

The political dynamics of the security-development nexus

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Introduction

Secretary General Kofi Annan has made it a key objective to reform the UN from a “culture of reaction to a culture of prevention”.¹ Annan’s reform-initiative is based upon the idea that there is an inherent relationship between development and security. Despite a high level of general political support, however, the progress of reforming the UN towards a more sustained focus on preventing conflict has been slow.² While there is broad conceptual agreement among member states that development and security is inherently related, there is considerable political disagreement about what this means more specifically and what types of policies that should be established to address the “root causes of conflict”. Indeed, there are central political tensions involved in current debates about how the UN should be reformed to respond to new threats and challenges.

These developments form the immediate motivation for this paper. It focuses on the genesis of the security-development nexus, and on the political debates about what kinds of institutional reform is required to address the relations between development and security. In section one I explore further the genesis of the nexus between security and development. I focus on the trajectories through which the policy-field of development have conceptualized its relation to issues of conflict and security, on the one hand, and on the trajectory through which the policy-field of security have conceptualized its relation to development issues, on the other.

In section two, I briefly explore some of the organizational changes that have emerged in response to these conceptual developments. Rather than representing efforts at policy

¹ For a brief summary of key resolutions from the Millennium Summit, see UN Press Release GA/9758 September 8, 2000.

² See UN (2001) *Prevention of Armed Conflict*. Report of the Secretary General. A/55/985—S/2001/574

integration, however, these organizational changes are merely a plethora of *coordination-mechanisms* between pre-existing organizational units in the UN system. What I call the “politics of coordination” is an attempt to capture how the current debates about, and efforts of, integrating security- and development-policy is primarily cosmetic. In the absence of changes in inter-governmental decision-making bodies that can address the linkages between development and security – something which requires political debates about such issues as the status of state sovereignty – coordination between pre-existing organizational units are as popular as they are ineffective.

The genesis of the development-security nexus

The Cold War was about stability and the maintenance of the status quo. Security thinking focused on balance of power between the USA and the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and on managing and monitoring peace-agreements between states, on the other. Containment, then, was the key concept through which security thinking and practice was defined and understood. Today, security thinking is defined by much more dynamic concepts such as prevention, transition and integration. Peaceoperations have since the early 1990s become charged, for example, with the task of enforcing a peace, and of assuming de facto sovereignty over a territory, as in the case of East-Timor and Kosovo. As a consequence of these developments, security policy and, more specifically peaceoperations, have increasingly assumed responsibility for managing large-scale socio-economic and political change. Moreover, it has been recognized that investments in both “conflict prevention” and “post-conflict reconstruction” form an integral and central element of security-policy. To provide peace and security, therefore, policy-instruments outside the tool-box of traditional security-policy have had to be mobilized.

At the same time, development policy has also been transformed in response to a new socio-economic and political environment. That is: The Cold War represented a significant economic, political and normative structure that defined development assistance as external to security. Development-policy was thus only *indirectly* tied to issues of security in the form of guaranteeing political support and preserving “spheres of

influences” of the two super-powers. The policy-tools of development were never employed specifically to reduce the potential for violent conflict, but was primarily focused on generating economic growth, and on securing the political loyalty of developing countries.

Today, development policy looks very different. Development policy have become much more “intrusive” in terms of seeking to re-shape key state institutions, to establish democracy and protect human rights, and, not least, to the strengthen the capacity of civil society to control the state apparatus. For Mark Duffield, this transformation of development-policy amounts to “The reinvention of development as a form of conflict prevention”, which implies a “commitment to those strategies and forms of intervention that are geared to the direct attempt to transform whole societies, including the beliefs and attitudes of their members.”³ It is not clear, to my mind, that development has either been reinvented or defined primarily as a conflict-preventive task. What is clear, however, is that included in this new development-paradigm is a much stronger focus on how violent conflicts may destroy investments in development, and, by implication, how development-policy can be harnessed to prevent violent conflicts and help re-build peaceful societies in the aftermath of a war.

Evolution in security-thinking

The policy-field of security was confronted with a series of new challenges during the course of the 1990s. For one, the cognitive-normative framework of global politics increasingly defined state sovereignty in relative, not absolute terms. And, importantly, the end of super-power rivalry meant that the UN Security Council emerged to play a much more powerful role in global politics. Moreover, the character of many of the violent conflicts that reached the table of the UN Security Council were markedly different from those of the Cold War era. They were very much directed at civilians, and were

³ Duffield, Mark (2001) *Global Governance and the New Wars*. London: Zed Book. p. 121.

intertwined with both weak or collapsed state-structures and with ethnic rivalry that had escalated into violent conflicts.

Between 1945 and 1988, the UN deployed only thirteen peacekeeping missions. Between 1988 and 1998, it deployed no less than thirty-six. More important than the change in quantity of peaceoperations, however, was the change in quality. Spurred by the end of the Cold War, the international community began contemplating how the UN could assume a much stronger role that went beyond the negotiation (or enforcement) and monitoring of a peace-agreement. Experiences from El Salvador and Mozambique, from Angola and Cambodia, suggested that a central challenge for the UN would be to formulate policies and strategies that focused on laying the foundations for the peaceful re-building of war-torn societies. This required more holistic approaches, well beyond the mandates and policy-tools of UN peaceoperations. It included efforts aimed good governance, democratization, social inclusion and poverty eradication.

The challenge for the UN, in short, was how to transform the short-term presence of peacekeepers into efforts aimed at societal transformation. Efforts aimed at building peace, as opposed to providing security, brought security-thinking and practice into closer collaboration with development policy, as policy-tools available to development agencies would be required to re-build, integrate and transform war-torn societies. This agenda came to be expressed in the concept of “post-conflict peacebuilding”. As defined in UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali in his *Agenda for Peace*, “post-conflict peacebuilding” was to form a fourth pillar of the UNs approach to peace and security.⁴

Underlying these changes in security-thinking was not only the recognition of the (new) character of war to which the UN had to respond. The gradual incorporation within security-policy of a concern with peace, human rights, democracy and justice had much to do with the normative and political changes that took place in the 1990s. In the wake of the end of the Cold War – and consistent with the liberal political credo – human rights

⁴ The other three pillars being “preventive diplomacy”, “peacekeeping” and “peacemaking”.

norms assumed a much stronger status. Such norms helped broaden the security-agenda, and it paved the way for the formulation of the “human security” agenda which infused concerns within security-debates about the extent to which the international community could intervene in a sovereign state to protect the security of individuals.⁵

These developments notwithstanding, the clearest expression of the linkages between development and security was formulated in response to the failures of the UN operations in Somalia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Rwanda.⁶ As early as 1992, Boutros Ghali had identified a new set of challenges pertaining to post-conflict *peacebuilding* that the UN had to confront in the post-Cold War era. When Boutros Ghali issued a supplement to his *Agenda for Peace* in 1995, it was the experiences from the failures of UN operations in these countries that formed the central concern. The report noted, inter alia, that the UN was now confronted with a qualitatively new type of violent conflicts, a central feature of which was that they took place within what came to be called “failed states”.

In its most simple form – often advanced by practitioners and policy-makers within the policy-field of development – the relation between development and security is expressed in the argument that poverty and underdevelopment *causes* conflict. Within the policy-field of security, however, the conceptualization of the relevance of development-issues came to be focused on the problems of state failure. The focus on failed states is perhaps the most clear expression of the relative convergence of the focus of policy-fields of development and security. In the absence of civilian, political control over the state’s key security structures, the likelihood of political violence between the state and certain ethnic groups, or between ethnic or political groups, increased dramatically.

⁵ The most comprehensive formulation of the human security-agenda came in the Carnegie Endowments report *The Responsibility to Protect*. It argued that state sovereignty was both a right and a responsibility and that, consequently, the international community was justified in intervening militarily in sovereign states to protect civilians. CHECK reference.

⁶ See, for example, Chesterman, Simon (2004) *You, The People: The United Nations, Transition Administration, and State-Building*. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 1—9.

Problems related to the institutional structure of sovereign states has thus become key issues of concern within security-policy, yet there is little that traditional security policy-tools available to the UN Security Council, say, can do to redress the “root causes” of state failure. This has, among other things, meant that efforts aimed at institutional reform by development agencies, particularly of the so-called “security sector”, has come to form a point of common concern between development and security policy.

Evolution in development thinking

President Truman’s “Point Four Program” is often regarded as a key instrument by which development-policy was brought into the larger geopolitics of the Cold War. True, development-policy was certainly linked to issues of security, but was then defined in terms of global security policy, expressed in super-power rivalry. Proxy wars were fought in the developing world, but the project of “modernization” and development was not defined as internal to, or as implicated in the causes of, violent conflict. Development-policy traditionally worked “around” conflicts rather than “in” or “through” them. When a war erupted in a country, development-agencies generally withdrew and left the arena for humanitarian agencies, or waited for a peace-agreement to be established before projects could be re-established.

The UN was established in 1945 to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”⁷. Its institutional structure – as reflected, for example, in the authority of the Security Council– shows that the *primary* purpose of the UN has been to prevent war between states. Issues related to development is certainly included in the charter of the UN, for example through the aim to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”. Nevertheless, it was institutionalized as a distinct policy-field with separate goals, policy-tools and organizational units from the 1950s and onwards in response to the challenges faced by the newly independent states in the south.

⁷ Charter of the United Nations. Signed on 26 June, 1945 by representatives of fifty states.

Importantly, development-policy have historically been provided for ideological and political reasons, but it has been defined as an a-political and technical task that operate outside the realm of politics. Development policies have always, by virtue of re-shaping socio-political relations and re-distributing resources, been a political project, but it has always been defined as a-political, and development-projects have been dependent upon the consent and approval by national governments. The principle of state sovereignty have thus defined the political space within which development-policy have operated, and it is very much for this reason that development policy have worked “around”, rather than “in” or “on” violent conflicts.

Development thinking have had a clear tendency to define its relation to issues of security by asserting that poverty causes conflict; that investment in development axiomatically reduced the potential for violent conflict; that development is a precondition for security. According to some, this view amounts to economic and ecological determinism, as there is no specification of the causal mechanisms at work between poverty and conflict, underdevelopment and lack of security.⁸ For others, normally representing or operating within the policy-field of development, the relation between development and security is still highly relevant, no matter how unspecific the causal mechanisms may be.⁹

A policy-statement issues by OECD-DAC in May, 1997, reflects how there is no clear-cut understanding of the causal mechanisms at work between development-issues and violent conflict. The statement asserts that “We know that prolonged economic decline can be a source of conflict. On the other hand, economic growth alone does not prevent or resolve violent conflicts, and can sometimes even intensify tensions in a society.”¹⁰ It then proceeds to identify in broad terms how “Development co-operation efforts should

⁸ Steadman, Stephen J. (1995) “Alchemy for a new world order: overselling “preventive diplomacy” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 3, pp. 14—21.

⁹ See, for example, World Bank (1999), UNDP (2001) CHECK REF.

¹⁰ OECD-DAC (1997) *Conflict, Peace and Development Co-Operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century*. Policy Statement, May, 1997. Paris: OECD. p. 2.

strive for an environment of “structural stability” as a basis for sustainable development.”¹¹

There are many ways in which development and security are related. Important work on how, for example, development-assistance may contribute to and fuel violent conflicts, for example through conflict-increasing distributional effects. Also, important contributions have been made towards aligning or infusing conflict-issues in all aspects of global politics. Focus is here on arms trade, on the role of diamonds and oils, on financial flows and regulations. Although important, these issues are focused on the key structures of global politics, and are less directly relevant to the issues to which we return later, namely how the UN have responded to the changes in conceptualization of the relation between development and security.

During the latter half of the 1990s the relations between development and security formed a central focus of research.¹² A UN University Study highlighted that inequality between rich and poor as such does not cause violent conflict. Rather, inequality in resources *coupled with* motivational factors grounded in religion or ethnicity *and* lack of institutional barriers in the form of the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights best explains the occurrence of violent conflicts.¹³ Also, numerous studies point towards the conflict-generating potential of ethnic, as opposed to civil, nationalism.¹⁴ Other studies found that a key ingredient in violent conflicts is the existence of a “shared disposition to ethnic nepotism”¹⁵ that is exploited within a social, political and economical framework with few institutional barriers that can prevent the tensions

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See World Bank (1999) *Security, Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development – Challenges for the New Millennium*.

¹³ Carment and Schnabel (2000).

¹⁴ Abasov and Akbarzadeh (2000) in Carment and Schnabel (2000).

¹⁵ Vanhanen (1999: 96).

between groups from developing into actual violent conflict (i.e. democratic governance, rule of law, effective police force)¹⁶.

For Paul Collier, however, these explanations are unsatisfactory. His study found that economic characteristics such as dependency on primary commodity exports, low average incomes and large diasporas, are central causes of civil wars.¹⁷ However, Collier acknowledges the motivational factors involved, which are often tied to ethnic tensions etc: “rebel military success depends on motivating its soldiers to kill the enemy, and this ... requires indoctrination.”

Building on much of the scholarship on the causes of war in developing countries, *institutional* factors have come in for increased scrutiny. This focus coincides with the trend in development policy during the last decade to focus on issues related to good governance, democratization and human rights. This forms the immediate background for the recent popularity of the concept of “Security Sector Reform” (SSR), which now forms the most cogent expression of the efforts, within development agencies, to establish policies that can help prevent the outbreak of violent conflicts in the developing world. SSR represents a trend whereby development-agencies increasingly recognize that it is counter-productive to neglect the broader *political* context in which they operate: It has been recognized that investment in development are futile unless core institutional structures – such as the judiciary, the penal system, the police force – are in place, making a state capable of upholding a certain degree of law and order.

As recent OECD-DAC report provides a central rationale for why development-agencies are increasingly focused on reform of the security sector, thus seeking to redress the problems inherent in weak state-structures:

Over the last decade, donors have increasingly recognized the ways in which the security environment can contribute to or undermine development. Until recently, because security was equated with military security and the protection of the state, development actors saw the provision of assistance in this area as

¹⁶ Tellis et al. (1997). See also Alger (2000), Hannum (1990).

¹⁷ Collier (1996).

the primary responsibility of their defence, intelligence and policy counterparts. In the late 1990s, this view began to change as the close links between security and development became more recognized.¹⁸

By linking reform of the security sector – the police, the judiciary and the military – with similar types of institutional reform under the heading of good governance, SSR now forms the most clear-cut expression of a convergence between development- and security-policy.

Put differently, SSR is the most concrete effort, alongside efforts in so-called Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration (DD&R) of ex-combatants – from development agencies to deal with issues of violent conflict. The concept of “peacebuilding” is, by development agencies, defined in such a way that development-assistance, whatever its focus (health, gender, economic growth, education) is aimed at conflict-prevention because it addressed the “root causes” of conflict.¹⁹

In the late 1990s, a different and much more politicized agenda emerged that bore promise of an integration between development and security-policy. This was the agenda connected to the concept of “human security”. It was launched in an effort to integrate both development- and security-concerns with a focus on individuals, not states. Human security was defined to include both “freedom from want” (development”) and “freedom from fear” (security). Human security formed the corner-stone of the Carnegie Endowment’s report *The Responsibility to Protect*, which argued that state sovereignty could no longer solely be defined as a right, but also as a responsibility. The report was a radical political document, effectively making state sovereignty dependent upon the ability to provide “human security”.

¹⁸ OECD-DAC (2004) *Security System Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice*. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series. Paris: OECD. p. 12.

¹⁹ See, for example, the Norwegian Government’s latest report to the Norwegian Parliament. St.meld nr. 35. kap. 9. The report – detailing the priorities of Norwegian development assistance – defines conflict prevention and peacebuilding in such a way that all development-assistance can be seen to contribute to reduce the potential for violent conflict. This amounts to what Peter Uvin has called “rhetorical re-packaging”. CHECK REFERENCE:

The *Responsibility to Protect* and the accompanying political advocacy of “human security” within the UN, notably by Canada under Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, triggered political opposition from developing countries, as they argued that such a concept would give major powers a green light to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign states. The human security agenda has, thus, come to form a more politicized, normative agenda than that connected to peacebuilding, conflict-prevention and security sector reform. Because it challenges state sovereignty, human security has not formed part of the efforts of reform within the UN.

The politics of coordination

During the Cold War, security and development were thoroughly institutionalized as separate “policy fields” with distinct objectives and means of intervention. Schematically, one may say that the Cold War effectuated a geographical ordering of security and development in which development concerned north-south relations, while security concerned east-west relations.²⁰ Following this geographical ordering of world politics was an institutionalization of two distinct fields of operations whose areas of concerns and modes of intervention diverged so as to create a conceptual and political division of labor, thus resulting in an absence of a common organizational, political and conceptual framework for the formulation of policies based on the recognition of the intimate inter-linkages between development and security.

The institutional and political design of the UN thus still reflects the profound institutionalization of “security” and “development” as two separate policy-fields. These two policy fields are, furthermore, backed by concomitant social scientific disciplines that have contributed to considerable *cognitive* division of labor as ‘development

²⁰ See Lundestad, Geir (1999) *East, West, North, South. Major Developments in International Politics since 1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

studies’,²¹ on the one hand, and ‘security studies’,²² on the other, are still very much linked up with and funded by different agencies in the two different policy fields that advance partly different institutionalized interests and goals.

These systemic features help explain why the conceptual and cognitive-normative convergence between development and security reviewed above have not, thus far, resulted in a corresponding development of new policies and new organizational mechanisms that can effectively address the nexus between development and security. True, the practice of peacekeeping has evolved considerably during the course of the last decade, with ever more focus on the integration between military and civilian tasks. Peaceoperations have, in brief, come to reflect the recognition that war-torn societies needs to be rebuilt, notably key state institutions. This is nowhere clearer expressed in the agenda on judicial and security system reform (SSR). Equally true, development policy has become more sensitive to how it may help reduce the potential for violent conflicts through conditionality in development assistance (on military spending etc).

To get a sense of how the UN has sought to respond to the challenges of bringing development- and security-policy closer together, it is useful to briefly review the ways in which “peacebuilding” has been defined and operationalized within the UN. Although there is no canonical definition of peacebuilding, the UN Secretary General has provided a formulation that echoes common usage: “actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation”²³. Peace building thus encompasses all the aforementioned issues, such as SSR and other efforts aimed at “structural prevention”. The UN Security Council has asserted, for example, that “the quest for peace requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach that

²¹ See Cooper, Frederick and Randall Packard (eds.) (1998) *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

²² See Bilgin, Pinar and Adam. D. Morton (2002) “Historicising the representations of ‘failed states’: beyond the cold war annexation of the social sciences?”, *Third World Quarterly* 23 (1): 55—80.

²³ S/1998/318 Para 63

addresses the root causes of conflict, including their economic and social dimensions”²⁴ And it has been noted that “When conflict breaks out, mutually reinforcing efforts at peacemaking and peacekeeping come into play.”²⁵ On this basis, the General Assembly has resolved “to make the United Nations more *effective* in maintaining peace and security by giving it *the resources and tools it needs* for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction”²⁶.

But these statements do certainly *not* reflect the operations of the UN. The progress in reformulating policies and in reforming key parts of the multilateral system lags considerably behind the conceptual convergence between development and security as reflected in international policy-statements and general policy-debates. Much of the debates about the future of security- and development-policy, respectively, tend to focus on the need for *more and better coordination* between already existing bureaucratic organizations, such as DPA and DPKO, or between UNDP, UNICEF, on the one hand, and DPA and DPKO, on the other.

The Brahimi-report were replete with calls for more coordination, and suggested, for example, the establishment of “Integrated Mission Task Force” which was to ensure joint planning and decision-making between relevant parts of the UN. However, the IMTFs have not been able to forge an *integrated* approach. The Stimson Center’s review of the implementation of the proposals from the Brahimi-report noted that “These IMTFs, ..., have lacked *decision authority* and recourse to higher level bodies for validation or appeal, serving more as brainstorming and drafting committees.”²⁷

The experiences with the IMTFs are indicative, I argue, for the structural issues at work in current efforts at reforming the UN to become an organization characterized by a

²⁴ UN Security Council resolution. CHECK REF. emphasis added.

²⁵ S/24111, Para 57

²⁶ Millennium Declaration of 18th September 2000

²⁷ Durch, William et al. (2003) *The Brahimi Report and the Future of UN Peace Operations*. Henry L. Stimson Center. p. xix.

“culture of prevention” rather than a culture of reaction. The policies aimed at addressing conflict-prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding are *coordinated* rather than *integrated*: Coordination is, in the final analysis, a recognition that two separate units should work closely together because their operations are inter-dependent. The more complex and inter-dependent a set of problems are, the more need there is for integration between distinct units and agencies to work together. Coordination does not say anything about authority, responsibility, action, implementation – all of which are crucial to an attempt to establish what everybody agree is needed, namely, a more “integrated”, “holistic”, “sustainable” and “long-term” approach to peacebuilding, conflict-prevention and long-term socio-economic and political development.

The reason why coordination is the name of the game is found in the considerable political challenges involved in seeking to establish new inter-governmental decision-making bodies. Integration of development and security policy would require the establishment of new *inter-governmental decision-making bodies* with new mandates and resources. However, efforts to re-distribute political power between member-states, or between inter-governmental bodies within the UN, are fraught with intensely political problems, as member-state jealously guard their positions, leverage and influence over the UN.

For example, the UN Security Council has broad authority to establish peaceoperations in support of international peace and security, but it has no authority over UN development agencies or the Bretton Woods Institutions, which are critical for post-conflict peacebuilding and state-building. The Security Council has considerably extended the duration of peaceoperations into the “post-conflict” phase, and peaceoperations have – based on the recognition of the linkage between security and development – become ever more “multifunctional”. Peaceoperations now include “rule of law” teams and perform a multitude of tasks that extends well beyond traditional “security-issues”. But: there is no *inter-governmental* home within the UN for post-conflict and state-building activities.

Activities that are aimed post-conflict peacebuilding, conflict prevention and “state-building” – all of which require a close integration of policy-tools of development-policy – are thus still coordinated between organizational units that perpetuate a dualist focus on development and on security, respectively. For example, there is no institutional home for a focus on conflict prevention through the use of development-assistance and through governance-reform etc. within the UN secretariat. The DPA performs some conflict-preventive functions, but is limited to the “good offices functions” of the Secretary General. At the same time, the UNDP has established a Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Recovery, which can, and partly do, focus on more structurally oriented prevention. But the UNDP is governed by its Executive Board, not by the Secretary General, and is not integrated with the efforts of early warning and analysis etc performed within the DPA.

Similarly, peaceoperations and development assistance in a country are functionally and financially separated from each other. Peaceoperations are financed by the assessed or regular UN, while development assistance is funded by the executive board (from the UNDP, say) and from extrabudgetary funding from bilateral funds. Moreover, development assistance is typically negotiated for longer periods with the host government, while peaceoperations imply that the host government is either ousted or placed under international command.²⁸ Hence, coordination is the name of the game. As Michele Griffin has observed, success of coordinated efforts on the ground often hinges on the

“...relationship between the resident coordinator and the high-level special representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) – who is usually in charge of the good offices or peacekeeping presence and also officially the lead authority over the whole UN presence on the ground, but who often enjoys little in the way of resources with which to enforce this authority.”²⁹

²⁸ See, for example, Griffin, Michele (2003) “The Helmet and the Hoe” *Global Governance* (9) pp. 199--217.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 209.

The Brahimi-report observed that the nature of peaceoperations had expanded considerably, thus requiring a broader set of competence and functions. This broadening in scope of peaceoperations had much to do with the problematics faced by the UN in so-called “failed states”, where the UN would have to assume de facto sovereignty to rebuild basic state-structures. For example, the Report noted that an international civilian police force could not function effectively without a criminal justice system and training in human rights. A “doctrinal shift” in peaceoperations was suggested in the report. Thus far, however, no such “doctrinal shift” can be said to have taken place, although several organizational changes have been made to bring in rule of law-expertize in planning peaceoperaitons.³⁰

In an effort to foster tighter integration between the various parts of the UN system the Secretary General established already in 1998, four Executive Committees (The EC on Peace and Security (Chaired by DPA), EC on Humanitarian Affairs (Chaired by OCHA), EC on Economic and Social Affairs (Chaired by DESA) and the EC – Development Group (Chaired by UNDP). These committees was established to ensure better coordination and planning, but they have not been as successful in pursuing their mandate as anticipated. The pillar structure -- “peace and security”, “humanitarian”, “development” etc – reflects the gap between the general conceptual consensus on the development and security nexus, on the one hand, and the political authority and mandates of current organizational units, on the other.

These are but a few examples of how coordination between organizational units -- whose goals, mandates and authority were established and institutionalized during the formative period of the UN – are as as popular as they are ineffective in bringing development- and security-policy closer together. In the absence of changing mandates, authoriy and inter-governmental structures, coordination will probably remain the name of the game of UN-reform in this area. It is precisely the more fundamental political questions that the so-called High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, established by the Secretary

³⁰ Durch et al. (2003) op. cit. p. xvii

General, will focus on. It remains to be seen what they will propose and how their proposals will resonate with UN member-states. A central challenges in this regard is how the panel will approach the issue of “failed states”, which brings out in much clarity the *need for an integrated* policy approach that will require changes not only in bureaucratic structures, but also in inter-governmental decision-making bodies.

The focus on the “politics of coordination”, is an attempt to capture how the current efforts of reform in this field have, thus far, rested on a tacit acceptance of the current politico-institutional framework, a framework whose key characteristics was born in the aftermath of World War II. Indeed, the knowledge-production about these challenges are also intimately linked to existing institutional structures, thus staging the debates about how to improve policies at a level that does *not* challenge existing institutional and political structures. There are countless studies and analyses that focuses on, say, peaceoperations and how they can be improved, but less reflection on the political framework wihtin which peaceoperations operate.³¹

In essence, then, the central point is this: the explanation for the focus on “coordination” as a solution to the challenges of the relation between development and security resides in the fact that more and better coordination does *not* challenge the crucial, but much more difficult issue of the political and institutional structures within which development policy and security policy are formulated and implemented. These political and institutional structures are defined by deep-seated tensions about the nature and status of state sovereignty, on the efficacy and legitimacy of the UN in global politics, and on the tension between UN as the promoter of certain universal principles, on the one hand, and the UN as the guardian of a pluralist system of states, on the other.

Let me, therefore, briefly sketch some key elements of these political tensions: The issues at stake in debates about how to integrate development-and security-polic revolve around

³¹ For a recent discussion of precisely this issue, see Pugh, Michael (2004) “Peacekeeping and Critical Theory” *International Peacekeeping* vol. 11. no. 1. pp. 39—58.

the limits, rights and obligations of state sovereignty, leading to the specific question of *when* the international community may rightfully intervene to either end or prevent violent conflicts. The “reactive” logic of the UN in responding to violent conflicts has, of course, to do with the fact that intrusive policies can only be established after the fact, once the Security Council has given such mandates. Development policy can be established much earlier, of course, but has little or no leverage in terms of challenging the host governments’ sovereign authority.

The second question, equally contested, concerns what an international organization, such as the UN, can and cannot do once it is on the ground. For example, can it assume state-building functions and stay for prolonged periods of time, thus ensuring the return of rule of law, basic security-functions and governance-functions. It amounts to a type of international autocracy, where governance is performed by professionals and experts to lay the ground for the return of (liberal) democracy. As Simon Chesterman has recently pointed out, such types of “transitional administration” and “state-building” bring out in much clarity the tensions involved in promoting liberal ends through illiberal means. This has resulted, Chesterman notes, in lack of clarity of mandates and doctrine on these issues, which according to him have produced a state of affairs in which the means of state-building are inconsistent with, inadequate for, and irrelevant to the ends.³²

These questions turn, of course, on the political nature and normative force of the principle of state sovereignty upon which the international order is ultimately built. Underlying these debates, in turn, is the tension between universalism and pluralism. The UN was established to promote set of goals and principles, such as “international peace and security”, “economic and social advancement of all peoples” and “faith in fundamental human rights”. These can thus be said to be universal goals and principles as they were laid down in the Charter of the UN. However, the promotion of these goals and principles were to take place within the political structure of sovereign states. Article two

³² Chesterman, Simon (2004) *You, the People: The United Nations, Transitional Administration and State-Building*. London: Oxford University Press.

of the Charter notes that “The Organization and its Members, in pursuit of the Purposes states in Article 1, shall act in accordance with the following principles: 1. The organization is based on the principle of the *sovereign equality* of all its Members”.³³

The UN was thus established upon the recognition of the pluralism of the system of states – upon the recognition that the promotion of certain values and principles were relative to the sovereign authority of its constituting member states to determine its own mode of governing. This pluralistic system has been under pressure since the end of the Cold War. The debate about so-called “humanitarian intervention” is all about this tension. It is a debate about whether the UN and the international community shall assume responsibility for intervening, also militarily, with the goal of promoting certain substantive values, thus relativizing the principle of state sovereignty.

For some, state sovereignty is a right much more than a responsibility. For these actors, the international system is, and should remain, pluralistic: the UN and others actors should focus on the relations and cooperation between sovereign states, not on what takes place within them. For others, state sovereignty is as much a responsibility as it is a right. Hence, any state that are either implicated in, or incapable of preventing, gross human rights violations, political violence etc. must recognize that the international community – acting through the UN – can and will intervene to restore law and order and to protect civilians. For these actors, the international system is becoming, or should become, more universalistic in character: the UN should move to assert itself as a guardian of certain universal principles and thus expand its focus to also focus on that which takes place within sovereign states, not only between them.

Conclusion

If the UN should assert itself more forcefully in promoting certain values, however, its effectiveness in doing so would, of course, be internally tied to its perceived legitimacy.

³³ Charter of the United Nations.

This brings up the question of the authority, and, not least, the composition, of the UN Security Council. If the UN should move towards a more universal approach and assume the authority to stay longer, with more broad-based governance functions to promote democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights etc, it would, arguably, be more effective in preventing violent conflict. But to establish such broad political authority within the Security Council and to make it more effective in integrating policies would also require that it be perceived as more legitimate, which requires reform in its composition.

In essence, then, the obstacle to genuine integration between development and security policy within the UN resides not so much in its bureaucratic structure as in its inter-governmental and political bodies. The challenges and obstacles to reform in this field are essentially political ones, not organizational. These political tensions may be *reflected* in organizational turf-battles and in bureaucratic politics, but they are epiphenomena of basic political structures defined by the principle of state sovereignty, and by the tension between universalism and pluralism.