Peacebuilding

Enhancing Peacebuilding Initiatives in Post-Conflict Nations

Forum: Peacebuilding Commission

Issue: Enhancing Peacebuilding Initiatives in Post-Conflict Nations

Student Officer: Irina Gheorghe

Position: Deputy president

Introduction

Post-conflict nations require peacebuilding because it prevents the resurgence of armed conflict while enabling the population to reconcile and build sustainable peace. Post-conflict nations face multiple challenges including weak political institutions, persistent social divisions, economic instability and ineffective security arrangements. These problems need peacebuilding to address them, not to achieve peace but to make it lasting. These efforts are also supported by the United Nations and its system of peacebuilding, including the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, as well as support to institutions such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). These institutions' work includes: the work of these institutions is centered on: addressing these challenges, these institutions focus on: The issues presented by these problems make it difficult to rebuild societies in the aftermath of conflict and seek solutions to address them.

Definition of Key Terms

Reconciliation
The process of repairing connections and trust amongst separated communities, which frequently involves truth-telling, justice, and healing from past injustices.

Demobilization and Reintegration
Former military personnel are disarmed and rejoined into civilian life through education, job, and social support programs.

Post-Conflict Nations
Countries emerging from periods of armed conflict, facing challenges related to governance, security, and development.

Sustainable Development
Long-term development that fulfills current needs without endangering future generations' ability to meet their own needs is frequently a fundamental goal of peacebuilding efforts.

General Overview

Peacebuilding in post-conflict nations is key to preventing a return to war and to constructing permanent stability. Peacebuilding is a broad spectrum of efforts to address political, social, and economic root causes of conflict. Some of the most significant activities include disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, security sector reform (SSR), support to human rights, rule of law institution-building, democratic governance support, and reconciliation between polarized groups of people.

The United Nations (UN) is a leader in peacebuilding efforts around the globe in its Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), established in 2005, that unites international support to rebuild post-conflict scenarios. The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) finances peacebuilding efforts, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is also engaged in post-conflict socioeconomic challenges.

Effective peacebuilding requires cooperation between national governments, international institutions, and civil society. Long-term political and financial support is crucial to ensuring that not only is peace created, but also maintained. Despite gains, political instability, shortages of resources, and weak institutions continue to hamper peacebuilding in many places.

Major Parties Involved

United Nations (UN):
The United Nations is the major international institution for peacebuilding, particularly through the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and ECOSOC. Its mission is to coordinate international efforts, support post-conflict rehabilitation, promote human rights, and ensure long-term peace through political, security, and development measures.

World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and African Union (AU):
They support peacebuilding through financial aid, development programs, and policy guidance. Their focus is on economic recovery, institutional reforms, and capacity building to strengthen state resilience.

Post-Conflict Countries (e.g., Afghanistan, South Sudan, Haiti, Burundi):
These countries are the primary focus of peacebuilding efforts. Their governments aim to restore stability, rebuild institutions, promote reconciliation, and prevent the recurrence of conflict. Their priority is securing international support while maintaining sovereignty over peacebuilding processes.

Member States (e.g., Germany, France, Sweden):
The EU and its member states contribute to peacekeeping through diplomatic efforts, development aid, and humanitarian help. They prioritize conflict prevention, rule of law, human rights, and long-term socioeconomic growth in fragile states.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
play a crucial role in local peacebuilding, campaigning for human rights, enabling reconciliation, and encouraging unity among divided communities. This includes NGOs and community groups.

Timeline of Events

1948, The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) is established, marking the beginning of UN Peacekeeping

197, Johan Galtung coined the term "peacebuilding" in his work "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding".

1992, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduces peacebuilding in his "Agenda for Peace" report as a means, characterizing it as attempts to build institutions and processes that sustain peace.

1989-1994, A rapid increase in peacekeeping operations occurs after the Cold War, with 20 new operations authorized and peacekeepers increasing from 11,000 to 75,000
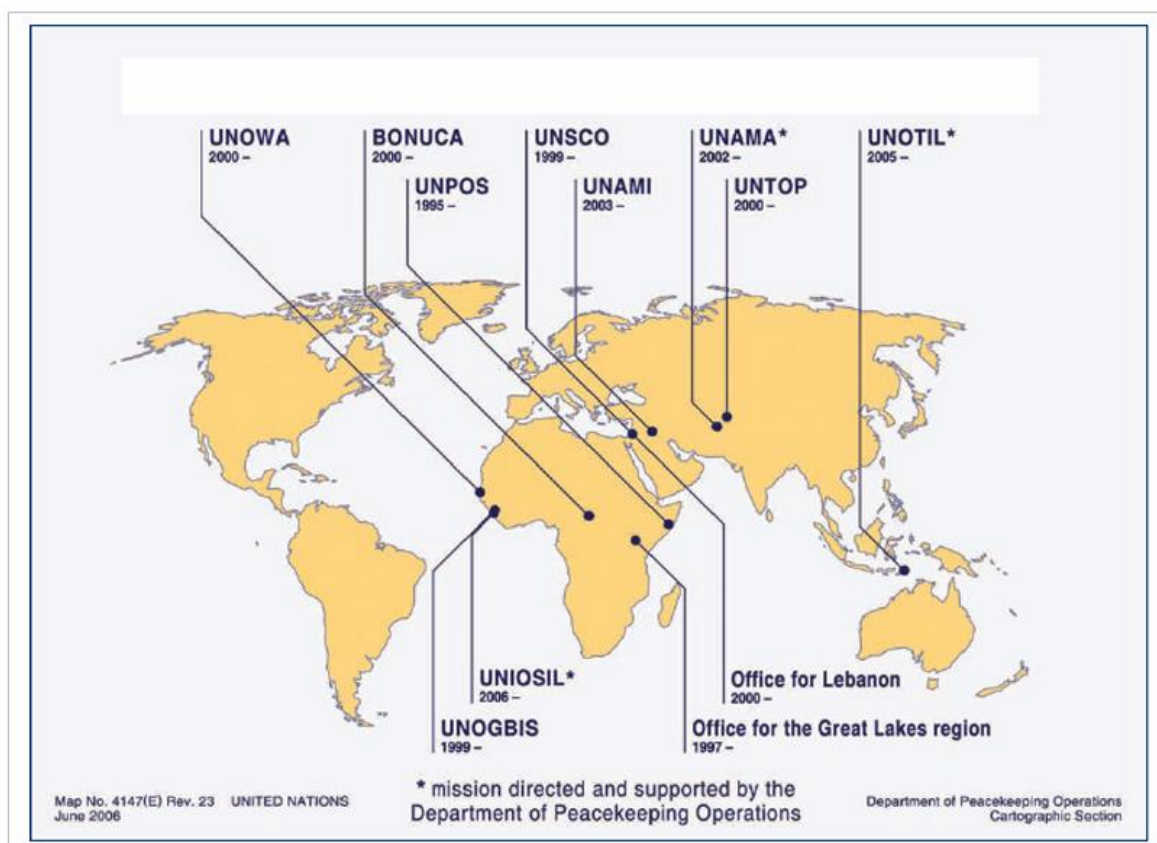
1999: Signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement

2005, The Peacebuilding Architecture of the United Nations is established, including Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Support Office, and Peacebuilding Fund, in response to the World Summit

2014, The UN Secretary-General establishes a High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations to assess the status of UN peace missions and requirements in the coming years

2015, The Advisory Group of Experts report leads to a shift towards post-conflict peacebuilding to a more integrated approach to a "sustaining peace" that is centered on conflict prevention and root causes.

2019, The Peacebuilding Support Office is merged in the Department of Political and

Source: Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Available at: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ppbm.pdf. Retrieved on July 17, 2006.

Peacebuilding Affairs to facilitate support to nationally-led peacebuilding processes at the international level.

Previous attempts to solve the

Efforts to rebuild post-conflict nations focus on preventing violence, ensuring stability, and promoting sustainable development. Some of the efforts include:

Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) – Established in 2005 by the UN, in partnership with Peacebuilding Support Office and Fund, to enable collective efforts and resource mobilization towards ensuring long-term sustainability of peace.

Security Sector Reform (SSR) - Aimed at rebuilding security institutions to become more effective in their work and to enable democratic control of armed forces.

UN-Led Peace Missions - These efforts include national dialogue, strengthening civilian control, and defense and police sector reforms.

Regional Organization-Led Initiatives – Organizations such as NATO and EU have taken leadership in security reforms in instances such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) - Efforts to reintegrate former combatants into civilian society to prevent a return to war.

Comprehensive Reconstruction - Includes rebuilding infrastructure, stabilizing political and economic systems, and strengthening legal frameworks.

Challenges in Peacebuilding

Despite these efforts, several obstacles hinder long-term peace:

Operational Challenges

Funding shortages - Inadequate funds lead to gaps in crucial activities.

Security threats - Peacekeepers become increasingly exposed to threats when protecting civilians.

Complex mandates - Broad missions generally lack explicit strategies or sufficient resources.

Capacity issues – Forces need better training, equipment, and increased female participation.

Political & Strategic Challenges

Weak political compromises - Peace processes stall due to a failure to agree.

Limited local ownership - The reforms collapse without genuine local engagement

Coordination problems - Lack of cooperation between UN agencies, NGOs, and financial institutions

Evolving conflict patterns - Peacekeepers must adjust to intra-state conflict and terrorist tactics.

Governance & Accountability Issues

Weak oversight - There is weak civilian control over security forces

Lack of accountability - Human rights abuses, and even abuse, often go unpenalized.

Transparency concerns – Media and NGOs struggle to scrutinize security institutions.

Socio-Economic & Implementation Challenges

Poverty & unemployment – Economic insecurity fosters more conflict.

Reversal of gains – Instability undermines previously gained advances.

Reform timing - Security sector reforms must be coordinated with political transitions

Restricted movement - Peacekeepers often face mobility restrictions. Measuring impact – Measuring the efficacy of efforts to build peace is challenging.

Possible Solutions

Focuse on sustainability in the long term: investing in human capital and social resilience in health systems and education systems.

Develop comprehensive, nationally-owned strategies: Create inclusive, nationally-owned strategies that involve a diverse range of actors and are based on strong conflict analysis.

Implement integrated security sector reform: Strengthen and transform institutions like the military, police, and judiciary to make them work for citizens and uphold rule of law.

Bibliography

https://www.government.nl/topics/international-peace-and-security/post-conflict-reconstruction

https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fe309fcd-fa3a-4076-a3a5-3789154ccaf7/content

http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index34ac.html
https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:3217/unu_cpr_evolution_of_peacebuilding.pdf

https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fe309fcd-fa3a-4076-a3a5-3789154ccaf7/content

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50CGTTeNtq8

https://cejiss.org/security-sector-reform-ssr-in-post-conflict-states-challenges-of-local-ownership

https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/goodpracticenote.cs-pb-sp.220510.v6.final_.web-compressed.pdf

https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf

www.usip.org/publications/2022/11/armed-actors-and-environmental-peacebuilding.