CRIME AND CONFLICT

The new challenge for peacebuilding

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The new challenge for peacebuilding

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is offered as a contribution to the growing effort to understand the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, and to design effective responses. At the heart of the document is the hypothesis that an application of the approaches and overall lens of peacebuilding can enrich broader efforts to reduce and transform contemporary armed violence and fragility linked to organised crime. This approach has not been widely tested in practice, but when it has the results are promising.

Over the course of the 20th century, a major period of inter-state warfare and wars of decolonisation gave way to an era of predominantly civil conflicts. The last decade points to further shifts, with far fewer civil wars now recorded worldwide.[1] In their wake, observers seem to agree that conflict is again changing, but a common narrative as to the dominant direction of these changes, and hence the contours of the global peace and security agenda, has yet to gel.

However, one major factor correlated to current changing forms of armed violence is now known to be the effect of new patterns, as well as increased scope and scale, both of organised crime and shadow economies operating at national and sub-national levels. Overlapping and blurred categorisations of a raft of non-state armed groups are often strung together in attempts to describe the complexities involved.

We can identify three broad dimensions to organised crime and its relationship to armed violence and fragility that can help us hone in on the key problems to be tackled. First, its connection to power holders and political interests poses challenges to governance and statebuilding approaches where the state itself is complicit. Second, attention to the incentives that pull and/or push individuals into crime helps us to identify broad-based response strategies. Third, globalised market structures in key crime commodities, such as illegal drugs, point to the need to look inwards as much as outwards in their response in countries where high demand sustains the financial flows and profits of organised crime.

This paints a complex picture. Given this complexity, the degree of consensus on the limitations of current approaches to the problem is perhaps not surprising. For example:

- There is widespread recognition that notions of sovereignty can protect state officials complicit in organised crime;
- The emphasis on locking up criminals as a major component of the global response to the problem may actually exacerbate violence in some cases;
- Little headway has been made in reducing the receptivity of fragile contexts to criminal enterprise; and
- Peacebuilding interventions have yet to adequately frame the issue of organised crime within overall responses to conflict and violence.

Organised crime has hitherto been treated primarily as a law and order problem. The shift away from an exclusive focus on law enforcement has begun, but it is very recent. Nevertheless, attention to the relationship between organised crime and state fragility is increasing in development policy

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1   L. Harborn and P. Wallensteen (2011). 'Armed conflicts 1946–2010', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 48, July 2011.

agendas, and is the subject of a number of recent reports and seminars.[2] This reflects growing recognition that levels of armed violence and associated fragility related to organised crime in different settings demand policy-makers and practitioners to work across the range of factors and policy arenas involved, such as law enforcement and crime prevention, security and diplomacy, development and peacebuilding, and public health.

The peacebuilding sector has been slow to come to the table, no doubt influenced by funders' priorities and institutional silos that currently work against the types of joined-up responses that are needed. However, designing interventions that are broad-based and transformative in intent can help to underpin a new generation of responses. In particular:

- *Conflict analysis* is crucial for understanding the dynamics at play. Rounded analysis through a peace and conflict lens, differentiating between root causes, proximate causes and triggers, will help to inform more holistic responses and ensure that projects 'do no harm' – avoiding the unintentional reinforcement of negative conflict dynamics;[3]

- *Dialogue* – often initiated, facilitated and sustained by third parties who are trusted for their impartiality and/or expertise – can bring together the actors involved in and affected by the problem in order to generate solutions; and

- *Civic activism and empowerment* emphasise the importance of bringing a wider range of actors to the fore. The capacity to leverage lasting solutions is to be found beyond state institutions and within and across communities. This includes not only non-governmental organisations (NGOs), but also business leaders, women's organisations, religious institutions and academics.

In its concluding section, this report offers five priority areas for action:

1. **Conflict-sensitive approaches need to be brought to bear on law enforcement.** Law enforcement will remain a key response mechanism to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility. However, it needs to adopt a 'do no harm' approach as advocated by the peacebuilding sector in relation to development assistance.

2. **There is a need for improved analysis and information flow across the whole range of local, national and global dimensions of organised crime.** While there has been a flurry of attention to the issues, enormous knowledge gaps remain. Greater analytical purchase across all dimensions will facilitate better monitoring of the impact of policy responses.

3. **There needs to be a more innovative and creative way of dealing with predatory power holders.** Current state-building approaches require a deeper understanding of the role of predatory power holders, including how criminal agendas can be factored into peace negotiations and processes.

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2   See, for example: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2012b). *Transnational organised crime and fragile states*, OECD Development Cooperation Directorate (DAC) INCAF Working Paper, 3/2012. Paris; I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). 'Crime and error: Why we urgently need a new approach to illicit trafficking in fragile states', CRU Policy Brief, No. 23, May 2012. The Hague: Clingendael Conflict Research Unit (CRU); J. Cockayne (2011). *State fragility, organised crime and peacebuilding: Towards a more strategic approach*, NOREF Report, September 2011. Oslo: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF); R. Locke (2012). *Organised crime, conflict and fragility: A new approach*. New York: International Peace Institute (IPI); M. Shaw and W. Kemp (2012). *Spotting the spoilers: A guide to analysing organised crime in fragile states*. New York: IPI; S. Batmanglich and K. Høyer (2013). *The new deal's peacebuilding and statebuilding goals and organised crime*. London: International Alert.

3   See: OECD DAC (2007). *Principles for good international engagement in fragile states and situations*. Paris. Available at https://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/45/38368714.pdf; and Saferworld, International Alert et al (2004). *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A resource pack*. London. Available at http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/conflict-sensitive-approaches-resource-pack

4. There needs to be a step change in tackling crime incentive structures. This is clearly an incredibly broad area that goes to the heart of development writ-large and to which there can be no sweeping response. Nevertheless, the need for a better grasp of the reasons why individuals are drawn into crime is clear. Moreover, attention should be given to civic empowerment as well as to targeted livelihood opportunities for at-risk populations.

5. We should not avoid paying attention to the need to disrupt globalised market structures. Developed countries that receive and consume illegal goods need to address their side of the problem as much as producer and intermediary countries are expected to deal with theirs. The debates are detailed and complex. Meaningful reflection is starting to happen and needs to escalate if transformation of the complex issues at hand is to be achieved.

INTRODUCTION

Military theory asserts that while the essence of war does not change, its character does. Dominant forms of violent conflict have evolved throughout human history alongside other societal practices and phenomena. Influencing factors include shifting geo-political dynamics; the establishment of international regimes, institutions and norms designed to better regulate conflict; changing socio-cultural beliefs; and new technologies. During the 20th century, a major period of inter-state warfare and wars of decolonisation, an era of predominantly civil conflict emerged, albeit often with external superpower proxy involvement, both during and in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. These developments were accompanied by extensive theoretical debate as to what was 'new' in warfare, and what was not.[4]

The first decade of the new millennium indicates further shifts, with far fewer civil wars recorded.[5] This has led observers to agree that conflict is again changing. However, a common narrative on the dominant direction of these changes, and hence the contours of the global peace and security agenda, has yet to gel. Defining history as it happens is no easy task, and while various studies (including this one) may refer boldly to '21st century conflict', it is fair to say that any bid in 2014 to define the century as a whole in terms of conflict is premature. After all, an observer of conflict trends attempting to capture '20th century conflict' in 1914 would surely have missed a number of unpredictable developments. As we look ahead to future conflict trends in the 21st century, two mid-term conflict risks stand out: climate change and the potential yet unpredictable effects it will have on resource and habitat availability,[6] and the next cycle of balance of power antagonism taking shape between the US and China.

> An observer of conflict trends attempting to capture '20th century conflict' in 1914 would surely have missed a number of unpredictable developments.

Anxiety about these mid-term risks is certainly mounting. The preoccupation in current debates about the changing nature of conflict, however, is targeted at shorter-term threats and real-time events: organised violent crime, globalised violent extremism in the context of a wider political crisis in the Islamic world, and social unrest in the world's mega cities. As a recent World Bank report that seems to have greatly influenced the direction of security discourse states:

> *"One-and-a-half billion people live in areas affected by fragility, conflict or large-scale, organised criminal violence … New threats – organised crime and trafficking, civil unrest due to global economic shocks, terrorism – have supplemented continued preoccupations with conventional war between and within countries."*[7]

Globalisation is itself seen as a broad process that has accelerated a number of factors influencing the propensity for violence, particularly in fragile states, at the same time creating a complex blurring and inter-dependence of factors that challenges analytical efforts.[8]

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4   See, for example: M. Kaldor (2013). 'In defence of new wars', *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 2(1):4. Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/sta.at; as well as diverse views collected in I. Dyvesteyn and J. Angstrom (eds.) (2005). *Rethinking the nature of war*. London and New York: Frank Cass.

5   L. Harborn and P. Wallensteen (2011). Op. cit.

6   Indeed, a recent conference on global future conflict trends looking ahead to 2030 emphasised climate-related drivers of conflict together with demographics and an unstable global economy, linked to the rise of new powers in the South and East. See Wilton Park (2011). 'Global conflict: Future trends and challenges: Towards 2030', Conference report, Steyning. See also International Alert (2009). *Climate change, conflict and fragility: Understanding the linkages, shaping effective responses*. London.

7   World Bank (2011a). *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, security and development*. Washington DC. p.2. Available at http://www.worldbank.org/wdr2011

8   See, for instance: OECD (2012a). *Think global, act global: Confronting global factors that influence conflict and fragility*. Paris. Available at http://www.oecd.org/dac/incaf/globalfactors.htm

THE ASCENT OF ORGANISED CRIME

One major factor correlated to these forms of armed violence is now known to be the effect of new patterns, and increased scope and scale, both of transnational organised crime (TOC) in its various guises, as well as related organised crime and/or shadow economies operating at national and sub-national levels. A distinct strand of theoretical attention in peace and security studies is currently directed at the prevalence of non-state armed groups of varying degrees of professionalism and scope linked to organised crime in various settings. However, overlapping and blurred categorisations are often strung together, as in one report which refers to: "militant nationalists, militant reformers, militant religious fundamentalists, ideologues, civil and military bureaucrats, terrorists, insurgents, warlords, drug barons and organised criminals."[9]

Western policy attention to organised crime grew steeply during the 1990s, in part responding to the boom in smuggling and criminal networks in the former Soviet Union and Balkans regions, as well as growing concern with money-laundering and kleptocratic tendencies in Cold War African ally countries. These and other nodes of TOC were facilitated by rapid globalisation and technological and communications innovation.

While the 2000 UN Convention against TOC (the Palermo Convention, which came into force in 2003) represented a milestone in global policy response, 9/11 and the subsequent US-led 'war on terror' have to some extent eclipsed policy momentum in this area, narrowing the focus to financing structures used by groups affiliated with al-Qaeda. The global policy community has been slow to engage with the links between organised crime and insecurity across a broader canvas of conflict settings and situations of armed violence. These are now gaining prominence, however, spurred on by events across Latin America, West Africa and Central Asia. Attention to organised crime as a source of financing for groups hostile to the US has now matured into the broader recognition that it affects peace and security everywhere.

> Narco-trafficking accounts for at least half of global transnational organised crime turnover as well as the highest proportion of violent homicides.

Narco-trafficking accounts for at least half of global TOC turnover as well as the highest proportion of violent homicides, with the use of violence – whether to settle business disputes or discourage competition – a standard operating practice.[10] However, the precise relationship between narco-trafficking, other forms of organised crime and armed violence is not straightforward and will be explored in further detail in this report. Nonetheless, the trade in illegal drugs spins an inter-woven web of organised crime and violence which also absorbs trade in other illicit commodities (such as guns and people).

Trade and turf wars between criminal gangs dealing in drugs and other contraband in the cities of Brazil, El Salvador, Jamaica and South Africa result in an annual death toll which far exceeds those on conventional battlefields. Latin America is the region most deeply affected, characterised by the greatest concentration of violent homicides. For example, violent competition between drug cartels in Mexico has spiralled dramatically out of control, threatening longer-term regional stability. Africa is also affected, with Mali having witnessed the collusion of political authorities in kidnapping for ransom and narco-trafficking, which has emboldened armed groups affiliated with al-Qaeda, while Guinea-Bissau presents a stark example of state collusion in TOC at all political levels. In Central Asia, the trade route for heroin from Afghanistan remains under the control of armed groups and opaque political interests.

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9   M.G. Manwaring (2005). *Street gangs: The new urban insurgency*. Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College. Quoted in R. Muggah (2011). 'The transnational gang: Challenging the conventional narrative', in T. Shaw et al (2011) *The Ashgate research companion to regionalisms*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

10   Estimates by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) vary, with one 2010 report putting the proportion of TOC profit linked to illicit drugs as high as 85% and another from 2011 estimating it to be at least 50%. See: UNODC (2010). *The globalisation of crime: A transnational organised crime threat assessment*. Vienna; and UNODC (2011). *Estimating illicit financial flows resulting from drug trafficking and other transnational organised crimes*. Vienna. The UNODC's *World drug report 2005* proposed a total value of the trade at around US$322 billion, dwarfing estimates for other major commodities such as coffee and tobacco. See: UNODC (2005). *World drug report 2005*. Vienna. pp.127–130.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Analysis in response to, and searching for definition of such events, focuses on a decrease in conflict-related deaths against other forms of violent death, highlighted by international data sets (see Box 1). Taken at face value, this data would seem to reveal a significant decrease in war and an increase in armed violence linked to organised crime (reflected as 'intentional homicide' deaths).

Data sets on trends in armed violence have traditionally concentrated on immediate battle deaths. In this regard, 'new' data which note a reduction conform with typical classifications of violence, even while they may signify shifting causal patterns. The sharp focus on body counts across this data is striking, but also problematic; it is increasingly recognised that the immediate number of battle deaths does not alone account for the full devastation or even deaths caused by violent conflicts.[11] Civilian injuries, disease and malnutrition as a result of war, bereavement and loss of income, destruction of infrastructure, services and development prospects, as well as social capital, all create conditions for structural violence. This structural violence will bring about deaths not revealed in 'battle' figures. One study estimates a ratio of 4:1 for indirect to direct conflict deaths, which gives a sense of the potential excess magnitude of conflict impacts concealed.[12]

Moreover, despite some gains, progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in countries experiencing fragility or violent conflict falls far behind that of other developing countries. (*Continues overleaf*)

11   See: M. Leitenberg (2006). *Deaths in war and conflicts in the 20th century*, Cornell University Peace Studies Program Occasional Paper, No. 29, 3rd edition.
12   Geneva Declaration (2011). Op. cit.
13   WHO (2008). *Preventing violence and reducing its impact: How development agencies can help*. Geneva. p.4. Available at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2008/9789241596589_eng.pdf
14   The issue of suicide, which claims the greatest number of lives lost through violence, remains outside the scope of this report, although one critical area of research is to better understand the relationship between the vast and increasing number of suicides and the effects on individuals' lives of organised crime, violence and conflict.
15   WHO (2013). *Global health estimates summary tables: Deaths by cause, age and sex*. Available at http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/estimates_regional/en/
16   Geneva Declaration (2011). *Global burden of armed violence 2011: Lethal encounters*. Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat. Available at http://www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html

BOX 1: TRACKING VIOLENT DEATHS

According to 2008 data published by the World Health Organization (WHO), violence in all its forms accounts for over 1.6 million deaths a year, some 90% of which occur in low- and middle-income countries.[13] In further data summarising the causes of death in 2011, WHO attributed an annual average of 798,000 to suicide,[14] 486,000 to inter-personal violence, and just 86,000 to war or other forms of conflict.[15]

The World Bank's *World Development Report 2011* corroborates the global decline in battle deaths directly attributable to war, in the case of civil war citing a drop from more than 200,000 battle deaths in 1988 to fewer than 50,000 in 2008.

Further evidence that major shifts in the actors, landscape, cycles and dynamics of contemporary violence are at play comes from the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development's *Global burden of armed violence 2011* report, which states that 526,000 people die violently every year, but 'only' 55,000 of them lose their lives in conflict or as a result of terrorism: 396,000 are victims of intentional homicide, 66,000 of whom are women; 54,000 die as a result of unintentional homicide; and a further 21,000 violent deaths occur during law-enforcement actions.[16]

However, these data sets are broadly considered to be conservative and must be viewed with caution for the following reasons: problems in harvesting comparative statistical data on a global level (which requires a merging of data from criminology, epidemiology and conflict studies); lack of availability of data and/or monitoring in some countries and regions; and different legal definitions/classifications of terms and crimes.

Battle deaths

200,000

1988

▼

2008

50,000

Infant and maternal mortality, as well as other welfare indicators, are all directly affected by violent conflict. In addition, serious challenges in ensuring peace agreements endure still persist – with a high likelihood of violence re-emerging in countries with a previous conflict. This highlights how the intractability of some conflicts continues to leave the potential for future cycles of death, suffering and instability.[17] Moreover, many (though not all) of the countries recording high levels of homicide are themselves recovering from war or other major socio-political transitions. In such cases, organised crime associated with armed violence and conflict risk is a direct result of conflict, and forms a crucial dimension of the post-conflict context. Any interpretation of statistics comparing battle deaths to homicides that leads to a downgrade of the centrality of the world's civil conflicts to peace and security today would be misguided, at least on the basis of the data alone.

Nonetheless, this data, coupled with the fact that countries such as Brazil, El Salvador, Jamaica and South Africa record more deaths from 'intentional homicide' each year than are recorded in many contemporary wars, demands attention. Taken to its logical conclusion, such data has inspired some theorists to assert the relevance of 'non-conflict' armed violence in security and development, noting that the extreme levels of violence in some middle-income countries is often overlooked precisely because of the emphasis given to the poorest countries in international assistance.[18] Thoughtful analysis has been produced exploring the 'non-conflict' label, highlighting the salience of drivers and factors such as urbanisation and globalisation. However, this drift towards a "simple binary separation" between 'conflict' and 'non-conflict' is problematic, given the overlapping dynamics discussed above.[19] The London School of Economics and Political Science's Crisis States Research Centre has put forward the term 'civic conflict' as an alternative label for certain aspects of contemporary conflict (again emphasising urbanisation contexts),[20] while others have suggested 'chronic violence'.[21] Most recently, journalists and scholars responding to the dramatic Westgate hostage crisis in Kenya, which led to at least 67 deaths, have drawn a common thread between this event and earlier, similar events in Jakarta and Mumbai, claiming a new form of 'urban conflict' where 'terrorists' target high-profile elite venues to maximise publicity for their cause and damage to their targets.[22]

STATE FRAGILITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY MAINSTREAM

> However different types of armed violence may be classified, they can be usefully analysed through the lens of conflict theory and peacebuilding practice.

While the growing body of research into contemporary armed violence linked to criminality has yielded some important insights perhaps, on balance, the search for a label is an unnecessary distraction. It is a central assertion of this report that however different types of armed violence may be classified, they can be usefully analysed through the lens of conflict theory and peacebuilding practice. This explicitly encourages attention to the deeper societal, political and governance dynamics at work. In the case of TOC, which has hitherto been treated primarily as a problem of law-enforcement, the application of such a lens offers complementarity to mainstream approaches which, this report will argue, could help contribute to more lasting and transformative results.

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17   World Bank (2011a). Op. cit.

18   IDS Knowledge Services (2010). 'Non-conflict armed violence: Rethinking models of conflict and conflict resolution', *Horizon*, Issue 2, Sussex; C. Moser and D. Rodgers (2005). *Change, violence and insecurity in non-conflict situations*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

19   Geneva Declaration (2011). Op. cit. p.43.

20   J. Beal, T. Goodfellow and D. Rodgers (2013). 'Cities and conflict in fragile states in the developing world', *Urban Studies Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 15, pp.3065–3083.

21   T.M. Adams (2011). *Chronic violence and its reproduction: Perverse trends in social relations, citizenship, and democracy in Latin America*. Woodrow Wilson Center Update on the Americas.

22   'Nairobi foreshadows tomorrow's urban conflicts', *Financial Times*, 26 September 2013; 'Westgate mall attacks: urban areas are the battleground of the 21st century', *The Guardian*, 27 September 2013.

The 'new' terms to describe contemporary armed violence may also risk adding confusion rather than clarity. In particular, they can overlook existing policy frameworks centring on the idea of state fragility that have advanced considerably as part of international responses to violence to date. While itself a subject of significant debate and critique, the concept of state fragility has evolved over the past two decades and represents a central idea informing development theory and policy making. From the outset, it has sought to encompass both those states in situations of conflict, and those emerging from a period of warfare and/or other major political transition. Significantly, whereas a decade ago definitions of a 'fragile state' were limited to 'low-income' countries sharing other identified characteristics, today almost half are middle income – this shift has been in part accounted for by the dramatic events of the 'Arab Spring'.[23] Moreover, the recognition that 'pockets of fragility', whether in rural Mexico or urban Brazil, can exist in countries otherwise considered relatively stable has also emerged. A recent report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) cites that many of the Latin American countries affected by lethal levels of armed violence and which top homicide indices are evidence of this reality.[24]

The idea of a spectrum, with extremes of 'fragility' and 'resilience' at each end, is expansive and dynamic. This moves away from a simple focus on states' capacity and willingness to govern, instead approaching a more complex idea that recognises the multidimensional nature of fragility and a whole set of relationships between society and the state. This spectrum would seem to pave the way for incorporating a response to high levels of armed violence into 'non-conflict' settings within existing global paradigms of fragility, without – crucially – losing sight of the dynamics between conflict and non-conflict situations. Given the raft of instruments, expertise and diplomatic commitments made towards addressing state fragility, analysing armed violence outside of the immediate context of warfare as a core element of fragile states discourse offers the possibility of bringing new manifestations of armed conflict into the mainstream of development policy response.

Increasingly, attention to the relationship between organised crime and state fragility is climbing development policy agendas, and is the subject of a number of recent reports and seminars.[25] Levels of armed violence and associated conflict risks related to organised crime in different settings demand that policy-makers and practitioners working in fields of crime prevention and conflict reduction/peacebuilding (across development and security diplomacy) collaborate far more closely. Other policy fields, such as public health, are also part of the picture. Therefore, the increasing manifestation of organised crime as a prominent feature of contemporary violence raises challenging questions about whether existing national and international response mechanisms can effectively respond. Achieving collaboration between relevant institutions and even across departments, agencies or ministries within specific actors such as the UN or bilateral donor countries – to coordinate and produce joined-up responses that straddle the complex issues entailed, as well as seek complementarity between short-term legal remedies and longer-term peacebuilding priorities – is an enormous challenge. The World Bank's call for a 'refit' of national leadership and an international system to address 21st century risks is echoed by others, including the Geneva Declaration Secretariat. Most recently, Jordan Ryan, Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery within the UN Development Programme (UNDP), made an appeal asserting that conflict has changed and that this needs to be reflected in the future development agenda.[26]

23   OECD (2013). *Fragile states 2013: Resource flows and trends in a shifting world*. Paris.
24   Ibid.
25   See, for example: OECD (2012b). Op. cit.; I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.; J. Cockayne (2011). Op. cit.; R. Locke (2012). Op. cit.; M. Shaw and W. Kemp (2012). Op. cit.
26   'Conflict has changed, and this needs to be reflected in the future development agenda,' *UNDP*, 2 August 2013.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report contributes to the growing effort to understand the relationship between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, and to design effective responses. The report is framed around this nexus, to help distinguish between the immediate armed violence associated with organised crime and the deeper long-term effects on conflict risk and fragility, whether this is at the state level or in more localised settings. It draws on International Alert's overall mission and experience as a leading peacebuilding organisation, and represents a building block of the organisation's efforts to grapple with emerging analysis and trends. The report largely focuses on global narco-trafficking, both because this aspect of organised crime is associated with the highest levels of violence (noting that this association is not straightforward), and in order to give some focus to the report's discussion. Its target audience is practitioners, researchers and policy-makers working across the aforementioned fields. The specific angle of inquiry is targeted at the peacebuilding sector itself, and seeks to motivate a more explicit and effective engagement with the forms of contemporary armed violence that take place away from, or in parallel to, conventional conflicts, including through grappling more effectively with criminality and shadow economic activity. Its hypothesis is that peacebuilding approaches and an overall peacebuilding lens could enrich broader efforts to reduce and transform contemporary armed violence and fragility linked to organised crime.

> This report is framed around the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, to help distinguish between the immediate armed violence associated with organised crime and the deeper long-term effects on conflict risk and fragility.

The methodology for the report consisted of a sample review of the expanding literature on this topic, as well as discussions with key researchers, scholars and policy-makers in relevant fields. In addition, research was commissioned for West Africa (specifically the Mano River Union (MRU) countries – Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), the Philippines and Brazil (Rio de Janeiro). This research was conducted by peacebuilding practitioners who are themselves immersed in each context, with a specific emphasis on mapping out peacebuilding responses to the challenges as part of wider initiatives.[27] This research is drawn on throughout the discussion of this report, either verifying or nuancing conclusions drawn from the wider literature.

Section 1 introduces the relevance of peacebuilding approaches to contemporary conflict in greater detail, focusing on the key ideas and tools that are particularly useful when considering more holistic responses to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility. Section 2 deepens the exploration of this connection, applying a conflict theory lens on the issues, problematising key terms and assumptions, and drawing in expert analysis from across the literature as well as evidence from the country research we commissioned. Section 3 analyses the main global trends in policy response to organised crime and violence based on the literature and our case study research, with the discussion turning towards reviewing the evidence of peacebuilding as part of a wider strategic response. We then offer recommendations for more transformative approaches aimed at reducing armed violence and the fragility associated with organised crime.

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27   The authors are: Frances Fortune, consultant and former Africa Manager for Search for Common Ground; Eduardo Ribeiro and Damian Platt, on behalf of Luta pela Paz, Rio de Janeiro; and Ed Quitoriano with Pancho Lara of International Alert, Philippines.

1 Peacebuilding and conflict theory: Key ideas relevant to tackling the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility

It is a central hypothesis of this report that the set of principles and tools encompassed by a peacebuilding approach would greatly enrich a new generation of responses to 21st century conflict risks related to organised crime, at different levels, as called for by representatives of major global institutions cited above. This argument does not claim that peacebuilding is a panacea to the enormously complex set of issues involved, but rather aims to demonstrate that the relationship between organised crime, armed violence and fragility is usefully viewed through the lens of conflict theory and peacebuilding practice. Additionally, peacebuilding expertise applied at the specific country, regional or global level in the search for effective responses to this nexus would significantly enhance and complement existing response efforts that have largely focused until now around crime prevention and law enforcement agendas.

Peacebuilding is a fairly new field, and one which is constantly evolving. The term is not widely understood outside of immediate development and security policy circles; indeed, even within these circles it means different things to different actors and is often conflated with peacemaking, peacekeeping, conflict reduction and others.[28] This report does not set out to provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of the concept's journey, either theoretically or in terms of institutional take-up (although a dedicated critique against the backdrop of '21st century conflict' would be timely and useful). What it will do is pull out key concepts and principles underpinning peacebuilding work, focusing on particular aspects that seem relevant both to understanding and working towards the transformation of the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility. The key points covered here will help to frame the report's subsequent discussion and conclusions.

> Peacebuilding is a fairly new field, and one which is constantly evolving.

1.1 PEACEBUILDING – WHAT IS IT?

The term was first coined in 1992 by then UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his document *An agenda for peace*, in which he set out responsibilities and responses for the UN and the international community in dealing with contemporary conflicts.[29] This involved four major areas of activity: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. The idea of a neat sequential intervention chain that confines peacebuilding explicitly to post-conflict settings was subsequently challenged, and the concept was further elaborated by practitioner theorists such as John Paul Lederach, who argued for a far broader definition and utility of the term:

> *"Peacebuilding ... is more than post-accord reconstruction ... [It] is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords."*[30]

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28 One report reviews the actual interventions and programmes labelled 'peacebuilding' by over 24 governmental and inter-governmental bodies and raises several questions as to its coherence and actual weight – arguing that its success lies more in its institutionalisation as a concept rather than actual delivery (see: M. Barnett et al (2007). 'Peacebuilding: What is in a name?', *Global Governance*, Vol. 13). A second report reviewed as part of this research, *Peacebuilding and organised crime*, takes quite a different approach to defining peacebuilding, focusing exclusively on the role of the UN (see: Swisspeace (2007). *Peacebuilding and organised crime: The cases of Kosovo and Liberia*. Bern).

29 UN (1992). *An agenda for peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping*. New York. Available at http://www.unrol.org/files/A_47_277.pdf

30 J.P. Lederach (1997). *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press. p.20.

BOX 2: INTERNATIONAL ALERT'S PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

Alert's programming framework encourages peacebuilders to envision what a more peaceful context in a given setting might look like in tangible terms. It then proceeds to identify which among specific peace factors might help or hinder progress towards the vision, before identifying people or institutions with power and capacity to strengthen positive features or overcome hindrances. This leads to clear programming interventions linked to definable change goals.

Peace is strengthened (and its relative presence or absence can thus be recognised) by what we call 'peace factors'. The peace factors provide a lens through which to examine a context in terms of the features which either strengthen and enable, or undermine and block peace and progress towards peace. They are designed to be used at any analytical level: household, community, province, country, region, etc. The five peace factors are:

- **Power** – the degree to which relationships between people, between peoples, and between people and governing or otherwise powerful institutions, allow for participation, accountability, mutual support and legitimate and effective decision-making and actions;
- **Income and assets** – the degree to which people have equal access to opportunities to make a living, and to invest in and manage economic assets which provide them with capital for further improving their livelihoods, and a cushion for difficult times;
- **Law and justice** – the degree to which people are predictably and equally accountable, and have equal opportunity for recourse under the law (including both formal and informal norms and traditions);
- **Safety** – the degree to which people are able to stay safe from physical and psychological harm;
- **Wellbeing** – the degree to which people have equal access to shelter, health, education and a decent living environment, and can reasonably aspire to improve their living conditions.

Source: International Alert (2010). *Programming framework for International Alert*. London. Available at http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/programming-framework

This wider conceptualisation of peacebuilding has proved to be highly relevant to responses to contemporary conflicts, the duration of which may span decades and be perpetually susceptible to reigniting long after peace accords are signed. Indeed, the field of peacebuilding has expanded and deepened in response to the world's complex and intractable civil conflicts mushrooming from the 1980s until the more recent decline noted above. It complements but is not equated to peacemaking, which is concerned with the immediate task of engaging warring parties to broker a cessation in hostilities and peace agreement, structured as progressively – with regard to lasting peace priorities – as circumstances and the skills of mediators will allow. With regard to the issues at hand in this report, important questions as to how sensitivity to criminal agendas can be better taken into account in peace negotiations, mediation processes and formal state-led post-conflict reconciliation initiatives, such as truth commissions and the trials of combatant leaders, are beginning to be explored in the emerging literature.[31]

This work represents an important part of the widening agenda around the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, and will be further referenced in this report. However, it is important to clarify that this report's primary focus is on peacebuilding approaches, not peacemaking alone. Peacebuilding is concerned with processes that will bring about deeper societal change to sustain lasting peace – noting that signed peace agreements and post-conflict accords rarely represent the real end of a conflict. Overarching peacebuilding change goals revolve around deepening understanding and raising awareness of conflict factors in order to transform individual, group, societal and institutional perceptions and practices that interact with and shape these factors, including through building trust across conflict divides. The design of interventions is based on context analysis and, increasingly, efforts to envisage 'what peaceful societies look like', as elucidated in International Alert's 'programming framework' (see Box 2).

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31   See, for instance: J. Cockayne (2013b). *Strengthening mediation to deal with criminal agendas*, Oslo Forum Papers, No. 2. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue; W. Kemp and I. Hrovatin (2011). 'Mainstreaming crime control in peace operations and development', IPI Meeting Note. New York: IPI. Available at http://www.ipinst.org/media/pdf/publications/ipi_epub_mainstreamingcrime.pdf

Despite its frequent challenge to the conflict-enabling features of a country's status quo, peacebuilding is inherently pragmatic and inclusive. It contrasts with the black-and-white perspective of those working in human rights (despite an often close allegiance and shared concern around the abuse of civilians during violent conflict), and seeks to engage all stakeholders, regardless of wrongdoing. To be effective, peacebuilding needs to remain strategic, address issues across the particular conflict context, seek timely entry points, be innovative and be prepared to self-reflect. However, a major challenge is to demonstrate results and evidence of where such comprehensive approaches have delivered tangible gains, which gives rise to all kinds of questions, such as 'what is peace'? This has led to growing experimentation with peace indicators, with a particular focus on people's perceptions: balancing short-term incremental progress against longer-term change goals, noting difficulties in attribution and accepting that immediate 'success' may well be thrown off track by broader shocks and events.[32]

The evolving field of conflict theory and peacebuilding practice, greatly enriched by the experience of a number of national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics and international agencies, is firmly located within the mainstream of development policy and practice. Member states of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) have adopted the twin goals of statebuilding and peacebuilding as policy objectives to guide their interventions in fragile states.[33] The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding[34] led to the drafting of a New Deal in 2011, a key agreement between fragile states and partners to change the policy and practice of engagement. The Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) articulated in the New Deal draw on the core principles of the primacy of context, the importance of all citizens actively engaging in statebuilding, and the multi-dimensional focus required across the whole of society to achieve peace (based on a vision of peaceful societies that resonates with Alert's 'peace factors').[35] At the UN, the mandate of the UN Peacebuilding Commission reflects the wider scope of peacebuilding as cutting across pre-, mid- and post-conflict stages. The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development was adopted in 2006 as a supplement to the MDGs, with the aim of achieving measurable reductions in global armed violence by 2015; however, the more transformative nuance of peacebuilding is arguably lost in the emphasis placed on 'reduction'. While the original MDG framework may have been lacking in its limited focus on the specific development challenges experienced in conflict-affected and fragile states,[36] discussion around the post-2015 global development framework that will succeed the MDGs recognises peace, security, justice and governance as a central part of the development agenda. This has been marked by the UN Secretary-General mandating the establishment of a specific working group on conflict and fragility.

These global policy developments point to the extent to which peacebuilding principles and experience are now reflected at the heart of development. However, it should also be acknowledged that practical policy programming to advance peacebuilding priorities has often gained less recognition when compared with other institutional priorities.[37] (*Continues overleaf*)

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32   K. Barnes (2009). *Turning policy into impact on the ground: Developing indicators and monitoring mechanisms on women, peace and security issues for the European Union*. London: International Alert; D. Hiscock and T. Dumasy (2012). *From conflict analysis to peacebuilding impact: Lessons from the people's peacemaking perspectives project*. London: Saferworld and Conciliation Resources; OECD (2012c). *Evaluating peacebuilding activities in settings of conflict and fragility: Improving learning for results*, DAC Guidelines and References Series. Paris.

33   See documents available on the OECD Development Assistance Committee International Network on Conflict and Fragility at http://www.oecd.org/dac/incaf/

34   A high-level forum for political dialogue to bring together government representatives of conflict-affected and fragile countries, international partners and civil society to catalyse successful transitions from conflict and fragility that grew out of this agenda.

35   The five PSGs are: (i) Legitimate politics – foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution; (ii) Security – establish and strengthen people's security; (iii) Justice – address injustices and increase people's access to justice; (iv) Economic foundations – generate employment and improve livelihoods; and (v) Revenues and services – manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery (see: http://www.newdeal4peace.org/peacebuilding-and-statebuilding-goals/). For Alert's discussion on the priority areas of the PSGs and the nexus between crime, conflict, peacebuilding and statebuilding, see: International Alert (2013). *The new deal's peacebuilding and statebuilding goals and organised crime*. London. Available at http://international-alert.org/resources/publications/new-deals-psgs-and-organised-crime

36   International Alert (2011). *Working with the grain to change the grain: Moving beyond the millennium development goals*. London.

37   A case in point is the limited actual role adopted by the UN Peacebuilding Commission, despite its originally intended scope.

Conflict triggers

Single acts or events (or their anticipation) that ignite violent episodes (e.g. plane crash killing of president, child killed by security forces live on TV, rumours, elections, etc.).

Drivers (or proximate causes)

Facilitating factors that perpetuate conflict/contribute to a climate conducive to violet conflict or its further escalation (e.g. behaviour of security forces, financial profit from war by armed groups, poverty and unemployment, etc.).

Root (or structural) causes

Underlying causes of conflict/pervasive factors that have become built into the policies, structures and fabric of a society and may create the pre-conditions for violent conflict (e.g. dominance by one group within a political system and the economy, poor governance, competition for scarce resources, etc.).

Source: Adapted from Saferworld, International Alert et al (2004). *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A resource pack.* London. Available at http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/conflict-sensitive-approaches-resource-pack

Indeed, the disaggregation of total spending on peacebuilding activities and interventions exposes peacebuilding as a 'poor cousin' of other development sectors, despite widespread rhetorical recognition that 'war is development in reverse'.[38] Therefore, this report draws a necessary distinction between the peacebuilding approach put forward by an organisation such as International Alert, the quality and purposefulness of all interventions labelled as 'peacebuilding', and the overall performance of peacebuilding as a sub-sector of development and diplomacy.

1.2 PEACEBUILDING TOOLS

The following specific peacebuilding tools are particularly relevant when considering the relationship between organised crime, armed violence and fragility.

Conflict analysis, information flow and 'do no harm'

Theoretical approaches to conflict that emphasise the importance of contextual analysis of the actors, issues and dynamics at hand are at the core of peacebuilding. Analysis is crucial for facilitating interventions that are able to consciously address root causes, proximate causes and potential triggers of violent conflict, drawing in the right stakeholders from across conflict divides and societal sectors, at different levels. A number of analytical tools have been designed to work across conflict systems, integrating local, national, regional and international levels.[39]

A core message of this report, discussed further below, is that casting organised crime-related armed violence and conflict risks solely as a problem of criminality requiring a law-and-order response is a reflection of a partial definition of the problem. More rounded analysis through a conflict lens, differentiating between root causes, proximate causes and triggers (see Box 3), will help to inform more holistic responses.

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38   According to a recent expert blogpost: "The global community spends more than US$1.6 trillion per year on security, US$126 billion on global development, less than US$10 billion on UN peacekeeping operations, and less than US$4 billion on peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities." C. Zelizer (2014). '12 actions for a more peaceful 2014', *Peace and Collaborative Development Network*, 9 January 2014.

39   Two good summaries are: Fisher et al (2000). *Working with conflict: Skills and strategies for action.* London: Zed Books; and Saferworld, International Alert et al (2004). Op. cit.

A lack of information about organised crime emerges as a major constraint on policy response, civic resilience and civic empowerment in diverse country settings. Analysis as a process can generate peacebuilding dividends, as stakeholders work together to examine differing perceptions of history. Information generated through analysis informs wider change processes and peacebuilding agendas, and contributes to empowerment of civic actors in striving for more peace-enabling governance environments.

Peacebuilding has also informed the growing normative commitment by leading international development institutions to the importance of conflict sensitivity when intervening in any sector, in fragile or conflict-affected states. Here, the analytical approach to conflict is applied to ensure that programmes and projects 'do no harm' – avoiding unintentional reinforcement of negative conflict dynamics through 'conflict-blind' beneficiary selection, privileged relationships with particular elite groups and wider status quo entrenchment, to name but a few.[40] This report will argue that employing conflict sensitivity when designing responses to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility would assist in ensuring their efficacy, including for law enforcement.

Dialogue on conflict issues

Informed by analysis and in turn informing advocacy at different levels, dialogue about conflict issues is a core method of peacebuilding. Often initiated, facilitated and sustained by third parties who are trusted for their impartiality and/or expertise, dialogue brings together people from across societal and conflict divides (whether within or across communities, and/or bringing citizens together with policy-makers, government officials and/or business) to explore, analyse and propose new solutions to specific

> In the context of organised crime, armed violence and fragility, dialogue processes in each of the countries reviewed are notable in their absence.

conflict factors. Borrowing from one study, "the spirit of dialogue is … in short … the ability to hold many different points of view in suspension, along with a primary interest in the creation of common meaning".[41] Peacebuilding dialogue initiates a process that opens up new conversations about old problems, growing outwards to join forces with other transformative initiatives at different levels. It also helps to contribute to a richer acknowledgement of: the particular conflict context; societal change; reconciliation and healing; political reform; and the foundations of lasting peace. The experience and environment of such dialogue processes are themselves held to be transformative; for example, providing people with the opportunity to examine their own subjectivity and perceptions about 'the other'. Defined as restoring broken relationships and learning to live non-violently with radical differences, reconciliation arguably constitutes the essence of the lasting transformation that peacebuilding seeks. Facilitated stakeholder or inter-group dialogue has a crucial role to play as a means of achieving or contributing to reconciliation – complementing state-level processes, or instead of them in cases where these are absent or ineffective.

In the context of organised crime, armed violence and fragility, dialogue processes in each of the countries reviewed are notable in their absence. The lack of fora for debate, exchange, confidence building and, ultimately, the accountability of policy actors on these issues, excludes citizens from contributing to the design of solutions for the spectrum of drivers and impacts of organised crime. Even at the policy level – whether national or global – it emerges that institutional silos across crime prevention, public health, development and peacebuilding prevent the full range of stakeholders from working together. This, in turn, inhibits joined-up responses.

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40   See: OECD DAC (2007). Op. cit.; and Saferworld, International Alert et al (2004). Op. cit.
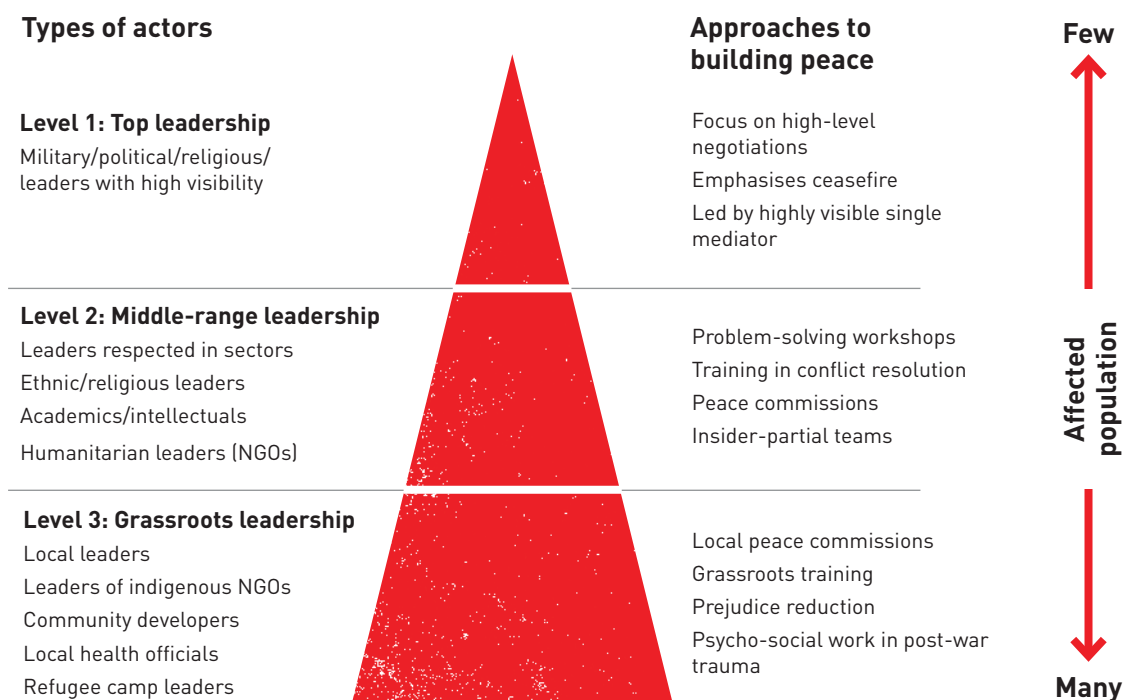41   D. Bohm and F.D. Peat (1987). *Science, order, and creativity*. New York: Bantam. p.247.

Empowerment and civic activism

Peacebuilding takes a broad approach in its perspective on societal levels linked to a conflict and its transformation, drawing again on Lederach, whose famous pyramid diagram graphically depicts this (see below). The model assists those designing interventions to identify critical resource people and leaders at each societal level to be mobilised in building peace, the types of activities to undertake with these constituencies, as well as potential links across levels. National actors working within their societies and communities are of paramount importance in peacebuilding; however, an enabling role for international partners is also recognised. The commitment to involve a wider range of actors in responses to armed violence and conflict has profound importance when considering the path of contemporary conflict, including armed violence related to organised crime, where the distinction between combatant (and/or criminal) and civilians has broken down, and entire populations may be affected or take part in different ways. The achievement of sustainable peace hinges on meaningful efforts to address and transform long-term grievances held by citizens. These grievances can be reflected in inequitable or unsatisfactory governance systems, economies, or legal and justice systems. Therefore, the empowerment of citizens to engage with these issues is crucial. This points to the importance of working with civil society – not only NGOs but also business leaders, women's organisations, religious institutions and academics – as key agents of lasting peace, ideally based on a sound analysis of how civic actors are themselves positioned vis-à-vis conflict dynamics. Enhancing civic resilience to the impacts of organised crime and empowering citizens' voices to address structural causal factors strongly emerge as gaps in the overall current response to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility. Peacebuilding seeks to promote meaningful policy reform and accountability of institutions and actors around their governance of issues relevant to the conflict dynamics on hand through civic empowerment.

It emerges from this report, as with public dialogue fora, that citizens' capacity to engage with political authorities and other actors on issues related to the connection between organised crime, armed violence and fragility is limited in many cases. However, it also directly correlates with societies' greater resilience to these dynamics.

FIGURE 1: ACTORS AND APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING

Types of actors

Approaches to building peace

Few

Level 1: Top leadership
Military/political/religious/
leaders with high visibility

Focus on high-level negotiations

Emphasises ceasefire

Led by highly visible single mediator

Level 2: Middle-range leadership
Leaders respected in sectors
Ethnic/religious leaders
Academics/intellectuals
Humanitarian leaders (NGOs)

Problem-solving workshops

Training in conflict resolution

Peace commissions

Insider-partial teams

Affected population

Level 3: Grassroots leadership
Local leaders
Leaders of indigenous NGOs
Community developers
Local health officials
Refugee camp leaders

Local peace commissions

Grassroots training

Prejudice reduction

Psycho-social work in post-war trauma

Many

Source: Reproduced with the permission of the US Institute of Peace, from J.P. Lederach (1997). *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press. p.39.

1.3 EXAMPLES OF PEACEBUILDING INTERVENTIONS

BOX 4: FOSTERING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION AND RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA

As Rwanda emerges from the shadow of its history, mistrust and a general lack of unity among its citizens means they are struggling to live together, despite an official narrative of successful reconciliation.

This project, implemented by International Alert in partnership with five Rwandan civil society and professional organisations, provides space for interaction by those most affected by the 1994 genocide and its aftermath – survivors, ex-prisoners, ex-combatants and young people – building trust between them. Based on an extensive analysis, design, implementation and review process, the project's integrated approach has three main elements: trauma counselling and education; creating safe spaces for the different groups to talk in dialogue, or 'peace clubs'; and supporting economic initiatives (e.g. microfinance) by mixed groups working together to alleviate poverty. It complements and extends the work achieved under the nationwide Gacaca courts process, responding in part to its limitations.

In the eight focal locations, victims and perpetrators of genocide are now able to sit together in order to discuss sensitive issues in relation to reconciliation and reintegration of the most vulnerable people among genocide survivors, ex-prisoners, ex-combatants and young people. Behaviours of different components of the target group have changed, for example replacing habitual pejorative language with a commitment to open dialogue. The formation of inclusive solidarity groups that continue to function well is a further impact. Thanks to the economic component of the project, living conditions have improved significantly for beneficiaries along with interaction – with Hutu and Tutsi mixed groups working together to provide mutual solidarity in livelihood enterprises.

The project provides **space for interaction** by those most affected by the **1994 genocide** and its aftermath

BOX 5: DOING POLITICS DIFFERENTLY IN LEBANON

Over the past few years, International Alert has been facilitating political dialogue between the youth representatives of the 19 political parties in Lebanon's coalition government. The aim has been to develop lines of debate and engagement that can cut across long-established sectarian divisions.

In late 2013, an external evaluation was carried out. The evaluation highlighted the success of the project in bringing about real change in the attitudes and behaviours of the participants. On a personal level, party representatives talked about the trust they had built among themselves. This in turn has enabled the participants to leave behind fears and stereotypical images and to better understand the perspectives of their counterparts. As one participant said:

"I never cared to listen to the other side, I never wanted to hear the opinion of the other side and I always dismissed them. Now I can see their point of view. Now I can listen until they finish their argument and I can happily sit down with them to talk."

Against the backdrop of a worsening political and security crisis in Lebanon, the party representatives express the conviction that there are issues that they can work on together. Equally, despite healthy doses of cynicism, the party representatives also began to trust in their ability to jointly influence their environment. As one participant said:

"The dialogue sessions on the Palestinian presence in Lebanon was very effective. It allowed us to examine the social and humanitarian aspects of their status away from the political discourse. We all felt that we could take on some initiatives with our parties to alleviate their suffering and to mediate the issues that are administrative in nature."

The project will continue to promote constructive political discourse based on policy rather than ideology. A key aim is seeking opportunities to increase the extent to which dialogue participants are able to influence the higher echelons of their party.

The project facilitates **political dialogue** between the youth representatives of **19 political parties**

2 Exploring the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility

Having laid out some of the core conceptual underpinnings which inform this report, the discussion will now highlight key dimensions of the complexity of organised crime (with a particular emphasis on the global trade in illegal drugs). We will first identify three 'factor-clusters' that are particularly relevant to understanding the issues through a peacebuilding lens. We will then reflect on the link between organised crime and conflict – distinguishing between trigger, proximate and structural conflict factors, and drawing on lessons from an earlier phase of policy concern with 'economic agendas in civil war'.

TOC has been defined as an international criminal enterprise that "works rationally to profit from illicit activities that are often in great public demand".[42] Considering illegal drugs as a key commodity traded via transnational organised criminal activity, it is useful to highlight that the reach of TOC is felt at three broad levels, with related effects experienced in levels of armed violence and conflict risk, which play out in mutually impacting spatial theatres.

Use of force, threats, monopoly control and/or the corruption of public officials are key tactics informing the modus operandi of TOC. Drugs represent the most important and profitable illicit commodity, with some estimates describing them as comprising up to 85% of the global value of TOC.[43] Fragile states are important transit points and fulfil intermediary roles in global TOC value chains, as they offer "porous borders, underpaid officials and public indifference or consent".[44] This means that TOC networks can move relatively easily from state to state in response to the relative permissiveness of different environments. In some cases, the "market logic is irresistible: Tajikistan […] shares a 1,500 kilometre land border with Afghanistan, producer of 80% of the world's heroin, and is the first stop on the way to Russia, the world's largest heroin consumer".[45] Because of their financial turnover, influence over political leaders, transnational reach, employment of security tactics and the number of people dependent on them for their livelihoods, it is not surprising that some observers have compared TOC groups such as Colombian drug cartels to multinational companies. The displacement of Colombian-sourced drug smuggling from its earlier transit route of the Caribbean to the West African coast in response to tightening law-enforcement efforts resonates with other globalised supply route practices familiar in the legitimate trade of various fast-moving consumable goods.

Despite these definitions, facts and features, the term 'organised crime' is fraught with difficulty and imprecision: the more light that is shone on it, the more conceptual cobwebs seem to appear. There are, to begin with, many different sorts of criminal cultures and networks. Among the best known, contrast can be drawn between the hierarchical mafia organisations of Sicily and the transnational cocaine trafficking empire and domestic political ambitions of Pablo Escobar's Medellin in the 1980s. Within the contexts of fragile states, one OECD study offers a (far from comprehensive) distinction between: (1) local organisations primarily concerned with local crime; (2) local organisations with global reach (illicit production); (3) transnational logistical networks; and (4) fragile states

> The term 'organised crime' is fraught with difficulty and imprecision: the more light that is shone on it, the more conceptual cobwebs seem to appear.

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42   OECD (2012a). Op. cit. p.30.
43   UNODC (2010). Op. cit.
44   I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.
45   Ibid. p.2.

as transit points for TOC.[46] Placing an emphasis on the different strategic positions adopted by organised criminal groups as part of their business models, Cockayne has offered a further typology, distinguishing between: warlord, where a criminal group exerts a typically semi-feudal type of control enjoying relative autonomy within a geographic (rural or urban) enclave; mafia, where a criminal organisation chooses to embed itself between the state and the population; terrorism, a strategy – usually short lived – of military and political confrontation; blue ocean, for example al-Qaeda in the Maghreb's (AQIM) movement into the Sahel in the 1990s in response to Algerian security efforts to curtail its activity, where it proceeded to open up a whole new market in hostage-taking; and joint venture, which takes the mafia model to a further extreme, meaning that organised crime becomes the strategic framework for national government itself.[47]

2.1 FACTORS SHAPING THE NEXUS BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME, ARMED VIOLENCE AND FRAGILITY

Taking note of the heterogeneous reference to and application of the term 'organised crime', this report has identified the following three sets of factors that warrant particular focus when seeking to understand the relationship between organised crime, armed violence and fragility through a peacebuilding lens (see Figure 3).

Organised crime and politics

Predatory power holders
While some accounts depict wily criminal gangs exploiting passive and fragile states to run their illegal trade, there is mounting evidence from the more recent literature (further corroborated by the research for this report) that entrepreneurial indigenous political and business elites who seek out opportunities for profit linked to TOC play a proactive role. In some instances, they wrest control of these opportunities in order to maximise profit margins. The insight of seminal analyses of dysfunctional governance in Africa is brought into sharp focus when reviewing this

FIGURE 2: THEATRES OF TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME

TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIMINAL NETWORKS

STATE/NATIONAL POWER HOLDER COLLUSION

URBAN/ SUB-NATIONAL GANGS
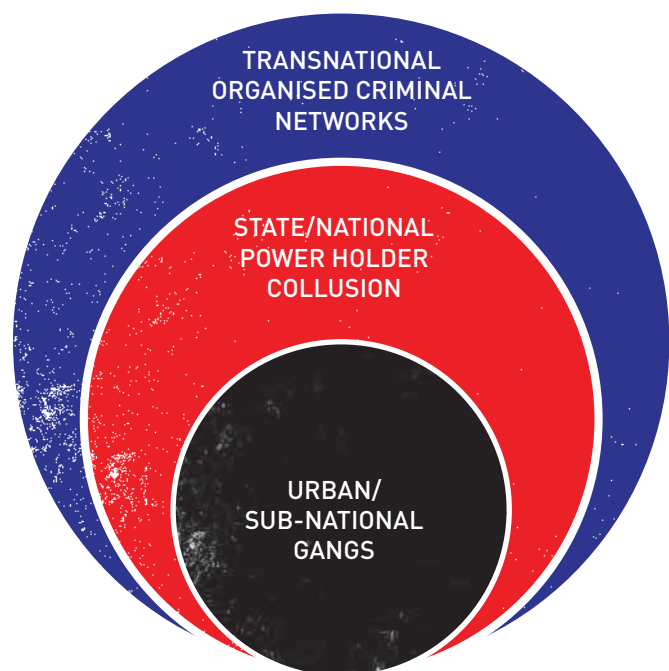
FIGURE 3: DIMENSIONS SHAPING THE NEXUS

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

GLOBALISED MARKET STRUCTURES

ORGANISED CRIME/ARMED VIOLENCE/ FRAGILITY

CRIME INCENTIVES

46   OECD (2012b). Op. cit.
47   J. Cockayne (2013a). 'Chasing shadows: Strategic responses to organised crime in conflict-affected situations', *Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Journal*, Vol. 158, No. 2.

dimension of TOC,[48] as confirmed perhaps most clearly in Guinea-Bissau. Guinea-Bissau is now widely referred to as Africa's first 'narco-state', where collusion in narco-trafficking takes place at the highest political level.[49] Political actors can be complicit in organised crime as part of their strategy of rule, whereby crime proceeds finance patronage settlement systems; such complicity is one of the factors behind Mali's slide into violence in 2012.[50] In the Philippines, our research found the control of illicit gun production by local business and political actors, asserting that "the persistence of the trade in illicit guns in the Philippines depends on agents of the law rather than the illegal traders and manufacturers outside the law". This is a phenomenon which is heightening violence in politics and is becoming increasingly meshed with the global drug trade. In the MRU countries, our research found that some of the actors best positioned to profit from and manage the illicit economy in drugs are state officials as well as business elites (noting the close relationship between these two).[51] Finally, in Brazil, our research found a distinction between the local drug trade within Rio's favelas, in which Rio's armed groups are key protagonists, and the wholesale international drug trafficking which supplies this trade. These processes involve powerful segments of local society, including politicians, business executives, *bicheiros* (illegal lottery operators) and members of the military.

> Political actors can be complicit in organised crime as part of their strategy of rule, whereby crime proceeds finance patronage settlement systems; such complicity is one of the factors behind Mali's slide into violence in 2012.

A destructive but symbiotic relationship between transnational, transcultural bed-fellows is in evidence across the countries in question. A number of analysts stress the significance of pre-existing political and cultural factors, as well as historical trajectories, in shaping the interface between organised crime, statehood and violence.

Understanding contemporary TOC would thus seem to require far-reaching efforts to classify what are essentially complex socio-economic practices – practices which may have their roots in deeply embedded cultural beliefs, historical circumstances and political realities.

Political interest of 'criminals'

On the flipside of the complicity of public officials in organised crime lies the interest that 'organised' criminals have in politics. This calls to mind what one analyst has named situations where "what outsiders perceive as a criminal is known to local populations as *the* authority figure in their town, providing security, justice and jobs … [In] nearly no context is there an easy answer to the question: 'How do I know a criminal when I meet one?'"[52]

Some scholars reflecting on the *modus operandi* of organised criminal groups have concluded that their conduct is fundamentally political. In some cases, this follows the model of Escobar, to which this report has already referred (where criminal bosses aspire to and gain political office, and provide extensive services to their constituencies, often over and above those offered by the state). Jamaican 'don' Christopher 'Dudus' Coke provides a more recent example in this mould. Even where no expressed desire for state capture or formal political power exists – and where, to the contrary, parasitic subsistence with the existing status quo and/or overtly apolitical and non-partisan behaviour is a fundamental part of a group's survival strategy – it is useful to consider organised criminal groups' activity as essentially strategic, or political, with a small 'p'; in other words, utilising political space as part of their business model. This point is elaborated extensively

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48   See, for example, Bayart's work on situations where the state represents an asset to enrich those in power. J-F. Bayart (1993). *The state in Africa: The politics of the belly*. London/New York: Longman.

49   Ibid. For analysis of the cocaine trade and its links to political elites, see: H. Vigh (2012). 'Critical states and cocaine connections', in M. Utas (ed.) (2012) *African conflicts and informal power: Big men and networks*. London: Zed Books.

50   W. Lacher (2012). 'Organised crime and conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region', *Carnegie Papers*, 13 September 2012.

51   Key stakeholder interviews in the MRU indicated that Nigerians dominate the trade, while Lebanese and other west Africans, including Ghanaians, Sierra Leoneans, Liberians and Guineans, are heavily involved. These groups use legitimate businesses to front their otherwise diversifying criminal interests, employing structures that mirror the relatively traditional and hierarchical West African society.

52   A. Wennmann (2013). *Strategies for dealing with actors involved in organised crime in peacebuilding contexts*. Bern: Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. p.9.

by Cockayne in his five models of strategic positioning for diverse criminal groups.[53] Our research in Rio highlighted how the concentration of armed groups in the city's poorest areas has interrupted development and democratic political participation, and has left communities open to violent oppression and exploitation. Criminals co-opt, exploit and threaten community leaders, sometimes appointing individuals to positions in the (local authority) residents' associations. Even when they attempt to stay independent of a local armed group, community leaders must still negotiate with them, often at considerable personal risk. This delicate situation is easily exploited for political gain: knowing that "they must retain the support of local populations, criminals provide politicians with monopoly access to favelas during elections in exchange for resources."[54] According to our research, defence militia are equally active in using political influence – even attempting to occupy political office. In the Philippines, our primary research involved looking into the escalating linkages between organised crime – specifically the illicit gun trade – and competition for political office (see Box 6).

Incentives for crime

Social exclusion
The subjectivity and complexity surrounding the term 'criminal' has further relevance in considering incentives for crime. Just as the old adage tells us that 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter', opinion is also divided on sub-national-level criminality. A faultline exists between a classical-liberal mainstream the 'dominant discourse on free will and faulty socialisation', which shows little sympathy for the effects of social exclusion on individuals' free will (despite the evidence), and social liberalism's discourse on poverty and social inequality.[55] Our research in the MRU highlighted the ways in which the youth demographic, social exclusion and poverty all act as key drivers in sustaining West Africa's increasing profile in the global drug trade. Similarly, our research in Rio provides stark evidence of the way in which social injustice drives organised crime and violence there. (*Continues overleaf*)

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53   See J. Cockayne (2013a). Op. cit.
54   E.D. Arias (2006). *Trafficking, social networks, and public security*. University of North Carolina Press. p.14.
55   S. Hall and S. Winton (eds.) (2012). *New directions in criminological theory*. London: Routledge.

The 2009 massacre of 58 civilians – mostly journalists and women – in the province of Maguindanao exposed the deadly links between warlord politicians and their private armies to national political elites. In one northern Philippines province alone, studies showed the presence of 10 private armed groups, two-thirds of which were under the control of the provincial governor and a municipal mayor. In August 2009, then Acting Defence Secretary Norberto Gonzales revealed the existence of 132 private armed groups linked to political elites. He also assessed these groups to be in control of 10,000 men and 800,000 firearms. These groups were involved in violence in nine election hotspots. President Aquino's state of the nation address on 22 July 2013 cited the enduring presence of at least 41 private armed groups across the country.

Data from five national elections since 1995 suggest an average of 227 violent incidents per election period, of which nearly half (49.7%) were composed of ambushes, harassments, arson and ballot snatching, and nearly a third (32.3%) of firearms use. The data also suggests a continuing rise in firearms-related incidents since 1995.

<div style="background: red; color: white;">**BOX 7: SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND VIOLENT CRIME IN RIO**</div>

Violence in Rio de Janeiro is geographically concentrated and occurs in the context of corruption, poverty, poor housing and lack of access to social, economic and cultural activity. Decades of violence have led to a city which is polarised, fragmented and host to a proliferation of extremely violent micro-conflicts. The characterisation of this situation as a simple 'law-and-order' issue over the years has stifled debate about the long-term measures needed to tackle the illegal networks and power structures which sustain it. Exposure to lethal violence in Rio is thus demarcated by territory and occurs in conformity with the patterns of the city's residential segregation, with social micro-segregation dynamics marked by the spatial proximity of favelas to the city's richer regions. In short, the highest homicide rates are to be found in the north and west of the city, as well as in the favelas. Age, gender and race are all factors that lead to a higher probability of victimisation, which only increases when these factors are combined. Several studies have proven that someone who is non-white, young and male is at higher risk of being a victim of homicide in the city and in the state of Rio de Janeiro, as well as in other Brazilian cities.

Much of the analysis reviewed for this report shares an emphasis on the links between poverty, social exclusion and links to organised crime.[56] In situations where structural violence is perpetuated daily, the inescapably pejorative connotation of the term 'criminal' rankles. This is particularly pertinent where systemic social exclusion combines with predatory practices on the part of those charged with governing, to stifle life prospects for the urban poor entirely. For this reason, grassroots organisations such as Cure Violence, which works to 'interrupt' gun violence through frontline interventions, specifically in Chicago, eschew the term entirely.[57] Indeed, the parallels between 'conflict' and 'non-conflict' armed violence deepen as the incentive structures which draw combatants to the battlefield become blurred with those which pull people into a life of crime in other settings. Differences may exist, where ideological or political conviction scores highly, but the tendency to sharply delineate – with criminals treated as criminals, but combatants as combatants, depending on the context, and despite the parallels – warrants closer scrutiny.

Livelihoods
A key vector of social exclusion relates to livelihood opportunities represented by organised crime in contexts where there are few, if any, economic alternatives. In fragile states in particular, and 'pockets of fragility' in more stable countries, the informal economy provides the bulk of opportunity for employment. Studies demonstrate that informal economy networks in licit goods can lend themselves readily to penetration by traders of illicit commodities.[58] In contexts characterised by massive under- or unemployment, and where economic opportunities are extremely limited, the lure of organised crime begins to represent not 'greed' but 'survival'.[59] Stamping out illicit trade linked to armed violence can be a blunt instrument which devastates community livelihood opportunities and leads to deeper cycles of fragility; this lesson was learned the hard way through

56   World Bank (2011a). Op. cit.; Geneva Declaration (2011). Op. cit.; C. Moser and D. Rodgers (2005). Op. cit.; I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.

57   Indicated in a recent practitioner and theorists' workshop convened by International Alert. See www.cureviolence.org

58   W. Lacher (2012). Op. cit.

59   Forty-six percent of surveyed gang members cite economic reasons for joining gangs, according to the *World Development Report 2011*. See: World Bank (2011a). Op. cit.

international experimentation in sanctions on conflict commodities during the 1990s. There is copious evidence of these destructive results in countries targeted as part of the 'war on drugs', whether it be from reducing responses to organised crime or securitising law enforcement. Entire rural economies have been laid waste, dramatically increasing poverty and, perversely, insecurity; Bolivia and Afghanistan present stark examples.[60] Our research in the MRU, the Philippines and Rio revealed the urgent need to invest in alternative livelihood opportunities for groups vulnerable to organised crime. This was particularly evident in the Philippines case study, which examined the profile of illicit artisanal gun factories in Danao City, and the livelihood losses that would be incurred should they be closed down as part of efforts to clamp down on the illicit gun trade (see Box 8).

Understanding the incentives for participation in organised crime helps to tease out the root causes and hence potentially devise a more nuanced, broad-based response strategy. It is worth highlighting, however, that the bulk of research into motivational dimensions focuses on poor and disadvantaged groups in both the global north and south. There is less scrutiny on the motivations of criminal bosses active at the apex of transnational criminal networks, or the state authorities determined to exploit the state for their own personal and group enrichment over public service. One exception is a discussion in a recent report that explores the "cognitive appeal of short-term profiteering" on the part of individuals in positions of power in contexts where war and other forms of hardship have been the norm.[61] A second take on this dimension is revealed by de Waal, who reflects on the intractability of violent conflict and the hybridisation between politics and criminality in many settings, and asserts the local legitimacy of patronage systems, regardless of their anachronism to Westphalian models of statehood. (*Continues overleaf*)

BOX 8: ILLICIT GUN MANUFACTURING AND LIVELIHOODS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Two kilometres uphill from downtown Danao City on the island of Cebu is a small village called Panas. Here Crisanto, a 63-year-old father of nine, follows his daily routine: breakfast, working on his small farm from 6-9am and, from 10am onward, teaming up with his son and grandson to make guns. Crisanto has been making guns since 1968, interrupted only during the period of martial law, when security forces fighting communist guerrillas inflicted damage on gun manufacturers. A specialist in 12-gauge shotguns, his family belongs to a group of seven other families working on a piece-rate contract with a financier from the city. "Show us a brochure or a replica and we can produce anything from Uzis, KG 9s, Ingrams and Bushmasters", says Luis Ramos (not his real name), a financier overseeing the production work of 10 gunsmiths.

The gunsmiths come from all walks of life: farmers, fishermen, tricycle drivers, un-schooled artisans and former farmers displaced following the insurgency and counter-insurgency operations of the 1980s. They and their financiers are not privy to who is buying the guns; bulk-buyers purchase volumes from consolidators (also known as *compradors* and 'stockholders') through brokers. All the makers know is that they are producing a commodity to earn an income. "This is the character of the people of Danao", according to former Mayor Ramon Durano III. "They are peaceful people. The gun industry is just a circumstance."

> Our research in the Mano River Union, the Philippines and Rio revealed the urgent need to invest in alternative livelihood opportunities for groups vulnerable to organised crime.

60   See: Global Commission on Drug Policy (2011). *On drugs*. Rio de Janeiro. Available at http://www.globalcommissionondrugs.org/wp-content/themes/gcdp_v1/pdf/Global_Commission_Report_English.pdf

61   R. Locke (2012). Op. cit. p.4.

Here, the 'corruption' of state officials and complicity in organised crime at the expense of the common good may not be an aberration, but evidence of behaviours entirely consistent with locally understood power systems.[62] However, research for this report did not discover a broader effort in the literature to apply the research methods used by political scientists and development theorists in surveying the poor to the interrogation of the perspectives and motives of crime bosses and the powerful, with a view to identifying entry points for change.

Globalised market forces

The market forces fuelling contemporary TOC are increasingly in the spotlight, as hinted at in a report by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which states that "organised crime seems to be less a matter of a group of individuals who are involved in a range of illicit activities, and more a matter of a group of illicit activities in which some individuals and groups are presently involved".[63] A recurrent theme in the emerging literature points to narco-trafficking as one of several elements representing the 'dark side of globalisation', whereby the global context of economic liberalism, based on an increasingly pervasive consumer culture, requires largely unfettered movement of goods and services on an unprecedented scale. The most comprehensive assessments of international crime concur that high profit margins in illicit trade and the leap in global connectivity are among the primary reasons behind the boom in transnational crime. While significant international effort has gone into combating smuggling, the sheer volume of trade means that full control and monitoring of imports and exports is simply not possible without dramatically slowing down and restricting its speed, which would both disappoint consumer expectations and hit corporate profits hard.

> While significant international effort has gone into combating smuggling, the sheer volume of trade means that full control and monitoring of imports and exports is simply not possible without dramatically slowing down and restricting its speed.

Meanwhile, the demand for illegal drugs in Western countries creates the opportunity for profit. Criminalisation of drug possession and sale ensures that the trade rests in the hands of criminal networks. This raises profound and extremely difficult questions – for example, why are people in parts of Asia, Europe, Russia and North America so keen on taking mind-altering drugs and how can this behaviour best be managed? These questions go right to the heart of the nexus, though they receive the least attention in response discourse. Policy-level recognition of the failings of the war on drugs that has overlooked some of these realities has begun to emerge. Most strikingly, last year the Organization of American States (OAS) produced findings of a high-level drug policy review mandated by 34 heads of state in the region, including the US, that was highly critical of the impact so far and urged greater emphasis on public health interventions in 'demand' countries.

Other features of globalisation, such as the movement of people, also contribute in unexpected ways to trends related to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk. One study points to large numbers of young people of Central American origin involved in crime, who originally emigrated during the civil wars of the 1980s and have since been deported from the US. These individuals are now seen to be key actors who are contributing to the rise of gang culture once back in their countries of origin.[64]

There are also arguments that, beyond creating logistical opportunities for TOC, the neoliberal, globalised, consumer capitalist system governing today's world also directly contributes to the very conditions of social inequality that drive crime, with global divergence between 'haves' and 'have-nots' reaching unprecedented proportions. Statistics indicate that almost half of the world's

62 A. de Waal (2009). 'Fixing the political marketplace: How can we make peace without functioning state institutions', 15th Christen Michelsen Lecture, Bergen, 15 October 2009.

63 UNODC (2010). Op. cit. p.29.

64 P. Kirby (2011). 'Gangs and wolves: Violence and vulnerability in a global economy', *Open Democracy*, 12 October 2011. Available at www.opendemocracy.net/print/61993

wealth is now owned by just 1% of the global population, which starkly underlines the way in which inequalities are apparently deepening within the global economy itself, and may be creating incentives for crime.[65] A World Economic Forum report has identified rising income disparities and inequality as the second greatest risk currently facing the world.[66]

2.2 WHEN DOES ORGANISED CRIME LEAD TO VIOLENCE?

In reflecting on the connection between organised crime and violence, it is helpful to pause and recollect the body of research that was inspired by Collier's now famous 'greed vs. grievance' dichotomy. This dichotomy drew global attention to the economic drivers of otherwise apparently politically motivated armed conflicts in the late 1990s, and immediately predates the contemporary research enquiry into the role of organised crime in violent conflict.[67] While provoking crucial reflection on the relationship between economy and conflict, the idea of a straight dichotomy ('greed' or 'grievance') in explaining conflict was contested and found by a number of authors to be overly simplistic.[68] The profit/political (greed/grievance) dichotomy is most usefully understood as a spectrum along which a given conflict will traverse, back and forth, through its duration. Clear examples of acutely ideologically, identity and politically motivated rebel movements, which today not only derive financial support from criminal activity, but have also over time become entirely captured or redefined by their struggle to sustain profit, include the Taliban in Afghanistan and both the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, or AUC) and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, or FARC). Without question, the longer a conflict endures, the more complex its financing structures are likely to become. In seeking to understand the nexus between organised crime, armed violence, as well as longer-term conflict risk at different spatial levels in today's world, a mirror image of this pattern of profit to exploit warfare for political ends, shifting over time to allow profit to become an end in itself, is apparent. Organised crime's starting point is profit, even while targeted violence and coercion represents a key element of its *modus operandi,* and despite the fact that some protagonists may appropriate it for broader political objectives, as above. However, just as warfare may develop its own economic logic, organised crime has been shown to develop its own equally complex logic of violence.

> Organised crime's starting point is profit, even while targeted violence and coercion represents a key element of its *modus operandi*, and despite the fact that some protagonists may appropriate it for broader political objectives.

There is clear evidence of a link between organised crime and violence. However, the relationship is not straightforward. Despite common assumptions, "drugs and drug-related violence do not overlap in either time or space",[69] and illegality alone is not a pre-determinant of levels of violence. Scholars are therefore increasingly recognising the need for "a theory that explains variation in levels of violence across different illicit markets and also within the same market over time".[70] While this report will not attempt to offer such a theory, it may be useful to at least classify the types of causal dynamics and impacts linking organised crime to armed violence and fragility, by drawing on conflict theory's distinction between triggers, drivers and structural causes (see Figure 4).

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65 Credit Suisse (2013). *Global wealth report 2013*. Zurich. Available at https://publications.credit-suisse.com/tasks/render/file/?fileID=BCDB1364-A105-0560-1332EC9100FF5C83

66 World Economic Forum (2013). *Outlook on the global agenda 2014*. Geneva. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_GlobalAgendaOutlook_2014.pdf

67 P. Collier and A. Hoeffler (2001). *Greed and grievance in civil war*, Policy Research Working Paper No. 2355. Washington DC: World Bank.

68 See: C. Cramer (2002). 'Homo economicus goes to war: Methodological individualism, rational choice and the political economy of war', *World Development*, Vol. 30, No. 11; K. Ballentine and H. Nitzschke (2003). *Beyond greed and grievance: Policy lessons from studies in the political economy of armed conflict*, IPA Policy Report. New York: International Peace Academy.

69 F.E. Thoumi (2010). 'The relationship between illegal drugs and violence: Is there a cause and effect?', *Portal*, No. 5.

70 R. Snyder and A. Duran-Martinez (2009). 'Does illegality breed violence? Drug trafficking and state-sponsored protection rackets', *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 52, p.254.

**FIGURE 4: THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
FACTORS SHAPING THE NEXUS**
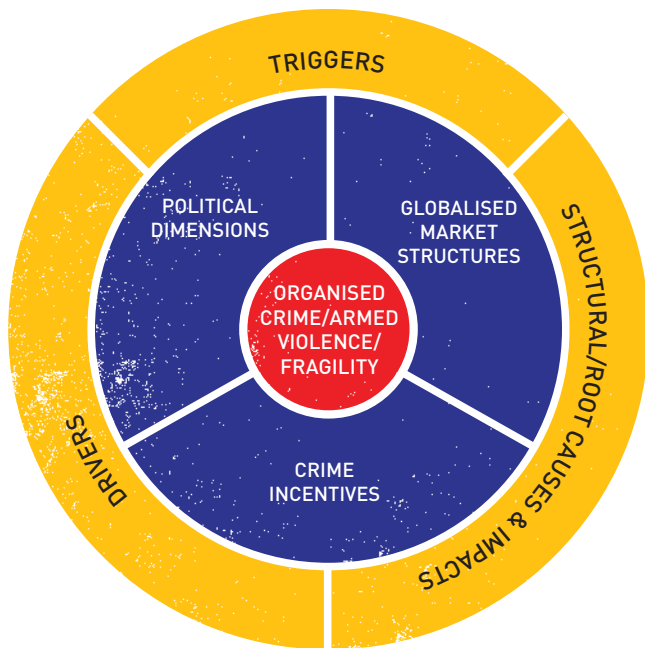
Scholars have noted the tendency for
some efforts to curtail organised crime
having perverse effects by dramatically
aggravating violence.

Within this, the specific gender-based violence
impacts of organised crime in different settings
warrant further research than this report was
able to produce. This is unfortunate given that,
of the studies reviewed, only very few have
anything to say about gender. This suggests a
real gap in research. The identity dimension of
gangs has received some attention and points to
the importance of gender relations in readings of
sub-national criminality. Young men acquiring
status and wealth to attract girlfriends and
wives is easily visible as one of the more obvious
facets here; however, more complex dimensions
of masculinity, group bonding and hierarchies
are also at play. Domestic and gender-based
violence or sexual crimes may inform the tactics
of organised criminal groups in different ways
in different settings, suggesting that the call for
a theory explaining levels of violence linked to
organised crime will require an explicit answer
on gender dimensions to be truly comprehensive.
Different roles ascribed to young men and
women along the supply and logistics chains of
TOC, and their relative experiences of violence
and coercion, also warrant specific attention.
The commercial sex industry as a whole, across
the full spectrum of trafficking, sexual slavery
and pornography, features prominently in the
overall portfolio of organised crime. While
its profits may be slight compared with those
generated by narco-trafficking, its impact on
gender relations and human suffering may well
be disproportionate.

Triggers

Levels of violence associated with different
criminal groups even within the same country may
vary dramatically. For instance, the contemporary
violence between Mexico's cartels contrasts with
an earlier era of low levels of violence. Therefore,
in certain situations and where a balance of
power is struck between protagonists of the illicit
economy, including those within the state (where
'state-sponsored protection rackets' exist), greater
levels of stability and human security may be
afforded to local populations.[71] Certain factors can
act as trigger causes in disrupting such temporary
periods of 'narco peace', for example the arrest
of lynchpin figures, which opens space for newer
players to compete. The notion that a 'balance of
power' between strategic entities is more stable
than its alternative (anarchy) resonates directly

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71   Ibid.

with international relations theory concerning the relationships between states, as well as military history. Scholars have noted the tendency for some efforts to curtail organised crime (whether in specific urban settings, at the national level, or at the interface between countries) having perverse effects by dramatically aggravating violence. These results have come about because of the disruptions wrought in the commercial status quo (for example, the US era of alcohol prohibition and more recent events in both Mexico and Burma) and have major implications for future policy responses. It is important to note that global, national and sub-national levels are interconnected.[72] Our Rio research highlighted that, while the 'Police Pacification Units' (*Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora*, or UPPs) (discussed in further detail in Box 11) have reduced violence in certain parts of the city, recent statistics show a rise in violence in outlying regions of urban Rio, where homicide rates and other crimes have been increasing (in some cases by as much as 61%). This suggests that violence patterns can migrate, which corresponds to the 'balloon' effect noted elsewhere in the literature, when organised crime, if squeezed from one location, easily shifts to another. Democratisation as a process has been identified as having in part destabilised the state protection racket that yielded comparative stability in the earlier phase of Mexico's drug trade, implying that political change or transition represents a further trigger factor. Finally, a period of relatively low violence associated with organised crime might be brought to an end by disruptions to either market or supply. This could be caused either by gains in law enforcement or the reverse. Our research in Rio revealed a period when middle-class and relatively high-value drug consumers became increasingly afraid to enter the favelas precisely because of the violence, thus driving down prices and creating increased competition and more violence.

Drivers (or proximate) factors

The rate of urbanisation emerges as one critical factor that can be classified as a driver of violence related to organised crime. A growing body of research into urban armed violence confirms that, in many settings, the highest incidences of violence are taking place in urban situations.[73] Markets for firearms and illicit drugs are more prominent in cities. The cities particularly at risk are those with "deep socio-economic fissures and stratification", which is the case in many Latin American and Caribbean cities.[74] Half of the world's population today lives in cities, which are expected to absorb almost all new population growth over the next 25 years.[75] This context looks set to continue 'driving' violence linked to organised crime, which flourishes in the conditions that characterise many cities. We can therefore anticipate more, not fewer, 'pockets of fragility', even in middle-income and relatively stable settings in the future.

Further drivers, recalling early work into the economic agendas of civil wars, are implied by the motive of profit inspiring organised crime. Our Rio research identified corruption as a crucial facilitator of violence and insecurity. For example, police sell protection services to drug traffickers and other criminals. A parasitic economy has developed around the illegal drugs and arms trade in the city based on the provision of illegal state services. The coexistence of rogue police, criminal factions, *bicheiros* and militia lead to a status quo where a multiplicity of criminal actors – and resulting illegal networks – can work both with and against each other. This situation makes coherent, long-term public security strategies for the city difficult to envisage, let alone organise. Our Philippines research also depicted a vested interest in profits from crime, which is leading to increasingly violent competition among political actors. Our interviews with key stakeholders in the MRU revealed that the drug trade is seen as exacerbating security threats, creating an ever-present possibility for belligerent groups to embrace illicit economies and generate the physical resources to fight the state (as was the case in the previous generation of civil conflict in the region).

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72 V. Felbab-Brown (2012). 'Drugs policy: How to solve the problem without generating even greater violence', *The World Today*, Vol. 68, Issue 7/8.

73 R. Muggah (2012). *Researching the urban dilemma: Urbanisation, poverty and violence*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre; OECD (2011). *Preventing and reducing armed violence in urban areas I*. Paris; Small Arms Survey (2012). 'Urban armed violence', Research Notes No. 23. Geneva; World Bank (2011b). *Violence in the city: Understanding and supporting community responses to urban violence*. Washington DC; C. Moser and D. Rogers (2005). Op. cit.; J. Beal et al (2013). Op. cit.

74 R. Muggah and A. Souza Mulli (2012). 'Rio tries counterinsurgency', *Current History*, Vol. 111.

75 UN Habitat (2007). *Global report on human settlements 2007: Enhancing urban safety and security*. London: Earthscan.

All of our primary research points to a further driver: the channelling of available resources into law enforcement over other policy priorities, such as socio-economic development within vulnerable populations. This is driven by the perceived security risk associated with organised crime and leads to a vicious cycle of under-investment in the resilience of high-risk groups.

Root (or structural) factors

There is a recognised correlation between a society's participation in narco-trafficking or propensity for violence and profound patterns of social exclusion. Understanding root causes which explain the reach of organised crime in some settings over others is critical if meaningful response strategies are to be identified. Cause and effect merge in deepening cycles of conflict risk as negative structural effects of organised crime become entrenched, eroding states' and/or specific localities' resilience and incurring deepening fragility. These effects include: undermining the capacity of states to provide public goods by strengthening informal networks and infiltrating public institutions; compromising the state's legitimacy by jeopardising its monopoly on violence and eroding citizens' trust; presenting a major obstacle to peacemaking in a post-conflict environment where profit stands in the way of bringing some groups to the negotiation table.[76] In these scenarios, profit orientation leads to increasing predation and a rise in violence.

A recent study of the illicit drug economy in Muslim Mindanao has argued that the collusion between local government officials and drug groups reduces violence within the drug economy. However, the economic rents derived from this economy are increasing violence within the political domain. Due to the fact that drugs money operates as the currency of political power for so-called 'narco-politicians' in the region, narcotics are fuelling a high-stakes political game that may turn violent due to the proliferation of unlicensed firearms and the presence of power-hungry politicians.[77] The corrosive effects of TOC that are exacerbating fragility across West Africa was also noted in our research in MRU. These findings are corroborated by a recent study that warns of West Africa's coming 'drug wars'.[78] Global post-conflict statebuilding initiatives the world over are being undermined and distorted by the existence and penetration of TOC networks or locally-based shadow economies that erode institutional accountability and steadily draw in political actors and elites, creating fertile ground for future violent conflicts to emerge.

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL LINKS IN THE NEXUS	
Triggers	■ Impacts of law-enforcement efforts ■ Disruptions to market (supply or demand, global or national) ■ Disruption to status quo as a result of political change
Proximate (driver) factors	■ Rate of urbanisation ■ Corruption and vested interest ■ Drain of resources from tackling root causes to security responses
Root (structural) factors	■ Social exclusion and systemic underemployment ■ Corrosion of state institutions ■ Erosion of public confidence ■ Deepening threat of violent elite competition for control of trade

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76   OECD (2012b). Op. cit.

77   R. Cagoco-Guiam and S. Schoofs (2013). 'A deadly cocktail? Illicit drugs, politics and violent conflict in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao', in International Alert (2013) *Out of the shadows: Violent conflict and the real economy of Mindanao*. Quezon City.

78   J. Cockayne and P. Williams (2009). 'The invisible tide: Towards an international strategy to deal with drug trafficking through West Africa', *IPI Policy Papers*. New York: IPI.

3 Transforming the nexus: An assessment of policy responses

The overview of typical trigger, proximate and root conflict factors linked to organised crime, as well as the identification of the range of actors involved, and the spectrum of societal dimensions implicated, highlights that the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility requires a comprehensive prism, such as that offered by contemporary peacebuilding frameworks. Indeed, these various factors can readily be plotted against frameworks such as Alert's 'peace factors' or the New Deal's PSGs, which help to envisage priorities for lasting peace and entry points for change. Such complexity in turn points to the importance of comprehensive and multi-faceted response strategies. However, what emerges from the literature and our research is a picture of a largely one-dimensional policy response to date, despite some discernible movement towards a broader strategic response. This section will outline some of the issues and challenges surrounding contemporary policy responses.

3.1 THE WAR ON DRUGS

The 'war on drugs' is a term commonly applied to the campaign of prohibition, military aid and military intervention that has been under way since the 1970s, which is aimed at reducing the illegal drug trade through discouraging production and distribution. The term was first used by US President Richard Nixon and has been a central plank of US foreign policy up until the Obama administration, which has explicitly moved away from using the term. Notwithstanding outright collusion with narcotics traffickers by the US government during the Cold War era (for example in Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Vietnam), policies linked to the war on drugs – for example, targeting poppy farmers in Afghanistan or coca growers in Bolivia – have been perhaps equally counter-productive, significantly increasing poverty and hence vulnerability to further cycles of fragility. In June 2011, the Global Commission on Drug Policy released a critical report, declaring that:

> *"The global war on drugs has failed, with devastating consequences for individuals and societies around the world. Fifty years after the initiation of the UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, and years after President Nixon launched the US government's war on drugs, fundamental reforms in national and global drug control policies are urgently needed."*[79]

The report highlights the unintended consequences of the war on drugs. In West Africa, these include: the growth of a "criminal black market financed by the risk-escalated profits of supplying international demand for illicit drugs"; the "balloon effect"; and, less visibly, extensive policy displacement as a result of using scarce resources to fund a vast law-enforcement effort intended to address the criminal market.[80]

Over the past few years, a wave of drug policy reform and reflection is in evidence in different countries across the world, with statesmen from Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Uruguay initiating reforms in their own countries, and landmark shifts notable even in the US.[81] A growing body of expert and public opinion, as well as political leaders, are now more strongly advocating for new approaches that focus on decriminalisation and emphasise demand reduction and a public

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79   Global Commission on Drug Policy (2011). Op. cit.

80   Ibid. p.9.

81   For the first time, the majority of Americans have supported regulating cannabis for medical use; with regard to Uruguay and New Zealand, see K. Annan and F.H. Cardoso (2013). 'Breaking with the past – a 21st century drug policy that works', *Global Commission on Drug Policy*, 5 November 2013. Available at http://www.globalcommissionondrugs.org/?p=859&preview=true

health approach.[82] In 2016, a special session at the UN General Assembly will be dedicated to the issue, promising the possibility for further adjustments to the global normative environment, in which responses to narco-trafficking and illegal drug use take place.

3.2 STRENGTHENING LAW AND ORDER

Newer approaches, while toning down the rhetorical motif of a 'war on drugs', are still focused on providing international cooperation on law enforcement and strengthening judicial systems. Therefore, a heavily securitised and supply-side oriented emphasis continues to shape the global response to narco-trafficking and organised crime more generally. At the global level, key actors UNODC and Interpol lead the way; that said, there is increasing recognition of the issue among other UN actors, such as the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Security Council. Policies and programmes geared at strengthening the capacity of affected states' security and justice systems to enforce laws are in abundance – in other words, working with authorities to set up agencies to deal with the issues and providing training to public entities across the spectrum of customs, coast guards, police, etc.

While analysts agree that this entry point is valid for tackling the problem, and that progress has been made, challenges can also be highlighted. Firstly, the law-and-order approach has, in some instances, overlooked problems in state legitimacy that exist in many of the affected countries, and thus "has the potential to reinforce historical enmities between the state and its citizens and notions of state power as coercive control rather than legitimate representation".[83] Given the links between organised crime and predatory power holders, as well as domestic politics more broadly, the risks of state-centric approaches to tackling the problem ought to be clear. Efforts to build up domestic capacity to clamp down on criminal activity can thus be criticised both for being "probably the least effectual and most long-term dimension" of response, where the emphasis on state capacity also overlooks the malign structures underpinning those states.[84] Another useful concept here is that of 'hybrid political orders', which focuses on the multiple sources of power and influence (formal and informal) that make up authority in certain contexts.[85] Lessons that statebuilding efforts "ignore or oppose hybridity" at their peril are emerging elsewhere in development theory and resonate strongly with the consideration of appropriate responses to organised crime.[86] This challenge is starkly illustrated in instances where agencies set up to deal with the issues and funded by Western donors are quickly corrupted and become part of the problem. One expert provides the example of the recycling of anti-corruption campaigns in Nigeria as tools for suppressing political opposition.[87] Another example is the militant approach adopted by anti-drug squads, which flies in the face of international human rights law; Thailand is a case in point, where, despite 51,000 summary arrests and 2,000 extra-judicial deaths in 2003 alone following a government crackdown at the street level, the approach failed to have any prohibitive effect further up the supply chain.[88] Such problems emerge starkly from our Rio research, which includes a discussion on deeply-rooted challenges affecting police integrity (see Box 9).

> Given the links between organised crime and predatory power holders, as well as domestic politics more broadly, the risks of state-centric approaches to tackling the problem ought to be clear.

82　OECD (2012a). Op. cit.
83　R. Locke (2012). Op. cit.
84　I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.
85　V. Boege, A. Brown, K. Clements and A. Nolan (2009). *On hybrid political orders and emerging states: What is failing – states in the global south or research and politics in the west?* Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management. Available at http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue8_boegeetal_lead.pdf
86　V. Boege, A. Brown, K. Clements and A. Nolan (2008). *On hybrid political orders and emerging states: State formation in the context of fragility*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management. Available at http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/boege_etal_handbook.pdf
87　A. de Waal (2009). Op. cit.
88　'Thailand's war on drugs', *GlobalSecurity.org*, 18 August 2010. Available at http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/thai-drug-war.htm

In our Philippines research, the new gun law passed by the government has been found to be woefully inadequate. It fails to address the illicit gun trade and contains enough loopholes and opportunities for illicit gun manufacturers, traders and owners to evade detection, apprehension and prosecution. The lack of political will and consequent failure to strengthen gun legislation reveals the capture of strategic policy making in gun control by private gun owners, private security agencies and ruthless politicians, including retired police chiefs and internal security officials who have transformed themselves into legitimate security providers. One of the biggest challenges identified is that the most critical regulatory agency, the national police's Firearms and Explosives Office (FEO), is also one of the most secretive branches of government. FEO allegedly operates as a 'shadow state' by extracting economic rents from the manufacturing, trade and ownership of illicit guns, as well as not enforcing rules and regulations.

Given these complexities, some argue that the fundamental principle of sovereignty in the international system paradoxically can work to protect state officials' collusion in organised crime.[89] Others, such as de Waal, take this further to assert that the basic premise of 'statehood' lacks realism in some contexts. The emerging view is that of associated risk, whereby statebuilding law-enforcement interventions by the international community, as well as nationally driven efforts in the same vein, have the potential to reinforce (rather than assist to transform) deeply-rooted governance and social justice challenges. This is a critique that needs to be taken seriously when approaches that seek to achieve lasting results are being sought.

Meanwhile, the emphasis on the internment (or even execution) of criminals as a major component of global responses to the problem flies in the face of arguments from Western criminology, which suggest that imprisonment makes little difference to crime rates.[90] Arresting 'drug barons' at the apex of the criminal hierarchy fuels greater levels of insecurity and violent competition, because it disrupts the status quo. (*Continues overleaf*)

89 J. Cockayne (2011). Op. cit.
90 B. Chasin (2004). *Inequality and violence in the United States: Casualties of capitalism.* New York: Prometheus.

BOX 9: POLICING OF ORGANISED CRIME IN RIO

The behaviour of the police, as well as the wider security policies adopted in recent decades, plays an important part in the occurrence of urban violence. Security policy in Rio, for instance, has historically orchestrated instances of armed conflict, mobilising large police contingents in order to invade and temporarily occupy territories with the use of violence equal to – if not greater than – the violence it is targeting.

This policy of confrontation is responsible for a large number of civilian (criminal and non-criminal) deaths at the hands of the police. As a result, police action – which includes not only casualties, but also summary executions – makes up a large portion of the city's homicides. One recent report revealed that 19% of favela residents and 7% of non-residents had at least one relative, friend or neighbour who had been killed by the police. A 2009 Human Rights Watch report found that, in 2008, police in Rio arrested 23 people for every civilian they killed, compared with 37,000 arrests for each alleged death in a shoot-out with police in the same period in the whole of the US. The report also found that just 10 military police precincts in Rio state were responsible for 825 such killings that year, suggesting that a small number of police were involved in a very high rate of killings.

Besides their participation in armed confrontations and the brutal and lethal characteristics of police operations, the high levels of corruption and involvement of sectors of police in criminality further exacerbate the city's security issues. Kickbacks and everyday bribery are common practices, to the extent that a lot of trafficking takes place with the permission or under the protection of the police.

Fear and insecurity among certain sectors and interest groups has led to demands for harsher police intervention and legitimises policies of confrontation. Such popular support is rooted in a fear of crime and justified perceptions that the criminal justice/penal system is ineffective. '*Bandido bom é bandido morto*' (a good criminal is a dead criminal) is a time-honoured Brazilian saying which reflects public and political backing for extrajudicial executions.

Additionally, clearing up street-level criminals, as in Thailand, is equally ineffectual. Stereotypes informing international opinion about the nature of criminals are seen by some analysts to be in part responsible for ineffective policy responses to the problem; in other words, "the conception of 'the enemy' is wrong".[91] Where the goal of an anti-narcotics strategy is to "target, combat and dismantle a cohesive entity made up largely of full-time professional criminals", or where 'organised crime' becomes the key malevolent actor, many other influencing factors are overlooked.[92] This critique is reflected in the example from the MRU (see Box 10).

3.3 REDUCING RECEPTIVITY OF FRAGILE STATES TO ORGANISED CRIME

The conclusion to be drawn is not that that law enforcement, as a category of response to organised crime, has failed entirely, or ought to be abandoned, but rather that the design of interventions needs to be improved and complemented by other types of remedies. Most recently, as recognition of the long-term and complex factors involved has evolved, and problem definition has improved, international development agencies are beginning to grapple with the problem of how to reduce the receptivity of fragile states to TOC. This represents part of the increasing attention given to dealing with the pernicious impacts of state fragility in development and security terms, and an increasing recognition of the central function of organised crime in contributing to these features. The agreement that finding ways to reduce the receptivity of fragile states to criminal enterprise is of paramount importance is substantiated in a growing body of recommendations as to how this might translate into policy options. These recommendations are emerging from both the academic and development agency-funded think tank literature. A review of some of these recommendations has greatly enriched the research for this report and many are referenced in its concluding section. The *World Development Report 2011* places central emphasis on the importance of functional ("legitimate, accountable and capable") institutions that provide citizen security, justice and jobs as a critical pathway out of 21st century violence, including that linked to organised crime. This stress on effective institutions is echoed in the statement by UNDP quoted at the outset of this report, and in various OECD policy briefing papers. However, at this stage in reviewing the mainstream policy responses, it is worth noting that limited practical programming intervention experience has been gathered to date.

The shift away from an exclusive focus on law enforcement has begun, but is very recent. One report focusing directly on the development sector's actual and potential response through a governance lens identifies only three of the leading bilateral donor countries as having any direct interest in addressing organised crime through development practice to date. However, even as research for this report was under way, the Netherlands and the US significantly increased their activity through their respective development agencies.[93] The fact that much of the armed violence and conflict risk related to organised crime has played out in middle-income countries outside the purview of this set of actors has apparently hampered their engagement. This is a direct reflection of the institutional silos that are highlighted in the *World Development Report 2011* as inimical to comprehensive responses to today's complex problems. While crises in countries such as Mali have perhaps served as the tipping point in focusing development attention, there are implied limitations to the scope with which these policy actors will respond to the issues as they play out in middle-income countries. The notion of 'pockets of fragility' to understand such settings becomes all the more important in putting these locations on the agenda of mainstream development actors. Such an approach would enable MDG-related development aid policy's prioritisation of the poorest countries to adapt to take into account and support other countries in managing transition away from violence and conflict risk.

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91   I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.

92   Ibid. p.3.

93   C. Kavanagh et al (2013). *Getting smart and scaling up: Responding to the impact of organised crime on governance in developing countries*. New York: Centre on International Cooperation. p.13.

BOX 10: ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSE TO NARCO-TRAFFICKING IN THE MANO RIVER UNION (MRU)

Major initiatives taking place in the MRU over the past 14 years include the following:

- In 2000, the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) established the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) to facilitate international standards on Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in West Africa;
- Since 2001, the offices of the US government, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Defense (US Africa Command, or AFRICOM) and Agency for International Development (USAID), have been actively building national and regional capacities to fight drug trafficking and transnational crime;
- In 2004, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone ratified the UN Convention Against TOC (2000) and its protocols, followed by Côte d'Ivoire in 2012;
- From 2008, a meeting of West African political leaders convened by ECOWAS and supported by UNODC and the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) agreed to scale-up their efforts to tackle narco-trafficking. This led to the adoption of a five-year strategic plan, the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The primarily securitised approach of this plan frames the trade as an existentialist threat against the state and rule of law, and privileges a law enforcement approach. The approach has five strategic goals, yet only the fifth speaks to non-law enforcement/judicial issues, framed around the socio-economic causes and consequences of transnational crime, with a promise of support for civil society action and drugs demand reduction. This represents a small step towards a more rounded approach.

The UN is supporting the ECOWAS regional action plan. UNODC has incorporated technical expertise into UN missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, working closely with the UN office for West Africa in Dakar. Other UN agencies focused on public health issues, youth livelihood issues and other relevant aspects are involved through regional-level discussions. However, a fully coordinated approach has not yet emerged. Finally, the first phase of the West African Coastal Initiative (WACI) started in 2009, with a needs assessment in the four countries. It identified technical assistance, equipment and specialised training requirements for principally law-enforcement, immigration and other security agents, before then establishing Transnational Crime Units (TCUs) in Côte

d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Other UN programmes have facilitated various aspects of building drug interdiction capacities, such as the Airport Communication Programme (AIRCOP). A coordinated US government strategy – the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative (WACSI) – is being put in place in 2014, with a US$60 million price tag in support of the ECOWAS regional action plan.

In January 2013, an independent body called the West African Commission on Drugs (WACD), which represents the highest level of political will in West Africa, was launched by Kofi Annan. In consultation with international and regional partners, national governments and civil society organisations, and supported by the Kofi Annan Foundation, WACD – hosted at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana – is comprised of a group of distinguished West Africans, including two former heads of state. With three major objectives around developing policy, enhancing coordination and mobilising public awareness, it represents the realisation that, despite ECOWAS and other institutions' efforts, drug trafficking is worsening. A dearth of systematic and coordinated information in the public sphere, a lack of clear metrics and statistics, and a narrow law-enforcement approach have all kept the impact of combined efforts relatively invisible. Although some arrests and seizures have been made and widely publicised, the impact of law enforcement on illegal drug markets is not fully understood. How specific markets are destabilised or their functions impeded through arrests are unknown, and it would appear that illegal drugs markets are resilient to attacks. Despite ECOWAS urgently prioritising the issue in 2008 and the various steps taken, the 2011 report of the Global Commission on Drugs suggests this has been an insufficient response: "a dangerous scenario is emerging (in West Africa) as narco-traffic threatens to metastasise into broader political and security challenges."

All stakeholders interviewed suggested that the political will to establish the requisite mechanisms is weak. While obligations to ECOWAS/UNODC are under way, such as the establishment of the agreed structures, the resources are not forthcoming from central government budgets to support these structures and staffing. Whether this is benign neglect, or the state being favourably disposed to the existence of the drugs trade in the country, depends on the person to whom you are speaking.

3.4 EVIDENCE OF PEACEBUILDING RESPONSES TO DATE

A core impetus behind this research has been to discover the extent to which the principles and concepts that inform peacebuilding, as a set of interventions designed to transform violent conflict and build lasting peace, have been utilised in efforts to address armed violence linked to organised crime. Fundamentally, peacebuilding attempts to address the causes of violence and conflict; in the case of the nexus between these and organised crime, offering approaches that chip away at the complex of socio-culturally specific causes, drivers and triggers is implied. The types of long-term and whole-of-society change agendas advanced through a peacebuilding approach are appropriate to the complex issues in hand, and they would greatly complement intelligent policing and law-enforcement interventions. The challenge of problem definition still persists, as violence related to organised crime has not, until recently, been seen as a form of conflict and has therefore not led to related responses – despite some high-level policy developments acknowledging the relevance of TOC to peacebuilding (e.g. the *Report of the high-level panel on threats, challenges and change* (2004) and through the work of the UN Task Force on Transnational Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking). It is for this reason that, when applied to violence associated with organised crime, terms such as 'non-conflict' may do a disservice to the agenda. Meanwhile, peacebuilding – as a sub-sector of development – depends on development budgets to do its work. This explains the tardiness of peacebuilders in stepping forward to apply their experience to assist in efforts to resolve these issues. Even where peacebuilding interventions are prioritised, their overall positioning vis-à-vis other spending priorities may reduce the quality and impact.

In practical terms, the peacebuilding lens has been fairly marginal in overall efforts to tackle organised crime and conflict linkages. However, some important experiences and lessons do emerge from our research. The UPP in Rio de Janeiro (see Box 11) stands out as the closest approximation to the peacebuilding approach defined in this report, complementing a law-enforcement approach. Yet it has not been labelled as such and relates more explicitly to counter-insurgency methods in its design. The programme has been developed in the context of city-wide preparations for Brazil's hosting of upcoming international mega-events: the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It has also in part been made possible due to a more favourable and better-resourced political configuration between key actors, such as the mayor's office, the state governor and federal government players, for the first time in many years, and due to the presence of a comparatively progressive minister for public security.

Our research in Rio also maps out the evolution of the response by civil society organisations to the situation – ranging from 'emergency responses' during the worst period of denouncing human rights violations and raising awareness, to a gradual take-up of more comprehensive initiatives with an emphasis on service provision directly with young people to provide alternatives to street crime and, latterly, seizing opportunities to engage in policy dialogue with authorities.

Despite the challenges noted, the UPP strategy represents a dedicated effort across societal tiers to both reduce violence linked to organised crime in parts of Rio and to address the root causes. Our research in Rio also maps out the evolution of the response by civil society organisations (CSOs) to the situation – ranging from 'emergency responses' during the worst period of denouncing human rights violations and raising awareness, to a gradual take-up of more comprehensive initiatives with an emphasis on service provision directly with young people to provide alternatives to street crime and, latterly, seizing opportunities (including those presented by UPPs) to engage in policy dialogue with authorities. The NGO Viva Rio, founded in 1993, is a good example. It has played a pivotal role over the last two decades in social mobilisation and the incorporation of public security and urban violence agendas into public debate. Viva Rio led a pioneering national disarmament campaign built around a series of Rio-based initiatives. (*Continues on page 38*)

BOX 11: OVERVIEW OF POLICE PACIFICATION UNITS

The strategy of 'Police Pacification Units' (*Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora*, or UPPs) has been under way since 2008. It replaces a logic of violent confrontation with one of occupation, starting with a permanent police presence and followed up by significant investment in social projects and public services. The four stages of establishing UPPs in the favelas are:

- Tactical intervention: repossession of regions by special operations groups;
- Stabilisation: consolidation of police occupation through tactical and siege actions;
- Introduction of the UPPs: physical establishment of the unit, with an effective local command structure – mainly made up of specially trained and newly contracted police officers; and
- Post-occupation: organisation of surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.

To date, 34 units have been installed, all in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The intervention has significantly reduced lethal violence perpetrated both by armed groups and the police. In the Complexo do Alemão, for instance, one of the most stigmatised regions in the city, the number of bullets fired by police dropped from 23,335 in 2010 to 2,395 in 2012. The number of people hit by stray bullets in the city has also fallen from 181 in 2008 to 35 in 2012.

The public security aspect of UPPs has been complemented since 2010 by the UPP Social programme. In its initial phase, the programme was implemented experimentally in three pacified favelas: Providência, Cidade de Deus and Complexo do Borel. These pilot experiences allowed for the design of an operating model based on the raising of community demands and on constant inter-sectorial articulations. There have been a number of positive innovations, including: permanent dialogue fora, which bring together communities with local institutions; small teams of researchers, which are capable of conducting diagnostics based on the information gathered from listening to the community's demands; and a central management unit, which is responsible for the articulation of actions with municipal, state and federal bodies. In 2011, the programme was transferred to the municipal government of Rio under the coordination of the Instituto Pereira Passos (IPP) and in partnership with UN Habitat. It has the following objectives:

- To contribute to the consolidation of pacification and the promotion of local citizenship in 'pacified' territories (after the implementation of UPPs);

- To promote urban, social and economic development in the targeted regions; and
- To promote the integration of these favelas into the 'formal' city.

Huge investments made in relatively small geographic areas is both one of the project's strong points and weaknesses, as the cost raises doubts about sustainability and the potential for expansion. This finding is particularly serious, as it demonstrates the existence of a logistical limit (which is still unknown) with regard to the number of possible UPPs that can be established. A total of 1,040 favelas are recorded in the registry of IPP. Currently, there are UPPs in 226 favelas (21.7%). With violence and insecurity reportedly on the rise in other parts of the city, such as the neighbouring municipalities of the Baixada Fluminense, Niteroi and São Gonçalo, changes in distribution of organised armed violence might provoke alterations in the geography of opportunity in the city, and could even heighten inequality. Regions designated to receive UPPs have been determined mostly in relation to the upcoming mega events, thereby privileging tourist and rich neighbourhoods in the South Zone of the city, as well as the favelas surrounding the Maracanã football stadium or important access routes. Poorer, more peripheral areas with a high incidence of lethal victimisation have taken second place. It is also important to note that UPP units are almost exclusively concentrated in territories previously dominated by drug-trafficking factions, not militia. The extent of these effects has yet to be evaluated.

So far, the programme has proved immensely popular with the public, especially businesses and middle-class voters who feel safer. UPP units are, today, an irreversible fact: they hold legitimacy for the people and, even if the political scene changes after state elections (which will take place in 2014), this will not interfere with the units that are already established. What is most likely is that, regardless of the political framework, UPPs will be maintained and supplemented. However, even though UPP units constitute an alternative policy to the traditional militaristic, repressive paradigm of security policies, they do not yet signify an overcoming of this older model, to the extent that older practices still stand in most of the city. There are a number of other serious challenges that have emerged regarding the administration of UPPs – particularly related to police conduct – and the UPP Social programme, both of which will need to be addressed to ensure lasting gains and progress.

These included gun buy-back programmes, the public destruction in 2001 of 100,000 illegally held weapons seized by police, and gender-based campaigns aimed at encouraging women to disarm male relatives. Viva Rio's efforts culminated in a national referendum on banning the sale of weapons to civilians; however, 63% of Brazilians voted against the ban. It is possible that the awareness-raising of Viva Rio's disarmament campaigns has contributed to a reduction in violence in the city. The NGO Fight for Peace can also be singled out. While working on the ground with young people and communities directly affected by the problem, it has made a considerable contribution to the policy debate about urban armed violence at both the local and international level.

> By contrast, in the Mano River Union our research found that, despite a very evolved discourse around peacebuilding ... there is no evidence to suggest that peacebuilding has formed a meaningful part of the response to drugs issues.

By contrast, in the MRU our research found that – despite a very evolved discourse around peacebuilding, rooted in the experience gained from the civil wars of the 1990s, and significant institutional investment by the peacebuilding sector (with the long-standing presence and investment of UN missions in the region's peace and security, as well as the UN Peacebuilding Commission) – there is no evidence to suggest that peacebuilding has formed a meaningful part of the response to drugs issues. Even the active civil society peace movement has failed to respond, with peace activists who see the need for such approaches reportedly having failed to mobilise resources and capacity to take this forward. This may relate to a lack of funding and support from donors, given the overriding emphasis on law-and-order responses. Those we interviewed also remarked on the complete lack of credible information on the topic (despite the anecdotal awareness and anxiety about the social impacts of drugs uncovered in the case study).[94] Our research reflects on the paradox between the presence of a highly developed peacebuilding sector and the absence of a peacebuilding lens on TOC. This suggests that the 'liberal peacebuilding approach' privileges economic development at the expense of social and political development, and thus has not addressed root cause issues. The research concludes that broadening the issue from its narrow interpretation and law enforcement bias, which, by its very nature, is exclusive, secretive and highly technical, to a whole-of-society response enabling and including public health officials, youth advocates and other leaders to take part in the discussion will allow the process of addressing root cause issues – and a more direct capitalisation on the peacebuilding expertise and mechanisms present – to begin with.

In the Philippines, the peacebuilding sector, which includes many international actors, has long neglected the impact of the shadow economy in weapons in the many peace negotiations between the government and insurgents. A lack of awareness about the links between the shadow economy in illicit guns, organised crime and rebellion reinforces the tendency of the state to treat gun-related crime and the shadow gun economy as a purely law-enforcement issue. This tendency has a negative effect on informal institutions, including the custom and practice of owning and bearing arms. This is particularly the case in many fragile and conflict-affected areas in Mindanao, where these institutions could otherwise potentially fill the gap in security and protection wherever the state is weak and unable to provide adequate protection to its citizens. The same tendency reflects a convergence towards state-centric approaches and an unwillingness to harness the skills and prowess of local strongmen and other shadow authorities in curbing wider access to illicit weapons. The problem of 'loose firearms' forms part of the peacebuilding discourse of civil society, yet practical attempts to stem the proliferation of illicit guns are virtually non-existent. A cursory review of peacebuilding groups reveals that illicit guns are not prioritised in the work of these organisations. Our research singled out the work of one organisation that is pioneering a community-level peacebuilding response to the problem of illicit guns (see Box 12). International Alert Philippines has also begun to research and publish policy-related advocacy material on the topic.

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94   Key stakeholders spoke about: aggressive and violent behaviour of young people; an increase in robbery and theft; corruption in offices of government affecting key decision-making; a business sector concealing economic activity behind small business; more pervasive and visible ghettos and places where people inject illicit drugs; and a political elite cushioned from society by a great deal of money evident from their lifestyles.

BOX 12: THE PAILIG FOUNDATION IN NORTHERN MINDANAO

The Pailig Foundation is working directly with clan-based armed groups in the frontier areas of Iligan and has developed an approach for responsible gun ownership at the community level. Pailig's first intervention was to organise the various clans into livelihood groups to kick-start sustainable agriculture and enterprise-based livelihoods. The idea behind the introduction of alternative economic activities was that it would steer the clans away from 'soldiering-for-income' activities for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and political warlords. In 2002, Pailig organised an assembly with 66 clan leaders, during which the clans agreed to set up an Organisational Disciplinary System (ODS).[95] This is in effect a code of conduct that incorporates customary laws and practices to regulate the ownership and use of firearms among the clans. It recognises the following principles:

- The right to self-preservation and protection in a condition of weak or absent law enforcement;
- Protection of the family;
- Protection of the gains from economic development;
- Reduction of violence related to *rido* (feuds between and among clans); and
- Provision of support to clan members involved in a *rido*.

The main purpose of the ODS was to reduce the level of gun-related, community-level violence. Criminal violence, latent clan conflicts and *rido* violence still exist, but have fallen dramatically.

The disciplinary system was temporarily disrupted in 2008 during the eruption of violence in the aftermath of the botched peace agreement between the government and MILF.[96] However, when the situation had calmed down again, both the Maranao and Higaonons clans renewed their commitment to the reduction of gun-related violence by using the mutually agreed ODS.

The relative success of Pailig's approach to curbing gun-related violence can be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, the community trust bestowed on Pailig is derived from the NGO leaders' familiarity with the language of guns, violence and civil conflict. In addition, Pailig's leaders built relationships during the 1970s and 1980s with Maranao activists, who would later become political leaders and commanders of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and MILF. These kinds of relationships have provided Pailig with necessary social capital. It also reassures the Higaonon and Maranao communities that whatever they do is properly communicated to the rebel groups. Secondly, Pailig recognised the critical importance of working with clan leaders in local communities with limited state presence and security provision. Thirdly, Pailig acknowledged that armed security is rooted in the customary institutions of both tribes, which it uses as a basis to manage local conflicts and prevent the escalation of gun-related violence. Fourthly, Pailig focused on developing economic alternatives, which has ensured that these communities would no longer have to serve political warlords and rebels to earn an income.

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95 They also agreed on the following code of conduct: (a) do not destroy crops; (b) do not take liberties with women; (c) be polite in speech; (d) pay the right amount for your purchases; (e) return all things borrowed; (f) pay all damages; (g) do not injure or vilify people; (h) do not be cruel. These rules are reminiscent of Mao Zedong's Five Golden Rays, which were influential during the early days of the New People's Army and which have influenced the thinking of Pailig's founders.

96 Both communities have claimed historical kinship, but with independent assertions of identity and territory. The pattern of kinship has been reinforced by peaceful co-existence and inter-marriage, despite sporadic explosions of rido-based violence. One of the infamous Maranao rebel commanders, Kumander Bravo, claims blood lineage from both Maranao and Higaonon forebears. Bravo has affiliated himself with both the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) (since the early 1970s) and MILF (since the late 1990s). During the MNLF and MILF rebellions, he would use these communities as a source of recruits and as physical refuge during heights of offensives by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

4 Towards transformative approaches

Global policy leaders agree that more strategic, coherent and coordinated efforts are required to complement and broaden law-enforcement initiatives to more effectively tackle the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility. This report argues that given the long-term and complex nature of the factors involved, the recent uptake of the issue by some development agencies needs to be scaled up to overcome silos and institutional barriers that keep them estranged from colleagues working in crime prevention and law enforcement. Simultaneously, this would involve harnessing expertise on state fragility (deepening response work around 'pockets of fragility') and related institutional frameworks and experience. Efforts to transform the nexus will only be successful when responses attain the strategic and holistic proportions required and work across the range of factors and policy arenas involved (e.g. law enforcement and crime prevention, security and diplomacy, development and peacebuilding, and public health).

Greater focus on more holistic responses begs the question as to what the appropriate venue for such strategic thinking might be, and with what lead. Would it happen most effectively at a global and generalised level, or sub-regionally – arguably already evident, as the most advanced discussions and response strategies are emerging through institutions such as ECOWAS and OAS. While there are clear priorities at each of these levels, our research reveals a gap regarding contextually-focused, country-level conversations on this issue.

Efforts to ensure synergies within major donor governments across government ministries and mandates are needed, noting the early steps taken in both the UK and the US. Useful conversations on responses that cut across the priorities identified in this report may also occur by commodity. Who would convene such processes, given the breadth of policy and non-state actors that ought to be involved? The new Kofi Annan commission based in Ghana perhaps offers a model (although regionally specific) of a dedicated hub for research and policy dialogue, facilitating the exchange of lessons between states and affected non-state actors.

> Peacebuilders must accept some responsibility for having been slow to come to the table, influenced by funders' priorities and institutional silos that currently work against the types of joined-up responses needed.

This is a new issue in peace and security, and peacebuilders must accept some responsibility for having been slow to come to the table, influenced by funders' priorities and institutional silos that currently work against the types of joined-up responses needed. The practical contribution of the peacebuilding sector in the countries reviewed has been minimal to date. However, the potential of civic actors to work towards the articulation of broader strategies does emerge. At the global level, agencies such as the International Peace Institute and Small Arms Survey have played a pivotal role in drawing policy attention to the issues. The reasons for this tardiness in response relate to a partial problem definition and the fact that many of the worst-affected countries are off the map of development spending, on which much peacebuilding work depends. That said, recent insights on 'pockets of fragility' in otherwise stable countries open the door for expertise on fragile states to cross-fertilise.

Despite the constraints, viewing the issues through the lens of conflict theory at each of the sub-national, national and global levels affected in order to better appreciate the root, proximate and trigger dynamics at work, as well as the complex of nested structural, proximate and trigger factors, can help in the search that is under way for a new generation of responses. This also

applies to designing responses that are broad based, transformative in intent and which draw on peacebuilding practice; together, these can incorporate a more transformative agenda into the heart of intervention goals. Peacebuilding needs to be part of the conversation, promising complementarity with law enforcement and other agendas. Its analytical framework, as summarised in this report, includes features that appear to be able to start to plug significant gaps in the mainstream of current responses.

Figure 5 summarises the application of the peacebuilding approach to those factors identified as crucial in moving beyond a straight focus on crime prevention towards a lasting transformation of the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility.

The discussion will now turn to a synthesis of the key strategic priorities for tackling the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, focusing on which factors seem particularly salient from a long-term, transformative peacebuilding perspective. The discussion will include ideas that explicitly respond to the three dimensions of the nexus that are highlighted above, revisiting some of the literature. These are: organised crime and politics; crime incentives; and globalised market structures.[97]

FIGURE 5: INFLUENCING THE NEXUS THROUGH THE USE OF PEACEBUILDING TOOLS AND APPROACHES

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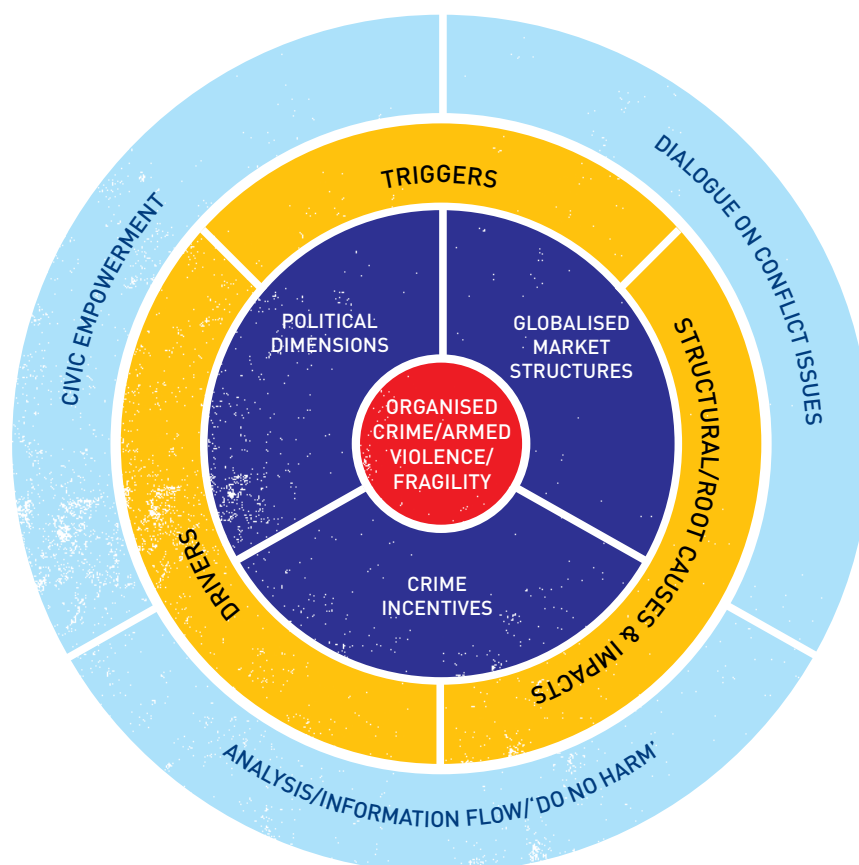
97 Representing a starting point for International Alert, this report has inevitably focused on a more theoretical and definitional approach, seeking to frame the issues through a peacebuilding lens. As a result, it did not include review and analysis of the specific institutional policy architecture of key actors. Therefore, this report cannot offer refined and actionable recommendations to these actors. However, given Alert's status as a leading UK-based peacebuilding NGO, future work probing the UK government response is a logical next step for the organisation; others, such as the International Peace Institute, have already looked more closely at the UN family.

4.1 'DO NO HARM' LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement – at the global, national and sub-national level – remains the central plank of policy response to criminality. Clearly, there is a need to strengthen the rule of law, limit the reach of organised crime, and protect citizens from the pernicious activities of organised criminal groups wherever possible, including the punishment of wrongdoing. What emerges from analysis of the effects of law-enforcement efforts in this area, however, is clear evidence of unforeseen impacts and consequences. In the worst cases, law-enforcement efforts have contributed to a deepening of the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, rather than the reverse – either acting as a trigger for an escalation in violence or serving to deepen predatory elites' grip on power. The global move away from abstract militarised concepts such as the 'war on drugs' can only be a welcome development amid a growing call for what one theorist has described as "a new approach to policing in which the minimisation of violence is given priority over the repressive and corrupted fight against organised crime".[98]

The idea of ensuring that law-enforcement efforts are assessed strategically to ensure that they will not lead to an upsurge in violence, or a deepening of longer-term conflict risk associated with the erosion of state legitimacy, resonates clearly with the idea of 'do no harm' and conflict sensitivity – concepts borrowed from the peacebuilding sector. Adapting the numerous assessment and planning tools that have evolved over the past decade for appropriate use by law-enforcement policy-makers and implementers – in such a way that takes into account the globalised nature of the nexus – emerges as a critical way forward. "Much more sophisticated planning, intelligence strategising and prevention are required to enable security forces to adopt an approach based on minimising violence and harm, and respecting the integrity of affected communities", Briscoe argues.[99] Whether global norms and best practice guiding the conduct of law-enforcement agencies might be adapted in the future to incorporate commitment to 'do no harm' into law-enforcement strategies, and where such thinking might most usefully be placed institutionally, is a subject for future debate.[100] Certainly, donor countries providing support to the justice, law and order sector in any given country, as part of responses to organised crime, need to proactively ensure and monitor the accountability and human rights conduct of the supported agencies.

There is also the need for a renewed emphasis on civil-military/civil-police relations and oversight related to efforts to tackle organised crime. This should include support for the creation and sustainability of fora for dialogue and confidence building between citizens and both policy-makers and implementers. The body of research and experience gathered in the civil-military relations field and in practical security sector reform interventions in fragile states points to the utility of civil-military dialogue rooted in international humanitarian law. This can usefully be drawn on to ensure that law enforcement targeted at organised crime builds on international best practice in order to 'underscore accountability loops' rather than the opposite (see Box 13).[101]

Direct efforts to ensure that crime-prevention interventions 'do no harm', based on deeper analyses of context, would also help to address some of the concerns surrounding some law-enforcement efforts' reinforcement of malign power structures and inform cost-benefit analyses of potential increases in levels of violence. Dialogue on issues across different nested theatres of organised crime is currently lacking. Dialogue processes targeted at the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility in different settings would contribute to improved information, civic empowerment, the accountability of political actors and, over time, the transformation of core factors and building resilience.

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98   I. Briscoe (2011). *What makes countries vulnerable to transnational organised crime?* Oslo: NOREF. p.15.

99   Ibid. p.15.

100 The UNHCR has produced guidance and handbooks setting out international human rights standards for law enforcers. See: UNHCR (2002). *International human rights standards for law enforcement: A pocket book on human rights for the police.* Geneva. Available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/training5Add1en.pdf

101 R. Locke (2012). Op. cit.

4.2 IMPROVED ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION FLOW

There is an emergent need for strongly improved analysis and information flow across a whole range of local, national and global dimensions of organised crime and its impact on societies because, while there has been a flurry of attention on the issues, enormous knowledge gaps remain and the information void in affected societies is huge. Greater analytical purchase on the issues across all dimensions would facilitate better monitoring of the impact of policy responses, improving understanding of what is and what is not working.[102] Better information would also enable early warning and, ideally, a ramping up of preventive and transformative investment in some of the key recommendation areas in at-risk countries (see Box 14).

4.3 DEALING WITH PREDATORY POWER HOLDERS AND THE WIDER LINK BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME AND POLITICS

There is a pressing need to shine a spotlight on the symbiotic relationship between organised criminal activity and politics in all its complexity, whether it be related to the complicity of the state, the personal ambition of drug barons, co-opting of community leaders, the inter-dependence of criminals, the political and business class and armed groups, or a combination of these behaviours. The determining influence of long-standing cultural and socio-political factors in shaping relationships and behaviours across crime and politics in each context points to the need for far more sophisticated capacities on the part of international actors seeking to intervene to understand them. (*Continues overleaf*)

BOX 13: REVERSING HISTORICAL ANIMOSITY BETWEEN POLICE AND FAVELA RESIDENTS IN RIO

Establishing reciprocal trust between residents of occupied favelas and UPPs is an important measure for the functioning of all models of action inspired by outreach or community policing. This approach is fundamental in the legitimisation of police work and in the reversal of an historical animosity between the police and favela residents. This can occur through the creation of opportunities for interaction and coexistence either in spaces that serve this purpose (for example, in security community councils) or through the participation of the police in community spaces that are already in place. It is important for this contact between the police and residents to take place in situations outside policing, to facilitate positive relationships and interactions.

BOX 14: URGENT NEED FOR IMPROVED INFORMATION IN THE MRU

Countries in the MRU are ill prepared to deal with rising drug consumption rates, which are related to increasing levels of narco-trafficking. Myths around drug use abound, including 'ex-combatants', youth crises and underclass usage. However, real evidence of who is consuming, what it looks like and what are the effects needs to be emphasised to break stereotypes. More research needs to be undertaken at the national and regional levels, more information has to be accessible in the public space, and more analysis needs to be completed to engage civil society to respond. A national strategy is needed that incorporates deep analysis and contextualisation of the issue and mainstreams a social response, including what kind of strategy should be adopted both for the treatment of drug addiction and relevant public health issues, as well as for legal and institutional frameworks to respond to victims of the drug trade (e.g. users, petty sellers, etc.).

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102 The metaphor of a 'balloon effect', whereby more effective responses to organised crime in some localities will simply push activity to others that are more susceptible, is well known. There are already signs that patterns of organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk similar to those in West Africa are well on the way to taking root in East Africa, as well as concerns about the spillover of events in Mali to Niger and Mauritania. Given these developments, it is clear how important proactive anticipation is on the part of the international community and national actors on where the nexus of organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk is likely to take hold next. Evidence of a correlation between organised criminal violence and cities provides a further indication on future likely risk locations.

De Waal posits that the entire thrust of international cooperation, which views the expertise of ethnographers and historians as 'contingent local knowledge' against the technocratic know-how of political scientists and economists, and which "is guided by models that are framed by certain norms of what a state *ought* to look like, and how it *ought* to be run", has things entirely the wrong way round. This has led to interventions that are "deaf to the vernacular of local politics".[103] The uneasy coexistence in many of the affected countries between well-established patronage systems reflected in the local political context and more recent statebuilding initiatives goes to the heart of what is not working across development and peacebuilding. Understanding this and even recognising the potential positive value of traditional systems from a development perspective adds a richness and complexity to notions of institution building that is often overlooked. This will also need to be an underlying component of longer-term efforts to curtail the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk.

Encouraging 'good' criminality

Recommendations emerging from some of the recent analytical efforts to identify improved policy responses to recalibrating the relationship between organised crime and politics in fragile states point to some useful progressive interventions which, if properly grounded in contextual knowledge and/or emerge from 'the ground', seem logical. One expert has put forward the controversial but eminently pragmatic concept of 'good criminals', accepting organised crime as a feature of contemporary life, but providing evidence-based proposals around various features associated with it that can be diminished in order to restrict its corrosive effects.[104] Key to this idea is the goal of keeping or creating a distance between criminality and society – one recent report exploring the governance impacts of organised crime frames this as reducing the 'thickness', or the extent of the links between governance and organised crime.[105] In line with this, another report urges the identification of political incentives which seek to quarantine political competition from criminality through explicitly building popular momentum around transparency in campaign funding.[106] The report offers the case of a Colombian legal initiative that aimed to punish national political parties which proved to have candidates linked to illicit activity. Further reward and protection of clean politicians is also cited as a further possible measure. A related recommendation made in the same report calls for a push to clean up legitimate business in cases where it is being used as a front or money-laundering venture for organised crime.[107] This is echoed in a report on TOC in Kenya, where the lack of a functioning company registration system creates such opportunities.[108] Recommendations include efforts to deliberately expand opportunities for legitimate business, which would reduce informality in the economy and, in turn, help to reduce incursions by organised criminal networks, as well as more clearly demarcate licit and illicit economic actors.[109] This implies targeted private sector development initiatives in areas vulnerable to TOC, organised crime and shadow economies as one important potential area for programming.

Addressing criminal agendas in peace processes

There is increasing recognition that peace processes need to deal with and recognise the presence and interests of organised criminality as a driver in conflict and a likely spoiler in peacemaking. A body of experience around incentives in peacemaking begins to explore this issue,[110] amid growing recognition that organised crime is not a deviant feature of conflict but a ubiquitous dimension that the UN and other agencies need to grasp. Therefore, the management of organised crime is a central element – albeit not always formally recognised – of many peacekeeping interventions.[111] A

103 A. de Waal (2012). Op. cit.

104 V. Felbab-Brown (2013). 'The gordian knot of organised crime, violent conflict and human security', Discussion meeting, Bloomsbury House, London, 30 July 2013. Available at http://www.iiss.org/en/events/events/archive/2013-5126/july-bdc1/gordian-knot-ad3a

105 C. Kavanagh et al (2013). Op. cit.

106 I. Briscoe and E. Dari (2012). Op. cit.

107 Ibid.

108 P. Gastrow (2011). *Termites at work: Transnational organised crime and state erosion in Kenya*. New York: IPI.

109 Ibid. R. Locke (2012). Op. cit.

110 Conciliation Resources (2008). 'Powers of persuasion: Incentives, sanctions and conditionality in peacemaking', *Accord*, No. 19.

111 J. Cockayne and A. Lupel (eds.) (2011). *Peace operations and organized crime*. New York: Routledge.

number of the recent studies reviewing this issue have indeed directly focused on the ways in which the UN in particular ought to respond to these issues in its mission countries. One study published by the OECD recommends enhanced international cooperation that allows peacekeeping forces to access information and intelligence on TOC as one step forward, as well as better guidelines, training and a possible amendment of mandates in order to integrate an organised crime lens to the mission.[112] Meanwhile, peace deals mediated or mooted between organised crime factions are also beginning to draw increased attention and interest.[113] Continued lesson-learning and reflection, to ensure that future peacemaking processes robustly integrate cognisance of criminal agendas into their frameworks, will help to improve prospects for such negotiations to lead to lasting results.

4.4 TACKLING CRIME INCENTIVE STRUCTURES

Tackling these structures is an incredibly broad area that goes to the heart of development, to which there can be no sweeping response. What does emerge strongly is the utility of focusing in on the reasons why individuals are drawn into crime, in order to understand root causes and hence devise more lasting solutions (other than incarceration alone). Crime incentive structures need to be probed in each affected setting with a view to enhancing existing response strategies.

Civic empowerment in order to reduce social exclusion

Given the centrality of the relationship between organised crime and politics, combined with the emphasis on statebuilding approaches that may serve to 'reinforce malign power structures', a real need to ramp up parallel work to empower civil society and the media around this set of problems was asserted in the primary research for this report, echoing an emerging body of consensus from others' research. The presence of an empowered civil society and media offers a hook on which to hang hopes of societal resilience to the pernicious effects of organised crime. One study puts forward the hypothesis that Bolivia and Nicaragua have experienced lower levels of violence than their regional neighbours precisely because of the relatively advanced level of civic engagement on the issues.[114] Perhaps the contrast between the Kenyan media's robust reportage on the growing presence of TOC links with the political class and the wholesale slaughter of Mexican journalists attempting to do the same augurs well for outcomes in Kenya. Better information is required at the local level to ensure that citizens are in a position to (among other issues): understand organised criminal activity and its effects in their societies; hold political actors to account where they are complicit, with a view to gradually advancing the 'good criminal' model and squeezing bad practice out; and prepare for the health impacts of drugs in their communities. Another report identifies a number of indicators which influence a country's exposure to the risks associated with organised crime from a governance perspective. Included in this is a strong culture of freedom of and access to information, a culture of asset disclosure among elected officials and political parties, and citizen perceptions of organised crime.[115]

Mechanisms for supporting coalition building, dialogue, local research and advocacy work around these issues need to be developed, particularly in affected and at-risk countries (including 'pockets of fragility' in otherwise stable countries, even where development agencies – which are habitually at the forefront of such work – are not present).[116] In addition to enhancing the resilience of societies facing the advance of organised crime and associated armed conflict and conflict risk, such empowerment processes will, over time, help to address and re-balance the poor governance at the heart of the social inequality which makes those societies vulnerable to its penetration.

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112 OECD (2012b). Op. cit.

113 M. O'Reilly (2013). 'Interview with Steven Vigil on the uneasy truce between gangs in El Salvador', *Global Observatory*, 7 March 2013. Available at http://www.theglobalobservatory.org/interviews/451-interview-with-steven-vigil-on-the-uneasy-truce-between-gangs-in-el-salvador.html; I. Briscoe (2012). 'Deals with the devil', *openSecurity*, 1 June 2012. Available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/ivan-briscoe/deals-with-devil

114 J. Cockayne (2011). Op. cit.

115 C. Kavanagh et al (2013). Op. cit.

116 The role of the British High Commission in Brazil in supporting relevant civil society groups in Rio provides one model.

BOX 15: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN RIO

It is imperative that, at the same time as UPPs enter into favelas, an investment is made in social policies that promote an increase in local work opportunities and income generation. Such policies should guarantee the insertion of young people from favelas and from the peripheries – whether or not they are involved in criminal activities – into the employment market, under decent working conditions. In both cases (in places with or without the presence of UPPs), it is important to take into consideration the need for education and training, or even the need to establish an immediate source of income and decent working conditions that are not dependent on formal education.

It is crucial to take into account that many of these young people have had only intermittent schooling and little or no work experience, which makes it practically impossible for them to find their way into the professional world. Specific public policies (different to those policies of police confrontation) are needed to deal with children, teenagers and young people who are already involved in trafficking and other criminal activity. These policies must take into account the complexity that these states of vulnerability represent.
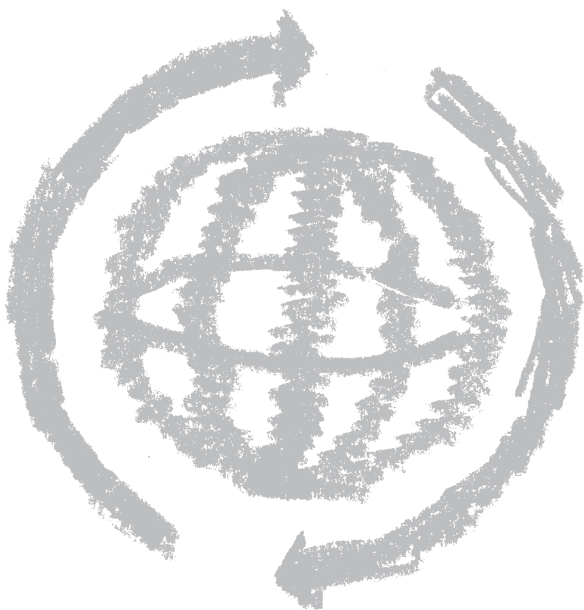
Targeted livelihood opportunities for populations vulnerable to crime

This report asserts the centrality of job creation and livelihood opportunities as a priority for transforming the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk, and is not alone in that regard. Jobs are among the top three priorities laid out in the *World Development Report 2011* and economic opportunity is one of the five New Deal's PSGs. Investment in livelihood opportunities, particularly for young people, has long been accepted as a key strategy for building peace: "A comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy must offer alternative sources of identity and empowerment for bored, disillusioned and disempowered young males."[117] Lessons from the most recent *World Development Report 2013*, which focuses on jobs and which asserts a paradigm shift away from unrealistic emphasis on formal sector employment to absorb the large number of unemployed in today's world, need to be taken into account to create meaningful opportunities; this includes harnessing the informal sector.[118]

This suggests the importance of a push for pro-poor growth across societies in countries that are vulnerable to organised crime (both developing and developed). Such interventions need to become more sensitive and explicit about the links between informal and illicit economies. Given the political economy dimensions highlighted throughout this report, it is crucial to ensure that such interventions – whether by international actors or national governments – are themselves conflict sensitive and targeted at unlocking opportunities for marginalised groups. A central dimension of 'do no harm' law enforcement will also be able to anticipate the impacts of efforts to tackle crime on livelihoods, accompanied by creative thinking around finding alternatives for people who want to leave a life of crime (see Box 15).

117 S. Metz (2007). *Rethinking insurgency*. Pennsylvania: US Strategic Studies Institute. p.53.
118 World Bank (2012). *World Development Report 2013: Jobs*. Washington DC. Available at http://go.worldbank.org/TM7GTEB8U0

4.5 DISRUPTING GLOBALISED MARKET STRUCTURES THAT SUSTAIN THE NEXUS BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME, ARMED VIOLENCE AND FRAGILITY

The mainstream of policy responses to the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and fragility, and even some of the newer priorities emerging from the current body of research, are heavily skewed towards working on the supply side of organised crime, particularly with regard to narco-trafficking. However, the centrality of the market structure of the trade is becoming increasingly apparent with regard to potentially defining its reduction. One OECD report calls for "cooperation and shared responsibility along the supply chain".[119] In other words, the developed countries that receive and consume illegal goods need to address their side of the problem as much as producer and intermediary countries are expected to deal with theirs. In several countries, evidence-based prevention, harm-reduction and treatment are endorsed. One of the alternatives showcased is the drug policy of Sweden, which seeks to balance public health concerns with opposition to drug legalisation. The prevalence rates for cocaine use in Sweden are barely one fifth of those of European countries such as the UK and Spain.

> It is clear that mere decriminalisation would not make organised crime go away, and the immediate loss of livelihood by criminal networks could lead to an upsurge in violence, not the reverse.

In addition, there are an increasing number of arguments for softening the system of global prohibition, which would radically reshape market structures and flatten criminal profits – albeit with unpredictable consequences.[120] It is clear that mere decriminalisation would not make organised crime go away, and the immediate loss of livelihood by criminal networks could lead to an upsurge in violence, not the reverse. The debates are detailed and complex, but the important fact to note is that they are starting to happen, which, from a pragmatic and transformative perspective such as that offered by peacebuilding, can only be a good thing.

The extent to which increased armed violence and fragility linked to organised crime perhaps represents collateral damage accrued by today's globalised liberal economy is subject to debate. Certainly, the sheer volume of trade means that full control and monitoring of imports and exports is simply impossible without dramatically slowing down and restricting its speed, which would both disappoint consumer expectations and hit corporate profits (and hence revenue) hard. Honest reflection on these structures may help to motivate increased investment in some of the other strategic priority areas outlined in this report.

A final question might be asked: what does disrupting the globalised market structure in criminal commodities have to do with peacebuilding? Peacebuilding asserts the importance of analysis of conflict dynamics across different dimensions, identifying root, driver and trigger factors. The opportunities presented in the global economy for extremely lucrative illegal profits based on a demand and supply model that pits rich and poor countries at either end cannot be overlooked. As mentioned earlier, the special session dedicated to the issue scheduled to take place at the UN General Assembly promises the possibility of further adjustments to the global normative environment in which responses to narco-trafficking and illegal drug use take place. This would allow for tentative shifts to the structural context in which the nexus between organised crime, armed violence and conflict risk occurs. The types of citizen debate, advocacy and empowerment which constitute the *modus operandi* of peacebuilding, coupled with continued emphasis on the costs of the current status quo to peace and security, can usefully be leveraged to influence such processes. Globalised civic awareness campaigns that led to a wave of fair trade and commodity certification from the late 1990s (for example the 'blood diamonds' campaign) provide a model to begin to influence consumer patterns and demands for commodities such as illicit drugs, as well as their overall regulation.

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119 OECD (2012a). Op. cit.
120 Ibid. p.3.

CONCLUSION

Violent conflict is a dynamic, ever-changing process. In its current manifestations, framing violent conflict in terms that are limited to war and civil war restricts our ability to address it. Criminal networks and organised crime are strongly linked to widespread instability and fragility, and not only in those countries labelled 'fragile states'.

Yet the systematic and deliberate application of peacebuilding approaches to the relationship between organised crime, violence and fragility remains well overdue. Whilst law enforcement is clearly part of the solution, the capacities within broader civil society urgently need to be drawn in. The silo mentality that dominates thinking needs to be broken.

Peacebuilding approaches that focus on analysis, dialogue and civic empowerment can help us find new ways of addressing what is a highly complex and global problem greatly in need of bold and creative solutions.