

THE CANADIAN PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This Strategic Framework reflects a common understanding by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) of the aims and approaches to peacebuilding that will be undertaken within the framework of the Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative. It responds to the desire of Ministers for a strategic approach to Canadian peacebuilding-- one that reflects a coherent and well coordinated inter-departmental partnership, and the full involvement of Canadian civil society, in order to most effectively address the peacebuilding needs of countries where violent conflict undermines sustainable development and human security.

A. CONTEXT

Since the end of the Cold War, the international community has been confronted by a growing number of intra-state or regional conflicts which engender long-term cycles of violence. Of the 96 armed conflicts that occurred between 1989 and 1996, 91 were intra-state conflicts, nearly all in developing countries. These conflicts destroy already limited resources, infrastructure, institutions of governance, and undermine often fragile ethnic and social cohesion.

The international community has responded to this challenge through efforts aimed at better understanding violent conflict and its links with development. The 1997 *OECD DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation* recognize good governance and the strengthening of civil society as the foundations for peacebuilding and highlight specific operational priorities for post-conflict recovery (such as demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants). They stress the importance of international and in-country coordination, as well as the need for regional conflict prevention and peacebuilding mechanisms.

Peacebuilding has been given new prominence in the United Nations in the Secretary-General's reform package. The Department of Political Affairs will now be responsible for coordinating the peacebuilding work of the development, peace and security arms of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the World Bank. In addition, recognizing that strengthening democracy is essential to strengthening peace and human rights, leaders at the Denver Summit of the Eight (June, 1997) made a commitment to build on their governments' most effective programs for democratic development, peacebuilding and human rights.

What is Peacebuilding?

Peacebuilding is the effort to strengthen the prospects for internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflict. The overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence. Ultimately, peacebuilding aims at building human security, a concept which includes democratic governance, human rights, rule of law, sustainable development, equitable access to resources, and environmental security. The pursuit of this goal in countries torn by internal