

Peace and Development*

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Abstract

Peace and satisfaction can be achieved if nations in the world can proceed towards their targets, if they can develop. Hence, development in its broad sense is the key to peace. The author gives an insight why “crisis management” should be changed for “crisis prevention” and how experiences of developed nations could be used for the benefit of less developed nations.

Key words: conflict management, peace, development, United Nations.

1. Introduction (Peace)

Although even not so long ago many considered the UN as unable to act resolutely in crisis situations and some even wanted to dissolve the UN as a useless and money-consuming institution, the war in Yugoslavia or the recent war against terrorism drew again the attention to the important role of UN in peace activities. Without the active contribution of UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan it would have been impossible to reach an international coordination in settling the Afghan war and in preparing the plans for Afganistan’s reconstruction. Therefore, today probably the most important role of the UN is to promote peace in the world for which it must enhance its international coordination activities, through many channels of communication between various regions and nations, in order to reach a better mutual understanding world wide. If na-

tions and regions will better know each other and if they will come to understand each other’s problems and conditions, hostility will give its place to mutual understanding and help. In this process a vital element is education.

Peace and education, knowledge are closely inter-related. Peace is the indispensable condition for normal human life and activity, without which no progress in social, cultural or economic development can be achieved. Peace is not a passive state, not a result of refraining from any activity interfering with other people, nations or countries, but it is the result of actively learning more and more about each other and of reaching a helping hand to those in need. Learning and accruing our knowledge is thus the true essence of peace, which is set as basic moral precondition also by the main religions¹.

*The text is based on my prize-winning essay at the 18th Eisaku Sato Essay Contest, 2002. Since the contest stipulated that participants should address the role of the United Nations and the United Nations University (UNU) in education to solve global issues like peace activities, sustainable development and poverty, in this essay the education and the learning process are also taken up.

¹“Father, forgive them, for *they do not know what they do*” (Jesus says when being crucified, Luke 23:34) Buddha sees the final reason in learning and “self-enlightenment”.

Knowledge is essential to avoid harm doing, but also to do benefit for others.

2. From crisis management to crisis prevention

When a crisis situation arises, it indicates the existence of unresolved problems. This is common to every crisis situation even if a crisis can assume different forms from latent conflicts between concerned parties to aggressive behaviour even war against other people or countries. How to solve a crisis?

Recently a most aggressive form of crisis, terrorism came to the forefront. Many politicians and specialists are calling up to a merciless fight against terrorism, asking death or life sentence for terrorists. This is a way of eliminating or eradicating terrorism in absolute terms.² A tit-for-tat approach, however, would further aggravate hostility and lead to broadening warfare. Would not have been negotiations with terrorists of hijacked airplanes, those would have been blown up and lives of innocent passengers could not have been saved. It seems therefore probably more appropriate to use the term "crisis management" implying the attempt to solve a crisis in its complexity and mainly to achieve the most humanistic outcome.

As crises are originating from problems, crisis management cannot be successful without going to the root of problems. Such problems can be poverty and isolation of certain nations or regions, the lack of technology for development, low level of education. Quite interestingly, after the September 11 events not only military retaliation was sought but a wave of learning emerged to know more about the origins of terrorism and to find remedies.³ Hopefully, the reconstruction plan for Afghanistan will help to overcome the isolation of that region and will soon start an economic and social development.

It can be seen, then, that crisis in its direct form

requires direct and prompt policies for solution, while the underlying problems ask for specific approaches and for the longer term.

First, the former one, that is the direct crisis management should belong to the UN, which is the most suitable organization for international coordination. It also should extend its activity to initiating (but not undertaking) the investigation and resolution of problems of crisis. In the past the UN acted more or less in line with such an expectation.

In future, however, the UN should be much more active and should develop a *crisis prevention* policy instead of the recent *post festa* crisis management. It should set up crisis study groups for locating and signaling latent crisis spots. Further, it should draw up a scenario for the crisis's development and should indicate the point at which the UN's inter-mediatory role should be activated in order to prevent the outbreak of crisis. For that, the UN itself must learn! The UN University (UNU) should provide such a targeted education for UN officials, taking up and analysing past crisis situations, what could have been done in order to avoid those crises. Learning from the past means to manage our future, - this should be better observed both by the UN and the UNU. Recently, researchers are progressing towards conflict prevention and pre-emptive actions.⁴

Second, for solving the problems at the core of crisis, the immense knowledge resource of the UNU should be actively used. The concrete problem solving, of course, would remain in the competence of specific helping or developing organizations (NGOs, the World Bank etc.), but the UNU should provide for them a theoretical and conceptual guidance. Thus, the UNU would help channeling knowledge toward practical application. In order to

²In the field of morals and law, B. Leiser's view is well representing this line. According to him, claims of terrorists are unsatiable hence non-negotiable and they should be put to death. (Liberty, Justice and Morals: Contemporary Value Conflicts, New York, Macmillan 1979).

³On the initiative of K. Annan the volume has been compiled: Crossing the Divide, Dialogue among Civilizations (ed. G. Picco), School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, 2001.

⁴For example, in the voluminous book: From Reaction to Conflict Prevention: Opportunities for the UN System (Fen Osler Hampson and David M. Malone, eds.) 431p., Lynne Rienner, 2002.

fulfil this mission, however, the UNU itself too must improve its knowledge resources. Because, UNU research reports often are of a too “abstract” academic level, or often go in the direction of pure political discussions, both of them being inapplicable to concrete problems. On the other hand, there are empirical reports at the other organizations being involved in aid or development projects. But again, these remain on a reporting-monitoring level, and cannot, following from their nature, level up to scholarly generalizations of the findings, whereby a treasure of valuable experiences remains unused. From now on, the UNU should become an active bridge between the knowledge base and problem solving in member countries in general, and especially recently in the field of crisis prevention. In this the word “active” means a really active role of the UNU in scholarly generalizing earlier experiences *and* in forwarding the essential findings, providing conceptual guidance to the respective organizations.⁵

3. From sustainable development to balanced development

In recent UN-jargon the “sustainable development” is mostly used for general economic development, but in fact the expression is nothing else than a desirable requirement set to industry developers to preserve the integrity of natural environment⁶, and thus it is more related to environment protection. The UNU’s thematic approach divides development into three separate fields: development (globalization, growth, urbanization), science and technology, environment (resource management, sustainable industry, water etc.).⁷ Here “sustainable” is better placed within environment and related to industry, suggesting that industrial development

should not cause harm to the environment. Both approaches are, however, too narrow to cover development issues, especially if we want to get closer to crisis prevention.

For our purpose the classification of development into the field of economy and technology on the one hand, and in the field of social structures on the other, would seem more appropriate. This approach would better reflect the pattern of development and its effect, consequences for the society. Needless to say that not every development is satisfying the people of a given society (nation, region, country), only that one which considers the given conditions of the society. Only in this case can we say that the development is “sustainable”. Therefore, a development which is acceptable or desirable for the society, is much wider than environment protection, it would be better to call it “balanced development”. It would include a considerate, well-established development policy, considering a sound balance between industry and environment, and between economy (technology) and society in a broad sense to avoid unbalances which easily could lead to social dissatisfaction and crisis.

Development patterns should be thoroughly analysed and evaluated in particular with respect to their social implications and crisis-creating potentialities. Even now, after socialism had disappeared 10 years ago, within the universal free market driven and democratic order there are several patterns of economic and social development. The free market model, probably in its classical form is to be found in the USA which also has its problems not only in the field of economic regulation and coordination, for example to ensure a continuous growth, but in social fields as well like unemployment, partial poverty or discrimination. The “social market economy” pattern of development (soziale Marktwirt-

⁵This is fundamentally different from the passively formulated Key Roles of the UNU (“A bridge between the UN and the international academic community”, and “A think-tank for the UN systems”). If the “bridge” from the academics does not lead to some really beneficial use, or if a think-tank is confined to “UN systems”, knowledge will remain in the academy’s “ivory tower”.

⁶About the origins see The Earth Conference, Brasil 1992.

⁷UNU, Thematic Orientation (<http://www.unu.edu>).

schaft) is traditionally practiced in Germany, which recognizes the deficiencies of market and attempts to smooth out its negative and irritating social effects. Thus, on the one hand the stimulative forces of the market can work to achieve efficient development, but its differentiating effects are being kept within limits acceptable for the society. The social coordination factor is playing still a stronger role in the welfare model of the Nordic countries like Sweden, Norway and other countries. Further, there is the transitional model of the post-communist countries in Central Eastern Europe, where the free market and democracy are being (re) introduced causing both new social inequalities and ethnicity problems. Also, in the developing world there are several patterns as to the beginnings of an independent economic and social policy making. The international aspect of development is globalization with its positive as well as negative impacts.

When advising a country what development pattern to follow, the conditions of that country must be very carefully considered. It is natural that certain development models are only applicable at a given economic and social, cultural level, for example the Swedish welfare model would be inconsistent in a country with a GDP level of US \$ 20 per capita. However, it is not the model itself which is important, but the ways and policies through which a country finally arrived at the welfare and social democracy. It is then, the development paths and policies of highly developed countries should be analysed.

The UNU should undertake this task. It should compile a set of development models, the paths and policies of how respective countries achieved their present position and these model-scenarios should be introduced into the UNU's education plan. Thus, policy makers and officials, professionals from other countries taking courses at the UNU could become familiar with various development scenarios, during discussions they could relate the respective policies to the present problems in their own coun-

tries and they will be able to answer new challenges.

4. Development: basic needs and technology

Human society was never free of conflicts, however their graveness is depending on the material development possibilities of the society, its social strata and the individual. Here not the "living standard" or the "level of wealth" in absolute terms is the conditioning factor *but the possibility and the expectation to get from a certain point to another higher point. If real development will meet expectations, the members of a society will enjoy the fruits of their efforts with satisfaction, otherwise conflicts will flare up.*

Saying that, however, level-differences between countries do matter for international peace, especially when the rift between rich and poor countries is widening. Recently globalization is leading to a polarized world community with a deeply embittered and marginalized majority.⁸ Today "...with 20 percent of the world's population earning 75 percent of the income and 25 percent earning less than 2 percent, 31 percent illiterate, 80 percent living in substandard housing, more than a billion people living on less than a dollar a day and nearly a billion and a half people without access to clean water, the state of the world is far from encouraging." (Crossing the Divide, *ibid.*)

Nations, except for the highly industrialized countries, usually face two key development problems. Those nations with very low GDP-level, the poor countries, are struggling with elementary problems of drought, food shortage, starvation etc. just to physically ensure human existence. Another group of nations have overcome basic needs problems, but are unable to start a stable development path. In the following these two groups will be discussed.

In the case of poor countries the first task is to secure basic needs, like food and water supply, basic education for literacy and health service. It is not

⁸Inequality, Globalization and World Politics (A. Hurrell, N. Woods eds.) Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999.

just “poverty” as it figures on the UN agenda of global issues, but it is development, the development at the level of basic needs. Poverty can temporarily be alleviated by food aid packages but poverty will reoccur unless local people will be educated and taught how to grow food for themselves. The dissemination and implementation of basic food programs is of highest priority in these countries. The UNU should work out models for basic food and nutrition programs in poor countries strongly using the experience of postwar development policies in countries like Japan, where production recovered from ashes, and more recent policies of some countries in Asia and Africa, which managed to secure self sufficiency. Not only the specific models should be worked out, but also the scenarios of how these models have been implemented so that politicians and specialists of countries in need could easily follow the idea to its realization. Considering the conditions of their own countries they could eventually modify some parts of the models or scenarios. They would not be compelled to start from zero, but could use the “international knowledge” for their own benefit. For this purpose the UNU would be better than, for example the World Bank or other financial organizations, because these latter ones are mostly preoccupied with structural, financial and monitoring issues, while the UNU has a wider scope and an adequate academic networking potential. However, when a development scenario comes to realization, cooperation is desirable between the given country, the financial institution and the UNU, whereby the UNU could provide consultation and support in preparing the credit application.

Together with basic needs (food etc.) also basic education should be started in poor countries. It is true though, that people in these countries do not need high education in order to grow basic food for themselves, even without literacy it would be feasible. Yet, as basic needs will soon be satisfied, the country will be faced with the next development stage for which technical knowledge and skill will be required. And since education brings fruits in the longer run, already at the same time with basic

needs projects the basic education should be started. This will be not an easy task because of the lack of proper teachers, therefore basic education programs (in the first years, at least) should run with the help of more advanced countries, also in financial sense. The UNU, when conceiving projects, scenarios for basic needs, should include simultaneously basic education and should act together with respective UN organizations in realizing them.

In the group of “starter countries” basic needs are satisfied but countries cannot start the take-off development stage and are stagnating at a minimum or slightly medium level. Here mainly two policies are necessary to start growth. First, to develop the infrastructure, network of roads, railways, communication, energy system etc., and second, to introduce an adequate technology. As the two are or should be realized at the same time, this development policy is probably more difficult due to its complexity than that aimed at the basic needs.

In “starter countries”, technology deserves special mention. This is because these countries, in fact, need *not* the latest technology, but that one which suits the best their development needs, e.g. a labor-intensive technology where masses of free labor should be absorbed. Sophisticated technology should also be avoided because low level of technical proficiency would result in defective products and would cause frustration in the recipient country.

The UNU should focus more on viable scenarios of technology transfer to these countries. The UNU being positioned in Tokyo, has a unique opportunity to explore the Japanese way of postwar modernization, how new technologies were introduced and adjusted to the local conditions in Japan and how a country poor in natural resources could achieve an unprecedented technological and economic progress so that it is now ranking among the most advanced countries of the world.

Also, Japanese foreign direct investments (FDI) have a spillover effect in the recipient countries, mainly because Japanese companies expanding to another country, are taking with themselves their

cooperation-network (subcontracting-system or “shitake”). Thus, a strong job-creating (in cooperating local companies many new jobs open) and technology spill-over effect is at work which is quite different from the usual Western style when the Western company just settles down in the other country and operates a simple assembly factory using imported parts.⁹

It is, of course, the companies themselves, which are the carriers of technology, and which will bring development into the “starter countries”, but it does in no way mean that the country should passively wait up until these companies would appear. The starter country should actively form a policy creating attractive business conditions for inviting foreign companies.¹⁰ The UNU through other UN organizations could actively help the policy forming for development. This is the more important because other international development institutions, e.g. the World Bank or the IMF, are following narrow approaches and are proposing only one standard policy, ignoring the specific conditions for its application in the given country.¹¹ The UNU has the academic background to work out more feasible development scenarios.

5. The UNU

The UNU in Tokyo is a unique university for several reasons, and it should use this advantage much better than at present. The main problem with the UNU is that it has no vision; it resembles at first glance a usual university although it is not. First we will discuss the UNU’s special position and then we will try to give some ideas as to its vision-

building.

The special position of the UNU means that 1) it is an institution of the UN, and that 2) it is located in Japan’s capital, Tokyo.

The first circumstance implies that the UNU has a direct access to not only the UN organizations but to the international stream of politics, and coordination activities, moreover via the UN to the member countries. Potentially, the UNU could use academic and policy-making resources worldwide, and to exert an influence or coordination to member countries. It seems however, that the UNU is unable to maintain contacts even with the institutions of the UN. In these institutions tons of valuable experiences are accumulated and the UNU should them scholarly evaluate and prepare development scenarios, schemes of crisis prevention, conflict resolution etc. in order to help member countries in need. “*To help*”, - this should be the specific motto of the UNU, distinguishing it from a usual university’s educational and think-tank function. Not only to educate just to spread intelligence and culture, and not just to pool excellent brains, but to use both for helping the nations to solve their problems! This turn toward an active engagement is, what the UNU would need.

Second, the location in Tokyo is a unique chance to use first hand experiences of a highly developed economy and society. Especially the spectacular postwar development from zero deserves attention. The creation of new industry, the application of technology, the research and development (particularly the management of applied research), the agricultural reform, the development-oriented monetary policy, the almost zero inflation for decades

⁹A good example is the Suzuki car company with Maruti in India, or Hungary. In India Suzuki established the whole production culture and could bring up technological level and quality level almost to the Japanese one, including that the engine is also made in India. In Hungary, Suzuki’s main assembly factory employs 1100 people, but it created altogether 15000 new jobs in the subcontracting local companies. Suzuki is satisfied with local quality and has decided to double production capacities so that to supply whole Europe from its Hungarian factory.

¹⁰It is informative to look at the experience of the transforming countries in Central Europe, particularly Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, as they consciously formed their policy after 1990 to create a suitable business environment for foreign companies.

¹¹There are several countries where IMF proposals failed, again some countries declined the IMF’s advices like Singapore or recently Malaysia.

giving consumers the feeling of social safety, and recently the shift from industry-based society to knowledge (and service)-based society, - all these can show the way to other countries for solving their own development problems. This is true even if the Japanese way is motivated by its special cultural traditions, because some countries in Asia successfully benefitted from Japanese experience and work management methods are efficient in Central European companies.

Now, let us see some considerations towards a vision.

The activity of UNU should be clearly divided between actual and main or strategic topics. As the UNU has (should have) an involvement in international developments much stronger than a usual university, it also should sensitively react on actual changes, new phenomena on the international arena. It should scholarly assess these new phenomena and should give a response using its international academic potential. Such an actual task became recently the fight against terrorism. The analysis of actual problems is usually a short term, almost operative task (although terrorism may remain here for a few coming years). *The main line of the short term vision should be: crisis and conflict prevention.* For the simple reason, because peace is the utmost necessity for normal human existence and activity.

Working on main or strategic topics, on the other hand, would be a task for the longer run. *Here the main line towards a vision should be: development* in the broad sense, including economic, social and cultural development, and the resolution of ensuing problems like environment protection etc.¹² The focus should be development, because every and each

nation in the world wants to develop, and the UNU through its international position is predestined to provide help for countries to their development.

Development issues should be assessed with a strong orientation to poor, developing and medium developed countries.¹³ When working out models, scenarios and policies for development, the UNU should use the rich experiences of Japan and other Asian nations, its location is very advantageous for that. Of the Asian development experiences especially two deserve attention, the technology transfer and environment protection. Thinking along the traditional anglo-saxon market economy, one would easily expect modern technology and pollution free environment from the automatism of free market. However, especially the Japanese experiences prove that a strong cooperation between the government and the business sector is necessary, and it is not by chance that today in the US and EU science and technology are among the central priorities of government policy making.

Finally, about the working method of the UNU. To fulfil a mission together with intensive research and education activity would exceed the capacity of the UNU and also the possibilities of a middle size traditional university. Following from its position, *the UNU should work as a professional coordination centre with a strong basic staff of scholars.*¹⁴ These scholars should be selected in accordance with the vision of the UNU, as to being highly professional specialists in their fields, *plus* possessing an active organizatory skill. It will be their task to compile models, scenarios and policies using international academic cooperation. With a basic staff of 50-80 proper scholars this task is manageable. However, basic staff scholars should be ap-

¹²In the present Thematic Orientation all topics are enlisted from human security to global climate, however, without any strategic focus.

¹³For example, the "geothermal research and training" in the schedule of UNU will bring no if any benefit for the poor and developing countries.

¹⁴The present structure of the UNU is already reflecting partly this expectation. However, the work of a programme officer (as it stands in the Major Responsibilities) includes much administrative duties (e.g. writing reports, preparing publications etc.). Here organizatory work, that is academic coordination should be the main concern, which is fundamentally different from administrative work.

pointed at least for 4-5 years to be able to realize longer term visions.

Borrowing a term mostly used in economics, the so-called “outsourcing” should become the main working method of the UNU. It would mean to give out research topics or education programs to member countries. The UNU should work out just the initial instructions and exactly formulate the expectations, and all the detailed organizational and administrative work could be commissioned to the member country. This would have several advantages. First, scholars of the region of or around that country would be activated and real problems, conditions would be more reflected in research programs. Second, the basic staff in Tokyo would be relieved from many organizational tasks and could focus more on academic issues of the vision. Third, through outsourcing the costs of research and education would be considerably lower than in Tokyo where prices are the highest in the world.

6. Conclusions

The main principle of both the UN and UNU should be peace, because peace is an absolute priority condition for human existence and normal human activity. Peace can be maintained through accruing knowledge how to avoid causing harm and how to help others, and here education plays a key role. We must learn how to prevent crisis and how to help each other.

Recent terrorism drew attention to the importance of preserving peace. For a successful peace activity the present “crisis management” should turn into “crisis prevention”, which requires the UN and the UNU to shift their focus to a more active role. They should investigate latent crisis spots and study the deeper reasons of crises. Only through solving the problems at the core can we avoid new crises.

Peace and satisfaction can be achieved if nations in the world can proceed towards their targets, if they can develop. Hence, development in its broad sense is the keyword to peace. Development patterns should be analysed and evaluated in particular

with respect to their social implications and crisis potentialities. When advising a country what development pattern to follow, the conditions of that country must be carefully considered. The focus should be shifted from “sustainable development” to “balanced development”, including all aspects and mainly its harmony with social satisfaction.

Development should become the main vision, which all priority tasks on international agenda should be attached to. Fighting poverty, for example cannot be a target *per se*, because it can temporarily be alleviated by food aid, but poverty will reoccur unless local people will be educated and taught how to grow food for themselves. Similarly, for “starter countries” where basic needs are already satisfied but countries cannot start the growth phase, introduction of technology should be promoted. These countries would need not the latest technologies but those ones which suit the best their development needs. The UNU should focus more on viable scenarios of technology transfer to these countries. The UNU being positioned in Tokyo, has a unique opportunity to explore the Japanese way of postwar modernization, how new technologies were introduced and adjusted to the local conditions in Japan and how a country poor in natural resources could achieve an unprecedented technological and economic progress so that it is now ranking among the most advanced countries of the world.

Development should go together with education. In poor countries simultaneously with basic food programs elementary education for literacy and in developing countries higher level education for assessing technology.

In order to comply with new challenges, the UNU should reform its structure and work. It should become a real centre of scholars helping the world. A new vision is necessary focusing on crisis prevention and development. The method of “outsourcing” should be boldly applied which would bring higher efficiency in academic and education activities at lower costs.

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