

Global Trends: Social
Disintegration/Integration

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The Three Poisons behind Violent Conflict

- Ignorance
- Yearning, Longing, Wanting, Lusting and Greed
- Jealousy and Hatred
- Plus the experience of pain and suffering itself-rejection, violent trauma, displacement and destitution.

Armed Conflict (1)1991-2005

- 32,275 deaths from terrorism between 1991-2001.
- 400,000 plus killed by the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- 380,000 plus lost their lives through direct violence in the Congo and an estimated 3 million in indirect conflict
- 220,000 were killed under Charles Taylor in Liberia,
- 200,000 in the Sierra Leonian Civil War
- 180,000 in the Yugoslav conflict.
- 100,000 plus deaths in Iraq post occupation
- 14,000 plus in Afghanistan post occupation

Armed Conflict (2)

- In 2005 , a larger proportion of complex major armed conflicts were resolved, compared with new and minor armed conflicts .
- The data on armed conflict ,however, suggests that there is a decline in the use of armed force, although there is an increased feeling of fear and insecurity in many parts of the world because of terrorist incidents.

The Changing Nature of Power

- Military Power is largely unipolar
- Economic power is tripolar-US, Japan and Western Europe representing 2/3rd of world product. China and India will become 4th and 5th largest economic powers in 12 years
- Soft power is largely a Western preserve.

US Military Power

- The United States Defence budget is \$417 billion after a recent rise of 14%. This is the biggest rise in 20 years. The defence budget is larger than the combined total of the next nine biggest defence spenders in the whole world. It accounts for 47% of world's military expenditure
- The 14% increase in US defence expenditure of \$49 billion is over half what the whole world spends on Overseas Development Assistance (which in 2004 was \$71 billion).

Economic Sources of Conflict

- Although there is a big debate about the relationship between economic factors and peace it is clear that most modern wars are concentrated in the poorest countries. 56% of those countries classified as having low development by the UN Human Development report experienced Civil war in 1997-2001. Only 2% of those countries classified as having high development experienced civil war in the same period.

The Conflict Trap

- . This trap reflects the fact that once countries have experienced a conflict they double their chances of having another conflict within a 5 – 10 year period.
- If they have experienced two conflicts their chances of another are quadrupled.

Political Systems and Conflict

- Violent conflicts also tend to occur more within autocratic and non democratic political systems or within systems that are in transition. In terms of established democracies for example, only 12% were involved in civil war whereas 45% of one party dictatorships were involved in civil war and 30% of states with transitional or uncertain democracies were involved in civil war

Human Rights and Conflict

- Violent conflict (war) is strongly and positively correlated with minor or major violations of human rights—especially civil and political rights. Political regimes which violate a wide variety of civil and political rights are much more likely to experience political violence than those which do not violate such rights. 72% of states involved in civil wars also reported extra judicial executions, torture, police and prison violence, as well as the mistreatment of refugees and immigrants

Ethnicity and Conflict

- Ethnicity itself is not a source of conflict. Rather it is the particular demographic mix of different ethnic groups which is likely to have an impact on whether or not violence is more or less probable. There are more violent conflicts in those countries which have ethnic, racial or national minorities of more than 30% with a very rapid rise in those with more than 50%.

Assymmetric Conflict

- Those who lack political, military and economic resources have always resorted to what is now known as “asymmetric conflict”. (This is where small and dedicated groups of people , social and political movements challenging larger dedicated powerful nations and peoples). The tactics that these groups employ to secure recognition of their social and political needs always rely on surprise, cunning, and probing for vulnerability in the powerful

The Prevention of deadly Conflict

- Link the Development and Security Agendas so that development is conflict sensitive and security is developmentally and justice sensitive
- The cost of achieving and maintaining universal access to basic education, basic health care for all, reproductive health care for women, adequate food for all and clear water and sewers for all is roughly \$40 billion a year or less than 4% of the combined wealth of the 225 richest people in the world.

The Prevention of deadly Conflict (2)

- Develop some vision of change that combines the development , security and democratisation agendas in an integrated and organic fashion.
“Without a vision the people perish!”
- Get the analysis right. There are some crucial economic, political and social sources of violence which need to be distinguished very carefully if conflict resolvers are to design adequate processes for dealing with them.

The Prevention of Deadly Conflict (3)

- Understand the linkages within and between different political complexes and the networked nature of relations between the state, civil society, the formal and non formal economic spheres, criminal and non criminal groups, paramilitary , police and military elements.

The Prevention of Deadly Conflict (4)

- Develop partnerships with locals where there are persistent patterns of gross violations of human rights ,widespread state repression of dissidents and large minority populations. Develop integrated analyses of these problems and assist locals in the design and implementation of intervention strategies that enable more organic evolution of different more capable and effective political systems

The Prevention of Deadly Conflict (5)

- Seek higher levels of communication, cooperation and positive working relations with like minded actors in the governmental, inter-governmental, private and non-governmental sectors to deal with structural sources of violence.
- Develop clarity about different competencies and a more efficient division of labour between all actors in conflict zones.

The Prevention of Deadly Conflict (6)

- Reducing fear, building trust and restoring confidence are necessary but insufficient conditions for the cessation of violence.
- Develop a less adversarial much more collaborative problem solving orientation to politics.

The Prevention of Deadly Conflict (7)

- Greater recognition of how conflict sensitive development strategies might be mainstreamed and more importantly implemented in macro policy and micro programme and project cycle frameworks.
- Military and development policies based on fear, vulnerability, revenge or a desire for revenge are doomed to generate insecurity for all of us.

As Seamus Heaney in his poem *The Cure at Troy* puts it.

Human beings suffer,
They torture one another,
They get hurt and get hard.
No poem or play or song
Can fully right a wrong
Inflicted and endured.

The innocent in gaols
Beat on their bars together.
A hunger striker's father
Stands in the graveyard dumb.
The police widow in veils
Faints at the funeral home.

History says, Don't hope
On this side of the grave
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed for tidal wave
Of Justice can rise up
And hope and history rhyme

So hope for a great sea change
On the far side of revenge
Believe that a further shore
Is reachable from here
Believe in miracles
And cures and healing wells

Extract from S Heaney, 1990 *The Cure at Troy*, Faber and Faber London, p 77.