

International Assistance to Post-Conflict Peacebuilding : The Cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan

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International Assistance to Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: The Cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan

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Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War, cases in which international community led by the United Nations is engaged with and supports the peacebuilding after conflicts have greatly increased. A considerable amount of case-studies and comparative or theoretical studies on such cases has been done, and this article intends to add one on Cambodia and Afghanistan. Both had long-lasting civil wars which were intervened by neighboring states and superpowers, but Cambodia attained peace in 1991 and then was helped by the UN which succeeded in establishing a stable polity and a developing economy, while Afghanistan was occupied by the U.S.-led coalition forces in 2001 and then has been helped by the UN, but remains unstable and fragile. The two cases show considerable differences in the nature of the conflict, conflict resolution approaches, the role of international organizations, and the resulting outcomes of the peacebuilding processes. Their comparison should suggest some hypotheses as to what method of peacebuilding would be effective in post-conflict developing countries.

Key Words

civil conflict, peacebuilding, international assistance, Cambodia, Afghanistan

紛争後の平和構築への国際的支援 —カンボジアとアフガニスタンの事例

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要旨

紛争後の平和構築に、国連をはじめとする国際社会が関与し支援する事例が近年増加している。それらに関する事例研究や比較研究、理論研究もさうとうなされているが、本稿はカンボジアとアフガニスタンの事例を取り上げる。どちらも長年にわたる内戦に隣接諸国や諸大国が関与していたが、カンボジアは1991年の停戦後国連が暫定統治機構を設置して立憲議会選挙を実施し、新憲法採択後新政府が発足するまで支援することで、平和構築、国家再建に導いた事例であ

る。他方アフガニスタンは、2001年の9.11同時多発テロ事件後、アメリカを中心とした有志連合軍が北部同盟によるタリバン政権打倒を助け、その後国連が新政権の発足から国家再建へと支援している事例である。カンボジアの方がアフガニスタンより10年早く国連の関与が始まっており、その成果もすでに顕著にあがっていると言えるが、アフガニスタンの場合は未だ不十分な成果しかあがっていない。しかし、単にかけた時間の差というだけでなく、両事例には紛争の性質、隣接諸国等の介入、平和構築過程、国家再建手法等においてかなりの相違点が見られ、それらが現在までの成果の差に影響を与えてきたと考えられる。本稿は両事例を検討してそれらの相違点を指摘し、この2事例を比較研究する国際的にも初の試みとするとともに、国際社会が紛争後の平和構築を支援する場合、一般的にどのような手法が有効と思われるかについても仮説の提出を試みる。

キーワード

紛争, 平和構築, 国際的支援, カンボジア, アフガニスタン

1. Introduction

The post-World War II era has been marked by an increase in the number of internal conflicts and civil wars. Mikael Eriksson and Peter Wallensteen suggest that for the period of 1989–2003 there were only seven interstate armed conflicts. In contrast, during this same period there were 116 conflicts active in 78 countries. Scholars have estimated that between eleven million and twenty million people died as a result of ethnic conflicts since 1945 (until-1994) (Williams). These conflicts have caused systematic human rights violation through genocide, mass rape, intimidation, and forced migration – a process labeled “sociocide” (Doubt). In addition, civil wars threaten international security and cause regional instability with a multitude of ethnic-religious problems, outflow of refugees, accompanying illicit deals of drug and arms, and giving rise to extremism and terrorism (Brown). Furthermore, civil wars affect outside powers because they can undermine the credibility of regional and international security organizations. This has raised the necessity to take initiatives for ending civil

wars. But international intervention for ending wars and building peace has been controversial both when it takes place and when it fails to do so as in Rwanda. International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) notes that: “For some the new activism has been a long overdue internationalization of the human conscience; for others it has been an alarming breach of an international state order dependent on the sovereignty of states and the inviolability of their territory” (ICISS 2001: VII).

Although UN peacekeeping operations have been widely recognized as a preferred way to deal with civil conflicts, they have been constrained by international power politics. During the Cold War, the UN Security Council’s initiatives for ending civil wars were about providing security to facilitate sustainable peace after the signing of a ceasefire or a peace accord, for the promotion of reconstruction and stability in wartorn societies, with the presence of peacekeepers in the area. Therefore, the peacekeeping missions have been limited both in number and scale. Between the founding of the UN in 1945 and 1990, there were sixteen peacekeeping interventions. The collapse of the

Soviet Union in 1991 freed the Security Council from Cold War politics and allowed the UN to become the primary actor in peacekeeping operations. With the end of the Cold War, the UN Security Council assumed the leading role in maintaining international peace and security, although it was influenced heavily by undisputed American hegemony. Hence, the UN expanded its peacekeeping initiatives toward multidimensional and “complex peace operations” and also long term post-conflict assistance including nation-building and state-building (Alex).

This shift in peace operations was manifested in Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* (1995a) which called for a more expansive and interventionist UN policy. Boutros-Ghali well grasped the changing context of international politics and new opportunities before the UN to move beyond the traditional approaches. In his second seminal work, *An Agenda for Democratization* (1996), Boutros-Ghali further encouraged the UN to play a more important role in international politics. The importance of democratization and human rights protection underlined in the Boutros-Ghali's agenda suggests a more complex UN peacekeeping operation in a changing international context.

Based on this new policy and in response to increased civil wars after the end of the Cold War, the UN moved more rigorously in the 1990s in tackling internal conflicts and initiating extensive peacekeeping operations. Since 1990 the Security Council has authorized forty-eight peacekeeping operations.

The end of the Cold War created political conditions which favored an expansion of peacebuilding into such new areas as facilitation of constitutional design and reform, supervision of elections, reconstruction, strengthening of state institutions, demilitarization and demobilization

of armed groups, and delivery of public services. The United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia (1989–90) represented the first of its kind encompassing the mentioned responsibilities (Ponzio). But the first major UN exercise in governance came with the 1991 Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Conflict in Cambodia. The UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was

“given direct control over Cambodian agencies in the areas of foreign affairs, national defense, finance, public security, and information; supervision over other agencies that could influence the outcome of elections; and the right to investigate various other government organs to determine whether they were undermining the accords and, if so, to take corrective measures” (Matheson).

Although the UNTAC manifested success of a full-fledged exercise of the UN authority in conflict resolution and political transition, peacebuilding operations have proved to be contextual and need to be designed on the basis of the requirements of each case. It is because of the varied causes of conflicts and their complex nature that they are more resistant to settlement and resolution.¹ For example, Lakhdar Brahimi's guiding principle that shaped the United Nations presence in Afghanistan was what he described as a “light footprint”. He argued that Afghans would never accept a United Nations transitional administration. But his deputy, Francis Vendrell was supportive of a more powerful UN mission in Afghanistan similar to the UNTAC (Smith: 25).

The more recent UN missions such as those in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Timor-Leste (UNTAET) represent a multidimensional peacebuilding such as; performing basic civilian administrative

functions, rewriting or amending the constitution, facilitating political transition and observation of the elections, protecting and promoting human rights, maintaining civil order and law, support of humanitarian and disaster relief, and reconstruction of key infrastructure. The UN mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was also mandated with similar authority and responsibilities; however the trusteeship was not exercised. The international assistance to post-conflict peacebuilding in the above-mentioned cases highly focused on crafting a self-sustaining state, nation building, and protecting human rights. The more recent UN missions such as those in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Burundi (ONUB), the Congo-Kinshasa (MONUC), Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Liberia (UNMIL), Haiti (MINUSTAH), and the Sudan (UNMIS) have comprehensively included more key areas in peacebuilding such as; the rule of law, transparency and accountability, reforming law enforcing agencies, training of independent civil society and media organizations, human rights, gender issues and women's rights, child protection, and observing elections (Ponzio).

The mandates of the UN missions in the above-mentioned cases range from a simple peacekeeping with mainly observatory roles to the full exercise of the UN trusteeship. Furthermore, the peacebuilding approaches differ to some extent from one country to another due to the nature and root-cause of conflicts and the complexity of problems, which define the outcomes. For example, territorial conflicts have proved to be more resistant to resolution (Stein). Among the UN missions to settle such conflicts only Kosovo resulted in success. Furthermore, Sambanis (2001: 259) argues that "identity (ethnic/religious) wars have different causes than

nonidentity wars." He also suggests that "living in a bad neighborhood, with undemocratic neighbors or neighbors at war, significantly increases a country's risk of experiencing ethnic civil war." These and other factors such as the degree of international commitment and assistance to peacebuilding are determinants for the success or failure of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries, and have intimate linkage with the outcomes of the political transition process.

Although international assistance to peacebuilding has contributed to ending wars and forging peace in many cases such as Cambodia and East Timor, many other cases ended up in failure despite all international efforts. In 2004, Haiti slipped back into chaos after ten years of statebuilding efforts. Liberia returned to conflict in 2004 following UN supervised elections in 1997. And in Afghanistan, after ten years of international assistance and support, ensuring sustainable peace and stability has not been achieved yet. On average, more than 50 percent of states that emerge from conflict return to conflict (Samuels). Therefore, comparative studies of post-conflict peacebuilding cases can contribute to understanding of the reasons for success as well as failure in more practical terms.

This article explores the role of international assistance in post-conflict peacebuilding in the cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan. The Cambodian case is chosen as an early and successful case while the Afghanistan case is as the latest and still struggling one. In order to understand the causes of the differences between the two cases, we shall compare the mentioned cases through a separate analysis of the nature of the conflicts, conflict resolution approaches, the role of international organizations

(especially the UN), and outcome of the peacebuilding processes.

2. The Case of Cambodia

2.1. *The Nature of the Conflict*

Cambodia is a relatively small country of about 14 million people in Southeast Asia, sandwiched between relatively large (in terms of population) countries of Vietnam and Thailand. To the north is Laos, through which, or rather, through the Mekong River, it is connected with China, too. Historically India also influenced Cambodians (Khmer) and they adopted Buddhism around the 13th century. During Angkor era (the 9th ~15th century) the Khmer Empire was a regional power and the ruins of its capitals, one of the UNESCO's world heritage sites, show how prosperous it was. However, Cambodia was then sacked and dominated by the Siamese (today's Thais), and Vietnamese, and in 1863 King Norodom sought the protection from France, making his country part of French Indochina. Phnom Penh was made permanent capital in 1866. France chose Norodom's relatives and Norodom Sihanouk was enthroned in 1941, when French Indochina was occupied by Japan and then controlled by it until the end of World War II.

After Japan was defeated, France sought to reestablish its Indochinese colony but failed and Cambodia became independent in 1953. King Sihanouk abdicated in 1955 in favor of his father and then became prime minister himself, but upon his father's death became head of state again as Prince Sihanouk while retaining the premiership. His official foreign policy was neutrality between the two camps of the Cold War and also the war in Vietnam, but he was more sympathetic to the communists. So,

North Vietnam utilized jungles of Cambodia as well as Laos to supply communist guerilla forces in South Vietnam with weapons and ammunitions through the "Ho-Chi-Minh trail." The U.S. forces in Vietnam started to bomb the route in 1969 and helped the then prime minister General Lon Nol stage a coup d'etat in 1970. Prince Sihanouk was exiled to Beijing, and appealed to his followers to oppose the Lon Nol regime. Ironically, it was the communists led by Pol Pot, who had been mounting an anti-Sihanouk uprising since 1968, that organized most effective resistance to it. The communists, called Khmer Rouge, used Sihanouk as the symbol of opposition, and the U. S. bombing of communist-controlled areas may have helped them recruit soldiers.

When the U.S. withdrew from Vietnam after the Paris Peace Accords of 1973 and North Vietnam's military victory over the South in 1975, Cambodian communists also gained victory against the Lon Nol regime in the same year. The Khmer Rouge renamed the country Democratic Kampuchea, and began to radically transform the existing political-economic-social system into an egalitarian, but totalitarian and chauvinistic one based on agrarian economy. They evacuated cities and forced city-dwellers to feed themselves by cultivating barren lands. Western-influenced buildings and Western-cultured people were destroyed or killed, which arguably resulted in the death of one to two million persons out of the then total population of about eight million — if not by executions alone but with starvation or illness, too. Premier Pol Pot was the one most responsible for this, as Sihanouk remained in exile.

With their chauvinism directed not only against the West but also against ethnic

minorities, Vietnamese settlers and Chinese residents were harassed and expelled. Even military conflicts took place at disputed border areas with Vietnam, which led to a Vietnamese invasion and establishment of a leftist government at Phnom Penh in 1979. The Khmer Rouge continued resistance from Thai border areas, and formed an alliance with royalists led by Sihanouk and liberalists called the “Khmer People’s National Liberation Front.” They set up the “Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea” nominally headed by Sihanouk in 1981 and maintained the UN seat, as the Phnom Penh government was considered a puppet of Vietnam and the Soviet bloc by not only ASEAN countries and China, but by the U.S. and the U.K. as well. So, the civil war continued, with the coalition forces aided financially and militarily by these countries, hindering state-building by Premier Hun Sen (since 1985) along the Vietnamese line.²

2.2. How the Conflict Ended

With the advent of General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union in 1985, the Cambodian civil war took an important turn. The Soviet Union stopped aiding allies abroad, including Vietnam. The latter was in turn forced to stop aiding the Hun Sen regime, and declared its intention to withdraw its troops by 1990. But the resurgence of the Pol Pot regime was never wanted by the allies of the Coalition Government, and they demanded it to negotiate peace with Phnom Penh. So, direct talks between Hun Sen and Sihanouk took place in Paris in 1987, which was followed by a “Cocktail Party” held in Bogor, Indonesia, in 1988 where all four Cambodian factions attended. On this occasion Hun Sen changed Cambodia’s name to the State of Cambodia (SOC) and Sihanouk resigned as president of

Democratic Kampuchea, apparently to elevate himself above factional struggles and to become the father of all Cambodians.

Indonesia arranged another meeting in Jakarta in 1989 where the U.S., China, and Japan also attended. But Sihanouk didn’t like the meeting and requested French President Mitterand to convene an international conference on Cambodia in Paris. Five months later it became a reality and the Paris International Conference on Cambodia was co-chaired by France and Indonesia with participation of Sihanouk, Khieu Smpnan (the Khmer Rouge), Son Sann (the National Liberation Front), and Hun Sen along with major international players such as the Permanent Five of the UNSC, the ASEAN states, Australia, Vietnam, and Japan. This historic meeting didn’t produce signed agreements but a general understanding was reached on a number of issues including; the creation of an international control mechanism to oversee implementation of a comprehensive peace settlement, repatriation of refugees, and reconstruction.

In early 1990, the P5 met in Paris and reached a tentative agreement on the outline of a peace plan which envisioned an active UN role in both the negotiation and implementation of the peace process. The P5 continued their efforts and produced a “Framework Document” during the same year, which called for creation of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to supervise demobilization and elections, and the establishment of the Supreme National Council (SNC). This was soon followed by the acceptance of the document by the four Cambodian parties meeting in Jakarta, and endorsement by the UNSC (Resolution 668 on 20 September 1990) as well as acclamation of the General Assembly.

The P5 then issued the "Draft Agreement" on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict in November, which added details about SNC (to offer advice to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, SRSG), demobilization, elections, the Constituent Assembly, and refugees' repatriation.

The Secretary-General of the UN issued a joint appeal with France and Indonesia in April 1991 for cessation of hostilities among Cambodian factions and they complied with it. The four factions later met in Beijing and reached agreement on the composition of the SOC, naming Sihanouk its President. Soon the Security Council approved the creation of the UN Advanced Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), and the Paris International Conference on Cambodia in October 1991 produced The Paris Peace Accords signed by 19 state participants. UNAMIC military liaison officers began to arrive in Cambodia in the next month and Yasushi Akashi, a career UN official from Japan, was chosen as the SRSG in January 1992. UNTAC was formally created in February, and the initial deployment of its personnel, including Akashi and Force Commander, Australian Lieutenant-General John Sanderson, took place the next month.³

2.3. International Assistance to Peace-Building

UNTAC operations

UNAMIC assisted in maintaining the cease-fire by facilitating communications among the four factions, and also in preparation for deployment of UNTAC by serving as liaison with the SNC. The 50 liaison officers and 20 mine-awareness trainers were absorbed by UNTAC upon its creation.

According to the operational plan submitted to the UNSC by the new Secretary-General

Boutros-Ghali, UNTAC was to be composed of some 15,900 troops, 3,600 civilian police monitors, and 2,000 international staff with 1,450 international election monitors (including 450 UN Volunteers) and 56,000 Cambodians at election time, which was scheduled to be no later than May 1993 (UNSC). The seven components of UNTAC were: human rights, election, military, civil administration, police, repatriation and rehabilitation.

Immediately after its establishment in March, UNTAC drafted the Electoral Law and presented it to the SNC for review, and also started to repatriate refugees. But its operation faced two serious challenges: delays in the purchasing and importing of necessary vehicles, office and communication equipments, etc. and in recruiting specialized personnel, and the Khmer Rouge's non-compliance with the cease-fire and demobilization. In spite of this the other three factions – the SOC, FUNCINPEC (Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif, or National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia. royalists), and the National Liberation Front – agreed to begin the regroupment and cantonment of their troops, and refugee repatriation proceeded gradually.

In June a Ministerial Conference on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cambodia was held in Tokyo, where 33 nations pledged \$880 million in recovery aid for Cambodia (Japan was the leading contributor, offering \$200 million, followed by the U.S. with \$135 million) (Boutros-Ghali 1995b: 21). The conference also decided to create the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia. But the regroupment and cantonment process had stalled by this time because of the Khmer Rouge's non-cooperation, and various diplomatic

efforts didn't produce results in the following months. However, in November the UNSC adopted a resolution confirming that the elections for a constituent assembly would be held as planned and instructing UNTAC to proceed with preparations for elections in all areas of the country to which it had free access as of 31 January 1993.

The Electoral Law was adopted by the SNC in August 1992 after reaching agreement on some amendments to the draft presented by UNTAC. The franchise was restricted to "Cambodian persons," i.e. non-Vietnamese, who were 18 or more years old at the time of registration, and overseas Cambodians were allowed to vote at one polling station each in Europe, North America, and Australia. Soon provisional registration of political parties began, first at provincial levels as the election of 120 members of the Constituent Assembly was to be held on a provincial basis with a system of proportional representation. In January 1993, 20 parties applied for official registration by submitting a list of at least 5,000 registered voters as their members. In order to prepare Cambodians for the elections and inform them about UNTAC, the Paris Agreements and their rights as well as public responsibilities, Radio UNTAC began broadcasting from Phnom Penh in November. At the same time UNTAC Information Center was opened, and videos, posters, leaflets, flyers and advertisements in Khmer, of course, were produced and distributed. Human rights training was introduced into Cambodian schools from primary to higher education levels. An International Symposium on Human Rights in Cambodia was convened at this time in Phnom Penh.

In January the SNC decided that the election would be held from 23 to 25 May 1993, and the

election campaign would run from 7 April through 19 May. By April, more than 362,000 refugees were repatriated in total from the camps in Thailand (with additional 2,000 from Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia) (Boutros-Ghali 1995b: 33-40), and by June, 15,991 international troops and 3,359 civilian police monitors were deployed in Cambodia. The countries contributing more than 1,000 troops were Indonesia, France, India, Pakistan, and Malaysia and those contributing more than 200 police personnel were India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Bangladesh, and Ghana (Ibid: 23). While the election campaign was run as scheduled, training for some 900 International Polling Station Officers, 500 more from UNTAC and the UN Secretariat, and more than 50,000 Cambodian electoral staff was also undertaken (Ibid: 39).

Although UNTAC prohibited the possession and carrying of firearms and explosives by unauthorized persons in March, more than 100 Cambodians (many of whom were ethnic Vietnamese) and some UNTAC members were killed between early April and mid-May.⁴ However, all polling stations were protected exclusively by UNTAC, and most Cambodian people enthusiastically participated in the polling; more than 4.2 million, i.e. nearly 90 per cent of the registered voters voted, in an atmosphere of calm free of violence and intimidation (except for a few scattered incidents). The Khmer Rouge boycotted the elections, but having lost support of China and Thailand, it refrained from all-out attempt at disrupting them.

On 10 June the final tally was released: FUNCINPEC won 45.47 per cent of the vote and 58 seats; the SOC's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) won 38.23 per cent and 51 seats;

the National Liberation Front's Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP), 3.81 per cent and 10 seats; and the other 17 parties, remaining 12.49 per cent of the vote but only 1 seat. The Constituent Assembly was sworn in on 14 June, and Prince Sihanouk was proclaimed the Head of State, but the SOC was not apparently ready to give up power in favor of FUNCINPEC. So, Sihanouk arranged the formation of a united front interim government, making Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen Co-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers. The UNSC endorsed the election results on 15 June and in mid-July agreed that UNTAC should provide \$20 million in emergency assistance to the Interim Joint Administration. UNTAC troops began to withdraw from Cambodia in early August, and the UNSC confirmed that UNTAC's mandate would end when the Constituent Assembly had completed its work on the Constitution and a new Government was established. On 24 September the new Constitution was promulgated and it established a constitutional monarchy, "The Kingdom of Cambodia." Prince Sihanouk was elected King by the Royal Council of the Throne, and he named Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen as First and Second Prime Ministers, whereby UNTAC's mandate came to an end.⁵

UNTAC operations failed in the full implementation of the Paris Accords, as T. Findlay (p.106) points out, due to (a) the inability to control and supervise the SOC Administration; (b) the reluctance to deal forcibly with human rights infringements; and because of (c) management failures including poor inter-component co-ordination and co-operation. However, we agree with his conclusion that "UNTAC's achievements were little short of miraculous in a country whose current

political leadership was and remains so apparently devoid of integrity, political maturity and vision." (Ibid: 161)

Continued United Nations Presence and the 1997 Coup

However, as Khmer Rouge forces were yet to merge into a national army and didn't end their resistance, the two prime ministers asked the UN in early October to dispatch a limited number of unarmed military observers. The Security Council in the next month extended the period of withdrawal of the military police of UNTAC until the end of the year, and established a team of 20 military liaison officers for six-month period. Moreover, The Declaration on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cambodia, one of the three main instruments of the Paris Agreements, remained in force and gave the UN an important role in supporting Cambodia even after the departure of UNTAC. An International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia had been created, and Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cambodia was appointed (Benny Widoyo from Indonesia) in April 1994 to coordinate the UN presence there.

International assistance to Cambodia now took less direct forms, and the work of the Office of UNSG's Special Representative in Cambodia was complemented by that of Cambodia Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, which was closed in 1999 but was basically succeeded by the UN Development Program in Cambodia with participation of not only UNDP and UNHCHR but also other UN agencies.⁶ The advice of these UN specialized agencies is fed into donor decision-making through the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia, which was renamed as the Consultative Group of Donor Countries.

Among donor countries, Japan has always been the largest contributor; for example, it disbursed 152 million dollars in 1995, which was 45% of the total bilateral aid, followed by France (53 million dollars) and much larger loans from international agencies (ADB's 45 million and IMF's 43 million dollars) (Uemura: 35).

With such international assistance domestic security was basically maintained and economy started to grow: Real GDP growth rates were estimated as 9.2% in 1994, 6.5% in 1995, 5.3% in 1996, and 5.7% in 1997 (Uemura:127). Such economic development was facilitated by economic liberalization and privatization measures taken around 1993-1994, which were guided by the donors, and enabled Cambodia to join ASEAN in 1999 and then WTO in 2003.⁷ Khmer Rouge soldiers' defection increased and the much weakened faction was officially outlawed in 1994. But the remaining forces which deposed Pol Pot as the top leader approached FUNCINPEC to forge an alliance. This encouraged more open rivalry between FUNCINPEC and the CPP, and "body guards" loyal to each faction repeatedly clashed in street battles in Phnom Penh during March and June 1997. Both parties had been vying with each other for enlarging their power and influence through recruiting followers into public offices, but the CPP's popularity had dropped sharply in the countryside, its former political base, because of its de-facto control of the government machinery and corrupt practices. Fearing it would lose badly in the next Assembly elections set for 1998, the CPP staged a coup d'état in July and killed or arrested hundreds of FUNCINPEC cadres. Prince Ranariddh had escaped to France shortly before it but was deposed by the National Assembly, which met with only 99 members out of 122 and elected a

FUNCINPEC member as the new First Prime Minister, following Hun Sen's proposal.⁸

The international community was naturally opposed to the coup and donors reduced or suspended aid, but curiously none of them demanded reinstatement of Ranariddh, as he was widely considered as an ineffective leader. The UNSC refrained from condemning the coup and asked Ranariddh and Hun Sen to find a political settlement. The largest donor, Japan, soon reinstated its aid after receiving a promise from Hun Sen to preserve the democratic institutions and the coalition government set up in 1993. ASEAN had decided to eventually allow Cambodia to join the organization, but postponed the plans after the coup. However, ASEAN appointed a mediator team of three foreign ministers to talk to Hun Sen. These and Japan's efforts produced a settlement between Ranariddh and Hun Sen, in which Ranariddh was to be convicted of his crimes but then be granted a royal pardon, thus permitting him to participate in the 1998 elections.⁹

The elections, which took place in July 1998, were monitored by 500 observers from the Joint International Observer Group and declared as "free and fair." But pre-election violence and intimidation were considerable, and the CPP won 64 seats with 41% of the votes. FUNCINPEC won 43 seats, and the Sam Rainsy Party (SMP: Sam Rainsy was a leader of FUNCINPEC, but was critical of Ranariddh and expelled from the party in 1995), 15 seats.

As promised, the CPP offered to create a new coalition with FUNCINPEC, but the latter initially refused, charging polling irregularities. After some public protests and police crackdowns a new CPP-FUNCINPEC coalition government was set up in November, with

Hun Sen as the sole Prime Minister and Ranariddh as chairman of the National Assembly. The Sam Rainsy Party was the sole opposition party in the Assembly¹⁰. The Senate was established in the same year, but is not directly elected by the public and does not carry much weight.

2.4. Outcomes

Thus, some form of democratic, parliamentary politics was reestablished after the 1997 coup d'état with international intervention, and National Assembly elections have been repeated regularly. In 2003, the CPP won 73, FUNCINPEC, 26 and the SRP, 24, out of 123 seats; in 2008, the CPP won 90, the SRP, 26, Human Rights Party (HRP), 3, and FUNCINPEC (Ranariddh was expelled and he formed his own party), 2, and Norodom Ranariddh Party (later renamed as Nationalist Party), 2, out of 123 seats. The CPP has been increasing its seats and now has more than two-thirds of the Assembly, but maintains coalition with FUNCINPEC, which has been reduced to an insignificant party. The SRP is today the major opposition party, but Sam Rainsy went into exile to escape arrest on political charges in 2009.¹¹ Prime Minister Hun Sen retains his post since 1985 (Second Prime Minister between 1993 and 1998) and has been the strongman of Cambodia.¹² His and the CPP's position and power are naturally supported by incumbents' privileges and influences based on manipulation of public offices, public education, and the mass-media, but continued economic growth of the country (to be discussed below) no doubt contributes greatly to the enhancement of their legitimacy and authority. Therefore, we agree with M. Lilja and J. Ojendal (307) who conclude: "Post-conflict reconstruction in Cambodia has been relatively successful: the general situation in

the country is better and more politically stable than it was in 1991, not to mention 1979. The constitution of 1993 is not under threat and no violent outbreaks can be predicted within a foreseeable future."

The real growth rate of GDP after 1997 has been; 5.0% (1998), 11.9% (1999), 8.8% (2000), 8.1% (2001), 6.6% (2002), 8.5% (2003), 10.3% (2004), 13.3% (2005), 10.8% (2006), 10.2% (2007), 6.7% (2008), 0.1% (2009), and 5.0% (2010) (Kem). Excepting the recent world economic crisis years of 2009~2010, a very high average growth rate of more than 6% was maintained for ten years. As a result, GDP per capita at 2000 constant price doubled from \$250 in 1998 to \$504 in 2008, which was \$739 at current prices.¹³ This has been realized through growth of garments manufacturing, tourism, construction, and agriculture, which has been enabled by the inflow of foreign direct investment (Jalilian & Reyes). The FDI started to grow from 1995, and grew even more rapidly between 2005 and 2009: Between 1998 and 2008, total fixed asset approvals reached \$13,397 million (Tong & Hem). Such inflow was greatly aided by infrastructure building with international aid and the enhanced credibility of the Cambodian government and economy supported thereby: Between 2000 and 2007, the UN and multilaterals delivered \$2,189 million; the EU and its member states, \$981 million; other bilaterals, \$1,540 million (Japan alone, \$853 million); NGOs, \$411 million; in total, \$4, 677 million (Ibid.).

3. The Case of Afghanistan

3.1. The nature of the conflict

Afghanistan as a modern nation-state emerged with a weak and problematic structure by the

end of the nineteenth century to buffer the two great powers: the U.K. and Russia. The political boundaries of Afghanistan were demarcated 'in defiance of any ethnic, linguistic, or cultural logic' and laid the foundation for the troubled status of Afghanistan (Shahrani). The weak and dysfunctional governments throughout the twentieth century undertook few efforts to bridge endemic social cleavages; instead, internal colonialism in tandem with external colonialism impeded development of the natural process of state-building and nation-building in the country (Hyman). This weak and fragile social and political structure accounted for the vulnerability of Afghanistan during the Cold War as well, when the superpowers in order to further their interests undermined the precarious independence and the non-aligned position of Afghanistan. Therefore, Afghanistan's three decades of war and instability were burdened with the legacies of 'The Great Game' and Cold War politics. However, the social cleavages were not the primary reason for the onset of wars in Afghanistan – aggravated grievances contributed to activation of ethnic dynamics in domestic politics. As a result, a nexus of conflicts developed in the last three decades in Afghanistan that can be explained in three phases: first, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA)'s coup d'état in 1978 and the following invasion by the Soviet Union from 25 December, 1979; second, the civil war among the ethno-political factions over power; and finally, war against the Taliban and al Qaeda terrorist networks. Each of these phases demands a careful and separate explanation despite having a causal interconnection. The three phases manifest the intimate linkage between regional and national politics in Afghanistan that caused the Soviet

invasion and the long-lasting civil conflicts. We will explain each phase of the wars briefly and try to explore the evolution of the conflicts from a primarily political one to an ethnic and ethno-religious one.

Political mobilization in Afghanistan dates back to the era known as the Decade of Democracy (1964–1973). The 1964 Constitution allowed the emergence of political organizations among which the Islamists and Communists came to play an important role in shaping the future political order and disorder in Afghanistan. The PDPA was created in 1965 by a pro-Soviet cell consisting of elites who were influenced by communist ideology and encouraged by the Soviet embassy in Kabul (Saikal). Dissatisfaction over the political and social situations in the country laid the ground for the spread of communist ideas, though it was limited to the elites in Kabul and some other big cities. The rise of pro-communist organizations provoked anti-communist mobilizations among the Islamists who were mainly influenced by Ikhwanul-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood).

The communist factions, especially Parcham aligned with Dauod. He allowed them to gain momentum from the 1973 coup, which resulted in the toppling of the monarchy. Dauod's rivalry with Pakistan – a close ally of the US – over the issue of Pashtunistan, and his reliance on Soviet aid for implementing his ambitious development goals were important factors in resetting the Cold War politics in the region. Furthermore, such policies allowed the communists to strengthen their position in administrative organizations, which subsequently enabled them to carry out the 1978 coup. On the other hand, during the Dauod's presidency many Islamic political activists (mainly from Kabul University) who had created links with Pakistan

and Saudi Arabia were repressed. Pakistan's government saw the Islamists as an ally in countering Dauod's pressure on the Pashtunistan issue and the historical dispute over the Durand Line (Rubin). Thus the domestic political dynamic went in tandem with the regional politics, which set the scene for foreign intervention and social fragmentation in Afghanistan in the following years.

The communist coup by the PDPA in 1978 imposed an alien ideology, and engendered both internal and external armed resistance. One year later, while the PDPA regime was struggling with its internal problems and increasing pressure from resistant groups and mass uprisings throughout the country, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. The invasion of the Soviet Union drew international attention to Afghanistan and turned the country into "a battleground for the contest of superpowers, one engaged directly to establish its firm control, the other indirectly by supplying huge amounts of weapons and money to the Afghan resistance" (Rais: 137).

In addition, oil-rich Gulf states and neighboring countries, especially Pakistan and Iran, provided money and weapons for Afghan resistance groups and hundreds of Arab Jihad-seekers came to Afghanistan to take part in the holy war. Afghan Mujahedeen organized themselves in various political parties headquartered mainly in Pakistan and Iran. While the common cause for such groups was fighting the 'godless communists' and the Soviets, various ethno-ideological factions with different agendas and sources of support developed in Afghanistan throughout the Afghan-Soviet war (Goodson). Both the Sunni and Shiite political organizations were divided along radical or conservative lines according to their Islamic outlook and

modus operandi. The overt and covert struggles among these factions continued until the Soviet withdrawal of 1989. By this year, while Mujahedeen political parties were getting more certain of their victory over Dr. Najibullah's regime, debates over a new political order and power sharing intensified and ethno-political division became more obvious. Thus the Soviet withdrawal marked the transformation of war into civil conflicts.

The Afghan Mujahedeen became the victor of the war against the Soviets, but failed to establish a broad-based democratic government to ensure stability, security and the rule of law in the post-Soviet Afghanistan. The intense ethno-political competition among Mujahedeen groups and the meddling from neighboring countries impeded a peaceful political transition. In such a complex state of affairs initiatives to establish a unified political body to replace Dr. Najibullah's communist regime and create the framework for a new political structure ended in failure. The creation of an Afghan Interim Government (AIG) in February 1989 and the Peshawar Accord (1992) excluded the Shiite parties and many other resistance commanders inside Afghanistan, which increased distrust and hostility among the political factions. Subsequently, in the absence of a peace agreement, a bloody competition over political power started and turned into an explicitly ethnic conflict. The atrocities committed among ethno-political factions brought a total collapse of the state apparatus, the development of warlordism, and a chaotic situation in the country. Ethnicization of politics was a disaster far more destructive than the Soviet invasion, and caused unprecedented inter-ethnic violence, animosity and social fragmentation.

As a result, a political economy of war

developed, that is, the formal economy declined and informal and black markets grew, which effectively blurred the lines between the formal and informal economies, and promoted criminal sectors and activities. Exploitation of natural resources by political groups, deliberate violence against civilians to acquire control over lucrative assets, looting and forced taxation on people, illicit drug dealing, and poppy cultivation created a '*homo homini lupus*' condition.

In addition, some neighboring states became deeply engaged in the civil war following the total disengagement of the US after the Soviet withdrawal. Pakistan favored a weak pro-Pakistani government in Kabul to settle the Durand line issue and for its rivalry with India in which Afghanistan served as strategic depth for Pakistan. So, it supported fundamentalists and radical groups composed mainly of Pashtuns. Iran and Saudi Arabia started their proxy war for creating a foothold in Central Asia. Thus the regional competition that Khalilzad termed as the 'mini-great game' further complicated the nature of war in Afghanistan.

The anarchic situation of the country laid the foundation for Pakistan's Inter-service Intelligence Agency (ISI) to use the Taliban as a new force in Afghanistan's political arena. Taliban members were mainly Pashtuns and educated in Pakistan's Dubandi Madrassa (religious schools), emerging as a new ethno-religious movement with full support of ISI and the Pakistan government. The emergence of the Taliban changed both the previous balance of power among the fighting ethno-political factions and the nature of the war by introducing ultra-fundamentalism and extremism. The Taliban initially benefited from the dissatisfaction of Afghan people against the

warlords, and succeeded to stabilize their controlled areas and provide with security, but as they grew stronger their ethnic manifestation became more obvious. The guise of the 'good Taliban' was dropped in the following years and the Taliban moved more rigorously against other ethno-political factions, as they were highly motivated by religious thoughts of the Wahhabi and Salafi types, and Pashtun ethno-nationalism. Consequently, the Taliban era came to be marked as the darkest period of the Afghan history with mass atrocities, gross human rights violations, especially the women's rights, and a state of terror. In sum, during these three phases of conflicts in Afghanistan, social gaps widened, ethno-religious confrontations increased, and a culture of war developed in the country, wherein putting an end to such a vicious cycle of violence would seem impossible without a strong international intervention.

3.2. How the war ended

The three decades of war brought immense changes in social and political systems as well as inter-ethnic relations. Ahady wrote that this change in ethnic relations was more important than the defeat of communism ten years later. The socio-political structure based on Pashtuns monopoly of power and exclusion of other minorities had wide implications both in war and peace situations. As other minorities advanced their position during the conflicts, a different discourse on rights and duties developed, which could not be accommodated in the traditional ethnocratic system and required a democratic political structure and a more balanced social relation.¹⁴ Such different mindsets of political factions had impeded reaching peace agreements before the Bonn Summit in 2001. Many attempts for ending

civil war in Afghanistan failed, including peace initiatives under the auspices of the UN (e.g. UNSMA 1993-2001), the Islamabad Accord (1993), and other peace talks by regional powers such as the "Six plus Two" talks composed of the states bordering Afghanistan and the US and Russia that concluded the 1999 Tashkent Declaration. In the absence of serious international commitment to peace-building in Afghanistan the confusion of Afghans and the barriers to peace were aggravated by competition among regional powers, especially Pakistan and India.

Finally, renewed international attention after 9/11, and intervention by the US and the International Coalition Against Terrorism helped the Afghans to end the war and reach an agreement for constructing a broad-based government. Among the peace initiatives, the Bonn Summit in 2001 had advantages in many regards, which contributed to achieving an agreement among Afghan political factions to put an end to war. In the domestic sphere, the rise and advancement of the Taliban forced the previously warring parties to join forces against the Taliban and thus inter-group antagonism was softened, allowing a degree of cooperation and alignment among the opposition groups against the Taliban, who constituted the majority of the Bonn Agreement signatories and later the backbone of the Interim Administration. But the most important element was the serious and earnest international support and commitment, especially by the US, that ended the protracted war in Afghanistan. While the military operation "Enduring Freedom" succeeded in ousting the Taliban regime from Kabul and dismantled their strongholds around the country, active diplomatic initiatives under the auspices of the UN facilitated the positive

outcome of the UN talks on Afghanistan. This left no choice even for the Taliban supporters and regional powers other than follow the trend.

Representatives of four Afghan groups – the Rome process (linked to the former king), the United Front, the Cyprus Group, and the Peshawar Group – participated in the Bonn Summit, but the Taliban was excluded from the talks.¹⁵ The Bonn Agreement was signed on December 5, 2001 envisaging establishment of democratic government institutions, protection of human rights, demobilization and disarmament of armed groups, and holding elections. The Bonn Agreement "set two processes in motion: state-building and consolidation of peace" (Their: 47). The Afghanistan Interim Administration (AIA) was created under Hamid Karzai, with a carefully balanced representation of ethnic and political groups to run the state for six months. Thus, the Bonn Agreement put an end to the chronic instability, violation of human rights and civil wars in Afghanistan, although the Taliban and terrorism remained major problems undermining the process of peace, state-building and reconstruction in the country.

3.3. International assistance to peacebuilding

In Afghanistan, the United Nations implemented the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, known as 'Brahimi Report' for unified control over political assistance and peacekeeping functions of the UN. Hence, the UN mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was mandated to overlook the peacebuilding process and coordination of the international assistance to Afghanistan. The UN Security Council in its Resolution 1378 (2001) affirmed that the UN should play a central role in the establishment of the transitional government. The succeeding resolution 1401 (2002) on the creation of the

UNAMA reaffirmed “the Council’s strong support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General” and endorsed “his full authority, in accordance with its relevant resolutions, over the planning and conduct of all United Nations activities in Afghanistan” and stressed that

“... the provision of focused recovery and reconstruction assistance can greatly assist in the implementation of the Bonn Agreement and, to this end, [the Security Council] urges bilateral and multilateral donors, in particular through the Afghanistan Support Group and the Implementation Group, to coordinate very closely with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Afghan Interim Administration and its successors...”

Thus the UN role in Afghanistan was not as dominating as in the case of Cambodia but not so weak as in the case of Iraq, defined by Brahimi as “light footprint” strategy in which Afghan leaders were to lead the Afghan people.

International assistance to post-conflict peacebuilding in Afghanistan was initially centered on two pillars: fighting the terrorism and the Taliban, and building a legitimate and democratic government foreseen in the Bonn Agreement. Furthermore, the international policy for consolidation of peace and democratization in Afghanistan included reconstruction, economic development, establishing reliable law enforcing agencies, promoting human rights, civil service, and reforming the judicial system.

Re-establishing a permanent legitimate authority

Establishing a responsible, representative and legitimate administration was the main issue for both the international community and the Afghan partners. The process envisaged for establishing such an authority according to the Bonn Agreement included four phases:

First, immediate establishment of the Interim Administration with all its members and chairman appointed by the Summit; Second, a transitional administration for 18 months to be decided upon by a *loya jirga* (grand assembly); Third, the drafting of the new constitution and the convening of another *loya jirga* to ratify it; Fourth, holding presidential and parliamentary elections by 2004 and 2005.

The approach of the international community and the UN’s approach to the conflict resolution was an amalgam of Afghan traditions and democratic requirements. The consociational design of the AIA was basically to satisfy various ethnic and political groups in a shared structure of power at least for the time being. For the later phases, the AIA structure was expected to be followed as a *de facto* model of structuring the political institutions. The transition of power to the AIA initially proceeded smoothly and raised much optimism among both the Afghans and international supporters, especially the Bush Administration. The generous donation from major donors enabled UNAMA and the AIA to arrange the Emergency Loya Jirga, in which Karzai was elected as head of the government for 18 months, and later the 2004 Loya Jirga for ratification of the new constitution.

Relying on *loya jirga* for the legitimacy of the new administration was a practical and realistic choice at the time, but its role was questionable for several reasons. First, *loya jirga* was a tradition rather than an institution, hence ill-suited for establishing a legitimate and democratic government. Second, the tribal system among many ethnic groups was weakened and the tribal elders were sidelined by new strongmen such as warlords, religious figures, and even criminals who controlled certain

parts of the country. Furthermore, *loya jirga* was used as a symbolic legitimizing instrument by former governments such as the Kabul communist regime, which had decreased the value of *loya jirga* itself in the eyes of Afghans. All these factors cast a shadow on the outcomes of both the Emergency and the Constitution *loya jirga*. Despite such imperfections, the *loya jirga* with great financial costs contributed to the consolidation of the new political structure and to the institutionalization of democratic culture, albeit with naive understanding.

The new and permanent constitution was perhaps the paragon of the post-2001 achievements that laid the foundation for creation of a new legal democratic government. The new constitution ameliorated social cleavages in a more plural and democratic structure, where both languages of Dari and Pashtu were recognized as the official languages of the state and other languages were to be official in the areas where local people communicate in them. Regarding religious issues, for the first time, the Shiite sect received official recognition beside the dominant Sunni sect, putting an end to a long lasting and historical marginalization of Shiites and denial of their rights. As for the ethnic cleavages the constitution only named all ethnic groups and emphasized equality and plurality. Thus the consociationalism of the AIA did not acquire legal status although it continues to shape the political structure even today. Moreover, the way that the constitution dealt with ethnic cleavages raised some criticism as well. Adeny (2008: 535) argued that the 2004 Constitution “rejected formal ethnic representation in state institutions,” explaining that “This Constitution, therefore, provides no defense against perceived or actual domination of the state by any one

particular ethnic community. This could lead to increased ethnic resentment and conflicts.” But with the bitter experiences of the Afghans in the past, deciding whether to restructure the power on the foundation of an “ethno-cultural core” in a multi-ethnic country or to resort to consociationalism was a difficult choice when the country had undergone considerable social and political changes. Creating a ‘civic state’ in a highly ethnicized political and social context was problematic and a far cry from reality. Furthermore, there was a harsh ethnic competition beneath friendly everyday meetings among Afghan leaders, which caused the re-ethnicization of politics in Afghanistan. In sum, the establishment of the legal democratic authority foreseen in the Bonn Agreement was completed by the 2004 presidential elections and the 2005 parliamentary and provincial council elections under the supervision of UNAMA and with financial support from the international community. Yet, the presidential system and the Single Non Transferable Vote (SNTV) system adopted by the Afghanistan’s electoral law undermined the role of the political parties in the political transition process. To some extent the SNTV system contributed to the continuity of the person-centric political structure embedded in ethnic politics of Afghanistan and caused ethnic mobilization by elites and ethnic entrepreneurs in the post-2001 period.

Reforming institutions and capacity building

Afghans have been suffering from a dysfunctional government unable to deliver public services and security in much of its modern history. The three decades of warfare deteriorated the situation where the governments were weak or even non-existent. Corruption, development of war economy, warlordism, and

powerful centrifugal forces that ruled over vast territories autonomously provided bone-breaking challenges for state-building in Afghanistan, which the Karzai administration had to cope with and it had to ensure the rule of law by expanding its rule beyond Kabul. For that, extensive reform of government institutions was required.

The judicial, civil service, and security sector reforms and promotion of human rights envisaged in the Bonn Agreement were undertaken by ad hoc commissions. The Judicial Commission was set up with UN help to “rebuild the domestic justice system in accordance with Islamic principles, international standards, and the rule of law and Afghan legal traditions” (Bonn Agreement). Italy was designated, in April 2002, as the lead donor state for work on the judicial system. The Italian government subcontracted judicial reform assistance with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) to provide assistance in legal training, drafting new laws, and reforming the existing ones with close cooperation of responsible organizations such as the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, and the Attorney General. But little progress was made because of the lack of sufficient donation and attention. As a result, the judicial system is far from winning the public trust and meeting international standards, and suffers from widespread corruption especially on the local level. As noted by the Crisis Group (2010), “Despite repeated pledges over the last nine years, the majority of Afghans still have little or no access to judicial institutions. Lack of justice has destabilized the country and judicial institutions have withered to near non-existence.”

The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) was

established in 2005 under the law of the same title. The IARCSC has succeeded to promote implementation of reforms to some extent in areas such as management of human resources in the public sector, including adoption of new recruitment procedures, development of a more systematic approach to job grading and associated pay levels, and introduction of human resource management functions in selected line ministries. Nevertheless, ethnic competition and meddling from government officials have hampered the process significantly. As a result, the reforms have failed to introduce a “system that depersonalizes, formalizes and rationalizes power through bureaucratic rules” in both central and local administrations (Lister).

The security sector reform was not the main focus of the Bonn Agreement; indeed it was the Afghanistan Compact (2006) that strengthened the security sector reform. The Bonn Agreement emphasized demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of the former combatants who were estimated between 63,000 and 250,000 (Ponzio). This process was financed by Japan as the main donor along with other countries, and implemented in two phases: DDR (2003–2005) through which around 62,000 were disarmed and demobilized; and The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) project (2005–2006) that resulted in the disbandment of 1,800 illegal armed groups comprising around 100,000 individuals (Sherman). With demobilization of former combatants re-establishment of a strong and impartial police force and national army was a high priority in order to avoid a security vacuum. However, it was only in 2005 with the resurgence of the Taliban and increasing terrorist attacks that establishing a stronger Afghan national security

force gained greater importance for the international community. The Afghanistan Compact authorized an initial police force of 62,000 but later with the US advocacy it was increased to 82,000 (Wilder). At the London Conference (2010) the international community and the Afghanistan government decided to increase the Afghan National Police (ANP) to 134,000 by the end of 2011. The police sector reform is supported by 25 countries including Germany as the leading donor working under the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB) as the coordinating organization. However, the lead nation approach of the Bonn process resulted in a fragmented and donor-driven approach to security sector reform and impeded smooth progress. The Afghanistan Compact contributed to a more integrated plan for police reform with giving the lead to the Afghan government and defining the donors as partners.

In contrast, the re-establishment of the Afghan National Army (ANA) has been a one-donor-driven process implemented by the US. Initially the size of the ANA was set to be 75,000, but the Karzai administration argued that the country would need a bigger military force to control its territory. Later the international community and the US agreed to increase the size of the army up to 260,000 by 2015. Despite problems such as desertion and lack of fiscal sustainability, the re-establishment of the ANA has been a success with currently 164,000 men in service, and the target is to reach 171,000 by the end of 2011. Afghanistan's security forces are now playing a significant role in stabilizing the country. However, some observers are critical of the ANA and ANP's training and re-establishment process and argue that despite receiving more than half of

the aid—about \$29 billion between 2002 and 2010—both the police and the army have proved to be unable to enforce the law and counter the insurgency (International Crisis Group, 2011). Especially there are doubts on the ability of the Afghan security forces to take over the security responsibility by the end of 2014 upon the withdrawal of the international security forces.

Economic development and reconstruction

In 2001, Afghanistan was a war ravaged country where most economic infrastructures were destroyed, and most of the people were living below the poverty line. Therefore, humanitarian aid, reconstruction and economic development were essential to fostering peace and stability in this country where 'bread was more important than democracy'. The international community and the new Afghan administration were quite aware of an intimate linkage between conflicts and poverty. Food shortage, lack of access to basic daily necessities, and unemployment could undermine the peace process and all efforts made for stabilizing the country. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "If through our wisdom we could secure elementary human needs, there would be no need for weapons of war" (Quoted in: Miller).

But the donors' initial response to the urgent need of development and reconstruction in Afghanistan was lukewarm. As noted by the Crisis Group, "Afghanistan received significantly less per capita in aid in the first five years after the US intervention than other post-conflict countries such as Bosnia or Iraq."¹⁶ This lack of attention to development and reconstruction to a large extent accounted for increasing insecurity and the resurgence of the Taliban by 2005. Later the international community showed more commitment to providing

more aid to Afghanistan; but it was too late and couldn't reverse the deteriorating security situation. From the first donor conference in Tokyo in 2002 till 2010, around \$62 billion were pledged for aid to Afghanistan from which \$26.7 billion has been disbursed in different projects (Livingston & O'Hanlon).

But the lack of coordination in channeling the aid into projects reduced the efficacy of international aid in changing the conditions in Afghanistan. From the onset of the Bonn process the international community preferred to rely on INGOs and NGOs for delivering humanitarian aid and implementing reconstruction projects in order to fill the vacuum left by the weak government. In addition, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) were engaged in reconstruction projects as part of the International Assistance Security Forces (ISAF). More than 77 per cent of aid was channeled through non-governmental organizations. Lack of attention to capacity building and enabling the government institutions in the capital or on sub-national levels caused serious problems and created a widespread skepticism on success of the political process among Afghans. Furthermore, low capacity of the government and the large number of NGOs have impeded creation of an accountable and transparent system and contributed to increase of corruption and waste of international aid.

Security and counter-insurgency

The security issue and countering the insurgents have been the most pressing element for peacebuilding in Afghanistan in the past ten years. The US and NATO military forces along with the Afghan police and army have made great efforts to eliminate the threats posed by the Taliban and terrorist networks. But despite such efforts, the Taliban

has remained the major threat to security and stability of Afghanistan and counter-insurgency has turned into a much prolonged war. Two factors were primarily important for the failure of the US and NATO forces to weaken the Taliban and other extremists. The first was lack of sufficient military force in the first years after the Taliban's ouster, which was limited to Kabul and some other major cities. The ouster of the Taliban regime completely paralyzed their organizational system. It was the right time to use full-scale military power and diplomatic initiatives to root-out the Taliban. But the Taliban received time for re-organizing and gained momentum from the initial lack of peacekeeping forces to be deployed around the country. A RAND study notes that compared to other interventions, Afghanistan had only one soldier for every 1,000 people versus seven in Iraq, nineteen in Bosnia, and twenty in Kosovo (Dobbins et al: 228). In addition, the Iraq war diverted the focus of the US and NATO from Afghanistan. The second factor was the lack of a broad-based regional policy for countering the extremists, which allowed countries such as Pakistan to play a dual role: partnering with the US and supporting the extremist groups.

3.4. Outcomes

The international assistance to peacebuilding in Afghanistan can be explained as both success and failure. A democratic central authority has been established and human rights, freedom of speech, free elections and other democratic values encapsulated in the new constitution have been institutionalized to some extent. Reforms in the security, civil service, and judicial sectors have been made, if insufficiently. In addition, Afghanistan has experienced some degree of economic growth and progress in

reconstruction and development in various areas. Currently, 85% of the population has access to basic health services; GDP per capita has increased by over 70% since 2002; numerous media outlets have been established and are operating in the country; and 75% of the Afghans have access to telecommunication services. Furthermore, illiteracy is decreasing with more than six million children enrolled in school and private and public universities growing both in number and quality (Livingston & O'Hanlon, 2011). These and other achievements indicate degrees of improvement in post-2001 Afghanistan. But yet the increasing insecurity threatens all progress made in the past ten years. Furthermore, despite the service of a bulk of ad hoc parallel commissions on anti-corruption and capacity-building, and spending of large sums, corruption and the low capacity for service delivery have remained strong barriers for peace and stability, weakening the central authority. Despite Karzai's commitment to fighting corruption as he stated in the Tokyo Conference in 2002 that he will be "a samurai against corruption," his government has failed to eliminate corruption in the country to win the trust of Afghan people.

The long-lasting war against terrorism and an obscure outlook for future outcomes have caused increased frustration over the current pace of progress among both the international community and the Afghans. Therefore, two mutually reinforcing options are put on the agenda: first, transfer of full security responsibilities to Afghan security forces as agreed at the NATO Summit (2010, Lisbon) and the Kabul Conference (2010); and second, arrangements of peace talks with the Taliban. As a result, the international community aims at empowering

the Afghan government institutions to be able to enforce law and end the war through reconciliation with anti-government insurgents. But both approaches are problematic and difficult to achieve, because on the one hand the Taliban has shown little interest in peace talks with the conditions set by the government, and on the other capacity-building and empowering state institutions are late moves that beg more time for realization. Hence the fragility of the state and its weakness to deal with domestic problems, and increased intervention from Afghanistan's neighbors, especially Pakistan, leave not much space for optimism on future political developments. In addition, during the last ten years the government has been unable to embark on a nation-building process. The traditional approach of the UN to nation-building through state building has not resulted in a sensible outcome. Furthermore, as the recent confrontations among political factions over the 2010 parliamentary elections have proved, ethno-political struggles have not faded away but remain as a potential cause for instability within the ruling body. It is a bitter reality that Foreign Policy Magazine listed Afghanistan as a failed state with a critical situation in its 2011 failed states index.

In sum, Afghanistan and the international community have come a long way to rebuild and democratize the war-torn country from the scratch—though not into a "Jeffersonian democracy" as stated by President Obama. Considerable progress has been made, some goals have been achieved, and some targets have been met, and yet achieving a self-sustaining government, security and stability is far from reality. Obviously, Afghanistan is now in a critical point, where without a sustained international support and long-term

commitment it may falter again and relapse to the pre-2001 situation. There are concerns on the future perspectives of a post-2014 Afghanistan when the international community withdraws their military forces completely from there. These concerns include economic, social and political developments, inter-ethnic relations, and foreign intervention especially from neighboring countries. A broad strategy that encompasses all these concerns and responds to the requirements for creating a stable, secure, and democratic Afghanistan is a primary necessity until 2014. Otherwise, the worsening security situation in Afghanistan might undo all achievements and progresses made within a decade with much sacrifice on both sides of the international community and the Afghan people.

4. Conclusion

As discussed above, the peacebuilding process in Cambodia ended in success despite all ups and downs, whereas peacebuilding in the Afghanistan case is still in a fragile state, if not a failure. But why did the peacebuilding efforts result in different outcomes? This comparative study of post-conflict peacebuilding in the cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan demonstrates both contextual differences in certain aspects and differences in the peacebuilding strategies pursued by the UN missions, which account for success or failure of international assistance to peacebuilding. We conclude our argument on peacebuilding with regard to the two cases by highlighting factors conducive to a sustainable peace in Cambodia and the defects of the peacebuilding initiatives in Afghanistan considering both the contextual and peacebuilding strategy variations.

Contextual variation

Cambodia and Afghanistan share to some extent similar troubled historical backgrounds, such as the rise of leftist movements, coup d'états, foreign invasions, and political disintegration. Furthermore, Cold War politics greatly contributed to the proliferation of civil conflicts in Cambodia and Afghanistan despite the non-aligned and neutral position of the two countries. But yet the socio-political and demographic structures as well as the geographic and geopolitical issues account for a lot of difference in the settlement of the conflicts of the two countries. The Khmers' absolute majority (about 90%) was an important element that allowed statebuilding and nation-building processes to develop in Cambodia around the Khmers' ethno-cultural core in the absence of ethnic and linguistic disputes. In addition, despite atrocities against the Vietnamese and Chinese minorities, the Khmers' overwhelming majority and Buddhism as the main religion of the country prevented religious or ethnic conflicts and so the nature of conflict was rather political, hence easier to resolve. Whereas in Afghanistan the absence of an ethno-cultural core and the co-existence of the four main ethnic groups (Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, and Uzbeks), in addition to Sunni and Shiite divides, made the conflicts more complex and more resistant to resolution.

Geography has also served in post-conflict Cambodia to achieve peace and security. In the 1990s Southeast Asian states were more focused on economic development and so the civil war in Cambodia with outpouring refugees and ethnic problems was seen as a destabilizing factor for the whole region. Therefore, besides the UN initiatives, the positive role of regional powers and neighboring countries were decisive

in ending the war in Cambodia. Moreover, the inclusion of Cambodia into ASEAN and later into the WTO was an important encouraging factor for the success of peacebuilding initiatives and preventing a relapse into war. Furthermore, peacebuilding was initiated at a right time coinciding with the decay and collapse of the Soviet Union that ended the Soviet support of Vietnam and in turn Vietnamese support of the Hun Sen government with withdrawal of its troops, which made the Hun Sen government accept a negotiated settlement and reconciliation. Later in 1993, when the Khmer Rouge boycotted the elections, the decision of China and Thailand not to support the Khmer Rouge was important as it deterred the Khmer Rouge from disrupting the elections and undermining the transition process.

In contrast, in the case of Afghanistan geography had negative impacts on all initiatives for peacebuilding. The rise of ethno-nationalism, religious fundamentalism, sectarianism, and the development of Islamic revolutionary ideas were what Afghanistan shared with its neighboring countries in the region. The inflow of troubles was much more than its outflow from Afghanistan. Pakistan and India's disputes over Kashmir turned Afghanistan into an arena of competition which Pakistan considered as its strategic depth and a support-base for Kashmir, while India considered winning the competition in Afghanistan decisive for the Kashmir issue. Moreover, Afghanistan suffered a lot from the ideological and strategic rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. The newly independent states of Central Asia which emerged along ethnic lines also influenced the political course in Afghanistan. In such complex regional politics

many attempts for conflict resolution were undermined by neighbors' meddling and ended in failure. In addition, while peace initiatives for ending the Cambodian strife ironically coincided with the Soviet withdrawal and similar initiatives in Afghanistan such as the announcement of the National Reconciliation program by Najibullah's communist regime in 1990, the international community and the UN made less effort to resolve the Afghanistan issue, and so the right time for peacebuilding was missed in Afghanistan. Furthermore, in contrast to the Khmer Rouge who lost support of its patrons after the peace accords, in Afghanistan, Pakistan continued to support Taliban insurgents after the Bonn Agreements, which enabled them to regroup and undertake destructive measures to undermine the peacebuilding process through armed resistance, boycotting the elections and intimidating the voters, etc. In short, our study of the cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan suggests that contextual variation has significant implications for peacebuilding initiatives and should be given serious consideration.

Peacebuilding strategies

Peacebuilding strategy and the policy options of the international community in the two cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan also account for the differences in the outcomes. The international assistance to peacebuilding in Cambodia was carried out under the auspices of the UN in exercising its trusteeship. Although some donor countries influenced the transition process, in comparison with the case of Afghanistan, the full control of the UN in post-conflict political arrangements in Cambodia contributed to a more coherent policy and a higher degree of coordination in international aid and support. But in Afghanistan, the "light

footprint” strategy that was to give the lead to the Afghans, resulted in poor coordination among the donor states. Furthermore, the weak role of the UN’s mission meant a stronger role of the US and pursuit of different policies by other donor states. In addition, the initial short-term, intensive and extensive peacebuilding initiatives by the UN in Cambodia helped the smooth and steady political transition, followed by a more long-term support. In contrast, the lack of sufficient support in the initial phase of political transition slowed down the peacebuilding process in Afghanistan, creating a lot of frustration among the Afghans and giving Taliban the chance to reorganize itself and establish their relations with Pakistani Taliban and other extremist groups such as Hezb Islami of Gulbudin Hekmatyar, Haqqani group, etc. Moreover, the UN mandated peacebuilding in Cambodia kept other regional and international powers behind the scene and created less political frictions and reaction in terms of power politics. But in Afghanistan the military presence of the US and the “coalition of the willing” raised concerns on the side of Afghanistan neighbors such as Iran, Russia and China, from among which Iran has been frequently accused of supporting the insurgents.

Another important factor for the success of peacebuilding in Cambodia was the inclusion of all four political factions in peace talks. But in Afghanistan the exclusion of the Taliban and Hezb Islami in the Bonn Agreement entailed high costs and undesired consequences. Although the post- 9/11 anti-terrorism climate didn’t allow the Bonn signatories to foresee the repercussions of such a decision, inclusion of moderate Taliban and especially Hezb Islami groups could have contributed to the success of

the UN mandated peacebuilding in Afghanistan. The same could be done in Afghanistan as in Cambodia which first included the Khmer Rouge and later outlawed the much weakened faction. But in Afghanistan, the exclusion of the Taliban and Hezb Islami brought a renewed insurgency and conflict while the peacebuilding process was put in motion.

Furthermore, the parliamentary political system arranged for post-conflict Cambodia did allow the political parties to play a significant role within a democratic and legal framework. But in Afghanistan the presidential system and the SNTV electoral system sidelined the political parties and instead encouraged a person-centric arrangement in which warlords and local strongmen came to play a significant role, producing political fragmentation and weakening of the political parties. Stronger political parties could have played two important roles in post-2001 Afghanistan: first, it could have transformed the ethnic competition into a competition among multiethnic political parties; and second, strong political parties could have strengthened the budding system of checks and balances in the nascent Afghan democracy.

Finally, channeling the international aids for reconstruction, post-conflict recovery and meeting the basic needs of the people affected by war is an important factor in peacebuilding. However, as the cases of Cambodia and Afghanistan show disbursing aid is very problematic because post-conflict states usually lack absorptive capacity and sufficient ability to use aid for reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. Therefore, aid usually causes rampant corruption and a delay in further aid disbursement. Moreover, relying on NGOs often reduces the benefit of assistance through lack of coordination and a donor driven

reconstruction process that can ignore primary local needs. In Cambodia the recovery plan rested in the hands of the government which was suffering from low capacity and inability to use the aid effectively. In Afghanistan, channeling a small amount of aid through government institutions and the larger portion through NGOs impeded capacity building and creation of an accountable system. Therefore, we suggest that while NGOs can serve as channels of aid for providing relief and reconstruction projects, international assistance should target primarily the capacity building of government institutions to make them capable to provide public services for their people and become self-sustaining with the capacity to absorb international aids and make projects on their own.

To sum up, timely interventions for peacebuilding and more coherent and well coordinated initiatives fit for the social and political characteristics of the countries suffering from civil strife are decisive elements for a successful peacebuilding. Furthermore, based on above observations we suggest that more proactive initiatives for ending civil conflicts and development of an early warning system for preventing such conflicts are needed. In addition, since a civil conflict usually involves neighboring countries and regional powers directly or indirectly, a broader political framework which would address their legitimate interests, deter them from interference and draw their support is indispensable for the success of any peacebuilding initiative.

Notes

¹ Barbara F. Walter argues that: "Over the past half century civil wars have increased and this

trend is disturbing for three reasons: first, civil wars tend to last twice as long as interstate wars; second, once they begin they are very difficult to resolve short of a decisive military victory; third, even if two sides do sign a peace treaty, most of these cases are likely to experience renewed violence in the future." Walter, p.1.

- ² For the political background to the civil war, see, for example, Amakawa, 2001.
- ³ For the process leading to the creation of UNTAC, see MacLeod and Heininger.
- ⁴ Boutros-Ghali, 1995, p.41. As of August 31, 1993, 84 were killed from among UNTAC personnel – Findley, p.156.
- ⁵ For UNTAC operations, see Heininger and Findley.
- ⁶ For international assistance after the departure of UNTAC, see Hughes, pp.99–104.
- ⁷ Tong, Naranhkiri, and Hughes (pp.31–50).
- ⁸ For the 1997 coup, see Ashley and MacLeod (pp. 88–92).
- ⁹ For the international pressure on Hun Sen's government, see Hughes, pp.104–109.
- ¹⁰ For the 1998 elections and their results, see Lizee.
- ¹¹ For Cambodian political parties, see Peou (pp.104–111) and Hughes (chaps. 4 & 6).
- ¹² For Hun Sen's dominant status, see Peou, pp.155–162.
- ¹³ National Institute of Statistics of Cambodia, <http://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/economic-stat/national-account-2008/> (accessed on Sept. 28, 2011)
- ¹⁴ Weinbaum notes, "The country's smaller ethnic minorities are determined not to allow the country's largest majority group, the Pashtuns, to regain its traditional political and economic ascendance."
- ¹⁵ However, later Brahimi who oversaw the Bonn Summit stated that the exclusion of the Taliban was the main flaw of the Bonn Agreement. Smith, p.7.
- ¹⁶ Per capita aid in Afghanistan was \$292 compared to \$585 in Bosnia and \$1,528 in Iraq. Donor Financial Review, Finance Ministry, November 2009, p.4.

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