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**The Role of External Development Actors
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This working paper gathers four texts presented to the Experts Meeting organized within the research project “Peacebuilding processes and state failure strategies” held by the Peace Studies Group in Coimbra on March 31 and April 1, 2006. This is the second publication presenting some of the findings of the research and it relates specifically to the three case studies included in the project: Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique.

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The Role of External Development Actors in Post-Conflict Scenarios – The Case of Angola

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This presentation faces various limitations. The main one derives from the title itself, which creates expectations for a case study on Angola. Since I am not an academic and do not have the necessary time for the in-depth research this matter deserves, I will limit myself to presenting the reflections I and my colleagues from ADRA – Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente – have made regarding the country's context. These reflections – based on the perceptions and opinions we have captured from our contact with the local populations and institutions we work with – focus on the relations between the State and society, or between the State and the citizens, and on the influence that external actors have on these relations. I will seek to highlight the particularities of the Angolan case and, as such, this presentation has no other ambition than to contribute with my personal experience to the theoretical framework that will underpin the planned research.

Some thoughts about the State...

I will start by trying to characterize the evolution of the Angolan State since independence. In the beginning, the idea was to establish a strong State, able to defeat the colonial heritage, to eliminate social injustices, to integrate cultural and regional diversities and to quickly recover from its “time warp” in relation to the developed countries. That would have represented a true commitment with the people and especially with the groups that had had fewer opportunities during the colonial period. Supposedly, this was a “revolutionary” State, by its ideological nature and the scope of services that it intended to provide to the citizens – including production, commerce, employment, and security –, and it was literally “run” by a political party. Under those circumstances, it made sense to speak of a party-State that led a process of building a Nation-State or, more properly, a party-Nation-State.

However, it was a State created in the image of the colonial State with which people did not truly identify because it wasn't based on laws and norms that reflected their social and cultural reality; at the same time, it created the perception of a paternalistic State that sought to provide for almost everything. For these reasons, it is not surprising that this situation would have induced, on the one hand, a sense of alienation in large segments of the population and, on the other hand, a strong feeling of dependence – the State was, or should be, “our father” and to fathers we owe respect, obedience, submission, even if at times they are spiritually distant from us, having little or no meaning in our lives. As a result of this situation, society was obliterated and the majority of the citizens were excluded. Only the armed opposition and some churches were exceptions to the rule, seeking, each in their own way, to question the State.

The failure of the policies resulting from this State model as well as from the development model adopted was a fertile field for the war to flourish, both factors having contributed to the growing fragility of the State. The level of service provision deteriorated progressively and it was a weakened State that, under external pressure, negotiated the 1991 peace deal with UNITA. That peace deal opened the way for two further transitions: to a multi-party system and to a market economy, in a neoliberal perspective that was in tune with the events in other African countries.

In the period between 1992 (the resumption of war after the elections) and 1999 (when UNITA lost its headquarters and its ability to continue to wage war), the State weakened sharply and stopped fulfilling many of its functions. The international community, through the *troika* of observers (United States, Russia and Portugal), United Nations agencies and NGOs, undertook some of those functions, in the political, social, communication and security fields. These two phenomena – State fragility and external presence, especially of humanitarian agencies in a broad sense – helped create the conditions for the emergence of a new Angolan civil society – namely of NGOs in the area of humanitarian aid, human rights and peace.

Paradoxically, it was in that period that the Angolan State carried out two military interventions in two neighbouring countries: Zaire, which would regain its former designation of Democratic Republic of Congo, and Congo Brazzaville. Most

analysts then pointed out the military capacity of the Angolan government as crucial, but failed to consider another aspect, of equal or greater significance. As observed by José Manuel Durão Barroso, leader of the largest opposition party in Portugal at the time, the Angolan State gradually affirmed its sovereignty and consolidated State power through the actual war, then legitimized by the MPLA victory in the 1992 elections, which made it believe to have the right to use force. According to Barroso, the Angolan State was capable of the notable deed of adapting to the diverse regional and international contexts and it was able to institutionally develop itself by creating identities that overpowered ethno-linguistic particularities, in spite of the disorganization that also contributed to its fragility.¹

After 1999 – and not 2002 as it is constantly emphasized – the Angolan State began to gradually recover its relevance and importance. Now it is the State that allows the MPLA to have the resources to return to its hegemonic condition of party-State. This is a new situation in which the State assumes the promotion of a national bourgeoisie as a strategic goal, which would not be condemnable if it wasn't being achieved through patrimonialist and clientelistic practices that allow the accumulation of wealth by individuals connected to the State power. However, the consolidation of the State is actually harmed because the economic and social bases that can buttress national unity and State building itself are deeply weakened and this affects economic integration; because the gaps between Angolans are increasing due to the different opportunities of access to goods and services; and because the State – which formally reaches all the provinces, but that doesn't mean the whole territory – continues to be perceived as something that does not mean much to the majority of its citizens in terms of provision of services.²

The historian Maria da Conceição Neto argues that, despite its errors and vices, the national State is a valuable instrument in the building of the identity of Angolans. According to her, the number of those that see themselves as “Angolans”, and that as such claim their rights, has increased since independence. The war itself seems to have contributed to this fact, due to the mobility of the population in the national space, the

¹ See Barroso, 1997.

² See Neto, 2003.

concentration of people from different origins in urban centres and the integration of young men from all over the country in the armies. Even though disagreeing on the concept of *angolanidade*, the wars were waged in the name of Angolans. Several factors work for national unity: the Bantu cultural background of the majority of the population, the hegemony of the Christian religions, and also the shared experiences throughout the last century, both under Portuguese rule and in the post-independence period.³ Within this framework in which the Angolan national identity is valued as the best way to combat imbalances and inequality, the State had a fundamental role, which grants it legitimacy, in the words of Susan Woodward.

However, the functioning of the State apparatus is affected by the way laws are conceived (the motivations frequently have an external origin), drawn (by jurists trained in a perspective that has little or nothing to do with the socio-cultural reality of the majority of the citizens) and approved (with little or no participation of the citizens and even of the members of legislative bodies). These laws might technically be correct, but provide few answers to the daily problems of the citizens, and I could quote several examples, from the notion of the State itself to land. As a result, few laws are complied with – and that translates into ambiguities and incoherencies, since the relationship between institutions occurs outside the laws, which have little meaning to the common citizens. On the other hand, there is still a widespread belief that the leaders are entitled to appropriate public goods. A good leader is one who possesses and distributes goods. Accountability makes no sense, since at the family level the husband and the parents aren't accountable to their children. If the State does not need the tax contribution of its citizens to feed its budgets, then it makes no sense to think that such a State should be accountable to those same citizens. In this sense, and using Susan Woodward as a reference once more, the Angolan State has no administrative efficiency or capacity to exercise a certain type of authority.

... *civil society*...

In the meantime, from 1999 onwards, and against some expectations, as the State started to recover some of its former power and the opposition parties began

³ *Idem.*

resigning, Angolan civil society, which had taken advantage of the political openness of 1992 and the opportunities created by the war, kept growing, offering relevant contributions to the establishment of a public space independent from the State, and increasing its political role. That can be seen

- in its contribution to peace and the rupture of the MPLA and UNITA bi-polarization, which is a result of the progressive change in the form of production of the political;⁴
- In its promotion and defence of human rights and citizenship and in its influence on some public policies (poverty, land, education, the media);
- In promoting public debates on various topics, including public policies;
- In the creation of spaces for dialogue at local level, also designated in Anglo-Saxon literature as new democratic spaces, where common citizens have the opportunity to participate and present their needs and priorities before the State Administration, something which is denied to them in the existing spaces of “formal democracy”, including the media.⁵

There are other indicators of the growing political role of civil society in Angola. I will just mention three of the most recent for their important meaning in the Angolan context. First, the invitation made by the President of the Republic to personalities from civil society organizations to give their opinion on the date of the next elections and the possibility of holding them before or after the approval of a new Constitution, a gesture that was interpreted as a clear acceptance of the political role of civil society. The second is related to the MPLA creating an office devoted to civil society and citizenship issues and its concern with promoting civil society organizations within its orbit. Finally, the fact that a rural community filed a judicial complaint against a provincial Government due to a land dispute, something that so far seemed unthinkable.

These ideas illustrate some of the contradictions and incoherencies in the relations between the State and society at a time when Angola seeks to consolidate peace, rebuild infrastructures and services and project its development. For this reason, it makes sense to analyze the issue of building a State based on the rule of law in the

⁴ See Pestana, 2003.

⁵ See Cornwell and Coelho, 2004; see also Pacheco, 2005.

present conditions the country is in. If it is true that the Nation-State and the rule of law represent extremely useful instruments in the construction of a unifying national project, it is also prudent to ask ourselves which law we are talking about, when the majority of the population does not relate to it. Therefore, I think we need to study other forms of public power that, at a local level, are closer to the citizens so that they can appropriate the idea of public power without questioning the rule of law and the Nation-State.

...and the external agents

The way the war ended in Angola caught the international community off guard. In fact, in recent years, we have seen how the application of neoliberal theories to the Angolan theatre has repeatedly failed: the inevitability of the defeat of the old so-called Marxist or former Marxist parties in democratic elections; the impossibility of a military victory in civil wars; the inevitability of IMF supervision to implement economic reforms.

As a result of this disorientation, the international community determined that the possibility of holding a donors' meeting to discuss and finance the reconstruction of Angola was dependent on fulfilling three requirements: transparency in the management of the oil accounts, approval of a poverty reduction strategy in the same fashion as defined for other countries – even the designation (PRSP) is unwise, to say the least – and an agreement with the IMF for a monitored programme of economic and financial reforms leading to debt negotiation.

In reality, none of the three demands was fully met. There was a certain improvement in the financial management of oil resources, but Angolans are still not fully informed about the mechanisms of expenses and accountability. The Strategy to Combat Poverty approved by the Government is a document of little importance and assumed as such – only once did the President mention it in public, in a circumstantial occasion – and its content is not reflected in a direct way in the State Budget. The talks with the IMF have always been characterized by advances and setbacks, but never by commitments, and recently the Fund publicly acknowledged a certain measure of success of the macro-economic strategy of the Government, although its own recipes had not been taken into account.

Meanwhile, the Angolan authorities have been paying part of the external debt (today it's below 10 billion dollars, not including the recent loans by the People's Republic of China). At the same time, they are negotiating new loans to finance the rehabilitation of infrastructures and the construction of new ones, such as the future refinery at Lobito, with other countries besides the People's Republic of China. The idea of a possible conference of investors interested in Angola is now on the table. In light of these new developments, the international community feels worried, marginalized. In a gesture that conveys an acknowledgement of its faults, of its loss of influence and of the arrogance it showed until 1999, it now talks of proposing a "partners' conference" to the Angolan government, in order to improve the dialogue between the interested parties and, supposedly, to influence governmental policies. On the other hand, the pressure to hold elections has shown no immediate results, and the date has been successively delayed without any consequence to the power of the Angolan State. It is thus pertinent to ask whether it is legitimate to think that the international community sets the rules in the case of Angola.

When we speak of cooperation for development we are obviously before a fallacy, because, in reality, it is understood as a one-way street: one gives and another receives, whether it is finances, material goods or ideas. As David Sogge (2002) has so well shown, in the end, those who give do not do so in an altruistic or generous way, as donors often end up benefiting more than the recipients. That is what the author illustrates when he shows how the remittances of emigrant workers, the "brain-drain",⁶ capital flight, trade exchanges, and trade barriers favour the rich countries more than the poor ones. In Africa, he states, aid flows are inferior to the resources transferred from the poor to the rich.

Another kind of criticism relates to the way the game of cooperation is played in the field. In a caustic, sometimes ironic, way, and based on his own personal experience, the Angolan anthropologist Ruy Duarte de Carvalho (2003) questions the way actors from multilateral agencies and international NGOs impose – or try to impose – their ideas on aid "projects" without taking into account a reality they hardly know.

⁶ According to a Nigerian newspaper dated 4/10/2000, quoted by Sogge, one in every three African university graduates works outside of Africa.

Questions about aid are also raised by the central government because it escapes the control of the authorities, disturbs the national financial system and has very little impact on the general budget; by local government agents, who feel marginalized by projects they don't consider realistic; by local organizations (NGOs or community organisations), who see themselves disregarded in favour of international NGOs and also deprived of their best staff by these organizations and multilateral agencies that pay much higher wages (sometimes 300% more);⁷ and finally, by public opinion, who accuses cooperation, in general, of wasting too much and doing too little.

In spite of all this criticism, there is no doubt that the international aid to Angola from 1992 onwards produced extremely important results and it would be unfair not to recognize it. It guaranteed the survival of millions of people, it gave an important incentive to the promotion and defence of human rights, it favoured the approximation and the dialogue between State institutions and civil society and citizens in general, and this in turn led to the definition of public policies aiming at greater social justice. And, above all, it supported the development of Angolan civil society and its gradual autonomy in relation to the national powers, which enabled it to finally influence the above-mentioned processes.

By means of conclusion

The increase in the production and price of oil in the international market, together with the loans obtained, has given rise to unprecedented levels of euphoria and self-esteem amongst Angolans. The GDP will probably grow over 25% in 2006, the year when Angola will take part in the World Soccer Cup for the first time. These facts, associated with the idea that the Angolan government is hardly submissive to external impositions, fill many Angolans with pride – even though this might be a bit imprudent. However, it is necessary to question the “development” model that is being followed. It

⁷ Two cases illustrate this: over 50% of the staff of a certain foreign NGO operating in Angola have been trained by a national NGO that is “supported” by that foreign NGO. Another international NGO recruited as its Angolan representative a person who had benefited from a scholarship paid by that NGO when he was working for a national NGO supported by that same international organization. The argument that this may be a way for Angolans to play a part in the definition of the strategies of these NGOs is not valid because these organizations usually define their policies and lines of action independently of the representatives of the countries where they operate.

is true that the bet made on the rehabilitation of roads and railways may contribute to the diversification of the economy, the reduction of the dependence on oil and a greater economic integration. Nevertheless, the excessive resort to foreign resources and the hurry to rebuild the physical infrastructures raises concerns about the fact that Angolans may not internalize the process, and consequently about the sustainability of these actions. On the other hand, the timid decentralization measures undertaken have not been reflected at the state budget level, since large projects are managed by the central administration, and that makes any affirmation strategy by the local administration and the populations very difficult, besides obstructing the processes of local development that have been attempted by local governments and various NGOs. This means that we are basically talking about the adoption of a model of growth that, not following the neoliberal way, seeks to recreate the nationalistic capitalism that collapsed in Africa and Latin America in the 1960s and 70s, but that in Angola is seen as the cause of the economic boom of the 60s.

In conclusion, I believe that a study on peacebuilding processes in states like Angola is entirely pertinent. A study that questions the nature and role of the State, the political system, citizens' participation and the influence of external factors. However, it is necessary to raise some questions from the start.

First, it is pertinent to ask whether Angola actually has a failed State, given its wealth potential, its military capacity and the way it has positioned itself in the international arena (not always for the best reasons). All this has allowed it to exercise its sovereignty in a quite distinct way from that of other States considered to be failed. Today, the Angolan State guarantees security in a general sense to all its citizens (the post-war violence indicators are much lower than those from other countries in a similar situation), and shows a new attitude towards human rights, although there is still much to be done in this area, and especially in relation to democratic legitimacy and administrative efficiency. At the same time, we can ask if anyone has the legitimacy to classify a State as fragile or failed.

Second, it shouldn't be forgotten that the Angolan peace process is being led by the State, without much interference from the international community, and four years

after the cease-fire, there are neither cease-fire violations nor an environment conducive to a return to armed violence. There was a military victory, but also an agreement in which the opponent wasn't humiliated – and the Angolan civil society played a fundamental role in that. This allowed the establishment of post-war scenario rules that largely explain the relative tranquillity.

Third, a study of this nature must, above all, be an opportunity for Angolans to express themselves in an authentic way. That's why I have some reservations about the fact that this study is externally conceived, both in terms of methodology and objectives, and in relation to the little attention usually given to the agendas and rhythms of the local populations and institutions, usually analyzed with reference to very different realities.

It seems to me that the international community should take into account the development of the potentialities that can be discerned in Angola. Its role should be to help to strengthen the State so that it can fulfil urgent fundamental functions, such as education, knowledge and information; to promote other forms of organization of public power at the local level that allow citizens to feel closer to power and to appropriate it; to strengthen civil society organizations so that they can assert themselves and demand that the State fulfil its obligations; and to help the State to reform itself in a way that conjugates the Law with the socio-cultural reality.

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The Role of External Actors in Post-Conflict Scenarios – The Case of Guinea-Bissau

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Context

“States don’t have friends; they have interests.”

Abdoulaye Wade⁸

“The lack of a constructive dialogue in Guinea-Bissau could have grave consequences.”

Kofi Annan (United Nations Secretary-General)

In a preliminary fashion, I should say that, considering the situation that has prevailed until now in Guinea-Bissau, I would replace ‘post conflict’ with ‘post-war’ in the title. Given the lack of the kind of open and constructive dialogue that the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, refers to, as well as other conditions, I think that the term “post-conflict” does not adequately characterize the current situation in Guinea-Bissau. It is true that for a while (and I speak in the past tense because of the recent fighting on the northern border with Senegal that has been going on for the past two weeks) Guinea lived without the sound of weapons. However, as the saying goes, the silence of weapons does not signify the absence of war. The most recent events in Guinea-Bissau show that war, and thus violence, can be waged in many ways. That is why I find it difficult to apply the term “post-conflict actors or players” to the present situation, but, for lack of a better term, the expression “post-war actors” might do in better describing the situation in Guinea-Bissau since May 1999.

At the break of dawn on Sunday, 7 June 1998, the urban inhabitants of Bissau were awoken by gunfire inside and in the vicinity of the military headquarters of

⁸ That was the way the President of Senegal responded to a question about the country’s decision to trade the cooperation of the People’s Republic of China for Taiwan’s.

Bissau. What seemed to be a light skirmish between a small group of soldiers unhappy with President Nino Vieira's regime and soldiers loyal to the President, soon extended to the whole country and would involve countries from the western sub-Saharan region of Africa: Senegal and Guinea-Conakry, in a direct way (which sent troops to support Nino Vieira), Gambia (where the leader of the Military Junta, the brigadier Ansumane Mané, was born), and other countries of the region through sub-regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as the so-called international community (the United Nations, Portuguese-Speaking African Countries [PALOP] and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries [CPLP], among others). These international organizations worked through diplomatic means to achieve peace, as did countries such as Portugal, France, Cape Verde, Angola and many others.

This is just to say that the political-military conflict in Guinea-Bissau – usually dated officially between June of 1998 and May of 1999, although the situation continues to be highly unstable to this day and no one can foresee the implantation of a stable and definitive peace – involved a series of internal and external actors.

Each one of the actors involved in this conflict has its own history, its own motivations, strategies and tactics. Thus, to understand the true role they played before, during and after the war, our analysis has to take into account the complexity of these actors. If we take them as a whole, we run the risk of presenting a complex reality in a very partial and incomplete way.

In light of the conflict, there are many questions yet to be answered. What were the causes for such a bloody and cruel conflict, the likes of which Guinea-Bissau had never seen before? Even the anti-colonial war, which lasted about 11 years, did not match the savagery that took place in 11 months, given the armament used and the atrocities committed on both sides. It seemed unbelievable that this was a conflict between groups that formerly had fought side by side in the fight for the freedom of the peoples of Guinea and Cape Verde from the Portuguese colonial domination (Jao, 2000), the *mandjuas*⁹ of old. Today, it only seems right to question if this conflict was worth the effort. What is the evaluation we can make of the first communiqué of the self-proclaimed “Junta Militar para a Consolidação da Democracia, Paz e Justiça” (Military Junta for the Consolidation of Democracy, Peace and Justice),¹⁰ broadcast by

⁹ See Flavien Fafali Koudawo, 2000: 153-174).

¹⁰ See Zamora Induta, 2001.

its first spokesman, the Major Melcíades Manuel Gomes Fernandes (a.k.a. Manel Mina), on Bombolom Radio Station on 9 June 1998? There are many who say that those who fought for the establishment of justice ended up trading the “J” of justice for the “I” of injustice. There are many questions that can be asked about the conflict of June 1998. A conflict that left thousands of innocent people dead, caused massive material damage and left Guinea even more “broken” than it already was. But cases like these are not uncommon in the recent history of Guinea-Bissau. A prime example is the coup of November 1980, a coup whose promoters called themselves “re-adjusters” (Movimento Reajustador de 14 de Novembro), but who ended up doing nothing except leaving the country with problems never seen before. Another example is the coup of the 23rd of October of 2003, which also did nothing but strengthen the power of the military and placing them above everyone and everything. Today, in Guinea-Bissau, it is no secret that power is extremely polarized and that real power can be found outside the sphere of the competent authorities, regardless of the speeches from the tribune. All these examples are dark pages of our recent history, to such an extent that the promoters of these events are now attempting to wash their hands of the affair. An example of this occurred last year (2005), when a group of soldiers that participated in the uprising of June 1998 did not want to participate in the commemoration of the date.

Nonetheless, everyone today speaks of reconciliation in Guinea-Bissau, but many want a reconciliation that does not address the past. The question is “how”? Who is going to reconcile with whom? Reconciliation over what issues, exactly? History has always taught us that we need to study the past to understand the present and prepare the future. Guinea-Bissau seems to have a different view of this issue. What this view implies is that the people of Guinea-Bissau should “bury the past to confuse the present and compromise the future”. These are interesting questions for discussion. Given the specific nature of the topic I was asked to address at this meeting – the role of external actors in post-conflict scenarios in Guinea-Bissau –, the following points are offered for reflection.

1. The role of external actors in post-conflict scenarios in Guinea-Bissau

As I mentioned in the first part of this presentation, the actual role of external actors – or, in other words, cooperation partners or, still, the international community – can only be understood if their intervention is analyzed in all its complexity. Several

dimensions have to be taken into account: the international community as a country (Portugal, France, Senegal, Guinea-Conakry), the international community as a regional or sub-regional organization (for example, ECOWAS), the international community as an international organization (for instance, the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, the last two as continental organizations), and, finally, the international community as a NGO (for example, the International Red Cross or Médecins Sans Frontières). It should be pointed out that the intervention of these actors is usually accomplished separately, but at times there are joint efforts, such as in observing elections, a phenomenon that has become more generalized wherever there are electoral processes. However, their actual contribution to electoral monitoring is, in my view, problematic. I shall return to this matter later on. One of the characteristics common to all the participants in this world of internal and external actors is their “mercantile” nature. Without wanting to put in doubt the good intentions of solidarity towards the peoples in distress, the action of this community does not differ from the logic of the market. We can only understand the attitudes and behaviours of the members of this vast world of actors in light of the market and considering different kinds of goals (political, economic, financial, professional, geostrategic, etc.).

Having this in mind, how can we understand the intervention of external actors (international community) in the framework of the post-war scenarios in Guinea-Bissau?

1.1. Countries as external actors

To understand the attitude and behaviour of countries such as Senegal or Guinea-Conakry, who early on assumed a clear role in the conflict, we should remember that on the third day of the conflict, on 9 June 9 1998, more than 2,000 elements of the Senegalese armed forces with large amounts of military equipment landed in Bissau in support of the then President of the Republic, General Nino Vieira. A large force from Guinea-Conakry also disembarked in the port of Bissau carrying heavy military equipment (since most of the heavy equipment of Guinea-Bissau was in the hands of the Military Junta). Then, we had countries like Portugal and France which, although less conspicuously than the first two countries mentioned, went a bit beyond just mediating between the belligerent parties. In the case of France, besides accusations of partiality, particularly by the rebels, there were repeated accusations of

involvement – not only of French military equipment (for example, war ships), but also of soldiers as advisers and in direct support of President Nino Vieira in the fighting. Portugal, in its turn, did not escape accusations of partiality, namely in favor of the Junta Militar. We should recall that Portugal had been accused of supplying a satellite phone to the Military Junta. Although these accusations might have some foundation, the truth of the matter is that Portugal was one of the first countries to take part in diplomatic actions to find a negotiated solution to the conflict. The Portuguese government, through its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Jaime Gama, was one of the first countries to appeal to the belligerent parties to cease hostilities and engage in dialogue.¹¹ Gambia, as stated before, as the birthplace of the leader of the rebels, also played an important role in the search for a solution to the conflict that was devastating Guinea-Bissau. Gambia's intervention was mostly at the diplomatic level. It was the country of the sub-region that was probably in a better position to have access to brigadier Ansumane Mané. However, Gambia was almost always seen with suspicion by the supporters of President Nino Vieira. That was made evident after the victory of the Military Junta, when general Nino Vieira refused the offer of medical assistance made by Gambia. This is an interesting matter that deserves the attention of researchers interested in the conflict in Guinea-Bissau and the alliances and counter-alliances established during and after the war. A study of this nature would be quite interesting, since its results might confirm President Wade's thesis that "States do not have friends; they have interests". An example of this could be the various alliances and counter-alliances established between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau during the last 8 years or maybe even before that. An analysis of this sort might show how "yesterday's friends become today's enemies", each attempting to defend their own interests. During the conflict of June 1998, the so-called rebels of Casamansa fought beside the Military Junta against President Nino Vieira. The current Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, General Tagme na Waie, was among the rebel group. Presently, there is a civil war going on close to the border of the two Guineas between forces led by General Tagme na Waie and Salif Sadio. It is what *Kansaré*¹² called, in one of its editions, an "alliance of convenience". Events could be told in quite some detail (...).

¹¹ See Zamora Induta, 2001: 123.

¹² *Kansaré* is a Guinea-Bissau weekly newspaper (See n° 70, 28 March 2006, p. 5).

1.2. Organizations as external actors

As always when there are situations of armed conflict like the one that struck Guinea-Bissau in 1998, the activity of organizations from the so-called international community was remarkable, both in terms of the diversity of fields of operation and in terms of the diversity of organizations that were present. There were international organizations, such as the United Nations, which continues to have a special agency in the country, continental organizations (EU, AU), regional organizations (ECOWAS), and organizations built on other affinities (ACOPL, CPLP), among others. If, on the one hand, we can say that there was a common denominator to all these organizations – the search for a solution to the conflict –, on the other hand, their interventions revealed other facets of that great family (the international community) besides the spirit of solidarity with a people in distress (which is supposed to be the prime, if not the only, reason for the presence of such organizations in areas of conflict). One of those facets has to do precisely with their mercantile features (political and economic market, market of influence, etc.). In what concerns the intervention of these organizations, the market creates, in many cases, diverging interests. A clear example of this, in the conflict in Guinea-Bissau, was the lack of empathy, after a period of time, between ECOWAS and CPLP. The success of CPLP in the mediation of the problem seems to have created, at one point, a certain unease among some organizations that were less successful (which shows, once more, the role of the market in the activities of these organizations and, in this specific case, the market of influence which they often represent). Just to quote an example: at one point ECOWAS positioned itself against what it considered to be the excessive protagonism of the CPLP in the mediation of the conflict in Guinea-Bissau, with the justification that the latter was merely a cultural organization and therefore not suited for the resolution of armed conflicts. And, in the opinion of the ECOWAS, the CPLP did not have a United Nations mandate.¹³ Just this example serves to demonstrate the complexity of the intervention of the so-called international community, which sometimes does not minimally resemble a “community”, as it is intended to be seen (...).

¹³) See Zamora Induta, 2001: 136.

1.3. NGOs: surviving by “helping”

Just as in the case of countries and sub-regional, regional or international organizations, the operations of NGOs do not escape the rules of the market. Being part of the world of cooperation for development, all these organizations function according to the rules of supply and demand. Despite their will to help, NGOs are far from being autonomous. If they do not have a target in need of help, they themselves have no chance of surviving. Therefore, they can only exist if they are able to help someone, real or invented. These characteristics of non-governmental organizations lead them to have a very high level of intervention in areas in crisis. Guinea-Bissau, a country that has persistently turned itself into a stronghold of all sorts of confusion, cannot be anything but attractive for the massive intervention of all sorts of organizations under the banner of “aid” (be it humanitarian, emergency or any other type). This has been the logic of intervention by the NGOs before, during and after the armed conflict in Guinea-Bissau.

2. The post-war situation

In spite of everything, few of the actors involved in the conflict in Guinea-Bissau were able to change the view (either positive or negative) that most of the native population had of them during the war period. All (or almost all) have a common trait, which is being seen favorably by some and unfavorably others. What this means is that the people of Guinea-Bissau do not have a uniform view of the so-called international community. President Wade’s thesis that it is interests (of individuals, of groups, of factions, and so forth) and not friendship that determine the nature of human relationship once again helps explain this fact. Today, the dominant opinion of the people of Guinea-Bissau of countries like Senegal, Guinea-Conakry, Gambia, Portugal and France is not different from the one they had during the conflict that began in June of 1998. On the other hand, few of these actors changed their attitudes and behavior towards Guinea-Bissau. But the force of circumstances might lead them to change their strategies (...).

In terms of areas of intervention for the international community in the post-war period, the situation in Guinea-Bissau is not unique. Above all, it is important to remember that the intervention of these actors is usually carried out at two levels: the visible and the “invisible”. And the “invisible” level of intervention is frequently more

effective (for good or ill) than the kind of intervention published daily in the press. I would like to focus our reflection on the more visible types of interventions.

In my opinion, all these actors are involved, each in their own way, in the process of crisis management but less involved in aspects that could actually help resolve the conflict for good. Broadly speaking, the international community's intervention in Guinea-Bissau in the last few years has been limited to a bare minimum – it's reduced practically to emergency aid. Some of the aid is channelled to pay the salaries of the Civil Service, which makes us doubt the “authenticity” of the State itself in Guinea-Bissau. A State like this can only be seen as such in terms of form – territory, flag, national anthem and little else. In terms of content, it would not be erroneous to call it a “half-State”. Also, there are actors that continue to perform the role of “firefighters” (when serious crises are imminent), while there are others that try to take the bare essentials for survival to the populations in need, but who also do so as a way for themselves to survive the global crisis. We also have others that are attentive observers of all that is going on, but that do not seem to have the necessary strength and clout to change what is happening. All in all, there is a little bit of everything, really everything.

In the midst of this world of actors, I would like to focus attention on a certain category. I am talking about electoral observers, who are, in my view, closer to “paid tourists” than people truly capable of monitoring elections (...).

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Mozambique at Odds with Broad-Based Development

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Introduction

Mozambique's 13-year long peace has been hailed as one of the few success stories of the international community's interventionist agenda, particularly in the African continent.

Unlike other countries that reverted to war, Mozambique slowly progressed towards reconstruction and stability, closely following the strict economic prescriptions of donors, thereby apparently endorsing the development model implemented in post-conflict situations.

Yet, despite considerable achievements attested by the macro-economic successes, clearly unattainable without international contribution, the challenges that persist not only reveal the inherent weaknesses of the peacebuilding paradigm generally applied, but also raise concerns over the sustainability of the country's hitherto thriving transition. Even with a rapidly growing economy, Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The socio-economic deprivation faced by the overwhelming majority of the population as well as the endemic disparities indicate the absence of a pro-poor strategy and threaten to dig out what was once the internal source of the conflict.

Critics point the finger at the neoliberal assumptions behind the imposed policies and question the impact of foreign assistance in generating broad-based development and thus building a lasting peace in war-torn countries. This research takes precisely as a case study the cherished prototype of the donor community in order to analyse its post-conflict performance and outcomes, taking, nevertheless, into account the historical structural characteristics that make the Mozambican story a rather complex one.

* The author thanks Carlos Castel-Branco for his comments.

The Colonial Inheritance: Selective Growth within Widespread Underdevelopment

Underdevelopment represented a burdensome legacy of the Portuguese colonial rule in Mozambique.

Although the decade before independence remains until today the period of major economic growth of the last fifty years (Francisco, 2003: 146), the overwhelming majority of the population was excluded from its benefits. Indeed, the colonial economic structure, which prioritised both the export of primary products and the provision of services to the neighbouring countries, ultimately relied on the expropriation of land for settlers and plantations, forced labour and imposed crops. While it best served their interests, the Portuguese saw no need for a massive investment in the colony, severely neglecting its development (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1994: 24-28). And even when the industrial activity finally flourished in Mozambique after the Second World War, it heightened the disparate regional dynamics and favoured exclusively the small minority of white settlers and Asian immigrants that controlled the modern sectors of the economy (Hodges and Tibana, 2005: 37). Black Mozambicans were, therefore, almost completely banned from having power over the economic activity, which resulted in general poverty and the blatant absence of a native middle class. This situation was exacerbated by the disregard extended to other areas such as education and health care. At the demise of Portuguese domination, over 90 percent of the population were illiterate and there were less than 100 doctors to serve a population of over 10 million – a dismal outcome in what human development was concerned (DFID, 1999).

Unsurprisingly, this colonial strategy paved the way for the radicalisation of the liberation movement and the subsequent armed struggle, which lasted for a decade, leading to the abrupt exit of Portugal and the transfer of political power to Frelimo in June 1975.

The Socialist State: Improving Human Development alongside Negative Economic Growth

The destitute scenario left by the Portuguese was further aggravated by the ‘massive and sudden exodus’ of more than 95 percent of the settlers – the skilled labour force that had run the state up until then – which created a severe economic crisis in Mozambique (Hodges and Tibana, 2005: 38). It was now up to those that had opposed

colonial rule to face both the crisis and the colossal development challenges of the newly independent country.

Aiming at the destruction of the colonial capitalist system and influenced by the geopolitics of the Cold War, the post-independence government adopted Marxism-Leninism as its ideological framework, established a one-party state and began to build a centrally planned economy. In order to expand state power and achieve prosperity, the main social and economic areas – such as land, the banking system, large industries, buildings, education and health care services – were nationalised; the abandoned enterprises were taken over and new ones, state-owned, were created in agriculture and in external trade (Castel-Branco, Cramer *et al.*, 2003: 157). Complying with the socialist fervent commitment to human development, literacy and health care campaigns became the focus of the socialist state intervention and initially produced remarkable results. The sustainability of this worthy strategy was, however, rapidly questioned due to the weak performance of the economy.

Within a few years of the beginning of central planning, its inefficiency had become apparent. Moreover, along with the problematic regional and international context and the droughts that hit the country in the 1980s, Renamo – the armed opposition backed by the surrounding white regimes – was having a devastating impact on the population, especially on the rural communities. Aside from the immense loss of lives, the escalation of the war was generating an inevitable rise in poverty, with the massive displacement of the population, the collapse of production, the scarcity of goods, the destruction of basic infrastructure, and the disruption of education and health services (Sousa, 2003: 51; 63). The new government was failing to “break out of underdevelopment” (Addison, 2003: 21).

In 1983, facing the failure of the socialist strategy and the internal discontent over the negative economic results, as well as the withdrawal of Soviet patronage and the subsequent need to open up to the West for financial support, the ruling party revised its economic policy and embarked on a radical shift, from a centrally managed socialism to a liberal market capitalism – a necessary step for its own survival (Wuyts, 2003: 148).

The Neoliberal Reform: Macroeconomic Growth Hand in Hand with Absolute Poverty

Mozambique's economic transition gained momentum in 1987, with the adoption of a structural adjustment programme, which was further advanced following the official end of the conflict, in 1992, and the first multiparty elections, two years later.

The comprehensive stabilisation plan, set up by the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) and aiming at surmounting the acute crisis, envisaged the implementation of a panoply of economic liberal reforms intended mainly to increase revenue and reduce expenditures, curb inflation and deficit, facilitate foreign and private investment, deregulate prices, liberalise trade, and privatise state companies. Thus, the new orthodoxy increased the dependence on market forces and drastically reduced the role of the state to minimalist functions (Sender, 1999: 101). The 'omnipotent' socialist rule, that ushered roughly all economic sectors, was considered too large to be efficient or even useful, and became discredited and significantly weaker. The gloomy perception of its performance thus far and the external environment were conducive to the downfall of the interventionist state.

There is no doubt that the government's acquiescence before the IMF and the World Bank recipes allowed the economy to grow exponentially, especially from the mid-nineties onwards. Nevertheless, though impressive, this buoyant economy hides deep concerns. Double-digit growth rates have meant very little to the great majority of the Mozambicans who still live beneath the poverty line, while the country lingers in the last positions of UNDP's Human Development Index. Indeed, Mozambique's socio-economic rehabilitation has not been evenly spread and the unequal distribution of the nation's wealth echoes a recurrent characteristic of the neoliberal approach. Much of this fantastic growth, besides starting from a very low base, occurs in the already most developed areas of the south and Maputo city, to the detriment of the north and central regions as well as rural areas. It is also concentrated in a few capital-intensive mega-projects, like Mozal aluminium smelter, which benefit from tax concessions and have a modest impact on the local population (UNDP, 2004: 7-9). The hasty and obscure privatisation process is a classic example of how economic power can be co-opted by narrow national elites as well as foreign actors, further marginalising the poorer peasantry. As Kamphuis points out and Mozambique illustrates, "[p]rivatisation is no neutral transfer of public assets into private hands; it sheds the cards for the

future” (2005: 208). The gap has widened and, inevitably, the prevalence of low-income households has been translated into minimal levels of human capital, especially amid women and the rural population – the poorest amongst the poor.

Furthermore, the strict financial austerity imposed by the international institutions, notwithstanding initially the ongoing war and the following particular post-conflict circumstances, prevented the government from redressing these problems, by constraining budget spending (Hanlon, 2005: 280-281). Hence, the state’s capacity to meet the population’s needs was curtailed, which generated internal dissatisfaction. In a highly aid dependent Mozambique, external stakeholders, besides controlling policy initiatives, frequently replace the central authority in its execution, establishing their own parallel management structures, thus deteriorating the state’s legitimacy in the eyes of its own citizens.

By and large, life in most of the country remains depressingly dire – which together with sharpening imbalances can inflame social unrest, potentially endangering the consolidation of peace. Macroeconomic stability and growth are necessary; nonetheless, as conceived by the BWIs during the preceding decade, they had far too many collateral effects, undermining the role of the state, national cohesion and inclusive development (Ratilal, 2004: 252).

Focusing on Poverty: A Radical Change or a Slight Adjustment to the Usual Model?

Faced with disappointing outcomes, and following heavy criticisms along with intense pressures, the donor community has come to rethink its earlier policies and focus on poverty reduction as the overarching goal of a renewed development strategy.

Hence, from the late nineties onwards, a timid try-out of a “post-Washington Consensus” has been fostered by several initiatives – such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), the Millennium Development Goals, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) or the Paris Declaration – whose proposals reflect a commitment to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development, as well as to restructure the relationship and the responsibilities of both national and international actors. Claiming to no longer share the market fundamentalism that shaped the ruling orthodoxy of the preceding period, external stakeholders have prioritised public investment in areas previously neglected, namely the distributional aspects of growth, human development and institutional building.

Mozambique has been, once again, a privileged target of this new strategy and a valuable case study to assess these recent policies. As demanded by donors, the government published its first Poverty Reduction Plan – *Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta* (PARPA) – laying out its own structured approach to spread the benefits of macroeconomic growth to the majority of the population and to deprived regions. Aiming at drastically reducing absolute poverty from 69,4 percent to less than 50 percent by the end of the decade, the ruling party targeted sector priorities – namely education, health, agriculture and rural development, basic infrastructures, good governance, macroeconomic and financial management – thought to have the necessary impact and therefore justifying the allocation of 67 percent of public spending (República de Moçambique, 2001: 1, 3).

In the absence of substantial domestic revenue, mainly due to the persistent lack of a comprehensive and efficient tax collection, the feasibility of this valuable exercise is profoundly dependent on external assistance. Public expenditure is at the basis of PARPA and inexorably requires aid inflows to assure budget allocations for social areas (Castel-Branco, Sulemane *et al.*, 2005: 16, 18). Within the African context, the donor community has proved to be a consistent funding source for Mozambique for the past 15 years, and has lately shown willingness to provide an increasing share of financial aid in the form of direct budget support.

The recent strong investment in this aid modality is good news. It is, first of all, a sign of donor confidence in the Mozambican government, encouraging it to assume greater autonomy in planning, allocating and disbursing resources in line with the national priorities set up in the country-owned strategy. While off-budget allocation of resources bypassed the beneficiary authority, budget support empowers the state by making it both decision-maker and executor, thus recovering its role as a strategic development actor, particularly before the domestic constituencies to whom it is politically accountable. In order to cope with this increased responsibility, external stakeholders have emphasised the importance of institutional building – an area practically ignored until now. All actors can thus participate and contribute to a single, comprehensive and coherent national development strategy, under government control, instead of sidelining it or draining capacity from domestic institutions (Foster, 2000: 7; 18). This joint effort fosters greater donor harmonisation, streamlining conditions among international aid agencies, and therefore reducing the administrative burden imposed on the recipient country by project

aid, which nonetheless still accounts for most of the assistance to Mozambique (Batley, 2002: 31). Furthermore, there is a gain in predictability, in the sense that financial commitments are multi-year, allowing for long-term planning.

At first glance, this new development assistance approach seems to be a fine improvement and there is no doubt that several good practices have emerged. But is it really the antithesis of structural adjustment it claims to be?

Even though it is still too early to properly assess the general impact of this new trend in development aid due to its fairly recent application, there are already a few critiques to bear in mind. Being no more than a change of slogan is the first. Indeed, the underlying framework remains the same: the neoliberal order, along with its faith in the market and the minimalist conception of the state (Hildyard, 2000). Notwithstanding the rhetoric, and the ‘cleaning’ of some collateral damages that incited the popular backlash, the debate over development approaches has not yet been freed from its strings. The alleged reform emphasises the efficient implementation of given policies rather than the conception of alternative ones – which, in turn, questions the authenticity of ‘ownership’. External stakeholders maintain not only a vested interest in the establishment of priorities and the outline of strategies, but the capacity to threaten aid cancelling, which inevitably puts a great deal of pressure on the supposed ‘dialogue’ between the government and the donor community. The norm is still for national leaders to reflect the viewpoint of its sponsors, and it is fairly difficult to distinguish the formers’ ideas from the latter’s. This is particularly evident when one compares the first PARPA with the World Bank’s guidelines for poverty reduction. As Foster sees it, “[t]he distinction between old style ‘conditionality’ and new style ‘ownership’ is a subtle one” (2000: 7). Moreover, creditor interests barely leave space for a true democratic participation in the development process outside their own intents (Stiglitz, 2003: 34-35; 40). Indeed, the Mozambican civil society confirms the lesser impact of proclaimed consultative processes, which implies that the nation’s specific needs are overlooked while the risk of ‘prescribing’ remains pretty much present.

Conclusion

Mozambique’s high reliance on international assistance is only matched by the atypical donor interest in its success, which makes this relationship an interesting case of reciprocity in what dependence is concerned (Manning, 2002: 7).

The fact that the international community regards this country as an oasis in a problematic continent explains to a great deal the reluctance to explicitly admit any kind of failure, much less dropping its star pupil. Regardless of Mozambican inherent vulnerabilities, which derive not only from historical antecedents but also from flawed strategies, external actors exhibit the progress made so far, in its quest to prove the overall viability of this development approach.

The need to protect Mozambique from the excess of criticisms, especially when considering the success in securing peace for more than a decade, should not, however, make us complacent about the impact of imposed policies. In reality, peace has prevailed as much as poverty. And even if strategies do change and rhetoric translates into practice, the consolidation of peace and broad-based development in Mozambique is bound to be a battle long enough for the next decades.

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Comments on the Case Studies and Main Challenges – Debate A Few Short Remarks

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The **development paradigm**, the overarching construction that spans multiple theoretical frameworks, has come under increasing pressure. For all practical purposes, development actors of all shades and denominations agree – at least implicitly – that development is something that has to be externally induced by development actors and their organisations. They hold lively (and well funded) debates on what development should mean and on the best way to achieve it.

That viewpoint is disconfirmed by reality. Large parts of Sub-Saharan Africa are not developing at all but are breaking down.

Where evidence of collapse of states gets too strong, development aid and development theory are temporarily suspended, emergency relief and rehabilitation take their place, until development agencies and development theory come back to reclaim theirs... The collapse of societies does not seem to get as much attention as the collapse of states. International agencies seem to feel stronger when their ‘development partner’ institutions cease to function completely than when societies fall apart. They never deal with them without an interface anyway. (Schiefer, 2002: 31)

The space occupied by the development paradigm is currently being invaded by the ‘Humanitarian’ paradigm as well as by the ‘Security’ paradigm – which will very likely not increase the ability to introduce more flexibility in the interaction of the three ‘complexes’ of intervention.

The general disillusion and donor fatigue in the development complex has already brought a swing to Direct Budget Support that will change the appropriation model of the national power elites by shifting resources within their direct reach through the state apparatus. This withdrawal from the ‘responsibilities for development’ of the donors happens without taking into consideration former experience with the DBS mechanism – nearly all of it quite bad.

The **International Community** is mostly a fiction. A fairly large number of agencies, of all sorts, with more or less zeal, involve themselves in **intervention** in African countries. Most of them are resource dependent, and their involvement is resource driven. They constitute the dissipative structures of the dissipative economy.

This kind of resource-driven intervention, uncoordinated, short-lived and short-tempered, undertaken by organisations competing for resources through paperwork and lobbying in clientele systems more than through performance, quite often does not produce the intended impacts of specific programmes or projects. As organisations are under strong pressure to produce success in the short term, they will try to do so by many means, at least on paper, and resort to simulation if deemed necessary and possible. In this kind of intervention the sum is more than its parts: together they certainly produce more confusion than any single intervention could.

This dissipative economy produces a complex set of interlocking self-referential systems. If we follow von Foerster's second order cybernetics, and change to a perspective that brings the observer into the picture, we can see some of the blind spots that these systems, like all systems, produce.

The first and maybe most important blind spot:

It hides the self-interest of the organisations, the dissipative structures of the dissipative economy that feed on the flow of resources. While it is evident that there has to be some equilibrium between the interests of all the parts involved in the process, in some areas of intervention the interests of the organisations clearly dominate the whole process, which is kept alive only for the sake of the organisations and cannot be justified by any positive impact they supposedly produce.

The second blind spot:

It produces its own intervention reality. Through a complex system of filters, the actual societies at the receiving end are carefully excluded from the picture. The only way they are allowed in are as meticulously defined abstractions: target group, stakeholder, civil society organisation, community (the typical one-size-fits-all approach), grassroots organisation or poor household. These concepts clearly betray the missionary position in which they were originally conceived.

The third blind spot:

It excludes every form of human organisation that does not correspond to a modern or quasi-modern model of organisation. As the “target groups” at the receiving end of intervention are nearly completely excluded (with the exception of entitlement programmes) from the direct transfer of resources (a basic principle of development intervention everybody in the business seems to agree upon), only organisations modelled on the bureaucratic pattern can benefit from the flow of resources. This approach propagates the expansion of the modern (or quasi-modern) organisation model. Where the flow of resources is strong enough this approach weakens and may even lead to the destruction of other forms of societal organisation. Not surprisingly therefore, development intervention is perceived quite often as a threat by those societies organised in different ways and meets with different forms of resistance.

War and peace. After the war is before the war.

In many African countries, peace is a continuation of war by other means.

The externally funded appropriation models of the national or regional power elites contribute to the fragmentation of the central societies and their formalized structures and destabilize the African Political Systems. As political power gives access to (mostly) external resources, the provision of these resources (development, humanitarian, etc.) intensifies and amplifies the quest for power in the central societies, which often extends to the agrarian societies.

There is also, if we look into societies, and not just at (failed or failing) state structures, a very strong spiritual dimension to most wars or warlike endeavours – for which the collapse of African Agrarian Societies losing the control over the potential for violence of their cadets provides the background.

Civil Society is mostly a fiction. It is made up and held up by the so-called Civil Society Organizations which are either extension of organisations of the “donor” countries or organisations set up as a consequence of the failure of the state apparatus to advance the “national development or modernization projects” and the shift of funding by international “donors” to non-state entities. The “real” civil society is mostly excluded from the picture, as it would consist of ethnically structured agrarian societies

which are deemed to be unable to produce an interface with the different intervention complexes (development, political, humanitarian, etc.).

Societies are mostly kept out of the picture. In conflict or post-conflict scenarios, when state structures fail to provide the necessary interfaces with the outside world as well as the necessary minimum order inside their territories, neither social nor political processes can be understood without an understanding of the underlying societal processes. Therefore, society should be an operative concept for peace studies and more so in failing or failed state scenarios where more or less formalized structures cease to function.

It is, however, important, to understand that in post-conflict configurations societies are mostly traumatised – not societies of traumatised individuals, but also traumatised societies as such, with all the consequences for all types of external interventions this implies.

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