



Working Paper

December 2008, n°6

State, non-state and multilateral logics of action in post-conflict environments

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Summary:

Critical voices in the NGO and academic worlds increasingly argue that there is a danger that northern security priorities might 'securitize' the humanitarian and development agendas¹, particularly in post-conflict environments. While these dangers are real, nevertheless one should not stereotype all international actors as "northern" or as promoting northern security (e.g. anti-terrorist) agendas. Rather than caricaturizing all the international actors that intervene in post-conflict situations with the global label of "*Northener*", it is instead more fruitful to view such actors as diverse players with conflicting interests that operate according to different policy logics.

Bio:

Niagale Bagayoko is a political scientist who has done research on security sector reform in francophone African countries and led field research in Central African Republic, Cameroon, Mali and Senegal. She has also studied interagency and multilateral processes in post-conflict environments as well as sub-regional security mechanisms in West Africa (ECOWAS). She has carried out extensive research on the impact of Western security policies (France, United States, European Union) on African conflict-management mechanisms.

Critical voices in the NGO and academic worlds increasingly argue that there is a danger that northern security priorities might 'securitize' the humanitarian and development agendasⁱⁱ, particularly in post-conflict environments. While these dangers are real, nevertheless one should not stereotype all international actors as "northern" or as promoting northern security (e.g. anti-terrorist) agendas. Rather than caricaturizing all the international actors that intervene in post-conflict situations with the global label of "Northener", it is instead more fruitful to view such actors as diverse players with conflicting interests that operate according to different policy logics.

Indeed, post-conflict environments involve an ever increasing range of international actors. The first category of actors includes agents deployed by northern states, while the second category constitutes the agents deployed by multilateral organizations. A third set of international stakeholders include non-states actors, such as NGOs, private companies and media organizations. These various actors are driven by very differing normative agendas. While they engage in the same fields of study and reform, their logics of action refer to standards, norms or procedures that are often hardly compatible one with each other.

It is thus possible to identify five logics of action that can explain the failures or limited successes of interventions in post-conflict environments:

- the security field is both embedded in a military and a constabulary logic of action;
- in the humanitarian field, the charity logic of action often clashes with a political approach to humanitarian assistance;
- in the field of peace building, institutional engineering is often torn between different national approaches to public service;
- in the reconstruction field, a profit logic may be in opposition with a solidarity logic;
- the field of media finds it difficult to combine the communication and the audience rating logic.

Finally, some post-conflict policies, particularly those of great powers, are primarily driven by the transformation of their internal security structures rather than by needs on the ground.

The security field, between military and constabulary logics

Two kinds of security missions characterize post-conflict environments. The first type involves preventing the resumption of hostilities and ensuring the protection of minorities. These missions clearly fall under the responsibility of the military, which often adopts a deterrent posture in the continuance of the action led in the conflict management phase. The second kind of mission consists of maintaining and enforcing law and order. These missions consist of quelling riots, preventing violence through community policing, managing ethnic tensions, fighting against organized crime, and dismantling criminal networks. Interventions in the field of law and order both fall under the responsibility of military and police forcesⁱⁱⁱ. For instance, the French armed forces have developed the so-called "crowd control" doctrine (*doctrine de controle des foules*), which is intended for riot management, while American land forces have increasingly become involved in penal and judicial missions, as well as the training of internal security forces, notably in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Concurrently, police forces have become

new actors of post-conflict operations. The UN has developed the International Civilian Police Program (CIVPOL) and the European Union (EU) has promoted a constabulary approach within the framework of the «civilian management of crises» concept, developed under the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The police forces of Southern Europe (France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal) have joined together under the European Gendarmerie Force.

Military and police forces refer to different standards (principles of war such as concentration of forces; strategies of offensive action and surprise versus negotiation and minimal use of force, etc.). Corporatist rivalries between military and police forces can also prevent both forces from collaborating on the ground.

Beyond the military and police, private companies are now fulfilling a growing number of functions that were previously fulfilled by the traditional armed and police forces. These private security companies are bringing in new operating procedures and standards that interfere with the military and police forces' norms.

The humanitarian field, between charity and politics

The humanitarian field is the one within which the most diverse set of intervening actors. This sphere of action is surrounded first of all by international organizations, be they multilateral (United National High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, etc.) or not (International Committee of the Red Cross). These organizations, which were specially created with the aim of assisting marginalized populations, are operating according to a charitable model and can act during emergencies. They also are meant to have mid-term and long-term effects.

Non-governmental organizations specialized in emergency assistance constitute the second category of actors. These organizations differ from one another with regard to their codes of ethics, their funding strategies, their operational capacities and the relationships they develop with other actors. It is thus difficult to consider NGOs to comprise a homogeneous and coherent group. Nevertheless, most French NGOs demonstrate their willingness to promote the principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality. To them, humanitarian action is an end in itself and cannot be considered as instrumental; humanitarian assistance must only be driven by an exclusively charitable logic.

This logic of charitable action, concurrently claimed by international organizations and by some NGOs, places human rights at the heart of organizational commitment in post-conflict environments. These actors believe that individual rights take precedence over the interests and the sovereignty of states and that "humanitarian assistance" be defined in terms of "human security". Other notably American NGOs (such as CARE, World Vision, Save the Children) promote the same human security principals but do not acclaim in such a demanding way the independence of their sphere of action. Instead, they collaborate more easily with the other actors that intervene in the humanitarian field.

In addition to multilateral bodies and NGOs, the armed forces also intervene in the humanitarian field. The dangers of the "militarization of the humanitarian action"^{iv} are frequently underlined, with servicemen often being accused of encroaching on the NGOs' field of action. It is, however, advisable to maintain a distinction among the logics of humanitarian intervention of various northern armies. Indeed, contrary to common belief, military intervention in the humanitarian field is far from constituting a recent phenomenon, which would have appeared with the formalization of the CIMIC doctrines

(*civilian - military cooperation*) developed by NATO or the American armed forces. First, the Geneva Agreements and the international laws concerning armed conflict impose a number of humanitarian obligations on the armed forces. Besides, some armed forces, such as the French or the US Marines, have traditionally fulfilled humanitarian missions throughout the 19th century. According to the rules set up by colonial Generals Lyautey and Gallieni, or by Calwell's "small wars" doctrine^v, implementing humanitarian programs (supply of care, construction of schools, roads and other infrastructure) has, for a long-time, been considered a tactic that aims to favor the insertion of the soldiers into the local environment. That is why a number of servicemen consider intervention in humanitarian affairs to be legitimate and express the feeling of being partly dispossessed of their traditional duties by humanitarian NGOs.

However, beyond this traditional approach, military intervention in the humanitarian field is increasingly being connected to more political logics. From about fifteen years ago, the humanitarian field has become a political and strategic stake. Political actors are knowingly invoking humanitarian action as a tool for crisis management. Increasingly, politics view humanitarian action as a political instrument that can provide legitimacy to states policies. US military action in Indonesia following the tsunami is a telling example, as the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) mobilized contingencies to bring humanitarian assistance to devastated regions. According to US officials, this allowed the image of the US to be restored, showing Muslim countries that the US did not hesitate in helping a country that is home to the largest Muslim population in the world. Humanitarian assistance in that case aimed not only at helping populations affected by a natural disaster, but also at widening American "soft power". Beyond this example, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan and the Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DART) in Iraq show that humanitarian intervention is increasingly seen as a "force multiplier" in some American politico-military circles^{vi}. The armed forces of other western armies are ceaselessly called on to directly assume humanitarian work within the framework of the CIMIC doctrine or to provide visible support to NGOs.

Thus, a state approach is developing that tends to consider humanitarian assistance as a politico-diplomatic lever. This instrumental approach obviously clashes with the principles guiding the action of a number of NGOs that refer to the inheritance of the *French Doctors* (Medecins Sans Frontieres, Medecins du Monde) To these NGOs, the instrumental approach can result in a political control over humanitarian assistance, directing the interventions depending on political objectives rather than on the needs of the populations on the ground. NGOs denounce the fact that, in a growing number of southern countries, humanitarian action is increasingly assimilated by the local populations or undertaken by the armed forces or the foreign policies of the states. Facing the growing interference of the military in the humanitarian field, several NGOs have pleaded for a clarification of the roles of each actor. NGOs also argue that being likened to the diplomats or the military of northern countries is likely to endanger their own safety and, consequently, limit their access to a number of zones. NGOs tend to consider that their insertion in the local environment (i.e. the relationship of trust they are able to develop with local populations) is their best protection. Being assimilated to the northern armed forces tends to destroy this protection as well as the NGOs' independent stance. NGOs generally tend to be characterized under the "northern" label and are often seen as occupying forces by the local populous.

Consequently, coordination of the actors intervening in the humanitarian field seems difficult to achieve, as so far the charitable principles that drive the actions of numerous NGOs seems widely paradoxical with the political logic underlying the humanitarian action being deployed by northern states.

The field of state-building (politico-institutional engineering): a public service logic

The objective of state-building is to reorganize southern states' apparatuses following conflicts by favoring the restoration of basic institutional structures. With the former institutional system having disappeared or been modified profoundly due to conflicting dynamics, new missions and modes of functioning of the state are enacted during post-conflict periods often under the aegis of the international community. First, state-building aims to restore the state's ability to manage key institutions such as the police, the judicial system, and the economy (budget, currency, taxes). Then, a new organization of powers (organization of the legislative, executive and judiciary powers) is introduced while a more efficient administrative structure is established.

Setting up a temporary government is often the first step towards the institutional reorganization of a post-conflict country. In this field, multilateral organizations (UN, EU, etc.) are often the main actors. Northern states are also often called upon to deploy their own experts in order for them to provide assistance in the politico-institutional engineering process. Policemen and territorial administrators can be sent by the home offices, and the Ministries of Justice can mobilize jurists and magistrates. Such agents can be deployed as members of the UN administration, as members of regional missions of the UN or Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), or as experts of their own national government in a bilateral framework. They can then serve as advisors to the new local civil servants.

These state or multilateral actors intervene according to a public service logic. The coordination of their interventions should thus be facilitated. However, it is advisable to keep in mind that state-building, in essence, refers to the exporting of politico-institutional models. By contributing to state-building in failed states, northern countries seek to promote their own modes of organization. As a consequence, there is often a latent competition between the various members of multinational coalitions, with each trying to reorganize the administration according to its national model. The case of the reorganization of the police in Kosovo is a good example of this competition between national models. There the US wished to set up a decentralized police system, while France suggested setting up a dual police system (with both police and gendarmerie forces). In Afghanistan, the Bonn agreement ended by giving each international actor the responsibility of reorganizing one sector as a whole; Italy was responsible for judicial reorganization, Germany was in charge of the police, Japan was responsible for Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes, UK for the fight against drugs, the US for training the Afghan army, and the European Commission and the World Bank for reform of the state. The institutions that emerge in the wake of such sharing arrangements are often seen as being "tinkered" with; in this sense, they are the result of an artificial combination of heterogeneous elements that stem from various national traditions rather than being the result of a coherent framework that is tailored to local specifications.

The field of reconstruction: profit and solidarity

It is during the post-conflict phase that the first programmes of reconstruction, aiming at rebuilding infrastructure, begin to form. Profit, connected to industrial purposes (e.g. the purchasing of concessions), is one of the forms of logic that drive the intervention of northern states in the field of reconstruction. National strategies, aimed at winning post-conflict reconstruction markets, are set up in

support of national private companies. The conquest of post-conflict local markets then depends on the efficiency of the diplomatic apparatus. Indeed, the promotion of national economic interests, by means of support to private companies, requires very specific methods. It does not solely consist of bilateral negotiations at the political level. Mostly, post-conflict countries are small states with unreliable markets that do not offer large-scale or long-term perspectives. Competition in these markets is not the same as in stronger markets. Further, the major characteristics of a post-conflict environment are latent insecurity and competition between companies to acquire multilateral financing for reconstruction programmes. At both these levels, private companies need to be supported by their national governments. First, companies need to acquire support (technical and logistical assistance, information, personal security when necessary) that is frequently provided by the national armed forces. Second, private companies need to be introduced to multinational donors, as the ability to lobby multilateral donors is key in the defence of national economic interests.

However, in the field of reconstruction, the logic of profit is not the only one that presides over the intervention of northern states. Most interventions are also concurrently driven by a logic of development. The logic of development does not enter systematically in contradiction with the logic of profit, as programmes dedicated to the rehabilitation of infrastructure can rely on both logics. For instance, in France, the double role of the AFD (Agence française de développement) - operating both as a banking institution (which provides grants loans to companies) and as an operator for development on the ground - illustrates the possible complementarities between development and industrial logics. Nevertheless, development, of course, far from limits itself to the material aspect of reconstruction. Development policies also aim to provide structural and long-term support to social groups weakened and marginalized by conflict. This support consists of implementing programmes with sanitary, social or educational vocations. Such policies are meant to create the conditions of a durable and equitable development. They are operated by the states through their development agencies (USAID, DFID, AFD), by multilateral bodies (UNDP) or by some NGOs specialized in the provision of long-term programmes with social vocations. These development actors generally consider that reconstruction has to resort to a logic of solidarity, while private companies – supported by some departments of their national states - consider that their contribution to reconstruction has to guarantee them a return on their investments.

Consequently, in post-conflict environments, reconstruction is at the heart of a twofold debate:

- Firstly, must assistance be directed toward supporting national private companies, or must it be directed toward providing direct assistance to local populations? This question is the subject of considerable controversy and debate in northern states.

- Secondly, what should be the role of local actors in reconstruction processes? Indeed, local actors tend increasingly to denounce the development actors as well as northern companies for imposing unfair competition on local companies. Such a situation prevents, in their view, the emergence of a local private sector.

The field of media, between audience rating and communication

Intervention in the field of media involves publicity of the actions and programmes implemented in post-conflict environments. All actors (states, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc.) seek to involve the media and adopt a communication logic, which aims to

legitimize their actions and augment public support. On the other hand, it is worth noting that the media as such is strangely absent in post-conflict environments. It is mostly before and above all during the conflicts that the media plays a crucial role by alerting the public of the dramatic reality of some conflicts, which may, as a consequence, provoke intervention from the north. By contrast, after conflicts the media is rarely mobilized because the logic of audience rating which governs the media's actions is hardly compatible with the general lack of interest that characterizes post-conflict environments. One of the challenges in post-conflict environments is to succeed in making the logic of audience rating and the logic of communication coincide. Indeed, it is often because of the absence of public interest during post-conflict situations (even when the pre-conflict and the management of the conflict itself mobilized attention) that political authorities do not make strong commitments in post-conflict environments.

Influence of decision-making processes and inter-institutional relations

The difficulties in harmonizing the different logics that drive the actions of the various actors involved in post-conflict environments can explain why northern security policies are often far from meeting the needs on the ground. But the issue of coordination is not only a challenge to be met once northern actors are deployed to post-conflict theatres. It is also important to take into account another phenomenon that can have a negative impact on post-conflict processes: bureaucratic relations between actors and institutions involved in policy-making processes. Indeed, northern post-conflict policies are often much more informed by inter-institutional processes than by local dynamics and interactions. Some of the strategic choices made by northern actors depend on the interests of each department involved in the construction of post-conflict policies^{vii}.

It appears that competition rather than convergence remains the main trend in inter-institutional relations when post-conflict policies are at stake. Rivalries are born out of the different institutions' desires to play the role of a 'lead agency' on post-conflict issues. The linkage between security and development is frequently at the core of this inter-institutional competition: increasing involvement in security issues constitutes a means for institutions involved in development (such as DFID, USAID, or Development General Directorate in the European Commission) to respond to doubts regarding the efficiency of their development strategies. At the same time, departments traditionally involved in security issues, namely the Department of Defence, aim to affirm their credibility and to keep a hand on processes that, in their perspective, still primarily rely on military dynamics. The policies on the ground are often the result of compromises among these departments.

Conclusion:

Increasingly, great powers like the US, UK or France, as well as politico-economic organizations, such as the UN and the EU, call for joint interagency approaches aimed at increasing coherence among the institutional actors involved in post-conflict environments. The emergence of the so-called "integrated approaches", which aim at enhancing the coordination and comprehensiveness of security policies on the ground, is the major symptom of this tendency. However, to be successful, such integrated approaches must harmonize the normative agendas that determine the actions of each kind of institutional actor involved in post-conflict situations. While comprehensiveness is often viewed as a

way to harmonize the practices, there is an urgent need to address the opposition – and in some cases the competition – that exists between the institutional cultures, as well as the normative standards of the actors deployed on the ground.

ⁱ M. Duffield (2001), *Global governance and the new wars: the merging of development and security*, London: Zed Books

ⁱⁱ M. Duffield (2001), *Global governance and the new wars: the merging of development and security*, London: Zed Books

ⁱⁱⁱ The distinction between military and constabulary ethos in peacekeeping operations, operated by Charles Moskos, can also be relevantly applied to post-conflict environments (Ch. Moskos (1975), « UN Peacemakers : The Constabulary Ethic and Military Professionalism », *Armed Forces and Society*, volume 1, n°4)

^{iv} Makki Sami (2004), *Militarisation de l'humanitaire, privatisation du militaire*, Cahier d'Etudes stratégiques 36-37, Paris.

^v Calwell Charles Edward, *Small War : Their Principles and Prattice*, (third edition 1986), Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press; Dabezies Pierre (2001), « La raison d'être des Troupes de marine en l'an 2000 », *Les Troupes de marine dans l'armée de terre : un siècle d'histoire (1900-2000)*, Centre d'histoire de la défense, Paris, Editions Lavauzelle.

^{vi} The PRT are made up of mixed teams, integrating both civilians and servicemen (often from the Special forces). Their mission is to facilitate development and reconstruction in Afghanistan. In Iraq, the DART, mostly made up of civilians and deployed under the aegis of the USAID, provides humanitarian assistance in order to support the military activities of the US armed forces.

^{vii} Allison Graham et Zelikov Philip (1999), *Essence of Decision : Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2^{ème} édition, New York, Longman; Halperin Morton et Kanter Arnorld (1974), *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, Washington D.C., Brookings institution; Egeberg, M. (1999) 'The Impact of Bureaucratic Structure on Policy Making', *Public Administration* 77.

