Peacebuilding as the focus of importance by the united nations

Experience, Peace

In any given territory, peace and security are of paramount importance and an arrangement that may help to protect and preserve peace and security is one of collective security. Collective security can be understood as a security arrangement, political, regional, or global, in which each state in the system accepts that the security of one is the concern of all, and therefore commits to a collective response to threats to, and breaches to peace. Collective security is one of the most promising approaches for peace.

This has a history of its own and it has evolved over time. The Concert of Europe which was established by the Congress of Vienna after the Napoleonic Wars was created to address these issues. However, its mission was not accomplished as it failed to prevent World War I.

The League of Nations was then formed as a result of the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War. This was the first large scale attempt to provide collective security in modern times and its principal mission was to promote world peace. However, the onset of the Second World War showed that the League of Nations had failed its primary purpose.

The United Nations (UN) was then created to prevent another such conflict. This was established on 24th October, 1945 to promote international cooperation and also to promote peace and security amongst states. Since its creation, the UN has often been called upon to prevent disputes from escalating into war, or to help restore peace when armed conflict breaks out, and to promote lasting peace in societies emerging from wars.

The Security Council, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General all play roles in fostering peace and security and the United Nations Charter enshrines this mandate as the Preamble states that the United Nations is determined, " to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security."

Noteworthy is the fact that, by the very act of joining the UN, all members " confer on the Security Council primaryresponsibilityfor the maintenance of international peace and security and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf".

They also consent " to accept and carry out" the decisions of the Council on any peacekeeping action that may be required. When a dispute leads to fighting, the Security Council's first concern is to bring it to an end as soon as possible. On many occasions, the Council has issued ceasefire directives which have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities.

It also deploys United Nations peacekeeping operations to help reduce tensions in troubled areas, keep opposing forces apart and create conditions for sustainable peace after settlements have been reached. The Council may decide on enforcement measures, economic sanctions (such as trade embargoes) or collective military action.

The General Assembly can make recommendations on the general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament, and for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might

impair friendly relations among nations. The General Assembly can also discuss any question relating to international peace and security and make recommendations, if the issue is not currently being discussed by the Security Council.

Pursuant to its " Uniting for Peace" resolution of November 1950 (resolution 377 (V), the General Assembly may also take action if the Security Council fails to act in a case where there appears to be a threat to or breach of the peace, or act of aggression. The Assembly can consider the matter immediately with a view to making recommendations to Members for collective measures to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The Secretary-General is empowered to " bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". One of the most vital roles played by the Secretary-General is the use of his " good offices" – steps taken publicly and in private that draw upon his independence, impartiality and integrity to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading.

The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948, when the Security Council authorized the deployment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to the Middle East. Since then, there have been a total of 64 UN peacekeeping operations around the world.

Over the years, UN peacekeeping has evolved to meet the demands of different conflicts and a changing political landscape. Born at the time when

theCold Warrivalries frequently paralyzed the Security Council, UN peacekeepinggoalswere primarily limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing situations on the ground, so that efforts could be made at the political level to resolve the conflict by peaceful means.

UN peacemaking expanded in the 1990s, as the end of the Cold War created new opportunities to end civil wars through negotiated peace settlements. A large number of conflicts were brought to an end, either through direct UN mediation or by the efforts of others acting with UN support.

The nature of conflict has also changed over the years. Originally developed as a means of dealing with inter-State conflict, UN peacekeeping has been increasingly applied to intra-State conflicts and civil wars. Although the military remain the backbone of most peacekeeping operations, today's peacekeepers undertake a wide variety of complex tasks, from helping to build sustainable institutions of governance, throughhuman rightsmonitoring and security sector reform, to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and demining.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) provides political and executive direction to UN peacekeeping operations, and maintains contact with the Security Council, troop and financial contributors, and parties to the conflict in the implementation of Security Council mandates.

The Department works to integrate the efforts of the UN, governmental and non-governmental entities in the context of peacekeeping operations. DPKO

also provides guidance and support on military, police, mine action and other relevant issues to other UN political and peacebuilding missions.

The experience of recent years has also led the United Nations to focus as never before on peacebuilding – efforts to reduce a country's risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Building lasting peace in war-torn societies is among the most daunting of challenges for global peace and security. Peacebuilding requires sustained international support for national efforts.

The United Nations has been at the center of expanding international peacebuilding efforts, from the verification of peace agreements in southern Africa, Central America and Cambodia in the 1990s, to subsequent efforts to consolidate peace and strengthen states in the Balkans, and West Africa, to contemporary operations in Afghanistan, Haiti and Sudan.