

of combatants, resettlement of displaced persons, local institution-building, election monitoring, democratic and judicial reform, civilian police training, and post-conflict economic and social reconstruction are all activities with important peacebuilding dimensions.

As the linchpin of the global security system, the UN has a critical role to play in all these areas. Many activities related to peacebuilding are in fact carried out by modern peacekeeping operations, as these have expanded their scope to deal with new realities. However, peacebuilding is a wider concept than peacekeeping because it seeks to deal with the root causes of conflict, to address not only the immediate but also the medium- and longer-term challenges for ensuring peace in troubled areas.

Active in peacebuilding at the UN are not only the Security Council and the office of the Secretary-General, but also other specialized agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Civilian Police. Regional organizations (e.g., the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, NATO, the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity) as well as a range of national and international non-governmental organizations are working with the UN on these challenges. Finally, through its two-year term on the Security Council, as well as through national efforts such as the

Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative, Canada is striving to enhance the capacity of the UN to undertake effective peacebuilding activities in areas of conflict.

Disarmament

Stopping the arms race and reducing, and then completely abolishing, the arsenals of weapons are main UN concerns. The UN has commissioned research and made recommendations. As a permanent forum for dialogue, it has facilitated negotiations conducted at the bilateral level or within the Disarmament Conference meeting regularly in Geneva.

In 1996, the General Assembly crossed a historic watershed when it passed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which banned all nuclear testing. The previous year had seen a great step forward, when the states parties to the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), ratified by 187 countries (all but 4 members of the international community), extended its provisions indefinitely. Under this treaty, states possessing nuclear arms promised not to supply them to other countries and to reduce their own nuclear arsenals. Countries without nuclear arms undertook not to acquire such weapons.

The concern with disarmament has been unwavering over the last 30 years. During this time, the UN has presided over the conclusion of treaties banning the emplacement of nuclear arms in space (1967), or on the seabed and the ocean floor (1971). Other treaties banned the development,

For more information about the Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative, visit the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Web site at www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca or the Canadian International Development Agency site at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca.



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