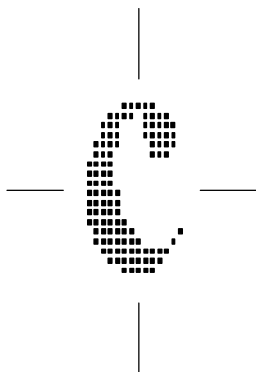


Conflict Policy Research Project (CPRP)

Conflict Policy in Some Western Countries:

Some Explorative Notes

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Abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPRP	Conflict Policy Research Project
CPWA	Conflict Prevention in West Africa Project
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DFID	Department for International Development
DM	Deutsche Mark
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom)
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MINUGUA	Misión de Verificación de la Situación de los Derechos Humanos y del Cumplimiento de los Compromisos del Acuerdo Global sobre Derechos Humanos en Guatemala (UN Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala)
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Assistance
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NOK	Norwegian Krone
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SEK	Swedish Krona
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

UNDP
USAID

United Nations Development Programme
United States Agency for International Development

1 Introduction

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As part of the ‘Conflict Policy Research Project’ (CPRP) this report explores the rough outlines of the policies and postures of some other Western governments with regard to countries in conflict. It is predominantly based on official government documents, which were collected by an undergraduate student working on behalf of the CPR Project.¹ Only the documentation relating to Norway was of a different nature as it involved evaluation studies by research institutes, albeit undertaken at the request of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a report on relief work in crisis situations that was drawn up by another institute. Documentation on the other countries discussed in this report stemmed from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Development Cooperation, or autonomous agencies engaged in development work.

This report attempts to explore whether or not the countries in question have developed (foreign, defence and development) policy towards countries engaged in intra-state conflict or civil war, especially countries in the Third World. It will try to show what instruments are part of such policy, which may involve activities in the area of conflict prevention, mediation, humanitarian aid given to attenuate the negative effects of hostilities, and post-conflict rehabilitation or ‘peacebuilding’. It will also discuss whether, more generally, these Western governments have formulated a specific vision or perspective vis-à-vis (intra-state) conflict in the post-Cold War era.

It is not our intention to analyse policy interventions with regard to *specific* conflicts, as was done in the six case studies on Dutch conflict policy and interventions that are part of this project. This was not possible within the temporal confines of this project. Moreover, the report focuses on general policy documents rather than on concrete outcomes and effectiveness of conflict policies. Our aim is to present, in rough outline, the vision, ideas and instruments employed in the conflict policies of

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1) Coen Postma. Here I would like to thank him for the collection and presentation of the data concerned in ‘The Good Intentions of Conflict Prevention Policy: A Policy Comparison of Six Countries’ (The Hague, September 1999).

the Western countries discussed. Obtaining empirical data on the results of policies and interventions would have required more substantial and extended research. However, it is hoped that, in outlining the nature of these policies and the visions and instruments concerned, this report may help to put Dutch conflict policy into relief and, perhaps, point out differences and/or points of convergence with the policies of other countries, lacunae, overlap and possibilities for coordination. Furthermore, while the report does not focus on conflict interventions in specific countries it will, where available, present data on the activities and funds involved so as to put the concrete significance of conflict policy in perspective.

It is hoped that, while the nature of the data is rather varied and they are unevenly spread, the report will, as a whole, provide a first, tentative clue with regard to the postures of other Western countries on conflict policies and interventions. The countries that are discussed in this report are Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom and Canada. Originally it was intended to include the Federal Republic of Germany as well. Unfortunately, two studies evaluating development cooperation will be published only in the autumn of 1999 and were thus not yet available at the time of writing. Some cursory information extracted from data in speeches and other documents will, however, be presented in the conclusions, as part of a more general discussion of Western conflict policy. In that context some remarks will also be made on the perspective on conflict as articulated in American policy circles.

2 Norway

As in the Netherlands, Norway does not have a separate Ministry of Development Cooperation. This field of activity is dealt with inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information on the Norwegian vision on intra-state conflict in the post-Cold War era is secondary in nature as the data involved come from evaluation studies undertaken by independent research institutes, among which the Christian Michelsen Institute in Bergen.² While some of these were executed at the behest of the Norwegian government they do not represent official government policy or opinion. Nevertheless, these reports do provide some clues as to Norwegian thinking on the topic of conflicts.

According to the documents involved global developments have created conditions for a new foreign policy activism by Norway with regard to conflicts. Indeed, it is expected that closer links will develop between Norwegian development assistance and foreign policy proper. It is contended that intra-state conflicts are hard to solve, among others because of the intensity of the violence involved and the emergence of economies of war – a phenomenon that seriously complicates conflict mediation as such. It is stressed that many conflicts involve an ethnification of national discord, which can also be internationalized: intra-state conflicts have a tendency to spread or affect the region in which they are located. Thus, it is imperative for the international community to intervene as early as possible when conflict erupts or is expected. Above all, the Norwegians stress the long-term nature of conflict intervention. External actors should have a long-term perspective on their own involvement as successful interventions depend on comprehensive, multi-faceted and time-consuming processes.

2) G.M. Sobo *et alii*, *Norwegian Assistance to Countries in Conflict: The Lesson of Experience from Guatemala, Mali, Mozambique, Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi* (Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Oslo, 1998) and M. Bergh and P. Jareg (eds), *Relief Work in Complex Emergencies: The Norwegian NGO Experience* (Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Oslo, 1998).

Moreover, it is important to realize better coordination among mediators and among mediators and those who are responsible for the implementation of peace agreements. Interestingly, the Norwegian documents emphasize the utility of NGOs in conflict mediation as these are not associated with governments and can thus communicate easily with both governments and rebel forces. However, it is admitted that, for that reason, they can also be used and dismissed without anyone losing face or generating diplomatic complications. The Christian Michelsen Institute argues, moreover, that humanitarian assistance cannot substitute for political action. Humanitarian aid has only a limited effect on the hostilities as such and may even prolong a conflict or create political passivity as regards efforts to resolve a conflict. Conflict management, however, is the essential business of governance and should be organized on the basis of prudent coordination among the political actors involved, such as governmental institutions, regional organizations, NGOs and the UN.

Put in concrete terms, the Norwegians supported various types of peacebuilding measures throughout the last decade. Thus, between 1990 and 1996 Norwegian peacebuilding support was given to some thirty countries. Whereas in 1990 it provided such support to a mere four countries to the value of NOK 3,7 million, six years later this had risen to NOK 167 million disbursed over 22 countries. Of these funds, which are only a part of Norway's total emergency and humanitarian aid, 32% was used to assist peacebuilding measures, peace negotiations, UN operations, demobilization efforts and attempts to build up police forces and the judicial process. Direct support for peace negotiations was given in the case of fourteen conflicts.

NGOs, such as the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), play an active role in the implementation of Norway's conflict policy. For example, at one time the LWF brought the belligerent parties in the Guatemalan conflict to Norway for peace negotiations in which NCA also played a facilitating role. The Norwegian government applied pressure to get the Guatemalan parties to accept a more active UN role in the negotiations and provided, to this purpose, financial support for the establishment of MINUGUA. Between 1990 and 1996 total Norwegian development assistance to Guatemala increased, especially assistance channeled to the mediation and peace process. Budget assistance also increased, namely from NOK 16 million in 1990 to NOK 97 million in 1997.

NCA played a particularly active role in the peace negotiations in Mali between the government and Touareg rebels. While the Norwegian government also provided financial assistance to Mali through UNDP,³ its contribution to the restoration of peace in Mali was channeled mainly through Norwegian Church

3) The 'Fonds d'Affection Special', to which Norway and the United States were the largest donors. These funds were used, among others, for peacebuilding, demobilization and the repatriation of soldiers.

Aid. Both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the 'Norwegian Agency for Development Assistance' (NORAD) have supported NCA activities in Mali since 1984, providing about NOK 216 million from 1984 to 1997. The Norwegians disbursed some NOK 64 million to Mali in 1996 alone. NCA activities involved, among others, the encouragement of reconciliation through the organization of intercommunity meetings. These meetings were funded jointly by Norway, Germany, Switzerland and Canada.⁴ In order to help in the consolidation of peace Norway will, however, disburse future funds mainly through UNDP, while it will also promote debt relief through the 'African Development Bank' (ADB) and send signals to the multilateral financial institutions that they should show consideration for the difficulties that Mali is confronted with in the implementation of economic reform.

The implementation of Norway's conflict policy in Sudan has been more low key, erratic and much less successful. Since war broke out again in 1983 Norwegian aid has consisted predominantly of emergency aid, which was disbursed through NCA and another NGO, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). The evaluation studies mentioned above concluded, however, that their combined efforts did not make much of a difference in persuading the belligerents to end hostilities. In particular, the Norwegian government was criticized for the lack of an institutional basis for the formulation of a comprehensive and coherent conflict policy on Sudan, that would combine short-term interventions with longer-term perspectives in terms of sustainable development. It did not show the same degree of consistency as Norway's policy towards Guatemala, with other countries assuming the initiative as far as the Sudan was concerned.

Similarly, in the case of Mozambique Norwegian conflict policy played only a secondary role even though Oslo has been one of the largest donors for decades. In the early 1990s Norway was the sixth largest donor to Mozambique, disbursing development funds to the total of some NOK 300 to 500 million a year. These contributions were aimed at various fields of activity, such as demobilization, demining, repatriation and reintegration and the promotion of political pluralism. Aid projects, according to the evaluation studies, were generally initiated at a satisfactory moment in the transition process. Nevertheless, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not seize on opportunities to exert influence on strategic issues during the peace process. While the Minister for Development Cooperation and NORAD were actively concerned, they dealt with Mozambique as a development issue rather than in military and political terms. Unfortunately, Norwegian development policy on Mozambique appeared to be hardly integrated

4) The Norwegian reports are rather positive about these efforts, something that was also borne out in a study written for the 'Conflict Prevention in West Africa Project' (CPWA). See T.K. Biaya, 'Acteurs et médiations dans la résolution et la prévention des conflits en Afrique de l'ouest' (*Project Conflict Prevention in West Africa*: Dakar, 1998).

in that of the multilateral financial institutions, which shaped the macroeconomic context for peace and reconstruction. These were largely accepted as a given in the formulation and execution of Norwegian policy.

In Rwanda Norway's role was low key both financially and politically. Before the genocide it had only limited contacts with Rwanda as Norwegian policy focused more on Burundi. Requests to provide financial assistance to the Arusha negotiations in 1993 were turned down. As other countries, Norway failed to perceive the dangers lying ahead. Subsequently, aid efforts focused on the provision of emergency aid to the victims of genocide. In contrast, Norwegian efforts vis-à-vis Burundi were more directly related to the area of conflict resolution. Norway constituted a significant source for mediation efforts, among others by way of foreign NGOs and 'grass roots' initiatives in Burundi focusing on reconciliation. At the official level Norway funded summits for the heads of state of the Great Lakes region in Cairo and Tunis (1995-1996), while it also contributed to the mediation efforts of former President Nyerere. Most Norwegian activity took place through governmental channels rather than through Norwegian NGOs. Norwegian aid to Burundi totalled, in 1996 and 1997, some NOK 37 million.

In conclusion one could say that the resolution of intra-state conflicts in Third World countries has become a significant topic in Norwegian foreign policy. This can be seen both in terms of policy principles and in terms of concrete financial assistance and, in a few cases, active political efforts aimed at contributing to the restoration of peace. In this context development assistance and, especially, emergency aid evolved more and more into important instruments of Norwegian foreign policy. Interestingly, Norwegian (unofficial) documents stressed the importance of a long-term perspective on conflict interventions in which humanitarian aid could not become a simple substitute for political mediation. While the Norwegians have, indeed, provided financial assistance to various aspects involved in long-term transition processes, such as mediation, demobilization, reintegration, demining and reconciliation, the importance of this should be set against the total sums concerned and, especially, the degree of their distribution over a large number of countries. Based on the above-mentioned evaluation studies it would seem that it was only in a limited number of conflict cases, such as Mali and, especially, Guatemala that Norwegian conflict policy amounted to consisted and coherent conflict policy interventions involving both humanitarian aid and political initiatives and close cooperation between Norwegian policy circles and aid agencies.

3 Sweden

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The Swedish government has gone to some lengths not only to employ concrete aid programmes as instruments in the implementation of conflict policy but also to formulate an explicit, official posture on the issue of prevention and resolution of intra-state conflict.⁵ In this way we can obtain a clear picture of the Swedish vision and ideas on the issues discussed in this report. According to the Swedish government conflict prevention refers primarily to measures that can be implemented before a difference or dispute escalates into violence or to measures aimed at preventing a flare-up of violence after a peace agreement or cease-fire. It should involve activities that address underlying causes of conflict as well as their symptoms. In practice, however, it is not always easy to make a distinction between short-term measures (often called preventive diplomacy) and long-term measures, called structural prevention.

According to Sweden the end of the Cold War has created better conditions for early action by the international community. There is, in the Swedish view, a growing interest in conflict prevention as a result of the extended powers of governments and NGOs to act in intra-state conflicts in the wake of the end of superpower rivalry. Intra-state conflicts are, at present, marked by the disintegration of state authority, the evolution of economies of war and the victimization of civilian populations.

In order to implement a policy of conflict prevention one should have recourse to some of the major international organizations, such as the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations. Humanitarian and peacekeeping and -making efforts should be an important part of security operations. In such operations the West European Union, in which Sweden has observer status, should be involved. To this purpose an inventory is being made of the military capacity of EU countries in the field of crisis management. Sweden also sees interesting

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5) *Preventing Violent Conflict: A Swedish Action Plan* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Stockholm, 1999). See also *Preventing Violent Conflict: A Study* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Stockholm, 1997).

lessons in the practice and experience of the OSCE and would like to share knowledge in this area with corresponding regional organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The UN should be provided with additional resources for the secretariat, as the Security Council does not have a sufficient basis for early warning and decision-making as regards conflict prevention. It is emphasized that military intervention should be decided on by the Security Council in those cases where belligerent parties do not consent.

More specifically, Swedish policy stipulates five objectives in the area of conflict prevention. Firstly, Sweden should encourage what is called a 'culture of prevention', with which is meant the strengthening of the international will and preparedness to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict. Awareness of the humanitarian, political and economic imperatives of conflict prevention should be reinforced. Secondly, one ought to identify the structural risk factors that may cause conflict. Here the Swedish government mentions economic stagnation, inequitable distribution of resources, undemocratic political systems, weak social structures, the suppression of minority rights, flows of refugees, ethnic tension and religious and cultural intolerance. One should be especially alert about the need for conflict prevention during times of radical political and economic transformation. In particular, the Swedish government lays emphasis on the dangers ingrained in the proliferation of weapons. It argues for the strengthening of international norms, transparency with regard to military production, better legislation and control of the illegal transfer of weapons and the inclusion in peace agreements of measures on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants. Thirdly, Sweden would like to strengthen the international system of norms and their implementation, in particular with regard to the rights of civilians. In this context the Swedish government aims at supporting countries in conflict in areas such as legislation, the conduct of elections and the development of governmental institutions. Fourthly, the international institutional framework for preventative measures ought to be reinforced, notably in the cadre of the various international organizations mentioned above. Finally, Sweden's own capacity to engage in international activities of conflict prevention should be strengthened in various policy areas such as foreign and security policy, trade policy, migration issues and development assistance.

Implementation of the above objectives should involve, among others, the use of existing methods of mediation and conflict resolution as stipulated in the UN Charter, complemented by confidence-building measures, regular surveys of potential conflict areas by the UN, meetings for the promotion of a culture of prevention and, within the Swedish Foreign Ministry itself, the establishment of a steering group for conflict prevention as well as a small section in the Ministry's Policy Planning Group to monitor international developments in this area.

On the level of policy, humanitarian assistance and conflict resolution are firmly integrated. Thus the 'Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency' (SIDA) considers the concept of conflict management as a term for aid-

financed projects implemented during ongoing armed conflicts, both for the victims and, especially, for peacebuilding. The latter involves promotion of dialogues, projects to influence the culture of violence, research, education, seminars and mediation at the local level, civil peace monitoring, demilitarization, demobilization, integration of combatants and arms control. In 1999 some twelve per cent of SIDA's total budget was earmarked for humanitarian assistance.⁶ In addition, SIDA has a special programme on democracy, human rights and conflict management which between 1994 and 1996 alone represented a financial commitment of some SEK 1,3 billion against a budget of SEK 8 billion for the totality of SIDA's development assistance.⁷ The annual level of spending on this particular programme was around SEK 600 million during the middle of the 1990s.

Projects involving the promotion of democracy amounted to 47% of the programme. During the last six to seven years Sweden supported some thirty elections through missions of 350 official electoral observers. Human rights accounted for 41% of the programme while conflict management obtained a mere 12% of the programme funds. The whole programme, from 1994 to 1996, consisted of some 1100 projects, with 350 in the area of democracy and human rights to a value of some SEK 640 million. The number of countries that received aid through this programme numbered 75 in all, most of them located in Africa and Latin America. Although Africa obtained the largest number of projects, those for Latin America involved larger sums of money, *i.e.* some SEK 450 million in total against SEK 425 million for Africa. Most projects were under SEK 1 million and fifty per cent of them did not cost more than SEK 250,000. Target groups were trade unions, human rights organizations, parliamentarians, journalists, women groups⁸ and victims of human rights violations. Some 85% of the projects were implemented by Swedish and international NGOs. Countries with twenty projects or more were South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Nicaragua and Burundi.

In Africa⁹ SIDA prioritized Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda as targets for long-term cooperation in the field of human rights and democracy. However, assistance is also given to other countries. For example, in 1997-1998 Angola received aid in the context of peace promotion activities, as did

6) See *Strategy for Conflict Management and Peace-Building: A Summary* (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – Division for Humanitarian Assistance: Stockholm, May 1999).

7) See *Justice and Peace: SIDA's Programme for Peace, Democracy and Human Rights* (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – Department for Democracy and Social Development: Stockholm, May 1997).

8) See for a gender perspective *Overview: Gender Equality and Emergency Assistance/Conflict Resolution* (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – Division for Humanitarian Assistance: Stockholm, January 1997).

9) See on Sweden's Africa policy also *Africa on the Move: Revitalising Swedish Policy towards Africa for the 21st Century* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Africa Department; Government Communication SKR 1997/98: 122: Stockholm, 1998).

Rwanda and Burundi and some countries in West Africa and the Horn. In Ethiopia Swedish aid efforts in the field of democracy and human rights were geared towards NGOs in civil society, with some attention paid to the development of the legal system. Eritrea did not receive much aid in the context of democracy and human rights – apart from assistance during the general elections of 1997. Most aid was given in the context of poverty reduction and gender equality, although democratic development figured as one of the objectives as well. Aid to Mozambique concentrated on the strengthening of the economy and the reinforcement of peace, with support given to the national and local election process and to public administration in the context of the promotion of decentralization. In South Africa support was given to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Tanzania obtained assistance for constitutional reform, the judiciary and human rights. Uganda received aid for the development of human rights education, capacity-building of the legal system, the transparency of governance and a host of other objectives. Other countries receiving Swedish aid were Botswana (for decentralization), Zambia (democracy and human rights, through NGOs in civil society), Zimbabwe (democracy, increased pluralism and human rights) and Guinea-Bissau.

In Asia Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, China, the Philippines and the Westbank and Gaza obtained support in the context of the programme on democracy, human rights and conflict management. More specifically, aid was provided, among others, to promote the development of media, civil service reform, constitutional and human rights for women, treatment of prisoners, elections support and reinforcement of judiciaries. Recipients in South America were Colombia, Peru and Bolivia and, in Central America, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.

In conclusion one could observe that, while Sweden has developed a strategy for contributing to conflict resolution both at the level of policy and the actual disbursement of funds, in practice relatively few projects can be classified as support for conflict resolution/prevention. This conclusion is shared by SIDA, which also admits that the impact of inputs made on processes of democratization and conflict management is difficult to measure. This is aggravated by the fact that the objectives involved are rather generally phrased. In the area of conflict management SIDA concluded that humanitarian assistance should be placed in its political and social context. One should be aware of the limitations of outside interventions in conflicts. Like the Norwegians, Sweden argues that, since conflicts are political, humanitarian assistance cannot substitute for the lack of political will to intervene or resolve a conflict. Furthermore, SIDA argues that assistance to promote democracy, peace and human rights should be targeted at both the state and civil society. In elections too little attention is given to women.

More generally, one aspect not touched upon by SIDA or the government is the fact that Swedish efforts seem to be spread rather widely across a broad range of sectors, objectives and priorities. In addition, the number of projects and

countries targeted appears to be considerable. This state of affairs may raise doubt as to the impact and effectiveness of Swedish policy and project intervention vis-à-vis countries which are engaged in conflict, faced conflict in the past or may be confronted with violence in future. Moreover, in spite of the considerable attention paid to conflict prevention at the level of policy formulation rather few projects were specifically targeted at improving conflict management in practice. However, the significance of this cannot be gauged, as data were neither available on the total funds involved in this area nor on the effectiveness of these efforts.

4 United Kingdom

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This chapter is based on policy statements of different ministerial departments.¹⁰ In Britain the disbursement of development aid is the responsibility of the 'Department for International Development' (DFID). In executing its tasks DFID has begun to integrate, what it calls, conflict reduction objectives in its development programmes. The goal of conflict reduction is defined as building up the political and social means to enable equitable representation of different interest groups, the promotion of all human rights and the resolution of disputes and grievances without recourse to violence. Good governance, human rights, accessible justice and personal security are deemed of crucial importance to tackle the underlying causes of conflict, namely social inequality and poverty. Thus conflict appraisals are now conducted when country assistance programmes are drawn up.

The instruments that DFID lists for the implementation of its conflict reduction strategy are the building up of local and national capacity for settling disputes and preventing conflict; the promotion of dialogue through mediation and negotiation involving civil society; the encouragement of the protection of minority rights; and expansion of the use of media to provide objective information. Furthermore, Britain aims to support international mechanisms for the settlement and prevention of conflicts by improving the capabilities of the UN, EU, the Commonwealth and regional organizations. It also wants to assist in reducing excessive or inappropriate military expenditure in association with the OECD and international financial institutions. Here one should think of the promotion of international cooperation to curb illicit trafficking in small arms; assisting poor countries to reduce the proliferation of small arms; and eliminating the threat of landmines.

Total expenditure on DFID projects which had conflict reduction as their primary objective totalled, for 1998-1999, some 19 million pounds. For example, Britain has provided direct funding for the Arusha negotiations on the civil war in Burundi, while it backs this up by giving broad support to human rights, among

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10) See the section entitled 'sources' in this report.

others by contributing substantially to the reconciliation work of the Burundi UN Human Rights Field Office. For Rwanda the UK provided, in 1998, 1,66 million pounds to the International Criminal Tribunal through the United Nations. It also assists in the alleviation of prison conditions there and the rebuilding of the judiciary. Perhaps more significantly, Britain has provided substantial support to the peace process in Sierra Leone. Thus since September 1998 ECOMOG has been given over three million pounds worth of logistical assistance while since March of that year the UK has committed over twenty million for rehabilitation and reconstruction. This includes aid for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In March 1999 a further ten million was committed for the preservation of democracy and protection of the civilian population, half the money going to ECOMOG to help in its efforts to stabilize the security situation, the remainder committed to build a new and democratically accountable national army.

One other issue emphasized by DFID is a topic not usually part of the mandate of departments working in the field of development cooperation: the promotion of security reform. Thus it reasons that security is an essential condition for sustained development and poverty elimination. An unreformed security sector¹¹ often fails to prevent and sometimes causes violent conflict, which leads to increased suffering and poverty. As argued elsewhere, conflict prevention is therefore crucial to combat poverty and reduce suffering.¹² Security sectors may also have a negative effect on economic development by causing serious distortion in resource allocation.

However, DFID argues that it can only be involved in supporting security reform as long as the primary aim is to promote development, as assistance for security sector reform is set in the framework of the overall objective of poverty reduction. In order to promote security sector reform DFID aims to reinforce the sector's democratic accountability and transparency by providing human rights training to civilians who have to control the military; by training to strengthen conflict resolution and negotiation skills in government; by training to improve on the objectivity of threat analysis, especially on the civilian side of government; by increasing democratic accountability of the security services through support for democratically elected parliaments to assess security issues; training of civil servants in developing accountability systems; developing of control and accounting systems for staff numbers, budgets and expenditure planning; developing procurement systems; encouraging the watchdog role of civil society; and

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- 11) Defined as involving those who are responsible or should be responsible for protecting the state and communities within it, including the military, paramilitary and intelligence services, civilian structures responsible for oversight and control of the security forces, but excluding the police. See *Poverty and the Security Sector: DFID Policy Statement* (London, no date).
 - 12) See *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century*; *White Paper on International Development* (Cm 3789: London, November 1997), p. 68.

assisting with the establishment of a structure and chains of command in defence ministries to ensure effective civilian control.

More controversially, DFID also aims to provide direct support to security forces themselves but tries to target its assistance on specific measures in order to tailor it to the control of conflict, regard for human rights and effective management of military expenditure. It should not lead to an increase in military capabilities as such. This entails training of security forces to heighten their awareness of responsibilities to the public, including human rights issues, international humanitarian law and gender awareness. Training is also provided in the area of conflict resolution skills, while DFID promotes regional cooperation in peace support and conflict prevention and the build-up of indigenous peacekeeping capacities. Democratic accountability of security forces is sought through encouraging dialogue between politicians, security forces and civil servants to develop an appropriate understanding of their respective roles; through training for security forces to understand their role in a democratic society; and by their training in the development of accountability systems. In the implementation of its assistance in security sector reform DFID collaborates closely with the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence, which pursue similar programmes based on the specific policy perspectives of their departments.

Thus, while this chapter does not provide an overall picture of British views and strategies with regard to intra-state conflicts or, for that matter, of its development and emergency aid policies, it can be safely concluded that the particular emphasis on security sector reform as an element in development assistance establishes a very explicit and direct linkage between conflict and development aid. Development cooperation thus becomes a genuine instrument in conflict policies and interventions.

5 Canada

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Canadian interest in efforts to intervene and resolve conflicts centres around the concept of ‘peacebuilding’. In recent years the government introduced a so-called ‘Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative’ which involved, among others, the establishment of a new peacebuilding fund of some ten million Canadian dollars and financed by the ‘Canadian International Development Agency’ (CIDA); the disbursement of development assistance to countries and regions wrecked by violence; and Canadian support for peacekeeping or ‘peace support’ operations.

Institutionally both CIDA and the ‘Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade’ (DFAIT) are important in the implementation of Canadian conflict policy. DFAIT engages in preventive diplomacy and undertakes initiatives to reinforce political solutions to disputes, governmental crises and situations of acute societal instability. DFAIT also manages Canada’s participation in multilateral political fora that coordinate international peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. The department works on the basis of the ‘Canadian Peacebuilding Program’, which supports Canada’s Peacebuilding Initiative in those areas which fall outside the priorities of the Peacebuilding Fund administered by CIDA. The programme is said to have three strategic objectives. Firstly, to build Canadian capacity for peacebuilding, such as by supporting government/NGO dialogues; secondly, to strengthen multilateral peacebuilding mechanisms by improving on the effectiveness of existing multilateral institutions and supporting conflict prevention initiatives and the activities of international peacebuilding networks involving NGOs, donors and international organizations; and thirdly, to support activities promoting peacebuilding in countries not eligible for Canadian ODA and assist initiatives in policy areas falling outside CIDA priorities.

At the behest of the Canadian government various studies were undertaken to provide its conflict policy with a firm intellectual basis. In one study¹³ the

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13) R. Hay, *Peacebuilding during Peace Support Operations: A Survey and Analysis of Recent Missions* (March 1999).

concept of peacebuilding was defined as the effort to strengthen the prospects for internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflict. The overarching goal of peacebuilding would be to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence. Ultimately peacebuilding is supposed to aim at building human security, a concept that includes democratic governance, human rights, the rule of law, sustainable development and equitable access to resources. In trying to prevent or resolve conflicts one should, however, distinguish between different types of violent disputes, even though it should be realized that such typologies are not mutually exclusive. Thus the above-mentioned study distinguished between so-called 'post-colonial' conflicts; 'post-Cold War' conflicts; and 'independent' conflicts. The first category usually involves military regimes which rely on force to maintain political order and thereby often create an environment marked by a high incidence of human rights violations. With low government capacity and low levels of economic development the resultant conflicts often stem from the power-seeking motivations of the elite. These conflicts are also difficult to resolve because of the continued availability of resources. One could think here of countries like Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola and Cambodia.

The second type of conflict – 'post-Cold War' – usually occurs along ethnic, religious or nationalist lines. There is a high incidence of human rights violations against both combatants and civilians. The belligerent parties are often dependent on regional powers and because their resources are limited these conflicts could be more amenable to settlement. One could think of Tajikistan or Bosnia. The third type of conflicts involves violent disputes which do not originate from systemic causes but develop largely in isolation from regional powers. One often sees, in this regard, military regimes opposed to the majority of the population and based on the interests of a wealthy minority. Terror-based rule and, again, a high incidence of human rights abuse, are some of the features involved. Examples would include Guatemala, Colombia and Haiti.

Peacebuilding efforts should encompass three kinds of activity. So-called 'tier-one' activities would include conflict resolution initiatives; humanitarian relief efforts, among others to neutralize the destabilizing effects of refugee populations; and physical security initiatives involving disengagement of forces, implementation of cease-fires, disarmament and demobilization. Second tier initiatives would involve the development of a national institutional capacity to assume responsibility for the reinforcement of previous peace initiatives, such as by strengthening both government and domestic NGO capacity and by assisting in elections. The final tier of activity would include efforts towards social and economic reconstruction.

In the study mentioned above it was perceived that Canada would have a special 'niche' in the implementation of tier two activities, which could include the development of government and NGO capacity through the provision of technical and financial support and training programmes. Nevertheless, it also emphasized that Canada has always been closely identified with the institution of peacekeeping

and that it should not undersell the military in terms of peacebuilding, since they can often move in quickly and have the requisite skills and training for peacebuilding tasks. Canada should continue to support the United Nations, which should be seen as the most experienced institution in the area of peace support operations. In the context of the Canadian 'Military and Assistance Training Program' peacekeeping and peacebuilding skills should be emphasized in the training of troops deployed by regional organizations. The UN, however, should retain supremacy in regional peace support operations. Canada should also share its knowledge with institutions like the Commonwealth, the Francophonie and the OAS. Special tasks to be pursued by the Canadians could be disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and civilian policing.

For its part, the Canadian International Development Agency has, as its principal objective, the broadly defined duty to support sustainable development in order to reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world. More specifically, CIDA is required to focus on six areas: basic human needs; women in development; infrastructure services; human rights, democracy and good governance; private sector development; and the environment. In the area of peacebuilding CIDA aims at supporting the emergence of participatory and pluralistic societies, with a well-functioning and responsible administration acting under the rule of law and with respect for human rights. In collaboration with developing countries the agency tries to strengthen the long-term foundations of peace, human security and sustainable development through a strong civil society, representative governance systems, economic opportunity and the participation of women in the development process. Such efforts are needed in order to build a tradition of conflict avoidance and effective institutions of conflict resolution in societies undergoing rapid economic and social change.

The Peacebuilding Fund administered by CIDA is designed to serve as a catalyst that will stimulate local, sustainable initiatives towards peace. It is supposed to respond quickly to urgent peacebuilding situations in developing countries by assisting targeted, short-term and one-time interventions at a critical juncture in the peace process. The Fund seeks to enhance the peace dialogue and develop local leadership for the consolidation of peaceful conditions. It is to be used in those areas that cannot be financed from the regular CIDA funds due to the level of risks involved and the speed and type of intervention required. Implemented by Canadian government departments, NGOs, the UN, regional organizations and other relevant entities, the type of interventions supported involves project activities to a maximum of half a million dollars aimed at conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict situations. Countries benefiting from such aid should figure in the Canadian list of countries eligible for ODA.

In pursuing its intervention policies the Canadian government also disburses funds to countries in conflict through CIDA's ongoing geographical programmes. Many of these programmes aim at consolidating fragile societies recovering from violence (such as Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti, El Salvador and Guatemala), or try and

help countries to reduce conflict and strengthen the search for peaceful solutions. Canadian contributions to multilateral programmes have benefited demining projects, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration of refugees, and dissemination of the principles of international humanitarian law.

In the African Great Lakes region Canada has tried to provide a mediatory role to the group of Francophone countries. It has also provided financial and political support to Nyerere's mediation efforts in Burundi. In recent years humanitarian assistance to the value of some eighty million dollars was disbursed to the population of the countries in the region. In Rwanda the Canadian government provided several millions worth of aid for debt relief, emergency reconstruction, reintegration of children and youth, justice system reform, assistance to the international tribunal in Arusha, human rights monitoring and reconciliation. In Burundi the electoral commission received support, while small sums of money were provided for income-generating activities to support reconstruction of communities and reintegration and resettlement of refugees. Assistance to a value of 1,5 million dollars was given for the promotion of human rights, conflict resolution training and education in democracy in Congo-Kinshasa.

In Asia substantial aid was disbursed to Sri Lanka for the rehabilitation of displaced people; water and sanitation infrastructure; the strengthening of key institutions involved in policy reform, human rights and democratic values to address root causes of conflict; support to local peace initiatives; and a host of other objectives. Similarly, in Central America the Guatemalans have received large-scale peacebuilding aid in the wake of various visits by the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Here one could cite projects aimed at developing grass roots organizations benefiting mainly indigenous people, to the value of over ten million, and small-scale agricultural development for the same group to a value of eight million dollars. Civil society organizations were assisted in their activities in the area of human rights and democratic development. Funds were also disbursed for the purpose of human rights monitoring and the repatriation of refugees. Finally, the Canadian government provides aid to political and mediation initiatives of multilateral institutions such as the UN, the Francophonie, the Commonwealth, the OECD, the OSCE and the OAU.

Based on the above, admittedly, cursory description it would be difficult to draw any hard conclusions. While Canadian aid seems to concentrate on issues and areas similar to those pursued by other Western countries described above, in terms of policy documents there is, perhaps, a slight emphasis on the more classical peacekeeping operations when the issue of conflict interventions is discussed. In terms of concrete aid the Canadians seem to target the same countries, although perhaps with special emphasis on countries like Guatemala and Sri Lanka.

6 Comparative Analysis and Conclusions

Based on the previous chapters it would be difficult to present a definitive and detailed comparative analysis of Western conflict policies. However, the principal observation that can be made on the basis of our cursory exploration is that there seems to be a remarkable similarity in policy objectives in this area, as well as a remarkable likeness in the language used to articulate Western conflict policies. Conflict resolution, conflict management, reconciliation, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants are key objectives in the conflict policies of all the countries discussed. Their conflict policies are, moreover, firmly embedded in their more general foreign and development objectives, which are couched in concepts as good governance, democratization, sustainable development, an emphasis on human rights, women, civil society and NGOs, and the environment.

The broad similarity in goals and policy terminology stands out even if, at times, a country articulates and stresses another concept as a key notion underlying its conflict policy. Thus, the United Kingdom employs the concept of 'conflict reduction'; Sweden emphasizes the, by now classical, notions of conflict prevention and conflict management; and Canada articulates the concept of peacebuilding as the central goal of its foreign policy on conflict. If one were to investigate the policies of other countries one would probably find other concepts that differ (slightly) from these notions. For example, a study sponsored by USAID coined the concept of 'social reconciliation'. It refers to a process that begins with adversaries accepting each others' right to coexist in a war torn society. Its objective is to prevent or resolve violent conflict by facilitating communication and by developing peace structures; to reduce deep-seated anger, prejudices and misunderstanding between conflicting groups through dialogue, cooperative action and acknowledgement of the past; and to establish a positive relationship among the conflicting parties.¹⁴

14) K. Kumar, *Promoting Social Reconciliation in Postconflict Societies: Selected lessons from USAID's Experience* (USAID Program and Operations Assessment Report No. 24: April 1999). This study does, however, not necessarily express the Agency's views.

While for some countries few general policy statements could be found, others, such as Sweden and Canada, appear to have gone to considerable lengths to justify their conflict activities by producing general yet comprehensive and eloquent general policy papers. To some extent this is true for the United Kingdom as well. In this respect it is interesting to see what the countries discussed see as the causes of conflicts in the post-Cold War era. One could conclude that, by and large, they seem to be in agreement on the nature of these causes, although they may differ in the comprehensiveness of the causes mentioned or particular indicators stressed. Sweden, for example, stipulates a range of causes, such as economic stagnation, inequitable distribution of resources, undemocratic political systems, weak social structures, the suppression of minority rights, flows of refugees, ethnic tension and religious and cultural intolerance. The UK's Department for International Development refers, more curtly, to social inequality and poverty as generating violence. Norway argues about ethnification of conflict, just as some others mention the factor of ethnicity. However, in certain German documents one finds an explicit emphasis on economic and social disparities as the most important structural causes of violent conflict, while the concept of 'ethnic conflict' is rejected with the argument that ethnic and religious identities are usually instrumentalized by people and groups having an interest in violence. Perhaps more analytically, Canadian policy papers work on the basis of a typology of conflicts although this was, admittedly, presented in a scholarly study sponsored by the government.

The data in this report are not sufficiently comprehensive to produce a comparative overview of the financial commitments made by the various countries in the field of conflict interventions. Based on the above one could merely say that, for example, Swedish funding of conflict-related projects and interventions appears to be substantially larger than that of Norway, while British, or DFID, funding in this area is much smaller. Yet, again, more thorough research would be required if one would like to produce a comprehensive and reliable overview of Western funding. For example, in 1999 Germany alone committed DM 175 million to a programme encouraging democratization and the development of independent media.

In all countries a range of institutions is involved in the formulation and execution of conflict policy. Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Defence, autonomous development aid agencies, and Ministers of Development Cooperation – whether or not facilitated by their own departments – are the principal actors and institutions concerned. Perhaps the Canadian Peacebuilding Fund, established and designed to respond quickly to urgent situations by assisting targeted, short-term and one-time interventions at critical junctures in the peace process, stands out as a noteworthy and original institution developed in this area.

This institution also represents a more explicit link between development aid and conflict policy, although its concrete significance is limited in view of the small funds disbursed.

All countries implement policy through a range of channels, such as domestic, foreign and international NGOs, and multilateral institutions. The Norwegians, in particular, emphasize the utility of NGOs. In contrast, Sweden lays considerable emphasis on the importance of governmental organizations like the European Union and, in the context of military interventions, the United Nations and the supremacy of the Security Council. Canada, too, stresses the importance of reinforcing the role and functioning of the UN. Generally, all countries seem to support the mediation activities of African actors and institutions, such as ECOMOG and Nyerere's negotiations with the belligerent forces in Burundi, rather than being active themselves. The Norwegian activities with regard to Guatemala stand out as exceptions.

This general picture is also in line with Dutch conflict policy which, at least in the case of the Liberian civil war, grounded its intervention activities on the political parameters formulated by other, African, institutions.¹⁵ In this respect Norwegian arguments about the utility of NGOs in pursuing mediation initiatives are particularly interesting in view of the criticism levelled against their involvement to the detriment of foreign ministries undertaking such efforts themselves. As Norwegian studies emphasized that one of the advantages of NGO involvement is that they can be dismissed without a loss of face, one could query whether reliance on NGOs in conflict mediation may, in fact, signify a lack of commitment to conflict resolution in Western policy circles.¹⁶ Telling in this respect is the emphasis in the Norwegian studies that humanitarian relief cannot substitute for mediation and political action and that it may even create political passivity as regards efforts to resolve a conflict. Swedish actors, too, stress the indispensability of *political* action, although in this case it is a conclusion by a major development aid agency that does not appear to have been matched by political action of the kind undertaken by Norway with respect to Guatemala.

On the basis of the explorative observations presented in the previous chapters it would be difficult, empirically, to state where the respective countries put their emphasis in conflict policy. Beyond the general policy pronouncements they all seem to engage in a broad variety of activities which, on first sight, make it rather hard to pinpoint priorities as applied in practice. Projects usually cover the later phases in conflicts, as they involve activities with regard to demobilization, demining, repatriation and reintegration; efforts in reconciliation and dialogue, the

15) See K. van Walraven, *The Netherlands and Liberia: Dutch Policies and Interventions with respect to the Liberian Civil War* (Conflict Policy Research Project: Conflict Research Unit, Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague, September 1999).

16) See chapters 4 and 5 in *ibid.*

promotion of political pluralism and election monitoring; and the encouragement of judicial reform, institutional capacity building, power sharing, political devolution, the reinforcement of civil society and (renewed) respect for human rights and the rule of law. An interesting question in this regard would be whether the policy sectors and instruments involved are firmly integrated and coherently applied in the execution of policy. However, based on our data it would be difficult to answer this question even approximately. Rather, it should be the subject of further and more detailed research. Perhaps the above only shows that in a few cases, such as Norwegian policy vis-à-vis Mali and especially Guatemala, conflict policy amounted to coherent interventions involving the integrated application of different instruments.

More significantly, it is clear that most countries provide aid to a large, and sometimes very large, group of countries, thus raising questions about impact and effectiveness. For example, Sweden's programme for democratization, human rights and conflict management benefited, between 1994 and 1996, no less than 75 countries and involved some 1100 projects of which half did not cost more than a quarter of a million krona. SIDA's observation that it is not easy to ascertain the impact of projects on the state of human rights, conflict management and processes of democratization may in this respect be a sobering thought. The British focus on security sector reform is therefore an interesting initiative as it establishes a more explicit link between development aid and the course of conflict.

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