

## The Security-Development Nexus: A Structural Violence and Human Needs Approach

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The security-development nexus is increasingly vital because of the realization that there can be no long-term security without development and vice versa. The linkages between the two concepts have evolved over the last few decades to eventually exhibit a certain convergence. The rise of the concept of human security has also, by its very nature, implied closer links to development. Examining structural violence and human needs, linkages between these two concepts can be explored and policy implications suggested for the security-development nexus.



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### The Evolution of the Concept of Security

Traditional notions of security were based on the use of force if necessary to preserve vital interests, as based on realism or power politics.<sup>1</sup> Power in this context is defined as the ability to get another actor to do what it would not otherwise have done, or to not do what it would have otherwise done. A variation on this idea is that actors are powerful to the extent that they affect others more than others affect them. The traditional notion of security was seen as closely related to the threat or use of violence, and as such military means were regarded as central to the provision of security.<sup>2</sup>

Realist concepts of security, associated with traditional security, were popular during the Cold War, during which many believed that all that stood in the way of a harmonious and peaceful world was a hostile Soviet Union committed to a military and economic ideology that was antagonistic to the West.<sup>3</sup> However, although Soviet intransigence to some extent fuelled the Cold War, many of the world's problems, especially those of developing countries, existed independently of superpower hostility. The end of the Cold War therefore still left some issues unresolved and also brought some new issues to the fore.

The post-Cold War period implied several new challenges in international security. Many of the conflicts do not fit the traditional pattern of inter-state war,

1 Joshua S. Goldstein, *International Relations*, New York [et al.], 2004, pp. 71–78.

2 Michael Renner, *State of the World 2005: Redefining Security*, in: Makumi Mvagiru and O. Oculi (eds.), *Rethinking Global Security : an African perspective?* (Heinrich Böll Foundation, Regional Office East and Horn of Africa), Nairobi 2006, pp. 1–11.

3 John C. Garnett, *Introduction: Conflict and Security in the New World Order*, in: M. Jane Davis (ed.), *Security Issues in the Post-Cold War World*, Cheltenham [et al.] 1996, pp. 1–11.

which previously dominated international relations. War between sovereign states remains a distinct possibility, but there has been a huge upsurge in intra-state conflict where the main actors are ethnic groups. Ethnic conflict is violence perpetrated by one ethnic group against another because of cultural or racial differences between them. Ethnic violence has become much more common in the post Cold War period. In 1993, Sam Huntington foresaw that the fundamental source of conflict in the years ahead would be cultural, and predicted a “clash of civilizations”, which had not been a predominant source of conflict in the Cold War period.<sup>4</sup>

Many of these intra-state conflicts in turn become internationalized in the sense that they have trans-boundary effects. The fundamental agents of conflict internationalization include interdependence, ethnic relations, the media and refugees. This makes it necessary to adopt a systemic perspective to effectively manage regional conflicts.<sup>5</sup> The security challenges of managing internationalized conflicts have been manifested in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes regions. The Somali conflict, for example, has contributed to insecurity in the entire Horn of Africa region while the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has destabilized the Great Lakes Region.

Apart from the change in trend towards intra-state conflict, more comprehensive notions of security are developing, for there is an increasing trend towards recognizing the importance of human security and environmental security issues. Human security implies protecting vital freedoms,<sup>6</sup> and implies protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations while enhancing their strengths and aspirations. Human security also entails creating systems that give people the building blocks for survival, dignity and livelihood, and is thus closely tied to development. Human security connects different types of freedoms—freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one’s own behalf. The state continues to have the fundamental responsibility for security. However, as security challenges become more complex and various new actors attempt to play a role, a paradigm shift is needed to broaden the focus from the state to the security of the people. Human security complements state security, by being people-centered and addressing insecurities that have not traditionally been considered as state security threats; it furthers human development; and also enhances the protection of human rights, which are at the core of democracy promotion.

4 Samuel P. Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*, New York, NY, 1996.

5 Makumi Mwangi, *Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, Nairobi 2000.

6 Report of the Commission on Human Security, presented to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, 1 May 2003.

Conversely, promoting democratic principles is also a step towards attaining human security and development. People are enabled to participate in the process on governance and make their voices heard. This requires the building of strong institutions, which establish the rule of law and empower the people. Human security strives to protect and empower people in post-conflict situations, to provide them with economic security by addressing extreme poverty, to provide adequate health care, and also to enhance knowledge, skills and values. The traditional focus on state security is therefore inadequate and needs to encompass the safety and well being of a country's population.<sup>7</sup> In situations where individuals and communities are not secure, state security will itself be extremely fragile. Security in the absence of justice will not produce a stable peace. Democratic governance is vital in the context of comprehensive security.

Environmental security has also become critical in recent years, particularly fundamental has been addressing ecological degradation and natural resource scarcity. Environmental degradation needs to be considered in a more integrative concept of global security. Environmental security has become a common security issue due to the recognition that the environment provides the fundamental life support system.<sup>8</sup> Security for the planet depends on the structure of the entire system while the conventional concept of security has exclusive concerns for the national level. Any attachment to the nation-state and the conventional doctrine of security becomes a fundamental obstacle to the sustainable management of the environment. The essential ingredients for peace lie in cooperation for the common good, which is based on the concept of equality and harmony among people who depend on the earth for their survival. In the environmental context, security problems need to be interpreted by the way societies are organized and connected to the natural world. The main source of threat is from modern industrialization. For a long time, the view has been that there was a trade-off between environmental protection and development. Now, within the concept of sustainable development, the protection of the local and global environment is seen as integral to the development process in an increasingly interdependent world.

Given the nature of the challenges posed by the emerging trends on security, an approach focused solely on the national level is inadequate. Real security in an increasingly globalized world cannot be provided on a purely national basis or on the basis of limited alliances.<sup>9</sup> Unlike traditional military threats emanating from a determined adversary, many current security challenges are risks and vulnerabili-

7 Renner, *State of the World 2005: Redefining Security*, op. cit. (fn. 2).

8 Ho-Won Jeong, *Peace and Conflict Studies : An Introduction*, Aldershot [et al.] 2000, pp. 95–105.

9 Renner, op. cit. (fn. 2).

ties, which are shared across state borders. Non-military dimensions also have a fundamental effect on security and state stability. States around the globe, especially developing states, increasingly face a debilitating combination of increasing competition for resources, environmental degradation, the resurgence of infectious diseases, poverty and growing wealth disparities, demographic pressures and unemployment. A multilateral or global approach is needed to deal effectively with most of these challenges, which often have trans-boundary effects.

#### The Evolution of the Concept of Development

The fundamental goal of development policy is to create sustainable improvements in the quality of life for all people.<sup>10</sup> There have been three generations of development thinking.<sup>11</sup> The first generation of development thinking was dominant in the 1960s and 1970s, and envisaged extensive government involvement in development planning to overcome pervasive market failures, which were thought to characterize developing countries. However, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, deficiencies in comprehensive planning became acute. Although the rationale for government intervention had been to address market failure, the result of government failure was associated particularly with the adverse effects of price distortions.<sup>12</sup> The second generation of development economics was based on the key principles of neoclassical economics. The emphasis of this school was on removing price distortions and “getting prices right”. Markets, prices and incentives became a core concern in policymaking. Structural adjustment programs in many developing countries in the 1980s and part of the 1990s were based on the ideas of the second generation. But the results of the second generation were also disappointing in many developing states, which were unable to attain sustained economic growth and meaningful reductions in poverty. The third generation of development economics began to emerge at the end of the twentieth century and emphasized the role of institutions in development. The emergence of the third generation coincided with greater emphasis on notions of human security and attempted to consider which institutional changes were required to achieve improvements in the quality of life. Development increasingly came to be viewed as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoyed.<sup>13</sup> These freedoms included political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency and protective security. Each of these types of freedoms helps to

10 World Bank, *Entering the 21st Century*, in: *World Development Report 1999/2000*, pp. 13–30.

11 Gerald M. Meier, *The Old Generation of Development Economists and the New*, in: Meier and Joseph E. Stiglitz (eds.), *Frontiers of Development Economics: The Future in Perspective*, Oxford 2001, pp. 13–50.

12 *Ibid.*

13 Amartya Sen, *Development As Freedom*, Oxford [et al.] 1999, pp. 3–11.

advance the capability of a person and therefore to improve the quality of life as the fundamental goal of development.

### The Concept of Structural Violence

Conflict is a feature of human activity and arises when there is an incompatibility of goals,<sup>14</sup> which is fundamental to the existence of conflict situations, whether dealing with structural or behavioral violence. Behavioral violence involves the deliberate use of physical force to injure or kill another human being. Structural violence is a type of conflict, which is embedded in the structure of relationships and interactions.<sup>15</sup> For example, structural violence can arise from anomalous legal, social or economic structures in society. Galtung defines structural violence as “existing in those conditions in which human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations.”<sup>16</sup> In a situation of structural violence, overt violence is absent but structural factors have virtually the same compelling control over behavior as the overt threat or use of force.<sup>17</sup> In a society prone to structural violence, an actor or group is prevented, by structural constraints, from developing its talents or interests in a normal manner, or even from realizing that such developments are possible. In the contemporary world, this may be manifested in class, race, ethnic or religious discrimination.

Violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and life chances. The focus on direct violence would lead one to analyze the capabilities and motivations of domestic and international actors with efforts to create institutions that can prevent them from exercising direct violence by punishing, for example, those who do.<sup>18</sup> A focus on structural violence would lead one to a critical analysis of the structures and possibly an effort to transform violent structures into less violent ones. Such structural transformation is revolutionary, but not necessarily violent.

Structural violence is often harder to identify than physical violence because it is not overt. Structural roots of violent acts therefore are typically ignored and the

14 Anthony de Reuck, *The Logic of Conflict: Its Origin, Development and Resolution*, in: Michael Banks (ed.), *Conflict in World Society: A New Perspective on International Relations*, Brighton 1984, pp. 96–111.

15 Mwangi, *Conflict* (fn. 5), pp. 14–15.

16 *Ibid.*

17 A. John R. Groom, *Paradigms in Conflict: The Strategist, the Conflict Researcher and the Peace Researcher*, in: *Review of International Studies* (Guildford), Vol. 14 (April 1988), No. 2, S. 97–115.

18 Johan Galtung, *Twenty-five Years of Peace Research: Ten Challenges and Some Responses*, in: *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 22, No. 2, June 1985, pp. 141–158.

cycle of violence continues.<sup>19</sup> Conflicts are dynamic and have a distinct life cycle.<sup>20</sup> In the context of the conflict cycle, structural violence, which is not attended to eventually, becomes violent conflict. The challenge during the earlier stages of the conflict cycle associated with structural violence is that of peace management. If peace management is not effectively undertaken, the conflict cycle moves to a phase of crisis. At this time the challenge is to undertake crisis management. If crisis management is not effectively undertaken, the cycle moves to a stage of physical or behavioral violence. Once physical violence breaks out the challenge becomes one of managing it. If conflict management attempts are successful, this leads to peace agreements followed by a period of post-conflict peace-building. If the stage of post-conflict peace-building is adequately addressed then this can lead to peace thus completing the conflict cycle. The conflict cycle illustrates the dynamism of conflict or conflict transformation. The actors, issues and interests in conflict are being constantly transformed.<sup>21</sup> Conflict is an intrinsic aspect of social change.<sup>22</sup> Conflict is an expression of the heterogeneity of interests and values that arise as new constructs generated by social change come up against inherited constraints. Social change is structural and may introduce new incompatibilities of goals,<sup>23</sup> and is therefore vital to take into consideration.

In order for structural violence to exist, the inequalities must be the result of relations between groups, which give differential access to social goods. Structural violence may be legitimized by the prevailing political and social norms. Webb considers a situation of negative peace to prevail where there is an absence of behavioral violence but where relations are marked by structural violence. Positive peace is defined in terms of harmonious relations between or among parties, which are conducive to mutual development, growth and the attainment of goals.<sup>24</sup> In order for positive peace to be brought about in a society experiencing structural violence, a structural change in relations in society may have to take place.

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19 Marc Pilisuk, *The Hidden Structure of Contemporary Violence*, in: *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1998, pp. 197–216.

20 Mwangi, *Peace and Conflict Management in Kenya* (Centre for Conflict Research and Catholic Peace and Justice Commission), Nairobi, 2003, pp. 55–64.

21 Raimo Väyrynen, *To Settle or to Transform? Perspectives on the Resolution of National and International Conflicts*, in: Väyrynen (ed.), *New Directions in Conflict Theory: Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation*, London 1991, pp. 1–25.

22 Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*, Cambridge 2005, p. 13.

23 Galtung, *A Structural Theory of Aggression*, in: *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1964, pp. 95–119.

24 Keith Webb, *Structural Conflict and the Definition of Conflict*, in: *World Encyclopedia of Peace*, Vol. 2, Oxford 1986, pp. 431–434.

Structural violence, if not addressed, may eventually lead to violent conflict as life in the structure becomes unbearable.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the strongest predictor of physical or behavioral violence is stagnation in economic and social development.<sup>26</sup> In conditions where relative social equity exists, productive growth will generally result in improved access to goods and services needed for human well-being thereby reducing the potential for physical violence. However, where social equity declines, there is a greater difference between the “haves” and “have-nots”, as structural violence becomes more deeply embedded in societies. Governments in such countries tend to grow more rigid in limiting options to redress social inequalities, thus creating a social pressure cooker. This occurred in Liberia and Nicaragua where structural conflict eventually led to physical violence. Nevertheless, the measures of normal levels of equity are specific to the history and culture of a particular society. Acceptable levels of social differentiation vary widely from one country to another.<sup>27</sup> As such the intensity of structural violence tends to vary among societies, which engage in it, from very low to very high. These variations reflect differences in social values and in degrees of inequality with respect to key institutions of social life in particular societies at particular times. The

25 Mwangi, Conflict: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management, op. cit, (fn. 5), p. 25.

26 Richard Garfield, Indicators of Social System Vulnerability and Resilience to Violent Conflict, Paper Presented at UN Expert Group Meeting on Structural Threats to Social Integrity: Social Roots of Violent Conflict and Indicators for Prevention, 18–20 December 2001, United Nations, New York, pp. 1–3.

27 David G. Gil, Understanding and Overcoming Social-Structural Violence, in: Contemporary Justice Review, Vol. 2 (1), April 1999.



Robert Mudida enriches the debate with insights from Kenya

higher the degrees of inequality, the higher also are likely to be the levels of coercion necessary to enforce the inequalities, and the levels of structural violence.

Hoivik demonstrates how demographic concepts can be used to develop a clear definition of structural violence, and argues that the distribution of a society's resources affects not only the standard of living but also the chances of survival.<sup>28</sup> A more equitable distribution will normally increase the average length of life in society as a whole. Hoivik argues that the loss of life from an unequal distribution is an aspect of structural violence. He develops measures of structural violence based on the potential increase in life expectancy. Whenever significant inequalities are prevalent in a society concerning the key institutions of social life, its ways of life involve domination, exploitation, injustice and widespread underdevelopment. In such cases, the people are not free in a meaningful sense and its political institutions are essentially undemocratic, coercive and structurally violent, in spite of the existence of formal democratic structures.

#### A Human Needs Approach

Christie argues that systematic inequalities in the distribution of economic and political resources deprive needs satisfaction for certain segments of society. Human needs theory posits that there are certain ontological and genetic needs which will be pursued and that socialization processes, if not compatible with such needs, will lead to frustration and anti-social personal and group behavior.<sup>29</sup> The whole basis of law and order is threatened in circumstances in which basic needs are frustrated.<sup>30</sup> These needs are universal motivations that are an integral part of the human being. In addition to the biological needs of food and shelter, there are basic human needs, which relate to growth and development such as needs for personal identity and recognition.<sup>31</sup> Institutions and political structures often frustrate these ordinary and well-recognized needs what sometimes leads to aggressive responses.<sup>32</sup>

Fundamental needs, such as individual and group identity, are compulsive and in many cases will be pursued even at the cost of physical violence. If conflicts are to be resolved institutions have to be adjusted to human needs. Although there is

28 Tord Hoivik, *The Demography of Structural Violence*, in: *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1977, pp. 59–73.

29 Daniel J. Christie, *Reducing Direct and Structural Violence: The Human Needs Theory*, in: *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, No. 3(4), 1997, pp. 315–332.

30 John W. Burton, *Violence Explained: the sources of conflict, violence and crime and their prevention*, Manchester 1997, pp. 32–40.

31 Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* London, 1990, pp. 36–48.

32 Burton, *Conflict Prevention as a Political System*, in: John A. Vasquez et. al. (eds.), *Beyond Confrontation: Learning Conflict Resolution in the Post-Cold War Era*, Ann Arbor, MI, 1996, pp. 115–127.

no precise definition of needs, some behaviors cannot in certain circumstances of structural violence be controlled by threat or coercion. Basic needs are ontological while interests and values are temporal. A group's ontological needs cannot be bargained away and should be treated differently from negotiable interests. Theories of basic needs reject a priori the assumption that violence originates in the aggressive nature of human beings or unconscious psychological dynamics;<sup>33</sup> needs provide objectives and rational criteria for analyzing and evaluating an emergent social situation that may contain the potential for generating conflict.

There are certain political and economic conditions that are essential for the fulfillment of human needs. The institutional set-up in a country should aim as much as possible to provide an enabling environment for basic needs to be achieved. The mal-distribution of power in societies has provided the opportunity for need gratification on the part of some at the expense of others.<sup>34</sup> As long as a state represents sectional interests, rather than common interests, thereby creating divisions in society, the use of differential power will remain the ordering principle and the needs of many citizens will be unsatisfied. As the crisis is recognized in the manner that power is distributed, the state will either become increasingly coercive, or manipulative and continue to serve sectional interests or become only an administrative structure serving the common interest. If the common interest is to be served, it must be recognized—and basic human needs are one basis for such recognition. The extent to which basic needs are being met provides one basis for judging the legitimacy of an existing order.

#### The Linkages between Structural Violence and Human Needs

Structural violence is closely linked to the inadequate satisfaction of basic human needs because structural violence is closely related to the people's inability to develop their full potential.<sup>35</sup> When people's basic needs are not met adequately, there is a gap between their potential and actual realization. This gap is the centerpiece of structural violence. The distribution of a society's resources affects not only the people's standard of living, but even the chances of survival.<sup>36</sup> A fundamental source of protracted social conflict is the denial of elements required for the societal development—the pursuit of which is a compelling need.<sup>37</sup> Conflict arises from the denial of those human needs, which are common to all

<sup>33</sup> Jeong, *op. cit.* (fn. 8), pp. 70–71.

<sup>34</sup> Paul Sites, *Legitimacy and Human Needs*, in: John W. Burton and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, Basingstoke [et al.] 1990, pp. 117–141.

<sup>35</sup> Peter Iadicola and Anson Shupe, *Violence, Inequality and Human Freedom*, Lanham 2003, pp. 333–366.

<sup>36</sup> Hoivik, *The Demography of Structural Violence*, *op. cit.* (fn. 28).

<sup>37</sup> Edward E. Azar, *Protracted International Conflicts: Ten Propositions*, in: Burton and Dukes (eds.), *op. cit.* (fn. 34), pp. 145–155.

and whose pursuit is an ontological need. In countries where the basic needs of the majority of the population are not being met, human development is very low as measured by the UNDP human development index, which is based on life expectancy at birth, educational attainment and standard of living measured by real per capita income at purchasing power parity.<sup>38</sup> While augmenting per capita income and consumption is vital to improving the quality of life, other objectives especially reducing poverty, expanding access to health services, and increasing educational levels are also vital.<sup>39</sup>

#### Policy Implications

Approaching the security-development nexus from a structural violence and human needs perspective provides some valuable insights. It illustrates from a conflict perspective that development and security are closely related. It reaffirms the argument that there cannot be development without peace or peace without development. The adequate satisfaction of human needs is vital to overcoming structural violence, which leads to the more adequate provision of human security and development. Approaching the security-development nexus from a structural violence and human needs perspective illustrates the importance of conflict prevention. Conflicts progress through a cycle and conflict prevention is always a less costly option than addressing fully blown conflicts. Parties in a particular situation may conceptualize conflict prevention as third party actions to avoid the likely threat, use or diffusion of conflict. Conflict prevention is also fundamentally about overhauling conflict-generating structures.<sup>40</sup>

Essentially this is about having appropriate institutions to address structural conflict. A solid network of effective institutions is also vital to holistic development. Effective institutions are increasingly recognized as being the centerpiece of development.<sup>41</sup> Institutions in this context refer to formal and informal rules governing the actions of individuals and organizations in the process of development. The current emphasis is therefore on “getting the institutions right.”<sup>42</sup> Having proper institutions for good governance and regulation is vital to overcome intra-state conflicts. Legitimacy of governance is a fundamental issue and effective governance ensures that human needs are adequately met and structural

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38 Anthony P. Thirlwall, *Growth and Development: With Special Reference to Developing Economies*, Houndmills [et al.] 2003, pp. 51–70.

39 World Bank, *op. cit.* (fn. 10).

40 Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *Conflict Resolution*, *op. cit.* (fn. 22), pp. 118–131.

41 World Bank, *op. cit.* (fn. 10).

42 Ha-Joon Chang, *Institutional Development in Historical Perspective*, in: Chang (ed.), *Rethinking Development Economics*, London 2003, pp. 481–497.

violence in society is reduced. Consequently, this improves human security and development.

Democratic governance has usually been considered basic to political legitimacy although what constitutes adequate democratic governance has been a subject of lively debate. In many cases, the issue of what kind of democracy is established is more crucial than whether a policy is democratic. Avoiding conflict depends on whether local domestic institutions can provide models for dealing with conflict and fostering development. Where governance is legitimate and accountable to citizens, and where the rule of law prevails, conflict is less likely. Development can prevent conflict and thus also enhance security.

However, although agreeing that certain institutions are necessary, one should be careful about specifying the exact form they should take.<sup>43</sup> Thus there is an agreement that good property rights are vital but in practice this principle needs to adapt to the realities of individual states. Effective institutions need to be homegrown, rather than externally driven. Such institutions should take into account the historical, political, economic and social realities of particular countries. Above all, institutional development takes time and the process requires patience.

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43 Ibid.



Discussions continue well into the coffee break

### Conclusion

Gradually evolving, the concepts of security and development have increasingly converged on the fundamentals required to attain both. A structural violence approach reaffirms the importance of overhauling anomalous structures in society so as to achieve security and development. A human needs approach reinforces the structural violence approach by suggesting that anomalous structures can only be overcome by addressing fundamental human needs. This is in line with current conceptualizations of both security and development, which consider needs-based approaches as central. At a policy level, effective institutions that promote good governance are vital to overcoming structural violence and achieving fundamental human needs. Such institutions will promote both security and development in the long-term. However, institutional frameworks that enhance both security and development should be carefully constructed. This implies upholding certain principles like good governance while taking into account the unique realities of individual states.