ODUMUNC 2013
Issue Brief for the
Non-Governmental Organization Forum

Creating Foundations for Sustainable Development and Peace

By: Kelsie Burkhard
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Introduction: "Saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war was the main motivation for creating the United Nations" (United Nations, Peace and Security, 2012). The UN is dedicated to preventing war and potentially harmful crises. War causes damage that can create problems with development of cities, energy sources, food, water, and ecosystems. The goal is to not only restore peace and development from past wars, but to promote a sense of security and sustainable development in society. Over decades, the UN has helped resolve numerous conflicts through the Security Council and peacekeeping operations that reduce conflicts in trouble areas to sustain peace. Its long-term role is supporting programmes to reduce the likelihood that violence will recur, insuring that all groups have a positive role in state governance and feel their needs are being met. These long-term goals are pursued primarily through the Economic and Social Council.

Background: Conflict prevention is one of the highest objectives of the United Nations. It requires a broad range of UN entities and disciplines to maintain peace and development; those being human rights, rule of law, elections and building democratic institutions, control of arms, and many others. The Department of Political Affairs is the central role of these efforts by monitoring global developments, advising the UN Secretary-General on actions to advance peace development, providing support to UN peace missions in the field, and supporting the work of the Security Council. The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948, with the creation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to the Middle East. Since the creation, there have been 64 UN peacekeeping operations around the world. (United Nations Peace and Security, 2012)

In 2002, the Council created the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups to define long-term programs of support for countries coming out of conflict. Two groups were created: Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. The mandates of the groups have been taken over by the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) created due to the needs and challenges presented at the 2005 World Summit. The UN General Assembly and Security Council mandated the Commission to bring together relevant participants to advise on strategies for post conflict peace building and recovery, to gather

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resources and funding, as well as develop bonds with political, security, humanitarian and development actors. Not only is sustaining peace in order, but there is also the need to create a plan for sustainable development in war torn countries. In 1992 during the Earth Summit in Rio, countries adopted Agenda 21 to rethink economic growth, advance social equality, and ensure environmental protection. (United Nations Peace and Security, 2012)

Current Situation: The issues in recent years has led the United Nations to focus as never before on peace building with efforts to reduce a country's risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Building lasting peace in war-torn societies is among the highest of challenges for global peace. Peace building requires sustained international support for national efforts across the broadest range of activities. Those being monitoring ceasefires; demobilizing and reintegrating combatants; assisting the return of refugees and displaced persons; helping organize and monitor elections of a new government; supporting justice and security sector reform; enhancing human rights protections and fostering reconciliation after past involvement. The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping currently administers 16 operations of peacekeeping around the world. (United Nations, Peace and Security, 2012)

The UN Security Council has recognized that including women and gender perspectives in decision-making can strengthen prospects for sustainable peace and development. In October 2000, resolution 1325 was adopted, addressing the situation of women and calls for their involvement on conflict resolution and peace building. Resolutions 1820, 1888, and 1889 also call for women participation in decision making and ending sexual violence and impunity. These resolutions are great steps to creating sustainable peace in societies, but there is much work to be done towards women involvement and violence. (ECOSOC: Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Recovery, 2012)

In the resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission at the 2005 World Summit, resolution 60/180 and resolution 1645, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council mandated it to bring together all relevant actors to advise on the proposed strategies

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for post conflict peace building and recovery; to dictate resources and help ensure financing for these activities; and to develop best practices in collaboration with political, security, humanitarian and development actors. (ECOSOC: Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Recovery, 2012)

The most recent development to take place was the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, otherwise known as the Rio +20. In June 2012, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a conference was held to define pathways to a safer, cleaner, greener, and more prosperous world. The UN brought together governments, international institutions and major groups to agree on a range of measures to reduce poverty, promote jobs, clean energy, reduce environmental destruction and find a more sustainable use of resources. Several issues addressed in the Conference were transition to greener economies, protecting destruction of ecosystems and climate change, establishing efficient cities, expanding use of renewable energy sources to lower pollution and promote economic growth, better forest management, and water conservation techniques. (ECOSOC: Rio +20, 2012

Role of the United Nations: The role of the United Nations is to not only establish order and peace, but to maintain this order in war-torn societies and lay the foundations for stronger development of a global community. Maintaining peace, conflict resolution, building up war-torn countries, creating equality in society, and developing and maintaining environmental resources are all issues in which need to be addressed. The UN sponsored major development, conflict resolution and peacekeeping programmes of its own, often through its specialized agencies. It also works to encourage donor states to develop bi-lateral projects of their own.

The Economic and Social Council palsy a crucial role in this process, as the long-term development project manager for the UN system. Because the ECOSOC encourages states to work through civil society or NGOs, it emphasizes the importance of these organizations in its resolutions and often tries to direct resources through them. NGOs are preferred by many—but not all—states as the most effective and efficient mechanisms for delivery of externally funded projects and services.

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It stresses projects and principles that improve humanitarian assistance and a stronger international community. The UN peacekeeping organizations have greatly evolved to meet the demands of different conflicts and a changing political scene, although much work is still to be done to develop sustainable way of living.

Country Positions: International conflict prevention assistance is overwhelmingly dominated by the countries of the European Union (including France and the United Kingdom, as well as the other 25 EU member states) and a group of like-minded donor states, including Australia, Canada and Japan.   Their support includes large-scale funding for state consolidation and institution building, stressing stability through rule of law for all residents and governance through democratic principles. They place special emphasis on conflict resolution and investments that reduce the likelihood conflict with start again

These donor also stress the importance of developing civil society or non-governmental organizations in recipient or host countries. Their support includes grants and sending technical expertise. This funding is part of their overall foreign assistance programmes, both national programmes that furnish support to UN initiatives and direct spending to recipient countries. They also work through their allocations to the European Union's External Action Service. Money usually is given to specific implementing organizations in each host country to serve specific purposes, generally it does not go to general government revenues.

Another large group of donors funds major projects, but mostly in selected recipients countries with which they have important bi-lateral or strategic relationships. Chinese assistance goes mostly to countries it is trying to develop strong trading relations with, including much of Africa, Cambodia and Myanmar. Russia focuses its assistance on countries close to its borders, especially favored recipients in the Caucuses and Central Asia, as well as Syria. The United States concentrates its development and post-conflict assistance on a group of preferred strategic partners, especially Afghanistan, Colombia, Egypt, Iraq, Israel and Pakistan.

In the last decade wealth emerging powers also have become major donors, including Brazil, India and Turkey. Their support typically goes to small recipients near their borders such as

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Indian assistance to Maldives and Myanmar, or countries they have adopted for special attention, such as the Brazilian relationship with Haiti.

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