

Check Against Delivery

Two-day High Level Conference on Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations: Integrated Missions Revisited

The Peace building Continuum: the Inter linkages between Peacemaking, Peacekeeping and Peace building

29 October 2007

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues,

Let me at the outset caution against thinking in continuums in relation to peacebuilding – as the title of this session indicates. Peace building-processes are not linear. Indeed, if we think we can act in phases, we will usually be too late, and we will easily fail. To succeed in building sustainable peace, analysis, planning and action needs to happen in parallel along all three pillars of peacebuilding, the political process, in security and in the socio-economic area. In many cases carrots for the recovery-phase can be necessary to reach agreement at the negotiating table.

So far, we in the international community have not managed these processes well. Joint analysis of the driving factors of conflict is usually the precondition for getting things right. That should be the starting point for any subsequent steps, be it humanitarian and development, security, or political and human rights interventions. The ‘right’ mix has to be determined by the country-specific context. And it is precisely here we collectively often have failed to devise the right strategies and actions, integrated or not.

To simplify, the root causes of conflict may be broken down into three core categories: 1. Survival, including access to critical resources such as water and land; 2. Grievances and a strong sense of injustice, real or perceived; and 3. Greed or strive for power, often related to access to natural resources. In my view, the success or failure of future peace operations rests on the *correct* and *joint* understanding of which primary cause we have to address, and then tailoring our actions accordingly, both in substance and, importantly, in sequence. For example, if it is survival that drives conflict, then the *initial* locus of response may have to be more biased towards protection, livelihoods and socio-economic interventions rather than solely political powersharing. Or, if it is greed that is the primary root cause of conflict we may want to initially prioritize disempowering the so-called spoilers, rather than overly concentrating early efforts and resources on democratization processes or national dialogue.

Such joint analysis should not only lead to integrated action, but the right actions – sequenced and tailored to country circumstances. To a large degree the structure of the UN-system works against this approach, even when operations are integrated, be it DPA, DPKO, OCHA and the UN agencies with their specific mandates and operating modalities. We do not – as yet, have the agility, flexibility and adaptability we need to get it right. I personally experienced this when helping to negotiate the

Comprehensive Peace Agreement for Sudan, both in our discussions with DPKO, where a light-footed operation was impossible to achieve, and where UN-agencies and IFIs failed in adapting their operations to the new situation. Despite early “Planning for Peace”-processes, and appeals from key donors, a major vacuum occurred. Peace dividends are yet to be felt for millions of Southerners and people in the border-regions. This does not strengthen the peace building process.

The other factor is time. Building peace and addressing root causes of conflicts takes time. Effective peacemaking and peace building processes don’t happen overnight. They require time and sustained investments. Sustainability of resources and engagement is not the prime characteristic of our interventions. This needs to be addressed, not least in relation to integrated operations. East Timor is but one example of too early withdrawal, and the lack of understanding of the complexities of the situation in the country.

One of the other logical implications of this is that durable peace is ultimately contingent upon the will and capacities of the next generation to manage and sustain the peace. Between 1970 and 1999, 80% of all outbreaks of civil conflict occurred in countries in which 60% or more of the population was under the age of 30. Young people are not only involved, exploited by the parties to conflicts, they are also key for any peace agreement to become sustainable.

This correlation must have an impact on our investments. Investing in young people, in education, health, and economic opportunities has an immediate and important peace building impact. Also in the long term, such investments in future generations, in the children of today, addressing their needs, protecting their rights, are critical for conflict prevention. This is not only the morally right thing to do, it is the best long-term investment in peace we can possibly make. Conflict prevention, both long term and immediate is largely absent in peacebuilding debates, also here. We need to put prevention at the core of our peace building efforts.

Let me say a few words about UNICEF’s efforts in relation to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

It is critical to address children and youth’s specific needs at the **outset of the peace process or during early peacemaking**, as this lays the ground for sustainable peace.

The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) is a first concrete example of where the needs and well being of women and children were well articulated. The agreement provided UNICEF and other partner’s opportunities to respond to the protection of children’s rights, including identification, removal, family reunification and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups. Building on the DPA, we were able to develop an Action Plan for the identification and release of children associated with fighting forces, which was signed between the armed group SLA Minnawi and UNICEF. The implications for the current negotiations in Tripoli in this area remains to be seen.

The Juba peace Talks between the Government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army in Sudan provides a second example of how UNICEF provided direct technical expertise to both parties to the conflict from the very onset of the peace talks. All parties and mediators recognized that children’s

concerns had to be addressed early in the peace process and have seen the relevance of the inclusion of such concerns in the ongoing discussions.

Children form an integral part of the UN peace and security agenda. The Security Council has called upon parties to armed conflict to include provisions for the protection of children in peace negotiations and agreements, including provisions on children's concerns in the mandates of **peacekeeping operations**. The appointment of child protection advisors in peacekeeping missions, notably in the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave child rights' violations under Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) is a significant achievement. Together with Office of the Special Representative for Children Affected by Armed Conflict, UNICEF has been instrumental in leading this process, both from the policy level as well as implementation at the country level.

Strengthening and rebuilding national social services while rebuilding governance structures must be an integral part of **peacekeeping** and peace building efforts. This requires that sufficient resources, capacities and expertise are put in place at early stages of the peace process and that these investments are sustained beyond the life span of the peace keeping operation. UNICEF has a critical role, expertise and commitment to ensuring that services in health, water, nutrition and education are strengthened and lead to improvements. In Afghanistan and South Sudan UNICEF has worked with the Ministries of Health and Education to strengthen health and education services and capacities in early recovery. In a dramatically challenging environment, this is no easy task. Adequate resources and sustained commitment cannot be underestimated.

The aim of peace building, as is to address the root causes of conflict and to lay the foundation for durable peace through the (re-)establishment of a political, legal, social and economic order. Peacebuilding initiatives must unite national and international actors around a strategy for durable peace, which is grounded in local ownership and supported by the international community. This includes the participation of children and young people in all programmes that directly impact on them.

An example is the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where the youth contributed to the development of the recommendations of the Commission and prepared a child friendly version of the final report. Similarly, UNICEF's Voices of Youth website serves as a platform for young people of the Middle East and North Africa to discuss and interact across traditional conflict boundaries.

In responding to the challenges and opportunities related to integrated mission policies, UNICEF has embarked on a policy review process. We want to strengthen both our understanding of integrated missions as well as our capacity to engage in a timely and effective manner, at Headquarters as well as the country level. A workshop will be held this November on the opportunities and challenges of UNICEF's engagement with integrated missions, including our partners in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs. We must work in an integrated manner, but to do so in a way that reinforces our mandate, the protection and assistance to children.

In October, as part of the Machel Study Ten Year Strategy Review, UNICEF and partner agencies launched a report entitled “Will you listen? Young voices from Conflict Zones”. The report compiled the views and recommendations of some 1,700 children and young people in 92 countries on conflict and peace. The report reinforces the need for children and youth to have the opportunity for effective participation in the peace-building processes of their countries. If there is one message that carries through, it is for the international community to take responsibility and to act, and to listen.

This is relevant not least for integrated operations. We must not only do the right things. We need to do things right. I hope these discussions will help us all to do exactly that.

Thank you.