

## Sustainable Peace as Sustainable Democracy: The Experience of Haiti

In the ten years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the term »peacebuilding« has become a part of the international lexicon. International organizations and governments with the means to do so have not only intervened in several violent internal conflicts around the world to end the fighting, or the humanitarian suffering caused by it, but to also create conditions which will prevent such violence from occurring again. Efforts to create these conditions are generically described as peacebuilding. Such efforts have been undertaken in numerous countries – from Namibia and Mozambique in Africa and Haiti and Guatemala in the Americas to Cambodia in Asia and Bosnia–Herzegovina and Albania in Europe. Despite a rich body of accumulated experience and learning from these efforts, key questions still remain regarding the nature of peacebuilding, and the factors which ensure its success.

One school of thought argues that violent internal conflict will continue to occur in a society unless the deep-seated factors which cause such violence are removed. These factors could include endemic poverty, communal tensions, and the effects of natural or economic catastrophes. The key to ensuring lasting peace, therefore, is to remove or ameliorate these factors.<sup>1</sup> This amelioration could require a considerable expenditure of time and resources, and a steady commitment, on the part of the concerned domestic and international actors. A corollary to this is that paucity of peacebuilding resources, and attempts to hurry the process along, could result in an unsustainable peace.

Another school of thought would propose that the best that can be done is to provide some international assistance to the afflicted society in the aftermath of a conflict in reconstructing some of the infrastructure, services, and amenities that have been lost to war. Former parties to the conflict could also be assisted in implementing the short-term provisions of any agreement that they might have reached among themselves with or

without international help. Such assistance gives the emergent post-conflict political system a head start, and increases the chances of its survival in the long run. This more limited understanding of peacebuilding was expounded as »post-conflict peacebuilding« by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.<sup>2</sup>

A third school of thought has sought to combine the previous two in a framework which includes both short-term, or »post-conflict«, peacebuilding, as well as longer-term attempts to deal with the so-called root causes of conflict. In this framework, immediate post-conflict could be carried out under the auspices of a multilateral peacekeeping or observer mission fielded by the United Nations or another international organization. Following the conclusion of this mission, various agencies such as the United Nations Development Program and the World Bank which specialize in longer-term economic and social development work could then take on the burden of dealing with some of the underlying factors that initially caused the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Each of these concepts of peacebuilding have merits and drawbacks which have been elaborated by scholars. Drawing on the Haitian example, however, this paper argues the following:<sup>4</sup>

1. This approach to preventing the occurrence or recurrence of conflict, which focuses on the removal of root causes, has also been referred to as »structural prevention« See Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997): *Final Report, with Executive Summary*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.
2. Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992): *An Agenda for Peace*, United Nations, New York, pp. 32–34.
3. See The World Bank (1998): *Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The Role of the World Bank*. Washington D.C.
4. Apart from the sources cited in this paper, the conclusions presented are based on thirteen field trips to Haiti between 1996 and 1999, including interviews with over a hundred Haitian personalities and international officials dealing with Haiti.

First, domestic and international attempts to build lasting peace, whether over the short or the long run, will not bear fruit if a sustainable political process does not emerge within the afflicted society to manage disputes before they turn violent.<sup>5</sup> In the absence of this process, recovery will continue to be hampered by intractable disputes, including over the apportioning of whatever international resources might be provided for reconstruction. Hence, the focus of all peacebuilding efforts, long or short-term, has to be political. All reconstruction activities must be undertaken in the context, and in support, of the revival of the political process. While social and economic problems may persist for long periods of time within many societies, it is the collapse of political processes in these societies and their ability to manage tensions resulting from these problems that causes violent conflict in the short term.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, societies with resilient political systems have managed to avoid widespread internal conflict despite seemingly overwhelming social and economic problems.<sup>7</sup>

Second, civil conflicts that have been caused by the failure of political processes to manage tensions arising from large-scale socio-economic transformation present challenges that are different from, say, civil conflict caused by disputes over the sharing of territory and sovereignty among groups within the same national boundaries. In countries like Haiti, Guatemala, and El Salvador, civil conflict resulted from the fact that existing political processes, which were products of earlier socio-economic circumstances, could not adjust adequately in order to be able to manage the consequences of rapid social and economic change. In the aftermath of conflict, nascent political processes in these countries must create and manage the very circumstances which are essential for their longer-term survival: a political culture of openness and conciliation; a vibrant civil society; separation of powers between institutions; and so on. However, to use the chicken-and-egg metaphor, which comes first: the right circumstances or the right regimes? Douglas Hofstadter's notion of a »tangled hierarchy« is perhaps applicable here.<sup>8</sup> The chicken and the egg are inextricably intertwined in a non-linear fashion. The policy implication, of course, is that attempts to revive the political process, i.e. peacebuilding, are in-

separably linked in these societies with creating the circumstances in which these processes are viable. To the extent that the earlier failed political processes were exclusive or non-participatory, creating a sustainable peace therefore requires the creation of sustainable democracies.<sup>9</sup>

## The Origins of the Haitian Crisis

Haiti's current plight can be traced partly to the circumstances in which it gained its independence from French rule in 1804. French colonial rule in Haiti had certain unique characteristics. Unlike their English colonial counterparts, the French frequently indulged in conjugal relationships with their slaves, thus giving rise to a class of mulattoes who were often sent to France to be educated in the French language and customs. These colored individuals frequently aspired to, and sometimes attained, the commercial status and properties

5. This analysis derives from a comparative study of peacebuilding in Bosnia, Cambodia, Haiti and Somalia, conducted by the International Peace Academy. See Elizabeth Cousens, Ameen Jan and Chetan Kumar (1999): *Cultivating Peace: The Revival of Politics in Fragile Societies. Bosnia, Cambodia, Haiti, Somalia* [working title]. Forthcoming.

6. A similar viewpoint is argued by Michael E. Brown, who suggests that »elite decisions and actions« are usually the primary immediate causes of conflict. See Michael E. Brown (1996): »Introduction«, in: Michael E. Brown, ed. *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, p. 23.

7. While examples alone are not considered as appropriate validation or invalidation of hypotheses, it is worth noting that some of the world's most intractable conflicts have occurred in relatively well-off areas such as Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, and Lebanon, while poorer and ethnically diverse countries such as Tanzania, India, and Bangladesh have managed to avoid all-out civil conflict.

8. For Hofstadter's masterly exposition of »tangled hierarchies,« see his *Godel, Escher, Bach* (Basic Books: 1979).

9. Susanne Jonas has argued that the Guatemalan peace process has been the »primary path« for democratization in Guatemala. See Susanne Jonas (1998): »Democratization of Guatemala Through the Peace Process,« paper presented at a conference on »Guatemalan Development and Democracy: Proactive Responses to Globalization«, Universidad del Valle, Guatemala, March 26-28, 1998 (<http://www.jhu.edu/~soc/.ladark/guatconf/guatconf/jonas.htm>).

of their masters.<sup>10</sup> At the other extreme, French plantation owners often treated their slaves with unspeakable brutality, causing many to escape from the plantations into the surrounding tropical wilderness, where they lived as »marrons«, constantly on the run from their former masters. This constant dodging of persecution, the constant need to avoid permanence lest one be pinned down, has left a very strong mark on Haitian politics and national culture in the form of a tradition of »marronage«. While an effective form of resistance, marronage often obstructs the kind of deal-making and bargaining that lie at the heart of viable political processes.

The war of independence of 1791–1804, in which the slaves overthrew their French masters, also resulted in certain characteristics of Haitian history.<sup>11</sup> A critical consequence of the war of independence was the destruction of the plantation economy,<sup>12</sup> and its replacement by subsistence and small commercial farming. Many of the slaves who had taken over plantation land after overthrowing the former owners subdivided the land among themselves, and settled down to agriculture which was primarily targeted at feeding their families, and secondarily at some production for the local market. The post-independence elite which formed the first few Haitian governments in the cities,<sup>13</sup> however, still saw plantations as assets. While most freed slaves as well as marrons that had settled down on former plantation land were black, this urban elite consisted largely of mulattoes, who had trading and commercial interests.<sup>14</sup> The first two presidents of Haiti, Dessalines and Petion, and also the aborted Christophe monarchy in the North, tried to revive some aspects of the plantation economy. The newly formed peasantry, however, resisted. The result was a curious economic stasis.<sup>15</sup>

While the twilight of the plantation economy ended existing agricultural opportunities, the urban elite did not actively try to foster new ones.<sup>16</sup> For the most part, the state contented itself with taxing the export of the modest amounts of coffee that Haiti continued to produce. Trade in imports, and monopolistic and speculative practices, formed the primary sources of income for the mercantile families. Few attempts were made to generate long-term investment, or create productive capital.<sup>17</sup>

In the absence of any meaningful role for the state in creating economic opportunity or growth over the past nineteen decades, Haitian politics has lacked substance, and tended to focus on the division of very limited spoils among a small set of parasitic elites.<sup>18</sup> Outsiders are often taken aback by the extent to which Haitian politics continues to focus on form and procedure, and lack deeper economic or social agendas. The mercantile families, as long as they have been assured of their monopolies and freedom from taxation, have tended to stay aloof from politics. The state apparatus, through practices tantamount to racketeering, has sought to reap benefits for whoever has been in charge. The line between the private and public sector has been thinly drawn, with both sectors often controlled by the same monopolistic elements.<sup>19</sup> Even where the political debate has shown substance, as in the current set of debates over privatization, it has masked narrower factional disputes over control of a few state-owned enterprises.

The lack of investment and organization in agriculture has meant the absence of a system for adjudicating disputes over land titles, and also

10. Sidney Mintz (1995): »Can Haiti Change?«, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 1, p. 76.

11. For an evocative fictional account of the Haitian war of independence, see Madison Smartt Bell (1995): *All Souls Rising*, Penguin Books.

12. Mintz: pp. 79–81.

13. See Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1990): *Haiti – State Against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 44–48.

14. While Haiti's mercantile elite was primarily »mulatto«, the country's military leadership, which often provided the political leadership, has been primarily black. The latter, however, has often been indirectly manipulated and dominated by the mercantile elite in a system known as »la politique de doubleure«. See Ernest H. Preeg (1996): *The Haitian Dilemma: A Case Study in Demographics, Development, and US Foreign Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, p. 13.

15. Mintz, p. 79.

16. For an insider's account of the secluded lives of Haiti's elites, see Anthony Schindler-Hattenbach (1994): *Hot Times in Haiti! – A True Story*. Port-au-Prince: JMS Publishings.

17. Trouillot, op. cit., Chapter 2, »A Republic for the Merchants«.

18. Trouillot, op. cit., pp. 85–86.

19. See Jean-Germain Gros (1997): »Haiti's Flagging Transition,« *Journal of Democracy*, 8, 4 (October), p. 104.

of any long-term attempts to conserve or renew the soil. Little protection or incentive has been provided to the peasantry to enable it to develop its land.<sup>20</sup> The result is a vista of treeless landscapes, scrub vegetation of the desert variety, and previously lush hillsides denuded of topsoil, all in a wet, tropical climate which normally fosters an excess of greenery. Even where greenery and topsoil remain, as in the fertile Artibonite Valley, there are no rural services provided by the state to enable the farmers to capitalize on their natural inclination to form instant cooperatives (or »kon-bite«<sup>21</sup>) to assist each other in times of distress.<sup>22</sup>

The last decade of the Duvalier era, from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, saw some international efforts to bring Haiti out of stasis, and into a regional market economy. These efforts have had some important consequences for Haiti's current situation. During the 1960s, the regime of Francois Duvalier had sought to diminish forcibly the more visible presence of the *mulatto* elite, and ostensibly made efforts to promote black leadership in the civil service, military, and commercial sectors.<sup>23</sup> This policy had assisted the emergence of a small middle class that was dependent upon the regime, but which was open to additional economic activity within Haiti. Jean-Claude Duvalier, who had succeeded Francois in 1971, had reached an understanding with several international organizations by the early 1980s whereby Haiti would receive development assistance under the rubric of the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

This assistance was predicated on the assumption that Haiti's only remaining comparative advantage as an economy was the availability of labor at rock-bottom prices for assembling consumer goods primarily for the US market. Under this strategy, assembly industries, once established and flourishing, would form the engine for growth that would motor the rest of the economy.<sup>24</sup> International assistance, then, would contribute towards creating state institutions that could guarantee a stable and free market for the assembly manufacturers, and towards providing infrastructure such as power plants and feeder roads for the assembly plants.

While this development strategy was based in sound economic theory, several things went wrong with its implementation.<sup>25</sup> First, to the extent that the strategy was not formulated on the basis of a

broad popular or even an elite consensus, it could not mobilize the majority of the Haitians to make it work. Second, the Duvalier state was as lacking in social and economic roots<sup>26</sup> in the rest of Haitian society as its predecessors. It did not take the effort to streamline and modernize itself to run a competitive and productive market economy to benefit the majority of Haitians, as had been anticipated by the foreign donors.<sup>27</sup> Third, Haitian elites who subcontracted and worked for the assembly manufacturers transferred all their earnings abroad, and did not reinvest in Haiti to create a sustainable indigenous dynamic of savings, reinvestment, and new production. In the absence of a broader national framework, the elite saw little incentive for keeping their money within the country.<sup>28</sup> Also, while the Duvalier regime had certainly increased the numbers of the black middle class through its policies, it had done little to diminish the stranglehold of a few large mercantile families on the Haitian economy.<sup>29</sup> These families had little

20. See Alex Dupuy (1994): »Free Trade and Underdevelopment in Haiti: The World Bank/USAID Agenda for Social Change in the post-Duvalier Era«, in: Hilbourne A. Watson, ed., *The Caribbean in the Global Political Economy*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, p. 100.

21. Catholic Institute for International Relations (1996): »Haiti – Building Democracy«. *Comment*, February, p. 23.

22. Perhaps the most authentic account of the potential of Haiti's peasantry is provided by the Haitian author Jacques Roumain in his classic 1944 novel *Masters of the Dem.*

23. Noam Chomsky (1994): »The Tragedy of Haiti,« in: James Ridgeway, ed., *The Haiti Files: Decoding the Crisis*. Washington, D.C.: Essential Books / Azul Editions, p. 11.

24. See Dupuy, op. cit., p. 93–95.

25. For arguments in support of an assembly manufacturing-led growth strategy for Haiti, see Clive Gray (1997): »Alternative Models for Haiti's Economic Reconstruction« and Mats Lundahl (1997): »The Haitian Dilemma Reexamined« in: Robert Rotberg, ed., *Haiti Renewed: Political and Economic Prospects*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

26. See Robert Maguire et al. (1996): *Haiti Held Hostage: International Responses to the Quest for Nationhood, 1986 to 1996*, Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies and United Nations University: Occasional Paper #23, p. 8.

27. See Dupuy, op. cit., pp. 95–96.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 98. Also see Trouillot, op. cit., p. 158.

interest in increasing local production.<sup>30</sup> Hence, even assembly manufacturing did not reach its full potential.

An important apparent lapse in these development policies was to not take into account the historic exclusion of the peasantry by the ruling elite.<sup>31</sup> The general assumption was that as the decline of Haitian agriculture continued to produce an outflow of migrants to the cities, they would be absorbed by the new industries. Since the latter did not live up to their full potential, the unabsorbed migrants congregated in large slums in Port-au-Prince. Those peasants that still remained in the rural areas had little contact with the state, and little access to services with which to develop their considerable artisanal and productive talents.

A focused effort to marketize this peasantry through devices that have been used elsewhere in the developing world such as rural cooperatives and micro-credit could have led to some positive engagement between the state and the peasantry. Given the fact that, despite years of massive migration, most Haitians still live rural lives, any engagement between the state and the peasantry might have allowed the former to advance beyond parasitism. What was needed was a development strategy that *required* the fullest possible engagement between the state and its people, even if such a strategy made only partial economic sense in the short run, since such engagement might have prompted a more resilient political process better able to deal with internal tensions. A state situated within a more substantial national framework might, then, have fulfilled international expectations by providing stable support for a flourishing market that, among other industries, would also have allowed assembly manufacturing to take root.<sup>32</sup> Given the stark divergence of the elite and peasant conceptions of Haitian nationhood shortly after independence, the issue of the peasants' status was not just significant from the economic standpoint, but also from the perspective of defining the nature and the role of the Haitian state in the country's economy and society. Furthermore, enabling the peasants to acquire sustainable and profitable livelihoods in their localities would also have prevented the rapid growth of slums in the cities during the mid-1970s to mid-1980s.

In the event this did not happen, large numbers of Haitians not only came to cities to find themselves unemployed but, freed for the first time in their history from rural isolation, discovered that at the heart of a lot of their problems lay a non-functioning state. Beginning in the early 1980s, a movement for change grew in both urban and rural areas that sought a sometimes violent overthrow of what was seen as a failed system.<sup>33</sup> This movement was led first by the Haitian version of the Roman Catholic liberation theology church, the »ti legliz«,<sup>34</sup> and then increasingly by the progressive members of the bourgeoisie. Popular frustrations, accentuated by the massive numbers of Haitians living in slums, often led to violent incidents between the elite and the activists. In the four years following the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1986, Haiti saw a number of coups and ineffective governments as the elite reacted to the popular upsurge. Clearly, Haiti's wholly inadequate political process could neither manage the economic development program of the 1980s, nor the consequences that ensued from its failure.

30. For a detailed account of the role of big mercantile families in Haiti's economy, see: »Haiti's »Economic Barons«: Memo from Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy«, in *The Haiti Files*, op. cit..

31. According to Trouillot, »By ignoring the problems of the rural world and the relationship between it and the urban classes, the light industry strategy in the end complicated them«. Trouillot: *Haiti – Nation Against State*, op. cit., p. 210.

32. A review article by Peter M. Lewis that surveys several recent volumes which draw lessons from the experience of promoting development and economic reform in Africa points to the nature of governance in a society – the institutions of the state, the relations between these institutions and the people, and the social coalitions that engender these relations – as key variables in determining the path of economic reform. »Economic Reform and Political Transition in Africa: The Quest for a Politics of Development«, *World Politics*, 49 (October 1996), pp. 92–129.

33. See Marx V. Aristide and Laurie Richardson (1994): »The Popular Movement«, in *The Haiti Files*, op. cit.. Also see Alex Dupuy (1997): *Haiti in the New World Order: The Limits of the Democratic Revolution*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, pp. 97–98.

34. For a summary of ti legliz activities, see: »Haiti – Building Democracy«, op. cit., p. 7.

## International Intervention Upon the Overthrow of Jean-Bertrand Aristide

A failed attempt at holding elections in 1987,<sup>35</sup> followed by a rigged elections in 1988, prompted the international community, in the form of monitors from the UN, OAS, CARICOM and the US, to intervene to guarantee a free and fair elections in 1990 – the first of their kind in Haitian history.<sup>36</sup> A former World Bank official with liberal economic views, Marc Bazin, was expected by some to win the elections at the head of a coalition of progressive parties. Instead, much to the chagrin of the elite, he lost to a popular priest named Jean-Bertrand Aristide who had not even entered the fray until the very last moment.

With origins in Haiti's lower middle classes, Aristide had become a lightning rod for the popular upsurge against the country's rulers during the 1980s. Many mistakenly believed that he had created this upsurge singlehandedly. His fiery oratory from the pulpit apparently gave a voice to many previously silenced Haitians, who saw in his promise of a complete transformation of a corrupt system a better answer to their needs than the tentative promises of the more conventional political parties. Aristide called this popular upsurge »Lavalas«, or »flood«, proposing that it was his destiny to carry this flood to the gates of power in Port-au-Prince. His promise of transformation also attracted many bourgeois intellectuals, and even technocrats, who had fled Haiti during the Duvalier regime, and who had, upon their return, concluded that Haiti's traditional politics was not capable of bringing the country into the modern era. A coalition of these reformist leaders let Aristide run on their platform at the last minute. On his election, they acquired significant positions in the new government. The more conventional politicians, however, retained control of the parliament.

In the nine months of the first Aristide government in 1991, clashes between the parliament and the presidency were frequent. However, this was not parliamentary politics of a conventional sort. The Lavalas government and its opponents both brought their supporters out into the streets to push their positions. This was a frightening time for Haiti's traditional elite. Many interpreted Aristide's fiery rhetoric regarding the uprooting of

the old system as calling for their physical extermination. However, they only reacted to this situation, and did not take measures to challenge Aristide by reaching out to the population on their own, or by building agendas and strategies of a progressive nature. The technocrats in the Aristide government, on the other hand, were able to come up with an economic plan that won the approval of international financial institutions.<sup>37</sup> The plan sought to streamline government,<sup>38</sup> collect taxes efficiently, and redefine the role of the state as a net provider of services, and not as a net extractor of value. However, the government failed to put this plan to public debate, thus foregoing the opportunity to build consensus around its key tenets. Instead, rowdy demonstrators called for compliance with the Lavalas agenda.<sup>39</sup> For their part, many in the elite saw the plan as being little more than a vendetta against their interests. In the absence of attempts to construct a broader, more sober, consensus, the plan became a victim of Haiti's perennial class conflict. And so did the progressive agenda of the first Aristide government. Fearing extinction, Haiti's elite and the armed forces allied with it responded with a coup in September, 1991.

The military overthrew Aristide, and then proceeded to systematically slaughter Lavalas activists by the hundreds. The purpose was to preserve the status quo by physically eliminating the leadership of the post-Duvalier popular upsurge. The viciousness of this reaction, and the resulting outflow of refugees, prompted concerted international response and action. The response of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was especially vigorous, spurred by both the OAS' firm post-Cold War commitment to the consolidation of democracy in the Western Hemisphere, and the

35. Robert Maguire et al., op. cit., p. 16.

36. For an account of the international community's role in these elections, see: David Malone (1998): *Decision-Making in the UN Security Council: The Case of Haiti, 1990–1997*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 50–54.

37. See Donald E. Schulz and Gabriel Marcella (1994): *Reconciling the Irreconcilable: The Troubled Outlook for US Policy Toward Haiti*. US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, March 10, p. 12.

38. Robert Maguire et al., op. cit., p. 18.

39. Schulz and Marcella, op. cit., pp. 9–11.

crucial role played by both organizations in facilitating and monitoring the election which had won Aristide the presidency.<sup>40</sup> The OAS rapidly suspended all aid to Haiti, except humanitarian assistance. When, several days later, the OAS delegation negotiating with the military regime was ordered to leave the country, the organization called on members to impose a trade embargo.

In the Fall of 1992, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali authorized a joint OAS/UN mission to Haiti to negotiate with the government and a Special Envoy for Haiti, Mr. Dante Caputo, was soon appointed (shortly thereafter, he was also named OAS Special Envoy).<sup>41</sup> The coup leader, General Raoul Cedras, indicated that he wanted to cooperate. Writing to Mr. Caputo in January, 1993, he accepted a proposal to establish a joint OAS/UN civilian mission to monitor human rights in Haiti. The Cedras regime also agreed to work under the leadership of the Special Envoy toward rebuilding Haiti's frail institutions. On April 10, 1993, the joint human rights mission, the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH), was authorized by the UN General Assembly<sup>42</sup>; and by early June it had already submitted its first report<sup>43</sup>.

Mr. Caputo's efforts to engage the Haitian military in dialogue, however, made little overall progress. On June 16, 1993, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, placed an oil and arms embargo upon Haiti.<sup>44</sup> Immediately upon the imposition of the embargo, Cedras again indicated a willingness to negotiate and began the talks which resulted in the Governors' Island Agreement (named for the location of the talks in New York). The Agreement, signed on July 3, 1993, committed Cedras to retire from government and to allow Aristide's return to Haiti by October 30. In the interim, Aristide was to work with the Haitian parliament to restore normal functioning among Haiti's institutions, and the United Nations was to provide a small peacekeeping force to help modernize the armed forces and assist in the creation of a new civilian police force.

Initial signs were promising, with the Haitian parliament ratifying Aristide's appointment for prime minister and the Security Council lifting the embargo on Haiti and authorizing a United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH).<sup>45</sup> The promise

turned sour quickly, however, when an UNMIH deployment arrived in the Port-au-Prince harbor on October 11, was met by hostile demonstrations, and turned back, prompting also the flight of most of MICIVIH's personnel (the infamous *Harlan County* episode).<sup>46</sup> The Security Council rapidly reimposed the arms and oil embargo and instituted a naval blockade.<sup>47</sup> On October 15, Aristide's Justice Minister, François-Guy Malary was assassinated. By early 1994, the few remaining MICIVIH personnel reported an alarming increase in human rights violations. Facing continued intransigence from the military government, the Security Council imposed further sanctions on Haiti, to which the regime responded by appointing a »provisional« president (Emile Jonassaint) who formally expelled MICIVIH from the country (on July 11, 1994).

By 1994, the deteriorating situation in Haiti had loosed a renewed surge of refugees on Ameri-

40. The increasing vigor of the OAS' commitment to democracy was dramatic: in 1985, the Protocol of Cartagena de las Indias incorporated democracy-promotion in the OAS charter; in 1989, the Organization began to observe elections in Member states when requested; in 1990, it created a »Unit for Promotion of Democracy« and launched additional programs to bolster democratization; in 1991, its General Assembly adopted a mechanism to respond when democratic order is interrupted in any Member state; and in 1992, it strengthened its several instruments for promoting democratic government in the Protocol of Washington.

41. David Malone's authoritative and detailed work: *Decision-Making in the UN Security Council*, op. cit., provides the best available account of the complexities of international decision-making on Haiti in the aftermath of the overthrow of President Aristide in 1991.

42. Resolution 40/27B

43. See: *Haiti – Learning the Hard Way: The UN/OAS Human Rights Monitoring Operation in Haiti, 1993–94*, 1995, p. 72.

44. Resolution 841 (1993)

45. Resolution 861 (1993) lifted the embargo, and Resolution 867 (September 3, 1993) authorized UNMIH.

46. Robert Maguire et al., op. cit., p. 37.

47. The most comprehensive and critical analysis of these sanctions and their impact is offered by Elizabeth Gibbons (1999) in: *Sanctions in Haiti: Human Rights and Democracy under Assault*. Washington D.C.: The CSIS Press. For another comprehensive review of the initial impact of these sanctions on Haiti, see: »Sanctions in Haiti: Crisis in Humanitarian Action«, Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies: Program on Human Security Working Paper Series, November 1993.

can shores, thus putting domestic pressure on the Clinton Administration. The upshot was the adoption on July 30, 1994 of Security Council Resolution 940, which authorized the formation of a »multi-national force« under Chapter VII of the UN Charter: »to use all necessary means to facilitate the departure from Haiti of the military leadership...the prompt return of the legitimately elected President and the restoration of the legitimate authorities of the Government of Haiti, and to establish and maintain a secure and stable environment...« The US-led Multinational Force, or MNF, was to be replaced by an expanded UNMIH, which would be responsible for:

- ▶ sustaining the secure and stable environment established during the multinational phase and protecting international personnel and key installations;

- ▶ the professionalization of the Haitian armed forces and the creation of a separate police force.

Faced with impending invasion Haiti's military leaders finally agreed to resign subject to an amnesty from the Haitian parliament. As a result, the MNF was able to move into Haiti on September 19 without opposition.<sup>48</sup> It created an Interim Public Security Force (IPSF) from new recruits and the remnants of the old army to temporarily provide security until a completely new civilian police could be fielded.<sup>49</sup> President Aristide returned to Haiti on October 15, 1994.

By January 10, 1995, the Security Council declared that a safe and secure environment had been established and that UNMIH could assume the reins from the MNF, a pattern of following a chapter VII enforcement operation with peacekeeping that had been tried in Kuwait and would subsequently be seen in Bosnia under NATO.<sup>50</sup> In 1996, UNMIH was succeeded by a scaled – down version called the UN Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH),<sup>51</sup> which was followed in the Fall of 1997 by a still smaller version called the UN Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMH). In 1998, the UN Security Council reduced the UN peacekeeping role in the country to essentially that of supporting the further development of the civilian police, and instituted the UN Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH).

In early 1999, the UN Secretary-General reported to the Security Council that the civilian police, the Haitian National Police, that had been de-

veloped under MNF and UN auspices had, despite tremendous odds, displayed a satisfactory level of competence in maintaining public order at a time of great political stress, and continued to be led by highly capable civil servants with a reputation for integrity.<sup>52</sup> The resilience of this police, and the absence of large-scale political violence, testified to the success of the international community's peacekeeping efforts. Despite this accomplishment, however, Haitian democracy continued to stumble.

Haiti's constitution bars two consecutive presidential terms. In accordance with his promise at Governors' Island to assist in building Haiti's frail institutions, Aristide agreed to step down as President at the end of his first term in 1996. His supporters, however, argued that since he had spent most of this term in exile, he should be allowed a second term.<sup>53</sup> The international community informally backed the constitutional position.<sup>54</sup> It helped to finance and monitor the presidential elections in 1995 that led Rene Preval to succeed Aristide as president,<sup>55</sup> and has assisted with subse-

48. See Rachel Neild (1995): *Policing Haiti: Preliminary Assessment of the New Civilian Security Force*. Washington Office on Latin America, p. 33. A more critical assessment of the role of the Multinational Force in dealing with insecurity in Haiti is provided in Bob Shacochis (1999): *The Immaculate Invasion*. New York: Penguin Books.

49. Following the restoration of democracy in Haiti, President Aristide had abolished the Fad'H. The international community had then assisted the government of Haiti in building a new civilian police force, the Haitian National Police (HNP). See David Malone (1997): »Haiti and the International Community: A Case Study«, *Survival* 39, 2 (Summer), p. 134.

50. The successes of both MNF and UNMIH are detailed in David Bentley: »Operation Uphold Democracy: Military Support for Democracy in Haiti«, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University: *Strategic Forum*, Number 78, June 1996.

51. Created under Resolution 1063 (1996).

52. See: *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Police Mission in Haiti*, 19 February 1999, S/1999/181, paragraph 18.

53. See: *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Haiti*, 14 February 1996, S/1996/112, paragraph 2.

54. *A Report on the Fourth Annual Peacekeeping Mission, May 19–23, 1995*, United Nations Association of the USA, p. 15.

55. *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Haiti*, 14 February 1996, paragraphs 3 and 4.

quent national and local elections.<sup>56</sup> While the transfer of power from Aristide to Preval through elections was a historic accomplishment in that it was the first of its kind in the country's history, Haitian institutions subsequently became deadlocked.

Aristide, who remained Haiti's most popular political figure even after Preval succeeded him as President, argued after the transition that the reform package that his government had agreed to implement would benefit a small elite and cause great suffering to the majority of the population. At the time of writing, his opposition had brought key components of the reform process to a halt.<sup>57</sup> Complicating this standoff was a dispute over the elections of April 6, 1997. In these elections, supporters of Aristide's LaFanmi Lavalas group had emerged ahead of their opponents, who claimed that Haiti's Electoral Council had permitted electoral malpractices. At the time of writing, this contentious issue remained unresolved. It led to the resignation of Prime Minister Rosny Smarth in June, 1997, further paralyzing the government.

The most immediately costly consequence of this political deadlock and wrangling had been to hold up hundreds of millions of dollars in international development assistance, thus further impoverishing an already poor country.<sup>58</sup> More significantly, the deadlock had caused an almost complete dissipation of the popular energies and enthusiasm generated by the democracy movement of late 1980s. Thus, despite international peacebuilding efforts, the Haitian political process appeared largely incapable of addressing the issues and tensions arising from the new socio-economic circumstances facing the country. Peace in Haiti was therefore not sustainable.

### **The Requirements for Peacebuilding in Contemporary Haiti**

The key to understanding the factors that can sustain peace in Haiti lie in the circumstances leading to the coup of 1991, and in the parameters of the country's current deadlock. As described earlier, the Haitian state, and the country's political process, had proved largely incapable of dealing with the circumstances created by the migration

of large numbers of Haitians from the countryside to the cities in the 1970s and 1980s. The latter's burgeoning demands for political participation and economic well-being were met with repression by the state, which also targeted the emerging civic organizations who had articulated these demands.<sup>59</sup> Having concluded that the political process was incapable of dealing with their demands, many Haitians sought a radical transformation of politics through revolutionary means. The two primary factors which debilitated the Haitian political process were:

- ▶ the absence from the lives of most Haitians of the state as a provider of basic services, which in turn implied a political process which was not rooted in the substantive concerns of most Haitians, but focused on shallow procedural issues;
- ▶ the absence of a broad consensus among different sectors of society on the parameters of both a democratic system of governance as well as a progressive socio-economic transformation in Haiti; this lack of consensus reflected the wide geographical and socio-economic gaps between the urban ruling elites and the vast majority of the country's population.

Two additional complicating factors contributed to the non-sustainability of the Haitian political process during the 1980s. Because Haiti had never had a civilian police force responsible for maintaining public order in a neutral fashion, the army was charged with dealing with the tensions and violence resulting from the state's incapacity to manage popular discontent. The army's violent

56. See Robert A. Pastor: »Mission to Haiti #3: Elections for Parliament and Municipalities, June 23–26, 1995«. The Carter Center of Emory University: Working Paper Series, July 17, 1995, pp 7–8.

57. Sandra Marquez Garcia: »Haiti's Ruling Coalition Gets Fractious«, *The Miami Herald*, February 24, 1997.

58. See Malone: *Decision-Making in the UN Security Council*, op. cit., pp. 142–143.

59. Haiti missed a remarkable opportunity in 1987, when a Congress of National Democratic Movements was convened to bring together most progressive elements in both the civic and political sectors that had been campaigning for democracy. See Amy Wilentz (1989): *The Rainy Season: Haiti Since Duvalier*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 210. The agenda set by this Congress fell by the wayside, however, as the military heightened its repression in the next few years.

repression, however, begat further violence. In many instances, it curbed the emergence of a civil society that could have contributed towards the development of a national dialogue between the different sectors. It also prompted a widespread revolutionary impulse among the population. Several expert observers have argued that Aristide was catapulted to power in the 1990 elections not on the basis of a popular desire for the institutions and norms of democracy, but as the vanguard of a new regime that would fundamentally transform the polity in a radical fashion. These expectations, which were amply reflected in Aristide's own rhetoric, contradicted the more gradual approach of those members of the Lavalas alliance that belonged to a small but growing middle class, as well as the more progressive elements among the traditional political and economic elite.<sup>60</sup> The elected government of 1990–91, therefore, suffered from a fundamental contradiction. It sought to address the popular demands for overwhelming social and economic change through the forms and institutions of electoral democracy. The »flood« metaphor was in clear contradiction to the laborious, consensus-building approach of a parliamentary democracy. It also clearly collided with the interests and priorities of the established elite. These contradictions led to the collapse of Haiti's nascent political process in the form of the army takeover of mid-1991. The army responded to the growing tensions and violence in the only way it knew: with more violence.

Clear lessons can be drawn from this episode regarding the factors that will sustain in Haiti a political process that is capable of managing tensions arising from rapid social change before they lead to violence. The first, essential, factor is a system of security that provides for public order in a neutral fashion, and allows a vocal civil society and opposition to flourish. The neutrality of this system is critical. If various sectors are not able to manipulate it in order to use state violence as a tool of political discourse, then there is greater incentive all around to settle disputes through bargaining and consensus-building. Second, Haiti's elected institutions have to address the problem of a lack of consensus between the country's different sectors on fundamental social and economic goals, and on the means – radical or gradual – for achieving them. It is important to note that

this consensus cannot be achieved within the bounds of elected institutions alone; in fact, it might be one of the factors that causes these institutions to function in the first place. In the absence of such a consensus, the institutions themselves merely reflect the broader societal stand-off. Additionally, the process of developing such a consensus engages many sectors of society with the state in a manner that gives the latter some depth and substance.

Hence, two factors – a viable internal security system, and the development of a participatory national consensus – are critical to sustaining a viable political process, and hence peace, in Haiti. The second factor also addresses the chicken-and-egg question raised at the beginning of this article. Haiti's democratic institutions, on their own, cannot bring about the very circumstances that are needed to sustain them. Hence, the development of both the institutions as well as the supporting circumstances needs to happen simultaneously. A critical early supporting circumstance is the type of multi-sectoral consensus envisaged here.

Following the restoration of Haiti's elected government in 1994, the international community invested heavily, and with some success, in the first of the factors required to sustain a political process. When the country's ongoing political deadlock came to a head in early 1999, the new police did stay neutral and provide security, hence preventing any of the parties from taking recourse to violence. However, the continued political deadlock suggests that not enough has been done to address the second factor.

When the international community restored Haiti's presidency in 1994, it also restored the contradictions that had existed in Haitian democracy. As before, Haiti's elected leaders took their profound differences to the floors of the elected institutions, thus paralyzing them. The divisions in the Lavalas movement, and more broadly between the different sectors, led to the crisis of 1997. The only progress that has been achieved is that in the absence of the old army, there is no widespread civil conflict. However, the

60. Alex Dupuy has described this division in Haiti's democracy movement in: *Haiti in the New World Order*, op. cit., pp. 47–48.

absence of effective government has created the threat of runaway criminal and drug-related violence. The considerable economic and infrastructure-related assistance that the international community has provided has done little to ameliorate this deadlock. In fact, the political class remains resolutely deadlocked despite warnings from the international community that once the window of opportunity created by the international intervention closes, economic assistance is likely to dry up. Clearly, in the absence of a political process to absorb and manage it, economic assistance alone is not a reliable path to building lasting peace.

The international community has provided some assistance to build democratic impulses into Haiti's nascent institutions. Political parties as well as parliamentarians have been offered educational programs targeted at building their understanding of democratic political processes. Civic education programs targeted at inculcating democratic civic virtues have also been launched among the population-at-large. These exhortatory approaches, however, have had little lasting impact. The population, having concluded that neither the international community nor the political elite are interested in radical redress of their more immediate plight, has lost interest in the political process. The political elite, as always, stays focused on acquiring control of the limited state institutions that do exist.

What are some of the steps that can be taken to build the consensus critical for political progress in Haiti?

*First*, international initiatives to address the problems of development and the environment in Haiti should be accompanied by broad-based dialogues among the sectors that are most likely to be affected by them. These dialogues need not be open-ended, but could focus on identifying the common interests that different sectors have in supporting a particular initiative in the long run. If certain sectors are likely to benefit more than others in the short run, they should understand that they would benefit even more in the long run if they did not monopolize the initiative. Those who are likely to lose in the short run should receive guarantees that their short-term sacrifice will lead to long-term gain. This process of identification of common gains, and of mutual guarantees, can develop very rapidly among a pragmatic

set of individuals, which Haitians often tend to be. It is also a very powerful tool for building lasting interaction between different sectors. Such interaction often forms the basis for consensual national frameworks for social and economic action. Additionally, articulating interests in common projects will provide Haitians with much needed experience in shaping specific political demands instead of expressing their needs through revolutionary spasms. Several international projects of this kind have recently unfolded. The USAID project in Fond Jean-Noel, for instance, has constituted a federation of 18,000 farmers into 25 co-operatives to grow and market, minus the traditional middlemen, the increasingly popular Haitian Bleu coffee for export to US markets.<sup>61</sup> Given the direct involvement of peasants in this project, and the fact that the coffee bush required the shade of large trees, many project participants had taken to actively conserving trees instead of felling them.<sup>62</sup>

*Second*, Haiti has yet to experience a public process of dialogue among civic and political leaders. This could provide a cathartic balm for the grievances of the past, and also constitute a genuine national consensus-building exercise.<sup>63</sup> Additionally, such an exercise at the national level would surely inspire similar exchanges at the local level (experts on Haiti constantly point to the fact that Haitians respond better to exemplary rather than exhortatory forms of guidance). In both Guatemala and South Africa, for instance, negotiations to end decades of civil conflict inter alia took the form of public dialogues stretched over several years that served both as an inspiration and as

61. So successful was this project in avoiding middlemen that a leading left-wing Haitian journalist, who had taken strong exception to US policies in Haiti in the past, admitted in a conversation in 1998 that he was willing to revise his opinion of the US ability to learn from its mistakes.

62. Some USAID projects in recent years had begun to show a laudable trend towards more participatory project implementation in Haiti. See Mimi Whitfield: »Clean water, garbage pickup slated for Cite Soleil slum,« *The Miami Herald*, November 3, 1997.

63. Gros makes a similar recommendation by arguing for the convening of a constituent assembly that would include both political and civic actors and that would address both issues of national reconciliation and contentious economic problems such as privatization. See Gros: »Haiti's Flagging Transition«, op. cit., pp. 106–107.

an example to the populations of these countries. While the South African process focused on building consensus on the political institutions that would politically empower all, as opposed to some, of its citizens, the Guatemalan process (which also involved the international financial institutions) focused on a wide range of social and economic issues (as reflected in the fact that the final agreements, which constitute more a national pact than a peace accord, are eight in number and cover diverse issues). Significantly, the Guatemalan dialogue did not happen as a prelude to the launching of the country's democratic institutions, but as a part of a broader process of democratization that also included institution-building.<sup>64</sup> In Haiti, the international community should encourage, and participate as a partner in, a series of dialogues that bring together national and local political and civic leaders from all sectors (government, labor, business, church etc.) in order to develop an understanding of each other's positions and interests, and to build common agendas on the basis of these interests.<sup>65</sup> As in Guatemala, however, these dialogues should not supplant the existing institutions but supplement their work in critical ways. Their purpose would be to ensure that the state does not just pay lip service to participation, but actively works to bring it about.

*Third*, neither of the two measures described above will bear fruit in the absence of a strong and independent civil society. While much has been invested in the building of so-called political parties in Haiti (many of which are no more than a few individuals with fax machines seeking a share of the spoils of the state), not enough has been done to assist the emergence of a viable civil society. Many civic organizations in recent years initially arose as a component of the popular upsurge that Aristide captured under the term »Lavalas«, and hence became a part of the political equation instead of acting independently. However, many of them, expressing disillusionment with Haiti's political parties, have adopted more independent positions in recent months. Before the political ennui causes them to fade away, they should be supported and built up so that they can constitute a vital force in making the political system more responsive and accountable to Haiti's people.

## Conclusion

From the analysis presented here, it is evident that only a viable political process will prevent violence in Haiti in a sustainable fashion. This process, however, can only be based on a consensus on Haiti's future between most sectors of society. Obtaining this consensus, though, is predicated on a constructive engagement between the state and the Haitian population. The international community, with only a few more (and perhaps even less) resources than it has expended in Haiti up till now, could facilitate an engagement of this kind leading to a participatory consensus. Certainly, a focus on reviving and sustaining political processes should guide the international community's approach to building lasting peace in most cases. While this conclusion clearly emerges from the Haiti case as a principle, it might constitute a worthwhile research agenda to test its broader applicability. The cases of Guatemala and South Africa (where the building of lasting peace was an internal enterprise) might be good starting points. An exploration of additional cases might establish if the chicken-and-egg dilemma of social transformation and democratization can indeed be generally addressed through the building of participatory national consensus or pacts, or whether other situations might necessitate other devices. ◀

64. See Susanne Jonas, »Democratization of Guatemala Through the Peace Process«, op. cit..

65. For details of the role of civil society and dialogue in the development of South Africa's National Peace Accord, see Peter Gastrow (1995): *Bargaining for Peace: South Africa and the National Peace Accord*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute for Peace Press.

66. An experiment of this nature was attempted, with relative success, by The Carter Center and the University of Virginia's Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction in Estonia from 1994 to 1996. A series of six workshops to encourage dialogue among Estonia's various ethnic groups were conducted. For details, see Joyce Neu and Vamik Volkan (1999): *Developing a Methodology for Conflict Prevention: The Case of Estonia*, Atlanta, Georgia: The Carter Center.