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1 Introduction: Concepts of Security, Conflict and Peace

Overview

The opening chapter introduces some of the core concepts commonly used in peacebuilding. It begins by presenting various ways of visualising the different stages of conflict, before reflecting upon the concepts of security and peacebuilding. To provide a context for subsequent chapters, there follows a brief discussion on ways in which to resolve armed conflict and build peace beyond those efforts squarely within the security and justice sector.

Learning Outcomes

- Critically assess the concepts of conflict, security and peacebuilding
- Evaluate the value and limitations of the curve of conflict
- Recognise that core concepts in peacebuilding have policy implications
- Articulate some of the major precursors to effective peacebuilding
- Be familiar with other peacebuilding activities outside the security and justice sector

Part 1 – Core Concepts

A number of key concepts are used throughout this book, relating to phases of conflict and third-party interventions, as well as to the underlying principles and wider theories supporting such interventions. Whilst many of these concepts are understood in broadly the same way within the international community, they have no universally accepted definitions. If conflict prevention, mitigation, termination and recovery efforts are ever to be successful, key concepts need to be unpacked and a shared, sensitive and comprehensive understanding arrived at. Without this shared understanding, it is hard for action to be co-ordinated, coherent, efficient and effective. It is also hard to monitor and evaluate progress, identify and utilise lessons learned and best practice, and ultimately improve efforts to prevent and respond to conflict and its challenges.

As Chetail (2009) notes, increased peacebuilding activity, perhaps ironically, has led to the term 'peacebuilding' becoming more ambiguous and less sharply defined.

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Many different interpretations of this and related terms exist. More problematically, perhaps, many different actors actually involved in post-conflict peacebuilding use different terms to refer to it (Barnett et al., 2007; Chetail, 2009). As Chetail suggests, the use of different terms and the different interpretation of similar terms reflect the different mandates, agendas and interests of the various actors. Not surprisingly, the ambiguity and abundance of related concepts in the field of peacebuilding create some confusion. However, this ambiguity also enables the various actors to work together under the same umbrella without ever having to reach an unlikely consensus on the precise nature of the engagement (for further discussion see Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2019; Barnett et al., 2007; Chetail, 2009).

Given these differences of interpretation, as well as differences (described in the next chapter) over causes and remedies for conflict, there seems little point in devoting this chapter to long and complex arguments about who is right. Those interested can follow the controversies through the references provided. In any event, in this chapter – as throughout the book – the intention is to highlight those interpretations and prescriptions which are politically powerful and which influence the way that governments, international organisations and donors behave in practice.

We will first consider the concept of conflict, before considering the concepts of security and peacebuilding. Other concepts will be addressed later in the book, including justice and the rule of law (Chapter 4), transitional justice (Chapter 5), governance (Chapter 8, when we discuss Security Sector Governance), human rights (Chapter 9), gender (Chapter 10) and terrorism (Chapter 11, when we discuss transnational security threats).

The concept of conflict

Before attempting to address the ambiguity described above, it is first important to understand what we mean by conflict. Conflict, broadly speaking, can mean disagreement, tension or incompatibility between positions, opinions, interests, principles, demands or needs. From this perspective, conflict, of course, can occur anywhere – in the home, at school or the workplace, within social groups and communities, within and between societies, on the global stage. We can see conflict everywhere: it is part of everyday life. Social groups, communities and societies generally have mechanisms to respond to conflict, to manage it and to guard against it becoming violent: rules and compliance mechanisms, norms and social expectations, and structures and processes for grievances to be aired and addressed, for instance. When conflict does become violent it may still not be considered to be armed conflict.

As described in Jackson and Beswick (2018) there are a number of ways in which to measure and categorise armed conflict. One of the most common ways is to count 'battle deaths'. This is problematic in itself, not least in securing reliable data, but in determining which deaths 'count'. For some scholars, when defining armed conflict, 'battle deaths' do not include indirect victims of conflict (those who have died as a result of ill-health or malnutrition as a consequence of the conflict, for instance), or civilian casualties. While there is no agreement among scholars that battle deaths are an appropriate way to measure and categorise conflict, even where battle deaths are used to categorise types of violence, there is no broad

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agreement on the number of battle deaths that should be the threshold to determine whether or not armed conflict exists. For instance, the University of Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) (http://ucdp.uu.se) and the Correlates of War Project (www.correlatesofwar.org), which manage the most comprehensive and authoritative databases on armed conflict, have markedly different thresholds. For UCDP (2019), the threshold is 25 battle deaths per year, while for the Correlates of War Project (2019) it is 1,000.

Moving on to considering how armed conflict (hereafter, conflict) can be conceived, one attempt to deal with the ambiguity described above was made by Lund (1996), who introduced the idea of the 'curve of conflict'. As shown in Figure 1.1, the curve of conflict maps the point at which the various phases of conflict occur as well as efforts to prevent, mitigate, terminate or recover from it. As USIP's *Peace Terms Glossary:* puts it:

> The curve of conflict is a conceptual tool that helps illustrate how conflicts tend to evolve over time. The curve helps in visualizing how different phases of conflict relate to one another, as well as to identify kinds of third-party intervention. Practitioners can use this knowledge in the determination of effective strategies for intervention, along with the timing of those strategies. (Snodderly, 2011: 15)

The intensity of the conflict is shown by the vertical axis and the duration of the conflict by the horizontal axis. So, you can see that conflict prevention precedes peace negotiations which, in turn, precede peacekeeping. However, you do not really know how long each of these phases will last and whether one might lead to the next or, if unsuccessful, remain 'stuck' in one phase for a prolonged period of time or even revert to a previous phase. In essence, all phases are about stopping armed conflict – whether its outbreak, escalation, continuance or recurrence. To some extent, therefore, phases often share commonalities, in terms of intent and activities. There are, however, often formal signifiers of a new phase, whether through the outbreak of conflict (leading from conflict prevention to diplomacy, for instance) or the signing

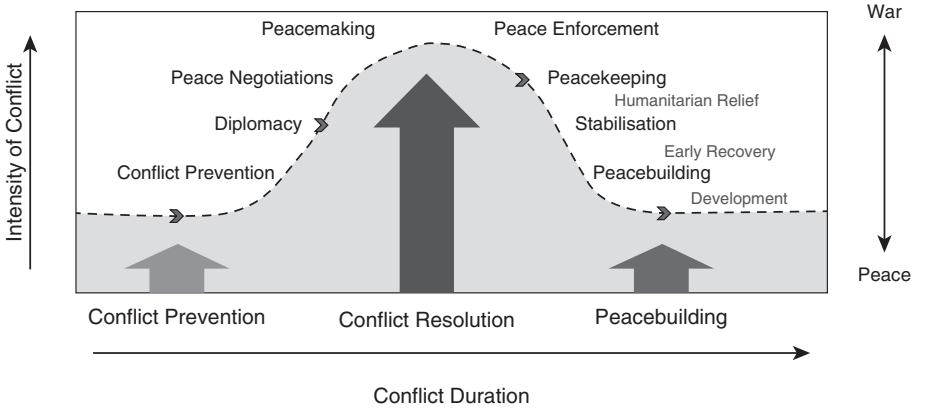

Figure 1.1 The Curve of Conflict (adapted from Lund, 1996)

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of a peace agreement (leading to peacekeeping rather than peace enforcement). As the term suggests, on Lund's curve of conflict, peacemaking refers to efforts to make peace when there is none (at the earlier stages of armed conflict), rather than peacekeeping, which refers to efforts to ensure the peace agreement holds. Peacebuilding, as we will soon discuss, tends to be an all-encompassing term referring to a broader range of activities after conflict to build sustainable peace.

It is important to note that the curve does not depict the level of violence that might exist. While armed conflict can formally begin before diplomacy and peace negotiations and end at the signing of a peace agreement (just before peacekeeping) – or when there is a truce, defeat, or the successful separation of armed factions (peace enforcement) – armed violence can continue and be prevalent throughout all phases, as will be discussed further shortly. And, of course, conflict can continue; even after the signing of a peace agreement, peacekeepers are needed to ensure the agreement is complied with and lay the groundwork for effective peacebuilding, which should include resolving the causes of the armed conflict and ensuring grievances are addressed and do not lead to conflict recurrence.

To add further nuance, in Figure 1.1, activities beyond those focussed on directly stopping the outbreak, escalation, continuance or recurrence of conflict have been mapped onto the traditional conflict curve. Humanitarian relief, early recovery and development are equally critical to building and sustaining peace (see Kamau, 2018), and tend to take place alongside formal efforts to resolve conflict. Humanitarian relief refers to the provision of life-saving food, water and sanitation, shelter and health services to those within or in the aftermath of conflict or other crisis, such as natural disaster. Development is a more nebulous term which refers to a broad range of activities across the economic, environmental, governance, human rights, health and education sectors undertaken to improve well-being and, in this context, help prevent the outbreak of conflict (recognising the relationship between security and development which will be discussed shortly). Early recovery is a less frequently used concept, which refers to activities which bridge immediate humanitarian assistance and longer-term development, with the aim of augmenting emergency humanitarian assistance and establishing the foundations for longer-term development. While humanitarian relief tends to begin when there is a modicum of security, and development once there is more stability, in reality both activities can be ongoing throughout all phases other than during heightened insecurity.

Conflict prevention, conflict resolution and, again, peacebuilding are also identified at the horizontal axis. Some analysts distinguish between these three phases of conflict (i.e. before, during and after) although, as we will soon discuss, the lines between these phases are very blurred. Ramsbotham et al. (2016) refer to distinct stages within each of these phases, in order to help identify responses. So, before armed conflict, the trajectory can be seen to move from 'difference' (requiring attending to cultural factors), to 'contradiction' (requiring attending to structural factors), to 'polarisation' (requiring peacemaking), which if unaddressed leads to violence. After conflict, all being well, the trajectory moves away from conflict, from ceasefire, to 'agreement' (requiring peacemaking), to 'normalisation' (requiring attending to structural factors) and, finally, to 'reconciliation' (requiring attending to cultural factors). It can be seen from the way Ramsbotham

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et al. (2016) refer to distinct stages within each of the phases of conflict in order to determine the requisite response, how efforts to build peace are often not too dissimilar to efforts to prevent the outbreak of conflict – we will be looking further into this in the next chapter. We can also use the terms 'escalation' and 'de-escalation' to refer to the way conflict might develop or intensify and end or resolve (see also Jackson and Beswick, 2018).

Distinguishing between the different phases of conflict can be useful in efforts to resolve conflict, to the extent that different strategies or tactics may be more appropriate than others, depending upon the current phase of conflict (or sub-conflict) (see Brahm, 2003). The curve can also be seen as a useful visual tool, in that it can help show common characteristics of different conflicts and, thus, potentially help in efforts to apply lessons learnt from one conflict to another.

It must be remembered, however, that this bell curve hugely simplifies a complex and messy reality. Conflicts do not progress linearly and successively through the various phases: many setbacks may occur, and conflict can repeatedly escalate or re-emerge, for instance. Similarly, efforts to prevent or resolve conflict or make, keep and build peace, will occur at multiple points during the conflict, and often concurrently. This is because the activities associated with these interventions are not exclusive of each other, and anyway there is no consensus around the terms used. Various actors apply different labels to the phases of conflict and related interventions, which further frustrates efforts to simplify. It is also important to realise that different actors and stakeholders, and even parties to the conflict, will perceive the conflict, the stage it is at and how it is developing, differently. There may also be multiple conflicts within one overarching conflict.

It therefore appears increasingly difficult to distinguish between phases of conflict, and third-party intervention, as activities associated with these phases broaden and definitions multiply. The lines between both the theory and the practice of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement are therefore increasingly blurred.

Thus, the transition from humanitarian action or relief to early recovery to development, for instance, is not as linear and clearly defined as is often implied. Similarly, humanitarian action often continues alongside peacebuilding and state-building efforts and, likewise, development activities often begin during the early recovery stages (and indeed as a conflict prevention measure even before the outbreak of conflict). While a clear understanding of the types of activity required in many post-conflict environments necessitates a delineation of their areas of responsibility, imagining that these activities occur in separate and distinct time frames is not helpful (see Figure 1.2). Recognition of the complexity of recovery efforts does, however, underscore the importance of co-ordination. Whilst co-ordination is widely accepted as a priority among actors involved in facilitating recovery from conflict, divergent and often conflicting or competing priorities, approaches, timeframes, agendas, objectives and perceptions tend to undermine efforts to consolidate a coherent, co-ordinated and effective response.

If we accept that there are inter-dependent relationships between development, security, governance and the protection of human rights, it is perhaps a fallacy to assume that efforts to address insecurity, state fragility and lack of governance,

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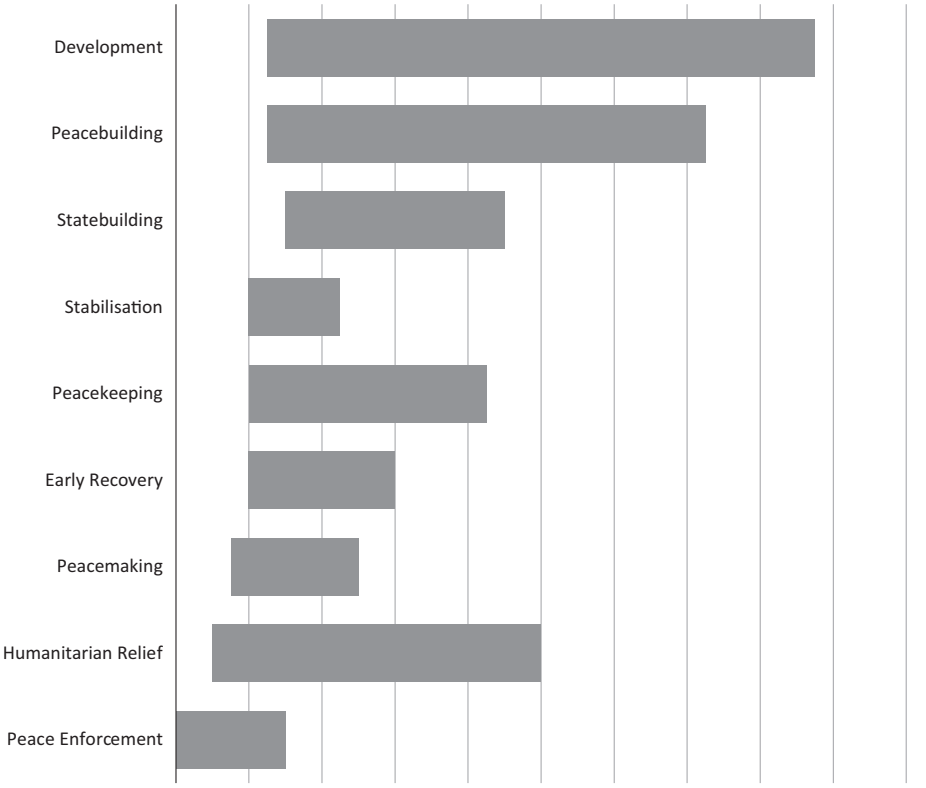

Figure 1.2 The Overlapping Stages of Engagement. (This is just one depiction of how the stages of engagement might be depicted. While this image shows the various stages of engagement are often overlapping, there are rarely definitive start and end dates to each stage as this image might suggest.)

underdevelopment, and violation of human rights can always proceed consecutively in logical order or independently of each other. Efforts – and equally, lack of effort – in one area will always impact another area. The risk of insecurity will be greater, for example, in a country in which some or all of the following are present: high levels of poverty and underdevelopment, weak state institutions, widespread human rights violations and limited justice or confidence in the rule of law. Likewise, the credibility of the state will also be jeopardised where there are prolonged or frequent outbreaks of armed conflict and the state does not enjoy the confidence or support of the majority of the population.

Increasing recognition of the interdependencies between security, governance and development, however, has also caused some concern about the blurring of operationally vital boundaries, not least in the protection of humanitarian space. The 2003 Iraq intervention has rightly been criticised for not paying attention to the subsequent rebuilding of the country and only attending to the security aspects of rebuilding a country. Its proponents assumed that after a short, non-destructive

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Box 1.1: Defence, Diplomacy and Development

The type of peacebuilding attempted in, for example, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kosovo and Sierra Leone encouraged the belief that there is necessarily a linear transition from war to peace, and that at a certain moment some actors therefore hand over to others. More recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan has shown that, in practice, military operations, the search for a political solution and development projects may all be taking place at the same time, and impacting upon each other. Even when military operations are effectively concluded, as in BiH, the existence of a sequential plan does not mean it will be implemented automatically. As in BiH, military security can create the conditions for development and a political solution, but it cannot make them happen.

Intervention failures in the last decade, notably in Iraq, have shown military-only solutions to instability to be inherently flawed. Such failures quickly led to a realisation that, without diplomacy or efforts to promote development, military engagement to foster peace will be destined to fail. Moreover, without 'joined-up-thinking' and co-ordination and coherence of efforts, intervention efforts can work against each other. The establishment of the UK Government's Stabilisation Unit – a triumvirate of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Department for International Development (DFID) – is an example of commitment to co-ordinated efforts across defence, diplomacy and development. More recently, there has, however, been a shift to 'hard' security as a priority, at the expense of a wider 'whole of government approach'. An increase in military spending and cuts to international aid across many western countries appear to have heralded this return to a focus on military-only or military-led solutions.

Scholars have also underscored the deficiencies of military-only solutions to conflict. Edward Azar (1990), a leading scholar in international relations who developed the theory of protracted social conflict, argued that such conflicts require problem-solving rather than military solutions. Azar contended that conflicts were the results of unmet basic social needs, such as security, acceptance or economic participation and so military solutions which did not address these causes were destined to fail.

war, the recovery and reconstruction phase would be handled by the local population itself, grateful to be free of the yoke of tyranny. This of course did not happen. Some have suggested that the tripartite (security, governance and development) or, rather, 3-D approach (defence, diplomacy and development, as described in Box 1.1) to dealing with conflict and its aftermath that characterised some western approaches in the aftermath of this failure has led to the securitisation of aid (see Box 1.2). There is clearly a need for efforts across the security, governance and development sectors to be co-ordinated, and for there to be supported efforts in these three areas if there is to be sustainable recovery. However, there runs the risk of development aid being used to respond to security concerns and, thus, becoming securitised. This risks undermining the principles, effectiveness and resources available to development programmes. There are also more practical issues to consider in respect of co-ordination and the protection of humanitarian space, such as

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Box 1.2: The Securitisation of Aid

The securitisation of aid broadly refers to the use of aid for the security interests of the donor (rather than the recipient). For a discussion on the securitisation of aid see, for example, Saferworld (2011) and Elhawary (2011).

In broader international relations, securitisation theory refers to the process of turning an issue into a matter of security. This, in turn, enables a security response and, often, extraordinary measures to be deployed. Issues that are securitised are not necessarily matters that pose a particular security threat to a state or its people but, rather, those issues which have been successfully categorised by someone as such (see Buzan et al., 1998 – instrumental in introducing securitisation theory to international relations). So, for instance, migration has been securitised and yet communicable diseases and road safety, which pose a direct and significant threat to many people, have not. From this example, it can be seen that the act of securitising is politicised and is often done precisely in order to legitimise certain responses. So, the risk of securitising responses to humanitarian crises or development challenges is that different policy responses are considered to be more acceptable and appropriate. In addition, different actors might become engaged (i.e. security actors), which can undermine humanitarian or development practices or principles, for instance, as well as problematise co-ordination and legitimacy of response.

where humanitarian or development tasks are carried out by the military because the environment is too dangerous for anyone else to operate.

Imagining that the transition from conflict to peace is linear also ignores the prevalence of violence in many allegedly post-conflict environments and many countries ostensibly at peace. Indeed, a high level of violence may historically have been part of the country's culture, and not be greatly affected by the arrival of formal peace. This reminds us that violence, including armed violence, can occur at any stage outside what is formally referred to as armed conflict (see Box 1.3). Violence that occurs in private spaces or against disempowered, marginalised groups can be significant. Violence between or against impoverished male youths is excessive in many countries. Violence and insecurity can, in fact, escalate after the end of armed conflict, due to many factors, including the security vacuum that is often filled by organised criminal groups in the immediate aftermath of conflict. High levels of gender-based violence can also remain after conflict, in the absence of effective security and justice sector institutions, as traumatised combatants return to civilian life, and as gender roles are renegotiated (Grady, 2010; Munala, 2007; Willett, 2010).

It is now generally acknowledged that what were once considered the different stages of conflict are increasingly blurred and overlapping. Indeed, it is better to think of a continuum, with street violence at one end and violent conflict at the other; but even this concept does not account for private violence, structural violence and other harms not so neatly categorised.

As Swanström and Weissmann (2005) point out, the simple bell curve of conflict has received much criticism from academics and policy-makers. They suggest that, in abstract form, conflict may be better represented as a series of irregular

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Box 1.3: Armed Violence versus Armed Conflict

Mexico

Criminal gun violence (as in Mexico, for example) can exceed the levels normally associated with armed conflict. The 2013 United Nations (UN) Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Study on Homicide identified nearly 450,000 cases of intentional homicide in 2012 (43% of victims were males aged 15–29). Significantly larger numbers were injured or crippled. This excludes suicides and accidents with firearms, which would substantially increase the total. More than a third of the homicides occurred in the Americas, reflecting, among other things, the results of the illegal drugs trade and efforts to suppress it (UNODC, 2013).

Colombia

In the weeks and months following the signing of the peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (Spanish: *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo*, FARC–EP or FARC), on 24 November 2016, the number of murders by paramilitaries of activists and community leaders and human rights/women's rights advocates escalated as these paramilitary groups try to fill the void left by the demobilised FARC, terrorising communities so they can control territories and drug trafficking routes (see HRW, 2017).

waves, in recognition of the fact that the conflict circle recurs and repeatedly passes through different phases, and that no conflict is like another. Moreover, the curve would be specific to each conflict; the path towards peace no longer represented by a universal, simple trajectory. Protracted conflicts, for instance, may be shown by a curve which extensively oscillates between the higher levels of the curve, or conflicts may repeatedly recur over prolonged periods, or there may simply be no clear delineation between war and peace (see Figure 1.3 for what a path might look like, superimposed onto the traditional curve of conflict to

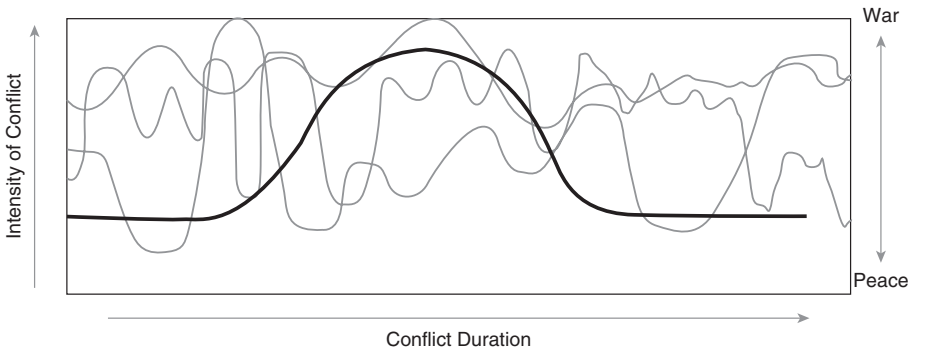

Figure 1.3 How the Curve of Conflict might be More Accurately Portrayed, Overlaid on the Original Curve of Conflict

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demonstrate the stark difference often between theory and reality – recognising that even these messy lines cannot capture much either).

For all these reasons, as Swanström and Weissmann (2005) have noted, conflict can never be represented by a single line, not least because each conflict often contains many smaller conflicts, each with its own specific cycle (see Figure 1.3 again for how a conflict with its many smaller conflicts might be mapped). Consequently, different types of intervention may be required simultaneously to respond to different developments and dynamics within a conflict. For example, risk factors from a latent conflict may increase at the point at which armed conflict between two warring factions decreases in intensity, while other sub-conflicts escalate or de-escalate in response to these and other developments.

Whilst visualising or mapping phases of conflict and intervention can be useful, if there is indeed a 'line of conflict', it is not linear or singular: it is multi-faceted, multifarious and dynamic. The complexity of conflict is discussed in the next chapter, when we consider the many and varied causes of conflict as well as the broad range of activities that can constitute effective conflict prevention.

Finally, it is important to remember that the way conflict is defined has a direct impact upon policy and practice. If conflict is perceived as linear, logical and one-dimensional, responses to conflict will seldom be appropriate. If conflict is measured in terms of battle deaths, other insecurities will tend to be overlooked and ignored until they too manifest themselves in terms of fatalities. If conflict is something that occurs between states and/or non-state actors, the blurred lines between the state and non-state will be overlooked, as will the impact of armed violence outside places formally considered to be engaged in armed conflict. If conflict is considered to be something that occurs elsewhere and for purely local reasons, we may continue to overlook the involvement of our governments in conflicts and our own responsibility for insecurities at home and abroad. Of course, there are times when simplification is necessary. Measuring a conflict in terms of battle deaths might be necessary, for instance, to enable large-scale statistical research. But there is a difference between the simplification needed for categorisation, study and analysis, and the need to take complexity into account in order to develop appropriate responses.

The concept of security

In the same way, how we define security determines our thinking about how security is best developed and managed, as well as who or what we believe pose security threats. This, of course, determines how we think we should respond to security threats, as well as who and what we believe are threatened (and who and what are the sources of that threat). The widest definition of security so far offered is that of 'Human Security', usually defined as:

> … far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and resources to fulfil his or her own potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of

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> future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment – are the interrelated building blocks of human and, therefore, national security. (UN, 2000b: n.p.)

Human security was introduced as a concept by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its Human Development Report (1994), equating security with people rather than territory and encompassing seven broad areas of threat: economic, health, personal, political, food, environmental and community. Human security moves beyond the narrower national security (which previously tended to focus on territorial security), and this shift was a result of the recognition that security and development are related, as well as recognition of the changing nature of threats: conflicts were increasingly intrastate and threats to security came from environmental degradation, pandemics, poverty, criminality and poor governance and not simply from armies and arms (see Kaldor, 2012). However, it is important to note that traditional security thinking included far more than just 'violent conflict', and many of the problems identified by human security thinking exist in peaceful societies. In addition, many of the human security objectives have been pursued by governments for generations, but without the use of the vocabulary of 'security' and 'threat'.

The concept of human security has, nonetheless, influenced policy-makers and practitioners in the field of security, justice, development and human rights, and efforts to prevent and respond to conflict and crisis have, at least ostensibly, been undertaken in a more holistic and co-ordinated manner. Since it came to prominence in 1994 it has, however, received much criticism, not least because the concept is so broad and, thus, often, vague that it undermines precisely how to conceive of security and ways in which it can be improved (see Paris, 2001).

In practice, in international development, the broadening scope of security is not yet matched by an expanding arena of indigenous security actors. Informal justice and security mechanisms, while often vital in post-conflict and developing states, are only now being given any real attention by international organisations and governments. Additionally, the role of civil society in the security sector is often restricted to pre-implementation outreach and consultation as well as ensuring the accountability of state security actors through specific Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Moreover, donors have a history of preferring to interact with, and fund, CSOs whose leaders speak western languages and share western ideas. Understandably, perhaps, the focus is generally on how security and justice are delivered, not on how they are received. Donors have their own imperatives, timetables and political limitations, after all.

So, while it is recognised that security is a broad, multifarious and often contested concept, the focus of providing security is very often state-centric and focussed on uniformed state security service providers. This, however, is beginning to change. Consequently, if the Human Security argument is valid, and if it can be made operational, it could be hoped that peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts will be more effective and sustainable, and post-conflict societies will stand a greater chance of not returning to conflict (see Box 1.4 for a definition of statebuilding and its relationship with peacebuilding).

Chapter 3 will further consider the concept of security, and the concept of non-traditional security threats will be considered in Chapter 11.

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Box 1.4: Peacebuilding and Statebuilding

Statebuilding refers to '[p]urposeful action to develop the capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state in relation to an effective political process for negotiating the mutual demands between state and societal groups' (OECD, 2008: 15). While there is an assumption that peacebuilding and statebuilding are mutually supportive, there can be tension between peacebuilding and statebuilding. While a resilient state may be considered to be a prerequisite for lasting peace, strengthening a state that has been a party to the conflict, is corrupt or is blamed for what it did not do, can increase tension and the propensity for conflict (see Interpeace, 2010). Conversely, peacebuilding can undermine statebuilding efforts. State legitimacy can be undermined, for example, if non-state providers are relied upon to deliver essential goods in the absence of effective state institutions (see Haider, 2010).

Moreover, the specific form of state–societal relations being created – specifically the transformation of war-torn places into liberal market democracies and the forced democratisation that often accompanies such efforts – often undermines the chances of lasting peace and stability (see Paris, 2004).

The processes of marketisation and democratisation ignore many conflict causal factors and also provide opportunities for those whose interests may be self-serving. In Kosovo and BiH, for instance, these processes tended to further marginalise those who were previously dependent on the land to support themselves, augment the power of many war opportunists and criminals, and tighten the bonds between organised crime and the political administration (see Bojicic and Kostovicova, 2011, for instance).

The concept of peace

It is worth taking a moment to reflect on what we mean by peace. Is it simply the absence of armed conflict? Certainly, peaceful societies need more than just a guarantee that there will not be an outbreak of armed violence. Johan Galtung, widely regarded as a leading pioneer of peace studies, was instrumental in drawing a distinction between negative peace (the absence of armed conflict or violence) and positive peace (the presence of all the other factors which contribute to a peaceful society). These other factors would include positive relationships between people, and between people and the state, as well as the presence of co-operation, equity, equality, dialogue and a culture of peace (Galtung, 2013). In the immediate aftermath of conflict, in the absence of armed conflict, therefore, there can be a negative peace; the effort, however, will be on building all the structures, processes and relationships which will make the peace sustainable at which point there might be what could be referred to as a positive peace.

The concept of peacebuilding

Fundamentally, security is the core prerequisite of peace, and peacebuilding is generally considered to be the way peace is built after conflict. Peacebuilding has been described as 'a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing

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into conflict, to strengthen national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development' (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations – UNDPKO, 2008: 18). The term has been widely used since the then-UN Secretary-General (UNSG), Boutros Boutros-Ghali, referred to it in his 'Agenda for Peace' in 1992 (UNSG, 1992). It was originally conceived relatively narrowly, but typically for this field, its meanings have expanded enormously (Chetail, 2009; Snodderly, 2011).

Originally the term peacebuilding referred to post-conflict recovery efforts focussed on reconciliation (reconciling formerly warring factions so they can live peacefully together, including through addressing grievances and building trust) and reconstruction (of physical infrastructure, including roads, buildings, transportation and communication systems, and also of state institutions so essential services can be delivered).

Today the term can encompass a wide spectrum of activities. These can include providing humanitarian relief, maintaining security, protecting human rights, facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), aiding reconciliation, supporting the reform of governance structures, and enabling economic recovery and even broader development. The aim is to facilitate sustainable peace, preventing the recurrence of armed conflict and providing mechanisms to enable conflict to be managed without recourse to violence.

In part because the term 'peacebuilding' can be used to cover a huge array of activities, there has been much criticism of its ideological foundations, seen by many as a justification for interventionism, and more to do with promoting domestic interests than protecting the interests of those within countries affected by conflict (see Duffield, 2007). Additionally, as Chetail (2009) points out, high rates of conflict recurrence call into question the effectiveness of peacebuilding activities. Questions about the type of peace being built, the type of activities that should be prioritised, the type of actors who should lead the process, and to whom those involved are ultimately accountable to, need to be critically attended to (see Llamazares, 2005, for instance). There are many examples to show that lack of clarity and shared understanding of the type of peace, and also type of state, being built – and how to do it – have led to peace processes faltering (see Glennie, 2010, for case studies of conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, particularly in the immediate aftermath of conflict, different international organisations, including the UN and many of its different agencies, had different priorities, depending upon their specific mandate. Within each organisation and agency there were also many different people with different levels of commitment to or understanding of their organisational goals, some of whom were seconded by their government (or another organisation) and so may have had competing aims. Moreover, actively engaged in Bosnia and Herzegovina were many different countries which had different agendas depending upon their often shifting, strategic interests and domestic politics. This not only created confusion, but often competition between individuals and organisations, which undermined prospects for successful cessation of hostilities and sustainable peace and, thus, the prolonged suffering of many people. Returning to the type of peace being

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built, it is fair to add that the assumptions behind peacebuilding are essentially those of the liberal state, and its effectiveness will therefore inevitably depend, to some extent, on the relevance of these assumptions when applied to other types of societies (see, e.g., Chandler, 2010; Cramer, 2006; Paris, 2010; Richmond, 2009).

The very complexity of peacebuilding and the enormity of its aims – coupled with the delicate balance between providing sufficient and sustained external assistance and ensuring the processes and results are locally owned and supported – are often overlooked, as are the many examples of significant steps taken towards peace in many places.

This is not surprising, since, as Chetail (2009) describes, in addition to the many activities and actors associated with peacekeeping, a triple transition is often involved:

- A security transition, from a situation of open violence to the progressive establishment of sustainable peace
- A socio-economic transition, from conflict economies to a peace economy which is more open to the private sector and to international trade
- A democratic transition, from an authoritarian system to one of representative government (Chetail, 2009: 8 citing David, 1998).

Just one of these transitions could cause much turbulence in any society, let alone in a society just emerging from conflict and also undergoing other transitions. The huge structural shifts, as well as the multiplicity of actors and activities in many sectors at all levels of society, can generate significant potential for tension and renewed conflict, if not managed carefully – that is, if not adequately planned, co-ordinated or communicated – and without sufficient grassroots understanding, involvement and support. Paradoxically, therefore, peacebuilding efforts themselves, unless sensitively handled, can be destabilising.

Part 2 – Building Peace After Conflict

Of course, how we define peace and how we define peacebuilding will have a significant effect upon outcomes for societies that have experienced conflict. It is important to note that, while this book focusses upon formal efforts to build security and justice after conflict, many of the critical peacebuilding efforts are informal – the everyday, local-level initiatives that help build tolerance, raise awareness or increase resilience, for instance.

This chapter has introduced peacebuilding at its broadest; the rest of this book looks at ways in which to build security and justice primarily after conflict, after looking at the causes of conflict and conflict prevention more broadly in the next chapter. Engagement in the security and justice sector does not take place in isolation, of course, and will not be successful unless peacebuilding efforts in other sectors, such as the economy, politics and development, are effective. Such efforts include building a sustainable economy (at the macro and micro levels and, not least, generating employment opportunities), supporting political processes (including electoral processes) and developing good governance, enabling the delivery of essential basic

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services (including water and sanitation), building the capacity of the health and education sectors, facilitating the return of refugees and displaced persons, promoting the protection of human rights, delivering humanitarian assistance, supporting reconciliation and providing for the development of a robust civil society.

It is important to be aware of the other types of activities involved, not least in order to anticipate the impact that activities in various sectors can have upon each other and to endeavour to ensure coherence of efforts. For example, those engaged in economic reform activities and those engaged in combatant demobilisation programmes or security sector institution rationalisation (often as part of broader Security Sector Reform programmes) should be aware of each other's desired and planned activities in order to ensure that they resonate with each other and, quite simply, are effective (see Box 1.5 on Kosovo for an example of why such co-ordination is important). Those developing programmes for demobilised combatants or those who may lose their jobs in the security sector through rationalisation need to know the opportunities and constraints that exist or will exist in terms of opportunities for employment or training as well as the constraints that might exist in terms of budgets, policy or other factors.

It is also important to remember that, in order for peacebuilding to formally begin, there first needs to be an end to conflict. Despite significant resources and attention given to trying to end conflict, as Kreutz (2010) and Ramsbotham et al. (2016) show, conflicts usually end without decisive conclusions. Consequently, such conflicts are prone to break out again and become protracted, not least because the root causes of the conflict remain unaddressed. A number of methods have been used to resolve conflicts, including not only military means (Flavin, 2003), but also negotiation and mediation (Ramsbotham et al., 2016), and economic pressures such as sanctions (Escribà-Folch, 2010; Gershenson, 2001). As will be mentioned in the next chapter, often the methods used to resolve conflict are quite similar to those used to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of conflict. As will be discussed, however, there are often many more actors involved in conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding, and many more resources and attention given.

As the 2003 Iraq military invasion by the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Poland demonstrates, the military can defeat opposing forces, but that in itself may not terminate, let alone resolve conflicts. Indeed, as in the Iraq War, it may simply provoke new conflicts. Often a combination of tools is required, the type and combination of which will need to be revisited regularly. Given the varied tools and many potential actors involved, it is critical that there is an overarching strategy and integral coherence to the interventions, to which all actors are committed.

Box 1.5: Kosovo

In Kosovo, with the planned stand-down of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), it was necessary to know what activities were ongoing or planned in other sectors; were there economic opportunities on the horizon that could be utilised for those in the KPC who would not have a place in the future Kosovo Security Force (KSF); were there budgetary or policy constraints that would impact any planned legislation for veterans?

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Various factors can influence whether a conflict recurs: notably, military victories and the deployment of peacekeepers (Fortna, 2004; Kreutz, 2010) are more likely to lead to lasting peace than peace settlements (Licklider, 1995). However, the positive effects of the deployment of peacekeepers may dissipate over time (Sambanis, 2007).

The signing of a peace settlement, significant as it is, is only a step towards lasting peace, which requires a whole series of extra ingredients to be successful. In reality, peace agreements are often not fully implemented and conflict recurs. This may result from lack of commitment, lack of local ownership, omission of wider considerations, deferral of difficult issues and many other factors.

Above all, perhaps, no peace process or agreement can be expected to work unless it reflects a widespread agreement among key indigenous actors that peace is more desirable than continued conflict. Otherwise, only a fragile peace will result. Some have also questioned whether 'peace at any price' is desirable, or even feasible. Others have argued that the cultural context and specificities are often ignored, and reconstruction has sought to impose an alien system on the environment. Others still have argued that peace agreements often do not address power imbalances, oppression or discrimination – and unless they do so, renewed conflict is likely. Certainly, there have been enough failures in peace processes that all of these factors and more can be plausibly blamed. But how to incorporate all these factors into a peace agreement and subsequent peace process – and whether that would provoke new forms of instability and insecurity – is another matter entirely.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced some of the core concepts commonly used in peacebuilding, including the concepts of conflict, security and peace. In so doing, it encourages critical reflection upon the concepts that are often taken for granted in practice and sometimes scholarship. We need to question what we mean by peace and security, and whether others share similar views, in order to be able to effectively address or analyse conflict and its causes and manifestations. We also need to question, when considering the broad concept of peacebuilding, whose peace and whose security are we interested in, and who or what are considered to pose threats to peace and security? In so doing, we recognise that these concepts are highly political and often used and misused for strategic gain. Through clarity of concepts, we can aim towards clarity of purpose. More critically, through clarity of concepts, we can also expose those instances where security is not equitable, peace is not meaningful to those beyond dominant or elite groups, and threats to peace are constructed to legitimise otherwise illegitimate interventions or responses.

To provide a context for subsequent chapters, this chapter has also briefly referred to ways in which armed conflict can be resolved and peace – however it is defined – can be built, beyond those efforts squarely within the security and justice sectors, which is the focus of this book. The next chapter provides further context for subsequent chapters by looking at the causes of conflict, recognising that effective peacebuilding needs to be responsive to causes, and conflict prevention,

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recognising that effective prevention can save countless lives and much of the huge amount of resources that are invested into peacebuilding.

Summary of Key Issues

- The stages of conflict and activities aimed at resolving conflict and building peace are often blurred and overlap.
- Violence, including armed violence, can occur at any stage outside what is formally referred to as armed conflict.
- Whilst visualising or mapping phases of conflict and intervention can be useful, if there is indeed a 'line of conflict', it is not linear or singular: it is multi-faceted, multifarious and dynamic.
- The way conflict is defined has a direct impact upon policy and practice; if conflict is perceived as linear, logical and one-dimensional, responses to conflict will seldom be appropriate.
- How we define security determines how actors think security is best developed and managed, and who or what we believe pose security threats.
- Security is a broad, heterogeneous and often contested concept, while the focus of providing security is very often state-centric and focussed on uniformed state security service providers.
- In part because the term 'peacebuilding' can be used to cover a huge array of activities, there has been much criticism of its ideological foundations.
- Effective peacebuilding requires that conflicts end conclusively and causes are addressed.
- Effective peace processes and agreements need to reflect a widespread agreement among key indigenous actors that peace is more desirable than conflict.
- Engagement in the security and justice sector does not take place in isolation, and will not be successful unless peacebuilding efforts in other sectors, outside the security and justice sector, are effective.

Reflective Question

Consider how to have a shared understanding of peace and how it can be built, while accommodating its subjective, dynamic and complex nature**.**

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