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# Redressing the balance

Why we need more peacebuilding  
in an increasingly uncertain world



Peace  
is within  
our power

## **About International Alert**

International Alert works with people directly affected by conflict to build lasting peace. Together, we believe peace is within our power. We focus on solving the root causes of conflict, bringing together people from across divides. From the grassroots to policy level, we come together to build everyday peace.

Peace is just as much about communities living together, side by side, and resolving their differences without resorting to violence, as it is about people signing a treaty or laying down their arms. That is why we believe that we all have a role to play in building a more peaceful future.

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Front cover image: Border crossing, Democratic Republic of Congo

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Phil Vernon

**September 2017**

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# Abbreviations

<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Peace Accord
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>IEP</b>	Institute for Economics and Peace
<b>IS</b>	Islamic State
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>NPC</b>	National Peace Council
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

# Executive summary

The advantages of peace are obvious: less suffering; more social and economic development; and greater shared security and prosperity – in a world where the great challenges of our time are rarely contained within the boundaries of one state.

Moreover, the imperative for peace has become even more urgent. Conflict is increasing (in both number and scale), millions have been forced from their homes and the international system is struggling to deal with the fallout. This is exemplified by the war in Syria, where hundreds of thousands of people have died and millions have been displaced.

Building peace means encouraging better, more inclusive governance, and people being safe from harm as well as having better livelihoods, wellbeing and access to justice. Where these conditions are not present, the seeds of division, distrust and violence can grow. Therefore, peacebuilding requires wide support, especially in the current climate.

While the concept and practice of peacebuilding has been with us for around 30 years and is increasingly – as a result of the conflict crisis – present in political rhetoric, it remains the poor cousin of other international interventions. By one estimate, annual expenditure on peacebuilding in 2016 was equivalent to less than 1% of the global cost of war that year<sup>1</sup> and was dwarfed by the cost of development and humanitarian aid.

There are numerous reasons for this: decision-makers are unaware of the peacebuilding approaches available to them or are sceptical that they work; development, humanitarian, security or military approaches are more familiar; peacebuilding 'takes too long' for politicians and others with a desire for quick results, who too often wait until a crisis is upon them before acting; and vested interests stand in the way.

It is high time for this disparity of effort and resources to be corrected. This discussion paper sets out the case for this.

Building sustainable peace takes many years and is subject to many setbacks and this does make it difficult for some to support it. This paper highlights just a few of the many thousands of recent peacebuilding successes and argues that the ever-present risk of failure is no reason to hold back – any more than it is a reason to hold back from other enterprises with uncertain outcomes. A number of recommendations to donor governments, multilateral agencies, civil society and even businesses in a position to contribute to peacebuilding are made, as outlined below:

## Make peacebuilding a central and robust component of international policies aimed at conflict-affected countries

- Adopt policies which recognise that peacebuilding must be a core component of all international initiatives in conflict-affected contexts. This means a major rethink by donor governments and multilateral organisations of how they frame and measure the success of international interventions, with a greater focus placed on anticipation, prevention and long-term peacebuilding.
- Routinely include explicit peacebuilding goals and indicators in policy dialogue, plans and progress reports with respect to all conflict, post-conflict or prevention settings.
- Weave peacebuilding goals into diplomatic, trade, aid and national security strategies and initiatives so that peace is not seen as separate but integral, and is increasingly part of the wider political and economic fabric; and bring peacebuilding, national security, aid, diplomatic and trade initiatives together (as in the 'whole of government' approach) in any given context, so all are working together.
- Double the level of resources invested in peacebuilding to at least US\$27 per capita in any given context, as recommended by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).
- Sustain this emphasis for long enough that peacebuilding takes on a momentum of its own, and becomes a familiar and normal component of the international system, so that vested interests and historical habits erode over time.

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP), Global Peace Index 2017, New York: IEP, 2017, p.3, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GPI-2017-Report-1.pdf>

## Build the capacity of international organisations and donor governments to plan, implement and monitor peacebuilding activities

- Equip political and other senior decision-makers with the knowledge and information necessary to consider peacebuilding routinely as a core foreign policy option through the strategic appointment of specialist advisers, and by adopting policies that require them to do so and providing instruments that readily allow them to do so.
- Back this up with concerted programmes of recruitment, training and other capacity-building on the concepts and practices of peacebuilding, and change staffing and systems to encourage and reward longer-term programming, emphasising sustainable peace goals and the acceptance of risk. Ensure that those holding organisations to account, such as parliamentarians and member state diplomats, have the requisite knowledge to do so.
- Reinvigorate multilateral and bilateral preventative diplomacy, focusing on more upstream and structural drivers of conflict. Be prepared to have the tough conversations about advancing economic and political exclusion with local and international actors who resist this.
- Given that different conflicts need different strategies – and different actors will always embrace somewhat different approaches, hindering close coordination – support the emergence of a mutually supportive network of agencies, with long-term peace as their common aim and a commitment to working in complementary ways.

## Take immediate steps to implement improved peacebuilding policies and practices

- Improve international cooperation to address some of the broad and cross-cutting underlying causes of conflict:
  - reduce levels of international crime;
  - lessen and mitigate the impacts of climate change on peace;
  - devise economic approaches that increase access to jobs especially for young people;
  - improve local, national, regional and international governance to promote fairness; and
  - implement conflict early warning systems accompanied by mechanisms for early action in contexts undergoing change.
- Embed long-term peacebuilding goals and approaches immediately as an explicit and major plank of responses to current crises so that every policy and programme is deliberately focused on long-term peace outcomes – and short-term stability is explicitly viewed as a step on the way to sustainable peace. Examples of where this should be done include ending the fighting in Syria, reconstructing Mosul and assisting with the transition in Myanmar.
- Given the urgency created by the crisis in the Middle East, seize the moment to support the UN's Sustaining Peace agenda<sup>2</sup>: disseminate the concept of positive peace and narratives of successful peacebuilding to convince leaders to invest more in peacebuilding.
- Start the process of building a generation of peacebuilders, with a major investment in capacity-building on the concepts, approaches and skills needed to build peace.
- Continue to support peacebuilding as the major component of policy and action in places where progress has been made, such as Nepal, Northern Ireland and South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> UN Security Council, Resolution 2282, S/RES/2282 (2016), New York: UN, 2016, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2282\(2016\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2282(2016))

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## **Stimulate national and international public discussion about the need for greater emphasis on and investment in peacebuilding**

- Promote and sustain a public dialogue about the benefits and legitimacy of peacebuilding, engaging honestly with those who are sceptical. Accept that peace writ large is unpredictable and may take years to achieve, but that it has been shown to work and is no less uncertain in its political outcomes than military action or other more familiar approaches.
- Shift public expectations about what an adequate response to security threats and consequent results look like so that peacebuilding is given equal weight as peacemaking diplomacy, peacekeeping, military, development and humanitarian interventions. This includes equipping political leaders with the necessary knowledge to engage their constituencies around this issue.
- Finally, peacebuilders themselves need to get behind and promote a more confident narrative of impact and success. We need to continue to assemble and proclaim a narrative of incremental progress, and of the changes in attitudes, practices and institutions that have been achieved, which all represent bricks in the building of a more peaceful future.

# 1. Introduction

The case for peacebuilding is not being heard widely enough.

Photo: © Stocktrek Images / Alamy Stock Photo



Army specialist on foot patrol in open-air market, Iraq.

The advantages of peace are obvious: less suffering; social, cultural and economic development; and longer, more fulfilled lives. People have made great progress towards peace in many parts of the world. Yet, in recent years, this has stalled.<sup>3</sup>

Against this backdrop, the rhetoric of peace and peacebuilding has been integrated into international norms: for example, the founding concepts of the UN<sup>4</sup> and the European Union (EU),<sup>5</sup> the Millennium Declaration<sup>6</sup> and, more recently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),<sup>7</sup> in which Goal 16 explicitly focuses on just and inclusive peace underpinned by good governance.

Peacebuilding is an explicit part of many countries' foreign and aid policies, and – not surprisingly – one of the declared aims of governments and civil society in conflict-affected countries. But the scale and scope of concrete peacebuilding activities has not kept pace. The case for peacebuilding is not being heard widely enough.

The reasons for this are varied. In international affairs, the familiar tools of state-to-state and multilateral diplomacy, and military or other security-based interventions still prevail. Although the military-industrial complex has evolved since the Cold War, it survives. The failed attempts to impose liberal peace and regime

<sup>3</sup> IEP, 2017, Op cit.

<sup>4</sup> UN, The charter of the United Nations, UN: New York, 1945, <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>

<sup>5</sup> European Union receives Nobel Peace Prize 2012, European Union [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history/2010-today/2012/eu-nobel\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history/2010-today/2012/eu-nobel_en), accessed 21 August 2017

<sup>6</sup> UN, UN Millennium Declaration, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, UN, 2000, <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

<sup>7</sup> UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development, Resolution adopted 25 September 2015, A/RES/70/1, UN: New York, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

change in places such as Afghanistan and Iraq have discouraged international interventionism. Decision-makers are often unaware of peacebuilding concepts and approaches, or doubt their efficacy, and so they stick with other, more familiar approaches.

Peacebuilding legitimately encompasses an array of concepts and approaches, and the resulting diversity can be confusing. Two recent meta-reviews of peacebuilding evaluations found there was no simple answer to the question of 'what works in peacebuilding'.<sup>8</sup> This is because every context is different, and because peace develops incrementally, is non-linear and takes a generation or more to take root and thus demonstrate fully what worked and what did not.<sup>9</sup> What is widely accepted is that successful progress towards peace has usually been led by the people and institutions of the country concerned. Outside support can be critically helpful, but cannot replace their leadership and efforts.<sup>10</sup> Despite its apparent complexity, peacebuilding is a simple idea: using available resources and methods to enhance people's ability to anticipate and resolve conflicts non-violently.

This paper is aimed at international decision-makers. It intends to remind them that practical peacebuilding approaches are both effective and readily available. It argues that an increased emphasis on peace and peacebuilding is essential, particularly today. It summarises the state of peace and conflict in the world, reaffirms the importance of peace and explains why current responses to conflict are deficient. It includes examples of some of the practical ways in which peace has been built, as well as recommendations addressed to donor governments and international bodies. Three case studies to illustrate how a sustained focus on peacebuilding has helped people in Nepal, Northern Ireland and South Africa make progress from stability towards a durable peace are also included.

The paper is not intended as a treatise on the many competing and overlapping concepts and theories of peacebuilding, nor is it an exhaustive list of what works in peacebuilding. Peace is a complex and evolving phenomenon and it is enabled differently in different contexts. Some of the countries that score highly in the Global Peace Index<sup>11</sup> have achieved this status as much through war and aggression as through other means, and replicating their experience is not recommended. Instead, this paper is a discussion document, arguing that more peacebuilding is needed because it is morally and politically right, is in the common interest and is eminently feasible.

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8 S. Autesserre, *International peacebuilding and local success: Assumptions and effectiveness*, *International Studies Review*, (0), 2017, pp.1–19, <http://www.severineautesserre.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ISRSeverine.pdf>; C. Cramer, J. Goodhand and R. Morris, *Rapid evidence assessments for conflict prevention*, Berkshire: Oxford Policy Management and School of Oriental and African Studies, 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/effectiveness-conflict-prevention-interventions.pdf>

9 The World Bank, *Conflict, security and development*, World Development Report, Washington DC: World Bank, 2011, [https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011\\_Full\\_Text.pdf](https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf)

10 S. Autesserre, 2017, Op. cit.

11 IEP, 2017, Op. cit.

## 2. The state of peace today

### 2.1 Negative and positive peace

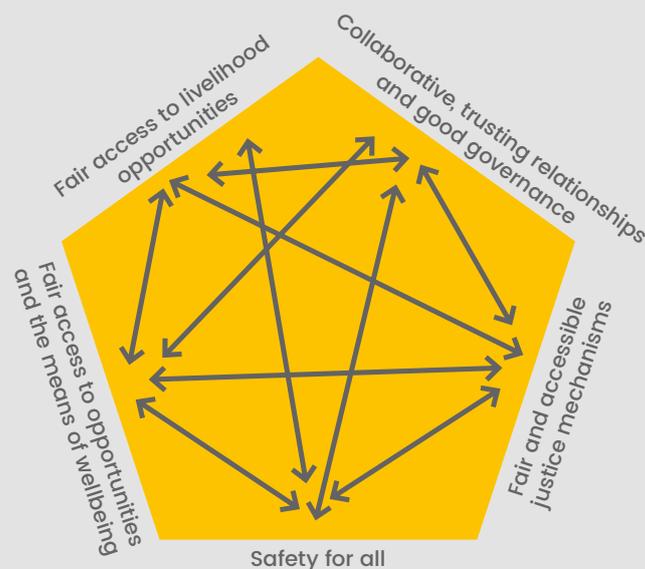
Peace is when people or peoples manage their differences and conflicts without resorting to violence. A transition from violence to peace can be seen in two phases: improved stability and 'positive peace'.

Stability is when there is no fighting – or at least no significant outbreak of fighting – or immediate risk thereof. People can get on with their lives, children can attend school, farmers can farm, businesses can trade and politicians can address normal affairs of state. After a period of tension or violence, this return to normality is welcome. But stability frequently masks the reality that grievances or other causes of conflict have not been addressed, and may erupt again. Indeed, the kinds of agreements needed to bring about stability often contain the seeds of further conflict. This is because short-term stability frequently means settling for something unfair and unsustainable, prone to being undermined by the grievances it creates. It is due to its inherent unsustainability that this state of affairs has been labelled 'negative peace',<sup>12</sup> and helps explain why a third or more of peace agreements break down.<sup>13</sup>

The challenge is to use periods of stability to build longer-term peace. Known as 'positive peace',<sup>14</sup> this means achieving incremental improvements in governance, and in fair access to economic opportunities, justice, safety and other aspects of wellbeing such as health, education and a decent environment in which to live.<sup>15</sup> These are the factors that, taken together, furnish the resilience that allows people to deal with their differences and conflicts without violence. Positive peace also requires the emergence of collaborative and trusting relationships among and between people and peoples, and between people and their governments. Positive peace applies to all situations: from the community all the way up to regional and global relations. Typically, we frame peacebuilding outcomes in terms of changes in attitudes and behaviours, and ultimately in the norms and institutions that mediate the relationships in and between societies.

Despite recent improvements, the trend for sustainable peace is beginning to reverse.

**Figure 1: The peace factors – components of positive peace**



12 J. Galtung, Violence, peace, and peace research, *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 1969, pp.167–91

13 Human Security Project, Human security report 2012: Sexual violence, education, and war – Beyond the mainstream narrative, Vancouver: Human Security Research Group, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, 2012

14 J. Galtung, 1969, Op. cit.

15 International Alert, Programming framework for International Alert, London: International Alert, 2017, [http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Organisation\\_ProgrammingFramework\\_EN\\_2017.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Organisation_ProgrammingFramework_EN_2017.pdf)

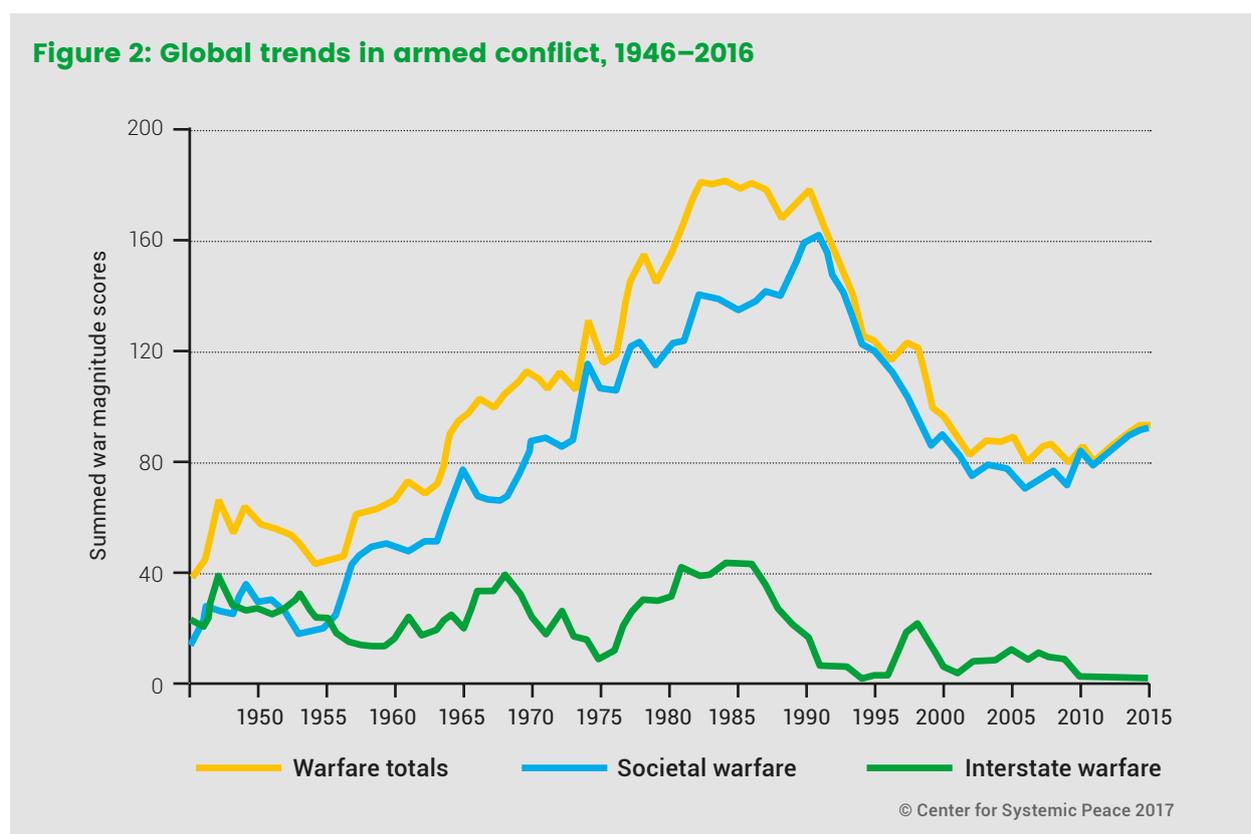
## 2.2 How is peace faring?

Trends in peace and conflict are both encouraging and concerning. Over the past few centuries, almost all forms of violence, including torture, rape, murder, civil war and interstate war, have markedly declined.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, violent conflict remains prevalent. After the end of the Second World War, there was a steady increase in armed conflicts, culminating at 52 by the end of the Cold War. This reduced to 31 by 2003, largely due to a growing capacity and willingness among the international community to intervene successfully – for example, in parts of the ex-Soviet Union and countries in Africa.<sup>17</sup> In 2016, more than 100,000 troops, observers and police personnel served as UN peacekeepers in 16 operations across four continents.<sup>18</sup> As shown by Figure 2, which measures the cumulative magnitude of armed conflict using an index, the wars that persist are increasingly fought within countries rather than between them.<sup>19</sup>

The 2017 Global Peace Index shows that peace has improved in 80 countries over the past decade. But it has also deteriorated in 83 countries.<sup>20</sup> As Figure 2 also shows, the magnitude has increased steeply since 2010, and there are now some 40 active armed conflicts, including in places such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, with violence and suffering at very high levels.<sup>21</sup> Battle deaths have tripled since 2003 and rose by 27% in 2016 alone.<sup>22</sup> This increase not only reflects underlying conflicts coming to the surface, but also the reality that progress towards peace is not straightforward, is influenced by a myriad of external and internal factors, and is frequently subject to setbacks. Peace agreements can all too readily return to violence if not accompanied by sufficient peacebuilding measures. Despite an increase in peace for many, millions of others' lives remain blighted.

**Figure 2: Global trends in armed conflict, 1946–2016**



16 S. Pinker, *The better angels of our nature: The decline of violence in history and its causes*, New York: Viking, 2011

17 K. Dupuy, S. Gates, H.M. Nygård, I. Rudolfson, H. Strand and H. Urdal, *Trends in armed conflict, 1946–2014*, Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2016, <https://www.prio.org/utility/DownloadFile.ashx?id=15&type=publicationfile>

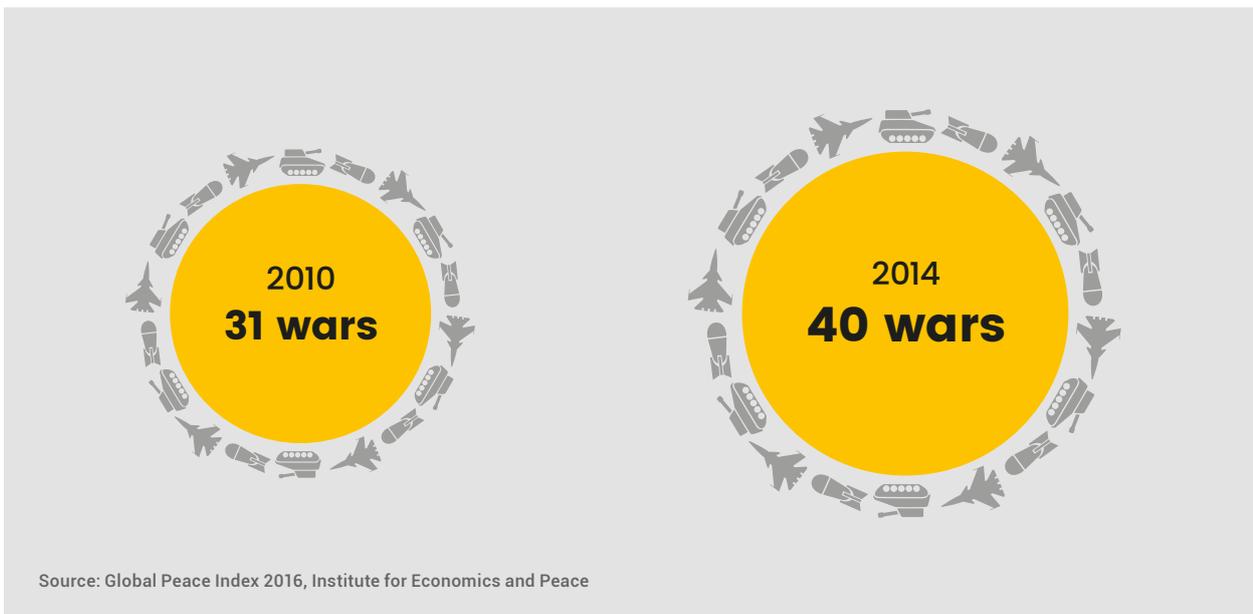
18 Peacekeeping fact sheet, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml>, accessed 21 August 2017

19 Global conflict trends, Center for Systemic Peace, <http://www.systemicpeace.org/conflictrends.html#fig3>, accessed 30 June 2017

20 EIP, 2017, Op. cit., p.31

21 Armed conflict database, International Institute for Strategic Studies, <https://acd.iiss.org/>, accessed 15 July 2017

22 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *States of fragility 2016: Understanding violence*, Paris: OECD, 2016



## 2.3 Complex, interconnected, fragmented and resilient

Modern conflicts can be divided into eight major categories:<sup>23</sup>

- Sustained geopolitical conflicts of major regional or global significance, such as between NATO countries and Russia, India and Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia and Iran.
- Intercommunal violence between neighbouring identity groups, for example Shia and Sunni Muslims, Muslims and Christians, or different ethnic groups.
- Classic stand-offs over territory, as over Kashmir, Palestine and Nagorny Karabakh.
- Long-running sub-national conflicts in otherwise relatively stable countries, as in India, Thailand, Northern Ireland and Philippines.
- Conflicts of state formation, which include Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan and Mali, among others.
- Countries apparently emerging from conflict, but where the risk of violence remains close to the surface, such as Mozambique, Philippines and Colombia.
- Conflicts waged by international extremist movements, notably Islamic State (IS) and its affiliates.

- Widespread social or societal violence, not necessarily seen as armed conflicts, often linked to organised crime and politics, such as in Venezuela and Guatemala.

Categorising conflicts in this way can help guide us in how to address them. For example, conflicts of state formation are about who has access to state power, and on what terms, and what obligations and rights citizens and the state hold in respect of each other. Therefore, these questions must be taken into account when building peace. But any categorisation is imperfect. All conflicts fit in more than one category, especially as they evolve, and the description of any conflict depends on the perspective and interests of those who are labelling it. This inherent complexity flags up an important trend: while recent conflicts have been predominantly intrastate in nature, they have also become increasingly interconnected, complex, fragmented and intractable.<sup>24</sup> They thus reflect the characteristics of the world in which they are fought. Although a particular conflict might be waged principally within the borders of a single nation, it is almost certainly linked to external interests and factors.

<sup>23</sup> P. Vernon, Fragmented and interconnected conflicts, PhilVernon.net, 9 October 2016, <https://philvernon.net/2016/10/09/some-peace-and-conflict-trends-and-the-need-to-strengthen-positive-peace/>

<sup>24</sup> Advisory Group of Experts, The challenge of sustaining peace, Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, New York: UN, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pdf/150630%20Report%20of%20the%20AGE%20on%20the%202015%20Peacebuilding%20Review%20FINAL.pdf>

## 2.4 Underlying causes of conflict

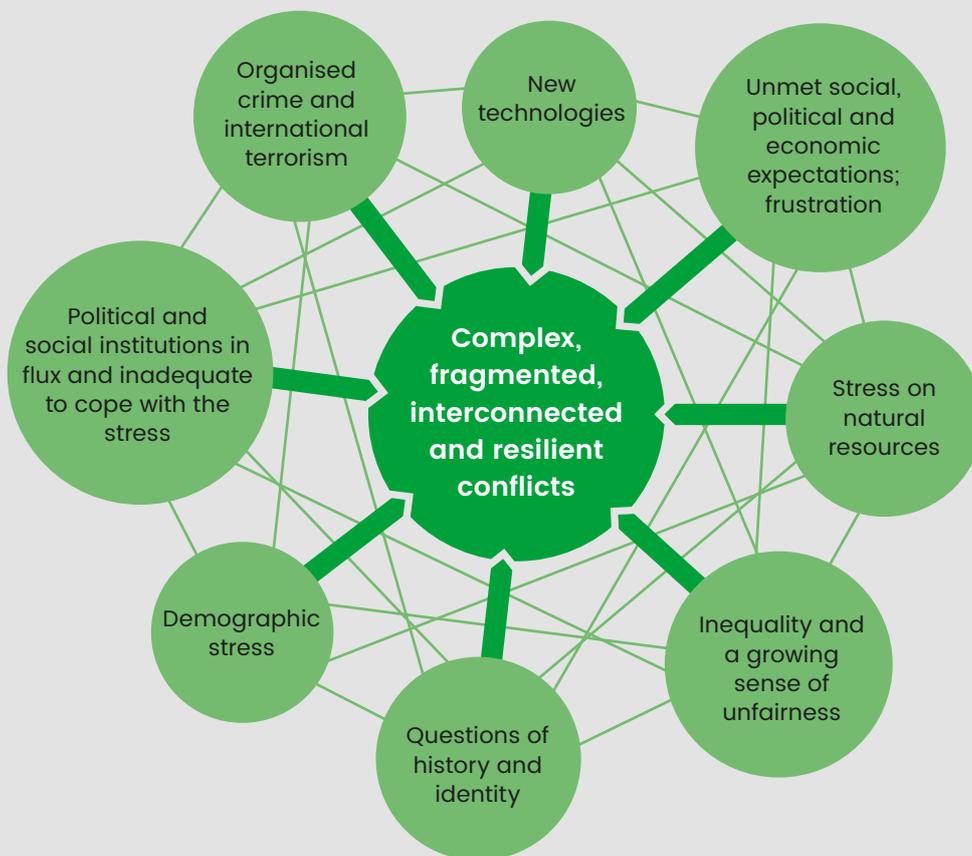
Each conflict is specific to its context and must be treated as such. We can, however, identify a set of broad underlying drivers that sustain violence. Taken together, these make up a dynamic and mutually reinforcing combination of pressures, as summarised in Figure 3. They also create grievances and a prevailing sense of unfairness that societies lack the capacity to address, especially during a period of great change in which many of the institutions and mechanisms that help provide resilience to conflict are in flux and thus weakened.

**Demographic stress:** Conflicts are fundamentally about access to resources and power, and demography has a major influence on this. Where the population's needs are out of balance with available resources, the risk of conflict is heightened. Population growth is outstripping the resources available for economic growth and decent living in too many places. Poorly governed and

insufficient access to land and other resources result in too many people in fragile countries having inadequate incomes, which is further exacerbated by a lack of underlying development infrastructure. Inequality and a sense of unfairness and injustice persist – and seem to be growing – within and between societies. This leads to frustration and grievances.

**Stress on natural resources:** The economies of many conflict-prone countries are still very much based on (often fragile) natural resources, which is why control of natural resources is a such core conflict factor in places such as the DRC and Myanmar. Growing populations add pressure. This, in turn, undermines economic development and can erode people's assets and incomes in a vicious spiral, which is further aggravated by external factors such as climate change or globalisation.

**Figure 3: Some of the interwoven, broad causes of modern conflicts**



**Inequality:** High rates of unemployment and inequality combined with low levels of education and development reduce the opportunity cost of mobilising for violence.

**Institutions in flux:** People whose livelihoods thus become unviable can be drawn into conflicts with neighbours or are obliged to move: either to new agricultural land to which others may have a prior claim, leading to new conflicts; to other countries where they are often unwelcome, creating new conflicts; or to growing and poorly governed settlements on the edge of cities, which become fertile grounds for violent crime and other sources of instability. Urbanisation is potentially good for peace, if cities allow faster and more widely shared economic growth, the middle class with a stake in stability rises, and there is an erosion of ethnic divisions, an increasingly dynamic civil society, and improved governance and relations between citizens and the state. But during rapid urbanisation, many factors that may have provided stability in rural areas no longer do so and the state's writ is often replaced by that of gangs in an environment of sustained poverty, human insecurity and violence.

**Unmet expectations:** Further stress is added in low- and middle-income countries with a high proportion of young people, if their social, economic and political ambitions are not met. Young people today have access to the internet and television, allowing them to see how others live and thus doubling their frustration. This is one of the factors incentivising recruitment to Islamist extremist groups, which offer young people a chance of personal agency – a chance to make a difference which otherwise seems denied to them. It was also a driver of the Arab Spring, sparked by the self-immolation of a frustrated young Tunisian, Mohamed Bouazizi.

**History and identity:** Identity has a heightened importance in fragile contexts. Religious and ethnic networks provide the economic and social resilience, and often security, when the state does not. This too often leads to – or exacerbates – enmity between identity groups, which is all too easily manipulated by conflict entrepreneurs. The breakdown of peace in South Sudan is just one example among many.

**International crime and terrorism:** Organised criminals take advantage of fragile states, setting up networks using corruption, patronage and violence. This further hollows out the state and makes the context yet more fragile. The influence of the international criminal drug trade on governance and stability in Mali – a route for sending illegal drugs to Europe – provides a recent example.

**New technologies:** Technologies can also have a major impact on peace and conflict. Connections and communication is critical for peace, and technology can enable these. Technology can also enable improved accountability, political engagement, economic opportunity, and access to justice, security and wellbeing. But new technologies are also exploited to undermine peace: for example, by enabling communication and propaganda between conflict entrepreneurs and their followers, and enabling acts of violence to be planned and executed across a wide area – as when attacks take place in diverse locations across the globe.

## 2.5 Institutions and the risks inherent in change

Conflicts are caused by internal and external stresses such as those described above. Societies develop institutions to manage stress, but conflicts turn violent when our capacity to absorb stress and manage the resulting conflicts – our *resilience to conflict* – is inadequate and overwhelmed.

We are living in a time of great change. Relationships between men and women, and between generations, are changing, often becoming more equal and freer; some political systems are becoming less repressive and more

democratic, at least on the surface; and international relationships are being recast. Ironically, many of these changes are seen as positive for peace in the long run. But – if so – they will take time to bed in. In the meantime, many institutions that should help anticipate and manage change have a reduced capacity to deal with stress and conflict, exactly when they need to do so. This increases the risk of local, national, regional and international instability, and thus of violence.

## Peacebuilding in progress Northern Ireland

Violence in Northern Ireland was caused by a complex brew of history, ethnic and religious identity, unequal access to political and economic opportunity, and external influences. A resurgence of violence – notably assassinations and bombings – since the 1960s resulted in over 3,500 deaths with many thousands injured,<sup>25</sup> a poorly performing economy, poorly performing public services, troops on the streets, imprisonment without trial, and communities divided by high walls physically reinforcing the identity-based social segregation, which was already a well-established trope in ideas of community and self.

The peace is by no means complete, as has been widely flagged in discussions of how Brexit might undermine the progress.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, great headway has been made. The annual death toll, 479 in 1972, has dropped to single digits in recent years.<sup>27</sup> Unemployment rates have dropped. The British army is no longer a familiar sight patrolling the streets, rural and city landscapes are being transformed,<sup>28</sup> political mechanisms have largely replaced violence in an example of the notion that politics is civil war by other means,<sup>29</sup> and surveys show that a large majority of people have high hopes for a peaceful future.<sup>30</sup>

This progress was helped by a growing sense of 'mutually hurting stalemate' on the part of the armed militants – brought about largely by the UK's state security responses and an acknowledgment that popular support for victory on any side was ebbing away, even if it were ever feasible.<sup>31</sup> The current state of peace has also been enabled by the increase in the numbers of people in Northern Ireland who do not identify primarily as members of the Catholic and Protestant communities – whether by choice or because they are immigrants – and, until now, on the common membership of Ireland and the UK in the EU.

This progress has mainly been achieved through a multitude of interwoven initiatives, characterised by a long-term commitment on the part of the UK and Irish governments combined with dynamic elements in civil society. Despite major setbacks and ongoing attempts by spoilers to undermine progress, there remains a willingness to focus on a small number of core issues and, importantly, a broad resolve not to allow challenges to derail them completely. The process has included hard-won peace negotiations, a comprehensive reform and independent oversight of policing, the disarmament of some paramilitaries, and the political engagement by paramilitary leaders and their supporters in convincing potential spoilers in their constituencies to renounce armed action in favour of politics. It has also included large financial transfers by the UK government and the EU to fund formal political mechanisms, the training of politicians, peace work, infrastructure projects, cross-community engagement, shared education initiatives, improved housing, economic policy development and to increase the political participation of more marginalised communities. Northern Ireland's exposure internationally as a famous peace case study has curiously also added an incentive to avoid backsliding, and created useful lines of collaboration and cross-context learning with peace activists elsewhere.

A core element of all these initiatives has been addressing some of the underlying causes of the conflict in the hopes of undermining the narratives of enmity. They have also been driven by hundreds of courageous civil society initiatives at all levels, and especially by women's organisations, to bridge divides, provide support to the bereaved, implement civic projects, organise public rallies for peace, and advocate for peaceful alternatives with political and community leaders. Importantly, they have also begun to shape new norms within and between all communities to rely less on notions of sectarian identity, seek to engender a common Northern Irish identity and reflect the recognition that progress can be achieved for all.<sup>32</sup>

25 M.A. Sergie, The Northern Ireland peace process, Council for Foreign Relations, 3 February 2014, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/northern-ireland-peace-process>

26 J. Doward, Brexit could leave Irish peace programme at risk, campaigners warn, The Guardian, 19 August 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/aug/19/brexit-leave-northern-ireland-peace-programme-jeopardy-open-britain-michel-barnier>

27 M.A. Sergie, 2014, Op. cit.

28 N.P. Walsh, How architecture tells the story of conflict and peace in Northern Ireland, ArchDaily, 11 May 2017, <http://www.archdaily.com/870567/how-architecture-tells-the-story-of-conflict-and-peace-in-northern-ireland>

29 D. Armitage, Civil wars: A history in ideas, New York: Knopf, 2017

30 C. Thiessen, S. Byrne, O. Skarlato and P. Tennet, Civil society leaders and Northern Ireland's peace process: Hopes and fears for the future, *Humanity & Society*, 34(1), 2010, pp.39–63

31 M. Gove, The price of peace: An analysis of British policy in Northern Ireland, London: Centre For Policy Studies, 2000

32 A. Hasanov, Civil society in Northern Ireland in the quest for peace, Analyticon, July 2014, <http://theanalyticon.com/?p=5337&lang=en>

### 3. Why peace matters

At least 22% of the world's population – over 1.6 billion people – live in conflict-affected contexts,<sup>33</sup> and 30–40% of political violence is directed against civilians.<sup>34</sup> More people have had to flee their homes today than at any time since the Second World War.<sup>35</sup> The UN estimates that the Syrian conflict alone has caused more than 400,000 deaths<sup>36</sup> and almost 11 million people have been displaced.<sup>37</sup>

**Millions are left with life-affecting injuries and disabilities, reducing their opportunities to make a living and fully participate in society.** Conflict wreaks psychological damage on combatants and civilians. High levels of sexual violence during conflict result in life-long scars. Among the silent consequences are increased rates of domestic violence, orphans, human trafficking, forced displacement and poverty. Women, youth and children are disproportionately affected and too many children grow up to see violence as a normal mechanism for resolving problems.

**By 2016, the number of people displaced by violence and conflict reached 65.6 million – one in every 113 people in the world.**

**Conflicts cross borders and feed other conflicts.**<sup>38</sup> Several of the world's long-running conflicts have a regional dimension, such as those in the Great Lakes region of Africa; Pakistan, India and Afghanistan; Syria and Iraq; and Israel and Palestine. Displacements due to conflict last for many years, and they create or intensify

conflicts over resources and undermine social cohesion in the places to which people are displaced.

By 2016, the number of people displaced by violence and conflict reached 65.6 million – one in every 113 people in the world.<sup>39</sup>

**Conflict also helps transboundary criminal networks flourish.** For example, drug trafficking networks that stretch from South America through the Sahel and into Europe, and human trafficking linked to refugee and economic migration.

**Violent extremism is one of the most politically charged transboundary manifestations of conflict.** IS and its affiliates have expanded to 28 countries by 2015.<sup>40</sup> While over 90% of those directly affected by acts of violent extremism were in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, historically more peaceful regions such as Europe have also been affected,<sup>41</sup> placing stress on pluralistic societies and emboldening divisive narratives and policies that have a knock-on effect in more fragile contexts through narrow and short-term foreign policies.

**Conflict reduces economic growth.** One estimate approximated that civil wars remove 2.2% of real gross domestic product (GDP) growth for every year of conflict<sup>42</sup> and GDP has already been reduced by well over 50% in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>43</sup> Conflict increases security, military and humanitarian expenditure, creates reconstruction bills that dwarf the estimated cost of prevention,<sup>44</sup> and reduces trade. Middle-income countries, often regarded as emerging markets, are not immune to conflict as inequalities grow and resources diminish.

**There is a moral, economic and political case for peacebuilding.**

33 OECD, 2016, Op. cit., p.14

34 Ibid., p.18

35 S. Jones, One in every 113 people forced to flee, says UN refugee agency, The Guardian, 20 June 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jun/20/one-in-every-113-people-uprooted-war-persecution-says-un-refugee-agency>, accessed 21 August 2017

36 Casualties of the Syrian Civil War, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualties\\_of\\_the\\_Syrian\\_Civil\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualties_of_the_Syrian_Civil_War), accessed 12 August 2017

37 Syria emergency, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/syria-emergency.html>, accessed 12 August 2017

38 World Bank, World development report 2014: Risk and opportunity – Managing risk for development, Washington DC: World Bank, 2013, [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTNWDR2013/Resources/8258024-1352909193861/8936935-1356011448215/8986901-1380046989056/WDR-2014\\_Complete\\_Report.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTNWDR2013/Resources/8258024-1352909193861/8936935-1356011448215/8986901-1380046989056/WDR-2014_Complete_Report.pdf)

39 Development Initiatives, Global humanitarian assistance report 2017, Bristol, Nairobi, Uganda and Washington DC: Development Initiatives, 2017, p.17, <http://devinit.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/GHA-Report-2017-Full-report.pdf>

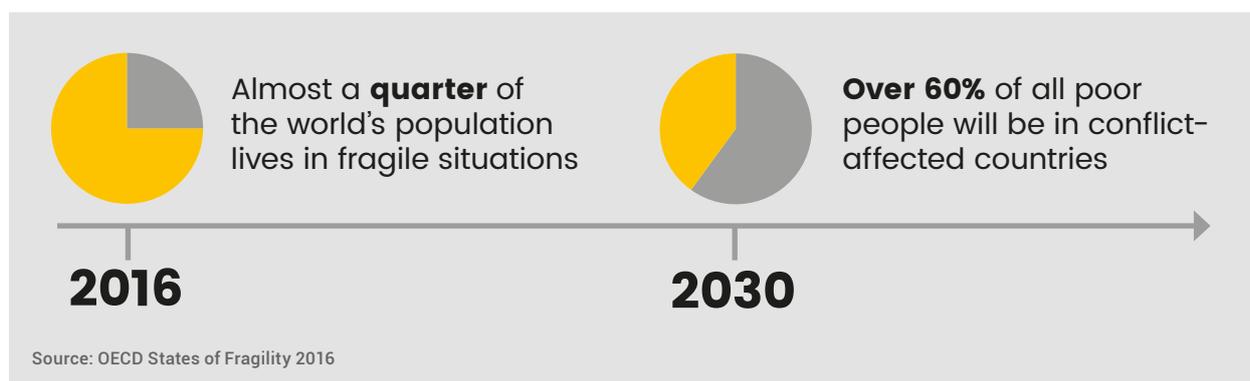
40 IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2016, New York: IEP, 2016, p.4, <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf>

41 Ibid., p.22

42 P. Collier, On the economic consequences of civil war, Oxford Economic Papers, 51, 1999, pp.168–183

43 IEP, 2017, Op. cit.

44 Ibid.



It is estimated that if civil war in northeast Nigeria were to break out, it could cost the UK economy £90–240 million per year.<sup>45</sup> The Middle East is estimated to have lost as much as US\$35 billion in lost output or foregone growth due to the Syrian crisis – the equivalent of Syria's entire GDP in 2007.<sup>46</sup>

**For people in conflict-affected countries, lives and livelihoods are disrupted and infrastructure needed for business, today and in the future, is destroyed.** Over 85% of Syria's population now lives below the poverty line, with over 50% of the labour force pushed into unemployment.<sup>47</sup> The cost of damage to infrastructure and economic losses in Yemen was estimated at more than US\$14 billion in 2016.<sup>48</sup> In Libya, the reconstruction of infrastructure will cost an estimated US\$200 billion over 10 years.<sup>49</sup>

Refugee host countries and international donors end up footing large parts of the bill. **More has been spent trying to rebuild Afghanistan than rebuilding Europe after the Second World War.**<sup>50</sup> Combined US expenditure in Iraq, a country still at war, reached US\$1.7 trillion by 2015.<sup>51</sup> The World Bank estimates that the influx of Syrian refugees in Jordan has cost more than US\$2.5 billion a year. This amounts to 6% of the country's GDP and 25% of the government's annual revenues.<sup>52</sup> Global humanitarian expenditure rose from US\$16.1 to US\$27.3 billion between 2012 and 2016.<sup>53</sup>

Conflict and violence obviously undermine human development. By 2030, over 60% of all poor people are expected to be found in fragile and conflict-affected countries.<sup>54</sup> On average, a country that experienced major violence over the period from 1981 to 2005 had a poverty rate 21% higher than a country that saw no violence.<sup>55</sup>

**Conflicts damage schools and prevent children getting an education.** They erode or prevent the development of healthcare, water, energy and other essential infrastructure and services; impede the private sector investment needed to generate livelihoods; deplete labour and human capital; and destroy productive assets and financial capital. War economies and institutions that are created in conflict are extractive, and distort national and local political economies, as well as placing pressure on the broader social fabric within communities and between citizens and governments.

**Conflict is the major challenge to implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.** It is hard to see how we will come close to achieving SDG 1, eradicating extreme poverty, without addressing conflict.

45 H. Mueller, The economic costs of conflict, International Growth Centre, Working Paper, 2013, p.32, <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Mueller-2013-Working-Paper2.pdf>

46 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) quarterly economic brief, January 2016: The economic effects of war and peace, World Bank, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/mena/publication/mena-quarterly-economic-brief-january-2016>, accessed 21 August 2017

47 About Syria, United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.sy.undp.org/content/syria/en/home/countryinfo.html>, accessed 21 August 2017

48 Y. Bayoumy, Civil war costs Yemen \$14 billion in damage and economic losses – report, Reuters, 16 August 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-damages-idUSKCN10R2B7>

49 MENA quarterly economic brief, Op. cit.

50 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Quarterly report to the United States Congress, Arlington: SIGAR, 2014, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2014-07-30qr.pdf>

51 P. Apps, The war in Afghanistan has so far cost \$33,000 per citizen. And will not end well, 1 October 2015, Reuters, <http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/10/01/the-war-in-afghanistan-cost-of-33000-per-citizen-and-will-not-end-well/>

52 MENA quarterly economic brief, Op. cit.

53 Development Initiatives, 2017, Op. cit., p.7

54 OECD, 2016, Op. cit.

55 World Bank, 2011, Op. cit., p.5

# 4. The current response to conflict

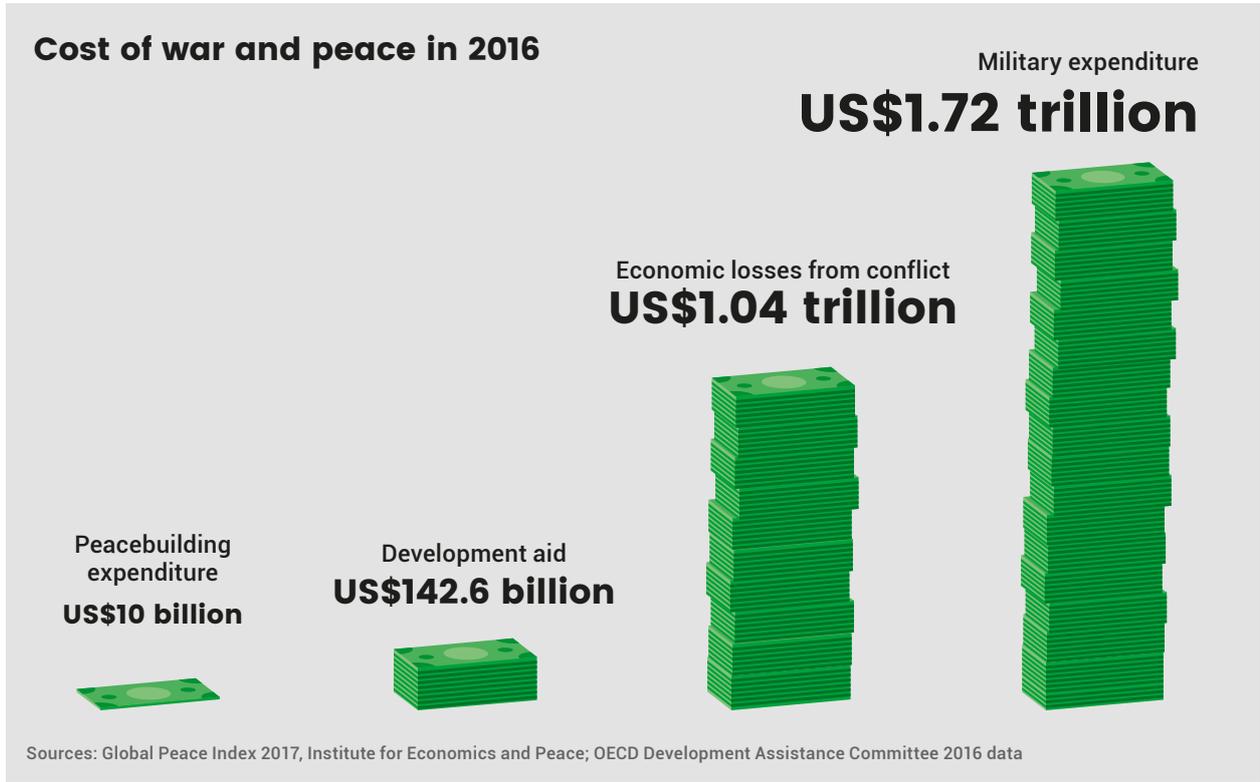
## 4.1 Conflict response and peacebuilding

Given the challenges outlined above, one would expect peacebuilding to be at the heart of international action. In section 5, examples of successful peacebuilding are provided. Many recent institutional positives can also be identified, such as:

- the inclusion of peace and security in the SDGs<sup>56</sup> and in the foreign aid policies of many donor countries;<sup>57</sup>
- the World Bank's and other international finance institutions' recognition of the need to work differently in conflict-affected contexts, based on the 2011 World Development Report and subsequent strategies;<sup>58</sup>
- the appreciation in international policies that climate change and climate adaptation can exacerbate or cause conflict;<sup>59</sup>

- an increasing emphasis on the rights and roles of women and girls in peace and conflict;<sup>60</sup>
- the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and UN Peacebuilding Fund, alongside the adoption of the "responsibility to protect"<sup>61</sup> (which mandates the international community to protect citizens at risk, even when their governments disapprove); and
- the adoption in 2016 of the UN Security Council Resolution 2282,<sup>62</sup> which recognises the need to refocus the UN's attention on long-term and inclusive peacebuilding.

The prevailing responses to conflict are inadequate.



56 UN General Assembly, 2015, Op. cit.

57 HM Treasury, Department for International Development, UK Aid: Tackling global challenges in the national interest, November 2015, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/478834/ODA\\_strategy\\_final\\_web\\_0905.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/478834/ODA_strategy_final_web_0905.pdf); Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), SIDA's approach to an integrated conflict perspective, January 2017, [http://www.sida.se/globalassets/sida/eng/partners/peace-and-conflict-tool-box/s209461\\_tool\\_integrated\\_peace\\_and\\_conflict\\_perspective\\_c3.pdf](http://www.sida.se/globalassets/sida/eng/partners/peace-and-conflict-tool-box/s209461_tool_integrated_peace_and_conflict_perspective_c3.pdf); Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Policy agenda 2012, <https://www.government.nl/documents/annual-plans/2011/09/21/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-policy-agenda-2012>

58 World Bank, 2011, Op. cit.

59 For example, K. Reiling and C. Brady, Climate change and conflict, An annex to the USAID climate-resilient development framework, Washington DC: USAID, 2015

Every **\$1** invested in peacebuilding can lead to a **\$16** decline in the cost of armed conflict.



Source: Global Peace Index 2017, Institute for Economics and Peace

Nevertheless, the investment in peacebuilding remains disproportionately small. The Global Peace Index estimated that the total expenditure on peacebuilding was around \$10 billion in 2016<sup>63</sup>, just over 0.5% of the \$1.72 trillion global military expenditure<sup>64</sup> and just under 1% of the annual \$1.04 trillion cost of lost economic global growth due to war.<sup>65</sup>

The IEP has estimated that every US\$1 invested in peacebuilding saves US\$16 in costs due to conflict.<sup>66</sup>

Based on this, one might argue that the global budget for peacebuilding should increase to *at least*

US\$65 billion, or one-sixteenth of the cost of war. This would represent an increase of more than six times the current level of spending.

But such global figures are highly abstract, thus quickly lose any real meaning, and a more tangible target would be to

spend at least US\$27 per capita on peacebuilding in all conflict-affected countries, as the IEP conservatively recommends,<sup>67</sup> – at least double the current rate of spending on average.

**At least  
US\$27 per capita  
should be spent on  
peacebuilding in all  
conflict-affected  
countries.**

In 2015, an Advisory Group of Experts asked to review the UN's peacebuilding architecture produced a highly critical report, *The challenge of sustaining peace*.<sup>68</sup> It took note of important successes in stopping the fighting and keeping the peace in places from Liberia to Cambodia. But it found the UN lacks the capacity to sustain its involvement and convert short-term stability into longer-term peace. This was explained by a combination of factors. The UN was constrained by its siloed approach and a predominance of short-termism, whereas peacebuilding requires a comprehensive and long-term approach. There was a poor understanding of the nature and methods of peacebuilding; an unwillingness or inability to reach beyond *states* and engage with diverse constituencies in conflict-affected countries; and the blocking of collective, effective action by member states themselves due to their vested interests.

These failings reach far beyond the UN and resonate throughout the international community, which has a tendency to focus on **peacemaking** (negotiating deals to end or avoid violence) and **peacekeeping** (restoring short-term stability), at the expense of longer-term **peacebuilding** (promoting an enabling environment for sustained peace).

60 UN Security Council, Resolution 1325, S/RES/1325 (2000), New York: UN, 2000; UN Security Council, Resolution 2242, S/RES/2242 (2015), New York: UN, 2015

61 UN General Assembly, Resolution 60.1 adopted by the General Assembly, 2005 World Summit outcome, A/RES/60/1, New York: UN, 2005, <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/idrl/I520EN.pdf>

62 UN Security Council, 2016, Op. cit.

63 IEP, 2017, Op. cit., p.3

64 Ibid., p.44

65 Ibid., p.70

66 Ibid., p.73

67 Ibid., p.70

68 Advisory Group of Experts, 2015, Op. cit.

Photo: © Karam Almasry/Nur Photo/Alamy Live News



Young girl in the ruins of Aleppo, Syria

In unresolved conflicts such as Ukraine and Nagorny Karabakh, the focus is on high level talks, which make little or no headway year after year, rather than finding ways to build relationships across the conflict or ceasefire lines and address the issues politically in Ukraine, Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Where peace agreements are achieved, international institutions tend to view them as representing a settled new political status quo and the basis for peace, rather than treating them as little more than ceasefires needing a great deal of further accompaniment and careful evolution, as they should.

International approaches to conflict still heavily rely on military and other security-led interventions. An example of this is the approach to violent extremism, with many governments focusing on arresting suspects and other 'hard' security measures, than on addressing the factors making people susceptible to extremist recruitment in the first place. Heavy-handed measures can be counter-productive, further alienating vulnerable citizens and potentially driving them towards armed groups.

Many international agencies lack sufficient ability to devise and deliver strategic packages of assistance designed to foster sustainable peace. In 2004, a major, highly critical report into externally supported peacebuilding called for it to be devised and delivered within a coherent strategic framework in any given context.<sup>69</sup> More than a decade later, there is little evidence of this being done. Comprehensive reviews of externally supported peacebuilding in South Sudan and the DRC both found that international agencies were still not working strategically and thus having insufficient impact on peace,<sup>70</sup> and this remains a worry.<sup>71</sup>

Finally, not enough attention is paid to places where tensions are rising and systems are failing, increasing the risk of conflict. Syria, for example, was affected before the conflict broke out by the combined threat of a devastating drought (the worst in at least 500 years, according to the Goddard Institute for Space Studies),<sup>72</sup> the Arab Spring, and instability in neighbouring Iraq – all compounding internal tensions, including brutal and repressive governance, and the effects of other regional conflicts.

69 D. Smith, *Towards a strategic framework for peacebuilding: Getting their act together*, Oslo: Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004

70 E. Brusset et al., Amani Labda, *Peace Maybe: Joint evaluation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, Synthesis Report, Ohain: Channel Research, 2011; J. Bennett, S. Pantuliano, W. Fenton, A. Vaux, C. Barnett and E. Brusset, *Aiding the peace: A multi-donor evaluation of support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in Southern Sudan 2005–2010*, Final report, The Hague: Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010

71 S. Autesserre, 2017, *Op. cit.*; C. Cramer, J. Goodhand and R. Morris, 2016, *Op. cit.*

72 E. Stokes, *The drought that preceded Syria's civil war was likely the worst in 900 years*, Vice News, 4 March 2016, <https://news.vice.com/article/the-drought-that-preceded-syrias-civil-war-was-likely-the-worst-in-900-years>

## 4.2 Why is so little attention paid to peacebuilding?

Looking beneath the surface, we can identify several institutional reasons for the lack of attention being paid to peacebuilding. Firstly, there is a poor understanding among decision-makers of what peacebuilding can achieve, and insufficient peacebuilding capacity available to them.

**There is a poor understanding of what peacebuilding can achieve among top-tier decision-makers**

This is compounded by a failure to understand that most peacebuilding is and can be done by non-professional peacebuilders: by politicians, civil servants, businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and others, provided they plan carefully and have a good understanding of context and a desire to contribute to peace.

Many governments are still conditioned by the reflex that interventions will be primarily military/security, diplomatic (government to government) or technical in nature, rather than a matter of engaging with a broad spectrum of different stakeholders in civil society, business and politics.

Some decision-makers are sceptical about the efficacy of peacebuilding work and are unsatisfied by responses to their questions about the impact of peacebuilding. This reflects the long-term and incremental nature of peacebuilding, as well as the genuine risk that successes can be impaired when conditions change. It also reflects an unhelpful tendency towards short-termism, driven by competition for funds and the understandable desire for concrete results, which can be easily understood by voters and other constituencies. Some decision-makers are more attracted to seemingly kinetic and tangible interventions rather than supporting less exciting, less photogenic activities such as dialogue.

The need to put the safety and security of decision-makers' constituencies ahead of the safety and security of others colours their interventions abroad. This means, for example, that combatting violent extremism emphasises hard security measures over measures that build community resilience to the attractions of extremism. It also creates

a preference for stability over the uncertainties of change, even when stability is accompanied by repression and human rights violations. There is a genuine tension between the desire of liberal donor governments and international agencies to support greater inclusion, fairness and accountability in conflict-affected contexts and their desire for stability today, especially as they know that increased inclusion can create short-term instability.

Historical trends, relationships and pathways, linked to vested interests, also undermine some governments' ability to see beyond existing alliances and their short-term interests. An obvious example is the US and other Western powers' inability to see new opportunities for peacebuilding in the Middle East, because of their history there, or the difficulty India and Pakistan have in seeing the situation in Afghanistan other than through the lens of their own rivalry.

A further constraint has emerged in the weariness and wariness among many, especially in the West, towards the whole idea of intervention, because of the failed interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. An alternative conclusion would be to avoid poorly thought-through and overly militarised interventions rather than the idea of intervening per se.

It is worth noting that policy-makers who opt for military action – and do so partly because this is kinetic and thus produces relatively tangible and rapid results – all too often find that their efforts fail and produce perverse outcomes, including increased instability and rising levels and extents of violence – as was made evident by the report of the Iraq Inquiry in the UK.<sup>73</sup> The 2011 international intervention in Libya is another sad example of this. After the initial success, the situation became increasingly insecure and unstable, complicated by the presence of IS and tribal factions, and has contributed to the large-scale human trafficking of desperate African and Middle Eastern refugees across the Mediterranean, with the resulting tragic loss of lives, and disruption of governance in Europe.<sup>74</sup>

**From the analysis so far, it is clear that much more attention needs to be paid to peacebuilding.**

73 UK Cabinet Office, The report of the Iraq inquiry, London: UK Cabinet Office, 2016

74 A.J. Kuperman, Obama's Libya debacle: How a well-meaning intervention ended in failure, Foreign Affairs, March/April 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/obamas-libya-debacle>

## Peacebuilding in progress **Nepal**

Nepal is another example where significant – although still far from sufficient – progress towards peace has been made. The civil war waged by Maoists and the state in 1996–2006 caused over 14,000 deaths, and thousands more were injured or displaced. It was accompanied by widespread violent unrest in the form of demonstrations, intimidation, damage to property and repeated shutdowns of commercial centres.<sup>75</sup> Both the Maoists and government forces committed serious human rights abuses, including enforced disappearances, torture, extrajudicial killings and sexual violence.<sup>76</sup> By 2006, the conflict had cost an estimated 3% of the country's gross GDP.<sup>77</sup> This was against a historical background of chopping and changing between different political systems since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, causing continual disruption and uncertainty, with many political issues and grievances never addressed. A repressive and exclusionary approach to governance became the norm, in a context where ethnic diversity and history meant that a more inclusive approach was needed.

The 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) brought an end to the civil war, which has not since been reignited. The rebel army was successfully disbanded and power-sharing governments ruled until the promulgation of a new constitution in 2015 and subsequent local and provincial elections. National elections are due to take place by early 2018. The role of parliament during this period has been filled by a constituent assembly, which during two national elections has returned members representing the geographic, religious, ethnic and caste diversity of Nepal – a major achievement. The nature of discourse about inclusion has significantly changed from being one of access to political and economic power within the historically established Hindu-dominated order to one in which the very concept of being a Nepali is undergoing change.<sup>78</sup> The levels of political disturbances and violence have decreased – although not uniformly. During the decade since the CPA, Nepalis have demonstrated the resilience to withstand continual elite infighting over power, attempts by spoilers to undermine stability, and the political, social and economic consequences of a major earthquake in 2015. There have also been violent reactions to the new constitution by people in the Terai region who fear it will disadvantage them, and the accompanying disruption and hardship caused by a trade blockade by a hostile Indian government.

As with Northern Ireland, much remains to be done before peace is embedded. Progress has been enabled by external factors such as the opportunities for labour migration, which has helped make up for the lack of business investment in Nepal so far – with millions of Nepalis working abroad.<sup>79</sup> But Nepal is rightly seen as a success – and like Northern Ireland is being looked at by others, such as leaders in Myanmar, for lessons. The CPA was brave and ambitious, as it sought to address the confused and dysfunctional political landscape by setting out a process for the establishment of nothing less than a new Nepali state, as well as new relationships between the state and the people. Setting out this demanding transformation ran the risk that spoilers would undermine it, but it also flagged the intention to address some of the fundamental political problems that had led to the civil war. By the use of a constituent assembly reflecting the demographic diversity of Nepal, it gave immediate weight to this intention. Temporary all-party governance mechanisms have done the same in the districts.

75 R. Gurung and E. Drew, *Peace audit: Nepal*, London: International Alert, 2015, p.10, [http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/PeaceAudit\\_Nepal\\_EN\\_2015.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/PeaceAudit_Nepal_EN_2015.pdf)

76 Nepal: Decade after peace, scant progress on justice, Human Rights Watch, 18 November 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/18/nepal-decade-after-peace-scant-progress-justice>

77 G. Pradhan, Nepal's civil war and its economic costs, *Journal of International and Global Studies*, 1(1), 2009, pp.114–131, <http://www.lindenwood.edu/files/resources/114-131.pdf>

78 A. Neelakantan, A. Ramsbotham and D. Thapa, *Peace, power and inclusive change in Nepal: Political settlements in practice*, London: Conciliation Resources, 2016

79 R. Gurung and E. Drew, 2015, *Op. cit.*, p.19

Photo: © Xinhua / Alamy Stock Photo



Nepalese activists demand women's rights as part of new constitution, Kathmandu, August 2015

The story of peace in Nepal so far is largely one of maintaining stability: binding the national and local elites into a transitional political arrangement to provide breathing space in which to start making progress towards a more open political economy. One of its strengths is that it has been mainly an indigenous process, seeking external support only for specific purposes (for example, in the demobilisation and reintegration of Maoists). Another has been the way politicians have been able to prevent stresses – such as the earthquake, internal political rifts, discontent with the constitution in the Terai and the Indian government's blockade – from derailing the process, preferring to miss CPA deadlines and allow time for people's discomfort over particular issues to be resolved or reduced, rather than rush them through.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, the scene has been set for the next stage of peacebuilding by the continued emphasis on inclusion and power-sharing at the elite level – in the local bodies, provincial parliaments, national parliaments, as well as other policy-making institutions and bodies – and by maintaining a vision of transformational change, designed to remind people that the systems that gave rise to past grievances are expected to change. Following the 2017 and 2018 elections, the challenge of expanding the political and economic circle beyond the elite will still have to be met.

<sup>80</sup> Deadlines for the promulgation of the constitution, demobilisation and other milestones, such as the establishment of commissions for truth and reconciliation and to investigate the disappeared, have all at various times been missed, allowing formal and informal process the extra time needed to digest and prepare.

## 5. The experience of peacebuilding

Since Boutros-Ghali brought peacebuilding to international attention in 1992,<sup>81</sup> the concept has been applied successfully in hundreds of contexts. There has not been enough time to 'achieve' peace fully in any given context: it is, after all, still a relatively new way of framing initiatives. It takes at least a generation to be able to say with evidence and confidence that peace is becoming sustainable on a large scale.<sup>82</sup> what has been called "peace writ large": when a critical mass of mutually reinforcing network effects embed peace sustainably in a given national or regional context.<sup>83</sup>

Historians do not agree on how peace has emerged, so no perfect prescription exists. But we know how to recognise peace: first by stability and reduced levels of violence; then by the accumulation of attitudes, behaviours and norms that allow fair access to livelihoods, justice, safety and other aspects of wellbeing; and by the collaborative and trusting relationships that reinforce good governance and social cohesion. Peacebuilding is essentially any initiative that strengthens these.

There is an increasing body of evidence that good progress towards these outcomes is being made, in a wide variety of contexts, and that a concerted and coherent effort to expand these efforts will tip the balance in favour of sustainable peace. Below are just a few examples that show peacebuilding approaches working and – along with the case studies from Nepal, Northern Ireland and South Africa – support the argument that a greater and sustained emphasis on peace and peacebuilding among a wider set of actors can yield even greater results.

### 5.1 Stability

Maintaining or achieving stability is a necessary but insufficient stage in peacebuilding. Peacemaking and peacekeeping – the core interventions for stability – are widely supported. The international community has successfully helped to end violent conflict or avert predicted violence in the past few years. Examples include Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Liberia, Nepal, Sierra Leone and South Africa, where political transitions from civil war were achieved; various Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe interventions in the ex-Soviet Union and in Romania; the ongoing transition from military government to democracy in Myanmar; the concerted effort to avoid a repeat of terrible election violence that occurred in Kenya in 2007–8; negotiating a political solution to the impasse in Guinea after the death of President Conté in 2008; and the recent intervention of West African leaders to ensure a peaceful handover of power after the disputed 2016 presidential election in the Gambia. Even the eastern DRC, despite at least 69 distinct armed groups remaining active after two decades of civil conflict, has benefited from the relative stability provided by the internationally brokered peace accords and the UN stabilisation mission there since 1999.<sup>84</sup>

The approaches which contributed to these successes included military intervention to stop or prevent fighting and maintain stability, direct and indirect mediation and negotiations, the rapid restoration of service provision and other confidence measures designed to demonstrate the peace dividend and the legitimacy of the state, the organisation of elections, the demobilisation and reintegration of fighters and cadres, injections of funds to pay for reconstruction and recurrent costs, and a restructuring of the security sector.



Evidence shows that peacebuilding pays.

81 UN, An agenda for peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, A/47/277, UN, 1992, <http://www.un-documents.net/a47-277.htm>

82 World Bank, 2011, Op. cit.

83 OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Encouraging effective evaluation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities: Towards DAC guidance, Paris: OECD, 2007

84 J. Stearns and C. Vogel, The landscape of armed groups in the eastern Congo, New York: Center for International Cooperation, 2015

## 5.2 Positive peace

Ending and preventing fighting, and the establishment of stability – negative peace – is a major achievement. But it is not enough. It is essential to continue building the enabling environment for peace as soon as – and for many years after – stability has been achieved. Otherwise, unresolved conflicts risk resurfacing in new outbreaks of violence, as we have seen from places as diverse as Burundi, Mali, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and parts of the Caucasus.

Positive peace – or resilience – depends on a number of peace factors, including the nature of relationships and governance, and the degree to which people have fair opportunities for livelihoods, security, justice and general wellbeing. These factors are all interlinked, thus few initiatives and outcomes are neatly confined within one of these domains. But they are part of a useful organising principle and this section therefore looks briefly at examples relevant to each.



### 5.2.1 Improved relationships and governance

**Governance works when disputes and differences are anticipated, managed and resolved non-violently and fairly.** This applies whatever the scope: local, national or international. A core element of peacebuilding is the reinforcement and expansion of mechanisms, skills and habits that allow this.

A review of peacebuilding initiatives carried out for the UK government in 2016 noted that one of the most successful forms of intervention was the establishment of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.<sup>85</sup> Typically, these are multi-stakeholder mechanisms for identifying and resolving disputes over resources. Such disputes are not only harmful themselves, but when there is a history of conflict – especially with an interethnic or communal dimension – they can easily get out of hand, and violence escalates. Successful examples of dispute resolution mechanisms build on pre-existing models

and are linked to formal governance institutions, but tend to be more participatory and inclusive, involving men, women and representatives of different ages, classes and other identities.

A survey following training and continued support provided to Muslim and Christian leaders in parts of the Central African Republic indicated there had been a five-fold increase in people saying conflicts between the two religious groups were being resolved peacefully and an 86% rise in the number of people who said they trusted members of the 'other' group in their communities. The increase in mutual confidence between them led to 69% of conflict-displaced people saying they had already returned home, or planned to. This factor was also cited as having helped create the conditions for a local disarmament and reconciliation pact to be agreed in one city, including a commitment to protect members of the other community from further attacks.<sup>86</sup>

A programme in the eastern DRC established and trained local groups, involving chiefs, men and women, different ethnic groups and young people, to investigate, deliberate and resolve local disputes, typically over land or other resources. After three years, two-thirds of community members said that conflict prevention and resolution had improved, and 28% more conflicts over land had been resolved than in communities which had not benefited.<sup>87</sup>

**In eastern DRC, local groups are resolving 28% more conflicts over land.**

Following severe outbreaks of violence in the Maluku archipelago in Indonesia in the late 1990s, with 5,000 casualties and some half a million people displaced, a combination of dialogue, action research and training in peace facilitation led to the establishment of a new council for an area covering 836 villages. It involved people from all levels and groups in society, and sought to understand and address some of the issues linked to identity, economic opportunity and historical injustice that had contributed to the violence.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>85</sup> C. Cramer, J. Goodhand and R. Morris, 2016, Op. cit.

<sup>86</sup> Alliance for Peacebuilding, Violence reduction: Evidence from around the world, Washington DC: Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2017, <http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Violence-Reduction-Case-Statement-Alliance-for-Peacebuilding-4.pdf>

<sup>87</sup> Rapport de l'évaluation finale du projet Tufaidike Wote, Janvier-Mars 2017. Patrick Milabo Kyamusugulwa, DRC. p. 21. <http://www.careevaluations.org/Evaluations/TUFAIDIKE%20WOTE%20FINAL%20EVALUATION.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> A. Bourse, A. Serbin, A. Ryabov, G. Khutsishvili, I. Malik and S. Bryn, Creating space for dialogue: A role for civil society, Dialogue and Mediation Series, Issue 1, The Hague: The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 2015, p.103, [http://www.gppac.net/documents/130492842/131171520/060-009\\_creating+Spaces\\_DigitalPublication.pdf/5749bd2b-5562-483d-b06f-5de233015547](http://www.gppac.net/documents/130492842/131171520/060-009_creating+Spaces_DigitalPublication.pdf/5749bd2b-5562-483d-b06f-5de233015547)

In Bangladesh, where electoral violence has become endemic over many years, a project trained 2,700 party officials and other influential women and men in eight districts to be peace ambassadors so they could raise awareness of the need to act peacefully during elections. Following the subsequent election, 97% of the ambassadors said they had prevented acts of violence and 89% had also been involved in resolving other disputes – not directly linked to the election – in their communities. This indicates that such mechanisms can have an impact beyond the initial policy goal.<sup>89</sup>

At a national level, a peacebuilding programme brought together youth leaders from all the political parties in Lebanon over several years. This led to an increase in the incidence of dialogue taking place between them, and a growing sense among them that dialogue skills and approaches allowed them to explore difficult issues on which their parties' pre-existing positions otherwise made it hard for them to compromise or seek a new consensus.<sup>90</sup> They subsequently worked together to resolve violent disputes among young people aligned to different parties.<sup>91</sup>

Dialogue helps improve mutual trust and is a core component of sustainable mechanisms for conflict resolution. But it is also used by peacebuilders to help resolve specific on-off problems. Plateau state in

Nigeria has been the site of terrible communal clashes. After initiatives that combined early warning systems, public radio programmes for awareness-raising, and dialogues between people and the security services, 70% of people surveyed said intergroup relations had improved and 76% said that their security situation had improved.<sup>92</sup>

**In Nigeria, 76% said peacebuilding had improved their security situation.**

Those conducting dialogue in places with deep structural mistrust between identity groups often admit it is difficult to measure success accurately. Anecdotal data sometimes provide clues, as for example in the case of dialogues between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. A local Serb leader there, who had persuaded his people not to commit revenge attacks on Albanians after a bomb attack on a café in Mitrovica, said he would not even have considered that option if he had not taken part in the peace dialogues.<sup>93</sup> In Burundi, a group calling itself Apostles of Peace was formed by senior figures in the military, security, justice and other elite sectors at the time of the Arusha peace negotiations, to develop informal relationships across party and ethnic lines that they successfully used to reduce tensions on high profile issues such as political reforms. They brought others together in dialogue and through joint public appearances served as role models, showing that “the other camp are not monsters”.<sup>94</sup>



## 5.2.2 Livelihoods and the economy

**Economic exclusion and grievances, and the struggle for economic power, are critical parts of the historical narrative of conflict.**<sup>95</sup> It follows, therefore, that improved and fairer access to jobs and other economic opportunities – and mechanisms for regulating access to economic resources – are critical to peace. While there are no blueprints, and economic initiatives can create or exacerbate conflicts if they are not devised and implemented carefully,<sup>96</sup> there is plenty of evidence that economic initiatives contribute to a reduction in violence.<sup>97</sup>

A recent evaluation of economic peacebuilding initiatives in Uganda found that engaging with national and local government, businesses and community groups has enabled successful mediation and resolution of conflicts in cities and across Uganda's borders. It also found that by working with business people in northern Uganda in the period after the end of the Lord's Resistance

89 Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2017, Op. cit.

90 International Alert, Results framework 2014: A snapshot of International Alert's main activities and impact, London: International Alert, 2015, p.37, <http://www.international-alert.org/publications/results-framework-2014>

91 Doing politics differently, International Alert, 13 January 2016, <http://www.international-alert.org/media/doing-politics-differently-lebanon>

92 Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2017, Op. cit.

93 A. Bourse, A. Serbin, A. Ryabov, G. Khutsishvili, I. Malik and S. Bryn, 2015, Op. cit., pp.70–74

94 Burundi: Organizations called Foundation for Unity, Peace and Democracy (Fondation pour l'unité, la paix et la démocratie) and Society of the Apostles of Peace (Compagnie des apôtres de la paix, CAP); whether Tutsi members of these organizations are targeted by extremist Hutus and/or Tutsis (1994 - November 2002), UNHCR Refworld, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3f7d4d5826.html>, accessed 13 August 2017

95 P. Vernon, Peace through prosperity: Integrating peacebuilding into economic development, London: International Alert, 2015

96 International Alert, Conflict-sensitive business practice: A guide for the extractive industry, London: International Alert, 2005

97 C. Cramer, J. Goodhand and R. Morris, 2016, Op. cit.

Photo: © Carol Allen-Storey / International Alert



Traders on the border at Bukavu.

In eastern DRC, women traders reported a **60% drop in harassment at border crossings.**

Army's rebellion, the programme helped reduce the risk of conflicts flaring up, for example, by providing guidance on how investors should approach issues linked to the conflict, such as how to obtain access to productive land. In addition, potential conflicts linked to Uganda's developing oil and gas industry had been prevented, with the programme's emphasis on improved communication and information sharing among the various oil and gas stakeholders credited as contributing to this. The programme also helped other stakeholders in Uganda take account of how economic issues influence continued progress towards peace – something that according to them had previously been ignored.<sup>98</sup>

Enabling communities to pursue trade without fear of violence or exploitation is also a critical economic pillar of peace. Following training of traders and custom officials on issues of rights and responsibilities, women traders have reported a 60% drop in cases of harassment at four key border crossings between eastern DRC and neighbouring Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, which has long been a very tense region. To effect further change, governments from across the region came together with women traders to explore ways of changing regulations and practices to better support their livelihoods.<sup>99</sup>

In rural, natural-resource-based economies, the regulation of access to land and other resources is fundamental to peace. Abovementioned examples of alternative dispute mechanisms showed how these helped people resolve issues of access to land. Another example is a land conflict programme in Alta Verapaz and El Quiché in Guatemala. A survey indicated that 86% of people were satisfied with the resolution of their land conflicts through mediation and 92% were found to have complied with the agreements they made. Almost all (97%) said violence had reduced as a result of the programme and over half claimed that the greatest impact of the mediation was being able to live without a constant fear of violent confrontation.<sup>100</sup> Land is also a core conflict issue in the Philippines and one of many land mediation programmes there, operating in Mindanao, was found to have solved 90% of high priority land conflicts.<sup>101</sup>

Some conflicts stem from the need for pastoralists to have access to land or water, where they may be in competition with other livestock herders or with farmers. Often the mechanisms for achieving harmony between competing

98 Policy Research Institute (PRI), Evaluation of International Alert's economic development for peace programming, Geneva: PRI, 2017 (forthcoming)

99 International Alert, Peace is within our power: 30 years of building peace, 2016, p.16

100 Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2017, Op. cit.

101 Ibid.

land uses break down when stressed by drought, forced displacement or other factors. An example of such cooperation being restored is in the Somali-Oromiya region of Ethiopia, where work on solving disputes through dialogue was credited as having contributed to improved freedom of movement. This, in turn, strengthened the livestock owners' ability to withstand drought and thus reduced the likelihood of further conflict igniting due to reduced availability of grazing and water.<sup>102</sup>

Business leaders are often influential beyond their narrow business role. While some businesses have fuelled conflicts, there are many examples of business leaders coming together to invest in cohesion and peace. It is often in their commercial interests to do so. Businesses in Kenya were critical in calling for peaceful elections in 2013, following the terrible violence accompanying the previous election.<sup>103</sup> The Nepal Business Initiative brought Nepali businesses together with police and communities to improve collaboration and mutual support, at the district level, to reduce political thuggery. Senior business people met politicians and persuaded them to reduce the practice of forced donations to political parties.<sup>104</sup> A 2015 report outlined many other ways in which businesses and other economic actors have contributed to peace.<sup>105</sup>



### 5.2.3 Security

**Without security – without a reduction in violence and the fear of violence – there can be no peace.** One expert has spoken of the 'golden hour', when restoring society after a period of violence is a prerequisite for stability and to give people the confidence to resume their lives.<sup>106</sup> It is important to use that temporary stability to continue investing in security provision and norms that respect human rights and value the safety of all people equally.

Because security is such a major feature of international peace missions, a great deal of time and funding has been invested in training, systems, equipment and in improving political oversight of the security services.

A well-documented example is Sierra Leone, where the entire military apparatus was brought under external command and management for several years following the coups and civil wars in which the military had been implicated. This resulted in a more professional army, potentially removing what had been a major destabilising factor, and allowing political and economic development to proceed after decades of instability and civil war.<sup>107</sup>

Stability in Burundi following the 2000 Arusha Peace Accord has long been viewed as tenuous. When in 2015, the president announced his intention to run for an unconstitutional third term, over 200,000 people fled the country and nearly 1,000 were killed in political violence. The government closed down radio and television stations. Information about the situation based on rumours became distorted and threatened

to fuel increased levels of violence. A peacebuilding network mobilised almost 200 citizen reporters – all local volunteers – to share information about security and human rights violations with the UN, foreign governments and NGOs.

At least 40% of these said they used it to inform their decision-making. Reviewing the impact of this action, 90% of violation cases included in the volunteers' reports were found to have been resolved or in the process of resolution, for example, through formal meetings between civil society, police and others, and through community-level dialogues. The programme was instrumental in evoking a greater sense of security across Burundi. When surveyed, 80% of the community members claimed these meetings contributed to a significant reduction in ethnic conflicts and 75% believed they had improved relations among the political parties. In addition, 69% said the meetings helped to reduce intimidation and torture by the ruling party's youth wing.<sup>108</sup>

**In Burundi,  
80% of community  
members say  
dialogue has  
significantly  
reduced ethnic  
tensions.**

102 Mercy Corps, From conflict to coping: Evidence from southern Ethiopia on the contributions of peacebuilding to drought resilience among pastoralist groups, Ethiopia: Mercy Corps, 2012, [https://www.mercycorps.org.uk/sites/default/files/from\\_conflict\\_to\\_coping\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.mercycorps.org.uk/sites/default/files/from_conflict_to_coping_-_final.pdf)

103 V. Owuor and S. Wisor, The role of Kenya's private sector in peacebuilding: The case of the 2013 election cycle, Broomfield: One Earth Future Foundation, 2014, <http://oefresearch.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/kenyaprivatesectorreport-digital.pdf>

104 L. Schirch and D. Mancini-Griffol, Local ownership in security: Case studies of peacebuilding approaches, The Hague: Alliance for Peacebuilding, GPPAC and the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace, 2015, pp.64–65, <http://www.humansecuritycoordination.org/documents/130617663/0/Local+Ownership+in+Security+Report.+15+March+2016.pdf/ca8698de-3525-4545-897c-80d81e7522fa>

105 P. Vernon, 2015, Op. cit.

106 P. Ashdown, Swords and ploughshares: Bringing peace to the 21st century, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007

107 P. Albrecht and P. Jackson (eds.), Security sector reform in Sierra Leone 1997–2007: Views from the frontline, Geneva: Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007

108 Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2017, Op. cit.

In the Philippines, local organisations trained and worked with military officers and their units, and this helped change the soldiers' attitudes and soften the units' approach to civil-military relations. They adopted less repressive, more peaceable approaches, including one case where a military unit helped 22 captured ex-communist rebels reintegrate with their communities. Importantly, the soldiers came to understand their own role – through repressive conduct – in making these poor communities' conditions conducive to rebel recruitment in the first place. The process involved a formal apology made by the military to the communities – seen as a step towards reconciliation.<sup>109</sup>

Similarly, members of the Israeli and Palestinian security forces who took part in a process of joint training and dialogue designed to reduce the risk of overreaction on either side found it improved the relationships between them. In addition, people on both sides indicated that their views towards each other had softened.<sup>110</sup>

NGOs, the UN and the government working on a “democratic policing” programme in Afghanistan used training and dialogue, and established mechanisms for joint initiatives between the police and local communities in several parts of the country, to build trust and improve accountability. This helped improve collaboration with communities in identifying security priorities and investigating crimes, as well as in improving the security of young women.<sup>111</sup>

Teams in Bangladesh spent four years establishing and advising on local security mechanisms. Consultations with local authorities and the police were found to have strengthened relations between civil society and the security services. They noted a change of attitude and an increased level of collaboration among communities, local government representatives and police officers. Community members were more confident and proactive about addressing security problems, and local government and police officers showed a greater sense of responsibility and willingness to respond. The project not only contributed to improving human security, but also to fostering social cohesion, strengthening state-society relationships, and increasing state legitimacy and responsiveness, thus advancing the broader human security agenda in Bangladesh.<sup>112</sup>

Informal encounters between the security services and communities in Beirut, including joint workshops and opportunities for community members to accompany police patrols, also reduced levels of mistrust, especially with young people, led to the establishment of mechanisms for continued collaboration, and helped improve the effectiveness of the security forces.<sup>113</sup>

Programmes to increase collaboration among NGOs, the mining company, the community and the police around the controversial Acacia mine in Tanzania, where conflicts between the company and local informal miners had become acute, led to a drop in security incidents.<sup>114</sup>

Another example of civil society engagement comes from Mozambique, where a programme combining weapons buyback with social programmes recovered thousands of weapons and helped thousands of community members collaborate with and assist the overstretched and under-resourced police. It improved trust and created public awareness of a culture of peace.<sup>115</sup>

In an inspiring story of transformation from western Sudan – where there is a local tradition in which women community leaders known as *hakkamma* have traditionally played a role in inciting intertribal conflict – one group of women made the decision to adapt their role. Instead of using public shaming techniques to fuel revenge and violence, they used these techniques to motivate their community to end local conflicts and make peace, for example, in a conflict between Fur and Arabs in the Jebel Marra area of Darfur.<sup>116</sup>

The National Peace Council (NPC), a body made up of religious and other leaders, reduced tensions and the risk of widespread violence during the 2008 Ghanaian national elections. It facilitated interparty dialogue, helped to establish a code of conduct for political parties and their candidates, and promoted voter education and the value of peaceful elections. When tensions broke out in the streets after the initial election result was announced (only 50,000 votes separating the winner and the loser, with some in the losing incumbent party claiming they would not cede power), the NPC mediated between the parties. It also arranged for both presidential candidates to go on television to ask their supporters to go home, reject the use of violence and support a smooth transfer of power.<sup>117</sup>

109 L. Schirch and D. Mancini-Griffol, 2015, Op. cit., pp.33–37

110 Ibid., pp.38–39

111 Ibid., pp.57–60

112 Ibid., pp.60–63

113 Ibid., pp.67–69

114 Ibid., pp.69–70

115 Ibid., pp.77–78

116 A.A. Mohamed, From instigating violence to building peace: The changing role of women in Darfur region of Western Sudan, *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 4(1), 2004, pp.11–26, <http://center.theparentscircle.org/images/31a3b93f45e74d64bb07a757dc599e02.pdf>

117 L. Schirch and D. Mancini-Griffol, 2015, Op. cit., pp.105–106

In anticipation of electoral violence in 2013, Kenyan organisations formed the Uwiano Platform, bringing together the government's National Cohesion and Integration Commission with the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management, the UN Development Programme and PeaceNet, a civil society network of more than 500 Kenyan NGOs. Uwiano set up an extensive campaign via media and mobile phone texting

**Kenya's Uwiano Platform is reported to have prevented over 100 incidents of violence in the Rift Valley region alone.**

to provide citizens with a way of providing early warning signs or reporting violence and to match requests for help with appropriate response mechanisms, including civilian rapid response teams as a first resort and the military and police as a last resort. The Uwiano Platform was reported to have prevented over 100 incidents of potential violence in the volatile Rift Valley region alone.<sup>118</sup>



## 5.2.4 Justice

**Fair access to justice is an essential element of peace.** It reassures people that if wrong is done to them, they have non-violent means of recourse, and that if they are accused of doing wrong, they will be treated and heard fairly. It is a challenging task to create these conditions in conflict-affected contexts where the rule of law is absent and where justice is seldom fair, and often depends more on connections and shared identity than on the facts of the case and the rules and norms set out in law. This applies both to criminal cases and to the resolution of other disputes such as those over resources or business. Alternative dispute resolution systems have therefore played an important role in the improvement of justice – and the perception thereof – in many post-conflict situations. Justice improvements have also contributed to peace in other ways.

Transitional justice mechanisms have been deployed in many post-conflict and crisis situations, seeking the right degree of compromise between holding people and institutions accountable for wrongdoing, and enabling stability and the ability of society to move on. These take many forms, including truth and reconciliation processes and legal tribunals, and are often controversial, with some claiming they are necessary and others a distraction that rakes over buried problems.

A review of 854 transitional justice mechanisms conducted in 161 contexts between 1970 and 2007 found that transitional justice had had a positive and significant impact on human rights and democracy in the societies that adopt it, and that a “justice balance” combining trials and amnesties, with or without truth commissions, had been crucial for success.<sup>119</sup>

In Rwanda, the Gacaca courts – a mechanism established to deal efficiently, fairly and transparently with a vast number of cases relating to the involvement in the genocide using local courts and para-justices – handled almost two million cases between 2005 and 2010.<sup>120</sup> Women's organisations lobbied successfully to allow women to give their testimony – often of shocking rape experiences – on camera, but primarily the courts were conducted as transparently as possible so that justice was both done and seen to be done. While not everyone was satisfied with this process, dealing with this vast backlog of cases was essential for Rwanda's future.

International justice tribunals are slow, expensive and achieve few prosecutions, and they usually happen far from the places where alleged crimes had been committed. They are frequently criticised, but they have removed guilty perpetrators from further involvement in politics and demonstrated by their prosecutions of presidents and other high level leaders that no one is above the law: an important factor in conflict prevention. At the opposite end of the spectrum, mobile courts established in the eastern DRC successfully mounted timely and proximate prosecutions of suspected criminals. Three-quarters of their cases were rape cases, a major issue there. During 2008–2012, they heard nearly 900 rape trials, with a conviction rate of about 60%.<sup>121</sup>

118 Ibid., pp.106–108

119 T.D. Olsen, L.A. Payne and A.G. Reiter, *Transitional justice in balance: Comparing processes, weighing efficacy*, United States Institute for Peace Press, 2010

120 R. de Witte and A.A. Pohu, *Mediation in Rwanda: Conceptions and realities of Abunzi justice (2011–2014)*, Proximity Justice in Rwanda, 3, RCN Justice & Démocratie, 2015

121 M. Maya, *Mobile courts in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Complementarity in action?*, The World Justice Project, 3 December 2012, p.34, [https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/mobile\\_courts\\_in\\_the\\_democratic\\_republic\\_of\\_congo\\_maya.pdf](https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/mobile_courts_in_the_democratic_republic_of_congo_maya.pdf)

Photo: © Carol Allen-Storey / International Alert



An ex-prisoner is counselled by local dialogue group, Rwanda, 2013.



### 5.2.5 Wellbeing

**Another element of peace is that people have fair access to services and other means for their and their families' wellbeing: physical and mental health, education and a decent environment in which to live.** The provision – or resumption – of services after conflict sends a strong message of stability. The provision of services to people from all areas and parts of society is also a powerful emblem of inclusion and fairness, the essential cross-cutting elements of peace.<sup>122</sup>

The provision – or resumption – of services after conflict sends a strong message of stability. The provision of services to people from all areas and parts of society is also a powerful emblem of inclusion and fairness, the essential cross-cutting elements of peace.<sup>122</sup>

In an example from the Central African Republic during civil conflict in Bangui, unrest was reduced after water and electricity services were restored. This went beyond mere stability, as it was designed to contribute to longer-term conflict reduction. For example, new participatory systems were established to govern access to water supplies and thus remove a potential future flash point between warring communities.<sup>123</sup>

Many people in Rwanda remain traumatised, long after the events of 1994. A programme that combined group and individual therapeutic sessions, along with practical projects and reconciliation processes, found that this approach was successful in helping hundreds of individuals in rural and urban communities to recover and reconcile.<sup>124</sup>

Psycho-social support, safe spaces, supportive and positive adult role models, and value-based lessons in non-violence, human rights and self-care recently provided to young Syrians in the country and in refugee situations has reduced their interest in joining armed groups and helped build bridges between their communities. This approach also led to less violent and disruptive individual behaviour, and an increased ability to use non-violent means to resolve day-to-day differences.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>122</sup> L. Denney, R. Mallett and D. Mazurana, *Peacebuilding and service delivery*, Tokyo: UN University Centre for Policy Research, 2015

<sup>123</sup> E. McCandless, *Peace dividends and beyond: Contributions of administrative and social services to peacebuilding*, New York: UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 2012, p.100, [http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/peace\\_dividends.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/peace_dividends.pdf)

<sup>124</sup> A. Tobie and F. Masabo, *Healing fractured lives: Reconciliation and reintegration in Rwanda*, London: International Alert, 2012, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/201209HealingFracturedLives.pdf>

<sup>125</sup> R. Simpson, M. Aubrey, R. Aubrey and F. Brodrick, *Teaching peace, building resilience: Assessing the impact of peace education for young Syrians*, London: International Alert, 2016, [http://international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Syria\\_PeaceEducationImpact\\_EN\\_2016.pdf](http://international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Syria_PeaceEducationImpact_EN_2016.pdf)

## Peace in progress | South Africa

In South Africa, the peace story can be seen partly as post-conflict recovery (following centuries of repression and structural violence, and decades of low-level civil war) and partly as prevention (of a more widespread armed conflict between whites and other South Africans, and between African ethnic groups). More than 300 years of settler colonialism and apartheid had built up an enormous reservoir of grievances and mistrust, kept in place by repression and reaction by those in power. Various opposition armed groups had been waging low-level war against the state, of which the largest and most important was the African National Congress's armed *uMkhonto we Sizwe* wing. Violence and the threat of violence had become an endemic part of South African governance and society, and the incidence of sexual violence was among the highest in the world.<sup>126</sup> Even as discussions about change were taking place from the mid-1980s, levels of violence continued and fatalities increased more than three-fold between 1985 and 1991.<sup>127</sup>

As with Nepal and Northern Ireland, significant tensions continue to threaten the fragile peace that South Africans have achieved. Nevertheless, since the signature of the National Peace Agreement in 1991, the country has seen huge improvements, including three democratic national elections, incremental improvements in housing and access to services for non-white South Africans, and increased participation of people from all races in economic growth.

This has been the result of many interwoven processes, at all levels. These have included the early focus on formal, participatory consultation processes to achieve specific goals, the adherence to principle-based and thus predictable and trust-building behaviour by most parties, the deep involvement of the business community and civil society including churches, and a commitment to keep the economic fundamentals in place in order to provide stability while opening it up to wider participation. Peacebuilding in the South African context has been characterised by the sustained use of very formal – almost bureaucratic – processes backed by principles, and this is perhaps linked to the fact that – despite the rogue operations of parts of government and society – there was a substantial rule of law in place even under apartheid, along with sophisticated bureaucratic systems of governance.<sup>128</sup> Such processes have allowed the wide participation not only of elites but also of the general public, and therefore divergent views could be taken into account and absorbed. Dialogue to devise a new constitution was highly structured, took several years, survived major crises of disagreement, and took into account the individual inputs of literally hundreds of thousands of South Africans. The business community and churches were also influential in creating opportunities for dialogue and, once the peace agreement was in place, keeping up the pace of implementation. For example, chambers of commerce and other business organisations helped build capacity and provided investment opportunities for black employment and engagement in business on a large scale, and businesses in partnership with the post-apartheid governments have continued to provide the economic and fiscal platform on which the new South Africa has been built.<sup>129</sup>

126 L. Vetten, Rape and other forms of sexual violence in South Africa, Policy Brief 72, Institute for Security Studies, November 2014, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/PolBrief72.pdf>

127 C. Barnes (ed.), *Owning the process: Public participation in peacemaking*, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives, Issue 13, London: Conciliation Resources, 2002, p.20, [http://www.c-r.org/downloads/13\\_Public\\_participation.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/downloads/13_Public_participation.pdf)

128 M. Maharaj, *The ANC and South Africa's negotiated transition to democracy and peace*, Berghof Series: Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Berlin: Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management, 2008, [http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/Transitions\\_Series/transitions\\_anc.pdf](http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/Transitions_Series/transitions_anc.pdf)

129 N. Marais and J. Davies, *The role of the business elite in South Africa's democratic transition: Supporting an inclusive political and economic transformation*, Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2015, <http://ips-project.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/The-Role-of-the-Business-Elite-in-South-Africa%E2%80%99s-Democratic-Transition-South-Africa-Paper-8.pdf>

## 5.3 Peace writ large

The preceding examples illustrate a tiny iota of recent successful peace initiatives. They are changing attitudes and behaviours, and having an impact on people's lives. There is evidence of norms and systems changing as well. Many of these gains may seem small when set against the challenge of establishing peace writ large. We can see and show how they contribute to better conditions for peace locally, but even those pitched at a higher level, such as changes in the way Lebanese political parties work, can seem insignificant in the face of the stresses and conflicts arrayed against them, when they are looked at in isolation.

But if we look beyond individual projects, we can see that the efforts and initiatives of many diverse individuals and organisations – taken together – can create a mutually supportive network and the critical mass within a particular country or context that develops into peace writ large. The three case studies highlighted in this paper are examples of where initial moves to create stability as part of a peace process have continued. In each case, multiple persisting initiatives – not only to maintain stability but also to address the underlying causes of conflict and reinforce positive peace – can be discerned. All eight types of conflict described in section 2 are susceptible to improvement, however difficult that may be, and international approaches to them must all encompass peacebuilding, if we are to succeed in reducing violence and suffering.

Taking the examples in section 5 along with the three case studies, conclusions can be drawn about what has worked and therefore what more is needed to strengthen the attitudes, behaviours and norms so that peace factors become progressively embedded and peace becomes more sustainable.

First of all, **local leadership and ownership is essential**, as illustrated by the peace network in Burundi and the Gacaca process in neighbouring Rwanda.

Second, **peace initiatives are needed at all levels of society**, operating in communities as well as nationally and internationally.

Third, together **they need to address all five peace factors** – governance and relationships, the economy, justice, security and wellbeing – which is where grievances are to be found and where fairness can be built. For this, they need to be inclusive, involving different age, gender, class and other identity groups.

Fourth, **they need to involve and be initiated from many institutional perspectives and at different levels**, forming a kind of tapestry: community groups, NGOs, professional bodies, religious bodies, politicians, governments, businesses and international agencies.

And, finally, **peacebuilding initiatives need to be sustained** over many years and seen as part of a deliberate big picture peace strategy to which other issues are subordinated, and thus create a self-sustaining dynamic – a critical mass – which has the potential to liberate people and countries from cycles of violence, unlock their potential and allow them to flourish.

## 6. Conclusion

Building peace is morally, politically and economically the right thing to do – and it works.

Photo: © Newzulu / Alamy Stock Photo



March for peace, Bogota, Colombia, October 2016.

Building peace is morally, politically and economically the right thing to do – and it works. The scepticism that exists about the efficacy of peacebuilding is unjustified. Obviously, there is no prescription guaranteed to achieve sustainable peace, but we know what peace looks like and we also know that real, incremental progress towards this most difficult of goals is possible, because it is happening all over the world, all the time.

Peacebuilding is most effective when it is sustained over many years, when it is in tune with the realities of each specific context, is led by and involves the participation of the people there, and when the diverse efforts of people and institutions operating at every level interact and create a critical mass for change. Self-evidently, peacebuilding should be one of the most popular approaches in international relations, especially now, given the high and increasing levels of conflict.

But it is not. Peacebuilding is the poor cousin of other approaches. When it is used, it is applied in too small doses and for too limited a time, and often too late to prevent crises from occurring. It is often dwarfed by other approaches that mask or undermine its effectiveness. It also tends to be non-strategic and poorly coordinated.

The lack of attention paid to peacebuilding is explained by a combination of ignorance and scepticism among decision-makers; by their preference for easy-to-grasp levers that appear to make a kinetic difference in the short-term over those that may not transpire for years and thus seem more uncertain; by a weariness due to failed interventions in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan; by a tendency to cleave to institutional habits; and by obstruction by vested interests. These are the issues that need to be addressed to escalate peacebuilding.

## 7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are addressed primarily to international actors: donor governments, global and regional multinational organisations and their member states, NGOs and international businesses.

### **Make peacebuilding a central and robust component of international policies aimed at conflict-affected countries**

- Adopt policies which recognise that peacebuilding must be a core component of all international initiatives in conflict-affected contexts. This means a major rethink by donor governments and multilateral organisations of how they frame and measure the success of international interventions, with a greater focus placed on anticipation, prevention and long-term peacebuilding.
- Routinely include explicit peacebuilding goals and indicators in policy dialogue, plans and progress reports with respect to all conflict, post-conflict or prevention settings.
- Weave peacebuilding goals into diplomatic, trade, aid and national security strategies and initiatives so that peace is not seen as separate but integral, and is increasingly part of the wider political and economic fabric; and bring peacebuilding, national security, aid, diplomatic and trade initiatives together (as in the 'whole of government' approach) in any given context so all are working together.
- Double the level of resources invested in peacebuilding, to at least US\$27 per capita in any given context, as recommended by the IEP.
- Sustain this emphasis for long enough that peacebuilding takes on a momentum of its own, and becomes a familiar and normal component of the international system, resulting in vested interests and historical habits to erode over time.

### **Build the capacity of international organisations and donor governments to plan, implement and monitor peacebuilding**

- Equip political and other senior decision-makers with the knowledge and information necessary to consider peacebuilding routinely as a core foreign policy option through the strategic appointment of specialist advisers, and by adopting policies that require them to do so and providing instruments that readily allow them to do so.
- Back this up with concerted programmes of recruitment, training and other capacity-building on the concepts and practices of peacebuilding, and change staffing and systems to encourage and reward longer-term programming, emphasising sustainable peace goals and the acceptance of risk. Ensure that those holding organisations to account, such as parliamentarians and member state diplomats, have the requisite knowledge to do so.
- Reinvigorate multilateral and bilateral preventative diplomacy, focusing on more upstream and structural drivers of conflict. Be increasingly prepared to have the tough conversations about advancing economic and political exclusion with local and international actors who would resist this.
- Given that different conflicts need different strategies – and different actors will always embrace somewhat different approaches, hindering close coordination – support the emergence of a mutually supportive network of agencies, with long-term peace as their common aim and a commitment to working in complementary ways.

## Take immediate steps to implement improved peacebuilding policies and practices

- Improve international cooperation to address some of the broad and cross-cutting underlying causes of conflict:
  - reduce levels of international crime;
  - lessen and mitigate the impacts of climate change on peace;
  - devise economic approaches that increase access to jobs especially for young people;
  - improve local, national, regional and international governance to promote fairness; and
  - implement conflict early warning systems accompanied by mechanisms for early action in contexts undergoing change.
- Embed long-term peacebuilding goals and approaches immediately as an explicit and major plank of responses to current crises so that every policy and programme is deliberately focused on long-term peace outcomes – and short-term stability is explicitly viewed as a step on the way to sustainable peace. Examples of where this should be done include ending the fighting in Syria, reconstructing Mosul and assisting with the transition in Myanmar.
- Given the urgency created by the crisis in the Middle East, seize the moment to support the UN's Sustaining Peace agenda:<sup>130</sup> disseminate the concept of positive peace and narratives of successful peacebuilding, to convince leaders to invest more in peacebuilding.
- Start the process of building a generation of peacebuilders, with a major investment in capacity-building on the concepts, approaches and skills needed to build peace.
- Continue to support peacebuilding as the major component of policy and action in places where progress has been made, such as Nepal, Northern Ireland and South Africa.

## Stimulate national and international public discussion about the need for greater emphasis on and investment in peacebuilding

- Promote and sustain a public dialogue about the benefits and legitimacy of peacebuilding, engaging honestly with those who are sceptical. Accept that peace writ large is unpredictable and may take years to achieve, but that peacebuilding has been shown to work and is no less uncertain in its political outcomes than military action or other more familiar approaches.
- Shift public expectations about what an adequate response to security threats and consequent results look like so that peacebuilding is given equal weight as peacemaking diplomacy, peacekeeping, military, development and humanitarian interventions. This includes equipping political leaders with the necessary knowledge to engage their constituencies around this issue.
- Finally, peacebuilders themselves need to get behind and promote a more confident narrative of impact and success. We need to continue to assemble and proclaim a narrative of incremental progress, and of the changes in attitudes, practices and institutions that have been achieved, which all represent bricks in the building of a more peaceful future.

<sup>130</sup> UN Security Council, 2016, Op. cit.



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