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Stockholm School of Theology
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No Shortcuts to Peace

International Development Cooperation,
Human Rights, and Peacebuilding

A documentation and some reflections on a Human
Rights-based approach to Peace and Security

Ingmar Armyr

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based approach to Peace and Security

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Author

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This report is written in his personal capacity.

1. Introduction

This report focuses on the relation between human rights and peace-building within the international development cooperation in areas of violent conflict. The specific aim is to examine how a human rights approach can go hand in hand with, and strengthen, a peacebuilding agenda within the international development cooperation. The document wants to (1) describe parts of the actual development process regarding human rights and peacebuilding over the last years, (2) be helpful in identify building blocks available to further develop a methodological framework on how a human rights approach can strengthen the peacebuilding agenda, and (3) finally make some preliminary conclusions on the way forward.

Relevant documents and experiences seen from a practitioner's perspective in the area of international development cooperation have been put together, and one of the preliminary conclusions is that when international development cooperation see human rights not only as international legal standards but also as basic guiding principles for processes of change, this is helpful to ensure a sustainable peace. It also highlights the importance of a long-term democratisation agenda within the human rights and peacebuilding agendas.

The document is based on experiences from the work the author has been involved in within Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and as Independent consultant during the last ten - fifteen years in the area of what today mainly is labelled "Peace and Security". The author's personal standpoint is that there is no other way than through work on the root causes related to poverty, strengthen of democracy and respect for human rights that a sustainable peace with security can be brought about. There is no other way – *there are no shortcuts to peace....*¹

2. The structure of the document

First the document situates the reader in the discussion on human rights and peacebuilding in the area of international development cooperation and makes a short reference to some examples of international statements and the Swedish governmental policy on the area. A research program on human rights and peacebuilding is also presented. This is to respond to "why at all?" discuss the

¹ This document is written in my role as Independent consultant. See also a further presentation of the author in Annex 1.

relation between human rights and peacebuilding (Chapter 3). Thereafter some building blocks of different types will be presented: studies, reports, statements and policies, and practical field experiences etc. as components for the further reflection (Chapter 4). This is followed by analysis and reflections based on the building blocks combined with my own practical experiences and lessons learned (Chapter 5). Finally as a preliminary conclusion the document focus on two key elements as part of a further discussion and development of concepts and methods in the area of human rights and peacebuilding (Chapter 6).

3. Background – Why?

We can assume that a great majority, also in the international development cooperation circles, wants to see both a “human rights agenda” and a “peacebuilding agenda” implemented. They are seen as a “nice couple”. Only in specific cases, in particular when being involved ourselves in violent conflicts and post-conflict situations, we have discovered that the “couple” sometimes is more complicated than expected, as well as have more potentials, than previously seen.

Three concrete examples are here presented in order to explain the reason for and the need to discuss how human rights better can strengthen peacebuilding.

3.1 One of many cases

You may imagine a village in the countryside in an area of violent conflict where a typical case of “overlapping ambitions” between the two agendas – peacebuilding agenda and human rights agenda - could occur. Years of violence in the country where the village is situated have created strong feelings of grievances against so-called political leaders, armed groups, and the military. Various abuses have occurred related to control of fertile land, sexual abuses and even disappearances of civilians and local leaders. This has also created mistrust within the village, between the villagers.

More information could be added, but even with this little information the two agendas could easily be described:

- the agenda of respect for human rights including both economic, social and cultural rights, and civil and political rights. The right to land, the right not to be abused, the right to life etc.

- the agenda of peacebuilding where a cease-fire could be seen as a condition for resolving the disputes of land, to end the abuses and to clarify what happened with the disappeared.

In this situation, what will happen if a general cease-fire in the country came through, but nothing else is changed? Prevailing trauma and grievances, and risk for violent conflict to reoccur? And what would happen if some of the land could be recovered to the right owners, but the conflict still goes on and the same situation is repeated in a nearby village by others taking advantage of the fragile juridical order during the violent conflict? And if international presence would temporarily diminish the abuses and disappearances, but the violent conflict goes on impeding the rule of law to be established?

If the situation were described in these terms, a logical question would then be “how to reconcile the two agendas of peace-building and human rights?” or “how could the two agendas support each other?”

Or is there a risk that the two agendas are understood as being contrary to each other? Or you go just for one of the agendas; the one you for the moment see looks to be the most urgent?

3.2 A discussion between a peace negotiator and a human rights actor

A discussion in *Human Rights Quarterly*², referred to in the study “Let’s Talk”³ by Elisabeth Abiri, Sida 2006, relates a discussion between a peace negotiator and a human rights actor regarding the conflict in former Yugoslavia. The peace negotiator argues that the so-called human rights community in fact prolonged the conflict: “What should one do if the quest for justice and retribution hampers the search for peace, thereby prolonging a war and increasing the number of deaths, the amount of destruction, and the extent of human suffering?” The argument goes on; “either negotiating what was achievable or giving up and leaving the parties to fight it out.”

² Anonymous, 1996, “Human Rights in Peace Negotiations”, *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. (18) 2 and Gaer, Felice, 1997, “Reflections on Human Rights Abuses”, *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 19(1).

³ “Let’s Talk! Human Rights meet Peace and Security”, Sida study, Elisabeth Abiri 2006. See: <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

The human rights actor argues that the human rights community “focused world attention on atrocious abuses” and the need “to uphold international promises and principles”. Its work brought about emergency sessions and the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The human rights actor accepts that the war was prolonged, but rather due to the “unwillingness of the international community to uphold the principles it proclaimed” and that human rights actors in fact were the only part that lived up to its task: point a spotlight on abuses, demand action to stop abuses and call for punishment of the perpetrators.

There is not always such a clear difference between the representatives of the two agendas, but being so outspoken, this discussion illustrates the two agendas in a concrete case.

3.3 The role of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and conflict management

The National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) such as the Ombudsman has a mandate to promote respect for Human Rights. Nevertheless, in many occasions they have moved away from applying a purely legalistic human rights approach that relies on protecting Human Rights through judicial and quasi-judicial means. Instead a number of NHRI have adopted conflict management and peace-building approaches and strategies, including mediation, facilitation of dialogue, national consultations etc.

This can be seen in both Latin America and Africa. The African study “Defenders of Human Rights, Managers of Conflict, Builders of Peace”⁴ from 2005 is one of the few studies touching this issue. The study highlights how the interest-based conflict management approach, such as mediation, in situations of human rights abuses is not uncomplicated. It can even be seen as controversial. “The reason for this is that mediation seeks to facilitate a solution that meet the interests of the various parties involved; the outcome arrived at through mediation is supposed to be acceptable to all parties. Where a serious offence has been committed and a strong power imbalance exists between perpetrator and victim, these points of departure may be questionable. Mediation may then not be feasible and may result in trade-offs or

⁴ “Defenders of Human Rights, Managers of Conflict, Builders of Peace? National Human Rights Institutions in Africa”, Edited by Michelle Parlevliet, Guy Lamb and Victoria Maloka, Centre for Conflict Resolution, University of Cape Town, 2005, http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/fileadmin/template/ccr/pdf/DOHR_Final_Draft.pdf

compromises, which mean that justice in conventional sense has not been achieved. ” (p 164).

A question raised from both the human rights and conflict management perspective is that if no one acted and mediated among the very few actors with sufficient credibility from ordinary people to act, the conflicts in many cases may have escalated and the situation aggravated. But if the mediation means that poor and powerless people lose their future, not much has been gained. The above-mentioned study recognises the need for further work and studies on this issue.

3.4 Swedish development cooperation

The Swedish policy on development cooperation has increasingly acknowledged the linkage between the two areas Human Rights and Peace-Building. The 2003 Government Bill ”Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s Policy for Global Development” gives the direction for the Swedish international development cooperation. Two perspectives, one of them a human rights based perspective, shall guide all the Swedish development cooperation. The perspectives shall be applied in all eight thematic areas of the Swedish policy, including the area of conflict management and security. So the mandate is clear, a human rights based perspective shall be applied to the area of conflict management and security.

To this shall be added that all thematic areas shall be given a conflict sensitive approach, i.e. not to escalate the conflict through the way development cooperation activities are managed, or *Do No Harm* as one method says. The challenge is then for development practitioners: how can a human rights based perspective be applied in the area of Conflict management, or “Peace and Security”, in the praxis of international development cooperation, and in the political reality?

3.5 At the international level

At the national level in Sweden, there is what could be called a “political axiom” that the human rights and the peacebuilding agendas are interconnected. There seems, at the same time, also to be an open discussion how this connection in concrete situations should be managed to best support a better life for affected people. Among the numerous documents that could be quoted, the previous UN secretary general Kofi Annan made this observation

in his report 2005 “In Larger Freedom”⁵: ”We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights”.

Most probably having this observation in mind, the former security expert in Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Anders Bjurner said on a presentation⁶ of a study on Development and Security commissioned by EGDI Secretariat at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that we have worked the relationship between Development and Security, Development and Human Rights; but very little has still been done on Security and Human Rights.

In her speech at Sida Head Office in Stockholm, January 15, 2008, Louise Arbour, then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, while recognising the sensitive relation between security and human rights, stated that ”three big issues are important just now: Security, Development and Human Rights⁷.” These issues are closely interrelated. The High Commissioner focused on the security issue, and wondered how high is the price we may accept for security. She pointed at the important balance: you cannot sacrifice too much freedom to achieve the highest security.

3.6 The Latin American part of the project “Human Rights and Peace-Building – One Goal, Different Agendas?”

This project is organized at The Stockholm School of Theology (SST) and the international NGO Diakonia, both located in Stockholm, Sweden, initiated in 2006. It is a joint, two years research program on human rights and peacebuilding. Both organisations have a solid background on the thematic issue. SST organising a 2-year program on Human Rights since the early 1990s, and Diakonia have a long experience of working with Human Rights

⁵ <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom>

⁶ Meeting in Stockholm, ABF-huset, Sept 2006.

⁷ Sida, Stockholm Intranet, Inside, January 2008.

issues, in all continents.

Focus of the research program is on the inter-link between human rights and peacebuilding, expressed in its title: “ Human rights and Peace-Building – One Goal, Different Agendas?” It is basically a global project, where experiences and positions on agendas of human rights and peace-building from Latin America, Africa and Asia were to be discussed, compared and analysed. The project invited Diakonia’s counterparters, members of truth- and reconciliation commissions (or equivalent), and/or academics who have written extensively on these matters to participate and contribute with the purpose to identify and analyse one particular issue: the overlapping ambitions of human rights and peace agendas in critical moments of peace-building – before or after a violent conflict has ended.

The method of the project was based on an invitation to Diakonia’s counterparters to participate in a round-table meeting with written contributions on the thematic issue from interested Diakonia counter-partners were to be discussed. The written contribution entitled one or two representatives from the participating organisation to participate in the round-table meeting, where the contributions from the participating organisations were presented and discussed. To prioritise, the decision in Latin America was to invite interested counterparters to Diakonia only in Guatemala and Colombia, where also the round-table meetings were held. Due to the high number of interested counterparters two round-table meetings, one meeting a day was organised in each country.

After the roundtable meetings the written contributions, after adjustments made by the contributing organisation and formal acceptance from the respective counterparters, is circulated as “Proceedings” from each round-table meeting and is also available through the web site⁸. A basic idea, and expressed in the methodological approach, has been to invite to a process of reflection where no final common standpoint has to be agreed upon. All written contributions are also made available to all participants to make it possible for all participants to develop their own standpoint. There will also be thematic publications in a Research Series⁹ to be decided further on during the project, and at the end of the two-year project period the researchers shall also make their own conclusions, to be shared with all who have participated during the project period.

It could be mentioned that the two countries chosen in Latin America, Guatemala and Colombia, showed a relative difference between the ways

⁸ Stockholm School of Theology, see:

http://www.ths.se/research/researchprogr_hr_peace_project.html

⁹ Ibid.

organisations from civil society have approached and understood human rights and peacebuilding, and how the discussion and practice has been developed differently.

Generally speaking, the more integrated way to understand the agendas in Guatemala also created a more integrated practice compared with Colombia where the two agendas have been seen relatively more separated, and even with certain tensions in between them. Some of the reflexions and preliminary conclusions in this document (Chapters 5 and 6) are also inspired by the many formal and informal discussions held during the Latin America-phase of this project.

4. Building blocks

This Chapter will present some building blocks of different types: studies, reports, statements and policies, and practical experiences as components and basis for the further reflection. The components are presented without order of priority, but added one after the other to:

- describe recent developments related to the thematic issue,
- describe the relevance of looking into the relation between the two agendas, human rights and peacebuilding,
- start to draw a picture of what could be seen and found when studying the human rights and peacebuilding agendas together, or more precisely, how can a human rights approach strengthen a peacebuilding agenda within the international the development cooperation?

4.1 Two pairs of concepts/binominals: Realists vs. Idealists and Pragmatism vs. Principles

Even though the relationship and interdependence between the policy area of Human Rights on the one hand and Peace on the other may seem obvious, they have in practice as well as academically not so easily been reconciled with one another. The Peace perspective, often referred to as the “realist” position has focused on achieving peace in terms of ending the violence, having the parties in the conflict to negotiate a deal they all can accept. The objection to this focus, as advocated by the Human Rights perspective, often referred to as the “idealist” standpoint¹⁰, is that such a deal may well be made at the expense of justice, truth and reparation, by them considered not only a

¹⁰ Compare to Ibid. p. 18, see: <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

moral issue, but the very cornerstones of a more than temporary peace and future reconciliation. This position would then be contested, by the “realists”, as an irresponsible one, as it risks to prolong negotiations and – consequently –also to prolong the violence. The “realists” instead argue that such issues can be dealt with in the future when everything has calmed down.

However, by giving priority to peace before justice, the party having committed the most atrocities is likely to benefit more from the deal, both by including its own protection and amnesty in the agreement and by remaining a political factor in society and politics.

The same distinction between the two perspectives is sometimes done with the concepts “Pragmatism” and “Principles”. The pragmatic ones are seen as those who do what can be done at the moment, whilst the principled ones are those that are guided by their norms and principles, and therefore less inclined to compromise.

As the benefit of these two “schools of peace” working together may seem obvious they rather have, in fact, a history of being separated both physically (regarding their institutions and offices, within for example the UN) and ideologically (largely represented by people with different education and training)¹¹. The dominating perspective in the UN as well as among governmental actors has historically been the “realist” position, whereas the “idealist” perspective to a larger extent has been promoted by different civil society organisations.

4.2 “Negative peace” and “positive peace” and their relation to human rights

In peace studies and analysis concerning peace work, the two concepts of “negative peace” and “positive peace” are frequent. A negative peace means generally the mere absence of war, a situation without open violence, beginning – after an armed conflict – with a ceasefire or stop of the hostilities, but continuing into a stable order in a society, without any reference to other conditions in the society. It is a narrow perspective on peace, and could exist even if there is, for instance, a serious injustice or a strong oppression of political parties or groups.

A positive peace means generally, on the other hand, a situation in which there is no exploitation of some individuals or groups by others, where the culture of peace is present and the formal and informal institutions supporting

¹¹ Human rights in conflict resolution: the role of the OHCHR in UN peacemaking and peacebuilding, Hurst Hannum, Tufts University, USA, 2005.

the peace is functional. It is a broader perspective where the political and material conditions for a better life are central.

In the discussions held during the Latin America phase of the project on Human Rights and Peace-Building mentioned above (paragraph 3.6 above), it became clear that the more you use and understand the concept “peace” as negative peace, the more complicated is the relation between human rights and peacebuilding. On the other hand, not surprisingly, the contrary is also true. The more you strive to see peace as a positive peace, including processes that creates conditions for a better life, the easier the relation seems to be between human rights and peacebuilding.

4.3 The power over the definition of the concepts

How you define the world defines the way you understand it and how you work with it! In a training course for field personnel in Cusco April 2007¹² in the above-mentioned project on the human rights agenda and the peacebuilding agenda, the power of the concepts and the quest for the power of defining the concepts, were discussed. The starting point referred to the fact that:

- a. We define the world through our concepts we use in everyday life
- b. The one who defines the concepts and definitions we use have the power of the agenda setting and as a consequence influences the world
- c. This may mean among other things that the act of defining the concepts, as it reflects values and interests, can be seen as a “political act”

With this background the question of how we understand and use the concepts becomes most important. And in this case more precisely: what do we mean, and how do we use the concept of peace and peacebuilding, and the concept of human rights? This becomes of utmost importance since our response to the previous question also influences how we connect the human rights agenda with the peacebuilding agenda to ensure a sustainable peace.

A clear concrete example of this and its consequences was given in informal field discussions during the previously mentioned study “Human

¹² “Human Rights and Peace-Building – One Goal, Different Agendas?” Final Report from the second phase in Latin America January – May 2007, Ingmar Armyr, Lima, Peru, 2007.

Rights and Peace-Building – One Goal, Different Agendas?": Generally speaking, however with exceptions, it could be noted that in Colombia the concept of Human Rights managed by some of the civil society organisations and its personnel were somewhat "legalistic". The clearest example was one person in an informal interview who expressed the idea that human rights is something for lawyers, and it is mostly a question of black and white, right or wrong, while peace is seen as dialogue and the process of finding possible ways forward. He was saying: "So we work with peace, and not with human rights at the moment."

This way of understanding the concept can of course be challenged, and many of the civil society leaders in Guatemala during the mentioned study had quite another way of using and thinking around these concepts. The close relation and connection between human rights and peace made it even sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two agendas in the discussions in Guatemala, and many civil society organisations had difficulties to define themselves as a human rights- or a peace- organisation. Many, but not all, see themselves as both. The peace accord in Guatemala from 1996 also shows this more integrated perspective having various components of human right integrated in its text.

In the Colombian case on the contrary, it was quite clear for almost everyone, which organisation was a peace-organisation and which one was a human rights organisation. Not seldom, and with a low profile, talks about the tensions between these types of organisations was also expressed. But also, and this was most interesting, the will to overcome this dualism was also present, once even expressed in terms like "if we don't overcome this dualism and coordinate this issues, we will never have peace in Colombia".

4.4 A contradiction between human rights and peace and conflict management communities

Experiences and documentations show examples of contradiction in the practice and theory between the human rights community and the peace community. This may well be a historic contradiction, but still present. At least you can see the issue being addressed by different actors, trying to create and find a constructive dialogue between the two communities.

The publication "Human rights dialogue" published by Carnegie Council, in its Series Two (2000–2005)¹³ "addresses the problem of the "human rights

¹³ Human rights dialogue, Carnegie Council, Series Two (2000–2005)
<http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/index.html>

box” – the constraints that have enabled the human rights framework to gain currency among elites while limiting its advance among the most vulnerable. Specifically, the essays aim to locate the barriers to greater public legitimacy of human rights and to demonstrate how those barriers can be overcome.”

Number 7, (2002)¹⁴ of this publication, has the title “Integrating Human Rights and Peace Work”. The introduction says: “Human rights activists often have different perspectives and priorities than conflict resolution specialists and peace activists. Our Winter 2002 Human Rights Dialogue explores some of these tensions and offers suggestions for building more constructive relationships between these communities.” The Sida study, Let’s talk! – Human rights meet peace and Security¹⁵ pointed on this same complicated relation, or at least not very much investigated relation by the research community.

A similar picture is presented in a study by Hurst Hannum in his report “Human rights in conflict resolution: the role of the OHCHR in UN peacemaking and peacebuilding”, Tufts University, 2005¹⁶.

4.5 “Pro-poor peace” and Swedish International Development Cooperation¹⁷

The expression “pro-poor growth” is often used nowadays to describe the role of development cooperation in economic growth. Logically, the concept of “pro-poor peace” should describe the role of development cooperation in peace and security issues.

An analysis of any given peace process must distinguish between what is necessary and what is sufficient for the poor in that process. Although a peace that ends an armed conflict is a necessary condition, it is rarely sufficient, in itself, to ensure that the poor will have a better life.

Peace means more than the absence of war, and a peace for the poor must mean, for example, the removal of illegal power structures once peace is declared, the establishment of a state under the rule of law, and the participation of the poor in the opportunities that peace offers. Development

¹⁴ Integrating Human Rights and Peace Work, Human rights dialogue, Carnegie Council, article Number 7, 2002.

http://www.cceia.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_07/index.html

¹⁵ ”Let’s Talk! Human Rights meet Peace and Security”, Sida study, Elisabeth Abiri 2006.

See: <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

¹⁶ Quoted in Ibid.

¹⁷ Abstract from article published at Sida intranet, and in the Swedish bulletin ”Omvärlden”, Armyr, November, 2006.

cooperation should have a rights perspective that gives the poor priority in work toward peace and security, and in determining what development cooperation funds should or should not be used for.

Generally speaking, efforts for peace have a value, *per se*, that is of benefit to all. This is similar to the general view that economic growth is of benefit to all. However, the perspective of development cooperation requires a more nuanced view. One must analyse the results of both economic growth and efforts for peace and security on various segments of society. Because both the fruits of peace and the fruits of economic growth are divided unevenly, the specific perspective of development cooperation must focus on the effects of peace on the poor. Efforts for peace must be conditioned on a resulting peace for the poor. We should be talking about a "pro-poor peace".

Most armed conflicts today occur within various countries. Unresolved conflicts of interest and various forms of illegal trade, often in different combinations that involve organised crime as an integrated component of the conflict, are not infrequently behind these conflicts. As a result, a peace settlement in these situations rarely results in everyone sharing the potential benefits of peace.

In these multifaceted patterns, a peace settlement can be more of a political victory for certain interest groups, than the basis for creating a lawful society under which the poor gain the access to society guaranteed by international human rights. A development cooperation assessment of how support to a peace process should be structured must therefore be based on whether human rights principles embodied in the international human rights documents will be respected and promoted.

The rights perspective, which Sweden's Policy for Global Development (PGD) has established as one of the basic pillars of Swedish development cooperation, is based on international human rights principles: transparency, participation, accountability and non-discrimination. These human rights principles are important to how Swedish development cooperation views its role in all the sectors and fields in which development cooperation is involved, including efforts for peace and security.

4.6 Human rights and development cooperation - legal issue and a process of change

Human rights is based on fundamental international agreements as a common commitment to guarantee the rights of the people. It is internationally binding

agreements between the signatory states, and the national judiciary system is bound to the agreements each state has committed them self to. So rule of law is a central part of the human rights system, and Human rights is a legal issue.

During the last decade, however, we have seen an interesting development of the concept and use of human rights especially within international development cooperation circles. The concept of Human rights has expanded from a purely legalistic view to a more process oriented view. It has developed a whole set of methodological instruments and concepts under the name of Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to programming.

The HRBA "...is essentially based on the values, standards and principles captured in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent legally binding human rights conventions/treaties"¹⁸. Thus, the legally binding Conventions has been expressed as human rights principles, facilitating a development of methods that goes beyond fixed legal standpoints and allow processes of change much wider than pure legal methods can support.

By focusing on these basic values and principles, it has been possible for the development cooperation community to connect the internationally recognised human rights to an approach for processes of change in the interest of the poor people.

In the case of UNDP, the human rights principles have been summarized as:

- Universality and indivisibility
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Participation and inclusion
- Accountability and rule of law¹⁹.

This same process has been described by UN Development Group, as "Human Rights carry normative value as a set of universally agreed values, standards and principles. Every UN member state has undertaken international legal obligations for human rights. More than 80 percent of member states have ratified 4 or more of the 7 core international human rights treaties. All UNCTs must use a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to support country analysis, advocate for priorities in the national development framework, and prepare an UNDAF that demonstrates a strategic use of UNCT resources and expertise. A HRBA leads to better and more sustainable outcomes by analyzing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power

¹⁸ UNDP, 2001, http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/HR_Pub_Missinglink.pdf

¹⁹ Ibid.

relations, which often are at the heart of development problems. It puts the international human rights entitlements and claims of the people and the corresponding obligations of the State in the centre of the national development debate, and it clarifies the purpose of capacity development”.²⁰

Subsequently, different NGOs and UN-organisations as bilateral development cooperation agencies have expanded its methodological tools in various areas, for example UNDP, 2005, “The Human Rights-Based Approach to Development - The Right to Water”.²¹ More examples in a variety of thematic areas such as education and health can be found. Unfortunately, however, very few examples of applying a HRBA to peacebuilding and Peace and Security have yet been developed.²²

4.7 A 25-years perspective on peacebuilding and development cooperation – a summary of three interviews from Guatemala

Too seldom do evaluations have a 20-years, or more, perspective in its approach. The “projectism”, where the historical processes and the changes within a society are divided into 2- or 3-years periods – or at the most a 5-year plan – is too common. It is also true to say that in the specific area of human rights and peacebuilding, the result you get from an evaluation with a short time perspective, compared with a long time perspective can be quite different. With this background it is reasonable when discussing human rights and peacebuilding, to give the opportunity to people that have been along for a long time, and still are in one way or the other, to present their subjective evaluation of the historical, political, and social processes they have participated in.

During one of my visits to Guatemala during recent years I identified six key persons I wanted to meet and interview for this purpose. All leaders in central positions in the civil society organisations and strongly engaged in the social and political developments in Guatemala during the difficult years of the 1970s, 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. The interviews, made as informal

²⁰ UNDG, <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=221>, see further the UN Common Understanding adopted by UNDG in 2003, http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/6959-The_Human_Rights_Based_Approach_to_Development_Cooperation_Towards_a_Common_Understanding_among_UN.pdf

²¹ UNDP 2005, http://europeandcis.undp.org/WaterWiki/index.php/The_Human_Rights-Based_Approach_to_Development_-_The_Right_to_Water

²² “Let’s Talk! Human Rights meet Peace and Security”, Sida study, page 24, Elisabeth Abiri, 2006. See: <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

conversations, were held in May 2007, with three out of the six identified leaders with whom I personally worked, during some of these years. The other three leaders were out of the capital of Guatemala at the time of my visit.

It is important to note that at the time of my interviews I did not represent any direct economic resources, project auditing or anything alike, so the conversations had very few hidden agendas. I approached these leaders as personal colleagues during difficult but important years of the peacebuilding process of Guatemala that led to a peace accord in 1996, with a genuine interest to listen to them.

My questions, even though presented more as a conversation, were basically divided into two lines:

- What do you see, with your long time perspective, as the most important issue you were involved in during these years? What of all that was done by the organisations during these difficult years, contributed to the most important changes in this process?

- And what do you recognise today that ought to have been done, but wasn't done?

The first expression from one of the leaders who gave a long life for the struggle together with the most marginalized people of the Guatemalan society, was:

“Diosito nos ha querido mucho...” (Our beloved God has taken care of us/loved us so much).

It was an attitude of thankfulness for what has been done, and a feeling of tranquillity – we did what was our duty. And with a sign of, as I interpret it, “it was all worth it”. All three conversations expressed with different words the same profound spirit of thankfulness of having been able to participate.

As a short summary of the most common subjective experiences and reflexions from the 25 years perspective on the peacebuilding and human rights that was presented during these three conversations, the following could be highlighted:

A. The human growth is important – the focus on values as participation, cooperation, social awareness, dialogue, equality, etc. is enormously important. This was a common focus, and from very different perspectives, that came up very clearly in all three conversations. The concrete projects, being water, chickens, corn or whatever it was, were –and still have to be – seen as merely a method for the most important goal: to empower poor people to decide for themselves about their future. The most important was to support a human growth among poor people, as a good self–estimation etc, so much needed in

the peacebuilding process.

One interesting aspect was added: these processes creating self-estimation did also create a positive environment for youth to grow up in; they learned to have opinions, to express themselves and to find solutions. These experiences taken together with, even still unequal and insufficient but compared with their parents, a better formal education creating active and mature young people was a clear result of the big amount of different projects managed during all these years. The interviewees felt the youth of today is giving hope for the future. An important so called “side effect”, not even possible to see in the short time perspective.

B. The NGO’s have to play the role of facilitator, not as activists themselves. There was a general opinion that there is a need to create a much broader social awareness and civic participation within the society to create the changes needed, much broader than what the NGO-activities represents in them selves. This was not to be understood as an opinion that the NGOs are elitist. On the contrary, it recognised that a society is very widespread, broad and multidimensional. And in the end, the political will and conscience of the majority is what you have to reach in a democratic society when peacebuilding is on the agenda.

C. The negotiations and the overall peace process ought to have taken on board, if possible, a lot more of the strong social, economic and political actors than what was done. The ownership of the society to fulfil the signed peace accords would than have been greater, the knowledge of the content of the accords would have been greater, and the way the accords have been used – as a common ground for the changes needed – would have been better.

This would most probably have created an even more complicated peace process, and it would have taken even longer time. But today some of the persons interviewed see that the potential value of the peace accords would have been much greater today if that price had been paid. “But at that time we were too focused on coming to an end, and to sign a peace accord, so we did not see this strategic need”.

It ought to be noted that this is said about a peace accord that has been known for its relatively broad participation process before it was signed, and with a relatively broad content including human rights issues. But also known for a slow implementation.

4.8 Developmental Humanitarian Assistance

Two examples from the Swedish Sida that fits well in as building blocks on Human Rights and peacebuilding will be given here, as they both reflect concrete national expressions of the international discussions. The first example relates to the late 1990's when Sida's Humanitarian Division participated in the international discussion on how to include, or not include at all, the analysis of the context of the international humanitarian assistance in situations of violent conflict as well as in natural disasters. The question was once formulated as: "The danger of allowing a conflict resolution strategy to jeopardise the impartiality of humanitarian assistance was set against the argument that root causes can no longer be ignored"²³

It was clear in the discussion that different actors have different mandates, and this has to be respected. The role of the "humanitarian imperative" can be different depending of the mandate of the organisation. In the case of Sida as a donor agency, the importance to analyse the contextual consequences of the assistance and act accordingly was at this moment put in focus in its definition of Developmental Humanitarian Assistance:²⁴

Developmental Humanitarian Assistance is a form of assistance, which in an acute situation, helps to provide long-term solutions of the acute problems and needs of those affected – solutions which are accepted and supported locally. It sees the acute needs as part of the whole life situation of those affected. This also applies when humanitarian assistance is given during phases of early reconstruction or during protracted crises. Developmental humanitarian assistance is based on both an immediate needs assessment of those affected and on an analysis of the entire life situation of those affected. This assistance covers basic physical needs and rights such as food and clothing, social needs such as safety and security and those needs provided for in international law, for example in the UN convention on the rights of the Child. It is a form of assistance, which sees the long-term needs in the short-term interventions...

and also

... developmental humanitarian assistance has a legal perspective. To uphold the rights of people in acute and conflict situations in accordance with international law...

²³ Principled Aid in an Unprincipled World: Relief, War and Humanitarian Principles, ECHO/ODI Conference Report (p.3), April 1998, London.

²⁴ Developmental Humanitarian Assistance, A Concept paper, Sida 1999, <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=3041&searchWords=developmental%20humanitarian%20assistance>

In the light of the actual discussion on human rights and peacebuilding, the statement above that the author of this document presented to Sida management board in 1998 can be seen as an early stand for the need to include the international basic principles of human rights in international development cooperation in peacebuilding activities.

4.9 Sida policy on Peace and Security and its relevance to human rights

The second example from Swedish Sida deals with the policy development where Sida, as one of many bilateral donors for international development cooperation, also has developed its policy for Peace and Security.²⁵ The policy deals shortly with different aspects and definitions etc related to peace and security, and includes also a paragraph on Peace and security and Human rights. “The rights perspective is based on the normative framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It comprises democracy and respect for human rights. The rights of the child and gender equality are key elements. Application of this framework assures attention to essential values and norms such as participation, transparency, accountability, equality in dignity and the rights of all women, men, girls and boys. During violent conflict or high levels of insecurity, many of these rights are limited or denied. Additionally, the voices and perspectives of the poor are made invisible, and their needs, interests and capacities are lost in the midst of war. Exclusion and the feeling of being excluded are important root causes of violent conflict.”²⁶

Based on the Policy there is a Manual for Conflict Analysis²⁷. This Manual also mentions the human rights issue and it’s role in a conflict analysis. Although the Manual is not aimed to be too operational, some concrete examples of the consequences to include human rights in the analysis are given. These examples are specially related to the concept of structural instability.²⁸ However, being a manual for analysis, not much of a concrete methodological tool is presented on what a human rights based approach could mean in support for peace and security.

²⁵ Promoting Peace and Security through Development Cooperation, Sida, October 2005.
<http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=3585&searchWords=peace%20and%20security%20policy>

²⁶ Ibid p. 5.

²⁷ Manual for Conflict Analysis, Sida 2006, (Based on original paper: “Conflict-sensitive Development cooperation: How to Conduct a Conflict Analysis”, Sida 2004.)
https://webmail.sida.se/Intranet/SidaMeny.nsf/frameIndex_WE?OpenFrameset

²⁸ Ibid p 17.

As a co-author of these two documents, I am the first to recognise that more concrete both policy as methodological tools are still to be developed around human rights and peace and security.

4.10 Democratise a peace process?

Without a real democratisation process the peacebuilding risks to be weakened. An inclusive participation and the right to independent information create in the long-term perspective a necessary ownership for the peacebuilding process. This is reflected by some of the civil society organisations working in Colombia that participated in the above-mentioned project²⁹ in expressions as: “In the midst of war we support the conditions for poor and excluded people to participate in a democratisation of the society”, “We support the conditions to find a solution that goes beyond a negotiated peace”, and “No more negotiations only between elites”.

A related issue was also discussed during one of the seminars held in the framework of the above-mentioned project³⁰, with the starting point in the fact that reconciliation, including justice and forgiveness, creates the basic condition for a social and political life that is both based on and creates a sound participation as developed in a democratisation process. - “Who, others than the affected people ought to decide the price for the needed reconciliation on which a peacebuilding process will be based?”

So maybe a stronger relation between human rights and peacebuilding pass through a democratisation process with a real respect for the human rights principles of participation and non-discrimination.

To this can be added that civil society organisations have identified a need to develop the social awareness present in many projects managed by civil society to include political awareness. The aim has been to strengthen among the broad population, the capacity to understand and analyse political processes and how the society as such is working. From this background the international development cooperation could have a specific role in supporting the still sometimes undeveloped potential of broad based and concrete civic education programmes. Experiences also show that broad civic education programmes have played a central role in both peace and democratisation processes.

In Guatemala one interesting experience presented in the above-mentioned project³¹ was focused in the presentation by one of the participating

²⁹ Paragraph 3.3, above.

³⁰ Paragraph 3.3, above.

³¹ Ibid.

organisations³²:

- There are two relevant forces for peace and human rights in a society, the justice system and the democratic system. Put emphasis in both, but don't forget the democratic participation and to include as many sectors as possible. Including the necessity to analyse the power and interests of the economic sector in the society. Democratisation is both the culture of participation and the institutionalisation of the state's functions in such a way that it creates conditions for poor people to a better life. The participating organisation concludes in a paper presented within the framework of the above-mentioned project: "Finally, it is important to note that a sustainable peace accord does not only include the negotiating parts, and the groups close to them. The accord acquires legitimacy when the public in general, but especially the young people, takes ownership of it." ("Por último, es importante hacer notar que un acuerdo de paz sostenible no debe sólo implicar a los negociadores y a los grupos cercanos a ellos. Adquiere mucha legitimidad cuando la población en general, pero particularmente la juventud, se apropian de él."³³)

4.11 Democratisation and violent conflict

Experiences show that a democratisation process in an open or latent conflicting environment also can be troublesome. In a document presented by OECD/DAC based on my contribution as Sida staff, this is described as "Without a good understanding of the context in which development assistance takes place, organisations that seek to foster democracy may unintentionally fuel violent conflict or exacerbate existing tensions."³⁴

Further quotes from the document focus on the democratisation process in violent conflict settings, including the human rights perspective:

Experience shows that too much attention is often placed on particular democratic or other political structures, rather than on key norms and principles of democracy such as participation, accountability, openness, tolerance, legitimacy, equality in dignity and rights, and the rule of law. The danger of moving too fast to multi-party elections may in many cases be mitigated by focusing on consensus-seeking experiences to set out a broad national cohesion

³² Presentation of paper: Derechos humanos y construcción de la paz: Bases para la democracia y el fortalecimiento del Estado de Derecho, Fundación Myrna Mack, Guatemala, 2007.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Democratisation and violent conflict, Issues Brief, OECD/DAC, 2005.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/40/47/35033677.pdf>

around the rule of the political game as identified and codified in a constitution. That is, a stronger focus on democratic culture than on democratic structures may mitigate potential violent conflicts. An important variable here is the attitudes the different national political actors have towards each other and towards a transformation to a democratic political system.³⁵

Another quote says:

Exclusion is a central concept for understanding the link between democratisation processes and intrastate conflict. When key principles of democracy, such as accountability, participation, openness and ownership, are undermined or not adhered to, political, social and/or economic exclusion can likely result. Historical, religious, and ethical factors can also be used by parties, to create or to perpetuate exclusion.

Exclusion of men, women, boys and girls, is generally part of a strategy to uphold the existing power of specific groups of people in society. Exclusion or the feeling of being excluded and not having a voice (in the political process or in terms of access to justice), as well as government's non-responsiveness, are factors that are specially relevant in understanding the type of grievances that can be contribute to an increased risk of violent conflict.

A power analysis, as part of a conflict analysis, is an important basis for programming development cooperation in conflict settings. The objective of a power analysis (or drivers of change/political economy analysis) is to map relevant structures and actors – formal as well as actual – and their respective powers of influence. Thus, the power analysis is a basis for a more in-depth conflict analysis.³⁶

And finally:

A human-rights-based-perspective to conflict prevention efforts provides content and a framework for building peace. It brings in internationally agreed norms and principles and enables monitoring bodies to supervise their implementation and to what extent they are being followed.

On the other hand, efforts to achieve grater respect for human rights can challenge existing power relations, which can generate violent behaviour. However, generally it is not a question of balance between these two perspectives, but an understanding of how they can best reinforce each other to promote peace, trust, and reconciliation.³⁷

It is illustrative that in this last paragraph the paper states the needed reinforcement of the two perspectives, but no further methodological information is given. The reason: such methodological framework for the

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

international development cooperation was still to be developed.

4.12 Fragile states and human rights - an issue close to the peacebuilding agenda

The international community with its efforts towards international development cooperation is increasingly aware of the difficulties to support poor people in their fight for a better life in environments that are contra productive to this. This fact is also reflected in the Swedish Policy for Global Development which has as its objective for Swedish development cooperation: "to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their living conditions".³⁸ As the environment, the context, is of utmost importance for the improvement of the living conditions the focus for both humanitarian assistance and development cooperation on what has been called "weak states", "failed states", or "fragile states" etc has increased. In OECD/DAC Development Ministers and Heads of Agencies endorsed ten Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States³⁹ at its High Level Meeting of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) on 3-4 April 2007 in Paris. These principles will guide international actors to improve their actions in fragile states.

It is easy to see that these principles in a broad sense are part of the peacebuilding agenda. And in these principles reference to human rights has been included in four occasions, which is a positive and interesting sign as such of the growing importance of human rights in international development cooperation in violent settings. The references in the document are related both to human rights violations and the concept of *Do No Harm*, security and human rights in state building and the importance of accountability, and finally human rights and its importance for social inclusion.

But, the question arises, how to act on internationally agreed human rights where states are to be held accountable for their duty to respect, protect, fulfil its commitments, in situations where there sometimes doesn't even exist a state to be responsible? And when there is a government in place, elected or not, that doesn't make any sing of acknowledgment regarding its duties on human rights, how can international development cooperation make use of the potential power of internationally agreed human rights?

Since very few methodological experiences have been documented, there

³⁸ Sweden's Policy for Global Development, December 2003, <http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/06/93/32/f51abd73.pdf>

³⁹ Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, OECD/DAC April 2007, see: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/45/38368714.pdf>

is still a quest for the international development community to make these good intentions operational. So it is clear that there is still a methodological work to be done. And even though one recent study by OECD/DAC in 2007 focuses on Justice Service Delivery and Security,⁴⁰ its focus on security gives quite a different scope than if human rights and peacebuilding would have been in focus.

Let me give a concrete example: When Sida started to prepare the strategy for its engagement in Somalia for the consecutive period after 31 December 2005, which was the end of the previous strategy period, the quest was to also include a rights perspective. But the only concrete result, however valuable, we could include in the proposal from Sida to the Swedish Government in April 2006 was to refer to some of the basic principles of human rights as expressed in the human rights based approach: participation, non-discrimination and accountability. These were to be seen as guiding principles in the quite unpredictable environment of Somalia. The difficulty was to methodologically describe how this was supposed to be implemented, more than to give some very short examples. The involvement in Somalia during the coming period did, however, limit the possibility to decide on the strategy, and in February 2007 the government decided on a short-term “strategy-like” (Swedish: förhållningssätt) for the period 15 February – 31 December 2007.⁴¹ But the remaining quest still is: How is, methodologically seen, a genuine human rights based perspective described in international development cooperation with fragile states?

4.13 What about “security” within the issue of “peace and security”?

The question of security has been raised as closely related to peace in the recent history of international development cooperation. The previously used concepts related to peace, for example “conflict management”, “conflict transformation” and also “peace and justice” have been changed at least in the bilateral development discourse to become “Peace and Security”.

Since there are many ways to understand the concept “security” and all are very close to the peacebuilding agenda, this makes it very relevant for the present document to review some aspects of this issue. Here I just want to

⁴⁰ Enhancing the Delivery of Justice and Security, OECD/DAC 2007.
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/13/38434642.pdf>

⁴¹ Information from Swedish MFA (in Swedish)
<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/2574/a/75151>

make reference to two areas of concern that may influence positively or negatively the potential power of the human rights agenda to strengthen the peacebuilding agenda: the work on Security System Reforms (SSR), and the connections to what is called the “war on terror”.

4.13.1 Security System Reforms

This (which was previously called “Security Sector Reforms”) has been more officially included into the international development cooperation agenda during the last five to ten years, but have come even more into focus during the last few years. Among the different documents produced OECD/DAC presented in 2007 its Handbook on Security Sector Reform: Supporting Security and Justice.⁴² The Handbook is based on the previous publicised Policy Paper from 2004 and its Guidelines from 2005.

From these documents a few aspects can be highlighted, for example:

- The goal is to work on *reforms* of the systems, not to support the systems as such too often dysfunctional in many conflict-prone countries.
- There is a clear stand in the documents to broaden the concept of the “security system” to include both the institutions in society that have an oversight function over the security systems, and to open up for public insight into the systems.
- The security systems shall be closely linked to the democratic governance issues in international development cooperation.

Let me quote some parts from the OECD/DAC Handbook on Security Sector Reform⁴³ to exemplify these aspects:

The overall objective of international support to security system reform processes is to increase the ability of partner countries to meet the range of security and justice challenges they face, “in a manner consistent with democratic norms, and sound principles of governance and the rule of law”, as defined in the DAC Guidelines on SSR. SSR helps create a secure environment conducive to other political, economic and social developments, through the reduction of armed violence and crime.

The focus for international actors should be to support partner countries in achieving four overarching objectives:

- i) Establishment of effective governance, oversight and accountability in the security system.
- ii) Improved delivery of security and justice services.
- iii) Development of local leadership and ownership of the reform

⁴² Handbook on Security System Reform, Supporting Security and Justice, OECD/DAC, 2007, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/25/38406485.pdf>

⁴³ Ibid.

process.

iv) Sustainability of justice and security service delivery.

Basic working principles for donor support to SSR processes, ... underline that SSR should be:

- People-centred, locally owned and based on democratic norms and human rights principles and the rule of law, seeking to provide freedom from fear and measurable reductions in armed violence and crime.

- Seen as a framework to structure thinking about how to address diverse security challenges facing states and their populations, through more integrated development and security policies and through greater civilian involvement and oversight.

- Founded on activities with multi-sectoral strategies, based upon a broad assessment of the range of security and justice needs of the people and the state.

- Developed adhering to basic governance principles such as transparency and accountability.

- Implemented through clear processes and policies that aim to enhance the institutional and human capacity needed for security policy to function effectively and for justice to be delivered equitably.⁴⁴

It continues as follows:

Justice and security reform is therefore best approached as a governance issue and not simply as a technical activity.⁴⁵

In addition to this, human rights references are present in the OECD/DAC documents on SSR, and the relation between SSR and human rights, norms are mentioned in many places in the Handbook. This is a positive trend and it goes well in hand with the basic approach to broaden the definition of security system well beyond a technical and police/military/intelligence issue. However, a more clearly methodological development of a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) as a mainstreaming method for human rights and its principles and norms into SSR is still to be developed. For example to analyse the degree of the four principles mentioned by UNDG referred to in paragraph 4.6 (above) in all activities related to SSR, and to develop a methodological framework for this.

When Sida approached this issue in 2005-2006, as a response to the OECD/DAC Policy paper and Guidelines in 2004 and 2005 respectively, one of the basic questions in our joint presentation from the Division for Peace and Security and the Division for Democratic Governance made to the Sida Management Board was: which functions in the state creates and sustains

⁴⁴ Ibid. p 21.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p 28.

security? The response was given in terms of a functional police, but just as much and in a more sustainable and long-term way: the education system, job opportunities, a functional justice system, anti corruption programmes, and the level of participation and to be taken into account as a person, etc. Thus, the importance to broaden the security issue into all areas of concern for the international development cooperation, and not isolate it as a “hard security” issue, was the basic approach. Such an approach makes it logical to go beyond the quick fixes that in this area don’t give sustainable solutions, and as reported to the Sida Management Board, the necessity also to develop a human rights approach in relation to the Security System Reforms.

4.13.2 The “securitisation of development”

This refers to the increasing linkages between foreign policy, national security and development agendas as part of the war on terrorism. Their connotations to peacebuilding as well as to human rights, have been observed by various interested actors. One of these are the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), based in UK, which since 2006 have “organised a series of workshops on the effects of counter-terrorism measures (CTMs) in Europe, South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East, supported by a number of NGOs, including ICCO and Cordaid.”⁴⁶

The key messages from the above-mentioned workshops are summarized by INTRAC on its website as:

- The concept of legitimacy and the role of the state is shifting and is being recast in the current security-led climate.
- The over emphasis on the threat of international terrorism is displacing priority issues of maldevelopment, a prime threat especially in the South and which is currently being overlooked and undermined through the blurring of the security agenda with aid policy.
- National legislation on counter-terrorism measures is systematically undermining international human rights law.
- The current discourse on insurgency and counter-terrorism has been cast in a way that is ahistorical and illegal. Learning the lessons from history requires recognising that in a context of terrorism the primacy of upholding human rights becomes even more important as well as reappropriating the role of the state in such a way to secure social development.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ INTRAC, Research Programme on Counter-Terrorism (CTMs) and Development http://www.intrac.org/pages/CTM_analysis.html

⁴⁷ Ibid.

As a further understanding of the “securitisation of development” it is interesting to read a short summary of the history of the language of “security”, by INTRACs Researcher Lena Lönnquist: “The international war on terror and the language of ‘security’.

The 1994 Human Development Report’s original definition of human security is “safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression” and “protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life”. In the year 2000 Amartya Sen expounded on the key features of human security (as defined by the then Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo) as “the menaces that threaten the survival, daily life, and dignity of human beings”. These menaces include economic, environmental and political or participatory downturns. Sidel points out how “the tolerance of opposition” is a key feature of human security. Yet tolerance seems to be antithetical to current national security operations.

As highlighted by Fowler (2005), security is to do with the quality of statehood, and its relationship to the degree of poverty and inequality. The greater the poverty and the more unequal the country, the higher the likelihood it will be insecure. Thus, the reverse – lower poverty and more equality – may increase security. CSOs have a significant role to play in areas of statehood, poverty and inequality, which history has clearly revealed are more likely to bring about security. Currently the term ‘security’, omnipresent in political discourse, refers to a different kind of security: namely national or geopolitical security, linked to military interests – a far cry from the notion of human security. ‘Security’ has become a euphemism for war and violence. Such terminology and transformative language supports the military interests of dominant countries, rather than contributing to efforts towards redistribution and justice.”⁴⁸

With this background it is easy to see the not only potential by real tension between some of the uses of the concept “security” and the human rights agenda. This makes the Swedish Government’s mandate in its Policy on Global Development to have a human rights perspective in international development cooperation in all policy areas, including Peace and Security, a very relevant issue. It becomes utmost important to review its development cooperation’s understanding of the “security issue” and its implementation in the field related to the human right norms and standards.

⁴⁸ National Security and International Development – Implications for Northern Civil Society, INTRAC, Policy Briefing Paper 16, http://www.intrac.org/pages/CTM_analysis.html

4.14 A start on a methodological proposal?

As a concrete response to the Swedish Governments Policy on Global Development and its focus on the rights perspective to be included also in the policy area of Peace and Security, Sida commissioned a study already mentioned in this document, that was given the name: “Let’s talk – Human rights meet Peace and Security.”⁴⁹ Among its different findings one concrete preliminary approach to explore further, is presented in the report’s Chapter 5, “A way forward? “.

This preliminary approach to explore further is based on examples from two researchers without references to each other: S. Osmani at the School of Economics and Politics at Ulster University, and E. Lutz from Fletcher School at Tufts University. Osmani, coming from the human rights community, highlights the growing process thinking within the human rights field, and Lutz, coming from the peace and security community, highlights the growing awareness of the need to be explicit of the norms existing in the field of conflict resolution. The interesting in this approach in my view is the possibility of a development of common grounds for the both communities, or agendas; maybe it is possible to develop and reconcile a process oriented human rights agenda with a normative peacebuilding agenda?

A good example of this changing process is mentioned in paragraph 5.4 in the above-mentioned study; the statement by the then UN Secretary-General in a report to the Security Council in 2001 that member states must “respect the prohibition of amnesty for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes during their negotiations and deliberations”.

A normative bottom line was formulated for negotiation and peacebuilding.

5. Analysis and reflections

5.1 Food for thought

In Chapter 4 (above) I have tried to present some building blocks as “food for thought” from different types of sources that all in one way or the other deals with the issue I want to tackle in this document, namely how a human rights approach can strengthen a peacebuilding agenda within the international

⁴⁹ ”Let’s Talk! Human Rights meet Peace and Security”, Sida study, Elisabeth Abiri, 2006. See <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

development cooperation.

In this chapter I want to try to single out, from my point of view, some of the most important pieces to reflect upon and analyse further in the quest for how a human rights approach can strengthen a peacebuilding agenda within the international the development cooperation.

As seen in the previous Chapter, there is an enormously big amount of documented examples from different areas related to peacebuilding, and peace and security, within the international development cooperation where the presence of human rights is mentioned in one way or the other. i.e. maybe with the exception of security within the “war on terror”. This presence must be highly welcomed taking into account the importance the international community through its different conventions/treaties has given human rights. Nevertheless, the human rights agenda seems still to be very little developed into a consequent method for action in the peacebuilding agenda. And even as the human rights based approach has been developed in areas as water, education and other areas relevant for the international development cooperation, still little methodological work has been done in the area of peacebuilding, and in peace and security.

5.2 Methodological considerations

It seems also clear that the role of human rights in peacebuilding has become even more crucial in the context of the upcoming issue of security. As have been seen in Chapter 4, the security issue can be understood and acted upon in different ways. This makes it utmost relevant to analyse the issue of peace and security with a human rights perspective to secure the internationally agreed norms and principles of human rights to be included in all security related issues within the international development cooperation.

For methodological reasons, however, it could be important in this document to distinguish between “peacebuilding” and “peace and security”. Since depending of how “security” may be understood and used, the differences between the concepts “peacebuilding” and “peace and security” can be quite big. But at the same time, and in the interest of keeping a broad understanding of “security” as in the concept of human security, it is also important to keep the connection between them. Additionally, to omit the issue of “security” in today’s discourse of international development cooperation may make the discussion on human rights and peacebuilding somewhat irrelevant or apart. So this document’s main focus is then on human rights and peacebuilding, but with a close reference to the security issue.

5.3 The perspective of the poor and peacebuilding

As long as international development cooperation is based on goals as “to help create conditions for poor people to improve their own lives”, the perspective of the poor on development has to be more clearly integrated in the analyses and the strategies for peacebuilding. Thus, it is easy to understand that peacebuilding seen from the eyes of the poor can be quite different as seen from the eyes of a wealthy elite, and the consequences of a specific peace process or peace accord can be quite different for a wealthy elite as for poor people.

This makes it utmost important that the specific role and the mandate of international development cooperation is very much in focus in the area of peacebuilding. This is especially true in cases when the work is done in close cooperation with the political or diplomatic branches that may have other goals and where other specific considerations are to be taken. A human rights perspective in peacebuilding activities can also strengthen the focus of international development cooperation on its specific mandate and goal towards poor people.

5.4 Entry point for a methodological approach?

When reviewing the most recent history and documents produced by the international development community it is quite easy to distinguish a clear, even not linear, process in which the human rights agenda is more and more present in the international development cooperation agenda. The partially UN-led mainstreaming of human rights into the agenda of development cooperation, also present in Swedish Government’s Policy on Global Development, can be seen as part of the explanation to this development. However this process is blurred by a lot of agendas in the globalised world where various different interests is at stake, the human rights issue is also present in a growing amount of agendas. This may be in areas from trade with social responsibility with ethical codes in general or specific areas as “blood diamonds”, to for example the growing interest to transform human rights standards into local politics on for example the rights of the child in Swedish local schools.

With this trend, the author of this document is convinced that the amount of areas of concern for human rights standards is growing. And it is more a question of time until the quest for clearly defined methods on how a human rights approach that strengthens a peacebuilding agenda within international

development cooperation is being worked on in a coherent way by recognised actors.

As a contribution to this development, this document argues that probably the most interesting entry point for a methodological approach to strengthen human rights in the peacebuilding agenda within the international development cooperation, still seems to be the reference to a Human Rights Based Approach given here in different documents. This approach gives a process-oriented way to approach the human rights that connects to the process-nature of peacebuilding. And it gives a normative framework based on human rights principles that is closely related to the recent developments of a normative peace-building process for a positive peace. This can, hopefully, give an opportunity to overcome the tensions between what has been called “realists” and “idealists”, as well as between process oriented and norm based programming.

The HRBA focuses on internationally agreed human rights principles that form a base for process-oriented actions as referred to above. If this approach is combined with a normative peace-building process, as exemplified in UN statements on a normative bottom line in peace negotiations, the development of methodological steps where human rights can strengthen a peacebuilding agenda ought to be doable.

The human rights principles as described in the Sida Policy on Peace and Security: participation, transparency, accountability, equality in dignity and the rights of all women, men, girls and boys, are quite similar to the principles described by UNDG above: universality and indivisibility, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, accountability and rule of law. The similarities in the way the human rights principles have been described between different actors will also facilitate such a methodological work.

Based on the above-mentioned assumptions, the goal to have a methodologically developed “participatory approach to peacebuilding based on the principles of human rights”, doesn’t seem too difficult to develop. The same could be said on for example a methodological tool in which the human rights principle of accountability, as well as the other human rights principles, can be guiding principle in all peace and security field activities.

This suggested entry point also fits well into the opinions expressed by civil society leaders in the above referred research project on the two agendas (chapter 3), for example the principle of participation could strongly support strategies on the opinion “no more negotiation only between the elites” as well as “in the midst of war we support the conditions for poor and excluded people to participate in a democratisation of the society”.

Human rights and peacebuilding cannot be seen isolated from democratisation.

It also becomes quite clear when reviewing field experiences from projects and programmes that promote one or the other agenda - the human rights agenda and the peacebuilding agenda - that various examples related to the importance of democratisation are mentioned.

A logic rationale for this may be that an already negotiated peace accord needs to be backed up by a democratic force for its fulfilment. And, with the same logic, a process of peacebuilding and possible negotiation needs to be backed up by a democratic force for a sustainable peace. A democratic force refers here in most cases to a profound participatory democratisation process, not merely a formal election process- or expressed the other way around; it is the fulfilment of human rights principles as participation inherent in a democratisation process, or the principle of accountability as mechanism to fulfil for example agreed standpoints in a peace process that can make a peace accord more rooted in the society, and thus more sustainable. Experiences also show that strong participation and clear mechanisms for accountability are winning concepts for a sustainable peacebuilding process, as it also strengthens both the democratic values and the democratic institutions in the society. Those are some of the reasons why it is reasonable for international development cooperation for human rights and peacebuilding in situations of violent conflicts to include a strong and clear component of support to democracy, even if that eventually should complicate the peacebuilding process in the short time perspective.

Obviously the international community has an important role to play here. But it is even more important to recognise that if a national democratic election process enables a peace accord, or a peace accord is supported for its fulfilment by a national democratic election process, this internal force is of utmost importance. No international community can, or may, influence in such a way as a committed popular national conviction.

Having said this, it is also crucial to take into account the risks with democratisation processes in violent settings especially through elections, as mentioned above in paragraph 4.11. For example, you may win an election with a majority of the votes, but if this majority is closely linked to a specific interest group, or ethnic groups excluding other groups, you still may have a potential violent situation. Especially if the majority takes all the excluded groups may potentially fight for their interests by non-democratic, even violent, means. This highlights also the value of the human rights guiding principle of non-discrimination to be taken into account in the analysis and practice of a democratisation process.

Thus, the basic HRBA principles of participation, accountability and non-

discrimination seems to be important and interesting areas to explore in the looking for methods on how a human rights approach can strengthen a peacebuilding agenda.

Based on the above, the example of civic education as a human rights approach to peacebuilding activities may be an interesting but not enough highlighted area relevant for support to peacebuilding from the international development community. Civic education based on the human rights principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination may be seen both as a support to the democratic culture, as a support to the democratic electoral institutions. Both are important, however experiences show that the cultural dimension cannot be overestimated. This may be true both as a peacebuilding activity in its own right, and if there is a peace accord already in place to be accomplished.

The quest seems to be to combine a very strong support to the cultural dimension of democracy together with a long-term support to the state institutions that guarantee election processes and makes the state accountable to the electorate. And that the institutions can manage the task without failure which otherwise can reverse the situation with heavy costs both in lives, and with social and economic costs. That is, it may be dangerous from a conflict sensitive perspective to rush too quickly into the institutional solutions with too weak institutions at hand.

5.5 Human rights and security

The present connection between peace and security within the policy areas of international development cooperation will most probably stay for some time. A human rights approach to security as part of peacebuilding is then a relevant issue. And some of the aspects to be taken into account ought to be:

- to push for a broad definition of security that includes all sectors in society that sustains and supports security, not only the “hard” sectors.
- to highlight the important and necessary role of the human rights agenda in the security aspects of peace and security, i.e. to “secure” the “security” to be understood as “human security” within the framework of human rights. I.e. to be clear that in bilateral international development cooperation it is presumed that the state acknowledges its accountability to its population to respect, protect and fulfil its human rights.

5.6 Result-based management and evaluations

When evaluating results from development cooperation in multi-faceted areas as peacebuilding and human rights, the picture you get from a narrow and short time perspective is very different from the one you get with a long-time perspective. This fact leads at least to two assumptions:

- Results based management based on quick fixes are not conducive to the mere possibilities for peacebuilding that is a long-term endeavour,
- Evaluation methods applied in the area of human rights and peacebuilding has to be allowed by the stakeholders to take into account methods that respect the long-term perspectives in a serious way.

5.7 A too delicate question?

There is also an ultimate question still to be mentioned: in the end, how far will the international community agree on pushing the human rights agenda in sensitive and violent situations where political interests also are present. One may ask, why is the issue of human rights in peacebuilding not moving forward with a more clear pace as in other areas of interest for international development cooperation? Is it a too sensitive issue in time of “war on terror” when the security issue has been closely linked to the peace agenda? And in the “war on terror”, the defence of human rights is a highly politicised and “hot” question. Can this be a reason for the slow move, hopefully not, but it would be nice to hear statements from government representatives within the OECD/DAC to clear it out.

6. Preliminary conclusions

As stated in the beginning of this document, the ambition has not been anything else than contribute to a more profound understanding of the need to further develop the human rights agenda in such a way it can strengthen the peacebuilding agenda. The document is written with a clear feeling that we have not (and will never?) reached the final statement – history has not ended.... and whatever statement made, it has to be adapted contextually. With

that in mind, the preliminary conclusion in the view of the author of this document is that the way forward on how the human rights agenda can strengthen the peace agenda in international development cooperation are closely related to:

- a. That Human Rights may be seen not only as international legal standards but also as basic guiding principles for processes of change, as for example methodologically developed in the HRBA. And negotiation and peacebuilding is more and more given a normative bottom line.
- b. The importance of a long-term democratisation agenda within the human rights and peacebuilding agendas.

These two key elements are shortly summarized below.

6.1 A Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) on the peacebuilding agenda is not an impossible endeavour

Human rights is a legal issue, but it is also more and more seen and understood as basic principles as participation and non-discrimination grounded in internationally recognised norms. These principles are helpful to understand human rights also as a process, and these principles go well in line with a peacebuilding process.

In the same way peacebuilding is the art of doing the realistically possible in a given situation, it is a process, but it has also more and more included basic norms on what an acceptable peace have to take into account. A positive peace with a recognised bottom-line is on the agenda. This is a development that may fit well with a normative Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) developed in the international development cooperation community during recent years.

With these two recent developments, the international development community has today an important opportunity to develop a methodological framework for how a HRBA can strengthen the peacebuilding agenda. A task that seems quite possible to realize.

A possible HRBA to peacebuilding may be exemplified by the expression” “in the midst of war we support the conditions for poor and excluded people to participate in a democratisation of the society”. This expression reflects on one hand the human rights based principles of participation - the right to participate in issues that influence ones life - in midst of war. And on the other hand it reflects a winning concept of a well-grounded peacebuilding process for a sustainable peace.

A comparison between the way the concept of peace and the concept of human rights is being understood and dealt with by civil society in Colombia and Guatemala in the referred research project, supports the importance to review the understanding of these concepts. As more you see the two concepts integrated into each other, the closer is the practice of the two agendas.

6.2 Democratisation cannot be excluded from the Human Rights and peacebuilding agendas

The international development cooperation in the area of human rights and peacebuilding has to include a profound democratisation process to be able to find a positive interaction between the agendas of human rights and peacebuilding. The logic may be that first when the human rights principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination inherent in a democratisation process are respected a sustainable peace can be reached.

Annex 1

Presentation of the author.

What today is labelled “peace and security” together with human rights, has been the central theme during more than 25 years of my almost continuous professional engagement in different areas of international development cooperation. My start as a volunteer in a study centre with university students in Guayaquil, Ecuador, where the discussions on social justice and human rights were high on the agenda, was followed by a profound engagement in the violent conflicts of Central America during the 80’s and 90’s through a specific support and close cooperation between Swedish MFA, Sida and the Swedish NGO Diakonia. Back in Sweden I joined the Humanitarian Division at Sida working with violent conflict areas of Africa. Within the organisational structure of Sida the Humanitarian division hosted what by then was called ”conflict management, an issue closely related to the concept of “developmental humanitarian assistance”⁵⁰, managed by the Humanitarian division at that time. After one of my periods as independent consultant on leave from Sida, I joined the Sida division for democratic governance in 2001. There I had the opportunity to follow the human rights and democracy aspects within the international development cooperation in a close way. It included the development of the methods of human rights based approach programming, the introduction of power analysis, and to connect this to the peace and security issue. During the following years the peace and security issue moved high up on the agenda of Swedish as well as other government’s international development cooperation agenda. The reality showed however a need to bridge the peace and security agenda with the democratic governance agenda, both on an organisational level between different divisions within the Sida structure, as well as thematically. One concrete example was given by the fact that Sida commissioned a study called “Let’s talk! Human rights meet peace and security”⁵¹. My temporary station at the Sida Office in La Paz during the overthrow of president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada in October 2003 and its follow up showed once again the close relation between violent conflicts and the human rights issue. During the last year I have had the

⁵⁰ Developmental Humanitarian Assistance, A concept paper, Sida,1999
<http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=3041&searchWords=developmental%20humanitarian%20assistance>

⁵¹ ” Let’ s Talk! Human Rights meet Peace and Security” , Sida study, Elisabeth Abiri 2006
<http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=23896>

opportunity to exclusively focus on the relation between human rights and peace building serving as Latin America coordinator for a research project “Human Rights and Peace-Building - One Goal, Different Agendas? - the overlapping ambitions of human rights and peace agendas” (see above).

I am a pedagogue by training (two academic degrees), with a basic degree in economics, together with a variety of shorter academic courses related to international relations.

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No Shortcuts to Peace

This report focuses on the relation between human rights and peacebuilding within the field of international development cooperation in areas of violent conflict. The specific aim is to examine how a human rights approach can go hand in hand with, and strengthen, a peacebuilding agenda within the international development cooperation. The report may be of specific interest for practitioners and policymakers in international development cooperation, as well as for students and activists engaged in human rights and/or peacebuilding.

One of the report's main conclusions, based on recent methodological developments, is that the international development community today stand before an important opportunity to develop a methodological framework for how a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) can strengthen the peacebuilding agenda. A task that seems quite possible to realize.

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