

NEPAD: PEACE, SECURITY, AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. Conceived and promoted by a number of African leaders, and with the blessing and endorsement of the full membership of the OAU (now AU), NEPAD was launched in 2001.

NEPAD centres around African ownership and management. Through this programme, African leaders are setting an agenda for the renewal of the continent. The agenda is based on national and regional priorities and development plans that must be prepared through participatory processes involving the people. It is believed that while African leaders derive their mandates from the people, it is their role to articulate these plans as well as lead the processes of implementation on behalf of their people. The programme is a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world, including the industrialized countries and multilateral organizations.

Long Term Objectives

The long-term objectives of NEPAD are

- To eradicate poverty in Africa and to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and thus halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process
- To promote the role of women in all activities

Goals

The goals of NEPAD are

- To achieve and sustain an average GDP growth rate above 7% per annum for the next 15 years.

- To ensure that the continent achieves the agreed International Development Goals (ADGs). These are
 1. To reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015
 2. To enroll all children of school age in primary schools by 2015
 3. To make progress towards gender equality and empowering women by eliminating gender disparities in the enrollment in primary and secondary education by 2005.
 4. To reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015
 5. To reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015
 6. To provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015
 7. To implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015.

Conditions For Sustainable Development

Peace and Security Initiative

Peace and security initiative forms one of the core areas for sustainable development.

This initiative consists of three elements, namely

- Promoting long-term conditions for development and security;
- Building the capacity of African institutions for early warning, as well as enhancing African institutions' capacity to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts; and
- Institutionalizing commitment to the core values of the NEPAD through the leadership.

The long-term conditions for ensuring peace and security in Africa require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised.

Efforts to build Africa's capacity to manage all aspects of conflict must focus on the means necessary to strengthen existing regional and sub-regional institutions, especially in four key areas:

- Prevention, management and resolution of conflict;
- Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace enforcement;
- Post-conflict reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;
- Combating the illicit proliferation of small arms, light weapons and landmines.

Peace, Security, and Conflict Management

While every corner of the world is affected by globalization, it is in the distribution of benefits that the global imbalance is most glaring. On the one hand, opportunities have increased to create or expand wealth, acquire knowledge and skills, and improve access to goods and services - in brief, to improve the quality of life. In some parts of the world, for example in the South East Asian countries, the pursuit of greater openness of the global economy has created opportunities for lifting millions of people out of poverty. On the other hand, greater integration has also led to the further marginalization of those countries that are unable to compete effectively. Many African countries fall into this category.

We can have poverty reduction with or without growth. But poverty reduction without growth is not sustainable. Therefore if we want sustainable poverty reduction, we need growth. But growth is necessary but not sufficient for sustainable poverty reduction. We can have growth with all the benefits of growth accruing to those in the high-income bracket, i.e., we can have growth with a worsening income inequality and this will not lead to poverty reduction. It is when growth leads to a reduction in income inequality will poverty be reduced. Thus, the first order condition for sustainable poverty reduction is growth. The challenge for Africa, therefore, is to develop the capacity to sustain growth at levels required to achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development.

NEPAD seeks to build on the achievements of the past, as well as reflect on the lessons learned through painful experience, so as to establish a partnership that is both credible and capable of implementation. African leaders have learnt from their own experiences that peace, security, and conflict management are a *sine qua non* for sustained growth and development. They are thus making a pledge to work, both individually and collectively, to promote these principles in their countries, sub-regions and the continent.

President Kuffour was reported by the Accra Mail of March 10, 2003, as having outlined a number of prerequisites to accelerate the translation of the vision of NEPAD into action to stimulate the socio-economic development of Africa. These include peace, security, democracy and good governance, sound economic and corporate governance, fast-tracking regional co-operation and integration and forging a new partnership with the international community particularly with the private sector.

NEPAD places emphasis on security and stability as prerequisites for development. The NEPAD Initial Action Plan presented to and endorsed by the inaugural summit of the African Union (AU) in Durban, July 2002, clearly underlined this. The Action Plan indicated that NEPAD is based on a three-pronged strategy, the first element of which is establishing conditions for sustainable development, including peace and security and improved governance. To reinforce this, it proposed a Peace and Security Initiative, designed to support the efforts and conflict management mechanisms of the AU and regional organizations.

The Peace and Security Initiative covers actions and measures to improve early warning capacity and ensure that this leads to timely and effective action; facilitate sustainable reconstruction and development, including disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation; address the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms, promote democracy, good governance and respect for human rights through security sector policy and institutional reforms; govern and set standards for the management and exploitation of non-renewable resources in regions affected by conflict; and engage in conflict management. It is closely linked with the Declaration of

Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, as well as the African Peer Review Mechanism, both of which were adopted by the AU Summit.

The declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance draws attention to the need for peace, stability and security, and the linkages between security, democracy and good governance. The declaration spells out a range of actions and commitments to promote democracy, good governance and the promotion and protection of human rights. If African leaders and countries fulfill their obligations under the Peace and Security Initiative and honour the commitments made under the Declaration, the political and security landscape of the continent will be fundamentally altered. Too often in the past, the political will to meet commitments has been lacking. The African Peer Review Mechanism is intended to encourage this political will and promote accountability, creating an incentive for governments to undertake agreed-upon actions. The AU Summit underscored particular elements of the NEPAD Initial Action Plan by adopting a Protocol establishing a Peace and Security Council. The Council is envisaged as the collective security mechanism for the continent, and it is intended to ensure timely and effective response to conflict and crises.

The Role of African Governments

NEPAD's successful implementation depends on the political commitment of the leadership, as well as active involvement of the people, of individual countries. Not all African countries are at the same stage, or will move at the same pace in terms of implementation, but all governments need to provide sufficient information about NEPAD and engage their domestic constituents in a debate about how it should be implemented. To date, this is perceived to have been lacking in a number of African countries. It is incumbent on governments to adopt the policy measures required under NEPAD and take steps to develop the institutional capacity to implement them. While countries will select the aspects of NEPAD that they will especially focus on, the governance and democracy dimensions are essential. In particular, governments have an obligation to maintain peace and improve the security of their citizens. Political leaders have endorsed the concept of peer review, and governments should be prepared for this to

be undertaken vigorously. They should also be willing to involve relevant stakeholders in the process, and to take recommendations seriously.

In a new era of democratic governance, and as they seek to promote private sector investment, governments need to accord security much greater attention than in the past. While improvements in governance will lead to increased security, governments should also specifically address the issues and problems that directly affect the security of communities and population groups, be they political, economic or social. This implies much more governmental interaction and greater responsiveness to the demands of the population groups. It also means redressing legislative or regulatory inequalities that disadvantage specific groups, generally women and children.

Placing citizens at the centre of security implies a greater emphasis on protection of human rights. Given the threats to security posed by crime, lawlessness and limited border control, there is need for strengthened police and law enforcement capacity in most countries. Customs agencies too have an important role in protecting security, by curtailing the illegal trade in arms and drugs that has increased violence in many instances.

While most governmental effort will necessarily be devoted to reducing insecurity within nations, regional involvement and cooperation is also important, given the interrelationship between regional events and security. The success of regional and collective security arrangements, whether under the auspices of the AU or a regional entity (eg., ECOWAS, SADC) will depend on the commitment of member states, and how well they are implemented. Given the independence of countries, collective security measures need to be taken seriously by all involved, and afforded the necessary human and financial resources. Such arrangements are also dependent on the quality of the individual security forces that comprise them, and regional measures cannot be expected to work in the absence of professional and competent national forces.

Greater regional interaction and cooperation could help to limit the cross-border trade in arms and commodities that have fueled conflict. Regional agreements, including those for security, are weakened when member states are involved in conflict. While some regional organizations have made progress, the capacity to effectively engage in conflict management still needs to be enhanced.

The governmental responsibility for NEPAD's implementation and improved security does not lie solely with the executive. The commitment and active involvement of the judicial and legislative branches are also needed. Adherence to constitutions and laws - by citizens, government officials and security forces - is the basis of security. But laws, however comprehensive or far-reaching, need to be impartially and fairly implemented if they are to be effective. This has been difficult to achieve in many countries, allowing arbitrary behavior and impunity to continue, while ordinary citizens are denied access to justice. The legislature also has a crucial role to play, in passing appropriate legislation, and providing a check on executive authority. Parliaments fundamentally affect the quality of democracy enjoyed in individual countries and the extent of political and economic freedom citizens are afforded. Specifically, with regard to security, in most African countries parliamentarians need to increase their understanding of defense and security issues, and become more actively engaged in debates on security policy and security sector reform.

African governments have joined the international coalition against terrorism, which places new demands on already limited human and financial resources. Like governments throughout the rest of the world, they are faced with the challenge of preventing terrorist networks from establishing bases or recruiting converts in their countries, or of channeling funds through them. African countries are particularly vulnerable because of the security and institutional weaknesses that already exist, as well as resource constraints.

Role of Civil Society

Civil society organizations have a responsibility to engage with governments on NEPAD and to develop ways of ensuring its effective implementation. Working in partnership with governments, they can hold governments responsible for living up to their commitments under NEPAD. This does not imply an adversarial relationship, but one based on mutual trust and understanding. Civil society needs to understand the constraints that governments face, and what is needed to overcome them. Civil society organizations, often working at the grassroots, can help communities act on their own development priorities. With regard to security and sources of conflict, they can help to identify the major challenges faced by different groups within countries, and how these might be overcome. Both the determinants of insecurity and the responses to them may well vary among communities and societal groupings, and their leaders and organizations can act as intermediaries, ensuring that the security concerns of citizens are voiced.

NEPAD affirms, and it is generally accepted, that economic growth and development require a robust and active private sector. Therefore, the extent to which NEPAD achieves its goals will be dependent to a large extent on the levels of private sector activity and investment that are generated. The private sector is obviously affected by security. Broad insecurity has been one of the main constraints on the growth of the private sector throughout the continent. Empirical work has shown that in situations of conflict, uncertainty and political instability, the long-term productive investment that is conducive to development tends to be replaced by short-term, quick profit activity. But the private sector can make an enormously important contribution to post conflict reconstruction and to increased security. Employment and economic growth generated by the private sector will help to reduce the economic basis of insecurity and conflict, and also allow countries to improve services and enhance security.

The media has an exceptionally important role to play in promoting and supporting the implementation of NEPAD. While governments should inform their citizens, so too the media should find out about NEPAD and seek to popularize it. The media is central to ensuring that people in African countries understand what NEPAD is and what it can

bring about, as well as commitments that have been made under it. In terms of security also, the press has influence. The media can play a negative role in promoting racial hatred and exacerbating conflict. It can also do the opposite. The media can be extremely effective in building understanding of cultural differences and the commonalities of experience that help to promote tolerance and therefore avoid conflict.

The Role of International Partners

The international partners can assist in enhancing peace and security in Africa. At their June 2002 Summit, G-8 leaders endorsed NEPAD and announced an action plan of broad support for its objectives. Given that security is intricately linked with development and participatory governance, improvements in these areas can be expected to lead to a greater sense of generalized security. Bringing Africa's current conflicts to an end would help to overcome the image of a continent beset by insecurity and instability, as well as lay the basis for development in the countries themselves. African efforts to promote peace require the moral support and engagement of the international community, as well as financial and technical resources. Countries coming out of conflict have enormous reconstruction needs that require long-term support. Disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of former combatants are specific elements of peacebuilding that need adequate and sustained assistance. In 2002, CIDA began supporting a three-year, C\$2 million UNICEF project to help meet the needs of war-ravaged children in Sierra Leone.

Development partners can also provide assistance to build African capacity for peacekeeping, and support continental and regional conflict management efforts. But in addition to providing assistance, Africa's partners can also help to reduce the incidence of conflict on the continent by taking action to control the illegal arms trade and make the financing of conflict more difficult. Measures to more closely monitor and track commodities such as gems and timber that have been used to fund wars could have a significant impact. Similarly, strengthened efforts to combat money laundering could help to cut off financing for conflict and make illegal arms and commodity deals less

lucrative. To be effective, these measures need the concerted effort of the international community.

Despite its importance, development assistance agencies have traditionally not focused on the security sector. This has changed somewhat as assistance programs have embraced good governance and democratization. However, even with this change, the focus has often been on reducing levels of military expenditure in order to reallocate scarce funds to social sectors. While commendable in principle, such an approach has often failed to take the security challenges faced by countries into account or accept that effective security is costly. Nor has it been fully recognized that large numbers of unemployed demobilized soldiers or under-funded, demoralized and unprofessional security forces can present challenges to security.

Africa's partners have not paid the same attention to other security forces as to the military, even though civil security (for example, watch dog committees) is of fundamental importance to most citizens of African countries.

An improved security environment in African countries is obviously conducive to development, and the ultimate beneficiaries will be the Africans themselves. But it also serves the interests of Africa's partners. Insecurity borne by conflict, political instability or lack of economic opportunity is one of the principal reasons people leave African countries. Although many simply move to neighbouring countries, others migrate to industrialized countries. While highly educated and skilled migrants are generally absorbed into the workforce of their adopted countries without problem, large influxes of less well-educated or illegal immigrants can cause tensions within their host societies and undermine security. Moreover, most of the drugs traded by organized crime syndicates that are increasingly using African countries as conduits find markets in richer countries. The events of September 11, 2001, have also underscored that security cannot be assumed by any single country, and that all countries need to collaborate to counter international terrorism.

Promoting Security

Whereas security was previously considered in predominantly military terms as maintenance of territorial integrity or national sovereignty, it is now seen as a much broader, and as inextricably linked to development. Indeed, it is increasingly apparent that while insecurity threatens development, so too lack of development undermines security.

In African countries, as elsewhere, the determinants of security are many and varied. State and individual security are intricately linked, and state security will remain fragile unless individual security needs can be met, at least to a reasonable degree. This is the challenge facing African countries, few of which have been able to adequately provide safety and security for their citizens, including the most vulnerable. Provision of security is a key element of the social contract between states and citizens.

Conflict and Security

Conflict in Africa is essentially a political issue, primarily concerned with how power is obtained and exercised. The challenge facing African countries is not to avoid political divergences, but to prevent violence. If security is to be safeguarded, impunity must be checked. Leaders who undermine security through abuse of power need to be held accountable for their actions.

Countries coming out of conflict are faced with specific challenges. While security is essential for durable peace, and has to be a priority of post-conflict reconstruction, it is extraordinarily hard to achieve. Although elections can provide post-conflict governments with necessary legitimacy, experience has shown that losers do not always recognize the results.

For many victims of conflict, both security and reconciliation are fundamentally linked to justice. The creation of a national military and the disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of former combatants are often priorities. But the economic situation can be a significant constraint. Unless they can find employment,

disaffected former combatants with easy access to small arms can threaten peace and security.

Political, Economic and Social Aspects of Security

NEPAD recognizes that security – or lack of it – has explicitly political dimensions, and that it is essentially a governance and public policy issue. Political exclusion, abuse of human rights, and poor governance have been major contributors to insecurity in many African countries in the past. At a minimum, even if they cannot guarantee security, governments have a moral responsibility not to erode it through arbitrary behaviour, or violations of the law and human rights. In established democracies, a reasonable degree of security is assured through the effective functioning of state institutions and the predictability of government actions. Both of these need to be strengthened in most African countries.

Increasingly in African countries, problems such as lack of economic opportunity, unemployment, violent crime, and poverty threaten the security of individuals. Left unaddressed, over time these problems can also undermine national security. In its focus on creating broad-based economic growth, attracting investment and creating employment, and providing opportunities for people to act on their own development initiatives, NEPAD is directly concerned with these economic and social determinants of security. Increased prosperity will not result in improved security if it only widens the gap between the rich and the poor. Indeed the existence of a disaffected, unemployed and cut off from opportunities for progress may well fuel tensions, leading to increased insecurity and even armed conflict.

NEPAD also recognizes the importance of education to development. Over time, better provision of education can also be expected to decrease insecurity, particularly of the most disadvantaged.

HIV/AIDS is coming to the fore as a major security issue in a number of African countries, not only because of its detrimental effect on the security of those affected and

their families, but also because of the economic consequences on society as a whole. In an already precarious situation, the loss of a breadwinner can be catastrophic in terms of personal security. But the loss of earnings and productivity resulting from the pandemic constitute a real threat to security by undermining the economic progress of countries, while at the same time increasing demands on already overstretched health services.

Security Sector Reform

The NEPAD Initial Action Plan recognizes that the type of security forces can best meet the needs of African countries may entail reform of security sector policies and institutions.

In a large number of countries, building greater trust in security forces will be a necessary part of security sector reform. For many, especially the poor, security forces are associated with oppression and repression, rather than protection. Like other state institutions, African security forces have suffered as a result of poor governance. Loyalty to the party, rather than professionalism, was required by single-party regimes, while political leaders sometimes relied on special forces drawn from their own ethnic or geographic region and operating independently of national militaries. Such selective recruitment had a particularly negative effect on security.

Militaries also generally fare worse under military regimes, where involvement in politics seriously erode their professional functioning. As a consequence, mistrust of security forces is particularly pronounced in countries that have experiences of military rule. Leechor (1994) described the environment of the PNDC 1 regime in Ghana as characterized by “mistrust” and “harassment”.

African countries, like others, are also faced with new challenges to security. These include threats from non-state actors, and comprise terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime. The resources such groups have at their disposal is frequently far in excess of those available to national security establishments.

Fundamental to the development of such security policies is an understanding of how much and what type of security can be financed. Many African countries have been accused of excessively funding security forces at the expense of development. While the defense budgets of some countries have been disproportionately large, others have not actually had sufficient funds to create modern, well-trained and equipped militaries. There are no easy formulas to determine what constitutes an appropriate level of military expenditure. Governments must make trade-offs in terms of how scarce resources are allocated. No country in the world can afford its ideal security apparatus – all have to make compromises. African countries face greater constraints because of the limited resources at their disposal. Civil security institutions in particular have been so neglected in many countries that considerable resources will be required to restore them to levels needed for public order.

Effective security reform must be based on adequate analysis and identification of the security needs of both states and their citizens. It also requires realistic assessment of the capabilities of African security establishments, and analysis of the costs of building modern, professional forces.

Conclusion

To achieve the objectives of NEPAD requires peace, security and ability to manage conflict. Governments have an obligation to maintain peace and improve the security of their citizens. It also means redressing legislative or regulatory inequalities that disadvantage specific groups, generally women and children. Emphasis on protection of human rights should be emphasized. There is need for strengthened police and law enforcement capacity in most countries. Customs agencies too have an important role in protecting security, by curtailing the illegal trade in arms and drugs that has increased violence in many instances. Regional involvement and cooperation is also important. Greater regional interaction and cooperation could help to limit the cross-border trade in arms and commodities that have fueled conflict. Active involvement of the judicial and legislative branches are also needed.

Civil society organizations can help to identify the major challenges faced by different groups within countries, and how these might be overcome. The extent to which NEPAD achieves its goals will also be dependent to a large extent on the levels of private sector activity and investment that are generated.

The media has an exceptionally important role to play in promoting and supporting the implementation of NEPAD. The international partners can assist in enhancing peace and security in Africa. But in addition to providing assistance, Africa's partners can also help to reduce the incidence of conflict on the continent by taking action to control the illegal arms trade and make the financing of conflict more difficult.

If security is to be safeguarded, impunity must be checked. Leaders who undermine security through abuse of power need to be held accountable for their actions.

NEPAD also recognizes the importance of education to development. Better provision of education can decrease insecurity, particularly of the most disadvantaged.

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