

## Presentation by Izumi Ohno

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Excellencies,

It is my great honor and pleasure to give this presentation, as Director of JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development. As our name signifies, connecting development to the peace and humanitarian fields is one of our main research interests.

2020 is an important year to kick-start the UN's "Decade of Action" to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The world today is also confronting the COVID-19 crisis. However, even with these challenging tasks, we should not lose sight of our common goal of realizing "peaceful and inclusive societies"—globally and more importantly in conflict-affected countries and regions—as embraced by SDG16.

### *Addressing the Challenges of Peacebuilding—Lessons from the COVID-19 Crisis*

The current pandemic reinforces the importance of three issues that are highly relevant to international efforts toward peacebuilding and sustaining peace. These are: (i) the need for a multi-sector and coordinated approach; (ii) the need for building institutions which provide essential public services (including the health systems); and (iii) the need for prevention and resilience. In a nutshell, there is a continuum between crisis management and beyond, and today, we need a "human security" approach more than ever.

### *Enhancing "Peace-Development Nexus"—Importance of Institution Building*

In the recent decades, the international community has worked hard to build mechanisms for enhancing the nexus between peace and development. When I was working at the World Bank in the 1990s, I never imagined that building and sustaining peace would fall within the scope of its operations. But, now the World Bank has included "Fragility, Conflict and Violence" as one of its Special Themes under IDA19. On the humanitarian side, collaboration between the humanitarian and development actors was highlighted by the UN Member States in the Global Refugee Compact in 2018. In December 2019, the "Global Refugee Forum" was held by UNHCR, in partnership with multilateral and bilateral donors to discuss how to operationalize the Compact.

So, a critical question is how to make this nexus operational and produce concrete results on the ground.

Our research and JICA's experience show that building institutions is the key. Here, institutions covers both central and local governments. They should include not only the systems for security and justice but also those for basic service delivery (e.g., health, education, food security, water and sanitation), social protection, public financial management, development planning, and so on. In particular, building a system for local service delivery is essential because it helps to prioritize local needs and develop the capacity of local governments in a targeted and integrated manner. This is a good way of localizing the peace-development nexus through empowering people, enhancing the legitimacy of local governments, and consequently building trust among those concerned.

### *Nurturing Trust through Building Subnational Institutions*

More specifically, I would like to highlight two ways of nurturing trust through building subnational institutions. The first is related to building trust between the governments and people as well as that within society, through the establishment of a responsive and accountable system for public service delivery. This requires the capacity development of local governments in the conflict-affected countries because they serve as the primary interface between the government and the people in the delivery of multiple basic services.

The second way is about building trust between refugees/IDPs and host communities through the promotion of co-existence. This requires the capacity development of local governments for a participatory and inclusive planning process, basic service provision, livelihood improvement, women's empowerment, infrastructure development in the countries which host refugees so that the needs of both refugees and/IDPs and host communities can be properly understood and addressed. It is only when local people, refugees and displaced people appreciate the "peace dividends" that trust can be nurtured, reconciliation can be advanced, and the state can gain legitimacy in the citizens' eyes.

In this regard, I would like to share two good practices from Asia and Africa (as presented in the brochure: JICA's Approach to Peacebuilding):

#### 1) Philippines: Mindanao peace and development

Since the late 1990s, JICA has supported a variety of multi-sector development needs in the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao (even before the final peace agreement was signed). This includes programs to support Mindanao's local governance, community development, public service, and economic activities in order to protect individuals' rights to life, livelihood, and human dignity, with the possibility of helping to establish an autonomous Bangsamoro Government in 2022. It is worth noting that, by taking a multi-sectoral approach, JICA comprehensively supported both the existing administrative organization and the organization that was preparing for transition. In parallel, the Japanese government supported political dialogues

between the central government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

2) Uganda: South Sudanese refugees and host communities

The refugee influx from South Sudan to northern Uganda placed a heavy burden on Ugandan host communities. In response, JICA conducted a multi-sector urgent needs assessment in the affected areas (covering both settlements and host communities) to deliver integrated services. The result of the needs assessment was presented to local governments and donors, which spearheaded a national drive to develop a harmonized information management system. JICA has been also supporting capacity development of local government officials and host communities for better public services and livelihood improvement. This is designed to reduce the burdens experienced by host communities and build a service delivery system inclusive of both refugees and residents. These activities have been implemented in close partnership with UN organizations such as UNHCR and UNDP, as well as the World Bank (through its IDA refugee sub-window).

*Way Forward—Building Institutions for Human Security*

While political engagement and promotion of reconciliation are necessary to keep a fragile peace, state-building through a homegrown process is the basis for sustaining peace. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace are long-term processes. The processes must be managed fairly and inclusively, with full respect to country ownership. As vulnerable people face a multitude of crises and disparities, we need to be reminded of the importance of human security and resilience building to realize a society where everyone can live in dignity, free from fear and want. It is vitally important to build accountable and inclusive systems that can deliver public services, with due attention to the political sensitivities involved in governance.

In this sense, *Pathways for Peace* (a joint report by the UN and World Bank (2018)) rightly emphasizes the need for a coherent strategy, as well as integrated planning and implementation on the ground—encompassing development, security, humanitarian, and political actors. While the UN and the World Bank Group bring separate, comparative advantages, and have different roles and responsibilities in the international architecture, their coordination is vital for peacebuilding efforts to be effective.

I have full trust that the Peacebuilding Commission will serve as a platform for the UN Agencies, Funds, and Programs (AFPs), other multilateral and bilateral agencies, humanitarian and development organizations, to share good practices and concrete experiences with institution building. This will provide a basis for building and sustaining peace.

Thank you very much.