

In reference to the United Nations resolution 63/23 entitled "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence", Finland would like to offer following views on the interrelation between armed violence and development.

State fragility, armed violence and development

A recent study by the Brookings Institution titled *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* ranks 141 countries according to a number of indicators which include economic, political, security and social welfare issues. 28 of the 141 countries listed are deemed as critically weak. All of these critically weak countries have experienced political violence of some kind in the recent past and some of these countries are still facing violent conflict. It is clear that there is a strong correlation between armed violence and development, conflict and fragility. Furthermore, violent conflict is not only a challenge for fragile states, but the impact of stability can spread beyond national borders, as Afghanistan and Democratic Republic of Congo demonstrate. This can be seen in refugee flows, the spread of HIV/AIDS, arms smuggling and the breakdown of trade.

States that have faced armed violence are most off-track in relation to Millennium Development Goals. People who live in these states are more likely to die early or live with chronic illness. The malarial death rate is nearly 13 times higher than elsewhere in the developing world and the proportion of people living with HIV/AIDS is four times higher. People in such states are less likely to go to school or to receive essential health care. Over 40 million children in fragile states do not go to school. Nearly half of all children who die before the age of five are born in fragile states. Child mortality is almost two-and-a-half times higher than in other poor countries and maternal mortality are more than two-and-a-half times greater. Fragile states have very weak economic growth. For the past decade or so the GDP per capita has been broadly flat while other developing countries grew at 1.17 % a year in real terms.

International engagement needs to be concerted, sustained and focused on building the relationship between state and society. Firstly, there is a need to support the legitimacy and accountability of states by addressing issues of democratic governance, human rights and civil society engagement. Secondly, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of states to fulfil their core functions which include ensuring security and justice, mobilising revenue, establishing an enabling environment for service delivery, strong economic performance and employment generation. It should be underlined that all actors need a realistic approach to state capacity and quality in early recovery phase and avoid overburdening the state with too high expectations. There is a recognised challenge of spreading the peace dividend to marginalised areas of society in order to consolidate peace processes. It must be acknowledged that state-building implies long-term national social processes. Concomitantly institutional designs need to be based on "tailoring and stitching" from existing local and national resources and available mechanisms.

In recognition of the impact of armed violence on social and economic development and the lack of development as a cause for armed violence, Finland has continued to be an active core group member of the Geneva Declaration of on Armed Violence and Development demonstrating the crucial importance of integrating questions of security and development.