The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC)

History

The U.N. Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is an intergovernmental advisory body that supports peace efforts in conflict affected countries, and is a key addition to the capacity of the International Community in the broad peace agenda.

The PBC was first proposed in December 2004 by the "High Level Panel on Threats Challenges and Change" that reasoned that prevention of violent conflicts would be more effective than the UN's usual task of ending existing conflicts.

The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan took up the proposal in his own report "In Larger Freedom" (March, 2005), adding a post-conflict role to the PBC, so as to prevent countries (or regions) from relapsing into civil war. He also suggested that the PBC have a broad membership, including not only UN member states but also development agencies and possibly even NGOs.

At the September 2005 Millennium+5 Summit, UN members agreed to establish the PBC and affirmed that the PBC should be "fully functional" by December 31, 2005. However, most of the details were left for further negotiations. There was much debate during the 60th session of the General Assembly over which UN body the PBC would report to – the Security Council, the GA or ECOSOC. A compromise ruling decided that the Commission would serve as an "advisory subsidiary organ" of the GA and Security Council, but the GA will be responsible for the overview of the PBC's work.
**Mandate**

In the enabling resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission, resolution 60/180 and resolution 1645 (2005) of 20 December 2005, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council mandated it:

- to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery;

- to focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development;

- to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

- In resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282, General Assembly and Security Council also stress the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission to fulfill the following functions in this regard:

  (a) To bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace, and to provide political accompaniment and advocacy to countries affected by conflict, with their consent;

  (b) To promote an integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding, noting that security, development and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing;

  (c) To serve a bridging role among the principal organs and relevant entities of the United Nations by sharing advice on peacebuilding needs and priorities, in line with the respective competencies and responsibilities of these bodies;

  (d) To serve as a platform to convene all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including from Member States, national authorities, United Nations missions and country teams, international, regional and subregional organizations,
international financial institutions, civil society, women’s groups, youth organizations and, where relevant, the private sector and national human rights institutions, in order to provide recommendations and information to improve their coordination, to develop and share good practices in peacebuilding, including on institution-building, and to ensure predictable financing to peacebuilding.

Structure
The PBC consists of a 31-member Organizational Committee whose composition is the following:

- Seven members elected by the General Assembly: Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Kenya, Indonesia, Mexico, Montenegro
- Seven members selected by the Security Council: China, France, Russia, Senegal, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay
- Seven members elected by the Economic and Social Council (one seat still vacant): Argentina, Belgium, Estonia, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, South Africa
- Five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Rwanda
- Five of the top providers of assessed contributions to United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies, including a standing peacebuilding fund: Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan, Norway

Moreover, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the World Bank are invited to take part in all meetings of the Commission.
The Peacebuilding Support Office

This Office (PSBO) was created to assist and support the Peacebuilding Commission with strategic and policy guidance, to administer the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and to support the Secretary-General in coordinating the activities of the UN agencies in the field of peacebuilding.

The Peacebuilding Fund

The above mentioned Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2006 to support activities, actions, programmes and organizations that seek to build a lasting peace in countries emerging from conflict. At present, it is supporting over 120 projects in over 20 countries and since its creation it has allocated 623 million USD to 33 countries with the aim to avoid a relapse into violent conflicts. The Secretary-General has delegated overall management responsibility for the Peacebuilding fund to the Peacebuilding Support Office while the United Nations Development Programme’s MultiPartner Trust Fund Office administers the Fund. An independent PBF Advisory Group is appointed by the Secretary-General to provide advice and oversight of the speed and appropriateness of fund allocations and to examine performance and financial reports. The group consists of 10 eminent persons, from all regions, with significant peacebuilding experience.

At country level, management of the Fund is delegated to the Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by the national Government and the United Nations with a broader membership representing national and international stakeholders.
I. LINKS BETWEEN PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

There is a general consensus that human rights violations are both symptoms and causes of violent conflict. Violent and destructive conflicts can lead to gross human rights violations, but can also result from a sustained denial of rights over a period of time.

The symptomatic nature of human rights violations during wars or conflicts is well known. Assaults on the fundamental right to life are widespread - indiscriminate attacks on civilians, executions of prisoners, starvation of entire populations, massacres, and even genocide. Torture is common in internal conflicts, as are measures restricting people’s freedom of movement. Women and girls are raped by soldiers and forced into prostitution, and children are abducted to serve as soldiers.
Tens of thousands of people detained in connection with conflicts "disappear" each year, usually killed and buried in secret. Thousands of others are arbitrarily imprisoned and never brought to trial or are subject to grossly unfair procedures. But other fundamental rights are also denied: the destruction of homes, schools and hospitals; attacks against relief convoys; the destruction of crops; the impossibility to work, travel and have access to food; the destruction of important cultural sites and symbols. Roughly 26 million people have also been forced to leave their homes due to violent conflict, becoming refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Armed conflicts clearly illustrate the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights. The collapse of infrastructure and civic institutions undermines the range of civil, economic, political and social rights.

At the same time, structural violence and denial of human rights also contribute to the emergence of most violent conflicts. Numerous conflicts have been caused by human rights issues such as limited political participation, the quest for self-determination, limited access to resources, exploitation, forced acculturation, and discrimination. It is important to note here that denial of human rights occurs not only as a result of "active violations" (which can be defined as explicit, direct and intentional actions by the State and its agents), but also as a result of "passive violations" (which can be defined as those violations resulting of the negligence or inability of the State to protect the rights of its citizens, especially in the socio-economic domain; passive violations can contribute to the deepening of societal cleavages and conflicts, and thus can lead to the emergence or escalation of violent conflict). It is important to note that causal links are sometimes difficult to pin down. Empirical scholarship, including many statistical studies, suggests that civil war often entails increased levels of human rights abuse. But the reverse is much less documented by research. Conflict is typically investigated by social scientists, while human rights violations are more frequently analyzed by lawyers and activists. The two groups use different theoretical and methodological tools, and engage in very little cross-disciplinary dialogue.
Another crucial dimension in the nexus between human rights violations and violent conflict is the role played by collective identities, such as ethnicity, race, and religion. Discrimination and violations of social and economic rights function as underlying causes, creating the grievances and group identities that may, under some circumstances, motivate civil violence. Violations of civil and political rights are more clearly identifiable as direct conflict triggers. A combination of socio-economic inequalities aligning with ethnic stratification and of political elites manipulating ethnic relations for particular ends often leads to instances of lethal violence between ethnic groups, and thus to systematic and massive human rights violations, such as ethnic cleansing and genocide. In an ethnically divided society, symptoms of a potentially violent conflict include the dominance of a particular ethnic group in state institutions (such as the judiciary or the police), as well as radio programs or other media that encourage ethnic division and hatred.

The distinction between human rights violations as symptoms or causes of a violent conflict is not merely theoretical. Indeed, it reflects distinct analytical lenses that hold potentially different policy implications. For both human rights actors and conflict management practitioners, it matters whether gross human rights violations resulting from conflict is the main concern, or whether the
focus is on conflict resulting from a denial of human rights. The problems to be addressed are different and so are the desired outcomes.

If human rights violations are first perceived as symptoms of conflict, the primary objective is to protect people from further abuses, to limit the excesses of war, and to protect civilians and other vulnerable groups. Activities of intermediaries are then aimed at mitigating, alleviating, and containing the destructive manifestations of conflict, in particular any form of physical violence. But if human rights violations are perceived foremost as the cause of the eruption or escalation of a violent conflict, the main objective of activities by both human rights and conflict management practitioners is to address the structural, systemic conditions that give rise to violent conflict in a society. The scholar Johann Galtung introduced the term *structural violence* to refer to situations where injustice, repression, and exploitation are built into the fundamental structures of society, and where the rights and interests of individuals or groups are impeded upon due to differential access to political representation, economic advancement, and material well-being that is built into a social system. In such situations, a conflict management perspective on human rights must aim at satisfying human needs.

The protection and promotion of human rights addresses structural causes of violent conflict by working towards the satisfaction of basic human needs. Institutionalizing respect for human rights through, for example, constitutional endorsement of fundamental human rights, the independence of the judiciary, and an independent human rights commission may ensure that such protection is sustained over a period of time and becomes a matter of state policy. It helps prevent high-intensity conflict by limiting the power of the state, affording citizen’s protection against abuse of rights, and allowing them a large measure of freedom and participation. Root causes can be addressed through measures designed to promote political pluralism, enhance transparency and accountability in governance, enable people to associate freely with groups of their choice, encourage economic growth and equity, facilitate equal access to employment, education, and health care, and strengthen the capacity of the state.

In the first case (human rights violations are treated as a symptom of conflict), the desired outcome will be what some have called "negative peace" (the absence of direct violence and armed conflict); in the second case (human rights violations as a cause of conflict), the goal will be to achieve "positive peace" (a structural transformation towards a socio-political and economic system capable of fostering justice and ensuring a self-sustained peace). Even though these approaches are not
necessarily mutually exclusive, and may sometimes be undertaken in a sequential manner, they have very concrete operational implications in terms of the extent of the reforms to engage, the type and duration of the programs to support them, and the criteria which will serve to monitor their implementation.

Human rights considerations are important factors throughout the course of a violent conflict. Although analysts do not necessarily agree about the number of stages and how they overlap, the model developed by the scholars Julie Mertus and Jeffrey Helsing, is an interesting example as it shows how human rights concerns may evolve in the course of a conflict. For analytical purposes, they have identified three—inevitably overlapping—stages and describe the role played by human rights considerations for each of them:

• *The conflict intensification stage:*
  
  Communal conflicts turn violent; human rights violations are often a root cause of conflict, and the ability of perpetrators to act with impunity contributes to the intensification of conflict; the failure to address human rights issues hinders conflict prevention efforts.

• *The armed conflict stage:*
  
  Violent conflict intensifies as competing factions take up arms; human rights abuses are both a common by-product of the violence and a component of wartime strategy; international human rights norms inform standards for international intervention in conflicts, evaluation of the conduct of armed forces, and wartime protection of civilians.

• *The post-conflict/post-crisis stage:*
  
  Violent conflict ceases, and efforts at rebuilding begin; human rights considerations play a role in peace agreements, the treatment of refugees, civil society-building efforts, human rights education campaigns, and the creation of truth commissions and other efforts to hold perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable; if patterns of destructive relationships are not transformed into healthier patterns of interaction, this third stage can lead to a new round of intensified conflict. It is important to note that another central component of that phase is institutional reform of key state institutions, including the judiciary, the police, and prisons.
Since the early 1990s, negotiated peace has become somewhat of an international norm of conflict termination. A survey of peace agreements including seventy agreements involving twenty-nine countries has shown that eighteen of these agreements (or series of agreements) included substantive references to human rights, although the degree of specificity and institutional commitment varied considerably. Analysts and practitioners alike disagree as to how decisive such inclusion might be.

From a human rights perspective, the inclusion of such provisions is viewed as enhancing the chances of human rights promotion and protection at the post-conflict peace-building stage. The advocates of such an approach strongly support the inclusion of human rights specialists in peace negotiations and the process of drafting of peace agreements. With the assistance of these experts, negotiators have the opportunity to, inter alia, craft effective transitional justice provisions which comply with both law and best practice, enact human rights commitments, provide for human rights treaty ratification, set in train rights-based constitutional review or amendment, establish the place of human rights within post-conflict reconstruction plans, establish human rights institutions and either put in place or provide for national and international programmes of human rights monitoring and protection. In that perspective, a mere reference to the respect of human rights is not sufficient. Dispositions to ensure long-term institutional changes (such as the establishment of national human rights institutions, reforming the existing institutions, such as the police and the judiciary) are essential.

From a conflict resolution perspective, the inclusion of human rights provisions may not affect the chances of human rights promotion and protection at the post-conflict peacebuilding stage. Some even argue that when the most important objective is to stop the armed conflict and secure
"negative peace”, forcing the inclusion of extensive human rights provisions may hinder the chances of reaching a peace agreement. Yet, securing a "negative peace" is essential because without ending the violent confrontation, there can be no human rights promotion and protection.

To date, no comprehensive and substantial research has empirically demonstrated the relationship between the inclusion and implementation of human rights provisions in peace agreements and their impact on both the chance to reach an agreement and its sustainable implementation. As such, one can only state for sure what remains to be known:

1) There is no evidence that including human rights provisions makes it more difficult either to reach agreement or to implement peace settlements.

2) There is little evidence that human rights provisions per se, without institutional change and/or significant international contribution to monitoring and capacity-building, make agreement or implementation easier or more successful in the short or medium term.

Preparation for the establishment of sustainable human rights systems may actually precede peace negotiations and agreements in that considerable effort can already get underway even as fighting continues. For instance, the application of a consistent human rights analysis and a close monitoring of the violations will set the parameters for defining solutions to the conflict in human rights terms and pursuing justice after the conflict ends. The support to the efforts of local human rights activists, especially for the monitoring, analysis and reporting of human rights violations, can establish strong foundations for post-conflict human rights civil society organizations.
The fields of peace and security on one hand, and human rights on the other, have developed separately with separate theories and separate practices. As a consequence, the practices within the two fields have basically mirrored this division - or vice versa. They often continue to be perceived as representing two distinct approaches to the construction of a society where justice, security, and human dignity are fundamental political principles. A fundamental difference in the nature of human rights and peacebuilding lies in the fact that human rights have an individual approach (to human security), while peace-building almost per definition - since 'peace' is understood not a 'state of mind' but as a 'state of society' - is a collective effort. This difference has wide implications for the policy and practice of creating security in a society, at any given point in time.

Therefore, even though tensions may continue to exist between practitioners of human rights and conflict resolution, especially in terms of values, goals, dilemmas, and methods, there is now a widespread recognition among academics and practitioners alike that the two fields are interdependent and that professionals in these two fields need to understand one another and learn to work better together. The promotion and protection of human rights is crucial to preventing the escalation of conflict into serious violence, as well as in establishing the basis for a sustainable peace, two key inter-related aspects of peacebuilding.

In the conflict prevention phase, special emphasis is placed on ensuring the protection of minorities, strengthening democratic institutions, realizing the right to development and securing universal respect for human rights. Preventing massive human rights violations from arising, responding to violations before they escalate into conflicts and controlling and resolving conflicts before they escalate further are central concerns of preventive action. A critical element of the conflict prevention phase is institutional reform. In addition to the fact that reforming historically abusive state institutions can help address the underlying causes of violent conflict and thus prevent future violence, it is an important test of the political will to engage in real change and prevent abuses. If reforms are resisted or not implemented seriously, the risks of serious conflict are increased.

In the aftermath of conflict, violence and suspicion often persist. Government institutions and the judiciary, which bear the main responsibility for the observation of human rights, are often severely weakened by the conflict or complicit in it. Yet, a general improvement in the human rights situation is essential for the rehabilitation of war-torn societies. Such efforts, in the quest for sustainability, will obviously be prospective in focus, concentrating on the development of systems and institutions capable of delivering long-term future results. They must also, however, address
the past, whereby its wounds are treated so that they are at least less likely to infect the future. Indeed, many argue that healing the psychological scars caused by atrocities and reconciliation at the community level cannot take place if the truth about past crimes is not revealed and if human rights are not protected. To preserve political stability, human rights implementation must be managed effectively. Here, some trade-off dilemma may appear between the need to re-establish security, which might require collaborating with perpetrators of earlier human rights violations, and the need for justice. Even more fundamentally, the promotion and protection of human rights must aim at deepening a culture of human rights within a society, and be an ongoing part of nation-building, particularly in a multi-ethnic country. A human-rights based approach to peacebuilding is closely related to issues of justice and rule of law. Yet it also goes beyond that. The scope and definition of human rights include such norms as the rights associated with political participation, economic and social rights, freedom of expression, and nondiscrimination.

The United Nations is founded on three mutually reinforcing pillars: peace and security, development, and human rights. Conflicts have devastating effects on development and the fulfilment of human rights. Studies have found, for example, that agricultural production is an average of 12.3 percent lower in conflict-affected countries than in those same countries during peacetime, severely impacting the right to food and food security.¹ Food insecurity undermines the capability of a society, affecting vulnerable populations disproportionately – such as women and children. According to UNICEF, 230 million children were living in war-torn countries as of 2014 and have been subject to related human rights violations. In a UNDP study of 29 conflict-affected countries, “just 3 reported any growth in GDP during the conflict and 9 experienced GDP declines

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of over 50 percent.”

Studies have also found that access to education and other public services is severely constrained in conflict-affected countries.

Military spending has adverse effects on the enjoyment of all human rights and prevents States from realizing internationally recognized development goals. As the Secretary-General has said, “the world is over-armed and peace is underfunded.” Moreover, the economic costs of wars and violence can transcend generations. The World Future Council has noted that worldwide, annually, over “1.7 trillion USD are spent on arms and the military, and… by redirecting only 10 percent of these expenses world hunger and extreme poverty could be eliminated.”

The 1986 United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development enshrines an “inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.” It recognizes that international peace and security are essential to achieve this objective. Article 7 of the Declaration calls on all States to “promote the establishment, maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security and, to that end, [to] do their utmost to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as well as to ensure that the resources released by effective disarmament measures are used for comprehensive development, in particular that of the developing countries.”

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights further calls for States to mobilize maximum available resources for the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

As a whole, the Declaration’s vision of development addresses many of the root causes of conflict establishing a normative framework through which conflict and militarization can be transformed into international cooperation and human-centred development with a view to achieving equality, justice and peace. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in

\[\text{Ibid, citing UNDP, Beyond the Midpoint:Achieving the Millennium Development Goals. (New York, 2010).}\]
particular Sustainable Development Goal 16, calls on States to

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development emphasizes that conflict poses a direct threat to development and calls for the mobilization of resources for peacebuilding and development. These instruments clearly establish that States have human rights obligations requiring them to prioritize funding to fulfil the right to development for all persons and to pursue peace, security and disarmament.

While conflict threatens both development and the enjoyment of human rights, development and human rights are themselves essential to conflict prevention. The realization of human rights and of inclusive, equitable, human-centred development can alleviate root causes of conflict and enable peaceful and just methods of resolving tensions. Through international cooperation, States can capitalize on the savings from disarmament and global peace to further development and the realization of all human rights for all. The United Nations can play a key role in this effort by providing a space for peaceful conflict resolution and dispute settlement, and for the negotiation of disarmament treaties, as well as promoting global development and human rights.

The United Nations recognizes disarmament and development as two of the international community’s most important tools for ensuring freedom from fear and freedom from want for all persons. As former United States President Dwight Eisenhower once noted, over-investment in arms is "a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.” In order to realize the ultimate objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leave no one behind, the world must move towards disarmament and reduction of military spending along with the corresponding reallocation of funds to fulfil the right to development for all persons.

During the 30th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development in 2016, the United Nations Human Rights office (OHCHR) seeks to raise awareness, enhance understanding and promote dialogue on the right to development.
Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free. True peace with oneself and with the world around us can only be achieved through the development of mental peace.

— Dalai Lama —

AZ QUOTES
II. WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING

The participation of women is critical to the success of any peacebuilding process: if half the population is excluded or faces discrimination, peace will be impossible to achieve. Women peacebuilders bring different perspectives and priorities compared to men, and their role in re-establishing the social fabric in the aftermath of conflict is vital. Their role is recognised in many international agreements and resolutions, and the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkol Karman, was a public recognition of the impact of women peacebuilders. But whilst female peacebuilders have made decisive contributions to peace processes in places such as Northern Ireland, Guatemala and Liberia, the reality remains that women are still denied meaningful participation in many peace processes.

The impact of armed conflict upon both men and women differs greatly. Whilst men comprise the majority of missing and detainee populations that result from conflict, they are also primarily prone to be wounded or killed as legitimate targets as members of armed forces or groups, who still largely recruit amongst male populations.
On the other hand, however, the impact of armed conflict upon women (and similarly children) is
different although equally terrible. They have increasingly become specific targets of attack and are
susceptible to marginalisation, poverty, and the associated sufferings engendered by armed conflict.
Women in refugee and IDP camps, and also whilst fleeing, face rape, sexual exploitation and a lack
of physical security, factors which often lead to further stigmatisation within the community.
Overall, women may be particularly vulnerable if they are held up as ‘symbolic’ bearers of cultural
and ethnic identity, and the producers of the community’s future generations.

Indeed, the reality for women in post-conflict situations has grown increasingly brutal as the
scourge of HIV/AIDS accumulates and interacts with the effects of poverty, natural disasters and
environmental degradation. Today, women in the aftermath of crisis have perilously little protection
or access to services, justice, economic security or citizenship. Delivery to meet basic needs and
safeguard fundamental rights is unrepentantly lacking. A recent assessment of the United Nations
Development Programme’s work in crisis prevention and recovery exposed an exhaustive failure to
integrate a gender perspective into the United Nations (UN) system’s approach to early recovery,
transition and reintegration. Justice and security sector reform is the arena in which women’s needs
are greatest and gaps in response most glaring. Despite increasing violence against women in
conflict’s aftermath, their protection typically receives less attention than higher profile street
crimes, homicides, political corruption, gangs, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
(DDR) initiatives.

Although recent attention has been given to rape and sexual torture as weapons of war, these very
same violations - when committed after a ceasefire – and often by the very same perpetrators, tend
to be recast in peace-building processes as private, domestic concerns. Most often, women’s
security is considered a ‘human rights’ or ‘women’s issue’ rather than a security sector imperative.
Yet undeniably, in many post-conflict settings, the formal security institutions charged with
women’s protection, namely the military, civilian police and even peacekeepers, are sometimes
among the perpetrators of violence against them and fail to serve as accountability institutions to
which women can turn for redress and security.

Within and across post-conflict situations, there are sharp inconsistencies in the support provided by
the international community to women’s machineries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
In transitional recovery, women’s increased care-burdens and the gender specific impacts of macro-
economic, labour and social protection policies are largely unaddressed. The considerable variance in the standards of basic and emergency health services provided to women in different countries is often associated with the ideology, funding source and/or political affiliation of the funding partners.

Where women are also armed fighters, they tend to shoulder an additional burden assigned by traditional gender roles which dictate primary responsibility for the maintenance of the family and community during war, as well as throughout the long, slow process of rebuilding the peace.

For peacebuilding initiatives to remain sustainable in the long-term, women must be included at every level of the process. Attempts have been made to ensure that gender perspective becomes central to peacebuilding, and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security urges countries “to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict”. However, more than a decade on from this Resolution, and the passing of many elaborate national and international frameworks, formal peacebuilding processes often remain largely male-dominated, where women are simply viewed as war victims.

At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders reaffirmed the important role of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. They called for the full and effective implementation of
the SC Resolution 1325 and, for the first time, accepted the inter-linkages across development, peace and security and human rights. This new resolve for integrated approaches to peacebuilding became a core rationale for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). In making gender equality the PBC’s only thematic mandate, a new doctrinal imperative was created for ensuring systematic attention and resources to advancing gender equality within transitional recovery, reintegration and reconstruction efforts.

However, as a relatively new field, unmet demand and huge gaps persist in knowledge on gender and peacebuilding and in how it is created and used intellectually, politically and in meeting practical needs. From management skills to infrastructure, technical expertise to resources, capacity is lacking within women’s peacebuilding institutions, and within and outside of government and the multilateral system. In the context of peace processes there is a systematic absence of gender expertise, conflicting UN positions on women’s human rights issues such as quotas and emergency reproductive health care, and an under-representation of women in decision-making.

Unequivocally, involving women and gender expertise in peacebuilding activities is essential for reconstituting political, legal, cultural and socio-economic and social structures so that they can deliver on gender equality goals. Gender equality brings to peace-building new degrees of democratic inclusiveness, faster and more durable economic growth and human and social capital recovery. Indeed, peacebuilding may well offer the single greatest opportunity to redress gender inequities and injustices of the past while setting new precedents for the future. But these
opportunities can be enhanced significantly – or constrained – by how the international community
sets its priorities for recovery and uses its resources for peacebuilding.

As an advisory body, the PBC has a broad mandate to bring together the UN's capacities and
experience in peacebuilding, respect for human rights, the rule of law, humanitarian assistance,
reconstruction and longer-term development. The PBC is a central node for helping create and
promote comprehensive strategies for peacebuilding, both in general terms and in country
situations. Its mandate to integrate a gender perspective into all of its work, therefore, represents a
crucial opportunity for developing policy guidance and ensuring adequate resources for early
recovery activities that both fully engage women in their design and implementation, and redress
structural inequalities that existed prior to and during the conflict, and which may have also shaped
the forms of violence used. Gender equality speaks directly to the PBC’s aim of “focusing attention
and consolidating good practice on vital cross-cutting issues…for which effective programmes must
draw on the capacities and plans of actors across the full range of political-security-humanitarian-
development activities.”

Three are the principal strategies for mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into
peacebuilding:

1) Addressing the particular impact of conflict on women’s recovery –
especially sexual and gender based violence;

2) Supporting women’s full participation in and ownership of peacebuilding
and recovery processes; and

3) Ensuring that national priorities for recovery – political, social and
economic – redress inequalities of the past and positively influence
gender relations and contribute to gender equality.

This review of the PBC’s progress in integrating a gender perspective into its work reveals a
number of substantive gaps which have yet to be brought on the PBC’s agenda or within the context
of other related development and poverty reduction frameworks. It also identified a number of
strategic issues which are currently on the PBC’s agenda but have yet to be analysed from a gender
perspective. Without rapid and serious attention to these critical priorities for women, which are
outlined below, societal-wide recovery efforts will be undermined.
The Substantive Gender Gaps within the Peacebuilding Commission’s Agenda can be summarize as follows:

(a) Military to Civilian Transitions: Despite growing awareness of the psycho-social needs of survivors of violence in conflict, effective responses have yet to be developed. But even less attention is given to the psycho-social consequences of war-induced stress among veterans and former combatants in their transition from military to civilian life. Clearly, unhealed psychic wounds, particularly among combatants and survivors increase the risk of family, community and societal violence and rupture. Decades of studies of returning veterans in the United States have established links between combat trauma and higher rates of unemployment, homelessness, gun ownership, child abuse, domestic violence, substance abuse, suicide, homicide and criminality. While there are clearly lessons to be learned from Western experiences, there is no equivalent body of literature or experience in post-conflict settings. Nascent efforts to respond to the psycho-social impacts of war on children and of sexual violence on men and women draw from non-conflict settings and are based on western, clinical, psycho-therapeutic approaches. Urgent attention – intellectual and programmatic – is needed to address the psycho-social issues of recovery from violence and its perpetration.

(b) Social Protection: For women – especially those who have been cast away from their families as a result of the violence perpetrated upon them - expanded social insurance packages and basic living allowances can prevent their engagement in survival, transactional or commercial sex or other exploitative situations. These programs can guarantee women access to medical care and unemployment insurance (for which they are typically excluded since they had never been among the registered employed). They can also reach women and elder caregivers, who, just at the point in their lives when they expect to be taken care of by their children, are forced to take in relatives, orphans, and even their own adult children who may have HIV/AIDS or be otherwise incapacitated. The expansion of child-care facilities and provision of transportation can contribute enormously to easing these burdens. In this regard, priority must be given to developing social security and protection systems.
(c) HIV/AIDS: Every country in sub-Saharan Africa affected by conflict also has a generalized HIV/AIDS epidemic – two-thirds with prevalence rates above 5%. Many of the forces driving conflict are also those driving HIV/AIDS – poverty, famine, environmental degradation, human rights violations and weak governance systems. The Security Council’s recognition of HIV/AIDS as a threat to international peace and security has yet to bring about appropriate measures in peacebuilding situations for prevention, care and treatment. As populations at risk – including soldiers, former combatants, refugees and displaced persons - return and reintegrate into their communities, many are no longer able to access ‘humanitarian’ support they received during conflict for HIV and AIDS. As governments need time to establish national HIV/AIDS infrastructure, lapses in prevention, care and treatment can create acute medical crises, new strains and risks of infection, resistance to anti-retroviral treatment, and increase stigma and discrimination.

Although women’s participation and gender equality is a ‘predictable’ peacebuilding gap, it is striking how far this core issue is lacking in institutional capacity, policy and operational guidance, programme implementation, data, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge and resources. As the UN works to consolidate and strengthen its gender architecture into a single, viable, operational entity, the PBC can play a crucial ‘stop gap’ role in drawing attention to priority needs for women and peacebuilding and advocating for gender-sensitive planning for peacebuilding
activities. It can help mobilize ‘surge’ support across the UN system and with civil society partners to strengthen operational capacity on gender and peacebuilding and for catalytic activities which help advance a medium and longer term agenda for women and peacebuilding. And it can convene the entire UN system and civil society around critical policy questions, knowledge needs, programme gaps and political challenges on peacebuilding which require a concerted and multi-sectoral approach.

While the PBC cannot ensure this full range of requirements, it can advocate for gendersensitive approaches and policies in support of peacebuilding, encourage collaboration with appropriate operational partners and help mobilize resources to fill capacity gaps where they exist. Further, it can help establish appropriate benchmarks and indicators against which progress can be measured.
III. THREATS POSED BY TERRORIST AND CRIMINAL GROUPS TO PEACE AND STABILITY

Over the past few years, leading intelligence and national security minds have noted the growing threat created by the transformation and convergence of transnational organized crime and terrorist groups. While there is some debate as to whether these groups are “converging” or “transforming,” it is clear that this growing threat is complex and increasingly difficult to counter with standard law enforcement and military counter-measures. As the United States and other nations adjust to the post 9/11 world of stubborn problems such as the Iraqi insurgency, Afghanistan, and al Qaeda, the nexus of organized crime and terrorism could prolong these challenges and lead to further disruptions and threats to global security and prosperity. Impediments to wholesale cooperation between the two parties remain, and many terrorist groups will never partake in organized criminal activities, but the merging of transnational organized crime and international terrorism is nonetheless on the rise.
Transnational organized crime and international terrorism increasingly share both organizational and operational characteristics, and at times even partner with one another. In general, there is agreement among national security, crime and terrorism analysts regarding the factors that create and sustain this threatening phenomenon. Initially a drop in state sponsorship, forced terrorist groups to look elsewhere for financial and material support. While this situation arose from the upheaval of the early 1990s, it has accelerated significantly in the post-September 11 era.

At present, over 100 countries are cooperating in the global war on terrorism, and are trying to close down sources of terrorist funding. To replace this revenue and the financial support from states that are now unable or unwilling to back them, terrorist groups look elsewhere for financing. This crackdown on terrorist financing has led some terrorists to transform their organizations by creating “in-house” criminal capabilities in order to generate revenue; these units then engage organized crime groups to meet financial and operational needs.

While terrorists are accustomed to receiving support from second parties, organized crime groups’ raison d’être is criminal activity for revenue generation. In many regions, organized criminal groups have become so entrenched and governments so corrupt, that arrest and prosecution is at worst impossible and at best a distant concern. Transnational organized crime groups do not enjoy state sponsorship (with notable exceptions such as North Korea) or territorial protection, and frequently have developed a virtual corporate structure from the outset. Such organizations provide excellent models for the evolving, loosely affiliated cell structures of terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. Even terrorist groups that enjoy state sponsorship, such as Hezbollah, which is supported by generous subsidies from Iran, rely increasingly on international criminal activity to sustain their
programs and improve their operational capabilities.

In addition to global political pressures and realities, there are numerous other reasons and opportunities that lead terrorist groups to embrace organized criminal activity as a source of revenue, or to seek alliances with organized crime groups. The expanding forces of globalization are enabling transformation and convergence through rapid communication, travel, surveillance, and information access. The growth of weak or failing states exacerbates this tendency. The absence of the rule of law in places such as Somalia and Afghanistan provides ideal conditions for the blending of criminal and terrorist activities. Economic hardship in many of these nations leads to corruption and trafficking of illicit goods, and there is little incentive to fight organized crime. Terrorist groups who otherwise might rely on charitable contributions or even “legitimate” businesses have little or no access to either in a failed state, leaving trafficking and other forms of crime as the obvious and easier alternatives. An organic criminal capability becomes paramount and the sole method by which to sustain the organization.

The nexus between terrorism and organized crime is further enabled through the widespread availability of small and light arms that can be both trafficked for money or used in operations. After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, Warsaw Pact nations found themselves flush with weapons, a great many of which found their way to the illegal arms market. Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, West Africa, East Timor, and Central, South, and Southwest Asia have only invigorated this arms trade. Porous international borders and corrupt or ill-trained law enforcement in a multitude of countries have also played a role in enabling the arms trade, to the benefit of terrorist and organized crime groups.

The above trends have led groups such as al Qaeda and Hezbollah to develop their own in-house criminal capabilities. While Hezbollah has been involved with methamphetamine labs and cigarette smuggling in the United States and Canada, al Qaeda has well-developed connections with criminal syndicates in Central Asia that include Pakistani and Afghani opium traffickers. Colombia’s FARC, however, provides perhaps the best operational example of the transnational organized crime and terrorism nexus. FARC’s involvement in the narcotics trade evolved from a strategy of simple taxation to one of direct control and distribution. Trafficking profits have enabled the FARC to obtain sophisticated weapons, communications technology, and helped them gain control of 40 percent of Colombian territory in their conflict with Bogotá.
Maritime piracy represents an area where the mixing of militant Islamic terrorism and crime can converge with potentially severe consequences for global military and economic security. Given heavy concentrations of al Qaeda cells and radical Islamic sympathizers, shipping lanes and pre-existing criminality, it comes as no surprise that Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, India and Nigeria experience most of the world’s maritime piracy attacks. Particularly alarming is the fact that criminals and terrorists not only steal lucrative cargoes, but also have the resources to commandeer lethal cargoes such as chemicals, gas, arms, and specialized dual-use equipment. A potential nightmare scenario for governments would be the hijacking and sinking of one or more ships in one of the world’s most important canals or narrow shipping lanes, such as the Straits of Malacca, the Suez and Panama canals, or oil trade chokepoints such as Saudi Arabia’s Ras Tanura terminal. The 500,000 ton ships that traverse these waterways carry a crew of only thirty and have no armed guards to repel raiding parties. A scuttled supertanker in one of these locations could create major economic disruptions.

The narcotics industry remains the most common and lucrative source of revenue to terrorists groups, leading many to legitimize this criminal activity by emphasizing the financial needs of the organization and the role of narcotics in undermining Western society. As has been well documented, Hezbollah operatives and their supporters are deeply engaged in the businesses of
illegal methamphetamine production and distribution. The Drug Enforcement Administration has made a number of arrests through its Operation Mountain Express, which uncovered Hezbollah-operated methamphetamine labs in the rural western United States. The dramatic spike in opium cultivation in Afghanistan over the past few years provides yet more evidence of the terrorism-narcotics nexus.

The United Nations’ International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) said that after zero opium production in the last year of Taliban rule in 2001, Afghanistan met about 76 per cent of the global demand of heroin and opium by harvesting poppy on 225,000 acres that yielded a record produce of 3,500 metric tons of opium. In 2003, the harvest is expected to yield 5,000 tons of opium.

The aforementioned examples illustrate a few of the many “enablers” of organized crime and terrorism transformation. There are also a number of inherent organizational and operational similarities between organized crime and terror groups. If one considers a Venn diagram that compares the character and modus operandi of these two groups, similarities quickly emerge. During an April 2003 meeting with South American counterterrorism officials and intelligence officers in Argentina, it was encouraging, yet worrisome to see that one of the visiting counterterrorism chiefs had a well-developed project focusing on the “nexus” issue. It is instructive to look at how this intelligence official and several of his colleagues have sought to compare and contrast organized crime and terrorist groups.

Similarities between criminal groups and terrorist groups:

- Both are generally rational actors
- Both use extreme violence and the threat of reprisals
- Both use kidnappings, assassinations, and extortion
- Both operate secretly, though at times publicly in friendly territory
- Both defy the state and the rule of law (except when there is state sponsorship)
- For a member to leave either group is rare and often fatal
• Both present an asymmetrical threat to the United States and “friendly” nations
• Both can have “interchangeable” recruitment pools
• Both are highly adaptable, innovative and resilient
• Both have back-up leaders and foot soldiers
• Both have provided social services, though this is much more frequently seen
  with terrorist groups

Argentina, experienced one of the first attacks borne of the convergence of terrorism, state sponsorship and organized crime. The 1992 and 1994 bombings of the Israeli Embassy and Jewish Cultural Affairs Center in Buenos Aires were conducted with truck bombs. The operators were Iranian-supported Hezbollah who used the notoriously lawless tri-border region of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay to plan and prepare for their terrorist operation. It was there that members of Middle Eastern terror groups including Hezbollah, Hamas and Gamaa al Islamiyah have taken advantage of a Muslim diaspora in a region known for money laundering, drug trafficking and other illicit activities. Argentine intelligence officials indicated that the trucks and the explosives used in the Buenos Aires bombings were paid for and assembled in the tri-border region, and were then transported through a criminal network on their journey to the Argentine capital.

Both organized crime and terrorist groups run in the same circles — they already operate outside of the law and they often need the same resources, including: false identification, shipping documents, operators, transportation networks, and counter-surveillance techniques. Terrorist groups just beginning to develop their own revenue generation enterprises often come into contact (sometimes hostile) with criminal elements who generally have reliable revenue streams.

While criminal and terrorist groups do appear to be moving closer together and have shared strategies, tactics, and resources, significant roadblocks to further cooperation exist. There remain cultural, operational, and practical differences between the two groups. No organized crime group is built around adherence to religious or ideological tenets, while groups like al Qaeda or Hamas are fundamentally based on religious beliefs and motivations.

For example, the removal of secular or corrupt leaders is a goal of many terrorist groups. By contrast, the existence of these very leaders is essential to the existence of certain organized crime
groups. The potential for long-term convergence depends on the possibility that both groups would gain from combined operations yet are able to maintain operational security. Attaining that mutually beneficial arrangement appears to be difficult.

In practical and political terms, organized crime groups are loathe to attract unwanted attention. Most criminal networks want to maintain the status quo—that is, to keep the system “wired.” Terrorists often seek out media coverage, whereas organized criminals avoid it. Furthermore, terrorists often take responsibility for their actions, while organized criminals do not. Criminal syndicates generally cultivate and maintain networks of illegal transportation, bribed or threatened customs officials, politicians, judges, police and intelligence officials, and have in many cases settled into some form of understanding with a host country. Should al Qaeda or Hezbollah operators and financiers enter into this equation they would most likely draw unwelcome law enforcement attention. This is particularly significant given current U.S. pressures on nations to participate in the global war on terrorism: many states that might otherwise turn a blind eye to organized crime now feel compelled to pursue terrorists. Both witting and unwitting state sponsors have been put on notice by the Bush administration that they will be held accountable for any support of terrorism. Current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate that the United States is not bluffing in this regard, though the long-term sustainability of such U.S. pressure may be questionable.
Another key distinction is motivation. Generally speaking, terror groups are seeking political inclusion, redress of grievances, or outright regime destruction whereas organized crime syndicates, as indicated previously, seek optimal business environments. While ideology, religion and politics form the basis of many terrorist organizations, pure profit is what drives criminal organizations. Terror groups are more integrated into the community, often blurring the lines between “terrorist” and “freedom fighter” when providing social services to or advocating on behalf of a constituency.

Terrorist groups often compete with governments for popular support, while organized crime does not. Finally, terrorist groups are generally less discriminating as far as those victimized by their activities, in contrast to organized crime.

Terrorism may serve as a “tactic” for criminal groups, whereas criminal activity may become a permanent necessity for terror groups lacking sufficient sources of funding. It appears more likely that terror groups would evolve into hybrid groups whereas criminal groups would unleash a terrorist style attack only when necessary. However, even if terror groups and criminal groups do not enter into strategic alliances, some may transform into true hybrids. It is conceivable that the world may face a number of transnational criminal-terrorist cartels that dwarf the Colombian cartels and al Qaeda of the 1990s and today. These groups could even attain political influence and enough power to bring down weak or “uncooperative” states.

The United States and much of the rest of the world is currently engaged in a pitched campaign against terrorism and to a lesser extent organized crime. In theory, as the two threats cooperate or mimic each other, it should be helpful for governments to use the lessons learned from fighting each type of organization. In reality, though, the threats are changing daily and both organized crime and terrorist groups are learning from past mistakes while probing recent defenses erected by targeted nations. They are constantly challenging sluggish, state-centric responses to their asymmetrical, adaptable organizations and methods. While some terrorist groups are hierarchical in structure, more typical is a cell-based, amorphous structure like that of Al Qaeda, which devolves power and authority to autonomous or semi-autonomous groups across dozens of countries. Such structures dramatically increase the challenge to government efforts at combating these groups.
Michael Kenney of Penn State University writes that al Qaeda has transformed organizationally much the way that Colombian trafficking groups did after U.S. and Colombian law enforcement targeted cartel leaders. Their similar modes of operation may be instructive to U.S. and foreign law enforcement and counterterrorism units seeking al Qaeda’s destruction. The main strategy for law enforcement and intelligence agencies to stop cell-based and vertically organized terror and organized crime organizations will demand much greater local intelligence that currently exists, and a deeper understanding of personalities, modus operandi, culture, and financing. Unfortunately, the track record of U.S. programs designed to eliminate narcotics trafficking does not bode well for similar efforts to halt terror groups also involved in the drug trade.

There are a number of officially sponsored initiatives currently underway which seek to understand and combat organized crime and terrorism. The Southeastern European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Center is a multinational organization based in Bucharest, Romania that supports common trans-border crime fighting efforts of participating countries. The SECI Center has an Anti-Terrorism Task Force that helps member states counter the nexus of organized crime and terrorism.

With weak economies, corrupt governments, poorly equipped, underpaid border guards and little regard for boundaries, it is easy to see how the nexus has developed so quickly in this part of the world. Human trafficking has risen in public awareness in recent months as stories of women and children numbering in the hundreds of thousands are moved through this region every year and are forced into prostitution. The United Nations is also engaged in addressing the links between organized crime and terrorism. The Vienna-based U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime works through its Global Programme on Terrorism and its Global Programme against Transnational Organized Crime to assist member nations in combating both threats. This assistance is offered, among other means, by strengthening the ability of customs officials, immigration officers, and border guards to counter trafficking in narcotics, human beings, vehicles, and weapons—all of which are directly relevant to effective terrorist operations, financing and organization.
Additionally, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) based in Lyon, France, has created the Fusion Task Force to address linkages between organized crime and terrorism. Among other things, the Fusion Task Force analyses data on criminal and terrorist organizations in order to “develop target packages . . . to facilitate the disruption and dismantling of criminal entities that play a central role in the funding or support of terrorist activities [including] drug trafficking, money laundering and other forms of financial crime, extortion, armed robberies, kidnappings, revolutionary taxes, and weapons trafficking.” However, with a $33 million annual budget for the entire INTERPOL organization serving 181 countries, the Fusion Task Force is glaringly under-funded.

Generally speaking, terrorist and organized crime groups are more responsive and agile than the governments and multilateral organizations which pursue them. Rapid re-calibration of law enforcement procedures and tactics are vital if anti-terror, anticrime efforts are to succeed. Terrorist and organized crime groups are unencumbered by official rules of engagement and can copy one another’s best practices to stay one step ahead of law enforcement. Thus, as the walls between criminals and terrorists come down, so too must some of the walls between law enforcement and intelligence.
Sitography

History and mandate

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission


I. The links between peace, human rights and development

Declaration on the Right to Development – United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner

Academic Council on the United Nations System
http://acuns.org/am2017/

The Sunday Leader

United Nations Office on West Africa

Humanities and Social Science Online

II. Women’s participation in peace building

UN Women

Australian Institute of International Affairs

European Commission – International Cooperation and Development
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post-conflict-planning-liberia-timor_en

United Nations Peacebuilding Fund

GSDRC – Applied Knowledge Services
http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/the-role-of-women-in-conflict-resolution-and-
peacebuilding/

Geneva Peacebuilding Platform
http://www.gpplatform.ch/womens-participation-peacebuilding

III. Threats posed by terrorist and criminal groups to peace and stability

SecurityIntelligence

Stability – International Journal of Security and Development
http://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.ea/

FBI
https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/organized-crime

United Nations – Meetings Coverage and Press Releases

NATO Review
index.htm