

Security and Development in Fragile States

An Exploration of Public Civic Partnership

IKV Pax Christi -- 5 February 2009

A Response to "Security and Development in Fragile States: Strategy for the Dutch Commitment in 2008-2011" a Document Issued by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 2008

When the Ministers of Foreign affairs and Development Cooperation issued their recent strategy paper on *Security and Development in Fragile States* our government took a bold step on the road toward renewal in international cooperation. It is not so long ago that fragile states were not considered eligible for development funding because they were poorly governed. Because of this risk-aversion, one third of the poor on this planet were deprived of a humane level of security, freedom and development. It takes spirit and vision to give precedence to countries where results are far from certain and risks are unavoidable. It is praiseworthy that ministers want to contribute to human security rather than looking solely to state security when seeking a criterion. The Netherlands looks to the human perspective on security and development, which puts it in the international vanguard that, we hope, will soon attract a broad following.

Drawing on lessons learned in the past, we would like to highlight three elements of strategic importance for success: the complementarity of a state top-down and a civil bottom-up approach; the connection between endogenous processes and exogenous interventions; and the correct judgment on the use of military and/or diplomatic means. The discussion on past lessons is far from finished. You may well consider this exploration an invitation to authorised ministries, political leaders and other interested parties to deliberate on these subjects.

During this discussion, we also want to look clearly and closely at our own role. We believe that a strategy aimed at security and development in fragile states cannot be based solely on the efforts of donor and other states. A strategy for fragile states is a prime example of an approach in which civil actors are involved alongside state actors so that top-down and bottom-up processes meet and reinforce one another. We are aware that we, like other social organisations, have our own responsibility in this.

During this exploration we unveil this responsibility and express our interest in deepening our CSO's partnership with the Dutch government in a way in which each has its own responsibility and brings its own added benefit and in a way that starts from the common objectives in the fragile states where the



Netherlands operates.¹ By way of illustration, we have appended to this paper a brief description of our current role in several fragile states, including how this impacts on the Dutch government.

Civilians as Co-creators of a Legitimate and Effective State

At heart, fragile states lack the social trust that underpins the social contract between government and society. In some fragile states, this social contract has been broken; other states have never had one. The dearth of social trust is connected to the lack of a government monopoly on violence, the lack of basic services, and the lack of government by law. This is one reason why groups come to stand head to head within society, or withdraw into ethnic and/or religious communities to protect themselves against repression and exploitation. That is one characteristic of fragile societies.

The restoration of social trust, the establishment of a social contract, is the most important task in a strategy targeting fragile states. A social contract presupposes at least two "parties": the state on one side and people and their communities on the other. The restoration of social trust presupposes a strategy and a range of intervention methods aimed at fragile states and (fragile) society.

IKV Pax Christi and other social organisations have their own potential and constraints when working within complex processes of change. This also applies to the Netherlands and other donor countries. It is evident that social organisations are better equipped than governments (of donor countries) to play an intermediary role in drawing broader levels of civil society into these processes of change. Experience teaches that security and development are highly dependent on a community-based approach. Social organisations also play a role in creating interfaces between local and regional communities and national leadership.

Social organisations should not become involved solely and simply as a stopgap on occasions when it is impossible to work with the government, as the ministers' strategy seems to suggest (p. 14). On the contrary, civil society's involvement should be a standard part of every effort intended to build a legitimate government.

Types of Challenges in Nation Building: Various Roles and Opportunities for Intermediation

¹ IKV Pax Christi operates in six of the nine fragile states, i.e. Afghanistan, DRC, Colombia, Pakistan, Kosovo and Sudan.



A thorough context analysis from state security and human security perspectives is the starting point of every effort that targets fragile states. We believe that it helps to be aware of several types of challenges faced in state building and remedying a state's fragility. Although this distinction is narrow because it is drawn from ideal types, it can still help us to acknowledge that our range of intervention methods must vary depending on the context and type of challenge. Sometimes such challenges will follow one another sequentially, and often not; sometimes they will be present all at once. We discern the following five types of challenges:

1. ***The 1st challenge. Weapons must fall silent.***

Armed conflict still rages. We – external actors – aim our efforts toward promoting peace agreements or cease-fires. Donor and other states' range of intervention methods consists of diplomacy, intermediation, negotiations, humanitarian help and military peace missions. Civil society organisations can also contribute to conflict mediation by applying various types of civic diplomacy. They can play a unique dialogue-centred, facilitating and intermediating role where third-party states are unable or unwilling to do this for political or legal reasons (Hamas, Taliban). In the case of peace missions, civil-military co-operation (CIMIC) can be of benefit, but some civil society organisations see great risks attached to (visible) cooperation with military forces. This challenge recalls the current situation in Afghanistan and the Palestinian Territories.

2. ***The 2nd Challenge. Establishing a New Social Contract.***

This centres on establishing agreements and settlements (closed if necessary) in society. Matters often miscarry in this extremely difficult period. In practice, we have learned that the formal steps that external (state) actors take – e.g. organising elections and establishing a constitution – are by no means sufficient foundation for a social contract. A social contract entails erecting formal institutions rooted in society and not imposed from outside or above. Civil society organisations can play an important role in this phase. They can help build social cohesion, facilitate social dialogue and meeting and monitor elections. They can also help create a balance between combating impunity and the need for social cohesion and stability. Sudan is one example of a country in which this challenge is prominently present.

3. ***3rd Challenge. Restoration of the State's Monopoly on Violence***

Restoring the state's monopoly on violence means combining all armed groups under one command. Donor countries often use disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) for this purpose. Here, again, the top-down approach is usually insufficient. In practice, DDR often runs aground during the reintegration phase because local communities have been insufficiently prepared. This is one of the areas where civil society

organisations can play a role. They can also contribute to SSR via community-based security programmes. It has been shown repeatedly that end-user involvement is a success factor in DDR and SSR programmes and in combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

An interesting development occurred when major oil and mining companies, four states (including the Netherlands) and peace and human rights organisations (See box 4) promised to abide by voluntary principles (VPs) relating to security and human rights.

Another role for social organisations lies in monitoring security and the arms trade, giving early warnings of risks of internecine and/or state violence and in lobbying donor states and multilateral institutions to leap into action in such cases. Donor states' vigorous political dialogue and diplomacy are also indispensable here. The DRC (See Box 1), Pakistan and Colombia face this challenge.

4. *The 4th Challenge. Putting Agreements and Rule of Law into Practice.*

Dialogue and negotiations have paved the way for national institutions that put agreements and rule of law into practice. These institutions exist, but are very weak on legitimacy. This stage is very risky: international media and diplomacy turn their attention elsewhere, the firing seems to have stopped, and elections have been held. This is the point where the political will to comply with agreements generally breaks down, although it is at this point that diplomatic pressure on the newly established state should be kept at an optimal level. Civil society organisations can help to strengthen social cohesion by helping to open up channels for negotiations and communication along which fundamental social discussions can be carried out in and with society. They can also lobby any third-party states involved to inform them about the absence of results and to urge them to apply diplomatic pressure. Kosovo, Burundi and Guatemala are countries facing this type of challenge.

5. *5th Challenge. Strengthening Democracy and the Rule of Law.*

Institutions exist and operate to a certain degree, but the rule of law is still insufficiently strong to resolve fundamental social problems. These can be getting irregular armies, large-scale kidnappings and organised crime under control. In these countries, the emphasis for the government lies on reinforcing technical capacity, while for civil society organisations it lies on monitoring, lobbying and advocacy. Colombia is one country facing this challenge.

This differentiation illustrates that civil society organisations and the Dutch government each have/has its own range of intervention methods for each of these challenges and that the roles that the government and the organisations play can differ accordingly. Sometimes the emphasis in the relationship between these two will be on their critical stance toward one another, at other times on

their constructive cooperation, and yet again on both at once. We think that it is important to appreciate and respect these differences in each context as a healthy basis for effective cooperation.

We think that it is worth the effort to examine each of the nine fragile states to see whether or not there are opportunities for what some are starting to call a public civic partnership between the Dutch government and Dutch social organisations and probably also their partners. A jointly formulated and shared strategic objective should underlie this partnership. It should set out clearly how the two parties can contribute to the objective given their own potential and responsibilities.

Toward a New Balance between Diplomacy, Defence and Development

Fundamental political and public discussions are now being held in the Netherlands on our international efforts. There is an exploration of the future of the armed forces and a discussion on the effectiveness of development cooperation. The main question is always whether the organisation of the Dutch armed forces and development cooperation is well attuned to the new risks and challenges in the world.

With these discussions in mind, it is striking at the very least that there is little or no discussion in the Netherlands on the future of Dutch diplomacy. A major reason is that a truly integral approach presupposes that Foreign Affairs will assume responsibility for coordinating the discussions on our foreign aid and military efforts, given the international challenges coming our way. But even more important is that the call for a new balance between military and diplomatic instruments is resounding louder in the international arena, including in the United States.²

Questions about the future of diplomacy are also extremely relevant for the Dutch strategy on fragile states. International developments over the last ten to twenty years summon up numerous questions on the future of diplomacy and especially the question whether the stated ambitions are still consistent with the diplomatic capacity they require.

The Dutch government has correctly articulated its international ambitions in its coalition agreement. We believe that these ambitions, incarnated in the strategy on fragile states and elsewhere, would justify an exploration of the future of Dutch diplomacy. We think that this exploration could very well lead to a heavy investment in strengthening the capacity of Dutch diplomacy.

² One example is Robert M. Gates, 'A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age', in *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2009

Box 1 Democratic Republic Congo (DRC), Ituri District

For years IKV Pax Christi has supported civil society in Ituri; civil society plays an important role there in increasing security and in mediating conflict prevention. One example of this is a federalised network of *nyumba kumi*, or security committees. When the government is (insufficiently) able to protect its citizens, these committees serve as the population's eyes and ears and so help to preserve calm. These security committees are part of a broader consultative structure operating via *commissions de sécurité*, in which representatives of civil society discuss security issues with the government, the army, and police. The Congolese government appreciates and encourages this project because, as it has admitted, it has neither the capacity nor the resources to facilitate such meetings. Civil society, however, including churches, can stimulate discussion of abuses in places where the government is unable to do so. This is the source of its power: it is able to raise controversial issues and then work with the government in attempting to deal with them. It is recommended as modality for supporting various layers of the Congolese government (*localité, collectivité, territoire* and *district*). This would improve the distribution of information, increase synergy between various layers and thus raise the quality level of the service that the government provides for its citizens. Closer cooperation and alignment between the abovementioned bottom-up efforts and the Dutch government's top-down contribution to SSR (EUSEC) could lead to a better net security result for civilians.

Box 2: Kosovo.

In IKV Pax Christi's work with local NGO partners in Kosovo we become more aware with the day of how important drivers of change are for building a democratic and multi-ethnic society. We also know how important it is that civil society occasionally holds up a mirror to the political system, the government and, in Kosovo's case, the international community.

To give one example: the Netherlands recognised Kosovo's independence in a declaration that stated that the conditions for an acceptable protection of minorities had been adequately met. This was indeed the case – on paper. In reality, we know from our local partners that the situation of minorities is quite different. We have come to speak of a risky implementation gap. Many people still await the return of their house or land; many people still have problems with security, education, work and health care. Our colleagues in Kosovo were surprised by the Dutch government's motivation.

There is a large gap between the words of Kosovar Albanian political leaders and the reality on the ground for civilians. During his address on 17 February 2008, Kosovo's Independence Day, Prime

Minister Thaci promised to do all possible to ensure equal rights for everyone in Kosovo. He spoke explicitly about the positive practical consequences of his words for minorities. Unfortunately, we know that the Ministry for Minorities and Return is riddled with corruption and inefficiency. This does not contribute to the cultivation of social trust or to attaining practical benefits for minorities.

The dialogue with extra-governmental partners that the Dutch ministers intend to attain with their fragile states strategy is indeed a condition for reaching a veritable critical political dialogue with the government. We are very happy that the Dutch government wants to carry out a critical dialogue with the Kosovar government and hope that we can contribute to this through our local partners. This critical dialogue needs practical, tangible input from the minorities' daily life.

We support local partners that belong to the Serbian minority in Kosovo to open channels of dialogue with the Kosovar government. We help them to bridge the implementation gap, the chasm between the obligations and promises recorded on paper and how they are put into practice. In practice there is often insufficient political will to put the deed to the word. In that case, our partners need the political and diplomatic pressure that the European Union and its member states can put on the Kosovar government. We have a lot of practical information about this that could be important for the Dutch government's diplomatic and foreign aid work.

Box 3: Sudan

The goal of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is a peaceful transition to democracy in which the question whether Sudan will continue to exist as a unified state remains open. A referendum on this is planned for 2011. This framework does not detract from the importance of trust between the population and the government when it comes to distribution of power and resources. Dutch social organisations contribute to this trust by supporting Sudanese social organisations as link between the various governments and the local communities.

NGOs can contribute to this by promoting the institutionalisation of the social mechanisms that ensure budgetary transparency, especially regarding using oil profits as peace dividends, by ensuring that the victims of the expropriation and depopulation policy in the oil-rich areas are compensated, by informing the population about their rights and duties under the CPA and by facilitating meetings on human security for local communities and the security services as part of SSR.

Social and church organisations play an important role in encouraging social cohesion between antagonistic communities (facilitating peace meetings) and between returning homeless and refugees

and the population that had remained and in assisting the disarmament of the civilian population under DDR.

A good understanding and social cohesion between population groups and between social and religious organisations is one prerequisite for sustainable peace in Sudan regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

Dutch organisations can contribute to promoting dialogue between population groups in the border areas between Northern and Southern Sudan and between social and religious and militant organisations throughout Sudan.

Box 4: Colombia

Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

The Voluntary Principles are one means for contributing to civilian security on a local level in Colombia. The 20 largest private oil and mining companies in the world have signed these Voluntary Principles (VPs) on Security and Human Rights for Oil and Mining Companies, as have the US, UK, Norway, the Netherlands and seven NGOs, including IKV Pax Christi. The new element here is that security is defined as a shared concern of government, civilians and the business community and that it is inextricably bound up with the protection of human rights. What does this mean in practice? Companies include human rights clauses in contracts with security companies. They give human rights courses to police and army and report infringements. Army officers no longer view the population as a security risk but as a partner. Communities are involved in security policy; they negotiate on the economic impact and complaints procedures. Their results in Colombia are quite striking: less violence, more trust, a better investment climate.

But a lot more can still happen, especially because the Colombian government welcomes the principles. At the very least, the Dutch embassy could regularly raise the subject with Dutch companies and could help ensure the monitoring of these principles in Colombia. The ambassador could also maintain contact with the NGOs working in the communities where Dutch companies are active and where monitoring is desirable.

Our government can give an enormous impulse to the VPs by encouraging the nine fragile states where it operates (including Colombia) to sign the Principles. Second, participating states must keep watch over the human rights component. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can include the VPs in its human rights policy. Third, local NGOs and communities are often insufficiently equipped to play their

consultative role. The Ministry for Development Cooperation can free the financial means needed to stimulate local discussions on the VPs between governments, companies, local communities and NGOs.

Monitoring DDR in Colombia

The OAS Mission for Colombia (MAPP/OEA) sees to the international verification of the DDR of paramilitary groups in Colombia. One important point regarding the verification is the advent of new armed groups, whether or not they include demobilised paramilitary soldiers among their number. DDR's legitimacy is highly dependent on the degree of recidivism among former paramilitary combatants and on whether these organisations display paramilitary structures. DDR must be credible if it is to retain sufficient support among the population for future peace projects. In addition, the presence of MAPP/OEA offices in remote areas is very important for the local population. When the local population lacks trust in the local authorities, contacts with MAPP/OEA is often the only way for local communities in Colombia to draw national and international attention to the security situation in their region. However, MAPP/OEA plans to close five offices in early 2009³. They are located in just those areas where new groups are emerging. After the publication of the 12th report, the theme will no longer be treated in MAPP/OEA publications. The Netherlands as an important donor to MAPP/OEA can raise this issue in conjunction with the other "Friends of the MAPP/OEA" at its headquarters in Washington.

³ These offices are located in Monteria, Cucuta, Apartadó, Pasto and Valledupar. Thanks to external pressure, one observer will continue to serve the last two locations.



Abbreviations

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
CIMIC	Civil-Military Co-operation
EUSEC	European Security and Evaluation Agency
MAPP/OEA	Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz de la Organización de los Estados Americanos / the Organisation of American States' Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
SSR	Security Sector Reform
VP	Voluntary Principles