"Role of Universal Human Rights to Wards Peace Building"

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims at role of universal human right towards peace building. As the twentieth century witnessed some of the worst war atrocities committed in the history of humanity. Today a key feature of the majority of conflicts that we witness today is their sub-national nature that is the subsidiary political, social and cultural polities that exist and function within the nation-state. We need to work more towards the notion of positive peace which means a peace that promotes reconciliation and co-existence on the basis of human rights and social, economic and political justice. This is achieved through an assessment of the elements needed to build a nation, and the ways in which specific human rights can contribute to a process of nation-building. The conclusion reached is that it is important for all sectors of society – and, in particular, minority groups – to be able to feel a connection to the newly rebuilt nation. In the absence of such a sense of belonging, it is inevitable that civil unrest will return. Whilst the introduction of human rights can cause controversy, the paper demonstrates that such does not always have to be the case: human rights can be introduced in a culturally-specific manner, thereby averting the common concern that human rights are simply a means of the West imposing its views on the rest of the world.

Keywords: conflicts, society, human rights, nation building, reconciliation

I. INTRODUCTION

Building peace is a major challenge not only for developing countries but even for poor countries as well as small organization and group. Looking around to the world of conflict it is the basic assumption to those who practice peacemaking are capable of doing better at conflict, as well as with awareness and communication. It is the same concept that holds true to great civilizations, cultures and historical religions it is the fact that individuals evolve endlessly whether for the best or the worst until the day that they die the same hold true for civilizations. In our search for some semblance of order in the chaos and nebulae of conflicts, we often see that for one overriding casual factor, in order to find a way to solve the conflicts or heal damage done by it. But this skews the complex casual interactions of conflicts.

The twentieth century witnessed some of the worst war atrocities committed in the history of humanity. This included the genocide in America, the Holocaust and the wanton carnage of the Second World War. The cold war retained this pattern of destruction with proxy wars being fought

along the East/West or Soviet/US ideological divide. In the aftermath of the Cold war the hope for a more stable and just international order was rapidly dissolved by the internecine conflicts that plagued all continents. These conflicts took on a pemicious form in the sense that they undermined the very fabric of the nation-state. Today a key feature of the majority of conflicts that we witness today is their sub-national nature that is the subsidiary political, social and cultural polities that exist and function within the nation-state. Sub-national conflicts have proved to be highly resistant to the intervention of inter-governmental organizations like the United Nations (UN) and regional organizations. In effect the international system has endeavoured to resolve such conflicts with limited success. The world continues to be plagued by sub-national conflicts in places such as the Darfur region of the Sudan, the Kashmir region of India and Pakistan, Lebanon, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Uganda and Western Sahara. Effort to build peace has come under increasing scrutiny.

II. PEACE BUILDING CONCEPT FROM NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE

In 1992, the Agenda for Peace, published by the then United nations Secretary- General Boutros Boutros Ghali, defined peace building as the medium to long term process of rebuilding war affected communities. It defined 'peace building as action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse to conflict'. Over time the definition of peace building has gradually expanded to refer 'to integrated approaches to address violent conflict at different phases of the conflict cycle'. Building peace requires the promotion of social and economic justice as well as the establishment or reform of political structures of governance and the

rule of law. These activities are ultimately striving to bring about the healing of a war affected community through reconciliation. Reconciliation however is not sustainable without socio-economic reconstruction and development, neither of which can be done without mobilization of resources. Peace building is effectively a political activity but one that seeks to unify the social and economic spheres (Murithi, 2009:3).

In the seventeenth century, the philosopher Spinoza claimed that peace is not the mere absence of war, but a virtue that comes from the vigor of one's soul and mind (Raviv, Oppenheimer, Bar-Tal, 1999:91). After three centuries, however the heroes of peace, who many times are assassinated by their own followers (for example, Mohandas Gandhi and Yitzhak Rabin), "Look pale beside the heroes of war" (Gillet, 1994:21).Peace building is an ethical process that requires a close partnership, respect and dialogue among all the actors. In a very real sense, then, there is a need to emphasis the fact that peace building can ultimately only succeed if it is conducted on the basis of an ethical framework. The notion of peace therefore also needs to be unpacked. When we refer to peace we need to consider that there are two broadly defined ways to understand the nature of peace. For most commentators there is a distinction between condition of negative peace and a condition of positive peace. Negative peace is the condition that most people refer to when they are discussing issues to do with peace and conflict: it is the condition in which peace is based on the absence of violence. We need to work more towards the notion of positive peace which means a peace that promotes reconciliation and co-existence on the basis of human rights and social, economic and political justice. In this context when we talk about peace building we are referring to the process whereby

the goal is to strengthen the capacity of societies to promote positive peace. Within most of the peace building and development, actors and agencies there increasingly a focus on the importance of promoting positive peace. Among these agencies in the last decade we have witnessed a resurgence of the role of civil society in actively advocating for, pursuing and implementing peace building strategies.

III. RELIGION, VIOLENCE AND HUMAN CONFLICTS

Religious meaning systems evolve out of particular cultural constructs and worldviews. They are accompanied by patterns of interpersonal moral and political actions that emanate directly from these worldviews. These systems of meaning are constantly evolving, despite the fact that conservative religious traditions like or need to present themselves to constituencies (who are starving for some form of permanent meaning in the modern world) as a changeless and ancient bed rock of certainty. It is the evolving character of these mythic universes that embodies both the promise and the peril of organized religion to influence the direction of political entities on the globe. Religious traditions promise to heal the wounds of human existence by uniting human beings to ultimate reality, yet the history of religions is steeped in blood, war, and sacrifice and scapegoating. While many interpreters of religion have focused on the constructive role of religion in human life, the brutal facts of the history of religions impose the stark realization of the intertwining of religion and violence: violence, clothed in religious garb, has repeatedly cast a spell over religion and culture, luring countless (decent) people-from unlettered peasants to learned priests,

preachers and professors-into its destructive dance (Boersema, 2006:11).

With the reinstatement of democracy, religions stopped favoring institutional action at the level of government or NGOs and undertook a kind of 'grassroots' approach working with men and women on the street (although this should be understood more as a relative than an absolute difference). This change of strategy has been clearly related to political transformations (Ter Haar, 2005:81). Traditional international relations practice more of an emphasis on the notion of negative peace as the absence of violence. Increasingly, peace building literature is making the case for mainstreaming the notion of positive peace. The tacit assumption that this adopts that there needs to be a transition towards adopting the notion of positive peace, in order to ensure that there is an ethical commitment towards promoting and consolidating genuine peace building.

IV. APPROACHES TO PEACE BUILDING ON THE GROUND AHIMSA (NON-VIOLENCE)

The most basic approach to consolidate peace building is the basic law of our being according to Gandhi. That is why it is used as the most effective principle for social action, since it is in deep accord with the truth of man's nature and corresponds to his innate desire for peace, justice, order, freedom and personal dignity. Since violence degrades and corrupts man, to meet force with force and hatred with hatred only increases man's progressive degeneration. Non-violence on the contrary heals and restores man's nature while giving him a means to restore social order and justice. Ahimsa is not a policy for the seizure of power. It is a way of transforming relationships so as to bring about a peace full transfer of power, affected freely and without compulsion by all concerned, because all

have come to recognize it as right. Since ahimsa is in man's nature itself, it can be learned by all, though Gandhi is careful to state that he does not except everyone to practice it perfectly. However, all men should be willing to engage in the risk and wager of ahimsa because violent policies have not only proved bankrupt but threaten man with extinction (Merton, 1965:23).True non-violence not only implies the highest form of bravery: it is a kind of charismatic gift, a "creed" and a "passion" for which one sacrifices everything: it is a complete way of life in which the satyagrahi is totally dedicated to the transformation of his own life, The non-violence of the weak is rather a policy of passive protest, or even a cloak for impotent hatred which does not dare to use force. It is without love. It seeks to harm the adversary in ways that do not involve force, and it may resort to secret sabotage or even terrorism. Such conduct is not worthy of the name of non-violence. It is demoralizing and destructive. To this false and cowardly nonviolence Gandhi says he would prefer an honest resort to force. Hence those who cannot practice a really dedicated non-violence should defend their rights and justice by force, if no other means are available. Gandhi does not preach the passive surrender of rights or of human dignity. On the contrary, he believes that non-violence is the noblest as well as the most effective way of defending one's rights.

V. INCULCATING THE VIRTUE OF FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is more than a synonym for pardon, which several theological teachings advocate. Ethically speaking, forgiveness can more appropriately be thought of as sacrifice, it is the giving up of one's self for the sake of others. In this sense forgiveness is in effect an ethical virtue. It assesses the notion of forgiveness prior to assessing some illustrations of forgiveness. A major challenge that confronts the consolidation of peace building in war affected countries is putting in place effective and sustainable process of forgiveness and reconciliation. Forgiveness is a major component of the reconciliation process. However, victims, perpetrators and observers a like consider achieving forgiveness to be a very difficult and sometimes impossible process in the context of situations where grave human rights atrocities are committed. The processes and mechanisms of peace building need to be informed by the issue of how to enable victims, in what are increasingly violent sub-national conflicts, to move from a condition in which they morally exclude their perpetrators as valid interlocutors to a situation in which they morally include and acknowledge the claims of the 'others'(Murithi,2009:113).

We as democratic, liberal societies base our legal/political systems on a set of rights and obligations that allows individuals to do what they want as long as they do not violate the rights of others, yet modern nation-states also require their members to undergo certain rites of passage in order to induct them into the national community. This includes learning the common language, adopting the social norms, and internalizing the historical symbols and beliefs that define nationality. In modern nation-states, one major institution developed to carry out the socialization process, especially of youth, is the school. For many years in the United States and still today in Israel, compulsory military service has played a major role in socializing young people into a national culture (Iram, 2003:29).

VI. THE VALUE OF RECONCILIATION

If and when the process of forgiveness is successfully undertaken then the parties involve d

are ready for genuine healing and reconciliation to begin. Effective reconciliation ultimately consolidates peace building. However, as with forgiveness, reconciliation is a process, not an event, and to achieve effective reconciliation may require one, two or more generations. Genuine peace is not sustainable without social, economic and political justice. The Owenities focused on the broadest malady namely human emancipation via a transformed education, which would promote the creation of a new moral world. They believed that to bring such world into existence at least three dramatic changes would be necessary: a definitive solution to the problem of poverty, a thorough going reform of working practices, and the establishment of communities organized socially and economically on a cooperative model (Boersema,2006:131). Both war and peace are uniquely human inventions. Both have evolved a pace with the development of culture in general, as human ingenuity has devised its usual stunning variety of forms for them. Most people recognize the ways in which war making has evolved technologically, and lament that 'progress' (Fogarty, 2000:11). War and peace are not simple opposites, where peace is defined as the absence of war. Rather, both war and peace are processes of interaction, conflicts, and cooperation, involving the pursuit of collective and individual interests and rooted in a connection between the individual and the community. Both war and peace are collective endeavors made possible by the human desire to form and maintain community. Many of the peace building 'international civil service' are thoroughly committed to the idea of 'peace' as both desirable and theoretically and practically possible. They are also careful to avoid the creation of external dependency; they endeavour to be sensitive to the needs of local ownership and to local conditions, and are very careful not to upset sensitive local political and social customs or arrangements where these are deemed to be viable within the liberal peace (Richmond, Franks, 2009:4).

VII. CONCLUSION

Poverty around the world remains the dominant feature along with security as a major concern. Violence and war are also intricate pattern of conflict. Peace building is adopted by governments on national level, nongovernmental organization, regional and international intergovernmental institution as means by which the outside world can contribute to the resolution of societal conflict and to the reconstruction or construction of a culture of peace in post conflict situations.

The areas of action are recommended to implement effective peace building in humans are listed below:
1. Culture of peace through education is the very concept of power which needs to be transformed—from the logic of force and fear to the force of reason and love.
2. Sustainable economic and social development represents a major change in the concept of economic growth which, in the past, could be considered as benefiting from military supremacy and structural violence and achieved at the expense of the vanquished and the weak.
3. Respect for all human rights and the elaboration and international acceptance of universal human rights. calls for a transformation of values, attitudes and behaviours from those which would benefit exclusively the clan, the tribe or the nation towards those which benefit the entire human family.
4. Equality between women and men is only [the] linkage of equality, development and peace can replace the historical inequality between men and women that has always characterized the culture of war and violence.

5. Democratic participation among the masses is the only way to replace the authoritarian structures of power which were created by and which have, in the past, sustained the culture of war and violence."

6. Understanding, tolerance and solidarity has never been a war without an "enemy", and to abolish war, we must transcend and supersede enemy images with understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all peoples and cultures.

7. Participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge are needed to replace the secrecy and manipulation of information which characterize the culture of war.

8. International peace and security inculcate peace diplomacy, peacekeeping, disarmament and military conversion.

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