Preventing Violent Conflict

The Search for Political Will, Strategies and Effective Tools

Report of the Krusenberg Seminar, organized by
the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs,
the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and
the Swedish Institute of International Affairs,
19-20 June 2000

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Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

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Preface

This report summarizes the proceedings and main findings of a seminar organized by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (SIIA). The subject of this meeting, held at the Krusenberg Estate, outside Stockholm, was Preventing Violent Conflict—The Search for Political Will, Strategies and Effective Tools .

The seminar brought together a diverse range of individuals from government, international organizations, the media, business, academia and non-governmental organizations whose common attribute is an engagement—actual or potential—in the process of conflict prevention. The purpose of their interaction was to consider the factors that affect international willingness to undertake conflict prevention and identify ways of overcoming the gap between early warning and early action to prevent violent conflict. The seminar was inspired by growing international interest in responding proactively to the threat of conflict and, in particular, the Swedish Government's Action Plan for Preventing Violent Conflict, which seeks to stimulate a global culture of prevention.

The meeting was an informal one, centring around three working groups. The substance of the discussions and the opening and closing plenary sessions are presented in the Executive Summary. A series of short background papers to facilitate discussion were produced and circulated in advance of the meeting. A number of these are reproduced in appendix 1. The participants are listed in appendix 2. The publication of this report seeks to continue the discussions begun at the Krusenberg Seminar and to contribute to the further development of an international culture of prevention.

There are many people to acknowledge in a collective effort such as this. It is my privilege and pleasure to thank all those who took part in the Krusenberg Seminar. I am particularly grateful to Jan Eliasson for his inspiration to convene the meeting. Ambassador Ragnar Ängeby and his team at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, especially Jessica Olausson, were responsible for the organization of the entire seminar, a task they performed with great skill. My special thanks go to the authors of the papers published in the appendix and to Dr Renata Dwan for her work on the report. I also wish to thank the Swedish Foreign Ministry, whose generous support made possible the publication of this report.

Adam Daniel Rotfeld
Director of SIPRI
September 2000

Introduction

One of those wise and articulate personalities one can find in collections of words of wisdom once wrote: 'Historical developments . . . are always a slower business than impatient politicians and idealists would wish'. That might very well be true, but the fact that a change of attitudes, norms and behaviour is a time-consuming affair must not preclude us from trying. The Krusenberg Seminar on Preventing Violent Conflict was one attempt among many to take the idea of prevention one further step ahead and to intensify the pace of developments.

In order to translate prevention into practice, one probably has to be a combination of political realist and impatient idealist. Not that prevention is a naive vision—quite the contrary. It requires convincing political leadership. Only committed individuals can mobilize the willingness, capacity and resources to act.

The successful preventive actor must, however, be not only engaged and compassionate but also systematic and decisive. Effective and conscious prevention requires thorough analysis and carefully designed strategy built on knowledge of the situation on the ground. Alarming signals of unrest and discrimination must be met timely and wisely. There must be both a will and a way to act. A clear link is needed between political will and understanding on the one hand and developments in the field on the other. We need to create mechanisms and routines for early preventive analysis and actions.

Preventing violent conflict is about avoiding human suffering, destructive violence and waste of resources. The humanitarian, political and economic rationales for preventing disputes from erupting into violent conflicts are now widely, but not globally, understood and recognised. There is a call for refined knowledge about means and ways of prevention. Promoting the culture and practice of prevention involves spreading the idea to those not yet convinced and strengthening the already committed.

This report is a contribution to this multifaceted process. The findings of the seminar are expressed in the Krusenberg Conclusions, which contain a number of specific recommendations for the future work of preventing violent conflicts. The report comprises a number of brief background papers that deal with important aspects of prevention.

The call for consensus as a challenge for prevention is illuminated, as is the 'toolbox' containing instruments for preventive action. The potential for an evolving culture of prevention is analysed in order to outline the way ahead. In line with the call for an integrated approach, the relationship between democracy and prevention is discussed. The need for and forms of cooperation between international and regional organizations are reviewed. Special attention is paid to the unique role of the United Nations as a preventive actor.

The encouragement and development of a culture of prevention is a task and a responsibility for actors from all parts of the international community. Governments need to cooperate with the academic institutions, and international organizations should connect with the business community and non-governmental organizations with the media. At Krusenberg, prominent representatives from these sectors met and combined thoughts and efforts. This inclusiveness and call for common action must be further developed.

The conclusion of the Krusenberg Seminar means the beginning of something else. Even though the meeting as such was a step from vision and rhetoric to practice and action, the greatest test is still facing us. How do we—participants and other committed individuals—ensure that the recommendations from the seminar will be put into practice? One answer might be to spread the word and methods to our own regions and organizations. By creating an informal network, facilitated by the new technology and stimulated by the sense of progress made, the pressure on national and international actors can be increased. Prevention seldom makes the news, but the untold success stories should be reported in order to gain support and to learn not only from mistakes but also from achievements.

A coalition composed of committed individuals, organizations and governments needs to be established to bring further momentum to prevention. We must proceed in a flexible and yet close partnership focused on the security and development of the individual. The guiding star must be the call for decisions and actions: many problems can be solved in practice which will never be solved in principle.

Jan Eliasson
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs
Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Krusenberg Conclusions

The question posed at the outset of the Krusenberg Seminar was a simple one—why *not* prevention? In terms of lives, costs, reputation and interests, the arguments for greater international efforts seem clear. Conflict prevention is undoubtedly demanding, requiring comprehensive understanding of the causes of conflict and the tools that can be used to prevent violence, good analysis of particular crises, the will to act preventively and the capability for effective action.

The generation of political will to develop effective short- and long-term preventive measures is a complex undertaking, but it is a prerequisite for peace building and structural stabilization. *Moral considerations* are an element, albeit varying, in motivating governments and political leaders to act preventively and are important for legitimating action. However, moral appeals rest on a sense of urgency that may be difficult to convey in the context of early prevention. The *financial argument* for preventive action is convincing, but it is often overridden by perceived low domestic public interest in vulnerable situations. Sensitivity to *domestic political considerations* also limits the time and scope of a state's commitment to conflict prevention. The apparent intractability of many intra-state conflicts can encourage a perception of prevention as unmanageable. Balanced against this is a growing view that prevention serves *national and international interests*. The benefits to be accrued have to be measured against the risk of being accused of interference.

It is here that certain states and governments can play a valuable role as 'norm entrepreneurs', introducing prevention into the international debate and taking a lead in initiating practical polices of prevention. The significance of leadership for the development of an international culture of prevention was one of the central themes to emerge in the seminar discussions.

The participants agreed, however, that the end of such leadership should be the *institutionalization of prevention* within national and international structures and decision-making processes. In this context, while the United Nations will continue to play a central role in conflict prevention, the world organization is not always the most suitable actor to take practical preventive action. A culture of prevention requires a wide variety of state and non-state actors. The ratio of prevention to reactive practitioners must increase. This poses a challenge to the traditional organization and working methods of the international system.

Prevention does not automatically imply external intervention, but it does involve states' acceptance of a more intrusive international regime. This is, and will remain, controversial and will continue to impede the development of a global culture of prevention. Prevention entrepreneurs must therefore strive to establish humanitarian impartiality in their policies and practices.

Strengthening political will

The building of political will is a question of changing *perceptions* of the possibility of action to prevent violent conflict. At the national and international level, this process of change can only come about through the leadership of a smaller group of committed individuals and/or governments. Participants agreed that this 'coalition of the willing' must initiate and lead a learning process of prevention that would identify potential violent conflicts and identify acceptable third parties as well as potential subjects for preventive engagement.

The goal of this learning process should be the *'routinization'* of preventive thinking within decision-making processes. The broadening understanding of human security—already evident in the policy agendas and discussions of international organizations as well as national governments—is a first positive step in this direction. It was suggested that structural, early prevention offers a less controversial arena for action and that this should be the main focus of preventive action.

Why has it been so difficult to put early prevention into practice? One reason is that decision makers may lack sufficient detailed knowledge of a vulnerable situation. It was suggested that information from a wider societal base would improve early-warning systems. A rethinking of what constitutes 'warning signs' should also be encouraged, with more attention paid to human rights violations.

Policy makers often do not have access to a *range of preventive policy options* from which to choose an action. The prevention constituency, therefore, either domestic or international, must take the responsibility of providing decision makers with credible options for action.

At the international level, collective action is affected by the *differing values, cultures and interests* that shape national assessments of the potential for conflict. It was suggested that the establishment of an international capability for assessing the costs of potential or actual violent conflicts could help national governments discern the need for negotiated and non-

violent solutions to political problems or particularly vulnerable situations. This in turn would increase the possibility and credibility of collective preventive action.

The roles and strategies of the UN and other intergovernmental structures and organizations

Initially, it was suggested that the United Nations is ill-equipped for conflict prevention. 'Structural flaws' and the 'multi-headedness' of the organization were cited as reasons. Later in the discussions, a more positive view of the UN's ability and potential emerged. The important role of the UN as a catalyst, capable of encouraging and strengthening various actors in preventive efforts, was highlighted. Yet expectations of the UN far outweigh the resources available to it. Subregional structures are sometimes better suited to carry out preventive action in a particular conflict. These structures should therefore be assisted, *inter alia* by the UN, to play an active role when appropriate.

The time line for conflict prevention was divided into *upstream* and *downstream* efforts. Upstream refers to long-term structural measures and downstream to short-term, crisis management actions. Traditionally, short-term actions make up the bulk of international efforts. Improved international ability to prevent escalation of an embryonic conflict must now become the goal of the prevention community. Positive incentives, 'carrots', were considered more efficient than the 'stick' needed at a later stage. Here, institutions such as the European Union (EU), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) could play a more important role.

Participants agreed on the significance of establishing a common understanding of the concept and elements of prevention, the so-called ladder of prevention. However, every conflict is unique in character. Tools for managing a conflict in one region are not necessarily applicable to other regions. In this context, the role of surrounding countries was highlighted. Their incentives to take action to prevent a violent conflict in a neighbouring state are especially strong but they may be held back by fears of conflict spillover and resource constraints. International support to initiatives by neighbouring states could be of important assistance here.

A recurring theme was the need for better coordination within and between various actors. Lack of knowledge and information about an emerging conflict is not a general problem. It is rather defective sharing of

information, within organizations as well as between them, that causes concern. The ability to evaluate and make proper use of information needs to be improved, as well as the ability of international organizations to swiftly pick up warning-signals from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the business community. One idea was to make better use of Development Round Tables, in order to draw on the clout of major donors and international financial institutions.

It is often difficult to get a potentially emerging conflict onto the international agenda. The view was expressed that the UN Secretary-General's office could do more to draw international attention to a crisis. It was suggested that the creation of a *standing fact-finding mechanism, at the disposal of the Secretary-General*, could be helpful in this regard. The early dispatch of a small but senior-level group, tailored for the particular potential crisis, could help alert the international community and identify the early preventive measures required. (A possible format of this standing fact-finding mechanism could include a senior representative of the UN Secretariat, a specialized UN agency, relevant regional organizations and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The incoming presidency of the Security Council could also be invited to participate.)

The UN Security Council also could improve its ability to identify potential areas of conflict. 'Routinization' of discussion of vulnerable situations coupled with consideration of possible preventive measures could assist in this. The need for contingency planning for all potential conflict stages, while avoiding sending wrong signals to the disputing parties, was stressed.

The concepts of fact-finding missions, special envoys or representatives were considered useful. However, envoys' political and logistical backing is sometimes inadequate. In cases of short-term prevention, there tends to be a proliferation of envoys from various intergovernmental structures, which risks diluting efforts. Clear mandates and improved coordination are essential.

Interests, roles and tools of other actors in conflict prevention

It is evident that no single actor—the UN, regional organizations or individual great powers—possesses all the strategies and tools necessary for the successful prevention of complex conflicts. A broad range of state and non-state actors have taken an interest in conflict prevention, and thus a rich

range of potential conflict prevention techniques and instruments is at the disposal of the international community.

The challenge now is to develop partnerships between the different types of player in prevention and to achieve higher levels of coordination and cooperation between traditional state efforts and initiatives sponsored by non-state actors. There is a need to distinguish the roles of track-two players (mainly NGOs), to map the existing available resources and, crucially, to identify the areas of comparative advantage for various NGOs, private individuals, the media, and the business and academic communities. Only then can synergies be created between state and non-state actors. An important step in this process is to develop mechanisms for incorporating the parties to a potential conflict into strategies of prevention.

A second challenge is to mandate a coalition of the willing. With a multitude of state and non-state actors, relationships, partnerships, responsibilities and comparative advantages, who can give this coalition of the willing a mandate to act and how?

New advanced technology could be used to facilitate information exchange, the development of a global early-warning system and a database of the lessons learned. Here, the business community could play a role, providing the technology and competence necessary for coordination.

The media play an important role in framing a conflict. Capacity building and training of the local media can improve the reporting on violence and potentially assist in identifying vulnerable situations at an early stage. Better media awareness of the preventive capabilities of the media could encourage journalists to devote more effort to drawing public attention to potential problems.

Conflict prevention is about moving the focus of attention and action to early stages of conflict and taking advantage of the dynamics of change. The academic community needs to improve its understanding of societal change and how societies move from stable peaceful relations to internal disputes and violent conflict and vice versa.

Final plenary session

The need to broaden the emerging prevention consensus beyond the Western states was underscored in the final discussions. A culture of prevention represents a community of values. To be effective, it must be inclusive. Some participants argued that the problem of political will was overstated

and that prevention should be presented to a wider constituency of decision makers as a strategy of greater resource efficiency.

A culture of prevention must recognize the limitations of state-centric and military approaches. A broad range of actors must be involved in the elaboration and implementation of practical prevention policies. This calls for a new spirit of flexibility among international actors and a willingness to engage in more informal networks. Regional organizations are sometimes better suited to such an approach. Currently, however, many have no practical preventive capacity. The emerging prevention community should place priority on equipping regional and subregional organizations with the necessary resources for conflict prevention.

Finally, specific recommendations for putting prevention into practice were presented.

- Establish a leadership coalition of early prevention actors.
- Create a common analytic system for assessing potential crises which establishes the key external concerns, including the costs and benefits of potential actions, and takes account of the perspectives of the parties to the conflict.
- Institutionalize regular UN Security Council discussions on prevention as a strategy as well as on potentially vulnerable regional situations.
- Create a standing fact-finding mechanism within the UN, charged with early-warning action and the elaboration of preventive strategies.
- Establish a coalition of key stakeholders to analyse and act on a potential conflict.
- Design a pilot project to develop a preventive peace-building strategy for a specific conflict-prone area. The Fergana Valley in Central Asia was mentioned as a possible area of action.
- Organize a follow-up seminar, preceded and/or supported by a virtual working group with the capability to develop recommendations and strategic frameworks.
- Initiate a special session on the role of the business community in conflict prevention to be included in the agenda of the next World Economic Forum in Davos.
- Advocate prevention at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, to be held in September 2000 in New York.

Appendix 1. Background papers

1. Consensus: a challenge for conflict prevention?

Renata Dwan

'There is near-universal agreement that prevention is preferable to cure, and that strategies of prevention must address the root causes of conflicts, not simply their violent symptoms.'[1]

It is hard to dispute United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan's declaration of general agreement among the nation-states, international organizations, non-governmental actors and individuals that make up the international community on the desirability of preventing conflict. The November 1999 Security Council meeting devoted to prevention, the recent attempts by regional organizations to develop preventive capacities—notably the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU) in Europe, and the Organization for African Unity (OAU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Africa—and the efforts by a number of national governments to focus their foreign and development policies in a more preventive direction testify to this widely held concern. This consensus represents the greatest strength of the effort to realize effective conflict prevention. It is also the greatest liability for practical conflict prevention. This paper outlines the challenge of international consensus for prevention and asks the question: Does consensus really matter for the development of effective prevention and, if so, how might collective international agreement be developed?

The significance of consensus in international politics

Consensus is a vague concept. It asserts agreement yet skirts around specifics and hints at passivity. Opinion is the point at which this collective gathers. For all its lack of clarity, however, consensus is critical to the legitimacy and activity of the international system. It is the means by which mutually sovereign states, without a common hierarchical authority, reach agreement on the basic structure and management of their relations.[2] It lies at the root of international order.

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[1] Annan, K. A., Millennium Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, 'We the Peoples', The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century, UN document A/54/2000, 3 Apr. 2000, p. 44.

[2] Although Hedley Bull's classic study of international order does not discuss consensus itself, it is implicit in his definition: 'a society of states exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another and share in the working of com-

This does not mean that the institutions and workings of the international system are always governed by consensus. The structure of the United Nations, led by a core group of states that includes five permanent members, is but one example of the attempt to balance recognition of equality with the realities of power and the need for capabilities of action. All international organizations, be they global or regional, functional or broad-based, function through a combination of general consensus, compromise, big and small majorities, and unanimity. Even then, they are frequently sidelined or ignored by unilateral or multilateral state actions. The agreements that states arrive at—within formal institutional structures or informally among themselves—are often the result of a lengthy process marked more by considerations of power and the exercise of coercion than by common understanding. Occasionally, agreement between states is possible precisely because of lack of interest in or commitment to a particular issue. Nevertheless, what makes all of these negotiated outcomes possible is the basic general agreement of participating states and institutions on the structure and mechanisms of their interactions. Consensus in international affairs, comprising a certain shared perspective or disposition on the part of states to manage their relations, is the first step on which subsequent decision-making processes are based. The existence of consensus, therefore, is a prerequisite for the development of a collective political will to act.

Consensus on conflict prevention

General agreement that the prevention of violent conflict is desirable may be seen as the first step on the way to developing the strategies and tools by which the international community can act to prevent disputes between or within states from turning violent. This consensus appears to centre on the common realization that violent conflict negatively affects the military, political and economic security of states and societies beyond the specific disputing parties. Self-interest, in other words, motivates consensus. At the same time, the fact that most contemporary conflicts occur within the borders of states and may not spill over to other countries suggests that aspects other than a simple calculation of direct self-interest might be shaping the emerging consensus on prevention. Recognition of the cost and waste involved for all warring parties is one element. This is closely linked to practical concern about the effects of conflict on the economic, environmental and general political well-being of the international system. Some have described this as a consequence of globalization and the recognition of global 'interconnectedness'—ultimately rooted in self-interest.[3] Increased interdependency has encouraged a con-

mon institutions'. Bull, H., *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Macmillan: London, 1977), p. 13.

   [3] See, e.g., Kaldor, M., *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, Calif., 1999). Others argue that contemporary war is not new or particularly unique: what is new is international awareness of and concern about such conflicts.

sensus on the responsibility of states for international order and, as a result, a right to be concerned with domestic events that endanger stability.

More substantial, and arguably new, however, is a sense of developing agreement on the illegality and immorality of many of today's conflicts. These 'new wars', as they are called by some, are not being fought for traditional aims (control of territory or the institutions of the state) or by traditional means. They are at once intensely parochial and transnational, directed against civilians and/or particular ethnic, religious or class groups for aims as particular and obscure as individual wealth, control of organized crime or rejection of an existing status quo. The sheer horror of these conflicts and the suffering inflicted on innocent individuals has played a part in shaping the emergence of a consensus that efforts to prevent such conflicts are desirable. An even stronger concern is for the fate of the international system itself. These new conflicts, which do not respect the structures and processes of the sovereign state, threaten to undermine the foundation of international order. Recognition of the rights of the citizen as an international concern is balanced against the desire to shore up the principle of state sovereignty that is seen to have facilitated domestic and international stability. Consensus on the latter is not new: emerging agreement on the 'wrong' of contemporary conflicts, however, is.

The conflict prevention consensus, therefore, rests on a broad general opinion on a range of established principles and new as well as old threats. That this agreement should be emerging among such a diverse group of actors is undoubtedly positive but it is also a liability to practical conflict prevention. The vague substance of the consensus disguises the fact that little if any understanding exists on the steps necessary for effective prevention of conflict and what a conflict prevention strategy might look like. Such an opaque and unexplored consensus may complicate efforts to move general agreement towards articulation of a case-specific practical strategy. In this case, more may well be less.

The liability of the current 'prevention' consensus is, in part, a problem with prevention itself. The potential infinity of the concept has led many to fashion a more precise, narrow definition. 'Minimal' conflict prevention might be defined as action to stop a conflict becoming violent, coming at the moment before the actual employment of force.[4] This type of conflict prevention is the one with which the international community is most familiar: preventive diplomacy through a mixture of coercion and cajoling, usually political and often high-profile. International consensus in such cases is usually presumed rather than explicitly obtained and often severely tested through the breaking of sanctions and embargoes. Occasionally it is

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[4] This definition is often expanded to include efforts to prevent the resumption of violent hostilities in a post-conflict period. Conflict prevention is also understood by many to include efforts to prevent the escalation of violence already begun. Notwithstanding the difficulty of applying rigid distinctions, I prefer to look at escalation prevention within the context of conflict management.

openly challenged, either in an international organization forum, such as a Security Council veto, or through demonstrated support for one of the belligerent parties.

The failure of 'minimal' conflict prevention to achieve its objectives has been the primary motivation behind growing calls for a more comprehensive approach to prevention on the part of the international community. 'Maximal' conflict prevention, as Kofi Annan suggests in his Millennium Report, addresses the structural causes of conflict—the deep and long-term factors that create the conditions for conflict. These are issues of poverty; social, political and economic inequality; and weak and/or corrupt governance—all elements that may appear only indirectly linked to a specific outbreak of violent conflict. This move towards a holistic understanding of conflict is highly significant for the national governments and international organizations that dominate the international system. In the first place, it takes conflict prevention away from concentration solely on the response of international actors. Prevention, in this concept, must be more than strategies for the avoidance of a specific conflict: it must be directed at removing the sources of violent conflict. In asserting that the nature and policies of a sovereign state can create or prevent conditions for conflict and in declaring this a subject of legitimate international action, 'maximal' conflict prevention brings issues of domestic order to the international arena in a new and comprehensive way. In so doing, it poses a serious challenge to the consensus on which the international system of states rests.

It is important to understand this development not merely as a challenge to the traditional *modus operandi*. Opposition to it represents more than zealous protection of the principle of state sovereignty. Rather, it is about the extent to which the international community shares a consensus on values. The prevention of the conditions for conflict is a highly normative endeavour. Comprehensive conflict prevention involves a series of beliefs and values about the nature of domestic as well as international order and it legitimates, if not mandates, international actors to act on those values. Some values may be held to be universal such as, for example, the illegality of genocide. Others may enjoy extensive, if not quite unanimous support, such as the illegality of slavery. There remain, however, a substantial number of highly contested ideas and principles, many of which are core tenets of prevention: the democratic nature of a state, the equality of opportunity for individuals, the function of state institutions, relations between government and its peoples, and the redistributive obligations of the state. The relationship between the rights of the state and the individuals who comprise it lies at the heart of these debates and is an issue on which no shared international understanding exists.

This is a real problem for international prevention of conflict. Any attempt to instrumentalize strategies of prevention that go beyond the rhetoric of international statements must negotiate this lack of consensus. It might be tempting to assert that the breadth of the concept of prevention can accommodate agreement in certain areas while obscuring divisions in others. However, it is the very breadth of pre-

vention that makes many states reluctant to seriously address implementation, for fear of opening a Pandora's box of ever-expanding activity, one that challenges the values and beliefs on which many states are based.

Does consensus matter for effective prevention?

Does this lack of consensus matter for the development of effective strategies for prevention? Many of the diverse actors engaged in prevention would argue that consensus does not, in actual fact, merit too great consideration. There is a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive conflict prevention action, as debates in the UN Security Council and within national development and foreign ministries have demonstrated. Current events in Africa and the Balkans merely underscore the sense of urgency. Why, therefore, should a widely held view be hijacked by the defensive and/or reactionary views of a number of states? Indeed, many non-state actors would go further and assert that the primacy of states' views should no longer be regarded as sacrosanct and should not be allowed to dictate the workings of the international system. This view is countered by a second argument: power realities ultimately dominate international action and, if a group of powerful states support prevention strategies, then recalcitrant states will be forced to fall in line. The fact that calls for more effective and 'muscular' prevention come mainly from the Western states, with the power and resources to act independently, tends to reinforce this attitude.

A more egalitarian approach suggests that the status quo orientation of states has always been an impediment to change and that therefore too much attention should not be given to consensus. Non-violent change is almost always the result of far-sighted leadership by one or more states, individuals or organizations over a significant period of time. A small group of sufficiently motivated 'norm-setters'—states, international organizations and non-state actors—should proceed with the development and implementation of conflict prevention strategies. The effectiveness of these prevention efforts will justify the actions of this group and gradually win over initially opposed states.

Finally, the nature of conflict prevention itself may encourage arguments in favour of setting considerations of consensus aside. In the first place, 'minimal' prevention is often required at short notice and necessitates rapid responses. This swift action is best undertaken by small groups of actors. Second, effective prevention is often confidential and takes place well away from the media glare. Third, given the breadth of possible prevention strategies it is simply unrealistic to expect it to be subject to wide collective coordination. Effective prevention, in this view, will always be a subject of action by a particular, rather than a universal, group.

These are all strong points and are based on a realistic assessment of the constraints of international action. Nevertheless, to neglect or deliberately reject the

significance of consensus in the attempt to effect practical conflict prevention would be, in the long term, to undermine the international collective management of peace and security. Despite the growth of international organizations, international legal mechanisms and the rise of non-state actors, consensus among states remains the central legitimating tool of the international system. If the will to effect strategies of prevention is to be developed, then this consensus must be maintained. Today's prevention consensus—Annan's 'near-universal agreement'—must also be furthered in depth and in content. Unless efforts are made to increase international understanding of the elements of prevention strategies and of the implications of a commitment to preventive action, it will be impossible to elaborate practical conflict prevention strategies at the international level. The prevention that does take place will remain particularistic and ad hoc and potentially divide the international community further.

The effective implementation of any preventive strategy, moreover, is dependent on practical coordination and cooperation. The success of coercive approaches to the prevention of conflict, such as sanctions or embargoes, will be, at least in part, contingent on the unanimity with which punitive measures are applied. It may be impossible to ensure full compliance with such collective actions but this does not remove the imperative of building as wide an observation as possible. Maximal conflict prevention is even more demanding. The negotiation of the root causes of a specific conflict can only be achieved by sustained, coordinated strategies linking international development and security policies and tools. The time frame, therefore, of maximal conflict prevention, extends well beyond the immediate pre- and post-conflict phase, and success will depend on maintaining coherence and agreement between the actors involved. In this effort, consistent attention to the level of understanding and consensus among all players will be vital.

In the case of intra-state conflict the most important consensus to obtain and sustain is, ultimately, that of the state in question. Without the agreement of the targets of prevention on the legitimacy of international engagement, any effort to implement long-term prevention strategies will fail. Again, this consensus may not necessarily represent enthusiastic support; yet it is crucial to the legitimacy, the international acceptability and the effectiveness of prevention. Practically, it necessitates the coordination—and ideally the active involvement—of the state in question. The extent to which a state will consent to external involvement in a conflict, actual or potential, within its borders is subject to a host of factors. One important determinant, however, is the degree of apparent unity among international actors and the degree to which division among them can or cannot be exploited by the state/parties in question.

Finally, specific cases of prevention are often criticized for being particular and partisan. The fact that the international community launched a preventive mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) while ignoring smoul-

dering crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo is seen to reflect more the interests of the USA and the West European powers than the imperatives of preventing violent conflict. While it is unrealistic to expect the international community to have the will or resources to employ preventive action in every potential conflict, a widespread consensus on international strategies of prevention could help to avoid allegations of self-serving particularism in specific cases where action is taken. It could, in the process, help to expand preventive engagement to more conflict-prone areas and make it more difficult for national governments to assess their policies of prevention only on a case-by-case basis.

Consensus building as part of a conflict prevention strategy: possible recommendations

Recognition of the importance of consensus to strengthening the political will for prevention is a prerequisite for an effective strategy. It does not mean, however, that prevention and the means to implement it will not continue to be an issue of significant debate and disagreement. Nor does it mean that specific preventive policies will not be initiated, implemented and managed by smaller groups of international actors. What it does mean is that the maintenance and enhancement of consensus must be accorded a significant part of general and specific conflict prevention strategies. Consensus must become an integral element and objective of any preventive approach with the necessary resources set aside accordingly.

One step in consensus building within a general preventive strategy would be to stress effective prevention by the international community as a mechanism that ultimately assists, rather than undermines, the principle of state sovereignty. The more an international consensus can be developed around the idea that a functioning, democratic state is far more likely to prove a stable one, the less great the divide between international prevention and state sovereignty may appear. The involvement of external actors at times and places of state vulnerability may be a helpful way of shoring up that state and the most solid assurance against massive political and military intervention at a later date.

Reassurance that the elaboration of strategies for prevention can be a transparent process could be encouraged through, *inter alia*, annual UN Security Council and General Assembly meetings on international conflict prevention efforts and the commission of an annual report on prevention from the Secretary-General. The development and widespread circulation of 'toolboxes' of prevention would offer practical demonstration of the range of instruments available in preventive action. Any organization or group of actors undertaking preventive action could be requested to present post-prevention reports to the appropriate international forum. Such reporting might offer one way of balancing confidentiality considerations with the need for greater assessment of specific preventive efforts.

Efforts to build networks of actors and to bring individuals and governments into communication and learning processes must be included in all strategies for prevention. Perception and attitudinal change among individuals, in the long term, may well be the most important factor in shaping new norms of prevention. As such, therefore, the individuals involved must be representative of all actors in the international arena, non-government as well as government. On a practical basis, such networks are crucial for policy and resource coordination in specific cases of prevention. Regionally coordinated networks might be a practical way of bringing together expertise for potential preventive action.

It would be an error to assume that the challenge of consensus can be overcome. Consensus will remain a serious problem for efforts to develop international preventive capacities. The current general disposition towards prevention in general is likely to be severely shaken by any effort to enact specific conflict prevention action. Nevertheless, this does not mean that consensus can be presumed or ignored. The effort to maintain and expand on current shared understandings and agreements must be an integral element of the effort to articulate prevention as an objective of the international community.

2. Developing a toolbox for conflict prevention

Annika Björkdahl

The political, humanitarian and economic imperative of conflict prevention is now widely recognized. Conflict prevention was highlighted in the August 1999 Report of the Secretary-General of the UN, the November 1999 Presidential Statement of the Security Council, the November 1999 OSCE Charter for European Security and, for example, at the December 1999 meeting of the foreign ministers of the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized nations. The EU as well as the UN, the OSCE, NATO, and other global and regional organizations are also engaged in field activities to prevent and moderate armed conflicts around the world. The challenge before the international community in the new millennium is how to address the issue of inter- and intra-state conflicts. *What are the efficient tools and pertinent strategies of conflict prevention? How, when and where should these tools and strategies be applied?*

It is, however, important to stress that conflict prevention is 'not *only* a specific technique, but a preparedness, a capacity and a disposition'.[5] Of utmost importance to efficient and rapid conflict prevention is political will and political capability to undertake preventive action. One way of bridging the gap between early warning and early response and of strengthening the will and capability could be to present decision makers with a clear policy alternative which identifies the tools and strategies relevant to the main objective of the preventive effort.[6]

Conflict prevention

Conflict prevention is a visionary strategy and, as such, difficult to put into practice. This paper is an attempt to present a concept of conflict prevention that is flexible enough to be applicable to different contexts, but still specific enough to be operationalized.[7] Central to the concept of conflict prevention is the requirement to link preventive initiatives to a specific, imminent or distant, risk situation in which

[5] Ginifer, J. and Barth Eide, E., *An Agenda for Preventive Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, NUPI Report 215 (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI): Oslo, 1997).

[6] Solid scholarly studies of the tools and strategies of preventive action in intra- or inter-state crises are required to develop a comprehensive toolbox for conflict prevention. Such studies have been undertaken and have enhanced our knowledge of the limits and opportunities of preventive action. For recent analysis of conflict prevention see, e.g., Lund, M. S., *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (United States Institute of Peace Press: Washington, DC, 1996); Bauwens, W. and Reychler, L. (eds), *The Art of Conflict Prevention* (Brassey's: London, 1994); and Chayes, A. and Handler Chayes, A. (eds), *Preventing Conflicts in the Post-Communist World* (Brookings Institution Press: Washington, DC, 1996).

[7] Sartori, G. (ed.), *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis* (Sage: Beverly Hills, Calif., 1984), pp. 50–57.

armed conflict is likely to break out. Failure to do so creates the risk that all foreign policy and foreign aid are classified as conflict prevention and that the concept will lose political significance. Furthermore, the concept should indicate when, during the emergence of a conflict situation, preventive measures should be taken and how, that is, which techniques and instruments should be utilized.[8]

One way of structuring an analysis of conflict prevention is to focus on the time dimension and the dynamics of conflicts. This paper suggests three stages of prevention related to time and to how a conflict evolves. Each stage is distinguished by its objectives, which in turn is related to phases of the conflict.[9] *Outbreak prevention* describes efforts taken in a potential conflict situation before the outbreak of violence, in order to forestall an eruption of violence. These efforts include both long term, so-called structural measures, dealing with the underlying causes of conflict, and short-term direct conflict prevention, focusing on managing the immediate conflict process. Structural measures are used in a long-term perspective; hence, they may be maintained in later phases of prevention.[10] *Escalation prevention* refers to actions taken after the outbreak of violence, aimed at preventing both the vertical and the horizontal escalation of hostilities to more destructive forms of violence and at involving additional actors. Of special interest is the early escalation phase, before the 'point of no return' after which escalation is unrestrained. Before this threshold there are still opportunities for prevention. *Relapse prevention* denotes efforts undertaken once violence has abated, guided by the objective of preventing the re-emergence of conflict.[11] In practice, however, this delimitation between the three phases of prevention is not always possible or even desirable. Nor is it possible to clearly distinguish between measures undertaken to prevent violent conflicts and those taken to manage and resolve conflicts. It is often more potent to combine the various approaches of a structural and a direct character than to use one at the exclusion of the other.

Where should conflict prevention initiatives be undertaken?

The dynamics and complexity of contemporary conflicts demand a new approach to conflict prevention. Many of these conflicts are intra-state rather than interstate

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[8] The definition of conflict prevention is a modified version of Michael Lund's definition in Lund (note 6), p. 37: 'Political, economic and military actions, taken in vulnerable places and times by third parties to avoid the use of military violence or the threat thereof, by state or groups to settle political disputes'.

[9] Lund (note 6); and Björkdahl, A., 'Conflict prevention from a Nordic perspective: putting prevention into practice', *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1999).

[10] Wallensteen, P., 'Preventive security: direct and structural prevention of violent conflicts', ed. P. Wallensteen, *Preventing Violent Conflict: Past Record and Future Challenges* (Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research: Uppsala, 1998).

[11] Väyrynen, R., 'Toward effective conflict prevention: comparisons of the usability and impact of different instruments', Working paper prepared for the 37th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, San Diego, Calif., 1996.

conflicts with religious, ethnic and cultural underpinnings. It is also necessary to clarify that not all conflicts need to be forestalled. Some conflicts are constructive and necessary for structural changes within societies as, for example, to spur a transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. Preventive actions to deal with intra-state violence, atrocities and human rights abuse clash with the well-embedded norm of sovereignty, the organizing principle of international relations. On the one hand the international community must take responsibility for and enforce universal human rights, but on the other hand the ability to do so is severely limited by the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. Past efforts by the international community to prevent violent conflicts show a lack of coherence. Preventive initiatives were undertaken in the FYROM, but not in Kosovo, and in the Baltic states, but not in Chechnya. There are, however, signs of a new praxis developing regarding various types of intervention, including preventive intervention in internal affairs. Prevention is needed where: early-warning signals of an emerging conflict have been observed; disputes risk developing into violent conflict; the parties to the conflict themselves have exhausted their ability to prevent a violent conflict; a broad consensus and support for preventive efforts exist; and international involvement can make a difference and be maintained over time as part of a long-term strategy to build peace and the effort can generate a positive outcome for the victims.

When can/should conflicts be prevented?

A framework based on the life cycle of a conflict needs to include early warnings of the development of a conflict, the dynamics of conflict and the process of escalation. Corresponding to a 'ladder of escalation', a basic division of conflict is practical for the purpose of conflict prevention.[12] *Emerging threat* is the lowest level on the ladder of escalation and is regarded as activities within or between countries, which in themselves do not yet involve a dispute, armed conflict or other major crisis but may have the potential to become so as, for example, in the case of the accumulation of large arsenals of weapons or an increasing pattern of human rights abuses indicating major internal instability. One difficulty is, however, to obtain early warning of the emerging potentially violent situation. Structural initiatives to prevent the outbreak of violence could be appropriate in this phase. *Disputes* are the next level on the ladder of escalation and are seen here as disagreements between states or within states which are serious enough to be a potential threat to international peace and security but which have not yet reached the stage of armed conflict. Here, structural preventive strategies need to be complemented by direct measures to prevent the outbreak of violence. Finally*, armed conflicts* are con-

[12] Evans, G., *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond* (Allen & Unwin: St Leonards, NSW, 1993).

sidered to be hostilities of a kind which threaten to violate international peace and security, such as invasions, armed interventions, border clashes, incursions and civil strife. Efforts aiming at preventing the escalation of violence need to be undertaken in this phase.

What are the different strategies and tools of conflict prevention available to the international community and how can they be applied? A toolbox of conflict prevention must include a broad range of both long- and short-term diplomatic, political, cultural, economic and military strategies and tools useful in the different phases of a conflict. These strategies and tools must be efficiently combined in order to achieve the goal of preventing the outbreak, escalation or relapse of a conflict.[13] Many of the tools are not only used for prevention of violent conflicts but, depending on time and context, they can be considered useful for prevention. From a preventive perspective it is important that the tools and strategies are used in a situation in which there is a potential for violent conflict. It may be difficult to identify these potential conflict situations, particularly if the conflict is immediate or distant in time. Of utmost importance are early-warning systems to identify incipient conflicts and perceptiveness to early-warning signals from strategically less important geographical areas.

There are mainly two general methods of prevention. One takes its point of departure in the principle of proportionality, that is, that the measures of prevention should be in proportion to the intensity of violence and to the level of conflict.[14] The second approach disregards proportionality and suggests the need for deterrence to prevent the outbreak or escalation of a conflict.

Preventive efforts to be undertaken by the international community[15]

1. Outbreak prevention
(a) Structural prevention

Political measures: Support democracy development programmes to address one root cause of conflict—undemocratic political systems and weak social structures—as well as schemes designed to promote wider recognition of and avoid suppression of minority rights. Promote political party building, institution building, election reform and training of public officials. Support power-sharing arrangements.

Economic measures: Use development assistance and cooperation to address underlying structural causes of conflict, such as inequitable distribution of

[13] Eliasson, J., 'Outlook: responding to crises', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 26, no. 4 (1995), pp. 405–12, refers to this as a 'ladder of prevention'.

[14] See, e.g., Lund (note 6); and Eliasson (note 13).

[15] This list of special policy tools is to a great extent based on a list developed by Michael Lund in Lund (note 6), but it is complemented by tools identified in *Preventing Violent Conflict—A Swedish Action Plan* (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Stockholm, 1999).

resources; provide beneficiary trade agreements, aid conditionality, and support economic reforms.

Legal measures: Support the development of a judicial system and judicial mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution, judicial and legal reform, the inclusion of minority rights in the constitution, police reform and police education.

Military measures: Support military reform programmes aimed at civilian control of a professional military with a transparent structure; promote alternative defence strategies; support non-aggression agreements; develop broad collective security regimes.

(b) Direct prevention

Official diplomacy: Send and heed early-warning signals; use fact-finding missions, rapporteurs and special envoys; sponsor informal consultations, international appeals/condemnations and moral sanctions; use the 'shame factor'; promote human rights; support unilateral goodwill gestures.

Non-official diplomacy: Support cultural exchanges and development of indigenous, peaceful mechanisms for dispute resolution; establish prevention centres and peace commissions; send 'embarrassing witnesses' such as eminent organizations or individuals; create 'friends' groups; engage in track-two diplomacy, problem-solving workshops and humanitarian diplomacy.

Political measures: Increase political party-to-party diplomacy, exchanges of parliamentarians; support political dialogue between representatives of the parties.

Legal measures: Arbitration, adjudication.

Economic measures: Threaten to withdraw economic assistance and delay investments, to freeze trade agreements and to dissolve joint economic projects.

Military measures: Teach human rights to soldiers; support confidence-building measures and military-to-military cooperation; promote disarmament initiatives; hinder arms races.

2. Escalation prevention

Diplomatic measures: Engage in mediation; support negotiation and conciliation; use good offices, formal consultations; initiate peace conferences; apply diplomatic sanctions; grant diplomatic recognition; withdraw diplomatic recognition; support the establishment of hot lines, coercive diplomacy.

Economic measures: Use economic sanctions; freeze the economic assets of the political elite; withdraw economic assistance; freeze trade agreements; provide humanitarian assistance.

Military measures: Preventive deployment of force, deterrence; use demilitarized zones, arms embargoes and blockades, threat or projection of force; promote and enforce arms control agreements and proliferation control; threat or projection of force, limited military intervention.

3. Relapse prevention

Diplomatic measures: Support truth commissions, national reconciliation efforts; build institutes for national reconciliation to encourage dialogue between cultures, ethnic groups and political parties.

Political measures: Create democratic political parties; promote fair and free elections; develop the election system, election monitoring; strengthen civil society, support education and cross cultural learning; support training in conflict resolution, repatriation or resettlement of refugees and displaced persons; support public servants and journalist training programmes; support neutral and impartial media and international broadcasting; establish trusteeship and protectorates.

Economic measures: Economic reconstruction assistance, economic and resource cooperation, increased trade and beneficiary trade agreements.

Legal measures: Support the development of a judicial system; promote strong property rights; support the establishment of a commission of inquiry, a truth commission, war crimes tribunals, constitutional commissions. Provide impartial personnel to support war crimes tribunals.

Military measures: Demilitarized zones, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, arms control agreements, disarmament.

Concluding remarks: towards an integrated response framework

The problem of obtaining early warning has received a great deal of attention. Yet, the more difficult problem of organizing timely, effective responses to warning has received less attention. The focus of this paper is the need for coherent responses to early warnings. The logic of conflict prevention can be summarized as 'the sooner the better'. Still, decision makers tend to put off hard choices and avoid confronting difficulties and unpalatable decisions, severely limiting the prospects for timely and rapid preventive initiatives. The complexity of today's conflicts combined with the compressed time span within which decision makers are expected to coordinate and articulate a policy to deal with unfolding crises makes it necessary to facilitate the decision-making process by providing decision makers with a clear strategy for conflict prevention. Such strategy should be based on a focused analysis of the root causes and the triggering causes of the conflict and of the early warnings, a well-defined and circumscribed objective of the preventive initiative, and a selection and combination of pertinent preventive tools and the sequencing of the use of these tools forming a coherent strategy relating to the objective of the conflict prevention effort.

3. Creeping institutionalization of the culture of prevention?

Michael Lund

A 'culture' without customs?

It is generally agreed that to be effective conflict prevention requires many types of actors at several levels in disparate cases—the United Nations, regional multilateral organizations, major states, international financial institutions, and international and national NGOs. This presumption seeks to take advantage of the differing geographic coverage, functional instruments and political leverage of multiple actors. It is also consistent with the idea of an eventually pervasive 'culture of prevention', for it evokes an image of conflict prevention activity that is multi-actored, multi-tooled and multi-levelled.

True, one way to foster more frequent and widespread conflict prevention[16] responsiveness might be through formulating and promoting a shared set of ideas and a common moral commitment among the many entities working in the field. Such a pervasive professional outlook would obviate the need for a central decision-making authority for conflict prevention, which is generally recognized as unrealistic. However, like UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's idea of 'loose and temporary global policy networks' that come together to work on international problems, the 'culture of prevention' idea is ultimately too amorphous to provide a practical handle for effective preventive action. It risks diffusing and attenuating responsibility for conflict prevention and thus condoning inaction towards future Kosovos and East Timors. If *everyone* is to do prevention, then *no one* has to. Such a vague culture of prevention might not substantially improve the current uneven performance of conflict prevention around the world.

To define a strategy for advancing conflict prevention further, we need to first acknowledge that conflict prevention is no longer new. In diverse ways, it has been undertaken wherever a critical mass of actors has taken a keen interest in a threatened country. A number of successes can even be claimed: those of the EU and the Council of Europe in Slovakia; the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), the OSCE and other initiatives in the FYROM (Macedonia); the

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[16] The primary definition of conflict prevention used here is actions/policies in threatened country situations in which major civil conflicts have not recently occurred (e.g., Kenya), including preventive peace building (structural prevention), not only violence avoidance.

OAU in the Republic of Congo in 1993; and the UN, the OSCE and others in Estonia and Latvia.[17]

Less visibly but equally significant, there are faint signs that a new international norm may be emerging that supports regular and more thorough conflict prevention. When calamities occur now, there is less talk of how they are a tragic but inevitable consequence of 'ancient ethnic hatreds'. Instead, more doubts are publicly voiced that they could have been avoided, and more questions are asked about what went wrong and who is responsible. Thus, the idea is beginning to be articulated that the international community is accountable for the prevention of man-made calamities. Some indicators of this trend are the public acknowledgements by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and US President Bill Clinton in 1998 that their respective institutions could have acted earlier to prevent the 1994 Rwanda genocide, the official parliamentary inquiries that have taken place in France and Belgium into the roles that their governments may have played in neglecting or worsening that horrendous human calamity, and the legal suit that has been brought by some families of victims of the genocide against the UN Secretary-General for failing to prevent it.

Evidently, the moral and legal stakes are being raised for well-positioned international actors that would hold them accountable for lapses of duty on their *presumed* conflict prevention watch. The underlying message in this recent discourse seems to be that, if violent conflicts are not inevitable and can be prevented with reasonable effort, major international actors are morally bound to act to do what is possible wherever situations could very likely lead to massive violence. Perhaps this norm might eventually become as widely accepted as the prohibition of inter-state aggression and slavery.

In any case, conflict prevention has never been higher on the international policy agenda than at present. In July 2000, for example, the UN Security Council debated the subject for the second time and the G8 summit meeting in Okinawa emphasized it in its final communiqué.

However, the state-of-the-art of conflict prevention falls considerably short of being a pervasive 'culture of prevention'. Anthropologists would tell us that, to become meaningful, any 'culture' has to be constituted by a set of customs and mores. Cultures follow accepted rules that are more or less routinized and consistently enforced. They develop practices to serve specific functions such as physical security and social welfare for the benefit of the community. Obviously, the current status of prevention does not attain anything like such a set of customs. Too many societies fall into the abyss because no conflict prevention safety net yet exists.

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[17] See, e.g., the chapters on the Baltics, Macedonia, the Republic of Congo and other 'success stories' in Jentleson, B. (ed.), *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World* (Rowman & Littlefield: Lanham, Md., 1999).

Current international conflict prevention is still hit-and-miss. Whether action is taken and what action is taken are determined by the evanescent agendas, political accidents, funding and sentiments that influence the decisions and priorities of the central headquarters of the foreign ministries and other agencies of major powers and multilateral organizations. Consequently, the disparate and purely voluntary conflict prevention efforts that are carried out often overlook potential trouble spots, still respond belatedly rather than proactively, and are sometimes overly duplicative because they follow the flow of funds (e.g., few NGOs have actually preceded governments into potential trouble spots). These initiatives often apply universal 'solutions' regardless of their situational appropriateness and feasibility (e.g., human rights advocacy, democratization and civil society building), but they often lack the key prevention tools that may be essential for effectiveness in a par-ticular potential conflict situation. In choosing policy instruments, decision makers do not methodically take into account the existing local peace capacities and defi-ciencies, the level of political polarization and mobilization, and the prevailing societal balances of power. In sum, conflict prevention is not yet activated and guided by regularized monitoring and bottom–up, context-specific country diag-noses that inform the choice of which peculiar mixes of preventive actions are needed in specific settings.

Hence, it would be more apt to describe current practice in conflict prevention as a perverse and inefficient global marketplace in which certain 'suppliers' with spe-cific goods may or may not find 'consumers' with the need for those goods. Some of the consumers have pressed upon them a portion of certain types of standard goods which they do not necessarily want or need (e.g., special envoys, ethnic 'dialogue' projects and elections) while other consumers go without goods from which they could greatly benefit (e.g., substantial targeted economic investment aimed at generating broad wealth and preventive deployment to deter threats of violence). Overall, the current status of conflict prevention reflects rising expecta-tions that responsibility for prevention should be undertaken, but there is no con-sensus as to where specifically that responsibility lies.

Are we then thrown back to the unfeasible idea of looking for a central governing authority if consistent conflict prevention is to take place? Is the only alternative for generating more political will the demanding strategy of publicly advocating conflict prevention in various broad forums? Or is there a more modest alternative that could still markedly improve the ad hoc, patchy record of prevention to date?

Such an approach is feasible. This third option, admittedly elitist and techno-cratic, is to give further support to those hubs of activity where some conflict pre-vention stakeholders, without waiting for a groundswell of public support and top-level political will, have been institutionalizing prevention quietly in incremental ways. This approach identifies the specific places where those concrete further

steps towards the operationalization of conflict prevention are being taken, and advocates more support to those efforts.[18]

Unheralded advances

There are a number of recent incremental steps towards rationalizing and institutionalizing conflict prevention that could be taken further.

Pressure is increasing for more effective prevention.

Recent conventional wisdom has identified the lack of political will, rather than lack of early warning, as the problem for conflict prevention. There is a dawning realization, however, that the problem is not merely getting *some* action but getting *effective* action, or at minimum 'doing no harm'. Practitioners are increasingly expected not just to launch initiatives and run programmes but to achieve tangible results towards the ultimate goal of sustainable peace in both potential and post-conflict interventions. The following developments have stimulated this pressure for effectiveness:

- Reversals or setbacks in international post-conflict missions that were previously celebrated as successes (e.g., Angola and Cambodia).
- Errors made by ostensibly preventive or peace-building actions, such as conferring diplomatic recognition on Croatia in 1991 without guaranteeing its security and failing to vigorously enforce aid conditionalities in Rwanda in 1993–94.[19]
- Increased questioning of whether humanitarian aid has adverse effects in abetting conflicts, such as in the maintaining of Hutu Interhamwe militants in refugee camps in eastern Zaire from 1994 to 1997, after their exodus from Rwanda.
- Programme evaluations by funding agencies and foundations, concerned that their money is not well spent. Findings in some instances reveal the limits of frequently used and well-meaning types of initiative, such as NGO 'track-two' diplomacy and economic development.
- Concern that unqualified championing of certain values, such as the promotion of democracy and minority rights, may result in actions that actually increase the risk of violent conflict, for example, such as the promotion of majoritarian elections in highly divided societies.[20]

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[18] This does not force conflict prevention responsibility *a priori* on given actors. However, as confidence grows from repeated experience of undertaking collaborative and successful prevention, specific duties and more focused institutional responsibility can be assigned.

[19] See the missed opportunities in Bosnia and Rwanda described in Jentleson (note 17).

[20] See, e.g., Reilly, B., 'Voting is good, except when it guarantees war', *Washington Post*, 17 Oct. 1999, p. B2.

- Findings from empirical studies of early-warning research which show that half-hearted or unbalanced international preventive interventions may be interpreted by determined oppressors as a go-ahead signal to carry out more oppression with impunity.[21]

In sum, the direction and tone of the prevention discussion in professional circles are shifting from viewing the problem simply as inaction to viewing it also as ineffective action. The recent policy errors have occurred in places of potential conflict where international actors are already present and carrying out programmes, not where they have no missions at work. There is a deeper awareness that the existing array of commercial, trade, aid and other international policies and actions inevitably become part of the factors that determine the course and outcomes of conflict, and that they often can worsen the situation.[22] Thus, if prevention failure has involved not only acts of *omission* but also acts of *commission*, the current challenge is no longer simply whether action is taken, but whether appropriate action is taken. In response to incipient conflict situations, it is no longer sufficient merely to press for preventive action: international actors need to exercise political wisdom as well as political will.

Policy-relevant lessons are being gathered by systematic comparative research.

Several volumes of empirically grounded and comparative case studies have been completed about recent preventive intervention successes and failures which provide lessons for future action. These have pinpointed key elements that are often needed for effectiveness at the *macro-level* (i.e., the whole conflict arena), and they have studied the impacts of particular instruments at the *micro-level* (e.g., mediation, positive incentives such as membership in multilateral organizations and development aid, and local inter-group development projects).[23]

[21] One might venture a hypothesis that this pattern has been evident in the international responses to Rwanda, 1993–94; Burundi, 1993; Kosovo, 1992–98; and East Timor, 1999. The international community's championing of a political minority's rights, e.g., through honouring unofficial referendums or denouncing the human rights violations of their oppressors, may polarize local relations further, demonize the perpetrators and catalyse violence if the international community is unable to deter the forces of potential violent backlash. Violence *prevention* becomes violence *precipitation* if well-intentioned measures advanced on behalf of a vulnerable group put them at greater risk by provoking more powerful local factions to pre-empt militarily the threat of political change and make no adequate provision for protecting the weaker side from the better-armed forces of reaction.

[22] See, e.g., Uvin, P., *The Influence of Aid in Situations of Violent Conflict* (OECD: Paris, 1999).

[23] See, e.g., Miall, H., *The Peacemakers: Peaceful Settlement of Disputes since 1945* (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1992); Munuera, G., *Preventing Armed Conflict in Europe: Lessons from Recent Experience* (Western European Union, Institute for Security Studies: Paris, June 1994); Lund (note 6); Wallensteen (note 10); Lund, M., Rubin, B. and Hara, F., 'Learning from Burundi's failed democratic transition, 1993–96: did international initiatives match the problem?', ed. B. Rubin, *Cases and Strategies of Preventive Action* (Century Foundation Press: New York, 1998); Väyrynen, R. *et al., Inventive and Preventive Diplomacy* (Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame: Notre Dame, Ind., 1999); Esman, M. J., 'Can foreign aid moderate ethnic

Conflict prevention criteria and procedures are slowly being institutionalized at headquarters and routinized in normal field operations.

Small 'cells' of professionals at the lower and middle levels of a number of foreign affairs and development bureaucracies, largely through bureaucratic re-engineering, have begun to take quiet steps to regularize conflict prevention as standard operating procedure. Almost all major state and multilateral donors have set up conflict prevention or management units and are trying to 'mainstream' conflict/peace-building criteria by making their annual or periodic country-level development assistance reporting and programming procedures conflict-sensitive. This is in addition to the earlier institutionalization of early-warning and conflict-prevention decision procedures within some international organizations, such as the mandatory preventive procedures of the Organization of American States (OAS) in the form of its Resolution 1080 against anti-democratic actions (used in Peru, Guatemala and Venezuela), and specific conflict prevention officials in the field (e.g., the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities operating throughout Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia).

   The fine-tuning of development policies can help to avoid objections from host governments that the interventions are violating sovereignty. If it can be shown that development programmes need to be designed in certain ways to avoid the risk of generating violent turmoil, host governments can hardly argue against such provisions on the grounds of infringement of sovereignty. There is no international right to the toleration or sponsorship of violent conflict.

Inter-agency donor consultation is increasing at the headquarters level, and intra-agency reviews at the country level are beginning to integrate an array of tools into more coherent, comprehensive conflict strategies.

For example:

*   The UN Secretariat has put into operation a Framework of Coordination that links 10 UN agencies in forward-looking early warning and conflict prevention.
*   Through annual country-level strategy development tools (e.g., Common Country Assessments and the Development Assistance Framework) and the emerging concept of the 'country team', the UN Secretariat and other actors are encouraging system-wide perspectives for all the instruments in the UN's toolbox to be examined and implemented as potential vehicles for preventive action.

conflict?', *Peaceworks* (United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC), no. 13 (Mar. 1998); and Jentleson (note 17).

- Inter-agency training in early warning, conflict analysis and prevention strategy development has been taking place in the UN and the EU.
- Practical manuals and other field-level decision support tools that link early warning with appropriate responses are being developed and disseminated by the EU, the UN and others.[24]
- Donors have been consulting and swapping their analytical frameworks and studies through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Task Force on Peace and Development, a donors' consultative network, and occasional joint inter-agency high- and middle-level meetings (e.g., EU–World Bank and EU–US Agency for International Development).

Recommended next steps

To significantly improve the frequency, geographic extent and effectiveness of conflict prevention, the above starting points could be taken a few steps further, as follows:

Lessons learned. Distil and disseminate the now available research findings to the various conflict units, desk officers and field staffs within foreign ministries and development agencies. Put the findings into usable checklists that identify entry-points where key ingredients may be missing and thus needed in national diplomacy and aid strategies.

Ladder of prevention instruments. Commission further research on the particular combined packages of diplomatic, political and economic development instruments (e.g., conditional aid and preventive deployment) that, under certain conditions, have succeeded in preventing violent escalations at different levels of hostilities and have substituted non-violent means for achieving social change.

Joint training. Expand the existing UN series of inter-agency conflict analysis and prevention strategy training weeks to include all other major prevention actors, so that a more common analytical and decision-making framework is followed by separate country operations.

Joint in-country analysis. Urge the heads of the G8, donor governments and international financial institutions (IFIs) to authorize their members' respective development staffs to engage informally with each other at the country level in joint analyses of each host country's conflict vulnerabilities and peace-building opportunities. These meetings should draw on the research regarding lessons learned mentioned above. Such joint analysis could, over time, encourage more complementary in-country programmes. UN Resident Coordinators or Special

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[24] See, e.g., Lund, M. and Mehler, A. *et al.*, *Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention in Developing Countries* (Conflict Prevention Network, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik: Munich, 1999), a manual for country desk officers commissioned by the European Commission, DG VIII.

Representatives, EU delegations or key NGOs (e.g., FEWER) could take the initiative and act as convenors and facilitators of these consultations.

Peace and conflict impact assessments. Authorize these actors to screen, prospectively and retrospectively, all of their explicit conflict prevention as well as other sectoral programmes with evaluative criteria that assess their likely impacts on worsening conflict or building peace.

Conclusion

The better analysis and planning procedures recommended above will not alone significantly change existing political priorities, but they can build up a basis for sound policy making for the time when conflict prevention advocacy begins to increase decision makers' political will. Better analysis is needed even when there is political will. More publicity, lobbying and political will not by themselves lead to more effective prevention policy decisions. In fact, popularization of an awareness of conflicts and of the promise of conflict prevention could worsen policy decisions, just as responding to public sentiment in some instances has led to unwise choices during humanitarian crisis interventions. Political will needs to be accompanied by solid analysis of the likely consequences of various policies and using that analysis to inform various agencies' regularized procedures for applying policy instruments in differing contexts.

In the meantime, knowing that there is a plausible and tried 'way' may itself actually increase political will by building up decision makers' confidence that they can initiate preventive action without taking huge risks (and making them more aware they may be held accountable later if they have not tried some plausible actions).

4. Democracy and prevention

David A. Hamburg

The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict delineates a variety of factors conducive to peaceful living–structural prevention. Among these, none is more important than democratic development. This refers to the value of democratic attitudes, practices and institutions in both the political and the economic sphere. These are intrinsically valuable in terms of opportunity, participation and decent human relations. They also have special and distinctive attributes in the perennial striving of humanity for peace with justice.

Democratic traditions evolve in ways that build mechanisms for dealing with the ubiquitous conflicts that arise in the course of human experience. Democracy seeks ways to deal fairly with conflicts and to resolve them below the threshold of mass violence. This is a difficult process and there are failures, but the general tendency is clear and strong.

Some of the attitudes, beliefs and procedures of democratic societies are useful in inter-group conflict generally, both within and beyond state borders. Informally as well as officially, processes of negotiation and mediation are common. There is a habit of trying to see the perspective of other people and learning mutual accommodation from early life onward. People become accustomed to a pluralistic society. They learn the art of compromise, seeking something satisfactory for all elements of the society.

Democracies seek to protect human rights, and most do so fairly well. They are not likely to cause large-scale egregious human rights violations that lead to intense fear, severe resentment, desire for revenge and major violence to redress grievances.

Moreover, the established democracies are strong now and getting stronger: economically, politically, technically and militarily. They are also in search of better human relations, internally and externally, having learned something from the extremes of hatred and violence throughout the 20th century. This impulse needs activation to fulfil the promise of democracy in informed, proactive, sustained efforts to prevent deadly conflict through just solutions and improved living conditions.

Any democracy needs a systematic, fair process for implementing the consent of the governed. There must be a system of representation but no single kind will suffice. Around the world, in governments generally recognized to be democratic, there are many different representative arrangements: parliamentary or presidential; centralized or federal; single member districts or proportional representation; exceptional majorities required for certain purposes viewed as particularly vital;

plebiscites for constitutional change; and special arrangements to protect the rights of vulnerable minorities. Across these variations is a common theme of fairness, of broad participation and of access on a large scale to the decisions that affect the lives of the population in important ways.

Facing obstacles and difficult transitions

There are many obstacles in the way of well-functioning democracy that provide an antidote to complacency or smugness. However fundamental the advantages of democracy are, they remain imperfect, requiring constant vigilance and ongoing adjustments to avoid the erosion of democratic values and practices. Among the problems that require persistent or recurrent coping are: the necessity to raise large sums of money in order to conduct modern, media-based campaigns; the persistence of prejudice in virtually every society in one form or another; the power of special interest groups, often more or less fanatical in their behaviour; excessive fractionation in some parliamentary systems so that pluralism becomes unworkable; and a recurrent need to rebalance powers among the constituent elements of the society, including the balance between majority rule and protection of minorities.

The present circumstances in the world require consideration of emerging, transitional and limited democracies. The history of Western Europe reveals a variety of transitions to democracy and variations on the theme of building democratic institutions. Additional examples have emerged in recent decades.

Democracy is structured to avoid a massive concentration of political and economic power. A highly centralized, command economy is not compatible with authentic democracy. There is simply too much power concentrated in the government that employs everyone, controls all resources and readily abuses human rights. Pluralism is at the heart of democracy; it permits and fosters the dynamic interplay of ideas, enterprises, parties and a great variety of NGOs on the basis of reasonably clear, agreed upon rules.

Democracies with strong market economies see to it that there are safety nets for those in seriously disadvantaged circumstances; moreover, they make public arrangements for vital human requirements such as education, health care and unemployment insurance. They employ progressive taxation in the interest of public fairness and seek ways to foster equality of opportunity. Indeed, all modern democracies make deliberate efforts to balance efficiency with social justice.

Democracy needs a supportive culture in which elites accept the principles underlying free speech, religious freedom, the rule of law, human rights and other fundamentals. The importance of political culture poses a profound challenge to the recent democratic transitions in the former communist countries. However, belief systems do change; the development of capitalism, a large middle class and an

organized working class, as well as increased education and wealth, can promote secularism, civil society and other prerequisites for democracy. This seems to be the case in recent transitions in the Confucian societies of Taiwan and South Korea.

Civil society builds democracy by allowing the evolution of democratic values through non-violent conflict. Groups compete with each other and with the state for the power to carry out specific agendas. Within the context of institutionalized competition, tolerance and acceptance of opposition develop. Civil society provides the opportunity for coalitions of individuals to undertake innovative activities, for example, in the service of equal opportunity or protection of human rights. Institutions of civil society have an increasingly important role to play beyond their national boundaries. They can work with counterparts on an international basis, not only to build democratic institutions but also to help prevent deadly conflict in other ways.

Facilitating the emergence of democracy through international cooperation

We pride ourselves in having humanitarian concerns for those who suffer in any part of the world, and massive operations are often mounted at considerable risk in order to relieve such suffering. However, the building of democratic institutions is one of the greatest possible *preventive* measures that could be taken. Can we formulate a decent minimum of democratic facilitation for all (or almost all) countries? Should the international community adopt a worldwide democratic orientation? If so, that would entail a vigorous, sustained effort for education of publics through the media and the formal educational systems about democratic experiences. Which structures and functions are vital for the emergence of a viable democracy? How can the international community make these widely known and understood? Certainly there is a vaguely formulated aspiration that has been sweeping the world in recent years. The international community must address the translation of this aspiration into the reality of emerging democracy.

A rigid, narrow approach is not the answer to fostering a democratic atmosphere, values and climate worldwide. Since resources are limited, the democratic community will have to make priorities in such efforts. One consideration is the importance of a particular country in the world at large—for example, the manifest significance of Russia in many dimensions. There are also important considerations involving the practical prospects for successful democratic development. Some priority will be given to investment where it is most likely to make a beneficial difference in the foreseeable future. There is also a need to consider some sampling of countries in each region of the world that can serve as a beachhead for democratic impulses and a constructive model for the region. Special efforts will be needed when a promising though fragile democracy is experiencing a reversal that

jeopardizes its future. All such efforts are more likely to be effective if there is extensive international cooperation within the democratic community.

Should every established democratic government have an agency whose primary purpose is to facilitate the development of democracies throughout the world? Such agencies would be likely to develop the necessary sensitivity to cultural differences, the history of particular countries and the skills necessary to be generally helpful. The trend of recent years has been towards the creation of such units in or close to government. Although governments certainly have a major role to play, these efforts should not be thought of as purely governmental or even resting on intergovernmental international institutions, important as they are. There is a significant role for a great variety of NGOs. They, too, need international cooperation to be effective.

What are the most effective means for promoting democracy? In the case of new, emerging and fragile democracies, it is valuable to strengthen the political and civic infrastructure of democracy. This involves technical assistance and financial aid to build the requisite processes and institutions, including widespread education of publics about the actual working of democracy. It involves many kinds of help: the conduct of elections at both the national and local levels; the establishment of legislative bodies at the national and local levels, including adequate support services; the creation of a rule of law embodied in an explicit and legal framework, including a constitution; an independent judiciary with real capacity for implementing laws fairly; oversight institutions for public accountability; political and public administration of a professional nature; civilian institutional capacities for security questions, both within and beyond the borders of the country; special measures to protect individual human rights, minority groups and vulnerable sectors; mechanisms to deal with conflict that can be perceived as fair to all and effective in preventing violence; political parties to enable democratic participation but with no attempt to favour one party over another so long as they are all within the democratic family; and the institutions of civil society (non-governmental) in addressing important issues of concern to the population such as working conditions, the environment, human rights, science and technology, and independent media.

Towards these ends, it is desirable that the democratic community establishes, singly and together, special funds for economic assistance that will be used to strengthen democracies that are making a serious effort to put their democratic institutions on an enduring basis. Such funds may be administered through NGOs as well as government agencies and international multilateral organizations. Both funding and technical assistance must be sustained over a period of years to support the complicated processes of democracy building.

The international democratic community must make a serious effort to intervene as best it can to protect fragile democracies when they are seriously jeopardized by new developments: natural disasters, violent ethnic conflicts or authoritarian foci

within the society. It is important to have a system of early warning so that the democratic community can recognize when a democracy is slipping into crisis. International mediation at an early stage could usefully be developed beyond the present efforts. Building new democracies will have to include the fostering of innovative institutional arrangements that take account of dangerous sensitivities likely to engender serious conflict and build mechanisms to accommodate ethnic, religious, linguistic and political diversity. The embassies of well-established democratic countries could serve as a focal point in each emerging, fragile democracy for intellectual, technical and moral support, not only in building democratic institutions in relatively good times but also for preventing deadly conflict when warning signals become clear.

There is a great need, all the way from fundamental principles to operational details, to educate for democracy. Indeed, in the era of modern telecommunications, it might be feasible to have a worldwide democratic network under highly respected auspices—perhaps a mix of governmental and non-governmental supporters. Such a network could present many interesting examples of ongoing efforts to build and strengthen democratic institutions in rich and poor communities alike. It could present basic concepts, processes and institutions. This could be done in a variety of languages and be adapted to many cultures. Thus, it might be feasible to enhance the level of understanding throughout the world of what is involved in democracy and its potential benefits for all, including especially its capacity for non-violent conflict resolution.

Democratic engineering and power sharing

Many paths to mutual accommodation in heterogeneous countries are possible. These include federation or confederation, regional or functional autonomy, and cultural pluralism within each nation and across national boundaries—above all, democratic institutions.

The option of confederation is important in today's world. In general, this is a form of democratic government that can accommodate a variety of orientations and cultural preferences, including highly parochial ones. It can foster tolerant and widely participatory orientations. In effect, it is a kind of decentralized, loosely organized, inclusive democracy. Such a democracy can be accountable to the people, effectively protect minorities, live by the rule of law, and represent its people fairly and relate to other peoples in the same vein.

In view of the epidemic of ethnocentric violence in the 1990s, it is vital to learn lessons from the world's experience with mitigating such violence where—as is commonly the case—different ethnic groups have lived together for a long time. In the most deadly conflict cases, ethnically based political parties pervade civilian politics and there are no inter-ethnic parties. If an intense fear of competition exists

between different ethnic groups, the danger is great. When there is also a past experience of domination, the risks of severe conflict are formidable. The real or imagined loyalty of one ethnic group to an outside entity can fuel antagonism. So, too, can demographic changes that stimulate fear in one group that it will be swallowed up by another.

Civilian non-governmental actors must be fostered to play a role in every major facet of these societies. They can be particularly significant in the protection of human rights, including minority rights. In tense, multi-ethnic societies, political institutions may well find it useful to shift to a percentage-based proportional representation in parliaments and to take other measures that avoid harsh majority domination. Another possibility is to decide on a fixed number of seats for each minority living within a republic. This kind of effort often requires continuing participation by the international community to help in formulating standards and monitoring implementation. Multiparty systems and free elections are necessary but not sufficient conditions for building a stable peace. Many projects are needed to serve as bridge builders between the peoples of the different ethnic groups that have been suspicious of each other. Local branches of international organizations may be particularly helpful.

There are several conditions under which power-sharing arrangements are most likely to be successful: when they are embraced by a core group of moderate political leaders who are genuinely representative of the groups that they purport to lead; when the practices are flexible and allow for equitable distribution of resources; when the arrangements are developed locally and are region-specific; and when parties can gradually eliminate the extraordinary measures that some power-sharing arrangements entail and allow a more integrative and liberal form of democracy to emerge.

Historically, there is little precedent for deliberate, systematic, well-organized international efforts to help substantially with this process of democratization. It is important to draw on diverse recent efforts. What are the most valuable lessons to be learned? What is the role of the UN? What is the role of the established democracies? How can each facilitate the work of useful NGOs? How can the latter be coordinated with each other and with governmental bodies?

Building democratic societies with market economies in a technically competent and ethically sound way is a clear path to structural prevention. In this direction, albeit with large bumps in the road over long and hard distances, can be found the conditions conducive to peaceful and productive living.

5. Divisions of labour between international, regional and subregional organizations

Renata Dwan

International, regional and subregional organizations have become increasingly significant actors in the contemporary management of conflict and peace. This is largely a consequence of the end of the cold war and the bipolar antagonism that severely constrained collective action at the international level. The demise of superpower rivalry also removed the two principal external brokers of local and regional conflicts around the world, leaving international organizations with little choice but to step into the resulting power vacuums. Yet the rise of international institutions is also a function of longer-term trends towards increased transnational interaction among states and non-state actors, a process facilitated by technological and communication advances. The primacy of international organizations, be they general or functional in nature, reflects a common understanding that the regulation of international stability and order necessitates coordinating mechanisms and organizations. This view is particularly pertinent in discussions of international conflict prevention. This paper briefly reviews the advantages and disadvantages that international organizations bring to conflict prevention and the extent to which effective divisions of labour might be developed among them.

International organizations and conflict prevention

If collective international bodies have taken a front-line role in the past decade, they could be described as the lead characters in the effort to establish international conflict prevention. There are strong incentives for the states that make up international, regional and subregional organizations to direct their conflict prevention efforts through collective channels.[25] First, prevention is often a low-profile, non-opportunistic process and one that is not likely to give national governments and leaders the exposure they generally seek. The long-term nature of many prevention processes, especially those directed at the structural conditions for conflict, is another reason for governments, driven by short-term electoral considerations, to work through international forums. A third consideration is cost and the perceived expense involved in elaborating preventive policies. The pooling of national

[25] Subregional is defined here as groupings of neighbouring states within a wider given region, e.g., Europe, Asia or Africa, that are recognized as such by the UN. See, e.g., UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Lessons Learned Unit, *Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Organizations/Arrangements in a Peacekeeping Environment: Suggested Principles and Mechanisms* (UN: New York, Mar. 1999).

resources represents a more manageable and ultimately effective solution to the problem of cost. Finally, national governments have recognized, albeit belatedly, how crucial coordination is for effective prevention of conflict. Current conflicts in Africa demonstrate how lack of coherence in international policies, for example, in the observance of sanctions, has substantially contributed to the outbreak, escalation and maintenance of violent conflict.[26] Cooperation through international organizations represents the most feasible means of bringing about the coordination needed for the successful prevention of conflict.

In addition, international organizations possess a number of distinct qualities that make them likely contenders for prevention coordination. The UN represents and expresses the will of the international community: the legitimacy of regional and subregional organizations stems from their subscription to the principles of the UN Charter. The Charter sets out the rights of the UN and regional organizations to engage in pacific settlement of disputes, noting, in the process, the primacy of the UN in the management of peace and security.[27] Global and regional organizations, by virtue of their size and structure, are often perceived as more neutral than individual or smaller groups of states and this facilitates their role as dispassionate actors in cases of threatened or actual conflict. Moreover, by encouraging shared norms between member states, international organizations enable agreement and cooperation on previously unnegotiated areas. The OSCE's success in establishing prevention as a matter of common concern and the agreement of its members to commit to 'identify the root causes of tension' is perhaps the strongest example of this norm-building function.[28] Above all, international and regional engagement in prevention underscores the connection between intra-state conflicts and the wider environment.

On a practical level, international and regional organizations have structures and functional expertise vital in establishing policies of prevention. The UN, the OSCE, the EU, the Council of Europe, the OAU, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the SADC, the OAS and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have, with varying degrees of specialization and success, established institutional frameworks for information sharing between member states. Most of them are already comprehensively engaged in areas related to peace and security and, specifically, to the root causes of conflict—humanitarian and

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[26] See, e.g., 'UN Report of the Panel of Experts on Violations of Security Council Sanctions against UNITA, 10 Mar. 2000', in UN, Letter dated 10 March 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola addressed to the President of the Security Council, UN document S/2000/203, 10 Mar. 2000, available at the United Nations Internet site, URL <http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/angolareport_eng.htm>.

[27] UN Charter, Chapters VI, VII and VIII.

[28] The commitment to preventive action was made at the 1992 Helsinki Summit. For further discussion of the OSCE see Cohen, J., *Conflict Prevention in the OSCE: An Assessment of Capacities*, Clingendael Study 9 (Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael: The Hague, 1999).

development assistance, human rights, economic integration and cooperative security relations. This provides a rich resource for preventive action and a mechanism for the coordination of unilateral efforts by state and other non-state actors (*inter alia*, international financial institutions, transnational corporations, the media and NGOs).

International organizations of all types, however, are prone to weaknesses that affect their preventive policies and hamper coordination between them. These problems are related not only to limitations imposed by the practices of member states but to the nature of the organizations themselves. The bureaucratic structure of many organizations is a serious impediment to rapid and flexible policy action. The bureaucracies of international institutions often demonstrate a narrow perspective and a preoccupation with staking out territories, which makes them resistant to innovative or combined approaches. An emphasis on generally applicable rules can make international organizations unsuited to devising targeted policies for specific conflict situations.[29] These weaknesses are compounded when international organizations interact with each other, with inter-agency rivalry often subsuming effective policy coordination. One need only think of the Balkans (notably post-war Bosnia) to be forcefully reminded of this. A more long-term weakness is the prevailing culture of 'no blame'. In organizations as large and bureaucratic as the UN or the EU, it is, perhaps, too easy to avoid real assignations of responsibility. This plays itself out in a lack of post-case assessment and in a failure to review policies and actions. This is particularly important for the development of prevention policies where the need for a record of preventive action, and an assessment of successes and failures, is crucial to learning processes.

The demands of prevention on international organizations

Prevention, be it 'light' or 'deep', is a highly demanding endeavour. It involves actions across multiple sectors—political, economic, military and socio-cultural—and targets a wide range of governmental and non-governmental actors in a particular society. These actions usually take place simultaneously and have distinct mechanisms and time-frames. In order to operationalize sustainable preventive strategies, therefore, multiple external and internal agents are required. Preventive action must incorporate government and non-governmental actors, top–down- and bottom–up-oriented approaches, and national as well as transnational frameworks. One great advantage of international and regional organizations is their potential to serve as forums for interaction and coordination among diverse actors. The success of this gathering site function, however, depends on the extent to which the organi-

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[29] For further discussion see Barnett, M. J. and Finnemore, M., 'The politics, power and pathologies of international organizations', *International Organization*, vol. 53, no. 4 (autumn 1999), pp. 699–732.

zation in question actively reaches out to all relevant actors. The size and state-centric bias of most organizations tend to militate against this. Regional and sub-regional organizations, in this regard, are better placed to bring together diverse actors, given their smaller size and more focused geographical and/or functional scope.

The challenge of coordinating multiple instruments and actors makes it almost inevitable that international organizations try to establish hierarchical and functional frameworks for coordination. The imperative of flexible responsiveness for successful prevention, however, suggests that a rigid delineation of responsibilities among actors could impede, rather than facilitate, effective preventive action. The UN Secretary-General's Millennium Report has tacitly acknowledged this, noting that formal institutional arrangements may not keep up with the scope and speed of the changing global agenda. Kofi Annan recommends instead the formation of 'loose and temporary global policy networks that cut across national institutional and disciplinary lines'.[30] While these potential networks challenge the structures and hierarchies of international organizations, they also propel international organizations to dominance in facilitating such frameworks. International organizations can help ensure contact between emerging global networks and provide the transparency that is often a concern for sovereign states.

Divisions of labour between organizations

There are five main areas in which coordination between international, regional and subregional organizations is important. These are: information sharing, especially in early warning; consultation, both regular and in specific situations of conflict vulnerability; decision making on specific cases of prevention; coordination of prevention policies; and assessment of prevention efforts.

Information sharing

The exchange and pooling of information within the context of conflict prevention can be divided into two main fields: information about situations of potential or threatened conflict (described broadly as early warning) and the preventive activities of the relevant actors involved. There exists a substantial literature on the problems associated with early-warning systems and the challenges of coordination between them.[31] Different criteria of conflict potential, systems of information collection and formality of frameworks make it difficult for international bodies to exchange early-warning information. This is compounded by considerations of confidentiality and fear that undue publicity may actually increase the potential for

[30] Annan (note 1), p. 70.
[31] See, e.g., the discussion in Leatherman, J. *et al.*, *Breaking Cycles of Violence: Conflict Prevention in Intrastate Crises* (Kumarian Press: West Hartford, Conn., 1999), chapter 2.

violent conflict. At the same time, it is worth considering whether these obstacles to information sharing are not overplayed. The interdependent and media-dominated worlds in which international organizations operate have substantially altered our ability to gather and circulate information on conflict-vulnerable areas, and it is hard to think of many current conflicts in which the potential for violence had not already been internationally recognized.

What is far more difficult is assessing the motivations, shifting balances and actions of parties in a dispute, particularly in intra-state crises where disputing parties are often at some remove from the international level. Subregional organizations can be particularly useful sources of early warning here, first because of their closer proximity to the situation on the ground and, second, by virtue of the inclusion of regional and local authorities and civil society in their activities. The subregional level, therefore, can be a useful gathering point for early early warning and can serve as a channel to transmit information to the wider international arena.

Consultation

Information sharing is one important and distinct form of consultation, but consultation implies more than the simple exchange of data. It suggests a propensity to dialogue and an openness to take on board advice and recommendations. It is not sufficient to assume that overlapping memberships will ensure regular consultation between international, regional and subregional organizations on preventive policies and crises. Instead, regular consultation on prevention in general, and in specific cases as applicable, should be fostered. Such interaction could serve as a useful way of encouraging different organizations to think about their entire range of policies and activities through a preventive lens. On a practical level it could also facilitate policy coordination and informal divisions of labour between the different organizations. Above all, regular consultation can assist external actors in reviewing the collectivity of their preventive efforts and whether the various policies are undermining or assisting each other. Such consultation would be particularly useful in the application of long-term preventive measures.

The formal nature of consultation procedures between international, regional and subregional institutions does little to facilitate regular, substantive consultation. One possible way of improving this could be to 'regionalize' consultations. Meetings held in specific regions, administered by the appropriate regional organization or, where resources permit, by the relevant subregional organization, would underscore the significance of regional and subregional institutions while assisting the creation of loose policy networks. Such a process was established within the OSCE context by subregional organizations active in South-Eastern Europe. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the South-Eastern European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and the EU's Royaumont

Process meet regularly in Vienna to consult on activities.[32] Although the meetings are not devoted to prevention *per se*, they offer a potentially useful model for generating consultation.

Decision making

The decision to initiate short-term preventive action in crisis situations is based on informed assessment of the potential for violent conflict. Collective action, therefore, is dependent on a shared assessment of a crisis situation as well as a willingness to coordinate responses. Such coherence is not always easy to obtain, particularly in short-term emergency situations. One way of managing this is to establish permanent contact between the various bureaucratic departments responsible for prevention. In Europe, contacts between the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, the EU High Representative's Policy Planning Unit, the UN Department of Political Affairs and those subregional organizations with a secretariat could be deepened with a view to expediting preventive decision making. The UN has already taken innovative steps in its relations with the OAU to facilitate coordination, including the establishment of a political liaison office and personnel and training assistance to increase the OAU's conflict management capabilities.[33]

The issue of legitimacy is an important one for external action in intra-state crises. Where substantial short-term preventive action is involved, the UN must take the primary role both as the forum for collective decision making and as the principal coordinator of subsequent action. This notwithstanding, the Security Council, as the UN's central decision-making body, could do more to bring regional and subregional organizations into its deliberations. Representatives of the organizations involved, for example, could be invited to attend specific Security Council meetings. Briefings and assessments from the states and NGOs most involved should also be encouraged.

Coordination of policies

Although the record of conflict prevention in the 1990s remains ambivalent, one emerging conclusion is the relative lack of success of 'big' conflict prevention. Functional strategies, smaller in scope and longer in perspective, seem to be demonstrating greater preventive worth than large-scale, frequently last-minute initiatives. Increased coordination of the multiple small-scale activities carried out by various international organizations would undoubtedly contribute to making the preventive sum more than its distinct parts and, more important, help identify gaps

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[32] In general see Dwan, R. (ed.), *Building Security in Europe's New Borderlands: Subregional Cooperation in the Wider Europe* (M. E. Sharpe Inc.: Armonk, N.Y., 1999).

[33] Report of the Secretary-General on enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity, UN document S/1999/171, 12 Feb. 1999.

in current strategies. It could conceivably also help reduce duplication of resources and efforts.

The very nature of such functional, low-key approaches, however, makes them resistant to over-formalization. The process-oriented approach of many preventive activities, for example, the multiple efforts to foster inter-ethnic tolerance in South-Eastern Europe, is defined by its potential applicability to different sectors of societies in different ways at different times. It would be self-defeating, therefore, to rigidly codify polices of international, regional and subregional actors in order to clarify divisions of labour. Indeed, a degree of over-duplication is to be welcomed, to the extent that each organization and/or policy reinforces similar messages. The coordination of preventive policy implementation, then, should be guided by two objectives: to ensure comprehensive preventive action (multi-sectoral and multi-level) in a particular situation; and, second, to ensure that the actions of external actors do not directly contradict and thereby contribute to the potential for violence.

Assessment

Strategies for prevention will be further developed only if assessments and conclusions are drawn from experiences to date. International, regional and subregional organizations, as noted, have not tended to devote substantial effort to analysing their record of action and, as a result, have continued to be primarily reactive in nature. Effective prevention requires proactive policies, however, and places greater onus on external actors to learn from past efforts. International organizations, potentially, have an advantage in assessment, given their ability to act as a collector and storage house for the diverse reports and views of member states and various international agencies. International bureaucracies, moreover, may possess comparative experience that subregional organizations and/or individual actors lack. Assessment resources, therefore, could be pooled in larger regional or UN frameworks. The UN structure has already begun to evince a greater propensity towards assessment and critical self-review, a process that could be extended to international preventive action.[34]

Conclusion

International organizations, by their very existence, represent an important preventive mechanism between participating states. All interstate organizations, therefore,

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[34] The most significant examples of this self-criticism are Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/35, Srebrenica Report, UN document A/54/549, 15 Nov. 1999; and Report of the independent inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, 15 Dec. 1999, United Nations Internet site, URL <http://www.un.org/News/ossg/rwanda_report.htm>.

can be seen as exercises in prevention. Second, international, regional and sub-regional organizations represent certain shared norms: introducing prevention as a central subject for these organizations is an important way of building a culture of prevention and a common understanding about its practice. The transparency and perceived legitimacy of preventive action are enhanced through leadership from international organizations.

The nature of prevention further propels international, regional and subregional organizations to dominance. All prevention requires an enormous variety of policy instruments and is targeted at a wide range of actors. It is directed along short-, medium- and long-term tracks, usually simultaneously. No unilateral state or non-state actor can meet these conditions. Ultimately, the complete coordination of all preventive action is impossible: what international, regional and subregional organizations can provide is forums for regular general consultation and a good degree of coordination in cases of specific prevention. It would be desirable, therefore, to substantially increase the resources of international and regional bureaucracies so that greater direct attention could be given to prevention.

The overall desirability and case-specific need for international coordination in prevention should not, however, obscure the independence of regional and sub-regional organizations. The requirements of long-term structural prevention, in particular, may make subregional and multi-functional regional organizations the most appropriate external actors. Over-enthusiastic efforts at the international level to coordinate and manage efforts at lower levels could undermine and fatally weaken regional/subregional preventive activities. Moreover, a rigidly defined hierarchy would thwart the multiplicity of actors that makes external action less threatening to a target state and/or society. Such considerations also extend to the crucial involvement of NGOs.

The appropriate division of labour between international, regional and sub-regional actors will, therefore, be case-specific. General preventive coordination could be facilitated through regular regionally focused meetings coordinated by regional and subregional organizations and incorporating participating states, international organizations and relevant non-governmental actors. International bureaucracies could be encouraged to establish permanent channels of communication and information exchange. Prevention, in the long run, may force us to reverse the traditional division of labour between international (peace and security management) and regional (more functionally oriented) organizations. Ultimately, it may well prompt a rethinking of the fundamental pattern of the division of labour in the international system, that between the sovereign state and international non-state actors.

6. The role of international financial institutions

Alfredo Sfeir-Younis

Events during the past decade have challenged the thinking of donors about whether development efforts—which have formed a prominent part of post-cold war engagement in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America—have really achieved an enduring legacy of inclusion, economic growth and human well-being. In a world where intra-state conflict is on the rise, it is evident that the ability to prevent conflict is linked both to a scarcity of resources and to a lack of understanding of the causes of conflict and the appropriate tools to address them.

International financial institutions play a fundamental role in conflict prevention. A recent study by Oxford University, presented in 1999 at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), concluded that the largest proportion of wars and conflicts since 1968 have been fuelled by economic and financial elements that later find shelter in ethnic, religious and other cultural and social considerations. If the conclusions of the study are correct, economics and finance matter in conflict prevention. Therefore, if societies are to prevent conflicts from arising, it is imperative to focus on the nature and scope of the economic and financial dimensions of development policies and programmes, and their potential links to war and peace. It is also essential that policy makers view the potential effects of their policies and the speed of their implementation as non-neutral in relation to conflict prevention.

The fact that economics and finance matter must be understood within a much broader context: a context of social and political structures (social capital), cultural and institutional diversity, unchangeable and at times controversial roles played by different actors and decision makers, weak institutional foundations and, most important, a 'societal agreement' (or its absence) on what matters to different groups, now and in the future.

This discussion paper focuses on only a few dimensions of the role of IFIs and attempts to identify the key dominant constraints to the mainstreaming of 'conflict prevention' into macroeconomic planning and implementation. It tries to link conflict prevention with sustainable peace.

1. It is central to understand that 'conflict prevention' is not the same as sustainable peace, or just peace. There are profound differences between the two (conceptually and in practice) and while some of the dimensions identified here may be central to conflict prevention they, in themselves, will not necessarily amount to a world that experiences a state of peace. Thus, if the ultimate objective

is world peace, some major shift both in the possible prescriptions and in the paradigm of conflict prevention may be needed. This is more than just semantics.

2. The role of the IFIs must not be conceived in isolation from other institutional and non-institutional actors. The intention here is not to lay down territorial rules or to give the impression that singling out certain elements means that the IFIs own either the design or the implementation. This issue must be raised at the outset because during the past decade the institutional debate at the international level has been crowded with problems associated with who should do what and why. It is not the intention here to either discount the issue or resolve it.

3. This paper does not focus on post-conflict matters per se, given the seminar's prevention focus. However, in many cases reality dictates that we will indeed still be in the post-conflict mode in many situations around the world. It is valid and productive, therefore, to be concerned with how to assist countries at that stage of their social and political conflicts.

4. Economic and social reconstruction must go hand in hand. Therefore, to prevent conflict, the economic and social dimensions of development must be understood as one whole. It is within this context that the so-called Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) is of fundamental importance. The essence that defines the CDF is finding a balance between the economic and financial dimensions of the development process and the social and structural imperatives facing most developing nations. This paper argues that imbalances between these may be in many respects responsible for conflict and war. Therefore, the CDF is a unique framework, which may provide a singular process in setting effective strategies for conflict prevention. This will be done by bringing policy coherence among donors, identifying key policy packages and reform programmes, and creating the necessary environment for a long-term commitment to the prevention of conflict and peace.

5. The experience of the World Bank—which is not unique in this case—demonstrates that the key to conflict prevention is the eradication of absolute poverty, discrimination, racism, economic and social exclusion, and the like. While we can continue to look for sophisticated and complex answers to conflict prevention problems, the bottom line seems almost always to be the same: excessive inequality in all its manifestations (and principally economics and finance). Thus, a solid, long-term, well-conceived and broad-based strategy for the eradication of poverty is tantamount to preventing conflicts.

6. Maximization of the positive impacts of IFIs on conflict prevention can only be attained if there is a political commitment to act, if societies have a social contract that includes the goals listed above, and if all is done in partnership with the large number of stakeholders implicated. Political commitment must precede most of what is outlined below and is essential in defining institutional cooperation.

Political identity, ownership and willingness to commit to long-term programmes are essential conditions of development processes.

7. Finding immediate, workable solutions necessitates new alliances and new forms of partnerships at all levels. However, seeking new partnerships also means being willing to send and support some tough messages to key actors in the process of conflict prevention. If poverty is one of the key issues, this means engaging actors in tough equity-related policy-based activities, and these will demand major effort and commitment to act. It would be counterproductive to enter partnerships where only some of the partners are willing to carry and execute the messages and implications that go with it.

8. In drawing attention to the material aspects of economic and financial 'fundamentals'—for example, employment creation, new jobs for economic minorities—one cannot disregard the non-material dimensions of conflict prevention. This implies focusing attention on the human, cultural, psychological, moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of human life and social interaction. Societies will have to address many of the non-material dimensions through reform of education systems and, for example, through access to social services for women, the poor and the powerless. As substantial harmony is required between the economic/ financial and the social/structural aspects of development (as proposed by the CDF), there must also be harmony—in the principles, instruments and practices chosen—between the material and the non-material ingredients of conflict prevention.

9. Finally, because of the importance of economic and financial factors in conflict prevention and the intensive process of globalization that is taking place, it is crucial to conceive of most conflict prevention programmes from a regional and global perspective (e.g., the Great Lakes region). Thus, while a 'nation' is by necessity the starting unit of account, the analysis, the selection of instruments and the definition of options must be enriched by the different dimensions of globalization. Many countries legitimately argue that, if poverty eradication is the essential strategy to be followed, then many of the factors affecting national ability to do so are externally driven. These factors may include trade patterns, the behaviour of foreign capital flows and investment, low levels of official development assistance (ODA), and so on. This is a central issue to be understood, although it is equally important to keep in mind that attributing all development ills to external forces may justify serious inaction at the country and local levels.

Any attempt by the IFIs to assist in the prevention of conflict requires that countries see the prevention process as part and parcel of macroeconomic management and implementation, and not a residual of it. This may be the most difficult change to bring about as it demands major changes in today's decision-making

systems. This fact is not different from the demands involved in other development processes, for example, development sustainability in environmental terms.

However, mainstreaming conflict prevention—thinking, instruments, programmes, policies and practices—is not a trivial proposition. This section lists 14 important elements, conditions or dimensions, the 'Rule of Fourteen', that may prove useful in mainstreaming conflict prevention into economic planning and implementation. Naturally, not all apply equally to any given country, and some serious adaptation may be needed to avoid a 'cookie cutter approach'.

- Any attempt to prevent conflict in a conflict-prone society is bound to address major equity issues that are at the root of conflict. It is imperative to consider all aspects of poverty eradication and close the huge gap between the rich and the poor.
- Conflict is often born out of a crisis of empowerment. Thus policies and programmes to empower the powerless are at the centre of conflict prevention.
- Conflict is born out of exclusion. Different modes of participation have proven essential to establish a dialogue that otherwise would provoke conflict situations at all levels of decision making.
- Conflict prevention cannot be conceived in a governance vacuum. It is central to establish rules that will be widely accepted and respected. These rules will define the roles and the functions of most stakeholders in the development process.
- A conflict prevention strategy must be anchored in effective and evolving institutions. At times of conflict, weak institutions have proven to be more a constraint than an asset. In conflict prevention, it is key to assess the quality of institutions working for the poor and minorities.
- Vulnerable situations require large sums of money and a commitment to allocate funds for long periods of time. This is particularly difficult when the political arena reacts mainly to short-term and immediate situations. Moreover, the broader the understanding of conflict prevention, the more resources will be needed.
- If economic disparities are the main source of conflict, and if there are fewer financial resources at the disposal of conflict-prone countries, it is imperative to spend those resources effectively.
- Conflict prevention is tantamount to a new development process. It therefore requires sustainability, that is, the capacity to maintain an acceptable level of benefits for those involved. The lack of the sustainability of past development efforts has been a source of disputes as people lose major productive assets.
- A conflict prevention strategy often calls for action in specific areas or towards certain groups in society. Targeting potential groups with development pro-

grammes or special projects must in the end benefit those intended. Experience demonstrates that this is not always the case.

- A conflict prevention strategy must be understood as a new system of values. Conflict prevention cannot be conceived in societies whose values are impregnated with violence, discrimination and violation of rights.
- A precursor of conflict is social instability and deterioration. A conflict prevention strategy has to establish the foundations for a new, inclusive social contract regarding interaction in a given society.
- It is imperative to study different styles of development as they may have in-built biases against peaceful interaction. More inclusion then might mean more conflict in the end. It is clear that a style of development that does not care about the poor will end up in more conflict.
- Conflict often results from the asymmetry between individual and collective actions. A common understanding of the type of collective actions needed to avoid social or economic breakdowns is required. The collective action may be internal, or it may include countries in several regions or be carried out at the global level.
- Prevention efforts must be anchored in a vision of a society's future. This is the point of reference and the direction a society must take in the avoidance of conflict. This vision is also a way of establishing an organizing principle and a development identity necessary for making tough decisions.

A number of other institutional considerations should be taken into account. Current conflicts suggest that there will be a demand for short-term relief and for long-term development processes to be merged into the type of transition programming that is now beginning to occur. Such merging will imply the blurring of several distinct decision-making 'cultures', including conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, human rights monitoring and traditional development.

Success requires strong local ownership. Without a solid base and investment at the community level, development efforts were found to be less likely to succeed or to be sustainable. Evaluation experience suggests that, to support this focus on local ownership, military spending should be reduced and the savings used to strengthen social institutions and civil society. At the same time, however, issues such as demilitarization, demobilization and the reintegration of ex-combatants must not be overlooked. A balance must be sought between social and military spending, nurturing and thinning each respectively at an adequate rate. The successful implementation of these processes demands the presence of a strong, legitimate government. Thus capacity building and guidance for good governance must be provided as well.

The fragile political and social conditions endemic to war-torn societies complicate the use of traditional methods of policy and macroeconomic management. If

policy packages and their implementation do not give special attention to social needs, the end product of these policies may be to exacerbate conflict situations or create new disparities from which conflict may arise.

Above all, a 'safe strategy' demands a major strengthening of countries' social capital. This will include a major element of trust, enhancement of capacity and institutions, and active participation of civil society. In the end it will be the fabric of society that sustains all, and this must become the primary focus of development. We know that war militarizes societies, disrupting existing social organizations and creating others. While some of the latter may endure, others are inappropriate once hostilities end. However, many difficulties are associated with restoring trust and social cohesion after violent conflict, and much debate exists over the appropriate means of restoring social capital and the nature and value of this process.

To some extent international actors can help strengthen social capital by increasing citizen participation, enforcing government accountability and fostering creative avenues for peaceful change. To do so effectively, however, we all need to learn more about how conflict affects civil society, which factors increase group cohesion under adverse conditions, and which issues are most critical for civil society (human rights, health or others).

Thus, it would not be difficult to suggest that a policy of conflict prevention must be one that identifies and addresses major deficits in social capital. This deficit is linked to the quality of political commitment, the extent to which real social justice is possible, respect for human rights in all its dimensions, and the adoption of value systems that promote a culture of peace.

Inclusiveness must be understood as a universal principle. All stakeholders must be included. This implies not forgetting about the private sector, as they play a crucial role in economic and financial decisions that are central to the balance between conflict and peace. Creating an enabling environment for the private sector, as well as raising their level of engagement and responsibility, must be part of any national or global strategy.

No state-of-the-art formula for preventing and solving conflict has yet been devised. In order to avoid further deaths, the international community must come to terms with and learn from its past failures. International political will to avoid conflict, and the political instruments required to achieve this goal, must be nurtured. Finally, addressing the issues of conflict prevention and defining the role of the IFIs demands the insertion of national realities into the debate. As ownership and development identity is central to any programme, it is at the country level where the efforts need to be made and attention paid. There must not be any confusion of the fact that development processes, including conflict prevention, must be designed, conceived and implemented by the countries themselves. This is the essential philosophy of the Comprehensive Development Framework.

Appendix 2. List of the participants of the Krusenberg Seminar

Participants of the Krusenberg Seminar

Gun-Britt Andersson	State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Brian Bacon	Chairman, Oxford IPC Worldwide, Vice-Chairman, World Business Academy
Anders Bjurner	Ambassador, Swedish Representative on the Political and Security Committee, European Union
Annika Björkdahl	Researcher, Swedish Institute of International Affairs
Agneta Boman	Ambassador, Policy Planning Unit, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Derek Boothby, CMG	Consultant to the Department for Political Affairs, United Nations
Kevin Clements	Secretary General, International Alert
Renata Dwan	Project Leader, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Bo Ekman	Chairman, Nextwork AB, Sweden
Jan Eliasson	State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gareth Evans	Director, International Crisis Group
Marika Fahlén	Ambassador for Humanitarian Affairs, Global Cooperation Department, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
José Javier Gomez-Llera	Head of Task Force on Horizontal Issues, Policy Unit, Council Secretariat, European Union
Nik Gowing	TV News Presenter and International Affairs Analyst, *BBC World*
David A. Hamburg	President Emeritus, Carnegie Corporation
Bitte Hammargren	Political Reporter, *Svenska Dagbladet*
Barbro Hedvall	Editorialist, *Dagens Nyheter*
Agneta R. Johansson	Deputy Secretary, Parliamentary Commission on Swedish Policy for Global Development

Mukesh Kapila	Head of the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department, Department for International Development, UK
Christian Leffler	Deputy Head of Cabinet, Directorate-General External Relations, European Commission
Xavier Leus	Director, Department of Emergency and Humanitarian Action, World Health Organization
Michael Lund	Senior Associate, Management Systems International, Washington, DC
David Malone	President, International Peace Academy
Randolph Mank	Director, Policy Planning Division, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada
Janne Haaland Matlary	Department of Political Science, Oslo University
Anders Mellbourn	Director, Swedish Institute of International Affairs
Aryeh Neier	President, Open Society Institute and Network of Soros Foundations
Mette Kjuel Nielsen	Undersecretary for Defence, Ministry for Defence, Denmark
Aleksey Nikiforov	Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Sweden
Aziz Pahad	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of South Africa
William Pfaff	Political Columnist, *International Herald Tribune*
Adam Daniel Rotfeld	Director, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Kumar Rupeshinge	Senior Researcher, State of the World Forum
Robert Rydberg	Director, European Security Policy Department, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Mark Salter	Head of Information Services, International IDEA
Burcu San	Officer, Political Affairs Division, NATO
Michael Schmunk	Deputy Director, Foreign Office, Germany
Alfredo Sfeir-Younis	Special Representative of the World Bank to the United Nations and the World Trade Organization
Jan Gert Siccama	Head Political and Parliamentary Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

Torkel Stiernlöf	Deputy Director, Global Security Department, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Bengt Säve-Söderbergh	Secretary-General, International IDEA
Annika Thunborg	Special Assistant to the Director-General for Political Affairs, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Anders Troedsson	Desk Officer, Secretariat for Conflict Prevention, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Peter Wallensteen	Head of the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University
Lars-Hjalmar Wide	Deputy Director-General, Head of Global Security Department, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Monika Wohlfeld	Senior Diplomatic Adviser, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Vienna
Taye-Brook Zerihoun	Director, Africa 1 Division, Department for Political Affairs, United Nations
Ragnar Ängeby	Ambassador, Head of the Secretariat for Conflict Prevention, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Symposium Secretariat

Helén Jarlsvik	Analyst, European Security Policy Department, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Jessica Olausson	Desk Officer, Secretariat for Conflict Prevention, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Helena Rietz	Second Secretary, Swedish Permanent Mission to NATO and the Western European Union, Brussels