

# Democracy and Political Party Assistance in Post-Conflict Societies





Boys in front of the Darul Aman Palace, seat of the future parliament. (2006)



Kabul, Afghanistan (2007)

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Demobilization of Burundi military (Muramwa, 2004)

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# 1 Introduction

Post-conflict and fragile states have become matters of prominent concern for international policy makers. These states not only keep their populations trapped in poverty and insecurity, but can destabilize regional and global security as well. History shows that the long-term emergence from fragility into a normal, stable, functioning state and society is directly linked to the promotion of accountable and democratic governance and restored, functioning institutions.

Democratization is always a politically contentious process and this is particularly true in volatile post-conflict settings. Without strong political and state institutions, components of democratization such as elections and political party competition can raise tensions or, in extreme cases, lead to renewed conflict. However, political party development and multiparty dialogue are necessary steps towards the creation of a stable, democratic political system that can be conducive to development, the protection of human rights and peaceful conflict prevention.

Whereas international donor agencies provide substantial support to elections, civil society development, state-building and other aspects of post-conflict democratization, political party assistance has often remained limited. However, international donors seeking to support the democratic transition of fragile, post-conflict states cannot avoid engaging with political parties; political parties are often part of the problem, but in any case part of the solution as well.

This NIMD publication provides a brief overview of the lessons learned in the field of democracy assistance in post-conflict societies in general and of political party assistance in particular. With this paper, NIMD aims to contribute to the debate and to present some practical guidelines for engagement in post-conflict situations.



## 2 Post-conflict and Fragile States

### 2.1 Basic Terms and Classifications

Many terms are being used in the vast body of literature on fragile states: they are referred to as 'weak', 'failing', 'failed' or 'collapsed' states. Fragility is often mentioned in the same breath as 'conflict-prone' or 'post-conflict' states. This is not surprising, since state fragility and violent conflict are strongly correlated; almost all of the states identified by the World Bank as 'fragile' are states that have recently experienced or are still experiencing violent conflict. In this publication, the authors will use the terms post-conflict and fragile states. But what do these terms mean here?

Today the term 'post-conflict' can be misleading and confusing. Contemporary intra-state wars rarely follow a linear progression from pre-conflict to armed conflict to post-conflict. The major twentieth century interstate wars used to start with a declaration of war and ended with the military defeat of one of the parties. Clear winners and losers could be identified. In contrast, the starting point of an intra-state conflict often becomes apparent only in retrospect, while violence and instability often continue after a peace settlement has been signed. The Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the most tragic examples of a country where domestic disputes that were dormant continuously flare up again.

For the purpose of this publication, it is useful to distinguish between different types of post-conflict situations, since the extent to which the conflict has ended determines the possibilities for political party support. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) identifies three types of post-conflict situations<sup>1</sup>:

- *Self-enforcing cases*, in which a clear winner can be identified. The defeated party may be territorially displaced and there is a strong consensus in society about the way forward (e.g. East-Timor in 1999 and Ethiopia-Eritrea in 2000);

- *Mediated cases*, in which the previously warring factions succeed in negotiating a peace settlement, which typically includes an agreement on the political and institutional framework, but mistrust and tensions remain (e.g. Guatemala in 1996 and Mozambique in 1992);
- *Conflictual cases*, in which one side achieves a military victory but there is no comprehensive peace settlement to resolve the issues that led to and exacerbated the conflict (e.g. Nicaragua in 1979-1990<sup>2</sup>, Burundi in 2005 and Afghanistan in 2003).

The level of fragility is directly linked to the way the conflict has ended; self-enforcing cases clearly produce more stable outcomes than conflictual cases. At one end of the continuum, post-conflict countries are extremely fragile; that is, the state lacks the essential capacity, resources, legitimacy and/or political will to provide basic services to the population, and faces difficulties in imposing order and in monopolizing the use of legitimate violence. After years of protracted conflict including multiple warring factions and/or external occupation, government capacities and the state apparatus have been eroded; a new government is still being formed, peace is fragile and violence may be ongoing in parts of the country (e.g. Iraq, Burundi, Afghanistan, Liberia).

On the other end of the continuum, post-conflict states are characterized by strong national capacities and relative stability. Previously warring factions are committed to peace and stability in the country, the government has policy-making and implementing capacity, and peacekeeping forces may be present to provide security guarantees (such as in Mozambique).

Unfortunately, most contemporary post-conflict countries can be placed on the 'weak national capacities' end of the UNDP continuum referred to above. In other words, most post-conflict states are fragile states.

<sup>1</sup> Three-pronged typology and continuum as proposed by the Chr. Michelsen Institute (Norway) and used by UNDP.

<sup>2</sup> Nicaragua is an example of a conflictual case in which the violent conflict continues due to external intervention after a clear military victory has been achieved by one of the belligerents. In 1979, the Sandinista Revolution achieved military triumph, but the contra-revolutionaries were remilitarized by the US and started a destabilizing war of low insurgency that lasted until the end of the 1980s.

## 2.2 Key Problems of Post-Conflict Societies

Post-conflict and fragile countries face serious difficulties in (re)building stable, democratic political systems. Caution is necessary when making generalizations about democratic transitions in post-conflict societies. But despite their historical, societal, cultural and economic differences, fragile, post-conflict states share a number of features that negatively influence the development of democratic political party systems and the institutionalization of political parties.

### 2.2.1 State Fragility and Accountability Gaps

The main obstacle to post-conflict democratic development is the fragility of the state. Weak state institutions are the key element of state fragility. Protracted intra-state conflicts all too often leave a devastated country in their wake. Elementary infrastructure has been destroyed and state institutions lack the capacity and/or the political will to provide citizens with a minimum level of security and public services. Often these states are highly vulnerable to external political and economic forces. Moreover, there is a lack of social cohesion and consensus on the way forward.

In fragile states, all *formal* accountability mechanisms are weak or even absent. Governance institutions are ineffective and citizens are unable to hold authorities accountable for their shortcomings. A state that does not deliver basic services, security and essential infrastructure to its people, and which offers no ways for the population to voice its concerns, will not have legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

Strengthening the state's core functions and the formal accountability mechanisms between the citizens and the state is therefore vital in the process of achieving a stable and democratic political system. State and government officials need to be challenged to justify their policies by an engaged and capable civil and political society. However, in most post-conflict societies, political and civil actors, press and media are weak and incapable of performing their respective roles. *Informal* accountability mechanisms such as patronage networks, particularly at local levels, can temporarily compensate for the absence of *formal* ones, but can hinder development in the long run.

### 2.2.2 Identity-related Intra-state Conflicts

Armed conflicts are increasingly taking place within states, even if they may often have spill-over effects to neighbouring countries (intra-state conflicts such as Afghanistan, Burundi and Somalia directly involve or affect bordering countries). In addition, contemporary violent

conflicts are often identity-related, that is: '(...) *conflict over any concept around which a community of people focuses its fundamental identity and sense of itself as a group, and over which it chooses, or feels compelled, to resort to violent means to protect that identity under threat*'<sup>3</sup>. Generally, the ownership of land and other economic, social and political resources or the right to use such resources are at stake in these conflicts, but identity factors (ethnicity, race, religion, culture and language) often serve as catalysts.

An understanding of the role that the identity factor has played during the conflict is crucial for understanding the role that it continues to play in the post-conflict political system. Political parties in a post-conflict setting tend to emphasize and appeal to the loyalty of one specific identity (ethnic, religious, or regional). The political debate too often remains one-dimensional, with an exclusive focus on ethnicity; widespread social disorganization, deep-rooted tensions, hostilities and mistrust prevail. This clearly hampers a peaceful democratic transition.

### 2.2.3 Highly Volatile Security Environment

Many post-conflict situations are still characterized by a relatively high level of insecurity. As mentioned before, contemporary conflicts rarely produce unambiguous, peaceful outcomes. Particularly in mediated or conflictual cases, members of former rebel forces and militias may continue to resort to violence, despite a peace agreement. When the issues that have led to violent conflict are not resolved, warring factions are not willing to lay down arms; even if they are willing to do it, they may face a security dilemma when there is no assurance that the cease-fire will not be violated by others. As several long-standing UN operations have demonstrated, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants – preconditions for a peaceful democratic transition – are impossible to achieve in the absence of a comprehensive peace settlement and security assurances provided by the international community.

Moreover, without effective law enforcement capacities, such as a well-functioning army and police forces, and with numerous incentives for 'spoiling behaviour', such as a profitable drug economy, crime will flourish. Illicit war economies that may have fuelled a conflict are not easily replaced by legal economies. Violence, intimidation and illegal political funding from undesirable sources can seriously thwart political reforms in a post-conflict democratization process.

<sup>3</sup> *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators*, International IDEA, 2003, p.9.

#### **2.2.4 Lack of Democratic Experience**

Finally, post-conflict countries tend to have little democratic experience or lack a democratic history altogether. As in other young democracies, this is reflected in the lack of free and independent media, of an active and participatory civil society, and of an independent judiciary. Civil society is too weak to act as a watchdog of the state and public mistrust of state institutions is high. Practices of patrimony, clientele and patronage may often continue to exist alongside bureaucratic state institutions. Power is often highly personalized, and may be concentrated in such a way that political leaders also control the economic domain and other parts of society. Corruption and discriminatory policies often prevail.

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## 3 Democratization in Post-Conflict Societies: Lessons Learned

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The general features of post-conflict countries as mentioned in Chapter 2 clearly hamper a democratic transition and the development of effective, accountable and democratic political parties. Caution is necessary, however, when making generalizations about post-conflict political systems and the development and functioning of political parties in post-conflict settings. Policy makers and practitioners tend to generalize post-conflict situations, which in reality can vary substantially. There are no blueprints for democracy and political party assistance in post-conflict societies; a country-specific approach is needed. As many old institutions continue to exist after the conflict is over, new institutions cannot be developed from scratch, let alone be imposed forcibly by outsiders.

Nonetheless, various lessons can be learned from recent experiences with democratic assistance in post-conflict societies. Which circumstances are conducive to democratic political reform, and which undermine such reform? What type of assistance – international democracy assistance in general and to political parties in particular – is most effective under specific circumstances?

### 3.1 The Peace Settlement and the Democratic Institutional Framework

#### 3.1.1 The Peace-Building Process

Contemporary intra-state armed conflicts are increasingly ended by negotiated peace settlements. Outright military victories rarely end intra-state wars. Peace settlement negotiations affect the post-war political system considerably. A peace agreement not only aims to end the war, but also lays the foundations for the democratic state-building process. Choices are made on crucial issues like the electoral system, power-sharing structures and the transformation of rebel forces into political parties. These choices have far-reaching consequences for the scope and pace of the democratic transition.

The *process* of reaching a decision on these issues is just as important as the *outcome*. It is not only the choice for a political system as such that determines the success or failure of a democratization process in the aftermath of a violent conflict. The inclusiveness of the process, the attitudes of the political actors involved, and the levels of trust are also important determining factors. All political stakeholders need to be recognized as legitimate political actors and taken seriously in the process. They need to define a democratic political system they can all live with. If the process is entirely driven from the outside without sufficient local support, or if major political players are being excluded from the settlement negotiations, there may be disastrous consequences at a later stage. In Afghanistan, for example, the peace negotiations were far from inclusive; both the Taliban and newly established democratic bodies were excluded from the Bonn process.

In the 1990s, countries all too often slid back into civil war after a peace accord had been signed; Rwanda, Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone are among the most catastrophic examples. International assistance proved ineffective. In order to gauge the prospects for democracy assistance, we will need to take a closer look at the conditions under which peace settlements that pave the way to a democratic transition are likely to succeed.

The literature on the implementation of peace settlements provides important insights into the determinants of success of post-conflict peace building processes. First and foremost, the security dilemma of former warring factions needs to be solved. A lack of trust among previously warring parties poses a major obstacle to a post-conflict transition to democracy. Indeed, how can a party trust its foes to keep the peace? External actors play a crucial role in resolving the security dilemma by providing security guarantees. If regional or international peace-keeping forces monitor the implementation of the peace settlement, particularly during the demobilization

and demilitarization phase, the antagonists will feel less vulnerable. They will be less fearful that their opponents will rearm and cause a relapse into armed conflict.

This international monitoring function remains important during the democratic transition. The former belligerents will have to build mutual trust, as well as trust in the new political system and its nascent institutions. It is therefore essential that the main political stakeholders continue a dialogue process for the issues that emerge in the implementation of the new constitutional provisions and other national matters that remain contentious. The need for continued dialogue is often overlooked in the rush to pursue 'normalcy' following a peace agreement or settlement. However, the social capital needed to make political systems work peacefully can only be developed over time and requires sustained dialogue. Outsiders can play an important, facilitating role in these post-agreement dialogue processes. International actors need to remain committed after the peace settlement has been signed and be prepared to act as co-guarantors for the political arrangements. The genuine willingness of the respective actors to play a constructive role in redressing the situation could be measured in the level of commitment to and delivery on a 'national agenda', to which they all should be required to subscribe in the post-agreement phase.

The success or failure of a peace-building process also depends largely on the incentives and opportunities for 'spoilers'. There are always potential spoilers, parties who are not truly committed to a successful outcome and obstruct the peace process. However, the incentives and opportunities can be minimized. An assessment of the motives, intentions and interests of all the parties involved can help identify ways to increase their commitment. While some former warring groups are motivated primarily by economic gain, others have a more political or reformist agenda; in most cases, both greed and grievance are part of the rationale. And within a group, hardliners and moderates, leadership and cadre can all have different agendas and interests. The availability of natural resources, such as diamonds, timber, minerals, poppy and coca cultivation, increases the likelihood of spoilers. Indeed, resource trade allows warring factions to finance the war, but is also a highly profitable business for warlords. For those warlords who control natural resources, instability, chaos and weak institutions may offer opportunities that stability, order and strong democratic institutions do not.

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In order to keep parties on board in a peace process, foreign partners need to use both the carrot and the stick. Carrots may include recognizing the former warring factions as legitimate political actors, putting social and economic grievances on the political agenda, and financing the transformation of rebel groups into political parties. Common sticks include financial, political or military sanctions in case of cease-fire violations, or restriction of access to international commodity markets for illegitimate exports from conflict or post-conflict countries.

### Lessons Learned

Successful implementation of a peace settlement is most likely when:

- All major warring factions have been included in the peace negotiations and have signed an agreement. Both moderates and extremists on all sides have been included in the process, particularly during the initial phase;
- After having signed a peace agreement, the parties continue an inclusive dialogue and commit themselves to a shared national agenda;
- The international community has made a strong political, financial and military commitment, providing security guarantees and remaining engaged after the peace agreement has been signed;
- There are few incentives and opportunities for spoilers;
- The country has reasonable levels of state capacity at its disposal to implement and sustain the peace agreement;
- Neighbouring states support the peace process and exercise control over borders;
- The number of warring factions is small and the number of soldiers is relatively low.

### 3.1.2 Electoral Design in Post-Conflict Societies

The electoral system has a considerable impact on the post-conflict democratization process and the political party system. The choice of the type of electoral system will depend on the specific situation of the country in question, encompassing its political culture, its track record on representative democracy, the size of parliament, the electorate's knowledge and the quality of its political organizations and leadership, and not on a 'one-size-fits-all' approach generally proven to be the best remedy for all post-conflict settings. This need for a country-specific approach also holds true for the less dramatic but also highly influential choice between a unicameral or bicameral parliamentary structure within a federated or confederated state structure, since this choice is clearly relevant for the emergence or consolidation of regional and local parties. All these institutional choices directly influence the levels of representation or inclusion, fragmentation and polarization in the party system. There is no perfect electoral system for countries with significant ethnic, social, religious or regional differences, nor for those which have recently experienced violent conflict, but experience suggests that some systems are more suitable than others.

The main requirements for a democratic transition in a divided society include maximal inclusiveness and incentives for multiparty (and multi-ethnic) cooperation and moderate, accommodative politics. Some form of proportional representation (PR) is therefore generally preferred over majority/plurality systems. Whereas PR systems are conducive to the representation of a large range of potentially divided groups in governance institutions and post-election power sharing arrangements, majority systems tend to lead to a few large parties and a concentration of executive power in a single-party government. However, plurality systems are also conducive to stronger, responsive, and accountable government. Therefore, some argue that the electoral system in a divided society should not merely promote proportional representation, but primarily should provide incentives for 'vote pooling' and pre-election coalition-building between political parties in order to prevent party fragmentation and a lack of governability.

#### Lessons Learned

The electoral systems in divided, post-conflict societies should promote maximal inclusiveness and representation of various groups and/or promote vote pooling and multi-ethnic cooperation. On the basis of these criteria, International IDEA has recommended four specific electoral systems for post-conflict, divided societies<sup>4</sup>:

1. *List proportional system* (list PR): South Africa after apartheid; all major groups in society are represented on the basis of proportionality.
2. *Alternative vote* (AV): Fiji, Papua New Guinea 1964-1975; voters cast their votes not only on their first-choice candidate, but also on the second, third and subsequent preferences. This system encourages multi-ethnic cooperation across group lines, since candidates move to the moderate multi-ethnic political centre in order to attract second-preference votes from other (ethnic) groups.
3. *Single transferable vote* (STV): Estonia, Northern Ireland; a mix between list PR and AV. The system allows for choice between parties and between candidates within parties and encourages proportionality as well as multi-ethnic cooperation across group lines.
4. *Explicit recognition of communal groups*: Lebanon; different systems are used to determine the institutional representation of ethnic groups, either by dividing seats on a communal basis, reserving a number of seats for ethnic groups, or by assigning 'best loser seats'.

<sup>4</sup> Ben Reilly and Andrew Reynolds, 'Electoral Systems for Divided Societies,' in: *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators*, International IDEA, 2003. See also *Engineering Electoral Systems: Possibilities and Pitfalls* by Alan Wall and Mohamed Saïh (NIMD, 2007).

### 3.1.3 Majority-Rule Democracy Versus Power Sharing

The nature of the executive power in a post-conflict country is determined largely by the electoral system. As mentioned, a majority type of democracy, with a single-party government resulting from a plurality or majority electoral system, can be distinguished from a power-sharing system, which arises as a result of some form of proportional representation. Broad agreement exists on the undesirability of a majority system that features a 'winner-take-all' outcome for highly polarized, war-torn countries. The prospect of a zero-sum outcome and the fear of losing power are likely to harden the electoral competition and increase the risk of renewed armed conflict. It should be mentioned, however, that in the cases of post-conflict countries such as Mozambique, El Salvador and Nicaragua, majority rule did prove effective. It has been suggested that majority-rule democracy is better suited for managing post-conflict settlements following peasant rebellions or class-based struggles than it is for settlements following armed conflicts fought by various, well-defined factions.

Many argue that some form of power sharing between former warring groups is better for successful democratization in a divided, post-conflict society in any case, because it accommodates different interests and assures all actors of a place in the political game. Power sharing pacts aim to achieve participation in the political decision-making process by representatives from all major groups in the society.

Arend Lijphart, the most fervent defender of the parliamentary consensual democracy as we know it in the Netherlands, has argued in favour of a group-based or *consociation*-based form of power sharing for divided societies, in which the various groups have the direct authority to manage their own internal affairs, while their leaders assure communal or ethnic representation on the basis of proportionality at the national executive and/or legislative levels. This system has proved relatively successful in helping pass from a conflict into a post-conflict situation in countries like Lebanon and Bosnia, but its implementation has proven to be problematic in a country like Burundi.

Moreover, a *consociational* form of power sharing may be more suitable for a period of transition than for a period of consolidation. As Lijphart has argued, consociational power sharing works best when ethnic or other divided groups are of roughly comparable size and when there

are more than two opposing groups (and negotiations and compromises are needed). And the system only works when the (ethnic) elites are in fact more moderate than their supporters. One of the main arguments against group-based power sharing is that the system perpetuates (ethnic) divisions and makes reconciliation more difficult. On the other hand, when (ethnic) divisions are real, it seems that the only way to manage them is by accommodating them in the power structure. Moreover, in general it can be said that democracy and governance are more sustainable when all players seek compromises and consensus, recognizing their differences.

In contrast to consociational, group-based power sharing, integrative forms of power sharing encourage multi-ethnic/multi-religious cooperation across group lines. This approach was adopted in South Africa after the apartheid, as well as in Fiji and Nigeria. The prevailing view is that identity-based, ethnic parties promote instability and harden ethnic identities. Therefore, post-conflict political systems should feature incentives for multiethnic political parties and coalitions that aggregate rather than articulate particular group interests. However, integrative systems do not always show the desired results, as was the case in Fiji. Iraq and Afghanistan have reinforced the argument that ethnic parties are in some cases inevitable and that they can have democratic potential – if only the variation of ethnic identities at all levels of government is ensured.

#### Lessons Learned

- In a divided, conflict-prone society, some form of power sharing is generally to be preferred over a majority system that promotes a 'winner-takes-all' outcome and a single-party government.
- Group-based forms of power sharing promote single-identity parties (ethnic/religious/regional); this seems more suitable for transitional periods than for democratic consolidation and risks to perpetuate societal divisions.
- Integrative forms of power sharing promote multi-ethnic parties and coalitions, but have proven difficult to achieve.

### 3.1.4 Party Laws and Finance

Some post-conflict societies already had multiparty political systems before the outbreak of the conflict (e.g. Guatemala, Nicaragua, Liberia). Many others, however, were under authoritarian or semi-authoritarian rule before the conflict and had to draft new constitutional or other legal provisions allowing for the formation and functioning of political parties after the war (e.g. Mozambique, Afghanistan). These party laws define the legal status of political parties and set regulations for party registration, organization and financing. Sometimes these regulations are very strict in order to prevent parties from entrenching ethnic or other divisions that may reignite conflict (Rwanda, for example, has banned ethnic-based parties).

Regulations for party financing are particularly important, since money plays a problematic role in post-conflict political processes. Irregularities in political finance, i.e. the funding of political parties, candidates and other electoral participants, are the rule rather than the exception in post-conflict societies. Some political finance problems are common to all democracies: imperfections in legal frameworks, a lack of compliance with regulations, a lack of disclosure and transparency. Other characteristics are specific to post-conflict and/or fragile states. First and foremost, the links between political parties, organized crime, paramilitary groups and militias that prevail in many post-conflict societies undermine the democratization efforts in general, and effective and fair political funding in particular. Political funding from obscure sources enables criminal interests to capture the electoral process and gain access to the political arena. Intimidation and the constant threat of violence discourage the population to vote for non-armed, less powerful political groupings and undermine efforts to promote transparency and accountability of political funding.<sup>5</sup>

A political finance system and adequate public funding are necessary, but insufficient to solve the problems related to the high level of violence and insecurity in post-conflict societies. Successful disarmament, demobilization and transformation of rebel forces, an effective and independent judiciary and an effective and accountable police force are all needed to cut the undesirable ties between politics, money and violence. The weak national capacities of post-conflict states hamper the creation and enforcement of an effective political funding system. Moreover, due to the lack of democratic experience in most post-conflict countries, concepts of transparency, accountability and equity in political funding are often not

rooted in political culture and do not meet international standards. Finally, as in other fragile, impoverished countries, little popular funding is available to political organizations. Addressing the issue of political finance at an early stage is crucial, since irregularly funded political parties are unlikely to support political finance reform in the near future.

#### Lessons Learned

The lessons from internationally funded political finance programmes in post-conflict societies, as identified by Fischer, Walecki and Carlson, are:

- Recognize that political finance is a priority in the post-conflict peace building process, and therefore encourage the inclusion of provisions in the peace agreement;
- Educate all political groups, the media, civil society and the general public about the standards of democratic political finance;
- Seize assets of political parties and individuals that have systematically abused state resources and instigate a process to return the assets to public control;
- Facilitate a dialogue between political groups, the media, civil society and the general public on political finance standards and funding prohibitions, and draft key laws and regulations;
- Provide technical assistance and resources to help introduce a political finance system and a regulatory agency;
- Provide limited direct and/or in-kind subsidies to political parties and groups;
- Support monitoring efforts of the political finance system by the media and civil society;
- Provide technical assistance to document violations and to enforce the law by means of dialogue, dispute resolution and sanctions;
- Evaluate the political finance system;
- Support the transfer of ownership of the political finance system to local authorities.

<sup>5</sup> Jeff Fischer, Marcin Walecki and Jeffrey Carlson (eds.), *Political Finance in Post-Conflict Societies*, IFES Center for Transitional and Post-Conflict Governance, 2006.



### 3.2 Security and Democracy: Balancing Short-Term and Long-Term Objectives

#### 3.2.1 Timing and Prioritization

Post-conflict countries rarely follow a linear progression, but all of them seem to pass through a number of stages: stabilization and transition (approximately 1 year), transformation and institution-building (1-3 years) and consolidation (3-10 years). Priorities are different in each of these three phases. Broadly speaking, security is a top priority during the first phase, but the restoration of infrastructure and basic services, the development of a new political framework, the pursuit of dialogue and a process of building trust between former warring parties also need to be initiated. Political, economic, judicial reform and institution-building follow in the transformation phase and require continuation and deepening for many years.<sup>6</sup>

Given that the development of democratic, open and accountable governance institutions is a long-term process, the trade-off between short-term security and long-term democracy and stability is one of the main dilemmas in post-conflict democratization processes. Ideally, democracy serves as a non-violent method of conflict resolution and of formalizing the competition for power. However, in the absence of strong political institutions, competitive democratic elections can easily generate conflict and exercise a destabilizing influence. Indeed, elections can involve a radical change in the nature of political power, undermining established political orders, allowing new entrants to access the political system, and highlighting social divisions.<sup>7</sup>

In many cases, such as in Angola and Sierra Leone, the elite's fear of losing power partly explains the resumption of armed conflict. The absence or underdevelopment of democratic institutions such as a free press, independent judiciary and active civil society, which can serve as a counterforce against extremists and ethnic outbidding in the electoral competition, can result in incentives for the political elite to harden ethnic positions during early democratization in post-conflict states. This happened in the early 1990s, for example, in former Yugoslavia.

In light of this warning, the international community needs to consider questions of timing, when assisting the democratization process and the development of democratic, accountable political parties. The long term objective of democracy should always be balanced with

the short term objectives of peace and security. This is not a matter of choice; it is a matter of well-considered timing, prioritization and coordination.

#### 3.2.2 A Gradual and Comprehensive Approach To Democratization

Two general remarks can be made. First, too often, rushed or premature post-conflict elections are pushed through by the international community as part of its exit strategy. Expectations are unrealistically high: post-conflict elections are not only expected to end the war, but also to transform warring factions into political parties and allow for the installation of a legislative body and a legitimate and accountable government. However, post-conflict democracy-building is a long-term process; competitive elections are only the beginning. A gradual approach for introducing democratization and political party competition is preferable in fragile, post-conflict societies. This does not imply deferral. Rather than sequencing approaches – security first, democracy later – , frequently entrenching the very political and economic interests that caused the conflict in the first place, successful international cooperation ought to be comprehensive: balancing the three interlinked objectives of democracy, security and development in an overall peace-building agenda.<sup>8</sup> Hasty elections are conducive neither to short-term security, nor to long-term, peaceful democratic practices. Rather than rushing to hold competitive elections, policy makers should recognize from the very beginning of the peace process that ensuring security and building a stable and democratic political system are closely intertwined.

Second, the possibilities for supporting political parties and the transformation process of former rebel movements, should be explored and, if deemed appropriate, initiated at a much earlier phase than is commonly the case. Already during a peace process an inventory should be made of the prospects and needs of the various political actors. In order to minimize the risks related to the first post-conflict elections, they should be supported from the earliest possible stage. For without functioning institutions, such as political parties, a relapse into conflict becomes more likely.

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<sup>6</sup> Paul Collier et al., *Breaking the conflict trap*, World Bank Report, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin Reilly, *Post-Conflict Elections: Uncertain Turning Points of Transition*, Conference paper, 2006

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Carothers, 'How Democracies Emerge: The "Sequencing" Fallacy,' *Journal of Democracy* (January 2007): 12-27.

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### **Lessons Learned**

- Too often, the international community has pushed for rushed and premature elections. Competitive elections should not mark the beginning of an exit strategy, but should be part of a long-term peace building agenda.
- Long-term international engagement (political, financial and military) is vital.
- Early recognition of former warring factions as legitimate political actors, and financial assistance for their transformation into political parties, can contribute to stability.
- The development of the new political framework – including the strengthening of political parties, restoration of infrastructure and basic services, and a process of dialogue and trust-building between former warring parties – must be initiated in the very first phase of the peace-building process.

## 4 Political Party Assistance in Post-Conflict Societies: NIMD's Focus Areas

Political parties are essential for democracy to function, as well as for the promotion of peace and stability and the prevention of violent conflict. Their functions – representation, interest aggregation and articulation, recruitment of electoral candidates and the formation of government – cannot be duplicated by any other civil society or private organization. This is the reason underlying NIMD's focus on political parties.

Over the last two years, NIMD has been asked by political parties, governments and international organizations to assist in strengthening multiparty political systems in countries which recently emerged from violent internal or regional conflicts. Particularly in post-conflict democracies, NIMD deems it crucially important to stimulate constructive cooperation in the democratic system, to assist in strengthening the institutional capacities, and to help political parties bridge the gap with civil society at large.

NIMD's facilitating role and technical assistance are crucial aspects of its work. However, it should be emphasized that party assistance cannot be considered a purely technical affair. Political party assistance is highly political. Party elites, specifically those of the ruling party, are likely to feel threatened by internal reforms; the elites are often not initially interested in interparty dialogue and cooperation. Like all other international partners, NIMD therefore needs to stimulate parties to engage in constructive interparty dialogue by using 'carrots' – providing technical assistance, expertise, opportunities for international and regional exchange, and recognition of former warring factions as legitimate actors – as well as 'sticks', such as peer pressure from partners in the region and political pressure of international partners.

### 4.1 Focus on Interparty Dialogue

After years of protracted intra-state conflict, mistrust, resentment and hatred prevail within a society and between political opponents. When trust is eroded and there is no longer a willingness to share different views, nor to seek consensus and mutual understanding, a multiparty system cannot function effectively. The stability and effectiveness of a political party system are not only determined by its legal framework, the checks and balances within the system, and the parties' organization and general democratic practices; to a considerable extent, stability and effectiveness hinge upon the existence of mechanisms for parties to engage in interparty dialogue and cooperation.

Major disagreements about a country's future do not dissipate after a peace treaty is signed. All too often, the international community has assumed that a post-conflict country will quickly move on to a status quo after the first, hastily organized free elections. That hardly ever happens. The peace is often fragile and the guns may have been silenced, but the origins of the conflict often still exist. To achieve sustainable peace, it is therefore essential that parties maintain an open dialogue, even after the first elections. Particularly where strengthening the democratic system and developing a shared, long-term vision for the post-conflict restructuring of society are concerned, parties will benefit from a dialogue that at least in part takes place outside the media's direct attention, in a neutral, non-competitive environment.

Facilitating a multiparty dialogue not only serves to prevent a relapse into conflict, it is also a precondition for better political accountability, especially in countries where one party holds the reins of rule. Strengthening an inclusive multi-party dialogue will help parties to overcome mutual distrust, which often obstructs pragmatic dialogue on political issues. Maintaining a regular and peaceful dialogue enhances the chance that reconstruction efforts

and necessary political, economic and social reforms will proceed peacefully.

Because post-conflict political parties generally lack a solid basis of mutual trust, facilitating a dialogue between such parties is a priority objective for NIMD. The initiation of such dialogues requires a cautious and not overambitious approach that is tailored to the specific nature of fragile, polarized political relationships. Reaching common agreement on the rules for dialogue

and determining the subjects of discussion are crucial first steps in creating an atmosphere for more fruitful party cooperation. In the longer run, this should lead to a common agenda that includes possibilities for democracy and party support.

### **NIMD in Guatemala: the Shared National Agenda**

*In 2002 and 2003, twenty political parties in Guatemala came together to develop a shared analysis of the situation in their country and a policy agenda for improvements. This Shared National Agenda was signed in December 2003; since then, it has constituted the principal framework for politics and policies in the country. The Agenda describes and elaborates on the main points of the Peace Accords reached in 1996, but the clear difference between the two documents lies in the nature of their development. As opposed to the Peace Accords, the Shared National Agenda was the sole creation of the Guatemalan political party representatives from the outset, making it a national and more viable product.*

*The Agenda is a multiparty political compromise that establishes the principles and norms for democratic political conduct and practice. As a blueprint, it addresses key national issues which require reduced social and economic inequalities, strengthened rule of law, effective law enforcement and greater transparency and accountability from the political process to society at large. The Agenda has initiated to start negotiations on governance accords regarding issues such as fiscal, political and electoral system reforms, the latter leading to*

*the decentralization of political activities and parties that took place before the 2007 elections and clearly increased the participation of the rural areas and indigenous population in the electoral process.*

*Another important example to mention is the ongoing political discussion about social dialogue and social cohesion in Guatemala. The discussion takes place both in a commission established by the new government as well as in the Foro de Partidos Políticos, the multiparty institutional platform established to develop the Shared National Agenda. The platform since then has been an alternative venue for deliberations and policy developments by the Guatemalan political parties.*

*Today the current government is facing various challenges. One of them is to effectively translate more of the Agenda into legislation and policy implementation. In addition, the influence of criminal organizations and of violence in politics will need to be addressed urgently. This is a new phenomenon which occurred during the latest election in 2007, with more than fifty killed under obscure circumstances.*

**NIMD in Burundi: Strengthening Interparty Relations and Party Capacities**

*The ten-year civil war in Burundi (1993 – 2003) has disrupted the most basic levels of trust, both between citizens and between citizens and the State. Ethnic clashes, large numbers of war-related casualties and displacements of large groups of people have led to deep community rifts. Insecurity is ever-present. As state institutions are generally weak and corrupt, the level of public trust in the State has remained very low. The lack of these basic conditions for stability represents the primary obstacle to democratic development in Burundi.*

*Many of the leading political parties are former rebel groups in the process of transformation to political maturity. The absence of well-established party membership and internal party dialogue undermines the operation of political parties as visible intermediaries and watchdogs between the government and the general public. In addition, political power sharing between the various parties has not materialized yet.*

*Following the request of President Pierre Nkurunziza in 2005 to assist the party system in Burundi, NIMD has explored the possibilities of starting a programme in this post-conflict country. A permanent multiparty dialogue platform will be set up to sustain the efforts to build trust between parties, to moderate positions and to build consensus on contentious issues.*

*At the same time, parties will be assisted in strengthening their identity and organizational structure, since political instability in Burundi is directly linked to internal party divisions. Former rebel movements will be supported in their transformation process. In the long term, the NIMD programme in Burundi aims to contribute to a more stable political party system through a depolarization of interparty relations and to the strengthening of political party capacities.*

**4.2 Strengthening the Institutional Capacities of Post-Conflict Political Parties**

**4.2.1 Classifications of Post-Conflict Political Parties**

Whereas the political party landscape varies from one post-conflict country to the other, three broad types of post-conflict parties can be distinguished: a) political parties that already existed before the war; b) political parties that emerged out of former warring factions, rebel groups or militias; and c) political parties that were established in the post-conflict era. These different types of parties have different institutional needs.

The parties that already existed before the war and continue to exist afterwards are usually the previously dominant ruling parties. They are often strongly institutionalized and closely intertwined with the bureaucratic machinery, as evidenced by FRELIMO in Mozambique, MPLA in Angola, and UPRONA in Burundi. In post-conflict elections, they may see their authority and legitimacy challenged for the first time by new competitors. Generally, their main challenge is to strengthen their accountability, vis-à-vis their party members and their voters.

The newly emerging parties in the post-conflict era generally lack resources and experience, and struggle with the uneven playing field they encounter. Their party identity and programmatic capacities are often weak. These new parties entering the political arena may include former warring factions, such as RENAMO in Mozambique, CNDD-FDD in Burundi, and the various *mujahedeen* groups in Afghanistan. These former armed rebel groups have to undertake considerable internal reforms in order to be able to function effectively as a political party within the democratic multiparty system. Whereas military structures require strong leadership and command, political organizations also need consensus-building, inclusive decision-making processes, communication and representation of various interests. These changes take years to achieve and should thus be initiated and supported in the early phase of the transformation process.

Notwithstanding the enormous differences between post-conflict parties, a number of focus areas for strengthening their institutional capacities can be discerned. For NIMD, the institutional development of political parties refers to the process by which parties develop democratic values and practices and a stronger sense of party identity, and

become better organized, more effective in the electoral competition and in the implementation of policies. Thus, parties are enabled to more effectively respond to and account for the demands and interests of party members and the broader electorate.

Strengthening accountability is particularly important in post-conflict countries, which are characterized by lower levels of political accountability than other young democracies. Post-conflict states often have fragile political landscapes, where little is needed for those in power to return to armed conflict. Within that fragile atmosphere, it becomes essential to replace elite control by full-fledged political parties that are able to hold the government accountable on behalf of broad-based voter-

groups and that can, in turn, be held accountable by their party members.

NIMD therefore engages political parties to improve their accountability vis-à-vis their party members and their electorate. NIMD encourages parties to focus on tangible policy issues that can have a direct positive impact on people's lives, to formulate and implement policy, to build coalitions on the basis of political goals and ideas and to overcome one-dimensional political debate. Political parties are not always seen as the ones who can bridge gaps and bring peace. However, clear and understandable policies and quick, tangible results can contribute to a popular belief in and support for peaceful, democratic political movements.

### **NIMD in Nicaragua: Strengthening Political Institutions**

*Bipartisan agreements between the two former belligerents constitute the main feature of current Nicaraguan democracy. The country is known for having the most violent political history of Latin America in the 20th century with recurrent revolutions and contra-revolutions, caudillismo (authoritarian populism) and dictatorships. Between the revolutionary victory in 1979 and the peaceful transmission of power in 1990, the Sandinista revolutionaries governed under the most severe Cold War conditions created by US President Reagan and his local allies.*

*Since the first truly free and fair elections in 1990, that gave victory to a centre-right coalition, the former Somocista right wing party PLC and the former Sandinista revolutionary FSLN have increasingly adopted the habit of sharing power by political deals. Political violence has disappeared but has been replaced with to political trade. That has been the case particularly in the last decade. The whole State apparatus has become politicized by an almost equal repartition of seats and functions between the two parties, thus effectively kidnapping democracy and its political institutions. Most of the deals have been detrimental to the development of the country in terms*

*of institutional development, transparency and policy effectiveness.*

*These problems notwithstanding, Nicaragua is now the country with the most institutionalized political party system in Central America and has one of the highest rates of popular participation during elections. Besides the two dominant parties – PLC and FSLN – the other political parties represented in Parliament have also been able to maintain a stable level of electoral support and a certain amount of organizational strength.*

*In 2005, a coalition of bilateral and multilateral organizations, coordinated by UNDP and NIMD, started a programme in support of the modernization of political institutions. Diverse activities, debates, technical training and capacity-building have been undertaken with Parliament, the political parties and young politicians.*

*The main challenge that Nicaragua faces is clearly the fight against poverty, which affects the vast majority of the population. Opening political life up to society in general and constructing a modern and effective government and public sector are equally important, too.*

#### 4.2.2 Transforming Former Warring Factions into Political Parties

A recent study by Jeroen de Zeeuw (ed.), *From Soldiers to Politicians. Transforming Rebel Movements After Civil War*, provides us important insights into the challenges faced by political parties that emerged out of former warring factions, rebel groups or militias. Jeroen de Zeeuw and Luc van de Goor identified the key factors defining the success of a rebel-to-party transformation:

- The organizational strength and structure of the armed faction and its type of leadership have an important influence on the rebel-to-party transformation. Previous political experience and the willingness of the leadership to reform are crucial for a successful transformation.
- The extent to which violence had ended and the nature of the peace settlement are critical. An inclusive peace process and some form of power sharing seem to be conducive to the political transformation of former warring factions.

- A politically stable environment and a clear willingness of the key actors to end the war have a positive effect on rebel-to-party transformations.
- Rebel forces transforming into political movements need to enjoy a high level of popular support and legitimacy during and after the conflict in order to succeed as a political party.
- The existence of consultative platforms (before the first post-conflict elections) and a proportional electoral system increase the chances for successful political transformations.
- The international, regional and national political contexts have to be favourable to the transformation of rebel movements and their entry in the democratic political arena.
- An international commitment in terms of political pressure and financial and technical support are crucial for a successful transformation, even if such a commitment is never decisive.

### **NIMD in Mozambique: Stimulating Dialogue**

*The civil war in Mozambique started when the country gained its independence in 1975. It ended with the Rome Peace Agreement of 1992. Most of the civil war took place in the Cold War era, and the governing party FRELIMO received some support from the Soviet Union and its allies. The conflict also had regional roots, with Apartheid South Africa (and initially Rhodesia) supporting the other major movement, RENAMO. The war caused massive destruction in many parts of Mozambique. Atrocities were committed by both sides.*

*The civil war came to an end through negotiation.*

*The Peace Agreement was characterized by a strong role by the international community. Important elements of the post-conflict situation included the return of millions of Mozambicans that had fled to neighbouring countries, massive international support and the introduction of a multiparty democratic system. However, violence was not eliminated altogether after the official end of the conflict, but it has continued on a limited scale.*

*International actors have continued to play an important role. Their support helped in rebuilding the Mozambican economy, playing a role in reducing the tensions in the country. However, the growing gap between poor and rich Mozambicans, and between poorer and richer parts of the country, is creating new tensions, and eruptions of civil unrest can easily turn violent. The international community is a generous donor, providing a significant portion of the government budget. International support for democratisation is limited, with most of the support provided to parliament.*

*NIMD's predecessor, the Foundation for the New South Africa, started its Mozambique programme in 2000. By then, the Mozambican situation had already stabilised, but the political landscape was essentially composed of just two major parties, FRELIMO and RENAMO. NIMD initially aimed to diversify the political landscape in order to create a possible bridge between the two main parties. At a later stage, efforts to stimulate a dialogue between the two parties, both of them still struggling with remaining elements of the civil war, have become more prominent. In addition, two civil society organisations were integrated into the programme to broaden the political debate.*

*The lessons learned from the Mozambican experience include:*

- *If a negotiated settlement is not politically inclusive, there is a great risk that tensions will persist.*
- *NIMD's initial desire to stimulate small political parties has not been very successful, as the parties that showed up at the NIMD office turned out to be of marginal importance in Mozambican politics and did not manage to convince the Mozambican electorate.*
- *Facilitating dialogue turned out to be very difficult, as the key political players still have their roots in the civil war. A new generation of political leaders should create more opportunities for dialogue.*



### 4.3 Bridging the Gap Between Political and Civil Society

In many post-conflict countries, mutual distrust prevails not only between political opponents, but also between political society and civil society at large. In particular, former warring factions that have plunged a country into chaos and destruction are not widely considered as the obvious institutions to promote the interests of the population once they have entered the political arena. Other civil organizations, interest groups and the church often step in to fill the void. However, civil society organizations cannot replace political parties; their functions have never successfully been duplicated by other institutions in any democratic system.

It is therefore crucial to promote dialogue and bridge the gap between civil society – including NGOs, religious organizations and the media – and political society. This can not only stimulate and exchange of knowledge and expertise, but can also help channel specific interests of the population more effectively to those who design and implement policy, as well as aid in strengthening accountability mechanisms. One of the ways in which NIMD stimulates dialogue and cooperation between civil and political society, for example in Afghanistan, is through support for political education programmes that help to develop a general consensus on what constitutes a democratic political community and a democratic political party.

#### **NIMD in Afghanistan: Focus on Political Education**

*Afghanistan is a state that has characteristics of both a post-conflict country and a country in the middle of conflict. Officially, the war ended in 2001; since then the country has boasted traditional democratic features such as a democratically elected government, a multiparty political system and an independent judicial sector. However, in reality the powers of these institutions have proven extremely limited. State institutions, security and the rule of law are flawed or entirely absent in large parts of the country.*

*Political parties' failure to hold their government accountable for its actions is in part due to the malfunctioning of political parties themselves. Afghan parties are generally weak institutions, both in size and in organizational structure, and hold few recognizable political ideologies or points of view. The violent and sometimes criminal history of some Afghan politicians adds to the public distrust and negative image of political parties. The lack of public trust in both the executive powers and*

*political parties seems to be one of Afghanistan's greatest impediments to a well-functioning, multiparty democracy.*

*The long-term objective of NIMD's Afghanistan programme, which started in 2007, is to strengthen the democratic system through mechanisms of dialogue and consultation between political and civil society. In the first stage, there will be no direct technical support for political parties. Instead, NIMD will concentrate efforts on enhancing dialogue between political and civil society and supporting a political education programme. NIMD will focus on the establishment of locally owned 'Democracy Schools', which derive their name from their objectives. These goals include facilitating young citizens in becoming active agents who interact with State institutions as well as political parties; training Afghan citizens to take up positions within political parties and the public administration; and disseminating the concept of democracy, understood as constituted by a set of universal values, but rooted in a local context.*

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#### 4.4 Guidelines for NIMD's Engagement in Post-Conflict Societies

1. **Early involvement.** When NIMD is requested to support a post-conflict multiparty system, the quality and sustainability of the peace settlement are determinants for its engagement; the peace agreement should be conducive to the development of a democratic multiparty political system. Free and fair elections are not a prerequisite; NIMD could also play a role in the pre-election period of a post-conflict democratization process, particularly by providing support to former warring factions transforming into political parties.
2. **Local political actors define the agenda.** NIMD's activities everywhere must be owned by the local actors themselves and should never be artificial interventions from abroad. In the analysis of the existing situation of political parties and the definition of the agenda and action framework, the principle of ownership is crucial and non-negotiable. Supported by NIMD through an interactive assessment, political parties should be empowered to draw their own picture.
3. **Political engagement, but do no harm.** NIMD should identify and support those actors that can most substantially and effectively contribute to democratic peace-building. Without compromising its impartiality, NIMD must explicitly recognize that as a pro-democratic, multiparty institution, it cannot hold to a traditional concept of neutrality and thus should not shy away from exercising political pressure.
4. **Continued inclusive dialogue is essential.** All relevant political parties should be involved in an inclusive interparty dialogue. Including non-democratic parties in the process may help those parties moderate their positions. And as in any other NIMD programme, a broad, inclusive dialogue among all political parties helps to build relationships based on trust, democratic tolerance and transparency and facilitates the exchange of best practices.
5. **Adopt a gradual and long-term approach.** Democratic state- and nation-building are long-term processes, and long-term engagement is therefore needed.
6. **Flexibility and adaptability.** Long-term strategic planning needs to be reconciled with flexibility and adaptability in the execution and implementation of programmes on the ground.
7. **Accept risks and continuously reassess the situation.** Given that a democratic transition after a period of violent conflict is usually a highly unstable and unpredictable process, NIMD should be willing to accept a relatively high level of risk. A thorough and continuous analysis of the political and security context should define NIMD's actions.
8. **Donor coordination.** Political party assistance should be embedded in a broader democratization agenda. The complexity of democratization processes in post-conflict countries and the variety of actors and agendas involved require effective coordination between donors. Technical assistance, capacity-building and multiparty dialogue must be integrated via a general approach in which other international organizations have a stake.
9. **Goals should be moderate and determined by the circumstances on the ground.** The NIMD is aware that (domestic) societal, economic, institutional and historical factors have a stronger impact on the development of post-conflict parties and party systems than international support.
10. **Define an exit strategy.** An exit strategy must always be part of a long-term strategic approach based on a well-conceived programme and calendar of activities, definition of tasks between partners and a monitoring and evaluation system in order to have analyses of input and output on a regular basis.

# 5 Focus Areas for NIMD Interventions in Post-Conflict Societies

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Post-Conflict Recovery Phase	NIMD Programme Objectives		
	Strengthening the Multiparty Political System	Institutional Development of Political Parties	Relationship Between Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations
Stabilization / Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate dialogue and trust-building between former warring factions.</li> <li>Constitutional, electoral and political party law design: encourage broad participation and inclusiveness; encourage the adoption of power-sharing arrangements; provide expertise and technical assistance.</li> <li>Facilitate dialogue on political finance standards and funding prohibitions; provide expertise and technical assistance; assist in drafting political finance laws and regulations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide incentives for warring factions to disarm and transform into political organizations: assist with financial and technical resources, foster peer pressure; uphold the principle of non-violence as non-negotiable; work with time frames.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate dialogue and trust-building among and between former warring factions and citizens; encourage mediation by civil society organizations and/or churches.</li> <li>Facilitate dialogue between former warring factions, civil society organizations and the media.</li> </ul>
Transformation / Institution-Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster peaceful interparty competition; help develop codes of conduct; encourage inclusiveness, consensus and the development of non-conflictual cross-party relationships.</li> <li>Assist in the development of a political finance system.</li> <li>Assist in creating an independent monitoring agency.</li> <li>Help establish financial mechanisms in support of political parties ('multi-donor basket funding', performance-based donor funding, public funding subsidies or in-kind benefits).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide financial and technical support to the transformation of former warring factions into political parties.</li> <li>Encourage parties to change military organizational structures; assist parties to initiate internal party reform: new lines of authority, inclusive decision-making procedures, internal communication, representation of women and minorities.</li> <li>Encourage and assist parties to adopt standards for transparency and accountability of political funding.</li> <li>Assist parties in drafting political programmes and strategic plans; encourage a focus on service provision.</li> <li>Provide training and technical support on campaigning, voter outreach, poll watching and communication with constituents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate continuation of dialogue between former warring factions, political groups, civil society organizations, media and common citizens; identify issues and priorities of the population through surveys and opinion polls.</li> <li>Assist in the reconciliation process.</li> <li>Assist in civic education programmes.</li> <li>Support media and civil society efforts to monitor the political finance system.</li> <li>Encourage equal and fair access to the media; encourage private media to represent a diversity of opinion.</li> </ul>
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster peaceful interparty competition.</li> <li>Continue to facilitate and to deepen the interparty dialogue and confidence-building.</li> <li>Assist in the continuous reform and improvement of the democratic framework (electoral law, political party law, political finance regulations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to assist and deepen internal party reform processes.</li> <li>Continue to assist and t deepen programme development, party definition, and long-term strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate dialogue</li> <li>Assist in the reconciliation process.</li> <li>Assist in civic education programmes</li> <li>Support monitoring efforts of the political finance system.</li> <li>Initiate debates between political parties and media.</li> </ul>

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Lotte ten Hoove (The Netherlands, 1980) has been working as a policy officer at NIMD since 2006. She graduated from the University of Amsterdam with degrees in political science and international relations. After her graduation, she completed a two-year Master's programme on conflict and security studies at *Sciences Po* in Paris. Her Master's thesis dealt with the regional peacekeeping capacities of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its interventions during the Liberian civil war.

### **Álvaro Pinto Scholtbach**

Álvaro Pinto Scholtbach (Chile, 1961) is a political scientist trained at the University of Amsterdam who has worked as policy adviser to the parliamentary group of the Labour Party of the Netherlands (PvdA) in international politics. He has served as International Secretary and Vice-Chair of that same political party. He was closely involved in the establishment of NIMD and is currently its Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

## 8 About NIMD

The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) is an organization of political parties in the Netherlands that works to promote political parties in young democracies. Founded in 2000 by seven parties (CDA, PvdA, VVD, GroenLinks, D66, CU and SGP)<sup>9</sup>, NIMD works with more than 150 political parties from 17 countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe.

NIMD supports joint initiatives by parties to improve the democratic system in their country. NIMD also supports the institutional development of political parties, helps them develop party programmes and assists them in efforts to enhance relations with civil society organizations and the media.

In a relatively short period of time, NIMD has received international recognition for its work. NIMD's unique character as a joint initiative of governing and opposition parties in the Netherlands, and the specific working methods it has developed since its foundation, have set an example in Europe and led to increasing demand for NIMD's knowledge, expertise and experience.

*Democracy and Political Party Assistance in Post-Conflict Societies* is a publication of the NIMD Knowledge Centre. Established in 2007, the centre collects and discloses expertise and information about democratization around the world, with specific reference to political parties.

[www.nimd.org](http://www.nimd.org)

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<sup>9</sup> CDA: Christian Democrats; PvdA: Labour Party; VVD: Liberal Party; GroenLinks: Green-Left Party; D66: Liberal Democrats; CU: Christian Union; SGP: Reformed Political Party (Orthodox Protestants).

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**Cover photo**

Cancuzo, Burundi (2005)

Under the eyes of international observers a woman gets her voter's card for the election of communal councilors.

The orange leaf refers to the NIMD logo, symbolizing the growth of multiparty democracy around the world.

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