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**Reflections as a Citizen of Civil Society Amidst
Divided Lands on Reinventing Civil Society,
Civil Liberties, and Governance in Post-Conflict Societies:**

**Patterns, Potentials, and Challenges, in the
Globalised New Millennium.**

**The ICNL-Cordaid Civil Liberties Prize
Honorable Mention**

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WE SHALL OVERCOME SOMEDAY....

REFLECTIONS AS A CITIZEN OF CIVIL SOCIETY AMIDST DIVIDED LANDS

ON

**"RE-INVENTING CIVIL SOCIETY, CIVIL LIBERTIES AND GOVERNANCE IN
POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES: PATTERN, POTENTIALS AND CHALLENGES IN
THE GLOBALISED NEW MILLENNIUM"**

Keywords: post-conflict reconstruction context, governance strategy guideposts, governance policy pillars, civil society, civil liberty, post-conflict governance, peace sensitivity, development, mediation and participatory processes.

I. Introduction

*Those who take meat from the table teach contentment.
Those for whom the taxes are destined demand sacrifice.
Those whose bellies are full*

*speak to the poor / of wonderful times to come.
Those who lead the nation into the abyss
call ruling too difficult / for ordinary people!*

- Bertolt Brecht (German poet, 1898 - 1956)

Brecht's satiric poem (above) aptly characterizes the world situation. The question is how to fix it. Between individuals' private lives and the activity of official governments, public interest groups (a/k/a "nongovernmental organizations") organize to improve the quality of their lives. The social space where they are active may be called "civil society." Some scholars define civil society culturally, that is, in terms of "social capital." Others in the European tradition define civil society "structurally" and "processually," that is, in terms of conflict. Despite differences in emphasis and perhaps like a dysfunctional family, neither of these approaches can survive long without the other. Each provides essential insights.

For the past several years, I have realized my part in the world through a personal voyeurism in civil society—NGOs, women and refugee issues. This essay which is based on my own experiences as a citizen of civil society living amidst post-conflict societies stems from the realization that the challenges that countries in crises and post-conflict situations face are complex, multifaceted and vary due to the variety of different historical root causes of conflict and the different political, social and geographical contexts. The strategies to address these challenges and

effectively support a country on a path of recovery, development and durable peace are therefore diverse. What works in one country does not necessarily work in another. However, there are some universally shared values, principles and key elements that have been found to be sine qua non for sustainable peace that will be described and analyzed in this essay. These comprise: focused and committed leadership, security, solid government structures providing basic services, building people's trust and legitimacy, information dissemination, sound civic dialogue, mediation and community participation. Experience from different countries emerging from conflict has demonstrated that when a leadership sets up appropriate, transparent and accountable management systems and tools, and then applies them properly and equitably, the key components of sustainable peace and development become more achievable. Government legitimacy and trust in national institutions are created. Economic activities can flourish and generate growth and prosperity. Difficult reconciliation can be achieved.

While the meaning of conflict has changed over the years, but, in this essay we shall refer to conflict and post-conflict situations in the traditional sense of the term.

Civic engagement and the role of social actors within the framework of the nation state is widely accepted in both politics and academia. The significance of civil society to international politics and in conflict settings is less agreed. The number of agencies engaged in international development policy, humanitarian aid, human rights protection and environmental policy has increased substantially over the last two decades. A similar development is witnessed in the field of conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict regeneration. However, assessments of the roles and activities of civil society actors in all these areas are contradictory and ambivalent. Controversial debates about their *capacities*, *impacts* and *legitimacy* are on-going among politicians, practitioners and scholars.

Therefore, some of the central questions addressed in this essay are: What types of activities do international and transnational NGOs undertake in order to influence international politics in a way that contributes to stable peace and coping with global challenges? What potential do actors from civil society offer for war-to-peace transitions? What problems and dilemmas are faced in the development of civil society in war-torn societies? What are the limitations of civil society's

contributions and how does it relate to state-building? Finally, how does any of this impact on theoretical conceptualisations of the term “civil society”? By way of elaborating these questions, the *second* section of this article discusses various terms and definitions linked to debates about civil society.

In particular, this essay focuses on the potential contributions of civil society actors for peace- building and conflict transformation. This includes post-conflict peace-building, early warning, prevention, external interventions and initiatives taken by local actors. It also may include economic development, social justice, reconciliation, empowerment of disadvantaged or strategic groups and humanitarian support. This essay points out that post-conflict reconstruction issues are linked to the specific challenges each country has to overcome. Despite the specificity of each country, lessons highlighted in the essay show that a sound mix of policies based on universally shared values and the proper use of management systems and tools are crucial for every country emerging from conflict. The paper shows the need for taking into consideration effective public policies, and appropriate governance institutions that mediate relations between governmental actors, civil society, the private sector and other regional and international partners. This essay which is based on my personal voyeurism over the years, as an active citizen of the global civil society will provide examples from case studies and lessons learned.

Lets now begin with defining the Characteristics of Civil Society and go onto examining the history and possibilities of global civil society...

Civil society” has become a central theme in contemporary thought about philanthropy and civic activity, yet it is difficult to define, inherently complex, and resistant to being categorized or interpreted through a singular theoretical lens. The term is increasingly used to suggest how public life should function within and between societies; at the same time, it provides a way of describing the social action that occurs within the context of voluntary associations or intermediary bodies.

Nonprofit organizations, like other groups and institutions in modern societies, operate within and are conditioned by three types of *systems*: economic, political, and social. Nonprofits themselves, in turn, give group members the opportunity to exercise three fundamental civic *principles*: participatory engagement, constitutional authority, and moral responsibility. These characteristics can be

useful to nonprofit organizations in identifying the presence of civil society and gauging its strength within a particular social context, and helpful in matching organizational goals to specific civic actions that will encourage positive social change. Widespread and legitimate citizen involvement in this civic context remains a foundation for nurturing and sustaining healthy and productive societies, especially in urban settings.

The formation of civil society usually partners with an identifiable system of political governance, characterized by open, public decision-making for all community members through governmental structures that (1) permit legitimate access to and use of civic space and resources, and (2) maintain fairness within the existing political and judicial systems by promoting and protecting the welfare of the people, with particular concern for the disenfranchised.

The literature reviewed suggests that the three principles enumerated below--participatory engagement, constitutional authority, and moral responsibility--are found in all civil societies regardless of cultural context.

Participatory engagement indicates that members of the society (1) enjoy access to and governance of resources used for the common good, (2) are free to be involved in civic action and social change, and (3) are free to participate in group affiliations that provide a sense of belonging on a community level.

Constitutional authority protects the rights and privileges of citizens in a civil society. Under the rule of law, citizens and social groups are constitutionally legitimized and empowered to hold economic and political actors accountable for their work as community servants and trustees. Local and national decision-makers, motivated by the common good rather than self-interest, are expected to design and implement public policies that strengthen the vitality and welfare of the community.

Within this social context, all community members have *moral responsibility* to use their civil liberties in ways that do not violate the human rights of others. The practice of equity, justice, and reciprocity produces social order and stability.

As the forces of empire reconstituted themselves to re-affirm their global dominion in the guise of development, the forces of community found parallel expression through a series of popular movements that drew inspiration from

earlier national liberation movements. These included the civil rights, women's, peace, human rights, environment, and gay rights movements — among others — and most recently the resistance against corporate globalization. Each sought to transform the relationships of power from the dominator model of empire to the partnership model of community. These movements emerged in rapid succession in response to an awakening consciousness of the possibility of creating truly democratic societies that honor life and recognize the worth and contribution of every person. Each sought deep change through non-violent means in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. They challenged the legitimacy of dominator cultures and institutions, withdraw cooperation and support, and sought to live a new reality into being through individual and collective action. Each contributed its piece to an emerging mosaic that is converging into what we now know as global civil society.

The reality and significance of the emerging mosaic began to come into focus at the International NGO Forum at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. This gathering engaged some 18,000 citizens of every nationality, class, religion and race in crafting citizen treaties articulating positive agendas for cooperative voluntary action to create a world that works for all. This was an initial step in forming the complex web of alliances committed to creating a just, sustainable, and compassionate world we now know as global civil society.

In the late 1990s global civil society gained public visibility primarily as a popular resistance movement challenging the institutions and policies of corporate globalization. Less visible was the on going work of articulating and demonstrating positive alternatives. This more positive and proactive face of the movement came to the fore in 2001 at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre Brazil nine years after Rio. It was the first major convocation of global civil society in the third millennium and it reflected a new stage in the movement's self-confidence and sense of its historic role in light of the failing legitimacy and increasing public awareness of the failures of the institutions of empire.

The foundation of the change ahead is the awakening of a cultural, social, scientific, and spiritual consciousness of the interconnections that bonds the whole of life — including the human species — into the living web of an Earth community. A word on globalization at this juncture would be in order---Most spheres of human activity are becoming progressively altered by globalization.

Communication is increasingly global. Knowledge and the news of events in one country are readily available to people in another. Culture is rapidly transmitted from one country to another. Increasingly, our reference point is the world, rather than the nation-state (ECLAC and OREALC 1992; Marshall and Tucker 1992). Globalization has had its most dramatic impact on economic competition. With open economies, trade becomes a global activity, and investment and technology become global commodities. Investment capital is actively sought, and flows of investment capital are global, rather than national. Competition becomes global, rather than national. As nations open up to the outside world, they identify promising new technologies, adapt them to local conditions, attract foreign investment, and monitor global markets for the best opportunities. The result is a global push for higher productivity, which causes employers to seek new technologies and workers who can apply them successfully. Remaining competitive under these conditions depends increasingly on the skills of a nation's work force. On the other hand, Globalization has spawned another factor fueling change: the spread of new ideas such as the global civil society, neo-civil liberties and the like. In an interconnected society, individuals may incur tremendous personal losses because of the failures of others. Individuals and persons working in small autonomous groups may do tremendous, almost apocalyptic, harm as well as innovative good. We leave portals open to an enemy that seems like the social studies equivalent of the HIV virus, a mechanism that feeds upon the very facilities that make society free, open, and productive.

Expressive freedom becomes meaningless in a society that doesn't have reasonable stability and security—although this statement is itself subject to elaboration later. Collective self-defense against any major enemy is a prerequisite for freedom. So society as a whole has to learn the social, political and especially legal equivalent of "safer sex." by psychological analogy to the gay male community's challenge starting twenty years ago (and continuing today). Of course, it is textbook social studies to say that terrorism, as a political strategy, generally aims at forcing the government of the attacked society to repress its own citizens and curtail civil liberties. Yet, in some sense citizens "share the suffering" and shed their "tainted fruits" regardless of their own individual best intentions. Terrorism is very much predicated on the idea that the world is a zero-sum game. It denies the importance of individual self-direction and conceives only of group or collective agendas, whether in terms of religion, nationality, or

some other cultural idea. Please understand that what follows in this essay is a hypothetical, conjectural reflection and discussion. It is not a prediction.

Freedom and responsibility are inseparable companions, for there is no freedom without responsibility. Among all species, we humans have the greatest freedom of choice as to how we will live and the greatest impact on the life of the whole. We therefore bear a special responsibility for the health and well-being of the whole, including taking all necessary steps to avoid the use of technologies that pose a potential threat to life.

A number of national movements suggest some of the ways in which civil society might most effectively fulfill its democratic function in national political life. Of special interest are major national movements in Canada, Chile, India, and the Philippines that have forged alliances among thousands of organizations representing millions of people in the cause of articulating and advancing national visions of democratic, life-centered societies. We have much to learn from such initiatives as they are leading us to a new and more deeply democratic human era.

Global civil society manifests a previously unknown human capacity to self-organize on a planetary-scale with an unprecedented inclusiveness, respect for diversity, shared leadership, individual initiative, and deep sense of responsibility for the whole. It demonstrates a human capacity for democratic self-governance beyond anything previously known in the human experience. Its rapidly expanding capacity for mutual learning, consensus convergence, and global coherence suggests the qualities of an emergent planetary consciousness or global brain. It is a social organism new to the human experience. We are only beginning to understand its nature, let alone its full implications and potential.

So, are civil liberties at risk? At the end of 2007 and the dawn of 2008, 20,000 Afghan people have been shoe-horned into one camp on the Pakistan border, joining some three million more of their countrymen who have already fled their homeland in terror of war, starvation or both. Nightly, the images beamed into our homes are of grave need and the horror of displacement. They inspire that most genuine human response, the desire to help. Western governments have pledged that aid will be forthcoming, that they will work swiftly to bring a speedy resolution to this conflict so that further human catastrophe can

be avoided. Now comes a fresh challenge to the already fragile status of asylum seekers. Before we rush for remedies we must remember the old adage is never more true when it comes to matters of civil liberties - legislate in haste and repent, well, repent if you are at all outside of mainstream society. And, while it may be tempting to say that, sacrificing some freedoms is a small price to pay if it means we can all inhabit a safer society, we should remember that it is not too long since we were freed from the stop on suspicion laws. The legacy of that legislation was deep and dreadful wounds cut into the relationship between the police and minority communities, wounds that still hurt to this day. It is in times like these that the state must set the example. The global leaders have gone to great lengths to insist that the fight against terrorism requires more than a military coalition that the humanitarian coalition is of equal importance. This is to be applauded, but we should start by setting our humanitarian standards at home. That means addressing the shambolic dispersal policy that has seen asylum seekers shuttled around the country, housed in sub-standard accommodation while 'asylum barons' rake in obscene profits. It means dismantling the voucher scheme, a discredited, ineffective and cruel operation that has deepened the misery of those in need while lining the pockets of the supermarkets and black marketeers. It means tackling the failure of the asylum administration system that sees people go without essential services and community workers report that babies are going without milk.

Ultimately balancing individual expressive liberty with general welfare and security, even given the shocking nature of the new threats, remains a matter of legal and moral principles. These principles apply even as we recognize that the enemy seems determined to exploit our openness as some kind of destabilizing evil and leverage that freedom against us with unpredictable attacks. When elucidating seemingly new legal principles that allow increased surveillance, restrictions upon expressive association and the use of military justice possibly even with civilians citizens, we need some convincing and principled way to draw a line. That boundary would involve evidence of the presence of weapons of mass destruction or clear evidence of intention to produce mass violence or destruction for its own sake. (This is not so far from how we used to view the Communist Party, when the legal definition of Communism—with the capital “C” and in comparison to socialism—included promotion of the use of violent conflict or overthrow of the government.) Every decade since World War II had its

distinctive personality along the way to a build-up of individualism and personal liberty. We have reached the crisis and catharsis. We know the theme of the start of the new millennium. We really do need to look in a structured way to draw the line against weapons of mass destruction with respect to most individual rights issues, including free speech, search and seizure, privacy, criminal due process, immigration, and maybe even national service.

Somewhere, someone is forgetting that today's security measure could be the seed for tomorrow's two-tier society with entitlement cards for those with full citizen rights while access to services is denied to asylum seekers and who knows the seed of a new conflict which will shake the very edifice of societies. We have to learn to determine when we are playing fair with the way we set our own priorities. ***With this we now move onto to discuss the key elements and challenges for Developing Post-conflict Governance Structures...*** Post-conflict recovery and state reconstruction are complex challenges for the state and the society. They constitute, in fact, the major goals to be reached when a series of specific challenges have been met. *The most critical key challenges in post-conflict realities are enumerated below:*

- *Legitimacy Trust and Authority of the State*

When the authority of the state has collapsed, and the remaining structures of government often lose their legitimacy in post-conflict settings, thus leading to political, societal and economic disintegration on a national and even regional level, the main task of governments in post-conflict situations is to rebuild economic and political governance and regain legitimacy and the trust of their populace. It is generally acknowledged that the critical determinant of sustainable recovery, peace and development is a committed leadership aimed at: protecting human rights; ensuring rule of law and security; reestablishing and strengthening credible, transparent and accountable public administration institutions; reconstructing an efficient, representative public service that achieves equitable service delivery and re-generates an equitable post-conflict economy. These key areas of concern constitute the basic prerequisites of peace-sensitive reconstruction and reconciliation. At their inception, post-conflict governments, especially transitional authorities, often lack legitimacy and have not yet earned trust, as they were formed as a result of negotiations between warring parties without the involvement of the majority of the population or they include former

combatants perceived by the population to be responsible for crimes. They also exercise limited control over the country's assets. The development of public policy often has to be negotiated with other actors (sectarian groups or former parties to the armed conflict) who may control parts of the territory and/or national resources.

- *Political Will for Transparency and Accountability*

The fragility of post-conflict situations creates multiple openings for corruption and the lack of a common ethos of governance undermines the political will for transparency and accountability, thus impeding the creation of robust mechanisms to deal with it. The absence of a shared vision and ethos of governance within the new, constituted governing group, especially when its members are drawn from former warring parties, often induces factionalism that makes different groups in government work at cross-purposes rather than for the national good.

- *Rule of Law*

Absence of rule of law, accompanied by a culture of impunity, especially affects many post-conflict situations and severely undermines the legitimacy of the State. It is likely that weak rule of law existed prior to violent conflict and was characterized by ineffective or corrupt institutions. The fall out from this circumstance is especially evident in the judiciary and police, where dysfunctional institutions have over time eroded confidence in the formal mechanisms for dispute resolution and grievance management and induces citizens to resort to illicit means. There is a need to re-build the judicial infrastructure from the highest to the lowest levels, with the most severe challenges being to rebuild the physical infrastructure and capacities of the staff, and to establish and promulgate an enforceable legal and regulatory framework that will be accepted by the populace.

- *Social Capital and Social Cohesion*

Post-conflict public policies are particularly vulnerable to distortion by sectarian behavior towards particular groups, sectors or communities overriding national interests. The loss of human and social capital, a dearth of social cohesion, continued exclusion of targeted groups in society, and absent participatory mechanisms in public policy formulation, all perpetuate a lack of trust in government and challenge the revival of legitimate local and national governance structures. Internally displaced people (IDPs), returning refugees, and unsupported youth and (former) child soldiers/ex-combatants and others are particularly vulnerable to being co-opted into unproductive or illicit activities that

are counterproductive to the effective functioning of the state. The State must organize specific, demonstrable initiatives to regenerate social cohesion through policies and programs that promote participation, equity and inclusion. The lack of coherence between the peace consolidation process as a medium- term action on the one hand, short-term peacekeeping actions and long-term development efforts on the other, may further destabilize efforts to achieve sustainable peace and development.

- *Economic Reconstruction and Service Delivery Structures*

Another major challenge is the need to simultaneously sustain ongoing governance reform and economic restructuring programs at the same time securing visible achievements in poverty alleviation efforts as dividends of peace and stability. With regards to economic reconstruction, the short-term economic orientation of local actors which is focused mostly on private immediate gain, often prevails in post-conflict settings. Unless concerted action to retake regulatory control of the State accompanies the cessation of violence, these parallel economies deny the state access to substantial revenues and the beneficiaries undermine and destabilize attempts to rectify the situation. Within this arena, the exploitation and abuse of mineral and natural resources by illicit national and/or foreign actors, coupled with worsening terms of economic exchange, are other crucial challenges that need to be addressed to ensure a sustainable economic reconstruction.

- *Security and Cross-border Movements*

Continuing insecurity and violence affect the provision of basic services, and reestablishment of government authority and administration at local levels. A lack of institutional authorities and failure in the security sector, in particular the police forces, lead to continuing mistrust of the population in public authorities and, at best, a State lacking legitimacy, and at worst, a breeding ground for the re-eruption of unresolved conflicts and violence. Conflicts spilling across borders represent an additional source of continued post- conflict disintegration, on both a national and regional level. Such cross-border conflict issues include the illegal traffic of small arms, light weapons and anti-personnel mines. The fundamental question here is how to regulate movements across borders in order to discourage illicit traffic while promoting legal and safe movements and advancing more cohesion and integration among countries.

V. Overview of the Governance Guideposts for Post-conflict Peace and Development

This section suggests a range of key governance guideposts and strategies for post-conflict and peace-sustaining reconstruction within different policy areas. These guideposts contain a mix of shared universal values integrated with first-hand experiences in post-conflict settings which illustrates the coexistence of three different areas: the surrounding area (represented by the lines emanating from the cultural context, external factors, and management tools), the center area and the periphery. The three central and interrelated governance levers are: (i) the people, (ii) the resources, and (iii) the services.

Based on the above analysis of the relevant factors pertaining to the nine identified pillars, we will examine key guideposts that are the ingredients for the success of post conflict reconstruction strategies.

i. Leadership and Governance

The success or failure of post-conflict reconstruction efforts is closely linked to a solid governance infrastructure, based on well-articulated horizontal and vertical divisions of power, which is crucial to delivering political promises along with the needed public goods such as security, health care, education and infrastructure. State- or nation-building is the central objective of every peace- building operation and is dependent upon the reconstitution of sustainable governance structures. Post-conflict nation-building comprises, at minimum: the rule of law, judicial, constitutional and security sector reform, the establishment of mechanisms of political participation and inclusive policies, the effective provision of basic services and goods, fighting corruption, fostering a democratic culture, free and transparent elections, and the promotion of local governance.

Thus, leadership is crucial. Most fundamentally, sustained peace requires a visionary leadership in a trustful, transparent and participatory partnership with civil society.

ii. Public Administration

In any development context, and particularly in a post-conflict setting, the public administration must be capable of the management and implementation of the whole set of government activities dealing with the implementation of law, regulations and decisions of the government and the management related to the

provision of public services. At the center of credible governance and public administration is an effective public service, whether understood as an institution, a structure of organization, a cadre of public officials, or simply as the service provided by a public authority. Therefore, a capable public service, based on a merit- and incentive based system, has a greater bearing on recovery than is generally recognized, both in terms of delivering aid and basic services and in rebuilding national cohesion and the credibility, legitimacy, and trust in government. The Rwandan experience demonstrates that institution-building is essential to ensure the promise of good governance and the achievement of economic and social goals. In addition, the South African experience indicates that it is impossible to transform a government and therefore a State without transforming the public service.

iii. Legislative Power and Rule of law

The guidepost involving legislative power and rule of law is derived from the inter-linkages of the legislative and judiciary pillars. Parliaments have a fundamental role to play in peace-building processes, including oversight of reconstruction, legislating on human right issues and addressing post-conflict security concerns. Parliamentary strengthening is critical to allow a parliament to fulfill its constitutionally mandated role of holding the executive branch accountable for its actions and performance. It also contributes to peace- building while restoring legitimacy and trust in the legislative power. Therefore in post-conflict realities, the legal framework, judicial institutions and the penal system need to be re-established to sustainably ensure the rule of law.

Here, it is important to mention that an accurate revision and enactment of laws and regulations, supported by appropriate funding provisions, may be needed to promote women and vulnerable groups' participation in leadership and decision making positions.

iv. Participatory Development and Social Cohesion

A decisive factor in the success and effectiveness of post-conflict reconstruction is the prior experience of a country and society in democratic processes. Where governance measures can rely on such traditions and previous experiences, the transition from violence to a peaceful and democratic political culture is greatly

facilitated. Social inclusion, political participation and social cohesion are crucial to post-conflict reconstruction, but also represent complex processes of political and social consultations. Enabling societies to dialogue with itself and to encourage dialogue between governments and the civil society needs to be amongst the key goals of post-conflict reconstruction in order to find solutions that consolidate peace in the long run. Support to the establishment of civil society umbrella bodies helps to create a structure through which civil society organizations can collectively engage in lobbying, advocacy and monitoring programs that help enhance the development of pro-poor development policies.

Therefore, any post-conflict development initiative must be implemented with the participation of the affected populations. This is to ensure correct understanding of their actual needs, including society transformation after conflict, local participation and ownership as well as responsibility for sustaining achieved results.

v. Economic Reconstruction and Development

In the area of socio-economic governance, the promotion of macroeconomic reconstruction and stabilization is one key determining factor for sustainable long-term reconstruction. Regulating ownership in a post-conflict society and combating and constraining the basis of so-called 'war economies' and parallel economies are priorities. In the immediate period after the end of violence, the creation of jobs through public works programs and the stimulation of micro and small enterprises are crucial.

Threatened livelihoods can easily lead to a new break-out of conflicts. Reintegrating ex-combatants, refugees and internally displaced people into the economy represent further financial challenges on fragile post-conflict states suffering from sharply reduced revenues. Inflation might be additionally increased by further credits; declining confidence in the domestic currency leads to brain drain and dwindling capital, thus to a spiral of continued economic failures. New macroeconomic policies and institutions, as well as capacity-building for people working in these areas, are required to encourage the development of market mechanisms that can efficiently and effectively allocate scarce economic resources. International actors should encourage governments to promote private sector development, creation of economic opportunities for business operation and

development as well as entrepreneurship training and policy frameworks for small and medium enterprise development. They should also assist governments to establish sustainable partnerships with the private sector, where the latter exists (public private partnerships), and carefully balance its interactions in this area in order to prevent polarization of interests that might undermine the benefits of the general population, hence generating renewed or even new conflict. Economic policies need to be closely aligned with peace-building components.

vi. Security Sector

Governance of the security sector is a precondition for stability – to provide safety and security for the populace, assure the return of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)/refugees and resettlement, and ensure good management of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes. A well-governed security sector is a key public service and a prerequisite for stability, recovery and development. Thus, security sector reforms need to be initiated and implemented within a wider and long-term peace-building perspective. Downsizing or reforming the security sector on the basis of international standards is not a sufficient starting point. The primary emphasis should be on determining, on the basis of dialogue among relevant stakeholders, the genuine internal and external overall security needs of a post-conflict society, and then ensuring the allocation of resources to meet these needs. The security sector has the potential to generate tremendous political good will and protect economic growth within a post-conflict country. Thus, governing authorities need to ensure security as a precondition for any further post-conflict development

vii. Information and Communication Technologies and Knowledge Management

Access to reliable and objective information is a vital element of democratic process and settings. Countries' experience shows that the manipulation of information can be a trigger of rising misunderstanding and tensions that can lead to devastating conflicts. Therefore, the promotion of exchange and dissemination of information is an important element of re-construction efforts. It is therefore in the interest of governments to set up mechanisms allowing them to manage information and knowledge assets. In particular information and communication technology (ICT) "can play an important role as a powerful tool for both economic and social development, allowing governments to improve efficiency and to deliver more transparent, high-quality services to citizens" .

viii. Environment and Natural Resources Management

The consequences of violent conflicts on the physical environment and irreplaceable natural resources are obvious. In the aftermath of violence, leaders and decision makers must pay a careful attention to environmental stewardship toward the ultimate goal of peace and sustainable development. This requires balance between reconstituting the ecosystem, the optimal management of natural resources and equitable resource distribution to benefit all citizens.

The main strategic areas to be developed further in both a conflict situation analysis and for policy development are as follows:

o Protecting biodiversity for the global environmental balance as a key element of re-construction efforts. Governments need to implement specific policies and actions for preventing natural disasters and planning for problems such as climate change, desertification, etc. .

o Enhancing socio-economic activities that reduce poverty, generate growth, and manage natural resources sustainable without further damaging the environment.

o Participation and commitment of local communities in the management of natural resources.

o Fostering an optimal resources management process based on transparency and accountability within three focal points: a) mapping of natural resource areas – e.g. “Tele-detection”, b) exploitation norms including performance requirements and obligations and c) control, monitoring and evaluation.

viii. Conflict Prevention and Peace-building Infrastructure

Both international and regional actors play a crucial role in peace-building as part of post-conflict reconstruction efforts. However, it is essential that they also support actions aimed at strengthening national capacities for conflict prevention. As part of these efforts, it is important to build skills and capabilities of civic and political leadership for understanding the nexus between peace and development and for enacting mechanisms for in-depth conflict analysis and prevention. Within this context, public sector managers need to be aware of the existence of mechanisms which can be accessed to support post-conflict peace building activities as well as for conflict prevention. Among the former mechanisms it is worth mentioning the Peace-building Commission, an intergovernmental advisory body established to enact a recommendation made by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit. The need for consolidating peace-building and development efforts

has been institutionalized with the establishment of this body. The role of the Commission is to marshal resources at the disposal of the international community to advise and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery, focusing attention on reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development, in countries emerging from conflict.

ix. Successful Policy Making/Mixing

Any post-conflict reconstruction strategy to be successful starts from the beginning by determining the right entry point(s). The assessment of the context will then point out the key pillars around which the strategy(ies) should be built. Based on the sectors or pillars identified as crucial, sectoral policies and appropriate management arrangements will be made with a main purpose: create coherence among different policies and make them converge towards the common goal of sustained development, prosperity and peace.

x. Forging Effective Partnerships

The political and managerial leadership will learn that nothing could be made in isolation due to the amount of challenges to overcome. Some effective partnerships will be strongly tied between national institutions and international community agencies, for example, the public donor agencies and NGOs, or between institutions of public and private sectors including the civil society and the common citizen at national and local level. With this, we systematically investigate the links between civil society and conflict resolution, we can achieve better understanding of violence in general as well as of its local a regional variation.

VI. The Potential of Civil Society in War-torn Societies and Conflict Resolution

Civil society interface at the point where conflict turns into violence. In NGO discourses, civil society is seen as “one of the crucial underpinnings for strengthening the capacity of societies to manage conflict peacefully. This is particularly true when individuals are members of multiple groups, each of which addresses different aspects of their Issues such as their communal identity, vocational interests and hobbies, social and political values, and neighbourhood environment.

Experiences from post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina “Strengthening Civil Society” is established as a key element of some external interventions and missions in post-conflict situations. It is applied both by international organisations and international NGOs based on the expectation that civil society will contribute both to democratisation processes and conflict transformation. Since the mid 1990s, the importance of civil society initiatives is increasingly acknowledged in peacebuilding discourses, especially given the failures of international intervention efforts in Somalia, Rwanda or the Balkans..

Cross-cutting memberships among civil society actors are expected to create “bridging social capital”: networks that are a powerful force in integrating society and minimizing the potential for polarisation along any specific divide. Civil society often is understood as a solution to social, economic and political problems, not only by grassroots practitioners but also by international organisations. But there is a risk that this view overestimates the scope of social actors and neglects the complexity of needs in war-to-peace transition, especially in situations where different processes of transformation overlap. This became obvious in the Balkans where post-conflict regeneration challenges coincided with transformation of the economic and political system. Based on experiences from post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, some dilemmas of strengthening civil society in relation to peacebuilding efforts can be elaborated. After the Dayton Peace Agreement that ended the war in 1995, Bosnia has become a kind of “pilot project for international governance” in the context of a “global domestic policy” which views the establishment of democracy and market economy as a prerequisite for conflict resolution and the prevention of violence.

What is crucial to the nation of civil society is that families and individuals connect with others beyond these homes and talk about matter of public relevance without the interference or sponsorship of the state. Whether such engagement takes place in association or in the traditional sites of social get-togetherness depends on the degree of the state urbanization and economic development. Cities tend to have formal associations, but villages make do with informal sites and meetings.

When villages become towns, towns turn into cities, and cities are transformed into metropolises and megalopolises, people begin to travel long distances for work, face to face contact is typically not possible beyond neighbourhoods, and associations become necessary not only for civil peace but also for many

economic, social and political aims and interactions. We should not look for associations, where the end for them is not pressing or where access to them is difficult for some groups. We should, instead, look at the alternative civil sites that perform the same role as the more standard civil organisations do. One more observation is that interethnic or inter-communal engagement makes for peace, not interethnic or intracommunal. Intracommunal engagement leads to the formation of what might be called institutionalised peace system. Engagement, if all intracommunal, is often associated with institutionalised riot system.

One the whole, two links can be specified between civic life and conflict. First prior and sustained contact between members of different communities allows communication between them to moderate tensions and preempt violence, when tensions arise owing to an exogenous shock, say a riot in the nearby city, distant violence repeated in press or shown on T.V., rumours planted by politicians or a group in the city, a provocative act of communal mischief by police or some youths. In cities of thick interaction between different communities, peace committees at the time of tensions emerge from bellow in various neighborhoods and the local administration does not have to impose such committees on the entire city. The former is better peace protector than the latter. Secondly, in cities that have associational integration as well as everyday integration, the foundations of peace becomes stronger without a nexus between politicians and criminals, big riots and killings are highly improbable.

Civil links across communities have a remarkable local and regional variation. They differ from place to place depending on how different communities are distributed in local business, middle-class occupations, parties, and labour markets. The result is, when the same organisation is able to create tensions and violence in one city or region, it is unable to do so in another city and region, when civil engagement crosses communal lines. In the late 1990s, for example, UN organisations, research institutions and NGOs (International Alert, UK, the American Council on Foreign Relations, York University, Canada, and swisspeace) founded a Forum for Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER). Through its FAST programme, the Swiss research institute, swisspeace, has been a standard-setter in developing early warning methodology, monitoring programmes in the Americas, Africa and Asia. The International Crisis Group delivers regular background reports and briefings on conflict zones. CARE International has launched several community-based early warning systems in high-risk areas of El

Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. In Africa, the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is setting the stage for a civil society-based initiative called Warning and Response Network (WARN) that will operate in 12 of the 15 member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in South Africa is also a key organisation in early warning analysis and crisis reporting in Africa.

Other Civil Society Organisations are active in *preventive diplomacy* (multi-track diplomacy, and in particular Track 1,5 interventions), as for instance International Alert (UK), the Carter Center (US) and its International Negotiation Network (developed by the Carter Center), and the church-related Community of Sant' Egidio. Some also have participated in *peacemaking processes*. In the cases of Northern Ireland, Guatemala and South Africa, civil society actors have effectively facilitated broader public participation in peace agreement negotiations, thus influencing such processes. Cooperation between governments and Civil Society Organisations has been practised in various conflict zones. Perhaps the most well known is the cooperation between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Applied Social Science to form the 'Norwegian Channel' that led to the Oslo Accord of 1994.

The international literature offers various taxonomies of a range of NGO functions in this context:

- Establishing alternative media, war and peace reporting
- Monitoring of elections and state institutions and activities related to democratization
- Youth work (community-based social policy, income generation, education and empowerment)
- Support for education sector reforms and initiatives for peace education
- Establishing peace cultures: incentives for overcoming cultures of war via arts, music, films and cultural events
- Strengthening local "peace constituencies"
- Initiatives for inter-religious dialogue
- Empowerment of women, campaigns for women's rights and against human trafficking
- Initiatives for demobilisation, disarmament and demilitarisation

- Protection of endangered individuals, and providing security for minority groups or refugees and returnees
- Re-integration of returnees and community building
- Human rights monitoring
- Documentation of war crimes, fact-finding and support to identify missing people
- Dealing with trauma and psycho-social support for war victims, refugees and returnees
- Initiatives for dealing constructively with the past (fact-finding, story-telling, reconciliation initiatives)

Civil society cannot, however, replace the state. Civil society typically depends on the security and predictability provided by an effective democratic state controlled by a government that ensures the rule of law and creates policies that respond to the needs of the population. Thus civil society and democratic states are highly complementary, even interdependent.

VII. Where are we going from here.....Lessons Learned & the Way forward... This essay which is more in the nature of a reflective journey has attempted to provide an overview of peace-sensitive considerations and insights to policy and practice in the main areas of concern to post-conflict reconstruction engaging discussions on civil liberties, the role of civil society and governance in these processes-both overtly and covertly.

As the range of examples in this essay demonstrate, the performance of countries varied greatly, depending on factors such as the degree of governmental commitment, institutional capacity, the extent of corruption, and the strength of civil society. The sobering realities of our new millennium are that as the worldwide push for greater personal and political freedom grows stronger, it is being met with increasing resistance from those who feel threatened by political and societal change. The question before us is- How far is this attack on civil liberties going to go?

Based on experience and analysis of the various case studies and examples from all over the world, the following conclusions may be drawn.

Civil society groups can be a factor in war as well as a force for peace. They can contribute to the mobilization and escalation of war. Intellectuals, research institutes and religious leaders may provide the moral justification for violence.

Authorities from the educational sector and the media can shape simplistic perceptions of reality, foster stereotypes and advocate war as an answer to a complex reality. This was obvious before, during and after the wars that brought about the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, where hardliners in governments and parliaments could rely on support from civil society actors (i.e., religious leaders, universities and journalists) to fuel conflicts, promoting segregation and division. Civil society actors can also strive for democratic values, positive social change and reconciliation. But in many countries undergoing transitions from violence to peace, civil society *per se* does not necessarily contain an emancipatory potential. This is further undermined when the civil society itself must be democratised.

Moreover, development projects have created a wide range of community-based organizations (CBOs). In areas with less NGO presence, mass party organizations and religious groups are the main organizational structures. Citizens in Guinea Bissau are compensating for a perpetually weak state by creating CBOs in response to specific problems. A number of NGOs, mostly national, support these CBOs on a project-by project basis, but lack necessary resources and capacity to ensure institutional development and sustainability. Poor governance has reduced donor investments but has also shifted resources from the state to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Nevertheless, CSOs also have important governance functions. First, they improve governance from the bottom-up by creating partnerships between CBOs and local governments. Second, CSOs introduce more participatory approaches to community-level decision-making. Third, CSOs can play a stabilizing and mediating role in reducing conflict.

CSO dynamics change in the transition out of conflict. The transition poses new challenges, both in terms of CSO-government relations, and the new skills and capacities that CSOs need to function in a changing environment.

First, as conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and government institutions change and new sources of friction may emerge. While CSOs are likely to continue to play a major development role, especially in social service delivery, the redefinition of roles and responsibilities may be subject to tension between CSOs and government, especially where rules are not clear or applied arbitrarily.

Second, as countries transition out of conflict and as the state is strengthened, the type of activities carried out by CSOs needs to shift from relief to development. This requires new skills and business models among CSOs, which are difficult to acquire when donor funding is tied to small, discrete projects, and CSOs have few sources for longer-term assistance in capacity building and institutional development.

Third, as public institutions gradually resume responsibilities in basic service delivery, opportunities may arise for CSOs to be more active in advocacy and policy influence, but this is an area where CSO experience and capacity is generally limited. In two of the country cases, weak democratic traditions constrain such activities. The paucity of institutionalized communication between government and CSOs, with reliance on ad-hoc or personal contacts, further exacerbates misunderstandings and suspicions. Legal frameworks in all three countries are unclear and rarely enforced. CSOs are subject to arbitrary restrictions not sanctioned by law. This is particularly true for advocacy organizations.

Some preliminary recommendations emerge in this essay. The recommendations target a broad specter of development partners including donors, CSOs, and governments. They can be summarized as follows:

First, more rigorous and systematic analysis of CSOs could help inform more effective engagement. This is particularly important in post-conflict settings, where there is likely to be little systematic information on CSOs, and their role will likely change as the country moves through the relief-to-development transition.

Second, longer-term financial support to CSOs would create better incentives for capacity and institutional development, strategic planning and specialization. As CSOs transition out of the emergency phase, with its less stringent requirements, they need sustained support to meet the more demanding conditions required by donors in the development phase.

Third, long-term partnerships between international and national CSOs could ensure transfer of capacities and improve sustainability.

Fourth, financial support to networks and umbrella organizations could promote more effective use of resources, cross-learning, and accountability.

Fifth, strengthened forums for CSO-government communication may contribute to better coordination and effectiveness, and underpin more systematic government engagement with CSOs in policy formulation, as well as more clear and transparent rules of engagement. Sixth, analysis of CSOs could be a useful precursor to Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes. More systematic and contextualized analysis of CSO dynamics and capabilities could assist governments and donors identify additional sources of quantitative and qualitative information on poverty and social conditions (which is often a severe constrain in conflict- affected and LICUS settings), and potential partners in developing and monitoring PRSPs.

It is critical for countries emerging from conflict to have engaged leadership committed to adopting effective and efficient strategies that establish effective, trustworthy, transparent, participatory and efficient governance institutions capable of ensuring the delivery of basic services to the population. Institutions are therefore expected to be responsive to the critical needs of human wellbeing (water, energy, healthcare and sanitation, shelter and education). Effective post-conflict leadership also requires commitment to address inequalities, social exclusion, manage diversity, foster social dialogue, consensus, peace, reconciliation and development.

Thus we can sum up by saying that, civil society organizations (CSOs), play and will continue to play a prominent role in conflict-affected and fragile states in the new millennium. The challenge is provide them with effective political and legal environments to further strengthen them and this is exactly what as a citizen of global civil society in century twenty-one looks forward to....My Journey in the Unfolding New Millennium has just begun....

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