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TO ACHIEVE AGENDA 2030, GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

WHY THE SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS IS VITAL TO IMPLEMENT SDGS

REPORT



This event is part of our Development Policy Forum (DPF), which brings together a number of crucial development actors, including the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the United Nations and the World Bank to contribute to the global and European conversation on development. Through its activities and publications, the DPF reflects the rapidly-changing global debate on growth and development and seeks to encourage fresh, up-to-date thinking on the multiple challenges facing the development community.

INTRODUCTION

“Development and peace are indivisible,” Nelson Mandela said. “Without peace and international security, nations cannot focus on the upliftment of the most underprivileged of their citizens.”

But peace-building requires time, more money and better planning, and should not be outsourced to armies or aid agencies alone, according to a Friends of Europe event at the 2017 European Development Days.

A day after EU institutions and member states signed the ‘New European Consensus on Development’ to help meet the UN’s 2030 Sustainable Development Goals - one of which is to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies” - participants at the Friends of Europe event agreed that better links need to be made between governments, development agencies and civil society to secure lasting peace.

The issue has never been more pressing, as the US boosts military spending while rowing back on its foreign aid and climate commitments. Meanwhile, conflicts continue to rage in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and beyond, with over 60m people displaced globally, a factor that is fuelling the refugee crisis in Europe.

EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY: A GLOSSARY

Sustainable Development Goals: 17 UN-agreed goals to help end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030, including Goal 16 for ‘peaceful and inclusive societies’.

Global strategy: the EU’s over-arching foreign policy and security strategy, agreed in 2016, which includes an ‘integrated approach to conflicts’ as one of its five priorities. A communication on ‘resilience’ (June 2017) set out how to move from crisis containment to prevention.

European consensus on development: a June 2017 agreement signed by all three EU institutions and 28 member states, to help meet the SDGs. Its primary aim is poverty eradication, but it links development to other policies, including peace, security, migration and climate change.

European Development Fund (EDF): the EU’s main fund for development aid, worth €30.5bn in 2014-20. It sits outside the EU budget, and is financed directly by EU countries.

European external investment plan: an €88bn fund for Africa and the EU neighbourhood, set up in 2016 to tackle the root causes of migration.

“What has changed is the global framework in which we are working these days”

Hannes Lambrecht

Advisor, Sector Programme Peace and Security, Disaster Risk Management at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

THE SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

The idea that lasting peace requires poverty eradication, and vice versa (the concept known as the security-development nexus), is not recent. “We have been talking about this with the coming of the concept of human security after the end of the Cold War,” said **Hannes Lambrecht**, Advisor, Sector Programme Peace and Security, Disaster Risk Management at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). “What has changed is the global framework in which we are working these days,” he added, pointing to the rising number of ‘fragile’ states and the (OECD) estimated 1.6bn people currently exposed to ‘fear, insecurity, violence and armed conflict’ worldwide (or up to two billion, according to the World Bank).

More than 15 years on from the US-led intervention in Afghanistan - described as a “spectacular failure” by **Olivier Ray**, Head of Sector, Crisis Prevention and Post-Conflict Recovery at the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) - peace-building lessons are being learned. One lesson is not to confuse the roles of humanitarian aid, development agencies and security services, while making sure they cooperate.

“Typically, humanitarian aid needs to be apolitical if it wants to be efficient and accepted by the population. Inversely, development aid is about changing local dynamics, and changing local dynamics is inherently political,” Ray explained. He compared the situation to an “emergency room in a hospital” with “several doctors treating a patient”. “One can’t do the job of the other, but if they don’t speak to each other, they don’t know what kind of treatment the other professional community is delivering to the patient, and that’s a very deadly cocktail for the patient.”

But there will inevitably be tensions post-conflict, as those who sign peace deals “do not necessarily have the same vision” about what is best for the country or region’s development, said **Lawrence Dechambenoit**, Vice-President for Corporate Relations Africa at Rio Tinto. “Let’s not kid ourselves - no one is an altruist,” he said. “States operate in a competitive space and a realist space, and what they put into solving the conflict, they view it as an investment, and they want a return on that investment post-conflict.”

COLOMBIA PEACE DEAL

In late 2016 the Colombian government signed a peace deal with the Marxist rebel group, FARC. The deal put an end to a 50-year conflict that erupted largely as a result of widespread poverty and inequality in rural areas, following years of repression and civil war. Despite the deal being rejected in a referendum last year, it was approved by lawmakers and has managed to hold. It covers rural reform, political participation, disarmament, drug trafficking and victim redress.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Proper planning is top of the European Commission's priority list for conflict preparedness. "We might indeed have the military gaining [in] the war and then the question is - from which point do we start? That has to be planned. That has to be prepared," said **Maria-Manuela Cabral**, Head of Unit for Fragility and Resilience at the European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development.

The Commission debuted a more 'integrated' approach to conflict management in a June 2017 communication on 'resilience', where the focus was on risk assessment and root causes, as well as 'dynamic monitoring' to keep conflicts from escalating. "We will get everything wrong if we don't understand the reasons behind that conflict," Cabral explained. "What we would aim to improve much further is what we call the 'early warning system', which would allow us - within the capacity, in my case of the development policy - to act with development tools to try to find a way to the root causes of conflict before [they] appear," says Cabral.

Historical perspective and context are key in the Philippines, a former Spanish and American colony which has been plagued by conflict since gaining independence in 1946. "From the time of colonisation, there wasn't exactly a Philippine nation that existed, it came about as a colonial accident," explained **Farahnaz Ghodsinia**, a European Development Days Young Leader. As a result, many regions, including Mindanao - home to the bulk of the country's small Muslim population - "never felt truly integrated in terms of political representation and also economic development". The communist New People's Army has also waged war throughout much of the country for more than four decades.

But understanding root causes is not enough. Lasting peace also requires clear political vision and leadership from governments, said **Maria Victoria Llorente**, Executive Director of the Fundación Ideas para la Paz, a Colombian think-tank. "We are really divided about peace," she says of her native Colombia, where a referendum on the 2016 peace deal was rejected. "So politics is critical. It is not only a technical issue." While she says the Colombian peace deal is "one of the most complete ever signed" - with around 70% of the text dedicated to tackling the root causes of the conflict - there is still something missing, a "development gap". "We know exactly what we have to do, but we don't know how to do it," she said.

Ghodsinia agreed. "In such situations, you need to bring moderate parties at hand to be able to discuss," she said. "If such extreme positions actually arise, this is where politics come in - this is where I feel it's important to have strong voices of leadership who can actually advocate a strong vision of peace that will benefit everyone, the common good."

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MINDANAO PEACE DEAL

Mindanao, a southern island region which is home to the bulk of the Philippines' five per cent Muslim minority, is also the country's poorest region. Clashes between government forces and separatist Filipino Muslim (or 'Moro') groups broke out in the 1970s and continued, despite Mindanao becoming an autonomous region in the 1980s. A peace deal was finally signed in 2014 between the government and the largest rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, to create a new autonomous region of Bangsamoro. However, President Rodrigo Duterte placed the region under martial law in May 2017 after killings by Islamic State-affiliated terrorists.

“We are really divided about peace, so politics is critical. It is not only a technical issue”

Maria Victoria Llorente

Executive Director of the Fundación Ideas para la Paz, Colombia

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

It is a lack of integration and a lack of concern for the common good that drives most conflicts, Ghodsinia said.

“In many conflicts around the world, essentially it boils down to a lack of integration, when people feel they have been left behind and people feel they have been unjustly treated,” Ghodsinia explained. Take her native Philippines, where she said “change isn’t really distributed throughout the country”, a fact borne out by the World Bank, which says wealth inequality is still high compared to other countries in East Asia. “The Philippines cannot really reach its full potential if one region is significantly left behind,” she said.

Private companies also have a role to play in peace-building, though they are often deterred from investing in conflict zones. Take mining giant Rio Tinto, which, in Africa, operates only in relatively stable countries such as Madagascar, South Africa and Namibia. “Responsible actors - because they are signed up to a number of governance commitments and have obligations as listed companies on stock exchanges, with very stringent regulatory rules - they tend to plug out of conflict areas,” said Dechambenoit. “Certainly, we are not in conflict areas as a company.”

However, opening the economy to private companies has complicated the peace process in Colombia, where there are well-documented links between armed groups, drugs cartels and gold mining. “They are also part of the conflict in some areas,” said Llorente. “We have huge gaps in development, even though a lot of opportunities were opened for companies.”

WINNING THE PEACE, AS WELL AS THE WAR

“The one word I would use is - it’s complicated,” said **Shada Islam**, Director for Europe and Geopolitics at Friends of Europe, “But it can be done.”

Proper planning - analysing the risks and root causes of a conflict so that no groups are left behind - is a challenge that will require more time and money. One option, in the short-term, is to concentrate on small, low-risk and quick-impact projects in conflict zones to deliver easy wins - or “peace dividends” - and buy time to do more strategic thinking, suggested Ray. But it will require development organisations to “do things in a much more agile fashion”. “Our organisations need to change to be able to act in highly insecure environments,” Ray said.

“We have to make peace as lucrative as war is at the moment,” concluded Islam.



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Shada Islam
Director for Europe and Geopolitics at Friends of Europe





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