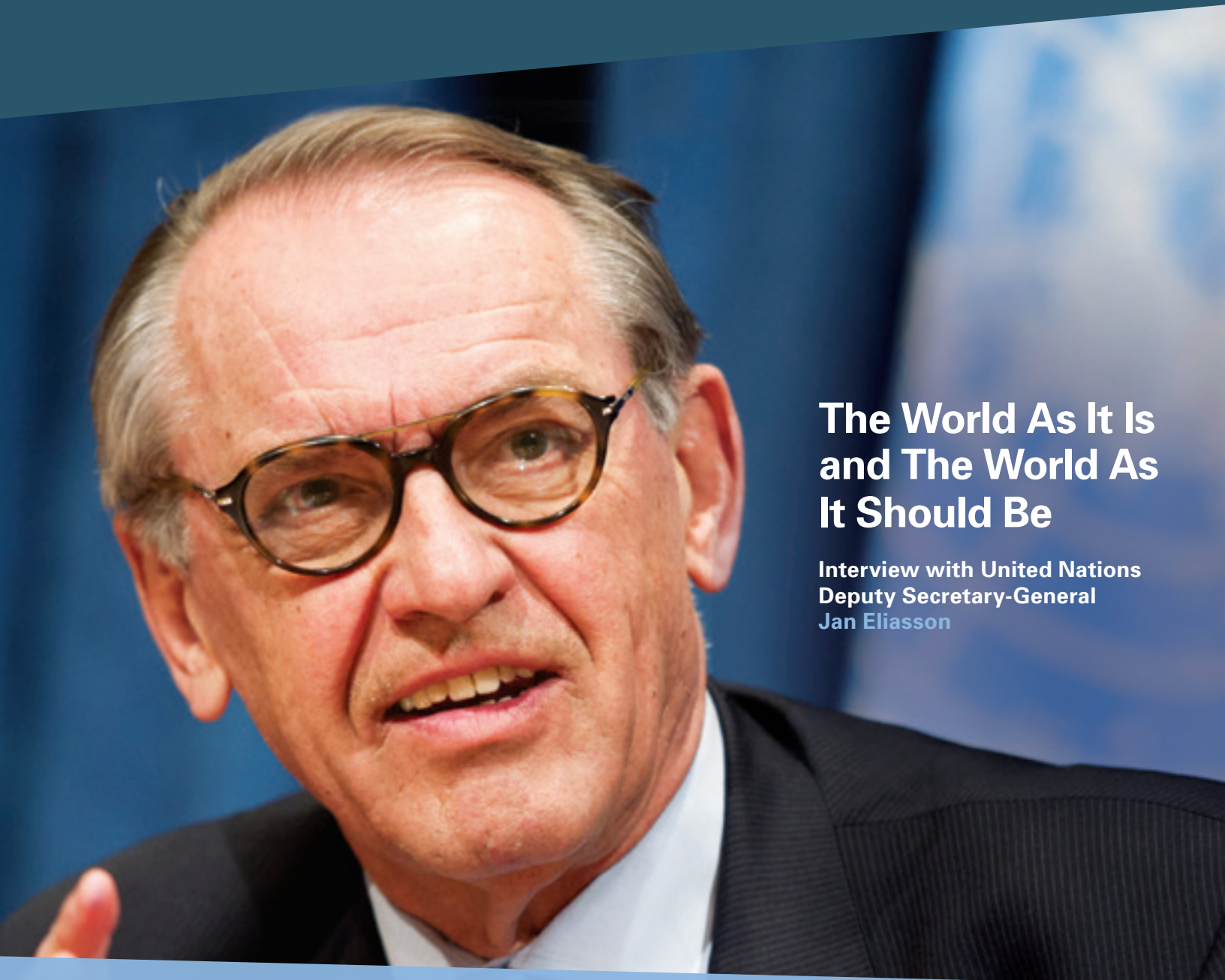A FORUM FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

SEPTEMBER 2013

BUILDING PEACE

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The World As It Is and The World As It Should Be

Interview with United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dear Reader,

In many areas of our lives, we understand that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In medicine, we talk about ways that we can watch our diet and blood pressure to avoid problems later. In highway safety, we talk about using seat belts and air bags to prevent injury. The same is true for building peace. There are many ways to prevent a conflict from escalating to violence, but these efforts are not documented nearly enough, nor are they held up as successes for other communities, policymakers, or funders to emulate. This issue of *Building Peace* focuses on creative interventions, from individual, community, and governmental points of view, designed to prevent deadly violence.

Just as one medication cannot cure every illness, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to conflict and violence prevention. Successful prevention requires a deep contextual understanding—at the human, social, economic, and political levels. Armed with this local awareness and the critical skills to train, advocate, mediate, or build coalitions, peacebuilders around the world are uniquely positioned to appreciate the underlying causes of tension and assess which tools or strategies will be most effective in fostering peace and preventing conflict from erupting.

In this issue, you will learn about successful violence prevention initiatives. These efforts are sometimes designed and implemented by traditional peacebuilders (*e.g.*, educators and trainers) and other times are the work of actors one might not normally designate as peacebuilders (*e.g.,* private sector companies). For instance, a nongovernmental organization mediates between a government and armed groups to maintain the peace, as occurred in Myanmar. In Nigeria, preventing violence starts on the playground, thanks to a sports project that brings together children from various religious and ethnic groups and teaches them how to deal with intercultural prejudices and different values. Private companies operating in Colombia have invested in conflict prevention initiatives to sustain and grow their businesses.

Despite current armed conflicts that plague our world, there are powerful alternatives to war and violence. Thanks to the dedicated and relentless efforts of peacebuilders across the globe, we are increasingly able to understand the roots of deadly violence and better equipped to prevent future conflicts. As always, we encourage you to contact us with your own reactions and ideas to *Building Peace*. ■

Warmly,

Jessica Berns
Editor-in-Chief
Building Peace

PLAYING FAIR

Using Sports to Avoid Conflict in Nigeria

by **Michael Olufemi Sodipo**

In May 2004, I survived a violent riot in Kano, a city in northern Nigeria. Young men swarmed through the streets of my neighborhood, burning and destroying randomly in retaliation to the ethnic violence in Yelwa and Shendam in central Nigeria. I was attacked simply because I am not an indigene of Kano. I have lived in Kano for twenty-eight years, but because I hail from southwest Nigeria teenagers turned terrorists burned down my home and car.

I know how deep the wounds are on all sides in Nigeria, how deeply rooted prejudices are in people, yet I can still hardly believe the attacks occurred. Instead of seeking revenge, however, I sought peace. I asked why young people harbored so much hatred and had so little hope for their own futures, and I vowed to do something that would make a positive difference. The Peace Initiative Network, an organization that focuses on peacebuilding, is my contribution toward a peaceful world. It arose from my intense desire to do my part in finding solutions to the crises and developmental challenges confronting Africa and Nigeria in particular.

Brutal ethno-religious violence has been common in Nigeria since the country returned to civil rule on May 29, 1999. Given Nigeria's heterogeneous society, with people of diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, competition for socioeconomic resources is acute. This competition heightens ethnic identities so much that community loyalty takes precedence over national loyalty. Democracy has offered Nigerians a channel to vent their frustrations with unfulfilled expectations and question whether Nigeria should remain a unified country. But ethnic politics still threaten Nigeria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, due largely to the self-aggrandizement of a few politicians. The sociopolitical situation for minorities and settlers (i.e., nonindigenes) continues to worsen.

On May 27, 2006—Children's Day in Nigeria—the Peace Initiative Network, in partnership with the British Council, inaugurated the Peace Club project for young people in northern Nigeria to promote dialogue and understanding through peace education and sports. The project brings young Muslims and Christians, indigenes

As the children learn to be creative together and to think inclusively, they often assume the role of the facilitator themselves.

and settlers, together using sports to bridge the divides among them. The club started with 50 members—30 boys and 20 girls—from 7 high schools in Kano. Currently the club has over 8,000 members from 60 schools in 4 Nigerian states. In 2009 it received support from Generations For Peace (GFP), an organization in Jordan.

The project team chose Kano as the location for Peace Club's pilot project, training young people from both religions and diverse ethnic groups as peer educators and coaches—not for athletics but for a new system of thinking. Young people are taught to think and act as global citizens—to question ethnic stereotypes and prejudices. Since schools, especially in Kano, are separated by gender and ethnicity, the Peace Club also promotes a constructive approach to religious, ethnic, gender, and linguistic diversity.

Peace Club members meet once a week. Sessions usually begin with a game of soccer, basketball, or volleyball. When the game turns unfair—for example, if the ball is not passed to younger children or to girls—the facilitator pauses the game. The children then come together and think about how to change the rules of the game to make it more inclusive and fairer. They may include more girls and decide, for example, that a goal scored by a girl earns double the points. As the children learn to be creative together and to think inclusively, they often assume the role of the facilitator themselves.

In the project's early stages, physical fights would break out at times among students from different backgrounds. But these conflicts brought important issues to the table for dialogue, such as how to deal

with intercultural prejudices and different values. Every dispute and activity ended in a discussion in which participants contributed to its resolution. In other words, the learning process would not have existed without the conflicts. As 17-year-old club member Yusuf Ibrahim responded during a project assessment, "Before attending this program I used to hate Christians. But now, I have learnt through Peace Club to love and appreciate them."

Most conflicts in Nigeria are in fact not religious or ethnic; they are given ethnic or religious expressions for political reasons. But such expressions were very visible in our project, due in part to the influence of certain sociocultural and religious teachings that reinforced stereotypes and prejudice among the students. For example, a child who loses the ball during a game might begin insulting another ethnic group. Addressing the problem immediately prevented the conflict from escalating.

In addition, the Peace Club offers skills for breaking down prejudices and mistrust of the parents—many of whom initially did not want their children to participate in the project. Peace Club facilitators do a great deal to build trust among members. The youth also independently plan intercultural activities within communities such as field trips and "town hall meetings"—interfaith dialogues in which parents, community leaders, and religious groups participate. The program's influence on parents has been one of its most exciting successes, though the change is not as great as it is among the children, who have developed close friendships. Peace Club programs have revived old acquaintances among parents that the crisis had destroyed, and

adults from different ethnic groups now invite each other to christening ceremonies, weddings, and funerals, which was not common before.

The Peace Club project for young people in Nigeria shows how sports can be used to promote peace. But sports can clearly cause conflict as well, so a sports project's success depends greatly on how it is designed. Well-designed sports activities that incorporate the best values of sports and peacebuilding principles—such as acceptance, cooperation, inclusion, responsibility, respect, and trust—help build the values and communication skills people need to prevent and resolve conflicts in their own lives. When integrated properly with other community programs and services, sports initiatives can also connect participants to resources that help them in this process, such as health services, education, and employment opportunities or assistance in starting a small business. To enable a sports program to unleash its full positive potential, coaches must monitor and guide its activities effectively. ◼

Michael Olufemi Sodipo is the founder and project coordinator of Peace Initiative Network, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that focuses on peacebuilding and good governance based in Kano, Nigeria.

PHOTO: SODIPO

PHOTO: TAROTASTIC

LETTING THE OTHER IN
Conflict Prevention in Myanmar

by **Emma Leslie**

Kyoko Okumoto, a well-respected Japanese peacebuilder, once said to me, "I firmly believe that to be an effective peacebuilder you need to be able to trust." By trust she did not mean a blind, naïve faith in whomever or whatever comes along; she meant a willingness, across cultures, faiths, political affiliations, and gender, to allow the other in—that is, to suspend all our prejudices and stereotypes. Such trust requires us to show our vulnerabilities to people we might not ordinarily reveal them to, in order to demonstrate that we have flawed humanity in common. This means entering into a place of insecurity and entrusting our host or guide to lead us and take care of us. This position of cultural humility is the foundation of peace work , allowing practitioners to connect with people on a basic level that is both informative and insightful in shaping effective peace practices and programs.

In December 2011, the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) was invited to meet Minister U Aung Min, a former general and minister for railways in Myanmar whom the president had tasked

with establishing a peace process. At the time, CPCS had been working in Myanmar for a decade to strengthen its peace infrastructure (and ability to establish peace), even as the country had been beset by a series of civil wars and struggles for ethnic and subnational autonomy. Amid the diverse actors drawn into the complex conflict, the center identified a lack of political analysis, strategic planning, knowledge of comparative cases, and strong leadership as significant challenges to creating a durable peace in Myanmar. Over the years, the organization has worked extensively to address these challenges by supporting civil society leaders, organizing and leading training programs to strengthen local peacebuilders' knowledge, skills, and potential, and forming a network of peace practitioners to promote sustainable peace in the country.

Corruption and nepotism among top officials in Myanmar's government further fueled the country's social fragmentation and conflict, requiring CPCS to conduct its work discreetly. It thus was extremely daunting when the organization was invited, by name, to meet one

of Myanmar's generals. Its leadership—myself included—agonized for two days over the right response. In the end, we decided to suspend our fears, make a psychological shift, take a risk, and accept U Aung Min's invitation to engage on a more official level, supporting peace negotiations. Despite our reservations about affiliating ourselves with government officials, initial meetings with the minster and other representatives revealed a surprising level of government commitment to establishing peace. U Aung Min's personal involvement in the conflict had become a catalyst for change, convincing him of the need to end the decades-long bloody armed conflict in Myanmar. Recognizing his own lack of experience and skills in peacebuilding, U Aung Min had humbly approached CPCS, among other long-term peacebuilders in Myanmar, for assistance in developing an effective peace process.

Once we agreed to work alongside the government to support the emerging peace process, CPCS had to adapt to the continuously evolving context of conflict in the country. The peace process began by establishing ceasefires between the Myanmar

government and several armed groups, requiring us to move our work from inside Myanmar to the Thai-Myanmar border, where many of the groups were based. Furthermore, the organization needed to build new relationships with these groups, which were deeply suspicious of anyone affiliated with the regime, even as they moved into negotiations. This put CPCS at a disadvantage in two respects: First, as we had entered the peace process initially at the invitation of the Myanmar government and had worked inside Myanmar for over a decade, we were perceived as being pro-regime. We were also accustomed to saying Myanmar and Yangon, terms commonly associated with the regime, whereas border groups maintained the names Burma and Rangoon. Second, CPCS's previous focus

confidential information. This meant working in a vacuum, but CPCS believed this decision was crucial to building a solid relationship of mutual trust.

While the grand plan worked in theory, progress was initially slow. One of CPCS's first programs was a workshop for the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), an armed group that had been fighting against the government since 1988 and had no previous relationship with CPCS. The ABSDF had requested the training on the recommendations of other armed groups, but they were, under-standably, hesitant and reserved during the workshop's first day. Few people spoke or were willing to participate. To address the lack of trust among group members, CPCS

As we entered into relationships with armed groups like the ABSDF, our reputation as a trusted organization spread throughout the country, granting us access to a number of more isolated and neglected armed groups that the official peace process had over-looked or failed to include. Our extensive experience working in the country for the past decade has placed us in a unique position to forge further relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders in Myanmar's peace process, including civil society organizations, government offi-cials, and various armed groups. With the assistance of long-time supporters of peace in Myanmar, CPCS has become a key link among these stakeholders, connecting individuals committed to establishing a durable peace in a strained and fragmented society. The organization has helped estab-lish a platform for peace in the country, laying the groundwork for the develop-ment of an effective peace process.

This position of cultural humility is the foundation of peace work.

on civil societies meant the organization lacked significant knowledge about the situation near the border, including the backgrounds of and dynamics between the armed groups there.

The only way to establish any kind of relationship with the armed groups at the border, we decided, was to be completely honest and open. Total transparency about our past analysis, work, and motivations would be crucial. We needed to reveal all of our conversations with the government so there would be no secrets or suspicions from other parties. We had to explain clearly that CPCS was a completely neutral entity, aiming to work with both the government and armed groups to achieve a just and lasting peace for Myanmar. To prove CPCS's goodwill and neutrality in supporting negotiations, we did not demand information from armed groups but gave them the space to decide when to release

worked hard to establish an open approach, making it clear that ABSDF members did not have to release any information they did not feel comfortable sharing. Instead, CPCS would continue to share information and support the ABSDF in initial peace talks, facilitating candid discussions of the groups' needs, demands, and aspirations to develop a coherent approach to negotiating with the government. CPCS also offered workshops that focused on expanding media and political analysis skills and provided leadership development training. Over time, CPCS mentored and advised the ABSDF as they navigated negotiations with the government, maintaining an open approach to build trust. The ABSDF even-tually reciprocated, laying the foundations for a deeper and more valuable relation-ship that has led to more effective and open negotiations between the ABSDF and the government.

Having worked with civil society groups that suffered under a corrupt and ineffec-tive government, CPCS had significant reservations about accepting the govern-ment's invitation to enter official peace negotiations. In the end, though, we learned that implicit in peacebuilding was the willingness to allow others in, despite cultural, faith, or political affiliations. When the time came, CPCS realized that it had to practice the same principles of cultural humility it was advocating. This meant dispelling our prejudices, accepting our insecurities, and placing some trust in the government's commitment. Our experience in Myanmar has taught us the value of an open approach and the impor-tance of trust in fostering relationships that allow for more effective peace practices and programs. ■

Emma Leslie is the director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) in Cambodia, whose mission is to strengthen strategic intervention into armed conflict in Asia.

BRINGING UP THE CHILD

Local Conflict Prevention Mechanisms in Kenya *by* **Alice Wairimu Nderitu**

The Elder Community

Growing up in Kenya's beautiful rural areas, I was fascinated by the power of the elders, a group of old wise men sitting under a tree delivering judgment on matters concerning the community. Everyone respected the decisions they made. Curious children would sneak up the tree under which the elders sat and observe them mete out justice to adults in their communities. When I turned eight, my older brother gave me a unique present—only after warning me not to tell anyone. He took me up with him into the branches of a tree one day just before the elders sat under it. We eavesdropped on this and several occasions afterwards, hiding among the leaves during school holidays. Day in and day out, adults

we knew appeared before the elders. We learned that Waigwa the cobbler was a wife beater and that Baba Kim, the church elder, had taken away his brother's land. Each elder had to make an individual decision on what to do with the wrongdoers. To vote in favor of a verdict, he would lay down his staff, hewn from the branches of the very tree we were hiding in. I grew up in a place where crime hardly existed, thanks to these elders. What fascinated me most, as I clung to a branch, were the discussions on peaceful coexistence that underlined each decision and the respect for the elder community. There were no women elders, however. Women appeared only to give evidence, like my grandmother, who unlike many of the elders could read. My brother told me sternly that there were no

In 2013, peace became everyone's business in Kenya.

women elders because making peace was not women's business. I wanted to be an elder, but I was a girl.

Electoral Violence in Kenya

When I left home for other, more turbulent parts of Kenya, I was constantly uneasy about the inability of Kenyans to peacefully coexist. Violence marred Kenya's electoral process in 1992, when multiparty politics were reintroduced. The Rift Valley was particularly hit. At that time, studying at the University of Nairobi, I was very conscious of the changes taking place in the country and participated in demonstrations against state action. The violence recurred in the next election year, 1997. But election year 2002 witnessed the peaceful transition from an authoritarian president to the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government. Hope abounded. Kenyans were polled as the most optimistic people on earth.

However, tensions continued to simmer below the surface as the NARC government failed to deliver on the promise of a new constitution, as well as other promises, as fast as expected. Kenya had gotten away with the illusion of being a country at peace surrounded by countries that had experienced conflict—Rwanda, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. Kenya's peace masked issues that successive governments had not been able to solve, resulting in ethnic animosities and differences between communities. These issues included forced alienation and appropriation of land by the colonial and postcolonial governments and the unequal distribution of resources. The country had become a nation of ethnic communities drawn apart by their differences and that saw little in common with each other.

Kenya was like a pressure cooker, and the lid blew off following the contested election results of 2007. The unprecedented violence in 2007 and 2008 shocked the world. More than 1,300 Kenyans were killed and 600,000 displaced. Kenya stood naked, her ethnic communities exposed for what they were: products of competitive electoral politics occasioned by the lack of requisite institutional reforms, exclusion, and unresolved intercommunal mistrust and tensions. The criminal justice agencies could not cope, and communities once again began, in the age-old tradition, to rely on elders.

Enter Kofi Annan

The violence brought Kofi Annan to Kenya. He led mediation efforts that resulted in the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR) Agreement, which prioritized the role of Kenyans themselves in preventing and resolving the consequences of violent conflict. Independent government institutions, named the Agenda Four Commissions after the KNDR fourth agenda, were created. These included the Commission of Inquiry into the Post Election Violence (CIPEV), the commission investigating the 2007 general elections; the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC); the Commission of Experts on Constitutional Review (CoE); the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC); the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC); and the Interim Independent Boundaries Commission (IIBC). The only one of these bodies that was permanent was the NCIC, which was mandated to promote peaceful coexistence. Through a rigorous appointment process conducted by Parliament, I joined the NCIC as a commissioner, fully conscious that the privileged position could influence the course of Kenya's history towards peace between ethnic communities.

The Agenda Four Commissions discharged their mandates, delivering a new constitution, among other far-reaching changes. Tangible reforms were visible in the judiciary and criminal justice agencies.

The Real Test: A Peaceful 2013 Election

The real test, everyone knew, was going to be a peaceful March 2013 election. Kenya had successfully brokered peace elsewhere, ushering in the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Somalia and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. However, putting in place a peace infrastructure proved to be difficult. Criminal justice agencies were still struggling to book many low-level perpetrators of the 2007–08 postelection violence. Victims were living side by side with perpetrators in the same areas without any recourse to law. Peace in these circumstances meant ensuring that violence did not recur, even in the absence of justice. Community elders took up the peacekeeping role with zeal.

Between 2008 and 2013, Kenyans mobilized extensively for peace. The country made every possible effort, with the NCIC at the forefront of government work. Faith-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the entire education system, and the private sector all preached peace. It was clear that the country had been to the edge of the cliff and was afraid of what it had seen there.

Uwiano Platform for Peace

One of the most effective platforms for peace was Uwiano—Kiswahili for cohesion—which brought together the

The country had been to the edge of the cliff and was afraid of what it had seen there.

NCIC, the United Nations Development Programme, the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management, the police, and PEACE-NET, a civil society network of more than 500 NGOs. Uwiano's strength lay in its partnerships and in the fact that it had been tried and tested in the 2010 referendum that ushered in a new constitution.

Many Kenyans later said that they knew violence would break out in 2007–08 but did not know whom to tell. Thus, in the buildup to the referendum in 2010, Uwiano stepped into the gap, allowing Kenyans to report threats of violence—in a strategy known as early warning and early response. Through an extensive media campaign, including text messaging and radio, any Kenyan who needed help could get it. When Kenyans faced the ballot box in the 2010 referendum, everyone expected mass violence, but Uwiano prevented it—a huge achievement considering the tensions that were still unresolved, despite the Agenda Four Commissions' work, barely one-and-a-half years after the 2007–08 electoral violence.

Leading up to the March 2013 election, Uwiano upped its game, strengthening its coordinated response to include humanitarian agencies. It also brought into its stable the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission and UN Women. Uwiano's key strategies included deploying peace monitors throughout the country and running a free text-messaging platform to report tensions and incidents, as 90 percent of Kenyans have cell phones or know someone who does. Uwiano ran a twenty-four-hour desk, where text messages were received, analyzed, verified, and disseminated for urgent action. Some of the cases required radio messages directed at specific issues or locations; others needed mediation or security measures. A rapid response grant provided funds through the mobile phone system for intra- and interethnic meetings between elders, to ensure quick interventions to stop a conflict before it became violent. These meetings addressed previously undiscussed issues, such as ethnic differences. The elders at these meetings, already highly respected in their communities, also had been trained by Uwiano as inter- and intraethnic mediators to mediate any tensions at the local level. Uwiano insisted that women be included in the eldership.

Uwiano handled information that included hate speech leading to ethnic incitement, mobilizing of gangs and militia, and destruction of property. The organization received, at its peak, an average of 5,000 messages per day forestalling violent incidents and reducing tensions.

Peace Efforts Multiply

Thousands of peace efforts were launched by nontraditional actors, such as the private sector, ahead of the 2013 elections. Faith-based and civil society organizations

PHOTO: AFROMUSING

dedicated considerable time. Energy was poured into long-term peace and cohesion efforts, such as peace education, nationwide drama and music festivals on cohesion, and NCIC's curriculum reviews in educational institutions to ensure all ethnic communities were included. There was an amazing convergence of peacebuilders and human rights activists toward a peace agenda.

The peace equation was complicated by the International Criminal Court's indictment of six Kenyans, two of whom have since been elected to office as president and deputy president. The peace process was, however, considerably boosted by the peace campaign political actors conducted. NCIC ensured that all presidential candidates signed on to the Kenya Kwanza (Kenya First) charter, pledging not to engage in or fund violence. NCIC brokered social contracts between conflicting communities, forming a team of Kenyan goodwill ambassadors with the gravitas to reach all Kenyans. One of the ambassadors set up a mediation team, the Concerned Citizens for Peace, consisting of a group of elders with direct access to all the presidential candidates. Working to support them, Uwiano shuttled with the elders between the candidates. I constantly felt like I was up in the tree with my brother again—again as a witness of the process, not a decision maker. I was therefore pleasantly surprised when two of the elders officially asked me to join them as an elder. The violence had created space for the previously unimaginable in Kenya: a woman at the elders' peace table. In 2013 peace became everyone's business in Kenya.

This Child, the Kenyan Peace

In future elections, a peace infrastructure such as Uwiano that is inclusive and links national to community structures and processes is crucial to preventing violence in Kenya. A meaningful convergence of peacebuilding and human rights actors is necessary for peace and justice. Including women and youth in elders' decision-making processes is as essential as a collaboration of state and nonstate actors toward peaceful coexistence. Community social contracts that address real issues, such as sharing water sources and keeping peace during elections so that schools and markets remain open, will ensure a peace that can hold after elections. The elders under the tree, dispensing indigenous justice through traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, are as useful as is equipping community-level service providers, such as nurses and teachers, with skills on conflict transformation. As they dispense medicine and classroom knowledge, they too can work toward peace. Dialogue as well as penalties that target politicians, urging them to desist from hate speech and build on diversity rather than ethnic differences, are essential, as is constant messaging through all media about the peace dividends of a nonviolent election. The state must provide security and citizens in turn must observe the rule of law.

A Kiswahili proverb says that giving birth is not difficult; bringing up the child is. Kenya has given birth to a fragile peace. How can we sustain it? That is the task Kenyans must now work toward. ◾

Alice Wairimu Nderitu is a commissioner of Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission, the Joan. B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice Woman Peace Maker of the year 2012, and co-chair of the Uwiano Platform for Peace.

THE WORLD AS IT IS

AND THE WORLD AS IT SHOULD BE

Interview with United Nations
Deputy Secretary-General
Jan Eliasson

by **Melanie Greenberg**

Jan Eliasson is one of the world's foremost diplomats and experts on peacebuilding. He was appointed Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations in March 2012. He served as minister of foreign affairs of Sweden, chair of Water Aid/Sweden, member of the UN Secretary-General's Advocacy Group of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), special envoy to Darfur, Sudan, President of the sixtieth session of the UN General Assembly, and the Secretary-General's personal representative for Iran/Iraq. Mr. Eliasson was the first UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and was involved in operations in Africa and the Balkans. He has taken several initiatives on landmines, conflict prevention, and humanitarian action.

Alliance for Peacebuilding president and chief executive officer Melanie Greenberg interviewed Mr. Eliasson in June 2013 at the UN headquarters in New York about his experiences with conflict prevention over the course of his rich and varied career.

Melanie: What is successful conflict prevention?

Jan: We hardly ever hear about successful conflict prevention, because violent conflict defused by diplomacy is often not considered as newsworthy. Have you ever seen headlines in the press saying a disaster did not occur? During my time as minister of foreign affairs of Sweden I worked intensely to put conflict prevention on the international agenda. But I found that it was difficult to get support for preventive measures because people don't want to deal with something that is not an immediate danger. We are stuck in the short term. Unfortunately, we don't often hear of many examples of successful crisis prevention, but there are a few.

In 1991-92, Southern Africa suffered one of the worst droughts in its history. Eleven countries were threatened by starvation and we had a month before it would become a huge humanitarian crisis. At the time, I was Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations and we worked with sub-regional organizations in Southern Africa to avert the crisis. In spite of the apartheid sanctions that were in place, we used major ports in South Africa and sent in water drilling equipment as well as other forms of humanitarian assistance needed. As a result, very few lives were lost. Very few know about this operation. We spent hundreds of millions of dollars, opened up railroads, and even set up a World Food Programme office in Johannesburg. I am extremely proud we did it.

Another example is the preventive deployment of UN peacekeepers in Macedonia in 1995, which was very important in order to stop the horrible conflict in the Balkans from spreading.

Now, I am extremely concerned that the horror in Syria will spread to Jordan and Lebanon. It is critical that we find a political solution to the crisis in Syria. This is proving to be difficult, not least due to the divisions within the UN Security Council. Meanwhile the situation on the ground is turning ever more complicated, taking on religious and sectarian tones. We need a preventive strategy that contains humanitarian elements, financial elements, political support, and diplomatic measures within and outside the country. It will show that prevention is not an academic exercise and that it can be a truly operational concept. And we—you at the Alliance for Peacebuilding and we at the United Nations—have a joint interest in identifying those operational concepts.

Melanie: How can we coordinate those operational concepts among all of us working on these issues and agree on a common purpose?

My job as well as yours at the Alliance for Peacebuilding is to reduce the gap between the world as it is and the world as it should be.

Jan: There is a growing realization that the price paid for not acting early is extremely high. When the vibrations on the ground are ignored, when human rights violations go on and we wait for the conflict to turn into a civil war, then the price paid in terms of lives, money, and the reputation of international organizations is enormous. When I was mediating between Iraq and Iran in 1980-86, within a year we had a proposal for a solution, but both sides swept it aside. Seven years later, almost the same proposal was accepted in Resolution 598. By then, however, approximately 700,000 people had been killed and three million had become refugees and internally displaced people. And, of course, hatred between Shiites and Sunnis had become deeper and continues to persist in the region.

The current situation in Syria is the same. A year ago, we talked about setting up institutions. Today, we are talking about the risk of another wave of violence erupting after a so-called military victory. This concern has come too late, because the hatred has worsened and the death toll is now around 100,000. To speak about reconciliation after so many have been killed is much more difficult. I hope that reason and logic will lead us to giving preventive action higher priority. It requires not only mobilization of political energy and resources of UN Member States but also civil society support.

Unfortunately, people have almost become numb to frequent unacceptable horrors. When a suicide bomber blew up a bus carrying young women in Pakistan and the attackers, bragging about it, went after those who survived in the hospital and held the staff and patients hostage, the horrific incident received some attention. But when you see more of such crimes against civilians all over the world, you tend to become indifferent. We simply close our eyes.

Melanie: How can we raise people's sensitivity again to allow for more effective prevention?

Jan: It is not enough to just issue a statement or condemn the act. We have to reach out to political and religious leaders and assign responsibilities to stop such horrors. The most important contribution that diplomats and international civil servants can make to improve the world is to start thinking operationally and preventively.

If the Security Council also acted jointly and in unison on threats to international peace and security, that would be a great step forward. The Security Council is consumed—understandably, because the crises are so many—by the fires that are already out there. But the Council should be there at the first signs of smoke when the arsonist reaches for the match.

Melanie: What do you think about Kenya, which has been held up as another modern success of prevention during the 2013 presidential election?

Jan: That's a good example. We were on the brink of a huge tragedy that could have been worse than the aftermath of the 2007-2008 elections. In many ways the 2008 post-election crisis in Kenya is a good example of diplomatic action under the responsibility to protect (R2P) doctrine. Many lives were saved thanks to early action. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon took diplomatic steps to address the violence by encouraging mediation efforts by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who travelled there in January 2008 with a negotiation team known as the African Union Panel of Eminent African Personalities. The United Nations provided mediation support and worked closely with Mr. Annan on the ground. At the end of February 2008, a negotiated settlement was reached through the National Accord and Reconciliation Act. After the crisis Mr. Annan commented, "under R2P, force is last resort. Political and diplomatic intervention is the first mechanism. And I think we've seen a successful example of its application."

Today the United Nations is increasing its mediation support teams and now also has standby units that are being deployed in several situations. They work very effectively and I hope that their efforts will have helped stabilize the situation in Kenya on a more permanent basis.

Melanie: That is a very interesting civil society story as well. There was a lot of coordinated action looking for a real leverage point, recognizing that we could not do everything throughout the whole country.

Jan: Yes, civil society plays a very important role. When I was in Somalia in 1992 during the worst part of the civil war, I remember how important civil society and NGOs were in terms of early warning. We got information from areas with the worst fighting and the worst risks of things getting very serious. At the time I developed a very close relationship with civil society. In the area of mediation there are also, of course, Track II initiatives—which

Ultimately, effective prevention is about picking up the early signs of conflicts, before the situation escalate.

DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

There is a growing realization that the price paid for not acting early is extremely high.

you, Melanie, have also been involved in—where civil society can play a crucial role, especially in civil war situations. Sometimes governments are concerned about bringing in international organizations or another government because it might look like they are giving legitimacy to what they call terrorists or separatists. In these cases, the civil society and NGO track is important. The Carter Center in Georgia has done important work in that spirit. Professor Peter Wallensteen at Uppsala University in Sweden, and you also, Melanie, have done similar work in this area.

Melanie: What are your thoughts about the links between R2P and prevention?

Jan: They are certainly linked. I remember the origin of R2P. We were discussing humanitarian intervention in the early 1990s, when Bernard Kouchner, of Médecins Sans Frontières, brought up the issue of *ingérence humanitaire* [right to humanitarian intervention] to stop a humanitarian crisis from turning into ethnic cleansing and genocide and that in the worst cases, we should have the right to act. It was rejected, wholesale, by Member States who saw it as a threat to their sovereignty. At the time, in 1991, I was

conducting negotiations on the humanitarian mandate in the United Nations.

Then the R2P concept returned in a more elegant form of dealing with the issue: It stated that if sovereignty is so important—which it is—does it not imply that the state has a responsibility to protect its own population from genocide or mass killing? The answer is yes! But what is to be done when a state can't protect its own population? That's when the international community has the responsibility to intervene. The intention was, and still is, that R2P serves a preventive purpose.

The Libya debate, however, has put a strong emphasis on R2P in military terms and Security Council actions. The discussion largely focused on whether the Libya experience had hurt the concept so much that we would not be able to apply it in the future. However, the thematic debate on R2P held at the UN General Assembly in September last year was encouraging as it confirmed that Member States still largely support the concept. I have hope that the concept will be alive and used in the future.

Ultimately, effective prevention is about picking up the early signs of conflicts, before the situation escalates. Solidarity with human beings in need does not stop

at the border. We know how much mass killings hurt the UN's reputation. But this reputational cost is less important than the fact that so many people are suffering and paying the price for states not having that right balance between respect for sovereignty and respect for solidarity.

Melanie: It seems that the choice is very stark: Either we intervene or we don't, and it is often talked about in military terms.

Jan: While Chapter VII of the UN Charter and the option of using sanctions and military force are important for the credibility of the UN and the credibility of the Security Council in particular, I still claim that Chapter VI [Pacific Settlement of Disputes] is underutilized. We need to make better use of Article 33 [of Chapter VI], which is music to my ears: "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice." How often do we do this?

Melanie: Were you pleased with the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the emphasis there on peace as a primary goal?

Jan: The High-Level Panel underlines the basic UN formula that was first formulated at the 2005 World Summit: There is no peace without development and there is no development without peace. And there is no lasting peace or development without respect for human rights.

When I was in Darfur, I saw that you need all three at the same time to have a lasting effect on peace and development. There was no harvest because of the fighting and the brutalization of the war led to increased hatred. A couple of years after the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document's emphasis on the interrelationship between peace, development, and human rights, I saw in Darfur how all this translated on the ground; you simply have to work with all three dimensions at the same time. This is a huge challenge for the UN because it means that we have to break down a lot of walls to work effectively. When I have meetings on the post-2014 situation in Afghanistan, I include the political and humanitarian departments, peacekeeping, UNDP, the human rights office, all the elements. Only when we take this holistic approach can we do the job right.

Melanie: How can all the actors involved in conflict prevention best work together, including the peacebuilding and development communities?

Jan: We have much work to do to bring down institutional walls. At the UN, but also in the European Union and in national governments, we work through ministries, which are structured in vertical silos, whereas the problems are interrelated. In terms of the post-2015 process, the degree to which we will be able to go into details on the peace and security side is difficult to say. Member States are focused primarily on core development challenges and on formulating a post-2015 Development Agenda, which is concrete on eradicating poverty and on sustainability. The Report of the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda laid out a clear vision and was well received. We are now in the process of collecting inputs from various other sources, including from consultations in the field, from Jeffrey Sachs' Sustainable Development Solutions Network, from the UN's Regional Economic Commissions, from the task forces, from all corners.

As a next step, the secretary-general will deliver his report to the General Assembly at a High Level meeting on September 25, 2013. Then Member States will bring all these elements together and point the direction forward in the same, inspiring and mobilizing, way as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did. The MDGs are one of the great success stories of the UN. They have had a very mobilizing effect, permeating national planning processes in many countries, and have been a very important driving force to fight poverty. We need something similar for 2015 but in a much more complicated world. We have to think about climate change, migration, and urbanization—in the future 60 percent of humanity will be living in cities, putting tremendous pressure on infrastructure, not least sanitation and water. But there are also positive trends: This is the century when women will take the place they should have had in history. We have also seen an explosion of information and communication technology, which offers enormous power to mobilize and share knowledge. Combined with improvement in education, it is a very positive force. It is therefore crucial to define these goals for the future and to pursue peace, development, and human rights at the same time. That is where peacebuilding comes in as such an important concept.

Melanie: How can our peacebuilding community best collaborate with the UN to prevent conflict?

Jan: I believe that we need to strike a balance between idealism and realism. My answer to those who criticize the UN is that the UN is as strong as the Member States want it to be. The UN is a reflection of the world as it is, whether you like it or not. Democracy is not everywhere, human rights violations take place, wars and huge inequalities persist. But if we forget the UN Charter, if we forget the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, if we forget what our work and the world should be, then we have failed. My job as well as yours at the Alliance for Peacebuilding is to reduce the gap between the world as it is and the world as it should be. It is relevant for the UN and for the Alliance for Peacebuilding. This is what we are fighting for, every day. ■

SEPARATE TRACKS, COMMON GOALS

Preventing Genocide and Conflict

by **Lisa Schirch**

Whether through quiet resolve or vocal outrage, the chorus of people saying "never again" to genocide and mass atrocities is growing. Many in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding remember when they took this oath to prevent or reduce violence and its devastating effects.

Two fields of professional practice are addressing the complex problem of mass violence. Genocide prevention, or mass atrocities prevention, focuses on stopping outbreaks of deadly violence and punishing perpetrators. Conflict prevention, or peacebuilding, focuses on resolving the underlying drivers of conflict that lead to genocide. Both fields are rooted in a firm commitment to human rights and a desire to reduce violence. Yet, perhaps surprisingly, despite this common set of values and commitments, there are few points of contact between the field of conflict prevention and the rapidly growing field of genocide prevention. The fields have separate academic centers, separate nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and separate government and UN initiatives. Impressive strides are being made every day in each field, especially in conflict assessment and mitigating the drivers of deadly violence. Why do these fields continue to work on parallel tracks rather than merging their efforts? Why is there so little exchange between experts and practitioners?

The questions become more important as the US government seeks to develop a unified approach to preventing mass atrocities around the world, with the Atrocities Prevention Board and an emphasis on conflict prevention in both the military and the State Department. Such a unified response requires understanding why the two fields, which share such common goals, have developed so differently. Ultimately, preventing mass violence requires building a cohesive prevention strategy that draws on the impressive strength of both fields.

A Brief History of Two Fields

The field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding is at least three decades old, with large, well-established NGOs and hundreds of university programs dedicated to it. Following the early lead of NGOs and academics, about fifteen years ago, the United Nations began referring to its own work as conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Today the United Nations has a robust peacebuilding architecture, including work in preventive diplomacy, economic development, governance, peace education, and related efforts that together

illustrate the growing UN commitment to conflict prevention. Likewise, countries such as the United Kingdom, Kenya, and Ghana are developing their own conflict prevention initiatives. In 2010 Secretary Hillary Clinton announced that conflict prevention was the "core mandate" of the US State Department. The 2012 *Human Security Report* identifies these new conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts as a key factor in the decrease of violent deaths in the last twenty years. Still, far less is spent on preventing than on reacting to violent conflict.

In comparison, fewer NGOs and academic programs have focused on genocide and mass atrocities prevention. Holocaust survivors and their allies have kept the dream of "never again" alive since World War II. After the Rwandan genocide and mass atrocities in the former Yugoslavia, academics such as Harvard's Pulitzer Prize–winning Samantha Power, whom President Barack Obama recently nominated as US ambassador to the United Nations, drew attention to genocide—in her words, "a problem from hell." In the last decade, new NGOs such as Save Darfur have used savvy media strategies to build political will to intervene in these worst-case scenarios.

These new policy initiatives indicate a growing international consensus to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. At the United Nations, the principle of the responsibility to protect (R2P) articulates the limited conditions under which the international community should intervene when a government is unable or unwilling to protect its own citizens from mass atrocities. In 2011 President Obama issued Presidential Study Directive 10 for US policy, which stated:

Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States. Our security is affected when

The fields' different frameworks have created serious misunderstandings between them, which in turn have prevented collaboration.

masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods. America's reputation suffers, and our ability to bring about change is constrained, when we are perceived as idle in the face of mass atrocities and genocide. Unfortunately, history has taught us that our pursuit of a world where states do not systematically slaughter civilians will not come to fruition without concerted and coordinated effort.

Despite the growing political rhetoric supporting atrocities prevention, little progress has been made in translating these new stated policies into practical measures with adequate resources. And the new commitments to preventing mass atrocities and genocide come with significant challenges.

In Syria and Mali, policymakers have faced immense challenges in translating their commitments into action partly due to the unintended repercussions of intervening in Libya. International efforts to implement R2P were criticized for moving beyond a mission to protect civilians in Libya toward a mission to change the regime. Observers accused the international intervention of failing to adequately report on civilian casualties caused by intervening forces and to monitor Libya's hefty weapons stock, which now is destabilizing neighboring Mali.

The field of conflict prevention is largely absent from the planning for new policy initiatives to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. The divisions between conflict prevention and genocide prevention go beyond the historical paths described here; important conceptual divisions also seem

to have kept academics and practitioners apart. Some of the tensions between the fields are due to misunderstanding. Others reflect real differences in experience and values.

Criminal Justice versus Conflict Resolution

Conflict prevention and genocide prevention efforts share similar goals of reducing violence, but their very different conceptual frameworks create many gaps between the fields. Genocide prevention, rooted in the values of human rights, emphasizes using traditional criminal justice processes to hold perpetrators accountable and training international attention on the specific deplorable acts of leaders who are inciting genocide. Under this framework, the idea of compromise or negotiation with perpetrators of violence can be suspect.

By contrast, the conflict prevention field arises from a conflict resolution framework, which emphasizes identifying the underlying drivers of conflict in a society and working with all stakeholders to determine legitimate grievances and inclusive governance models. Under this framework, focusing only on the actions of perpetrators, without addressing the dynamics that led to violence in the first place, seems incomplete. Most conflict prevention experts view coercive criminal justice or the use of force as necessary in some cases. But far too often for those in the conflict prevention field, real, principled diplomacy and robust, skilled negotiation and mediation and restorative justice approaches are never given a chance.

The fields' different frameworks have created serious misunderstandings between

them, which in turn have prevented collaboration. A prominent genocide scholar described conflict prevention as a culture that treats all parties in a conflict as morally equivalent, where practitioners pursue peace at any price, even when there are credible threats of violence, tending to believe that prevention ends when violence begins. This is a caricature of the conflict prevention field: No conflict prevention expert would suggest that all groups in conflict are morally equivalent or that peace should be pursued at any price. The concern regarding moral equivalence could derive from a belief that talking to perpetrators confers legitimacy onto them. This is also a concern of the conflict prevention community. Conflict prevention experts have noted that perpetrators may use diplomatic efforts as a distraction.

Conflict prevention methods, including negotiation and mediation, require talking directly to perpetrators in order to better understand their motivations and to explore options for ending the violence. Mediators who talk to perpetrators of atrocities are not condoning the perpetrators' actions. Diplomacy and dialogue do not imply justification for a perpetrator's acts. But conflict prevention experts advise that maintaining communication or diplomatic channels with all stakeholders, even those perpetrating atrocities, is essential. In weighing the costs and benefits of communicating with perpetrators, most conflict prevention experts believe the benefits tend to outweigh the costs.

Balancing Coercion and Persuasion

In practice, policymakers' responses to genocide and mass atrocity prevention have tended to focus more on coercive legal mechanisms—such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), which names, blames, and shames individual perpetrators of mass atrocities—or on military intervention. The international human rights community and activists aiming to stop mass atrocities in Uganda worked to obtain an ICC warrant to arrest Ugandan rebel leader Joseph Kony. Local Ugandan religious leaders and NGOs expressed dismay at this effort, as the ICC ruling came just as years of careful work at a peace process including Kony were coming to fruition. The ICC had not consulted with Ugandans trying to stop the violence, and the top-down ruling seemed to both ignore and undermine bottom-up peacebuilding efforts to stop mass atrocities.

Conflict prevention scholars and practitioners tend to be skeptical of coercive mechanisms as short-lived, unsustainable, and leading to unintended consequences, though they do not rule out that there is a time and place for coercive legal or security-sector involvement as part of a larger conflict prevention strategy. A coordinated approach grounded in both genocide and conflict prevention holds promise for joint research as well as a better balance of persuasive and coercive measures to ward off violence.

Differing Approaches to Conflict Assessment

Genocide and mass atrocities happen often, but not always, during an armed conflict. Mass atrocities occur within a context of structural violence—the systematic use of policies, institutions, and cultural practices that result in disabilities and deaths of certain groups. Specific structural conditions and early warning indicators of potential atrocities could be better identified through close collaboration between conflict prevention and genocide prevention experts.

Genocide prevention experts rightly criticize the conflict prevention community for lacking an atrocities prevention lens while assessing a conflict. Assessments developed by the conflict prevention and peacebuilding field have not focused explicitly on preventing mass atrocities, in part because the field has tended to see these expressions of mass violence as developing within the context of structural or direct violence. Conflict assessments currently examine the dynamics of structural violence and institutional abilities, local peacebuilding capacity, and the broader international context, as well as specifically looking at the individuals and groups driving the conflict and their motives and means to carry out mass violence. Conflict prevention broadly analyzes the political economy of conflict and contestations of power and governance that often fuel intrastate genocide and mass atrocities. Its scholars bring complex understandings of identity and the psychology of conflict. Its practitioners attend to the psychosocial challenges of trauma healing and the effect of trauma on the brain and cognitive functioning, which are central to their approach to conflict assessment.

Genocide scholars articulate analytical frameworks similar to those found in the conflict prevention literature. But in policy circles, the genocide prevention community has tended to focus on specific perpetrators rather than underlying structural causes or the psychological and identity dimensions driving conflict. Other genocide and mass atrocities researchers

A coordinated approach grounded in both genocide and conflict prevention holds promise for joint research as well as a better balance of persuasive and coercive measures to ward off violence.

point to the uniquely horrific level of violence, the distinct patterns of structural and direct violence that lead up to mass killing, and the specific motivations for committing genocide.

The differences in the fields' assessments need not contradict. Assessment methods are more likely useful for preventing both conflict and mass atrocities if the fields engage in greater dialogue with each other about their complementary foci. Robust, multistakeholder, ongoing conflict assessment is essential to both conflict and genocide prevention, and currently, there is not enough quality data collection and comparative triangulation of information to improve planning for either.

Identifying Potential Negative Consequences

In the rush to act, policymakers may be tempted to intervene without adequately assessing the potential for negative consequences. Experience suggests that interventions to stop mass atrocities may

› cause significant civilian casualties,

› undermine longer-term efforts to foster democratic governance,

› infuse a surplus of weapons into a region that then falls into the hands of insurgents in neighboring countries, causing regional instability, and

› fuel a narrative that colonial powers want to extract resources and impose political dominance on smaller countries.

In Mali, opponents of the international intervention cited each of these concerns. In Cambodia, documents suggest that US attempts to stop or slow the Khmer Rouge through a military bombing campaign only built momentum for the regime's subsequent genocide.

Conflict prevention and development researchers consistently find that good intentions often can have destructive and counterproductive effects. In response to decades of lessons learned, the field of conflict prevention has developed extensive assessment tools to identify and avoid unintended effects. Widespread training in conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm methodologies have affected how conflict prevention and peacebuilding organizations plan to reduce potential consequences. Working together, the two fields could better anticipate and prepare to mitigate potential second- and third-order effects, particularly in military interventions.

Including the Whole of Society in Prevention

Recent genocide prevention policy initiatives seem to favor a top-down approach, emphasizing the need for ICC prosecution or military intervention. The field of conflict prevention has learned that prevention works best when leaders at all levels of society communicate and coordinate with each other to prevent and respond to crises. Such whole-of-society conflict prevention has developed into well-tuned infrastructures linking civil society, government, and military in Ghana and

Kenya, which prevented electoral violence in 2008 and 2013, respectively. Genocide prevention and conflict prevention should work together to design whole-of-society approaches that engage not only state structures but also community and mid-level society leadership to prevent and respond to genocide.

Next Steps

As political leaders figure out how to turn the concepts of genocide and mass atrocities prevention into policy and action, the lessons learned from conflict prevention could save both time and effort. New genocide and mass atrocities initiatives are reaching out to the conflict prevention community for greater dialogue and discussion. At the same time, conflict prevention practitioners and scholars should pay closer attention to the momentum in genocide and mass atrocities prevention and learn from and work with people with a specific focus on atrocities prevention. ◼

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A LIVING **REALITY?**

The Responsibility to Protect and the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities

by **Alex J. Bellamy**

At the 2005 World Summit, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P). World leaders agreed that they each had to protect their own populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity; that they should encourage and assist others to fulfill their own responsibilities; and that they should respond in a timely and decisive fashion. In the annals of international diplomacy it was a rare moment of unity and clarity in setting out the responsibilities of governments and the international community to protect people from these crimes. Member States agreed to continue considering measures to implement R2P, and the concept has been the subject of

four informal dialogues in the UN General Assembly. The Security Council has referred to R2P in two thematic resolutions on protecting civilians in armed conflict and a presidential statement on preventive diplomacy. The principle has also appeared in Security Council resolutions on the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Darfur, Libya, Côte d'Ivoire, Yemen, South Sudan, and Mali. Given this track record, it is easy to agree with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that R2P is a concept "whose time has come."

Preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity—that is, genocide and mass atrocities—lies at the heart of R2P. With the global fixation on questions of armed intervention, it is

often forgotten that R2P includes a specific commitment to prevent these crimes and their incitement. In the long term, the principal measure of the concept's success should not be evidence of more effective armed interventions (though that is certainly part of the equation) but rather the overall reduction of crises involving the crimes or their imminent risk.

Implementing R2P to prevent genocide and mass atrocities involves a comprehensive range of efforts to reduce underlying sources of risk, build national resilience to these risks, and prevent the escalation of crises and conflicts into violence against civilian populations. The strategies required for prevention are, in many respects, similar to those associated with peacebuilding, human rights action, and conflict resolution. Addressing underlying risk involves challenging discrimination in all its forms, addressing inequalities, and dealing with past crimes and injustices. Building national resilience involves establishing and maintaining the rule of law, reforming national security, establishing accountable institutions that can resolve disputes legitimately, and ensuring human rights. Preventing the escalation of crises can involve mediation, preventive diplomacy, and even targeted sanctions to deter would-be perpetrators. The prevention of genocide and mass atrocities is thus complex and multifaceted, involving partnerships between local actors and international agencies, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to it.

Amongst others, some officials in the United Nations and European Union have raised concerns about the potential for R2P to weaken existing prevention efforts. These focus on the potential militarization of the work and fears that political controversies connected to R2P might undermine the progress already made. Such concerns should be addressed. But R2P does not change—or seek to change—rules governing the use of force, nor does it expand any entity's authority to interfere in the affairs of sovereign states. World leaders explicitly insisted that R2P implementation be consistent with the UN Charter and existing international law. States seem to have understood this. Despite the controversy created by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)–led intervention in Libya, the Security Council has referred to R2P more frequently in the two years since Libya than it did in the prior five years, showing that the council's underlying commitment to R2P is not swayed by differences in the principle's implementation in specific cases.

It is telling that the R2P concept has been most effective as a guide for noncoercive means of preventing genocide and mass atrocities. Although the precise contribution the concept made to the stemming of postelection violence in Kenya in 2007–08 is disputed, African Union mediator Kofi Annan explicitly framed his largely successful actions through R2P. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations employed a similar strategy to equally good effect in response to the 2009 crisis in Guinea, where international action helped prevent further escalation. In Yemen, the Security Council used R2P to remind the government of its protection responsibilities and create impetus for a negotiated transition of authority. In South Sudan and Mali, the United Nations has employed R2P to galvanize international assistance to states struggling to protect their populations from nonstate and state-based threats. Missions in both these countries are focused on preventing genocide and mass atrocities and protecting vulnerable populations. Most recently, the UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide played an important part in international efforts to ensure that the 2013 elections in Kenya did not result in mass bloodshed. The early signs are that these efforts proved helpful. These cases suggest that preventing genocide and mass atrocities is becoming a living reality in the work of the United Nations and its regional partners, even as abject failure to prevent mass atrocities in Sri Lanka and Syria are reminders that much work remains to be done.

The civil war in Sri Lanka ended in 2009 with the killing of approximately 40,000 Tamil civilians. A UN inquiry found that many may have died due to war crimes or crimes against humanity committed predominantly by government forces. This prompted serious questions about the United Nations' own actions during the crisis. The resulting inquiry was damning. As the most influential Member States were unwilling even to discuss the crisis, basically because they supported the elimination of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers), and as UN staff in Sri Lanka were subjected to harassment, the report found that the United Nations remained largely silent in the face of concerns about civilian protection in order to secure the cooperation of the Sri Lankan government, which it

Syria should be seen as pointing to two areas where more work is urgently needed.

The R2P concept has been most effective as a guide for noncoercive means of preventing genocide and mass atrocities.

needed for humanitarian access. It found that the UN leadership was divided and sent inconsistent messages, that senior UN figures undermined casualty estimates that the United Nations itself reported, and that the UN country team was unsuited to operate in a conflict environment. No senior UN officials assumed responsibility for protecting Tamils.

Set against a backdrop of, at best, apathy from most Member States, the UN experience in Sri Lanka is a tale of an organization still not fully configured for its protection responsibilities. The crisis predated the secretary-general's first R2P report. Much has changed in the United Nations since 2009 and further changes are afoot that should make the organization better able to anticipate and respond to protection crises. First, the United Nations now has an Office for Genocide Prevention and R2P (OGPRtoP) charged with monitoring situations and providing early warning advice. The office is also working to train government and UN officials in prevention, sensitize UN country teams, and publicly remind leaders of their responsibilities. Second, the United Nations is establishing a single crisis center responsible for observing cases, pooling resources, providing consolidated advice to leadership, and ensuring that the organization responds with a single voice. Third, the organization is beginning to grapple seriously with the mainstreaming of R2P, and the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, across its activities—a move the secretary-general called for in 2009. Fourth, several UN agencies are developing their own policies and tools for

enhancing protection, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the development of real-time evaluations of protection responses at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Finally, the secretary-general has acknowledged the problems uncovered with respect to the organization's response to the crisis in Sri Lanka and has established a process to review further options for reform. These reforms should improve UN capacity to prevent genocide and mass atrocities and deserve support.

However, for all the progress made by fine-tuning UN institutional arrangements, the tragedy of Syria is a reminder of the lingering power of power politics. One of the United Nations' first steps in implementing R2P was to establish a capacity for early warning and assessment of situations likely to give rise to genocide and mass atrocities. In one of his many pleas to the Security Council, the secretary-general recalled with no satisfaction that everything that had come to pass in Syria since the first days of the protests there was predicted in advance. More than 130 states in the General Assembly have signaled their displeasure at the Security Council's performance on Syria, and a solid majority in the council favors collective action, showing that R2P is simultaneously galvanizing and is being galvanized by a significant shift in international values in favor of humanitarianism and human rights. But that will be little comfort to the families of the victims or millions displaced in Syria and other sites of mass atrocities around the world.

It is easy to despair of R2P in the face of the Syrian situation; some commentators have done so, declaring "R2P RIP." But that ignores the real progress made elsewhere. Rather than being cause for despair, Syria should be seen as pointing to two areas where more work is urgently needed. First is the need to further strengthen, widen, and deepen global consensus on R2P and the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. If strengthened, the values that gave rise to R2P might develop into a global culture of nonindifference to mass human suffering. Second, researchers and practitioners need to understand what tools might be used, especially by civil society, to prevent violence and protect communities when official channels are blocked. Research on how communities prevent atrocities locally, how they protect themselves, and how international civil society might support them is gathering pace, but much more is needed to develop and drive effective strategies. ■

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PHOTO: JAY AHERAM

BEYOND
THE LAST RESORT

The US Military and Conflict Prevention

by **Janine Davidson**

The military's role in preventing violent conflict is often misunderstood. Civilians, policymakers, and practitioners have argued that the military should have little to no role in prevention, a perspective that reflects concerns about the continued imbalance in resources between the Departments of Defense and State, as well as the potential militarization of US foreign policy. These concerns are legitimate, but they fail to appreciate the very real role the military has and can play in prevention activities and thus dismiss a key element in the diplomat's toolkit. The military need not lead an integrated approach to prevention, but it is a crucial aspect of it. The responsibility to protect often requires real military options, as part of the bargaining kit and as the last resort to stopping the killing. This article builds on John Agoglia's call for a more holistic approach to conflict prevention and suggests how the military can be better integrated into more enlightened strategies for preventing conflict and instability.

From Deterrence to Prevention: The Military's Historical Role

Traditionally, the military's role in prevention was to be ready to prevail in all-out war. This was the essence of classic Cold War deterrence, in which the United States' lethal nuclear arsenal, capable of ensuring the near-total destruction of the Soviet Union, was kept on constant alert to prevent the Soviets from conducting a first strike. Interagency coordination for this arrangement meant letting diplomats talk about how ready the military was while the military trained and positioned itself overtly for retaliation. The very last line of diplomacy was the president's red phone, through which, it was hoped, the leaders of the two superpowers might avoid miscalculation and lower tensions at the eleventh hour. In this tense but stable arrangement, the diplomatic toolkit was contingent on the military one, and the civilians in charge intimately understood military capabilities and plans.

Today, although deterrence is still at play against threats such as North Korea and Iran, evolving norms and the changing nature of war mean an additional focus on preventing general instability and mass atrocities against civilians. The military understands that there are no easy military tactics for stopping genocide in its tracks or reversing a spiral of violent instability. In such missions, the enemy is not always clearly identifiable and is often chaos itself. Experts still debate over the point

at which an intervening force might have prevented the Rwandan genocide, but military planners generally feel that the longer one waits, the harder and bloodier the solution might be.

For a holistic approach to prevention, civilian and military planners should consider the following roles the military might constructively play in prevention.

Planning

As Neil Levine discussed in the first issue of *Building Peace*, the US government has begun to develop more systematic processes for identifying potential crisis spots to inform decision making. For Levine's "extended warning list" of countries where crisis is not imminent, the military's existing planning and war-gaming processes could be of great value if implemented through a more systematic interagency planning group. In the current process, which is implemented only occasionally for highly sensitive threats, military planners develop worst-case scenarios well in advance of the outbreak of hostilities and present them to decision makers as table-top exercises. This methodology allows planners and policymakers to think through the potential paths to conflict and identify prevention and response options. It can also help senior leaders prepare for crisis decision making by prodding them to think through various options calmly.

Shaping

When conflict breaks out in a country, poorly trained and unprofessional security forces can enflame the violence or commit atrocities. Thus military-to-military engagement is key to extended prevention. The US military's approach has evolved greatly since the Cold War, during which US trained militaries were accused of atrocities and coup attempts. Although it is probably impossible to guarantee that every troop or aid worker will behave

impeccably, long-term engagement can spread shared norms concerning professional civilian-led militaries that respect human rights and the rule of law. Today, military officers from around the world attend the US Naval Postgraduate School and the National War College, where the curriculum focuses on professionalization and civil-military relations. These values are evident in Chile and El Salvador, which are now said to be "security exporters" in multinational peacekeeping missions abroad.

Negotiating

In some countries, military officers may have a more prominent political status vis-à-vis civilian leadership, compared with our own democratic models. In such cases, US military officers may have more influence engaging their counterparts than US civilian officials might with theirs. The military-to-military engagement discussed above also can forge professional relationships among officers who serve as lines of communication in impending crises. During the 2011 uprising in Egypt, senior US military officers engaged directly with Egyptian military leadership to encourage protection of civilians. Of course military relationships alone cannot guarantee long-term democratic transitions or perfect outcomes, but from a crisis prevention perspective, they offer valuable leverage.

Deterring

As hostilities become imminent, prevention options become limited. When forces are already on the move, as they were in Benghazi, they may be stopped only through force or the threat of force. Thus, diplomats attempting to convince aggressors to turn back need to understand and update Cold War theories of deterrence, and civilians engaged in such messaging at the highest level need to clearly comprehend realistic military options. Practicing scenarios in table-top exercises will pay off, as forces will have been prepositioned

If the military is brought into the game only after guns have been raised and bullets have begun to fly, intervention will be bloody and success will be uncertain.

for maximum and realistic effect to present a credible threat and decision makers will have already thought through options.

Fighting

Actually deploying the military is the last and worst option. If the military is brought into the game only after guns have been raised and bullets have begun to fly, intervention will be bloody and success will be uncertain. The military will argue, rightly, against a small-footprint deployment to limit risk. If an intervention scenario has not been run in civil-military table-top exercises, that option might seem extreme to civilians who hope to avoid large military interventions. But we cannot be naïve about the numbers of troops and lethal tactics needed to stabilize chaos and stop violent actors.

The military can and should have a role in prevention well before a conflict begins. Rather than separating civilian from military means, good civil-military planning for prevention should consider military processes and capabilities in all phases. ■

Dr. Janine Davidson is assistant professor at George Mason University's School of Public Policy. She is a former Air Force pilot who recently served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for plans in the Pentagon.

EARLY WARNING, EARLY RESPONSE

Lessons from Sri Lanka

by **Madhawa Palihapitiya**

Most community-based violence can be prevented if the right information is delivered to the right stakeholders, at the right time, in the right format, enabling the stakeholders to take the right actions. Early warning that leads to preventive action is effective in reducing community-based violence, especially cyclical violence. Using local knowledge is crucial for early warning and response to be successful at the community level. The early warning system developed in Sri Lanka shows that community-based early warning and response can be successful in preventing violence from escalating.

Soon after the signing of the 2002 Cease-Fire Agreement (CFA) to end a three-decade long civil war between the government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Foundation for Co-Existence (FCE) implemented a citizen-based conflict early warning system for the volatile eastern province. The violence in this region started when 14 crosses in an eastern town were destroyed. Religious violence soon became communal violence and spread throughout the three districts in that province. The violence there was so severe that it threatened to derail the entire peace process. Experts later realized that the violence could have been prevented and the threat to the CFA averted had the communities used an early warning

system that systematically collected, verified, and conveyed early warning signs for preventive action.

The FCE early warning system was a "third-generation early warning system"— the first such system to be developed and used exclusively by local actors within a conflict zone. Unlike the first and second generations of early warning systems, whose actors and approaches originated outside the conflict region, third generation systems relied heavily on local expertise and comprised local actors who monitored, evaluated, and implemented activities within the zone. Statistical indicators of violence and also peace were developed to analyze and predict the tendency for violence. These indicators were designed at the local level by communities themselves, unlike the country-level indicators that first and second generation early warning systems relied on. In addition to monitoring newspapers, websites, and other public media, the third generation early warning system developed in Sri Lanka monitored handbills, hate speech, and other highly localized events while also relying on daily situation reports from highly trained field officers.

Statistical indicators of violence and also peace were developed to analyze and predict the tendency for violence.

The FCE early warning system strongly emphasized early intervention. It was a unique symbiosis of an information center, an early response unit, and a group of highly motivated field staff (see Figure 1) and included youth leaders, journalists, local politicians, and community mobilizers. The information center collected daily reports of both conflicts and cooperation efforts from field staff, verified and coded the information, and transformed it into data that was entered into the FCE Early Warning (FCEWARN) database for analysis and forecasting.

The FCEWARN combined data analysis with field staff analysis and continuous

field monitoring by the early response unit. This unit was pivotal in generating early warning and early response through continuous interaction with local actors. The unit monitored a broader range of indicators than the database. Some of them bordered on intelligence, such as information on rebel artillery positions and fuel collection for arson attacks.

Due to the fluid nature of the conflict in Sri Lanka, a considerable amount of information collected became inaccurate by the time it was written into reports for formal dissemination. This challenge was overcome through stringent verification processes. Multiple field staff or social

Figure 1: Example of community-based intervention
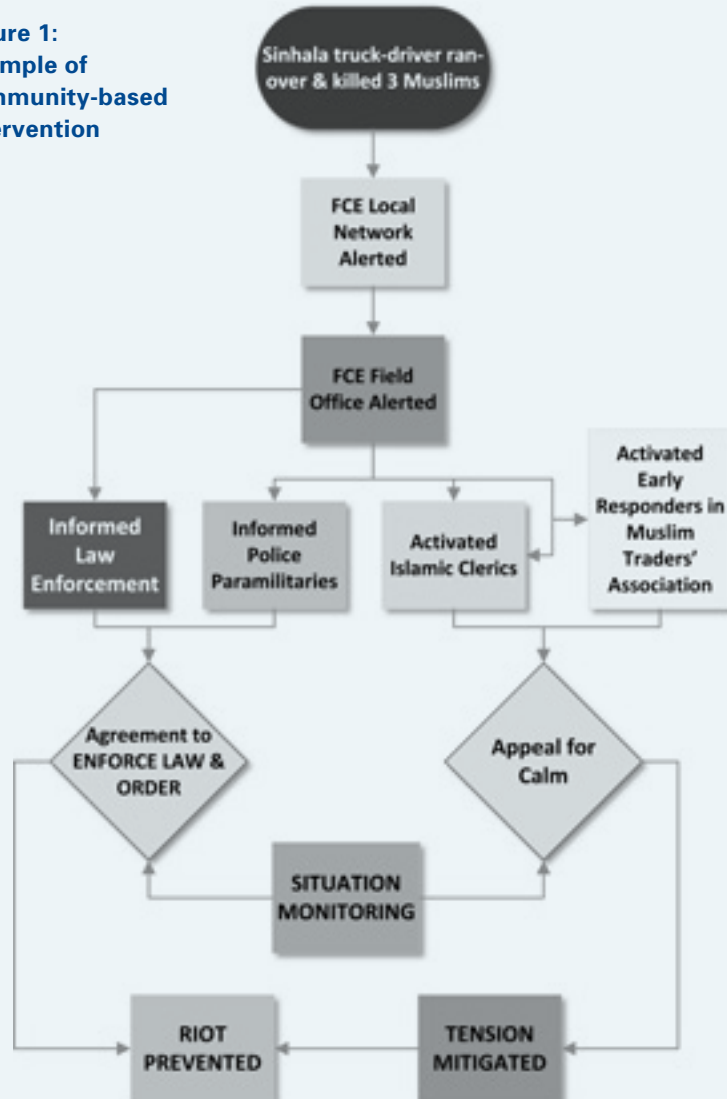
Figure 2:
Main components of FCE early warning system and their interaction
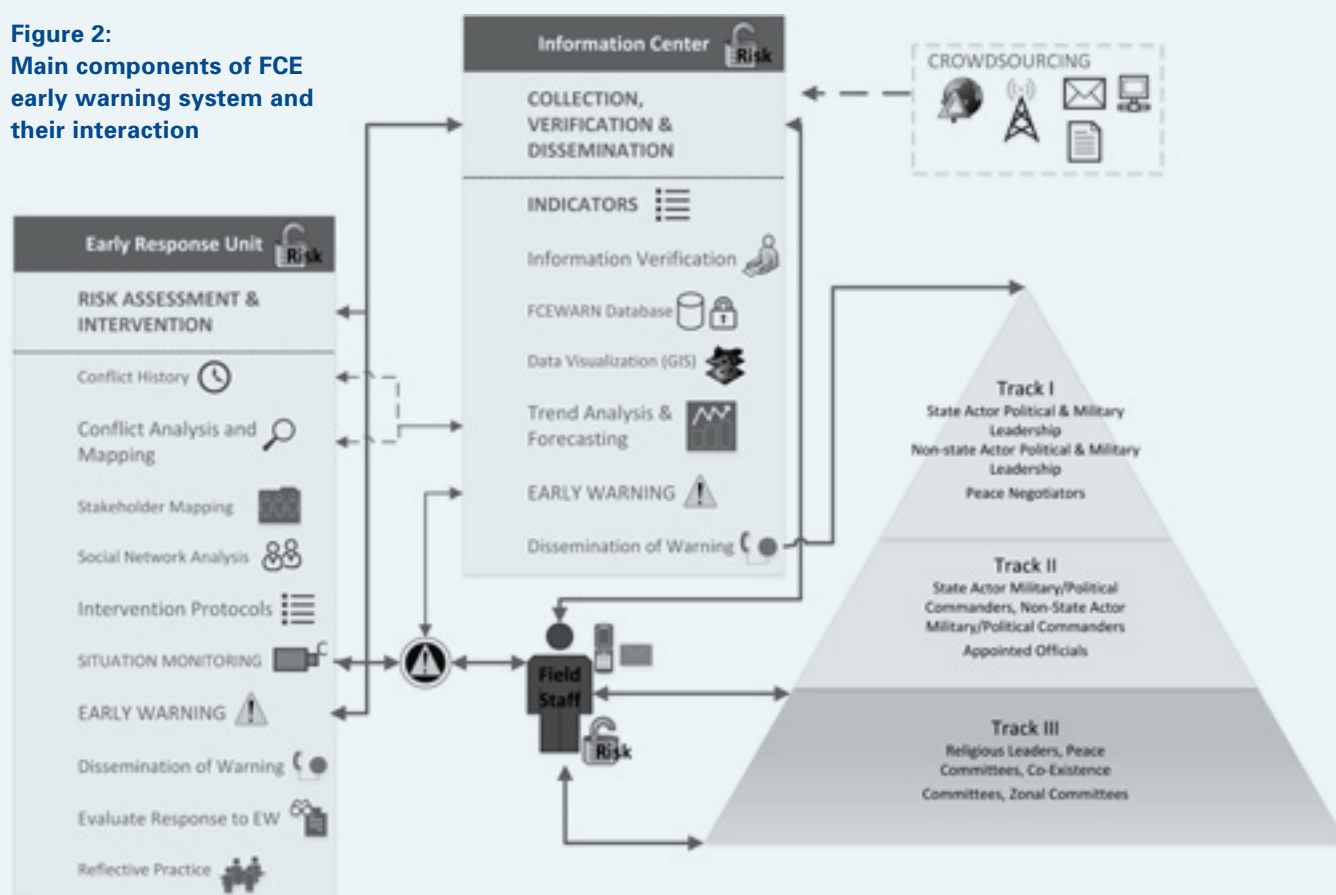
networks observed the same situation, and warning signals sent to stakeholders through text messages or telephone calls were analyzed and disseminated as they were received.

For each early warning signal, the FCE selected appropriate response mechanisms; identified additional stakeholders to receive the warning; and chose the appropriate methods to communicate the warning (e.g., phone calls or text). Then, the FCE identified the human and material resources needed for response and developed timelines for intervention, which involved defining the desired early response outcomes and assessing the risk

to staff and others. The FCE coordinated with other stakeholders, including bilateral and multilateral agencies (if present). The effectiveness of each response was evaluated to identify potential areas for improvement. The process concluded with staff debriefing and reflective practice (see Figure 2).

The FCE early warning system was successful in preventing conflict from intensifying in the area. For instance, FCE early interventions, including face-to-face negotiations, convinced military leaders to refrain from escalating communal violence and also quickly defused catalysts for communal violence, such as the

LTTE seizure of tractors from Muslim cultivators. By working directly with the government, security forces, law enforcement, and community and religious leaders, FCE harnessed their combined capacities to prevent violence.

Initially, the interspersing of ethno-specific cities, towns, and villages (a Tamil village situated next to a Muslim village, which was next to a Sinhala village), particularly in the eastern province, proved challenging. During times of conflict, this interspersing made information collection and early action difficult as violence would erupt on the borders of these villages, making them inaccessible.

Integrated technology in the hands of local actors, coupled with their determination to prevent violence, can carry citizen-based early warning to greater heights.

Access roads would be cut off, and each group would patrol the boundaries of its own village. Over time, however, FCE acquired accurate information and credibility to mobilize interventions by hiring locals from these different villages. FCE explained the principles of early warning and violence prevention to these stakeholders and conducted trainings in negotiations theory and mediation skills. The formation of formal interethnic and/or interreligious committees, which we termed coexistence committees, assisted tremendously in this effort.

Unfortunately, as the war escalated, field monitoring became increasingly difficult to the detriment of community-based early warning and response. Entire communities were under threat as the two armies engaged in all-out war. Communities were displaced, disturbing the cohesion and integrity that is crucial for early warning and early action. Information collection became a highly sensitive issue as both warring parties considered it intelligence gathering. The safety of the field officers and community-based networks were at risk. Before the war escalated, warring parties were amenable to an extent to FCE's activities to reduce violence, but once the war was in full swing, both sides cared more about military victory than about civilian casualties. As the fog of war set in, information became less reliable and preventive response thus diminished.

Civil society actors implementing early warning systems during all-out war must find novel ways to collect and verify information while still maintaining the safety of their staff. If warring sides do not respond to early warnings and are perpetrators of violence, appropriate international actors need to be engaged to put pressure on local actors to protect civilians. Today, new technologies are advancing information collection, verification, and dissemination for citizen-based early warning. These include crowdsourcing, open-source spatial data platforms, technology for remote imaging, mobile technology, and big data analysis as well as low-tech methods like high-frequency radio. Such integrated technology in the hands of local actors, coupled with their determination to prevent violence, can carry citizen-based early warning to greater heights. ■

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THE
BUSINESS OF PREVENTING
ARMED
CONFLICT

by **Angela Rivas Gamboa**

Preventing armed conflict might seem like a task only state agencies and civil society organizations are interested in, but businesses in conflict-prone areas are equally, if not more, interested in it. Armed conflict imposes additional costs on companies, which might not be evident, particularly if a company has been operating in a conflict-ridden area, such as Colombia, for many years. Armed conflict clearly creates difficulties for companies worldwide and challenges their capacity to secure the transactions necessary for business. The presence of illegal armed groups can significantly hinder companies from transporting personnel, buying goods, accessing facilities, constructing infrastructure, delivering products, and even hiring employees—all common activities in business operations. Armed conflict also impedes local economic growth, political stability, socioeconomic development, and good governance,

rendering business activities unsustainable. Thus it is in companies' best interests to care about and work toward preventing conflict, though it is not always clear what a company can contribute to preventing conflict effectively.

The role of businesses in not only preventing but also generating armed conflict has become increasingly apparent. As companies working in complex environments all over the world have found, buying commodities from areas with a strong presence of illegal armed groups, exacerbating internal divisions within locals, or hiring services in areas where extortion is rampant can escalate, or even generate, conflict. Firms should, therefore, conduct their operations with an awareness of these concerns. Their managerial strategies should include an assessment of the effects of business activities on conflict dynamics, consultations with key stakeholders to understand their expectations

and concerns about armed conflict, identification of risks related to armed conflict, policies on armed conflict, and procedures to implement such policies. For example, in the mining and energy sectors in Colombia, there is a general shift in the way in which companies assess risks and impacts, as well as important changes in the way in which they handle and manage them.

However, adapting practices to prevent armed conflict and integrating them into business operations, though critical, is not enough. Certainly it is not the only way a company can contribute to conflict prevention, and stakeholders increasingly expect businesses to engage more visibly in this task. The experience of companies in Colombia shows at least two approaches on this front: The first, narrow, approach focuses on working with specific populations who are vulnerable to armed groups. Initiatives include preventing illegal armed groups from recruiting youth and supporting the socioeconomic reintegration of former combatants to avoid the recurrence of violence. In contemporary Colombia, the latter is more common: Colombia's reintegration agency (ACR) has engaged a number of companies to contribute to the ongoing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process. The second, broad, approach focuses on a specific territory and seeks to provide the needed conditions for security and sustainable peace there. Through Peace and Development Programs civil society organizations and companies have committed to securing peace and socioeconomic development in a given territory.

In contemporary Colombia, companies seeking to effectively contribute to conflict prevention and sustainable peacebuilding need to adopt both the narrow and broad approaches (i.e., conduct operations without exacerbating or generating conflict as well as secure conditions for peace at the local level). In doing so, companies can benefit from working with other actors, such as government agencies

and nongovernmental organizations. Collaboration among different parties is widely acknowledged as key to successful interventions. Such collaboration can take a variety of forms—from multistakeholder initiatives focused on certifying conflict-free commodities to public-private partnerships aimed at assisting vulnerable populations. However, this collective work is not always smooth and requires effort to secure constructive interactions. Choosing the right mode of interaction between companies and other actors depends greatly on the nature of the conflict, as well as the characters of the parties and the ways in which they have interacted with each other in the past. As such, there are no models, in the strict sense of the term, that can be followed, but certain elements have proved to improve a collaboration's chances of success. To begin with, the agendas and strengths of each actor should be identified and built upon, allowing enough time to foster trust. The initiative should be designed in a way that benefits all parties involved. These are elements, rather than parts of a single model, that companies should bear in mind and adapt to their initiatives accordingly.

Even though conflict prevention is in businesses' best interests, companies can face both internal and external obstacles when engaging in such initiatives. Internal obstacles include apprehension over engaging in initiatives pertaining to armed conflict and peacebuilding, as well as the lack of clarity on why the company should engage in such initiatives. Further obstacles could make it difficult to effectively carry out conflict prevention initiatives.

The role of businesses in not only preventing but also generating armed conflict has become increasingly apparent.

Challenges include selling the idea internally and gaining employees' and executives' willingness to work on conflict prevention, identifying initiatives that are more relevant to a company's activities and places of operation, and building the capacities to develop and carry out conflict prevention initiatives.

External obstacles often relate to lack of legitimacy of either the initiative or the actors involved, lack of security for those involved in the initiative, inability of other actors to effectively carry out the initiative's activities, and the effects of conflict dynamics on the given initiative. Challenges thus include designing conflict prevention initiatives in a way that secures their legitimacy, identifying and engaging legitimate partners to carry out the initiative, avoiding security risks by either working on initiatives that no actor sees as a direct threat or staying away from areas that armed groups still control, developing capacity-building strategies so all partners can perform as expected to secure the initiative's success, and adjusting the initiative based on shifting armed conflict dynamics.

Despite these challenges, engaging in conflict prevention initiatives is not only a wise decision for companies operating in conflict-affected areas but also a critical element in securing the sustainability of business operations. ■

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OVERCOMING
OBSTACLES TO PEACE

by **Laurel Miller**

In a new RAND Corporation study of nation-building—*Overcoming Obstacles to Peace: Local Factors in Nation-Building*—we analyze the impediments that local conditions pose to interventions aimed at stabilizing conflict-affected areas. Previous RAND studies of nation-building over the past decade focused on external interveners' activities. Our new work shifts the focus to internal circumstances, first identifying the conditions that give rise to conflicts or threaten to perpetuate them and then determining how external and local actors have or have not been able to modify or work around them to promote enduring peace.

The set of activities that we label nation-building corresponds closely to those to which the term *peacebuilding*—preferred by the United Nations and other organizations and analysts—is applied. The terms *state-building* and *peace operations* are also often used to capture similar international engagements in establishing peace, rebuilding shattered societies, and preventing the recurrence of conflict. For our study, we employ the term *nation-building* to describe operations conducted by external civilian and military authorities that employ armed force—by deploying foreign troops, armed foreign police, or both—together with other levers of influence to promote enduring peace in conflict-affected areas.

We examined in depth six societies: Cambodia, El Salvador, Bosnia and Herzegovina, East Timor, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also analyzed a larger set of twenty major post–Cold War nation-building interventions. We assessed the risk of renewed conflict at the onset of the interventions and subsequent progress along five dimensions: security, democratization, government effectiveness, economic growth, and human development (which measures changes in health and education as well as income levels).

We found that changing many of the specific conditions that fueled conflict often is infeasible in the time-frame of

nation-building operations. But we also found that such changes are not essential to achieving the primary goal of nation-building—that is, establishing enduring peace. In most of the countries that have experienced nation-building interventions in the past twenty-five years, conflict has not recurred and there has been improvement in the other dimensions we assessed—in some cases, considerable improvement—even where it cannot be said that the intervention reengineered social relations or otherwise fully resolved the causes of conflict.

The countries that were better off to begin with, institutionally and economically, were better off at the end of nation-building interventions than were those that had greater limitations at the start. Nevertheless, almost all countries were meaningfully better off than when the operations began. Most post–Cold War interventions have been followed by improved security, some democratization, significant economic growth, and modest improvements in human development and government effectiveness. These outcomes have been achieved, in most cases, with only a modest commitment of international military and civilian manpower and economic assistance. The measurable improvements we document for the twenty post–Cold War nation-building operations suggest benchmarks by which to measure progress in future operations.

Our study shows that three factors most influence the establishment of sustainable peace: gaining local consent; neutralizing the interference of outside actors, including neighboring states; and mitigating the influence of entrenched patronage networks. Nation-building operations that have enjoyed local consent and regional support almost always have achieved peace. In the twenty cases we examined,
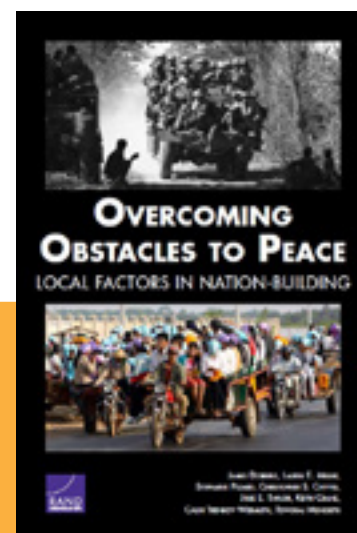
the warring parties' consent to an international intervention was very closely related to success in establishing enduring peace. All but one of the seventeen missions that enjoyed consent (the exception being the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) led to peace, whereas none of the three nonconsensual peace-enforcement missions (Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia) did so.

In our six in-depth case studies, the regional or global situations had a profound effect in fomenting or sustaining violence, and changing those situations was crucial to ending the conflicts. The international community succeeded considerably in altering the geopolitical sources of conflict in each of the six cases, but it could not substantially weaken the hold of patronage networks that were competing for wealth and power. These networks often were coopted into power-sharing arrangements, which produced peace and even some modicum of democracy, but they could almost never be persuaded to support institutional and policy reforms that would curb their own rent-seeking capacity.

For example, international pressure on the leaderships of Serbia and Croatia compelled them to persuade their proxies within Bosnia to make peace, but the power-sharing governance arrangements in Bosnia that were integral to the peace settlement have persistently been dysfunctional. In Sierra Leone, the UN peacekeeping operation gained traction after the United Kingdom stepped in to suppress insurgent elements and after the international community helped stabilize neighboring Liberia, but the deeply entrenched patronage system has been an obstacle to strengthening Sierra Leone's state institutions.

Overall, our findings suggest the importance of setting realistic expectations. Those involved in nation-building operations should not expect to quickly lift countries out of poverty and create liberal democracies. They also should not be swayed by a negative stereotype of nation-building that does not recognize its signal achievements in the great majority of cases. These more realistic expectations should guide the development of nation-building strategies and implementation plans, as well as the appreciation of outcomes. ■

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THE ATROCITIES PREVENTION BOARD

An Experiment in Genocide Prevention Systems

by **Andrea Bartoli**

Because remembrance without resolve is a hollow gesture. Awareness without action changes nothing. In this sense, "never again" is a challenge to us all—to pause and to look within.

—President Barack Obama, April 23, 2012, US Holocaust Memorial Museum

PHOTO: WHITE HOUSE

For nearly two years the US government has been developing a comprehensive interagency strategy to help prevent mass atrocities and genocide. This policy experiment includes creating the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) within the White House's national security apparatus, along with equipping federal agencies with new capacities and tools for preventing atrocities. While still a work in progress, the effort marks an important step forward in shifting the stance of the US government and the international community from willful neglect, which meant intervention came too late in Rwanda and Bosnia, to coordinated action to help prevent future genocide and mass atrocities.

The recent US policy developments on atrocities prevention trace their roots to the Genocide Prevention Task Force (GPTF), led by former secretary of state Madeleine Albright and former secretary of defense William Cohen, and the efforts of many to translate the rhetoric of "never again" into practical reality. In late 2008, as the Obama administration prepared to take office, the bipartisan task force released its report, which included a robust list of recommendations for improving US capacities to help prevent genocide: assessing risks and triggering action through early warnings, engaging before a crisis erupts, halting and reversing escalation through preventive

diplomacy, dedicating resources and foreign assistance to support preventive capacities, incorporating genocide prevention and response into national policy guidance and planning, developing military doctrine and training on protection of civilians and prevention of genocide, and helping to create an international network for information sharing and coordinated action to prevent genocide.

A number of incoming officials were personally engaged in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and were long-time advocates of a more responsible US role in addressing mass atrocities. Meanwhile, a growing coalition of human rights, humanitarian, peacebuilding, and faith-based organizations organized around the GPTF report and began a concerted advocacy effort to ensure key recommendations were implemented. The Obama administration began to dedicate high-level attention to mass atrocities prevention, implementing important components of the GPTF recommendations, including appointing a national director for war crimes, atrocities, and civilian protection in the White House national security staff and adding mass atrocities for the first time to the intelligence community's annual assessment of security threats.

At the same time, a new international genocide prevention architecture was emerging, starting with the 2004 Stockholm conference on genocide prevention. On that occasion UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced the establishment of the post of special advisor on genocide prevention, a role that Juan Mendez, Francis Deng, and now Adama Dieng have performed so far. UN Member States and international organizations began expanding and developing a more active role in early warning and response. Argentina, Switzerland, and Tanzania organized regional gatherings. A growing number of states began to address genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect. Training programs such as Engaging Governments in Genocide Prevention introduced more government officials around the world to genocide prevention. New civil society initiatives focused on strengthening community resilience to help avert mass violence and heal after atrocities. All these activities called for synergy.

On August 4, 2011, the White House released Presidential Study Directive (PSD) 10, which emphasized that genocide and mass atrocities prevention was a national security priority and moral responsibility and stated clearly that "in the face of a potential mass atrocity, our options are never limited to either sending in the military or standing by and doing nothing." The directive mandated the creation of the APB to address emerging threats and coordinate a comprehensive strategy for atrocities prevention. Agencies across the US government were charged with reviewing their own capacities for atrocities prevention, identifying gaps and challenges, and developing focused work plans to improve their capabilities. From this review came a number of specific initiatives, including improved civilian surge capacity in the State Department, an innovative Tech Challenge by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), new doctrine and training on mass atrocities prevention in the Department of Defense, and new Department of Treasury sanctions against third-party enablers.

A year later at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, President Obama announced the establishment of the APB and the development of a US strategy to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. He recommitted the United States to striving for a future where there is a "place for dignity for every human being," and to making this "the work of our nation and all nations."

The APB has now been up and running for over a year. Some have criticized it for not being more out front on the Syria crisis and for working behind a shroud of secrecy. The criticism has been intense especially among academics and some sectors of civil society and is worthy of debate. The APB has not been adequately transparent, and it needs to find clear ways to measure and demonstrate the real effects of its work on changes in its behavior and policies in specific situations. A shift does seem to be

happening in these directions, but it has been slow in coming and will not satisfy all critics.

However, the seemingly bureaucratic changes the APB has focused on are critical steps forward. The board meets monthly and includes senior representatives of the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Treasury, Homeland Security, and Intelligence, along with USAID, the US Mission to the United Nations, and the Office of the Vice President and national security staff. It looks at specific country cases that may be at risk of atrocities and seeks to take an upstream approach on situations that may not otherwise get high-level attention. Rather than operating in crisis mode on situations that have already escalated to mass atrocities and high-level policy attention, such as Syria, the APB is undertaking the apparently mundane but long-neglected work of trying to address crises before they erupt. It is taking prevention seriously.

The APB is also changing how the US government works at an interagency level and how resources are spent. It has helped ensure dedicated US investments in prevention efforts in Burma, Kenya, and Central Africa. It has established itself as a forum for interagency engagement and coordination in identifying and mobilizing US resources on emerging atrocities threats. And, perhaps most promising of all, it has begun to institutionalize atrocities prevention into "the DNA of the US government." On May 1, 2013, the White House released a fact sheet outlining progress since PSD-10, and an executive order on atrocities prevention is expected in the months ahead. A new national intelligence estimate identifies specific situations of concern for mass atrocities threats.

The United States is both leading and learning as the APB begins its work. The APB will not be perfect and its efforts will still be undertaken within the

broader confines of a complex and often conflicting US foreign policy agenda. It will face the ongoing challenges of the prevention paradox—that we can prevent only what we know—and the difficulties of policy prioritization and interagency coordination. But it is a crucial effort that can support and be part of the emerging broader global regime for genocide prevention. Atrocities prevention is ultimately a collective enterprise that uses and generates learning and produces good practice through experimentation, verification of results, and further improvement. The APB attempts to move US policy from moral outrage to evidence-based decision making. Data on human rights violations, the arms trade, hate speech, demographic trends, economic patterns, and early warning must be collected and interpreted properly, consistently, and transparently. Policies and investments need to follow what works. Doing so requires not only mustering greater political will to face emerging threats before violence erupts but also the slow and steady work of research and learning, policy development, program design and implementation, and resource investments to support capacity-building at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

The APB's work is often not high-profile and may be difficult to measure. It is neither a panacea for genocide prevention nor a merely bureaucratic exercise. Rather, it is an experiment that deserves the attentive examination and critical support of all who are committed to transforming "never again" from persistent promise into practical reality. ◾

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REMINDERS
OF THE PROMISE

Civil Society and the Responsibility to Protect

by **Don Deya**

In 2005 governments worldwide made a historic commitment to prevent and halt genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing by unanimously agreeing to the responsibility to protect (R2P). Enshrined in the UN World Summit Outcome Document, R2P affirms that the state holds the primary responsibility for protecting populations from mass atrocities and that the international community must assist states in fulfilling these obligations, as well as respond in a timely and decisive manner when a state fails to do so or is in fact the perpetrator of the crimes. This agreement for states to not remain indifferent in the face of the most horrific crimes was meant to prevent governments from using sovereignty to shield their massacres of their own populations. For the first time, states acknowledged that these four crimes—no matter the location, perpetrator, or circumstances—constitute threats to international peace and security and thus require action.

R2P offers a comprehensive framework to prevent and halt atrocities, prioritizing nonmilitary responses and emphasizing the use of diplomatic, legal, economic, and humanitarian measures to protect populations. If nonmilitary means are

CITIZENS

PRIVATE SECTOR

GOVERNMENT

CIVIL SOCIETY

inadequate, the use of force can only be undertaken collectively, with Security Council authorization and in accordance with the UN Charter.

Prevention sits at the core of R2P, but what does this mean in practice? An effective strategy for prevention is likely two-pronged. Stakeholders at the local, national, regional, and international levels must first strengthen their institutional capacities to prevent and respond to crimes—for example, by ensuring national constitutions are inclusive and representative, judicial institutions are free and fair, early warning systems are equipped to recognize indicators of impending atrocities, and human rights monitors and mediation teams have the required training and resources. Second, they must garner the political will to react rapidly when populations are threatened.

Civil society plays an invaluable and multifaceted role in encouraging and inspiring governments to improve their abilities to protect and build the political will to act. Local groups often have unique and detailed knowledge of internal developments in countries facing potential or current atrocities, as well as the ability to mobilize their respective governments, publics, and media. Other organizations may work in places with otherwise limited activity and can bring an atrocities prevention lens to their research and reporting. Civil society can also share expertise and lessons learned across regions and subregions to develop nuanced policy options for prevention. These experiences and analyses all contribute to the collective international effort to protect populations from atrocities.

Driven by the belief that working in coalitions can strengthen civil society efforts, the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) was created to amplify the voices of these groups around the globe and ensure that organizations from all regions and sectors inform R2P implementation nationally and internationally. This global movement now exceeds sixty organizations undertaking a vast array of activities. They are engaging with diverse religious communities to facilitate local dialogue, providing legal support to judicial institutions to prevent impunity for crimes, working with governments to establish national atrocities prevention architecture, encouraging officials to take into account risks of atrocities as they develop domestic policies, calling on governments to curtail the illegal transfer of small arms and light weapons, and organizing public and private opportunities to highlight the roles of nongovernmental organizations, policymakers, security sector and media representatives, lawyers, and others in atrocities prevention.

The past decade has seen growing support for R2P and stronger determination in all parts of the world to prevent atrocities. Even so, there are still those who believe that R2P will only ever be a permission slip for military intervention and who do not understand that the norm is

an unprecedented framework to guide states in using noncoercive and coercive measures to prevent, respond to, and rebuild after mass atrocities. More often than not, however, the greater danger is not that governments will intervene improperly but that they will not act at all. Our failures to stop atrocities in Sri Lanka, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Syria show the continuing need to make this norm a living reality.

Civil society can and must address the challenges by continuing to strive tirelessly—through ongoing initiatives as well as new and innovative strategies—to prevent mass atrocities. It must remind states that they already made the commitment to protect their populations from these crimes and convey that it is a ready partner as they work to uphold their promises. ■

Don Deya is the chief executive officer of the Pan African Lawyers Union, an umbrella association of African lawyers and law societies based in Arusha, Tanzania. He is chair of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect and the chairperson of the Board of the Centre for Citizens' Participation in the African Union.
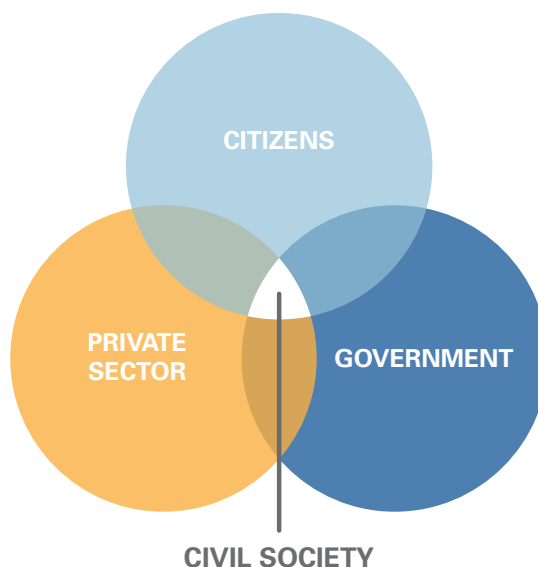
A WHISPER TO A ROAR

Director: Ben Moses

by **Julia Roig**

In a globalized world, when leaders in Asia make a declaration, it is almost immediately heard in the Americas. Likewise, social activism and ideas can spread rapidly across borders, as the Arab Spring recently demonstrated. While it is easy for ideas to spread, immense differences among cultures affect their implementation for social change.

The 2012 film *A Whisper to a Roar,* written and directed by Ben Moses and produced by Appleseed Entertainment, draws powerful parallels between five vastly disparate nations—Ukraine, Venezuela, Egypt, Malaysia, and Zimbabwe—yet skillfully refrains from overstretching the similarities, allowing the viewer to appreciate the context of each story. In each country, *A Whisper to a Roar* examines a recurrent theme regarding the power of people to work together for democratic change

and the courage and commitment needed to break the cycle of power, impunity, and corruption within their governments. While each country's leader held legitimacy at the beginning of his rule, the movie shows how the governance structure succumbed to a paradigm of violent oppression and corruption. Additionally, *A Whisper to a Roar* highlights how, through social networks and instant global communication, people are refusing to abide by a system that represses them. As the famous phrase from the 1976 film *Network* goes: They are as mad as hell, and they're not going to take it anymore.

Footage from each of the five countries is presented alongside interviews with the people who were personally involved—from student leaders to heads of state—in the conflicts, allowing the audience to experience the angst firsthand. Historic videos

of rallies in each of the countries and speeches made by the leaders and key figures at the time are shown through the reflections of the same individuals today. This juxtaposition of past and present allows the viewer to connect to each country's struggle, though it also demonstrates the film's bias as a piece of activism, meant to instill outrage that leads to support for democratic activists.

Peaceful protests steeped in outrage can unfortunately also lead to violence. Missing from this movie is, in the immortal words of Paul Harvey, the rest of the story—the "now what?" History has shown us that those invested in the status quo will do everything in their power to silence those challenging it. That is exactly what we see in each case study examined. In Venezuela, when Hugo Chavez felt threatened by individuals' voting habits, he nationalized the media along with many other aspects of society and criminalized peaceful student protest. Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe used the military against his own citizens to retain his power. Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad wanted to consolidate his power, and when his colleague Anwar Ibrahim questioned the legality of his finances, Mahathir had him arrested. In Egypt, Hosni Mubarak arrested anyone who opposed him. Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma allegedly had his political challenger, Viktor Yushchenko, poisoned in an attempt to remain in office. *A Whisper to a Roar* does a good job of documenting the extreme need for democratic transition in these countries but stops short of presenting the long hard road to democracy after the autocratic regime is ousted. When individuals rise up and speak out, they are met with violence, and in the rare case of success—as in the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak—the country is forced into a power vacuum for which it is not prepared.

For this reason Partners for Democratic Change (Partners) works to arm democratic activists with democracy-building tools beyond protests. Building lasting peace and democratic institutions requires that all people have a say in decisions that affect their lives, including those who may not agree with one's visions. Structures and processes for governance beyond regime change are critical. Our work throughout the world helps to prevent such violent backlash from occurring because citizens are trained to strategically intervene in the system and resolve their issues without resorting to force. For example, in Yemen, Partners is holding citizen dialogues on the constitution-writing process to help them actively shape their government. We work directly with local civil society organizations, connecting activists throughout the Middle East so they can provide each other with support and advice on peaceful change. In Latin America, we have galvanized civil society to be more active in converting the Inter-American Democratic Charter into a relevant advocacy tool for democracy in the region. In West Africa, we are training civic leaders in participatory governance mechanisms and transparency. Through methods like these, in partnerships with civil society, business, and governments, Partners empowers voices for transparency, participation, and the rule of law to prevent a recurrence of the transitional violence that the film highlights.

A Whisper to a Roar educates its audience about acts of democratic courage in five countries, serving as forces for change in violent and destructive contexts. Most of the stories presented in *A Whisper to a Roar* are not over yet, however. Partners believes that we should continue to support local leaders beyond their protest movements, helping them to build coalitions and collaboratively advocate for an inclusive society that together can build and rebuild democratic institutions.

A Whisper to a Roar calls for all to continue helping democratic transitions in Ukraine, Venezuela, Egypt, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere, so their stories can end with the establishment of vibrant and peaceful democracies. ∎

Julia Roig is the president of Partners for Democratic Change, an international organization that works through a global network of professionals to support local leaders and create partnerships that transform conflict, strengthen democratic institutions, and achieve sustainable development. She oversees the DC-based Partners team and provides technical and strategic leadership to the global network of twenty Partners affiliates that make up Partners for Democratic Change International (PDCI).

GIVE **PEACE**
A CHANCE

Authors:
David Hamburg
## and Eric Hamburg

by **Darynell Rodriguez Torres**

When we talk about giving something a chance, we usually mean giving it an opportunity. But *chance* can also refer to the probability or likelihood of something happening. In *Give Peace a Chance,* David A. Hamburg and Eric Hamburg—father and son—use both meanings. The book's title is taken from the famous John Lennon song, asking for an opportunity to use nonviolent means to resolve conflict. This book is not so much a plea to end ongoing conflicts but an analysis of how to prevent mass violence before it erupts. It thus offers an elaborate response to the question of what we can do to reduce the chances for violence and increase the chances for peace. This is done in the form of a personal and, at times, intimate conversation with David Hamburg, making the book compelling and easy to read for a nonexpert audience, while offering insights for seasoned conflict prevention and peacebuilding practitioners.

Hamburg is a distinguished scholar in the field of medicine. His work originally focused on stress research but evolved into the study of human aggression. This led him into the study of human evolution, for which he set up a research station in Tanzania with Jane Goodall to observe the behavior of chimpanzees. From this experience, Hamburg gained insights into group thinking and the causes of intergroup aggression. Since then, his work has been devoted to identifying tools and mechanisms to reduce the probabilities of outbreaks of mass violence. For fifteen years he led

the Carnegie Corporation in New York, where he established and co-chaired with Cyrus Vance the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict.

The book takes us through what the authors see as the pillars of prevention: education, early warning, democracy, development, human rights, and arms control. The discussion of each one of these pillars involves entertaining personal anecdotes involving famous scientists, politicians, diplomats, and civil society leaders from all corners of the world. Of the six pillars, Hamburg especially emphasizes education: "There is a sense in which this whole book is about education," he says. Along with the need to educate children and the youth, he stresses the need to educate leaders, not only those active in politics but also those in other sectors of human societies, giving them the skills to understand the nature of conflict and minimize disputes. According to Hamburg, these educated leaders will be key to developing constituencies for preventing armed violence.

Hamburg sees the practice of conflict prevention as the process of identifying valued common goals and fostering collaboration among different actors to reach those goals. In that sense, the whole book appeals to the idea of not only strong multilateralism but also multiactor collaboration to achieve greater peace and security. A good example is Hamburg's own experience developing a program to foster exchanges among scientists from the United States and the Soviet Union, which
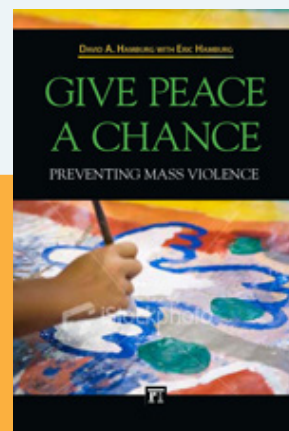
evolved into a diplomatic initiative that helped ease tensions during the Cold War.

The need to develop mechanisms to overcome in-group bias and promote intergroup cooperation is a persistent theme. Issues such as health—a common value appreciated by all—can be used as an instrument to promote collaboration, enhance interaction, and build confidence among different groups. According to Hamburg, "a strong constituency for preventing deadly diseases has emerged. This has led to improved rates of immunization, better diet and exercise practices, reduced cigarette smoking, and in turn, to diminishing the casualties of a variety of diseases." He suggests we could use a similar approach to preventing armed conflict by addressing social vulnerabilities and risk factors that could lead to violence. This is an idea worth giving a chance to. ■

Darynell Rodriguez Torres, is the program manager for policy and advocacy at the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). His work is focused on strengthening cooperation between GPPAC members and policymakers from governments, regional international organizations, and the United Nations to provide inputs for shaping conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies.

Conflict Prevention Facts

COSTS OF WAR

The cost of a typical, seven-year civil war in a low-income country

$64.2 billion
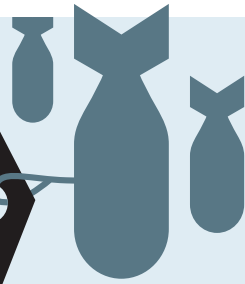
$8.12 TRILLION

The global cost of violence in 2010 is estimated to have been more than $8.12 trillion

CONFLICT PREVENTION TIMELINE

1960 — The term "Preventative Diplomacy" is used for the first time by UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld

1985 — International Alert, one of the first conflict prevention nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), is established

1990s — Post–Cold War conflicts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda help shift thinking towards the importance of conflict prevention strategies

1999 — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan delivers a speech titled "Development Is the Best Form of Conflict Prevention" at the World Bank

2010 — Secretary of State Hillary Clinton highlights conflict prevention as a major focus of US policy in her Quadrennial Development and Diplomacy Review

" The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice. "

– *Charter of the United Nations, Article 33 of Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes*

BENEFITS OF PREVENTION

↓ 90% FEWER CASUALTIES
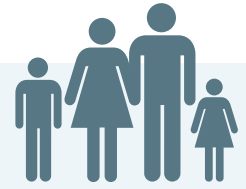
Largely because of better conflict prevention and resolution efforts, 90% fewer people were killed in violent armed conflicts throughout the first years of the 21st century than during each year of the 1990s

$12.8 BILLION in savings per year

Programs to reduce the risk of civil war by 10% through international aid or prevention of relapse into conflict could reap $12.8 billion in savings per year

65% SAVINGS

Using a conflict prevention rather than conflict management approach would have saved the international community 65% in expenditure on major conflict interventions throughout the 1990s

Reducing violence by just 25% would have saved the global economy over $2 trillion in 2010

TWO TRILLION DOLLARS
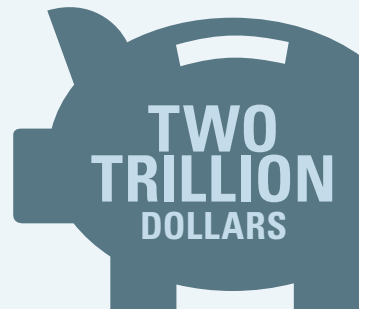
RECOMMENDATION

HYBRID APPROACH

A combination of improved policy and increased aid can reduce conflict risk by around 28% over a period of 5 years

DEFINITION OF CONFLICT PREVENTION

"**Actions, policies, procedures or institutions undertaken in** particularly vulnerable places and times in order **to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion** by states or groups as the way to settle the political disputes that can arise from the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political, and international change."

– Michael Lund, author of *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*

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