

## **Chapter 9 - Human Rights Reconstruction**

The ultimate goal of any human rights operation (HRO) must be to facilitate the creation of self sustainable human rights environments. This includes actual and perceived security of individuals and groups, functioning judicial systems, and a civil society aware of its human rights and how to defend them. This is part of the larger issue of post-conflict reconstruction<sup>185</sup> or rebuilding wartorn societies<sup>186</sup>.

It is a fundamental truism that human rights reconstruction and sustainable human rights environments must come from, and be driven by, the local society itself. Broad popular involvement is the touch stone of sustainable human rights protection, and provides the legitimacy for governmental human rights structures, laws, and procedures.

Nevertheless, HROs and the larger international human rights community can play an important role in facilitating both reconciliation and human rights reconstruction. Because internal national social dynamics and politics are crucial to this process, HRO personnel need to be particularly knowledgeable about the causes of the local conflict and local human rights violations. Because human rights reconstruction is extremely long term, HROs must combine local knowledge with an ability to think strategically on how to proceed.

This chapter will look at some of the options open to HROs and others from the international human rights community to first create the foundations for, and then undertake human rights capacity and institution building.

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<sup>185</sup> See UN Doc A/50/345 containing the report and recommendations of the International Colloquium on Post-Conflict Reconstruction Strategies as well as UN Doc A/50/332, report of the SG on UN support to new or restored democracies.

<sup>186</sup> See the study being conducted by the UN Research Institute for Social Development on *Rebuilding Wartorn Societies*, Geneva, inter alia it is extremely positive that they see those societies themselves as the key component of rebuilding and are conducting the study in a participatory manner with several wartorn societies as active contributing partners.