Breakfast Dialogue on the Follow-up to Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Topic: Peace, poverty, and violence; interlinkages for sustainable development

17 December 2013

**16th of a Breakfast Series
Co-convened by the Bahá'í International Community,
International Movement ATD Fourth World and
the Quaker United Nations Office**

08:30   **Arrival of Participants & Breakfast**

08:35   **Welcome and Introductions**
Andrew Tomlinson
     Quaker UN Representative and Director
     Quaker United Nations Office

08:40   **Opening Remarks**
Ms. Sarah F. Cliffe
     Special Adviser and Assistant Secretary-General
     Civilian Capacities

Ms. Kavita Desai
     Adviser
     Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations

09:00   **Open Discussion**
Moderated by Mr. Daniel Perell
     Representative
     Bahá'í International Community

09:50   **Information Sharing**
All participants are encouraged to share upcoming related plans and activities.

10:00   **Closing**

Note: Informal notes will be taken and shared. Comments made by participants will not be attributed to the speaker.

Informal Notes of the Breakfast Dialogue on the Follow-up to Rio+20
and the Post 2015 Development Agenda, 17 December 2013

Topic: Peace, Poverty and Violence: Interlinkages for sustainable development

Organized by the Bahá'í International Community, International Movement ATD Fourth World,
and the Quaker UN Office

A diverse group of stakeholders[1] convened to informally discuss key issues on the topic of peace, poverty and violence in the sustainable development agenda. The following are highlights of the discussion:

- Violence is a fundamental dimension of human suffering, a part of everyday life for hundreds of millions of people. Violence has been called 'development in reverse.' Populations in conflict situations have made the least progress on MDGs.
- Evidence has shown that we cannot achieve development objectives without addressing violence, and its root causes, in the ordering of international affairs.
- Freedom from violence provides a foundation for other types of development; violence stifles economic development (e.g. poverty rises with prolonged periods of violence in a country); spills over into neighboring countries; impacts trade and investment; and depletes human resources. Development gains can be made quickly when stability is achieved. Freedom from violence is also an ends in itself: building a road is development because it enables transport; reducing crime is development because it reduces crime.
- Strong and inclusive national institutions are key to preventing violence. We need inclusive political processes, nationally driven institution building pathways, and rapid confidence-building measures. Domestic institutions must be involved in recovery. The relationship between the state and the community is critical. Must focus on community-level institution building.
- Confidence building (e.g. of people vis-à-vis their governing institutions) is vital. If external actors provide all the 'development,' indigenous institutions will not be able to show people that they can be effective. Building indigenous capacity should be a priority. (E.g. $1 billion in international aid was spent in one country, yet the level of poverty increased during that time.)
- Societies with high levels of corruption and low levels of accountability are at a high risk of future violence.
- People's aspirations for peace and security must be central to the development agenda. E.g. Timor-Leste's biggest achievement has been its stability and security. It has had double digit growth but it still will not meet any of the MDGs. Despite not meeting the MDGs, this must still be considered a success.
- Peace must be a universal goal. Post-conflict, fragile and conflict affected countries are not the only ones who should be promoting the importance of peace for development. There is violence in all countries.
- Role of women is central to achieving piece. It is fundamental and should not be left aside until after peace has been secured. Women are not only victims of violence but are also agents of change.
- Many agencies are participating in an open working group to implement Resolution 1325 into the development framework and compiling proposals for Member States. Discussions cannot be framed only in terms of the Resolution 1325, they must encompass the issue of development more broadly.
- The issue of peace and the eradication of violence can be mainstreamed across a number of development goals even if it is not a separate goal in itself.
- According to some, there can be no development without disarmament. Discussions of financing for development and disarmament tend to be siloed. The "Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and

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[1] Permanent Missions represented: Japan, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Timor-Leste, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Zambia. Representatives from UN: Civilian Capacities, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Non-governmental Liaison Service, UN Peacebuilding Support Office, and UN Women. Non-governmental organizations represented: Bahá'í International Community, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Franciscans International, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office, International Committee for October 17, International Development Law Organization, International Movement ATD Fourth World, International Presentation Association, Local First, Loretto Community, Mennonite Central Committee, Passionists International, Salesian Missions, Shanghai Institute for International Studies, United Nations Foundation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Youth Women's Christian Association.

Development" is a diplomatic initiative aimed at addressing the interrelations between armed violence and development. The "Global Burden of Armed Violence" Report provides an integrated approach to understanding the impact of violence around the world.

- As much as stability can be created within societies, we must also understand the external factors that shape the social and economic dynamics within countries, e.g.: arms flows, trade rules, economic agendas, external security agendas. All of these must be addressed at a systemic, global level.
- For many people living in extreme poverty, poverty *is* violence. It is often difficult for people to speak about their living conditions because it is not commonly talked about. What happens when an entire country has suffered violence? What happens when only a subset of the population has suffered and do not have a common narrative with the rest of the country? People that are living in extreme poverty come to dislike the word 'development' because it hasn't brought them prosperity.
- Key drivers of conflict are: inequalities, inter-ethnic and inter-faith conflicts (though these are often proxies for contests of power), corruption and social alienation.
- 'Trauma healing' is an important part of peace-building, as are inter-ethnic and inter-faith peacebuilding efforts. Need to undercut drivers of conflict. Consider the role of mediation and reconciliation.
- Some of the things we value most (e.g. reconciliation) are very difficult to measure and yet we must persevere to include these in our plans and policies. Cannot be forced into prioritizing those variables that are easily measured.