remarks, Anere responded that although ethnic relations in Papua New Guinea can be described as clan-based, these are clans with different languages. He pointed out that the geographic terrain of dispersed

islands and mountains has made it difficult to aggregate choice or develop a nationalist movement. Nyang'oro replied to the specific comments on the United Republic of Tanzania, describing the Zanzibar crisis as one of incomplete democratization and state manipulation rather than ethnicity. It just happened, he affirmed, that those resisting on the Pemba island of Zanzibar have a different skin colour; the struggle has been more about electoral fairness and democratic rights. He concluded that the main problem in the United Republic of Tanzania is state corporatism, which has hindered the development of more democratic liberal forms of politics. With regard to the comments on Suriname, Ooft responded that the big ethnic parties are still the most important; the ideological parties, which are formed by young intellectuals, are still small, even if their influence is growing. He stressed the importance of leaders in Surinam who have devised catchy political slogans, such as: "brotherhood policy" (people of different cultures in Suriname share a country and should respect each other's cultures as brothers and sisters); and "flower garden policy" (we are all different flowers in the garden of Suriname, and together we make up a pleasant bouquet).

## Group Inequality and Development

Session eight was a lecture by Frances Stewart on group inequality and development. She highlighted the importance of dealing with horizontal or ethnic inequalities, which can affect well-being, economic growth and the full realization of the potential of excluded individuals, as well as exacerbating poverty and conflict. However, it is a mistake, she argued, to correlate cultural diversity with conflicts. Relatively homogenous countries are not free from conflicts, and many multicultural societies are free from violent conflict. She affirmed that cultural differences do not in themselves lead to conflict unless there are also major economic and political causes. Horizontal inequalities are likely to provoke conflict when they are durable, the group boundaries are impermeable, and when there are two or three big groups. Intragroup inequalities can both check and promote intergroup conflict. Intragroup differences are bound to be higher than intergroup inequalities since the former deal with the incomes of numerous individuals, whereas the latter are concerned with a few groups. Inequality of 3:1 is big for intergroup inequalities and small for intragroup inequalities. Wide

inequalities may force leaders to attempt to unify the group against outsiders; they can also encourage elite cooperation with members of other groups.

Stewart then developed a typology of inequality and conflict. The first represents cases in which a privileged group in mixed patterns of settlements dominates the political system. This may lead to revolt, but secession may be a difficult option. In such situations, she argued, affirmative action policies may be used to correct the inequalities. A second case involves situations where the underprivileged group in mixed settlements dominates the political system. This can lead to outcomes as varied as those in Fiji, Malaysia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. A third case is where a privileged group in segregated settlement patterns dominates the political system. The underprivileged may well want independence, the government may repress it or redistribute resources to poorer areas. A fourth situation is where the underprivileged, in segregated settlement patterns, dominates the political system. The privileged group may opt for independence because it may not want to pay the cost of redistribution.

She also examined measurement problems in the study of ethnic inequalities. She highlighted the problems of selecting the groups, finding the data and developing indicators. She believed country studies are likely to yield better results than cross-country work. She raised the question of aggregation of the various dimensions of inequality. All aggregation methods are arbitrary. If an aggregate index for cross-country comparison is developed, the separate indicators will need to be carefully examined. Another problem relates to descriptive evaluation. The goal, she believed, should be description rather than evaluation, but most of the indices that have been used to describe group differences involve some element of evaluation. Then there is the problem of how to measure inequality. There are a range of measurement techniques in the study of income inequality that are of varying quality; they should not be replicated in measuring horizontal inequalities. Variants in group performance or ratios can be used. Ratios work best when there are two groups, and the group distribution or ethnic structure is also important. This is something that is not captured by the fractionalization index. Stewart discussed a few examples of high inequalities and conflict: Chiapas, Malaysia, Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka. She affirmed that where efforts are made to narrow inequalities without alienating the privileged group, as in Malaysia

and Northern Ireland, outcomes in ethnic relations have been positive.

In concluding, Stewart criticized adjustment programmes and democratization policies that are group blind. She affirmed that group considerations ought to be taken into account in aid policies, government expenditures and constitution making. She believed the debate should go beyond abolishing discrimination and focus on equality in outcomes. Affirmative action policies are important but these have to be done sensibly in order not to provoke further conflict. It is very difficult for affirmative action policies to get acceptance when one group dominates politically and the minority is politically weak. Unfettered market policies may constrain efforts to correct inequalities, as demonstrated in the case of South Africa. Stewart insisted that there has to be fairness between groups and monitoring of inequalities. She believed that current anti-terrorism policy is unhelpful because it is a military solution, which does not recognize the horizontal inequalities that lie behind terrorism.

## Discussion

The discussion that followed highlighted the difficulties of subjecting culture to the kinds of quantification economists use in measuring income inequality. It was argued that not all identities are constructed, and there is a need to understand the primordial nature of some identities. It was stated that affirmative action policies can be problematic, because they address issues of social justice, which are fundamentally about culture and solidarity. One participant stressed the need to focus on basic incomes in tackling inequalities, especially when one billion people are entering the labour market and basic income has become an important development issue. The point was also made that inequalities can be durable and promote stability and cohesion even if they are morally unacceptable. What often matters, it was argued, is not current inequalities but past perceptions of mistreatment; and status reversal and politicized inequality may be more important than inequality *per se*. The need to introduce horizontal inequalities and indicators on governance in the Millennium Development Goals and anti-poverty programmes was emphasized.

Stewart responded that the end of the Cold War is responsible for the shift from class to cultural explanations of conflicts, arguing that many of the current wars would have been given a class angle if

they had occurred during the Cold War. She agreed that there is a problem of quantification, but stressed its importance because of the need to counter what she believed is the rather superficial work that relies on cross-country regression analysis to explain the causes of war. She said that basic income is important, but not enough to explain conflict; there is sometimes conflict in societies that have solved the problems of basic incomes. She added that identities are not constructed from nothing and individuals have multiple and overlapping identities; what they choose to emphasize at any given time is contextual. Leaders play a major role in structuring these identities. History is also important, but its importance is linked to whether the groups in question suffer current inequalities. On the subject of affirmative action, she agreed that, although it is problematic, one should be sensitive to its failings and attempt to improve upon them. She concluded that the governance dimensions of inequality offered by the UNRISD project will be complimented by her own work that takes economic issues into account.

## Ethnicity in the Central and Eastern European Context

Session nine was also a lecture delivered by Nil Muiznieks, Latvian Minister for Integration, on ethnicity in post-communist transitions in Central and Eastern Europe. He argued that nationalism was a very powerful force in the region after the fall of communism for several reasons. First, since the communist system was discredited, the elites who championed the transformation re-branded the pre-communist past as a golden age—free of alien influences and culturally homogenous. Second, citizens had a contradictory relationship with the state. Even though they expected the state to look after many of their needs, they distrusted it because of its oppressive character. It could, therefore, not attract the loyalties of citizens. Nationalism became an alternative source for creating identities where ideology was discredited. Muiznieks believed, however, that the fears of uncontrollable nationalist politics were exaggerated, as the trend has been contained. There is now a cooling-off period and a move toward more ethnic accommodation. Whereas many countries in Western Europe have seen the rise of far-Right parties, he argued that in Central and Eastern Europe, only Romania has a strong populist nationalist or xenophobic party. Surveys on attitudes

toward other ethnic groups and foreigners also show that Central and Eastern European countries perform much better than Western European ones.

Muiznieks affirmed that the constraints imposed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the EU and NATO on certain political choices of some of the elite in these countries should not be underestimated. However, he believed there are additional factors that have helped to promote ethnic accommodation: national cultures and languages that were suppressed have been allowed to breathe; economic growth has been restored; associational life is flowering; and alternative ideologies to nationalism and the state are developing and shaping party formation and politics. A survey he conducted in his own ministry suggested that how people define themselves is very different from official classifications. There are many more identities than the homogenous categories employed for each large ethnic group. The region is also becoming one of immigration, although the numbers vary across countries. Muiznieks rejected designs for major institutional reforms, which, he believed, are applicable only in societies that are trying to create new states or rebuilding states affected by war. He suggested instead incremental reforms, which focus on non-discrimination, integration schemes at the workplace and in the armed forces, summer camp activities for children of different ethnicities, promotion of multiethnic NGOs, and youth programmes.

### **Discussion**

In the discussion that followed, one participant observed that Western Europe does not emphasize cultural identities because these are now settled issues. However, migration threatens these settled assumptions

and notions of multiculturalism and may account for the resurgence of far-Right parties in Western Europe. Another participant questioned the view that there are no nationalist populist parties in Central and Eastern Europe apart from the one in Romania. Many mainstream parties, it was contended, are still nationalist and populist. The point was further made that governments in the region should not wait until a state implodes before carrying out reforms. The question of how the interests of foreigners, Russians and other minorities in the new nations will be addressed was also raised. Participants asked what the dominant group would give minorities in order for them to accept integration under a dominant language.

Muiznieks replied that integration is not in conflict with multiculturalism even though there is need for a common language. In Latvia, minorities can be assimilated into one of the two poles: Latvian or Russian. The problem is that Latvians tend to switch to Russian when they speak to Russians, which could affect Latvian children if joint schools are set up. He believed that Latvia's large number of experts on Russia would be beneficial to the country as an EU member. He considered, however, that fears of migration of Central and Eastern European citizens into the EU are exaggerated. He insisted that a stable country does not need major institutional reforms as there is limited room for manoeuvre and the EU Monitoring Centre Against Racism and Xenophobia will be a powerful tool to confront racism in Central and Eastern Europe. He concluded that the EU and NATO have helped to settle Latvia's fundamental security problem. Membership of these institutions will further help modernization and openness.

## Agenda

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### Thursday 25 March

#### 9:30–10:30 Opening Session

Welcome remarks —Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs Rihards Pīks, read by Gabriele Köhler  
Gabriele Köhler, UNDP Resident Representative, Latvia  
Nils Muiznieks, Latvian Minister for Integration  
Thandika Mkandawire, UNRISD Director

An overview of research issues and policy implications—Yusuf Bangura, UNRISD Project Co-ordinator

#### 10:50–11:35 Session 1

Chair: Renata Desallien, UNDP Resident Representative, Bhutan

Inequality and public sector governance in unipolar ethnic settings: Botswana and Lithuania

Speakers—Natalija Kasatkina and Vida Beresnevičiute, and Onalenna Selolwane

11:35–11:45 Discussant—Ralph Premdas

11:45–12:30 General discussion

#### 14:00–14:45 Session 2

Chair—Max Ooft, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Sub-Office Suriname

Inequality and public sector governance in bipolar ethnic settings: Fiji, and Trinidad and Tobago

Speakers—Jonathan Fraenkel and Ralph Premdas

14:45–14:55 Discussant—Khoo Boo Teik

14:55–15:40 General discussion

#### 16:05–16:50 Session 3

Chair—Mark McGillivray, Senior Research Fellow/Project Director, WIDER

Inequality and public sector governance in bipolar ethnic settings: Latvia and Belgium

Speakers—Artis Pabriks and Kris Deschouwer

16:50–17:00 Discussant—Wolf Linder

17:00–17:45 General discussion

### Friday 26 March

#### 9:00–9:45 Session 4

Chair—Falk Lange, Senior Advisor, Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, OSCE

Inequality and governance of the public sector in tripolar ethnic settings: Bosnia-Herzegovina and Switzerland

Speakers—Florian Bieber, and Wolf Linder and Isabelle Steffen

#### 9:45–9:55 Session 5

Chair: Ukoha Ukiwo, Researcher, Oxford University

Inequality and governance of the public sector in tripolar ethnic settings: Nigeria and Malaysia

Speakers—Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Khoo Boo Teik

11:45–11:55 Discussant—Julius Nyang'oro

**11:55–12:40** General discussion

**14:10–14:55** **Session 6**

Chair—Jean Mfasoni, Political Affairs Director, African Union

Inequality and public sector governance in concentrated multipolar ethnic settings: Ghana and Kenya

Speakers—Richard Asante and Karuti Kanyinga

**14:55–15:05** Discussant—Onalenna Selolwane

**15:05–15:50** General discussion

**16:10–17:25** **Session 7**

Chair—Jon Fraenkel, Project Researcher

Inequality and public sector governance in fragmented multipolar ethnic settings: India, Papua New Guinea and United Republic of Tanzania

Speakers—Niraja Gopal Jayal, Ray Anere and Julius Nyang'oro

**17:25–17:35** Discussant—Karuti Kanyinga

**17:35–18:15** General discussion

## Saturday 27 March

**9:10–9:40** **Session 8**

Chair: Ambassador Peter Semneby, Representative of the OSCE Mission in Croatia

Ethnic inequalities and development

Speaker—Frances Stewart

**09:40–10:25** General discussion

**10:45–11:15** **Session 9**

Chair—Gabriele Köhler, UNDP Latvia Resident Representative

Ethnicity, diversity and governance in Latvia in the Central and Eastern European context

Speaker—Nils Muiznieks

**11:15–11:35** General discussion

**11:35–12:15** **Closing remarks**

Gabriele Köhler, UNDP Latvia Resident Representative

Nils Muiznieks, Latvian Minister for Integration

Thandika Mkandawire, UNRISD Director

Yusuf Bangura, UNRISD Project Co-ordinator

## Panellists, Chairpersons and Organizers

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Senior Research Fellow and Project Director  
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## **Papers Presented**

Ray Anere. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Papua New Guinea.*

Florian Bieber. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

Kris Deshouwer. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Belgium.*

Jon Fraenkel. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Fiji.*

Emmanuel Giymah-Boadi and Richard Asante. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Ghana.*

Niraja Gopal Jayal. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in India.*

Karuti Kanyinga. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Kenya.*

Natalija Kasatkina and Vida Beresneviciute. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Lithuania.*

Khoo Boo Teik. *Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance in Malaysia.*

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