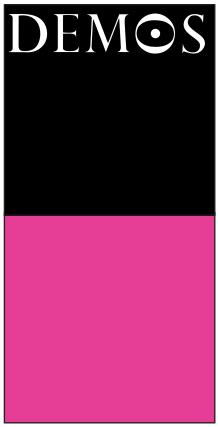
# Simply attempting to hit back at terrorism provides only short-term solutions and is woefully inadequate




## Hearts and Minds

Human security approaches to political violence

Scilla Elworthy
Gabrielle Rifkind

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# Contents

# A note from the authors

This pamphlet was conceived in early 2005, and represents the culmination of months of writing. It is built on years of research on and experience of conflicts and efforts to seek resolution.

Its final form was written and finalised before the horrific events of 7 July 2005 in London. The London bomb attacks have served as a brutal reminder of the challenges of terrorism and political violence across the world.

In this painful and difficult time for all those caught up in these tragic events, we hope that this pamphlet can play a small part in contributing to efforts to bring an end to conflict and political violence across the globe.

Our thoughts are with the victims of these appalling attacks and their families.

Scilla Elworthy
Gabrielle Rifkind
11 July 2005

# Acknowledgements

This pamphlet is dedicated to Dr Amal Malachi, Iraqi judge, member of the Advisory Committee for Iraqi Women, who joined us at the Amman Roundtable on Human Security in May 2004. She was assassinated in Baghdad in November 2004.

Several individuals made significant contributions to this report. Rachel Briggs at Demos fostered the idea from the beginning, and Tom Bentley edited the text with great insight. Francis Wilson, Professor of Economics at Cape Town University, gave invaluable help in restructuring the pamphlet, and Alistair Crooke acts as a living embodiment of these ideas. Professor John Sloboda offered useful material and Professor Jake Chapman gave critical feedback. Refqa Abu Remaileh skilfully researched the details, and Johnny Levy patiently supported the process. We respect and value their contributions.

Scilla Elworthy
Gabrielle Rifkind
July 2005

# 1. Introduction

Terrorism and political violence have assumed a new profile in politics around the world. Resolving intractable conflicts, especially those involving non-state actors, has become an even more urgent task since the September 11th attacks and subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Achieving peace and security now has to involve strategies for preventing and reducing the use of terror to pursue political and territorial conflicts. But too often this violence in turn is exacerbated, indeed sometimes even triggered, by the actions of governments, both democratic and non-democratic. In this turbulent world many of the old methods of dealing with conflict seem either to have failed or to be unable to deal with the new realities. Force of arms is not sufficient to establish peaceful order. Military victory is not enough to prevent future violence. Whether we are considering Iraq, Al Qaeda, Chechnya or the Middle East, it is clear that a strategy of simply trying to hit back and to destroy the 'enemy', the 'terrorists' or the political opponents using arms is woefully inadequate and provides only short-term solutions.

In fact, the evidence would suggest that such strategies increase, rather than decrease, both the level of violence and the yawning chasm between the two sides. The vast superiority in military and economic power of states – American, British, Russian, Israeli – is unable to bring peace. New thinking and new approaches are needed.

This pamphlet argues that such strategies will never be successful unless they address the full range of factors that fuel cycles of violence and influence the use of terror over time. These include the economic, social and cultural context in which violence is sustained. Perhaps even more important, they include the emotional and psychological effects of violence and humiliation, factors often missing from our traditional approaches to counter-terrorism, and especially the 'war on terror'.

To address this broader range of factors requires a different repertoire of methods to prevent conflict, strengthen human security and interrupt the cycles of violence through which terrorism and repression flourish.

Much more is known about how to reduce and prevent violence than our current public debate about terrorism acknowledges. A careful analysis of the root causes of political violence reveals the persistent influence of powerlessness, exclusion, trauma and humiliation. If it is to be applied effectively, this knowledge should inform and influence the development of new security doctrines based on principles of non-violence, neutral third parties, mutual respect and dialogue.

The need for armed intervention and the consistent threat of it may never be eliminated from the way the world is governed. But minimisation of its use and costs is a realistic goal, which all people have a moral responsibility to pursue.

This pamphlet sets out the elements of a different approach by analysing a series of factors often neglected in violent conflicts and then proposing a set of practical steps that could and should be taken in a wide range of conflict situations. Practical actions are outlined that have been successful elsewhere and could be used with positive effect in Iraq, Israel–Palestine and more widely. At the global level, it proposes five international measures to prevent and resolve conflict without the use of force. The aim is not just to seek immediate resolutions to armed conflict, but to address and prevent the conditions in which it can be triggered by acknowledging its roots in subjective experience and shared culture.

This human side of conflict, understanding the psycho-emotional causes of political violence, is often dismissed as at best a nice extra, and at worst a harmful distraction from our real world goals. This report argues that rather than being peripheral, approaches to terror, political violence and insurgency must take human security as their starting point. This is the only route to lasting peace.

# 2. The links between trauma and fundamentalism

Iraq and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict provide us with timely case studies showing the effects of conflict and political violence. They help to show not just how violent conflict is prolonged through cycles of trauma and retaliation, but also how armed intervention designed to end conflict can often have the effect of unintentionally reproducing it later on.

To understand why this is, and to understand how such conflicts can fuel fundamentalism, we have to look closer at the psychological effects of these kinds of violence.

## Iraq: the role of humiliation, powerlessness and dehumanisation

Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq established a deep sense of powerlessness among Iraqi people during years of threat, dehumanisation and fear. This has been compounded by the humiliation resulting from the invasion and the failures of post-reconstruction. It is essential to find ways to address the alienation that ordinary Iraqi citizens experience. The fact that a significant number of the population feels humiliated and dehumanised has and will become a recruiting agent for terror organisations. The Iraqi people need to have an investment in their communities and a sense of hope for the future, yet the trauma they have experienced stands in

the way of that. Until it is addressed, progress will be halting and the cycles of violence (see chapter 5) will continue.

If foreign military personnel humiliate men, attack women, children and old people, arrest people arbitrarily, destroy property and restrict freedom of movement, it is but a painful reminder of the powerlessness felt under Saddam. What is required is precisely the opposite, namely respect. Such an understanding does not excuse or condone political violence – on the contrary it can be used to define concrete interventions capable of dealing effectively with such violence.

Alistair Crooke, an intelligence officer and former security adviser to the EU with decades of experience in the Middle East, reports from Falluja:

> *If you haven't experienced it you can have no idea what it feels like being subjected to bombing of this kind. The houses being destroyed had nothing to do with resistance fighters, who were in any case sleeping in alleyways. Drones going over, utter powerlessness, helicopter gunships playing cat and mouse with those they know they can and will kill. Because bombs were attached to doorbells, the US troops killed the first person they saw as a matter of course. This kind of trauma generates intense hostility. Even if you are an observer, you can't trust your emotions for a few days.*[1]

***Falluja***

It takes little to squander goodwill in areas of conflict. Falluja is a prime example of this.

1. Falluja was not hostile to American-led efforts to remove Saddam from power. Fallujans defied Saddam's rule during his last years in power. He was angered in 1998 when local imams refused to hail him in their Friday sermons. Many were imprisoned and the city was punished.

2. In April 2003, before any conflict had erupted in Falluja, US soldiers opened fire on a demonstration against the military occupation in a primary school, killing 18 people. Up until this point, not a single bullet had been fired at US soldiers in Falluja or any of the cities north of Baghdad.
3. In April 2004 there was the horrifying killing of four American contractors. After the killing of the contractors, negotiations were initiated by the US Marine General who persuaded a former soldier from Falluja to engage with the local power structures to set up a local police force. Washington discovered this and disowned the process. The general was then replaced by another from Baghdad who was both unknown in Falluja and insisted that the soldiers paraded in the street. He lost credibility and American policy shifted from one of accommodation to one of threat.
4. The US military then unleashed firepower in urban areas. AC150 warplanes dropped 500lb bombs, while helicopter gunships fired into densely populated areas. More than 700 people were killed. After the huge numbers of casualties, US forces agreed to withdraw to the outskirts of Falluja, and the city then became a stronghold for insurgents. The overwhelming use of military firepower increased the rage and potential for political insurgency in the city and is one of the causes of the political problems now present.
5. In November 2004, the US forces and Iraqi allies stormed the city of Falluja, launching 'Operation Phantom Fury'. The aim was to wipe out the insurgents from the city. Falluja's main hospital was seized by US troops in the first days of the siege in order to control information about the number of civilian casualties. The other clinic was hit twice by US missiles and all its medicine and equipment was destroyed. The two ambulances that came to help the wounded were shot at and destroyed by the US troops. After the first siege of Falluja in April 2004, 2500 people

from the tribes joined the resistance; after November those joining numbered 25,000–30,000.[2]

What could have been done differently?

- How authority is established in the early days is of overwhelming importance.
- It may be of value to compare the different rules of engagement of the American forces in the Sunni centre of the country and of the British troops in the Shiite south.
- British troops are allowed to open fire only when attacked, using minimum force and directed only at identified targets.
- The British army's response to challenges in its area of control has been to build relationships in the local community, to build communication and confidence. This requires a high level of visibility, contact in the street, wearing berets and not helmets, sitting on carpets drinking coffee with local leaders, so the population gained some sense of the soldiers being there to protect them.
- The American response to the killings in Falluja did not carry such restrictions of proportionality or focus on relationship-building. In the American response there is a tendency to elevate the requirements of force protection above those of winning 'hearts and minds'.
- It is essential that any response carries a notion of proportionality and restraint. Using heavy firepower in response to the killing of the contractors only served to stimulate the violence and alienate large sections of the community.
- In pivotal moments in any conflict, the desire to use overwhelming force needs to be measured against the potential to provoke more violence. At moments of provocation, a deep sense of fear is stimulated, especially in the

case of the US marines where all their training in containment has been challenged.

- Interventions need to differentiate between the killing of innocent civilians and political insurgents. Otherwise, moderate voices are alienated, thus stimulating the very political extremism that causes anxiety to the West.
- The natural response is to desire some kind of revenge or retribution for the humiliation. It takes enormous self-restraint and wisdom to pause and think of non-violent responses to acts of provocation. However, to seek revenge will only unleash a further cycle of violence.
- Mature democracies need to find ways to model the capacity to be reflective and contain the violence in moments of fear.

What would have served to contain the violence at such fragile moments?

- A more contained response in Falluja could have served to weaken the case of the insurgents and keep public opinion on the US side. Lt Gen James Conway (US Marine Corps), who led the first major assault of Falluja in April 2004, initially opposed the attack, preferring other methods for pacifying Falluja. Looking back, he says: 'When we were told to attack Falluja, I think we certainly increased the level of animosity that existed.'[3]
- The steady use of counter-insurgency techniques – such as clearing neighbourhoods in search of potential suicide bombers and smuggled weapons – is a more effective technique when local leaders are consulted about how it should be managed. However, this depends on having established prior contact, employing Arab speakers, and showing respect for the culture and traditions of the country.

- Had the Americans not been committed to 'victory' in Falluja but rather to an isolation strategy and the arresting of insurgent groups, then they may well not have inflamed the local community. An approach as recommended in the proposal for a human security force comprising trained civilians alongside military personnel could have done much to contain the violence (see practical action 13, chapter 7).

Lessons can perhaps be learned from the experience of the French in the Battle of Algiers, where the French were victorious but at the cost of one million casualties. Ron Dudai and Daphna Baram argue that 'victory in the Battle of Algiers did not make occupation any more sustainable. It did, however, scare the French collective consciousness for generations.'[4] They emphasise that 'the price for ruthless violence is exacted from the occupier and the occupied alike'.[5] No matter what the French did militarily, the war dragged on. The French in Algeria, like the US in Vietnam, were unable to transform military successes into political victory. Without a political solution and the support of the majority Muslim population, French forces remained isolated in a hostile sea.

This kind of analysis might help to explain why hostility to occupying troops remains so great in Iraq. But it also points to one of the most powerful ways in which fundamentalist movements can be unintentionally strengthened by repeated humiliation.

In cultures where there have been endless cycles of violence communities become cumulatively traumatised. In this atmosphere it becomes difficult to enter into the mind of the other. Without this it is hard to build any concern for or interest in the other, or level of trust – the necessary preconditions for dialogue. This leaves both parties in the position of victim. The culture of perpetual victimhood distorts values, weakens and cuts off the vital feedback mechanisms of self-criticism, robbing communities of their most valued asset, the questioning mind.

## Stability through fundamentalism

This pamphlet suggests that there is a direct link between trauma and fundamentalism. Many of the families who have chosen to identify with fundamentalist groups like Hamas will have experienced their own family trauma or witnessed some deep humiliation or violence done to someone close to them. This is further compounded by living in an uncertain, chaotic world in which there is no sense of control and no ability to have any influence. Fundamentalism then offers two possibilities which could give the impression of safety. First is the offer of welfare provision, which cannot be underestimated in terms of providing a material safety net. This shows people that the fundamentalist group is taking care of their best interests and is of benign intent. Second, the offer of a firm philosophy, albeit extreme in its content, gives the impression of certainty in an uncertain world.

The importance of routine and ritual deserves recognition. If you live in a very uncertain world with a potentially high level of chaos and very little security, external structures such as praying five times a day give a sense of familiarity and safety. Moreover, a strong sense of community and belonging are particularly important when one has very little control over most aspects of one's life. So, for example, if you live in a refugee camp or suffer the indignities of occupation where you feel very little control, to identify with strict codes of practice might offer emotional relief.

If you live in a very fragile environment, there is enormous psychological safety in having more clarity about right and wrong, coinciding with a psychic need for rigid structures and a more calcified view of human behaviour. In these conditions the potential to dehumanise the enemy increases, with the loss of the ability to regard them as real people with feelings and ordinary needs. Lost are the subtle complexities of human behaviour where we recognise people's propensity for good and bad. Such are the conditions for the hardening of attitudes that stimulate acute political violence.

## Observing cultural sensitivities

Key to restoring a sense of stability in Iraq is the work already underway to re-establish law enforcement, retrain and reconstruct the judiciary, and police the streets. Coalition forces must be fully briefed on how they can not only minimise insult to Iraqis, but actively show respect for the culture and customs of the country. British forces have already set an example of how to communicate with Iraqis, but more could be done in terms of formal training for all occupation forces. Handbooks do exist for preparing soldiers on the ground on how to make contact with the local community and how to be culturally sensitive in terms of communicating. But such handbooks are not of much value unless they are used in training groups in which soldiers can become more aware of their own responses and heighten their awareness of communication and meaning in different cultures. It became increasingly clear that, with some startling exceptions, the US military lacked the ability to innovate and think creatively. They had been ill-prepared for Arab culture with its tribal complexities, and had no training in managing the deep rage which was a response to what Iraqis experienced as American disrespect and insensitivity.

None of the American soldiers had received any but the most rudimentary instruction in the Arabic language or in Iraqi culture. Outspoken Army reformer, Col Douglas A Macgregor, appraising the US military's dilemma in Iraq, said:

> *Most of the generals and politicians did not think through the consequences of compelling American soldiers with no knowledge of Arabic or Arab culture to implement intrusive measures inside an Islamic society. We arrested people in front of their families, dragging them away in handcuffs with bags over their heads, and then provided no information to the families of those we incarcerated. In the end, our soldiers killed, maimed and incarcerated thousands of Arabs, 90 percent of whom were not the enemy. But they are now.*[6]

The American forces are perhaps the most isolated occupation force in history; they cannot go out to local bars to relax; there is no place off the base for Americans to remove their body armour in the presence of locals. Every encounter is potentially hostile.[7]

There are deep-seated human security problems in Iraq that cannot be addressed by any military force. From Kirkuk in July 2004, for example, a British Iraqi reported, 'There are literally hundreds and thousands of conspiracies and rumours in Kirkuk; no one knows the truth of anything, there is utter chaos and people are utterly lost.'[8] His conclusion, similar to that of other humanitarian workers in Iraq, is that a 'bottom-up' human security policy needs to be built.

## The value of listening

This would mean listening in detail to what people on the ground want and need, and providing resources to support them in building a civil society, perhaps incorporating the experience of others who have faced similar problems in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance at the London School of Economics, emphasises that, 'Today the challenge, closely linked to the question of legitimacy, is to start engaging from the bottom up. You have to start from the needs of the people on the ground and how they perceive the situation.'[9] In Amman in May 2004 a Roundtable on Human Security in the Middle East was held to start such a process.[10] The specialists present – from backgrounds in politics, business, the military, academic research and psychology – contributed their experience of civil society and peace-building in the region, in Eastern Europe prior to the Velvet Revolution, and in Northern Ireland, and constructed a plan for a civil society network in the Middle East.

So, when trying to understand any conflict, it is essential to consider the cumulative effects of trauma and how this affects cycles of violence. Trauma may be likened to an unhealed wound[11] that festers. Unprocessed trauma increases the subjectivity of experiences, so that people are more likely to see themselves as victims. Others are not to be trusted – 'we can only depend on ourselves' – and the level

of pain can become such that it is difficult to look outside, to imagine the experience of the other or to empathise. The world becomes organised around a group's own experience.

# 3. Understanding terrorism: humiliation and revenge

Terrorism is a tactic rather than a definable enemy. There is no 'finite number of terrorists in the world' who can be smoked out, imprisoned or killed. Their numbers are controlled instead by the level of anger and hate that drives people to join their ranks. It is that anger and hate that must be addressed.

At present there are two diametrically opposed views about how to manage terrorism. Some believe it has to be wiped out at all costs by declaring a war on terror. Holders of this view dismiss as an illusion the idea that Islamic radical groups, for example, could transform themselves into peaceful political parties, seeing no place for negotiation with those who are responsible for terror. Others believe that those excluded from a peace process will undermine it, and that among those who take up political violence there may lie a country's future leadership, as became apparent in South Africa.

At one level, terrorism can be seen as highly organised systemic intervention. Terrorists strike at government symbols to force retaliation and elicit sympathy, both internationally and within more moderate circles locally. Provoking government crackdowns will in turn invite repression, stimulating more passive supporters to identify with terrorist tactics, leaving little space for moderation.

## The limitations of defining terrorism

Labelling terrorist organisations with a single definition leads to a predominantly military strategy where those involved are seen and treated as criminals. A military response may reduce the number of attacks in the short term, but will fuel future violence by enlisting the more moderate voices. This strategy ignores the fact that extreme movements emerge out of social, political and psychological injustice and are often supported by local communities. Thus, as Mary Kaldor suggests, 'To use military means against an assortment of criminals and insurgents is simply to provoke and consolidate support for those groups.'[12]

There are a number of well-known groups, widely labelled as terrorist, around the world. One is Hamas, to be found mainly in Gaza. To those outside the Middle East, the ideas and methods of Hamas may seem extreme. But inside the occupied territories, particularly in Gaza, Hamas is seen as close to mainstream. If Hamas is treated as a criminal organisation, a military response may, in the short term, reduce the number of suicide bombings. However, in the long term, such a response will only fuel future political violence and enlist more moderate voices. The approach taken by Hamas to the problems faced by Palestinians is sufficiently representative of the community (approximately 30 per cent support Hamas) to require that it be taken seriously. All this has to be seen in the context of the recent elections in Gaza and the West Bank, and Hamas's current pursuit of political legitimacy.

It becomes increasingly important to be able to differentiate between those with whom it is possible to communicate, and hardliners who are not open to any kind of dialogue. The International Crisis Group published a report in March 2005 warning against a 'sledge-hammer approach which refuses to differentiate between modernist and fundamentalist varieties of Islamism'. It goes on to say:

> *American and European policy-makers risk provoking one of two equally undesirable outcomes: either including the different*

> *strands of Islamic activism to band together in reaction, attenuating differences that might otherwise be fruitfully developed, or causing the non-violent and modernist tendencies to be eclipsed by the jihadis.*[13]

## Engaging moderate voices

In the first instance, it is possible to engage the moderate voices in NGOs and other organisations, in the hope that over time they may be able to reach those who are unreachable at present. Crooke and Milton-Edwards argue, 'if there is to be any really meaningful dialogue with political Islam, the West needs to accept the role of listening, actively promoting symmetry in dialogue, and being ready to accommodate alternative discourses on the experience of modernity'.[14]

However undesirable poverty and illiteracy are, they are not the root causes of terrorism. Many terrorists are of middle-class or privileged origins and well educated, and those who support them are likely to be more educated than their fellow citizens.[15] Peter Mansfield writes,

> *Islamic activism was the creation not of the poor but of the frustrated middle class . . . it gained a following not in the shanty towns of the North African cities, but on the campuses of universities and technical colleges. Arab students volunteered to fight in the Afghan jihad . . . in the same spirit as their leftwing European counterparts in the 1930s went off to fight in the Spanish civil war.*[16]

This comparison gives a more accurate impression of the passions behind Islamic activism than analyses based solely on fundamentalism or sexual repression. Likewise, the Bader–Meinhoff gang members who terrorised Europe in the 1970s were well-educated German students.

Humiliation is one of the prime root causes of terrorism. Harvard scholar Jessica Stern emphasises that 'this word is extremely impor-

tant in explaining why terrorists are so successful in recruiting large numbers of young men'.[17] With such an emotionally, physically and politically intangible force as a driving factor, it becomes clear that terrorism cannot simply be understood by reference to sociological factors such as poverty, political constellations and power struggles, or historical events. There is a powerful correlation between acts of humiliation and the desire to restore honour and pride by using violence; for example, Palestinian men being stripped naked in public at checkpoints by Israeli soldiers, lack of freedom of movement, lethal use of military forces by Israelis, house demolitions, confiscation of land, bulldozing olive groves and, more recently, the construction of the 'security fence'. All such actions, however they are understood by those who carry them out, are experienced as humiliation and result in an acute loss of dignity.

Individuals who have accumulated an unquenchable desire for vengeance[18] may not be in a frame of mind to communicate or terminate the violence. Their anger may be such that their desire for retribution and revenge (see figure 1 in chapter 5) is greater than their capacity for reason and reflection. The levels of hatred may be so entrenched that rational argument is impossible. Indeed they may wish to foreclose all further discourse by becoming suicide bombers, whether as young women walking into a public space with explosives strapped under their clothes in Israel or Chechnya, or young men flying a crowded passenger aeroplane into the New York World Trade Center.

# 4. The growth of suicide bombing

The increasing role of suicide bombers in terrorist attacks in this new century is a matter of particular concern to all those seeking to create the conditions for peace. Our incomprehension of suicide bombing, according to Madeleine Bunting writing in the *Guardian*, is partly because it is the opposite of how we believe wars are fought. She writes,

> *The West can only now kill from a distance, preferably from several thousand feet up in the air or several hundred kilometres away on an aircraft carrier. It is the very proximity of these suicide missions which is so shocking. This kind of intimate killing is a reversion to pre-industrial warfare – the kind of brutality seen in the 30 years' war, for example. Suicide bombers in Iraq are a new permutation of old traditions; they have no monopoly on the horrors they reveal of the human psyche and its capacity to destroy life.*[19]

The mechanism of psychological 'distancing' makes it possible for a soldier to fire canisters of buckshot at jeering children in Mosul, Iraq, for example, while explaining, 'It's not good, dude; it could be fatal, but you gotta do it.'[20]

One needs not only a psychological analysis but also an economic analysis of the motivations of those who choose to become suicide

bombers. It is easy but inaccurate to assume that suicide bombers are poor, uneducated religious fanatics who are emotionally unstable and depressed. That profile simply does not fit the bill. Evidence suggests that suicide bombers do not come from one particular socio-economic background, as shown by a study conducted by the Pakistani journalist Nasra Hassan. Hassan interviewed nearly 150 recruiters and trainers of suicide bombers as well as suicide mission volunteers between the years 1996 and 1999. He wrote of his findings that

> *none of the suicide bombers – they ranged in age from 18 to 38 – conformed to the typical profile of the suicidal personality. None of them were uneducated, desperately poor, simple-minded, or depressed. Many were middle class and held paying jobs. Two were sons of millionaires. They all seemed entirely normal members of their families.*[21]

The important question to answer is not simply how sociopolitical conditions affect motivation, feelings or actions, but how and why they affect different people differently.[22] There are multiple motivations and it would be an oversimplification to have any assessment of behaviour described in the blanket analysis. Each individual will have their own personal story as to how it has influenced their chosen identity.

When someone is exposed to traumas and humiliation in a context of social and political violence, they will tend to experience these both on a personal level and as something affecting them as a member of a group. In this way 'the need for revenge and rectification of the harm done may then not only be personally motivated, but may also gain strength from a need to restore the group's identity and honour'.[23] Wounded by territorial disenfranchisement and ethnic humiliation, terrorists seethe with retributive rage. Added to this is pent-up sexual frustration, which is a common characteristic in sexually segregated societies.

This is compounded by many of the suicide bombers being in their

early twenties or late adolescence, which is a particularly volatile age for confusion around identity, setting up a crisis about who one is. In such conditions, one is more at risk of ideological thinking and, potentially, brainwashing. One stereotypical analysis is that many young men are facing thwarted lives without sexual pleasure or hope and can in this way seek a 'magical escape'. This is thought to synchronise with adolescent dreams of sumptuous erotic pleasure in paradise. Of course it is much too naive to think that carnal bliss in heaven and the promise of 72 virgins would drive young minds to participate in the cult of suicide bombing. Much more likely is a sense of powerlessness, rage, hatred and injustice.

Thus, a deeper enquiry into the explosive mix of religious and sexual repression, the psychological pay-off for those who choose this identity, and the accumulation of humiliating experiences is needed. The young suicide bombers of the second Intifada are the children of the generation who experienced the first. They witnessed their parents' profound impotence and humiliation, and chose a more extreme identity in an attempt not to re-create their parents' experiences. The Palestinians felt that they had tried non-violence and it did not work. They felt abandoned and betrayed by the Arab world and the international community. Moreover, in spite of the optimism that the various peace processes might have brought, material conditions have continued to worsen. Dashed hopes have built up to create a more deeply engrained anger and despair. Children at a Palestinian school in Al Khader, south of Bethlehem, were found to be badly affected by the constant violence. One eight-year-old was so traumatised that her hair turned white. Constant fear, speech problems, nightmares and eating disorders are commonplace.[24]

Radical ideology alone is not enough to explain the creation of a suicide bomber. Subject to an intensely stifling social milieu, and encouraged by charismatic leaders, the suicide bomber finds violence not only legitimate but also deeply gratifying. To reach such a mental stage, a submersion in a 'parallel world' is essential.[25] Looking at suicide bombers' biographies, Werner Bohleber notes that the leader was served by instilling in group members a . . .

> *'shared state of aggressive numbing', an orientation towards the attack ahead, an erasure of all prior scruples, and an extermination of all doubt and any sense of empathy for those who will soon be victims of the attack. This is the submersion into a parallel world from which there is no 'point of return'. . . . What is always killed in such acts is one's own weakness, doubts, and conscience, which are projected upon the other.*[26]

This suggests that the act of suicide bombing is calmly and consciously used as a political instrument and as a *last recourse in trying to resolve past struggles*. It is important to remember that for the 30 years of the Palestinian political struggle and desire to bring their political plight to the world stage, they did not use suicide bombing.

What happens to a culture when it loses any sense of hope or investment in the future and becomes attached to a culture of death? When does the situation become so desperate that a 'dignified' death is preferred over living in shame and humiliation? When this coincides with a situation where daily life conditions are harsh in the extreme, as in Gaza, where it is difficult to find work, receive medical help, or travel from place to place, a situation emerges where people are ready to identify with a culture of death rather than life. When people are being killed daily for no apparent reason, life for young people becomes so futile that life after death can seem preferable.

There is an implicit assumption that suicide bombing is irrational, but it is necessary to factor in that there are strong strategic reasons why these methods are being used. It could be argued that suicide bombing is the only weapon Palestinians have against the Israelis and has created a balance of terror which has forced the Israelis to negotiate. Alternatively, it can be argued that it draws attention to the extremity of the conflict and increases support for Hamas. Can young men filled with noble ideals not feel, as in earlier wars, that they should sacrifice their lives for their people? Why did kamikaze pilots commit suicide?

A basic way to reduce suicide bombing would therefore be to introduce systematic efforts to restore a sense of respect, or at the very

least to remove daily humiliations such as road-blocks, body searches, night raids on houses and disrespect of women. A positive development is the recently created 'Machsom (checkpoint) Watch' movement set up by Israeli citizens. However, the problem remains one of basic injustice, with the result that young Palestinians feel deeply alienated, hopeless, furious and alone in their struggle. Equally, current measures taken by their government are not making Israelis feel safer.

The same may be true for some Chechens. In an article for the newspaper *Nowaja Gaseta*, Mainat Abdulajewa writes:

> *Ajsa Gasujewa, 22 years old, from Urus-Martan in Chechnya was the first Chechen suicide killer in 2000. What led the beautiful woman with green eyes into the military headquarters of Urus-Martan with an explosive belt around her body was the loss of 16 of her closest relatives, killed by Russian military within barely a year since the beginning of the war – among them her husband, two brothers, one sister, several cousins and nephews. Ajsa's husband who belonged to the rebels had been wounded and held captive; the same day General Gadschijew, the military commander of Urus-Martan, visited him in the regional hospital. He had no questions for the patient, he stepped forward to him and drilled a bayonet into his chest. . . . Thereafter Ajsa had managed twice to speak to him and ask for the release of the bodies of her husband and her brother but Gadschijew wouldn't give in. During her last visit he promised her, in front of witnesses, to bury her alive if she was to dare again to appear in front of him. Thereafter, the woman left her home and wasn't seen for two weeks until she showed up on the morning of the 10th June 2000 in front of the headquarters gateway.*[27]

# 5. Why do peace processes collapse?

Many of these conflicts have been subject to repeated attempts to establish dialogue through non-violent 'peace processes'. Leaders, often under pressure from outside, may undertake negotiations and in some instances manage to reach an agreement, which is then heralded by the media. To everyone's astonishment, these carefully crafted agreements then come apart, and violence breaks out again. The whole pack of cards collapses. Why? Moreover, why do 50 per cent of countries emerging from war fall back into war?

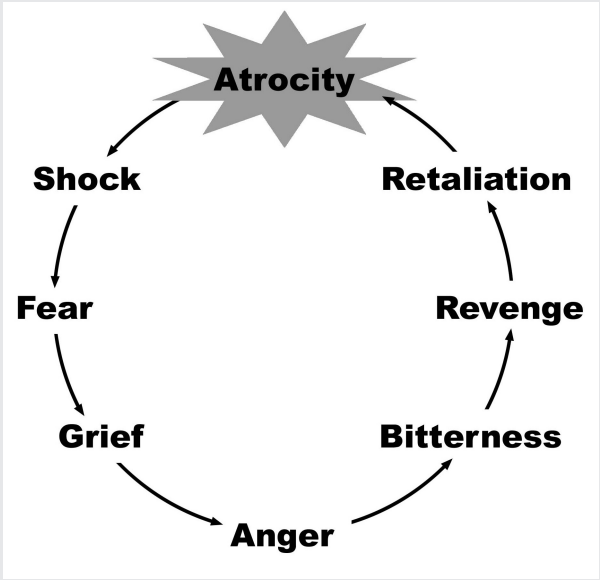
The short answer is that unless peace is established at the grassroots level, unless the tiresome, difficult, unglamorous work of re-building people's lives has been done, unless people are in a mood to live with their neighbours, no amount of coercion or shuttle diplomacy at the top will produce a lasting peace.

## Breaking cycles of violence

This is because people, as well as communities or nations, get caught up in deadly cycles of violence. These cycles are deadly because they ensure that one conflict leads straight into another, often involving more and more killing. The classic cycle of violence has roughly seven stages. This cycle has been evident in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, in central Africa and repeatedly in different regions of former Yugoslavia.

Figure 1 shows how the cycle of violence works in the human

**Figure 1 The cycle of violence**




psyche, at the level of emotions. If conflict resolution is to work, it is at the human level that it must operate, because the origins of the cycle can only be dismantled within the individual human heart and mind.

Intervention is needed at the point before anger hardens into bitterness, revenge and retaliation (see figure 2). To be effective it must address the physical, the political and the psychological security of people trapped in violence; all are equally important, and one without the other is insufficiently strong to break the cycle. In every case, the people involved in situations of violence must be supported in the development of their own resources for transformation.

That is why strategies for building peace must address the physical, psychological and political dimensions of security simultaneously, and seek to combine political negotiation and formal agreements with changes that are evident much closer to everyday life.

**Figure 2 Point of intervention**


## Providing physical, political and psychological security

Obviously, the first priority is to provide physical security so that people feel safe to venture out of their houses. Improved methods of peacekeeping,[28] violence monitoring, disarmament and gun collection can help to establish a safe environment. Political security can be addressed by law enforcement, the establishment of a working judiciary, a free press and in due course free elections. These essential steps have been addressed elsewhere.[29] What has hardly been addressed is the psychological security of those who have endured atrocities or long-term conflict. Whether in a family or society, it is well known that those who have been severely traumatised frequently go on to traumatise others, unless their experience is recognised and addressed.

## The Palestinian–Israeli conflict

For the Palestinians, there is a profound sense of injustice that goes back to their experience of 'Al Nakba' and their displacement in 1948. The occupation compounds this injustice, particularly the loss of the home; studies show that among children the worst kind of trauma after losing their mother is losing their home. Thus vulnerability and insecurity can translate into nihilistic violence. This violence becomes central to the culture and is passed from one generation to the next.

For the Israelis, part of society is still traumatised by the impact of the Holocaust, indelibly etched on their political landscape. The death of six million Jews represents the terrible period in history when the Jewish people were unable to protect themselves and were unprotected by the rest of the world. The Jewish state, since its founding subsequent evolution, has not only had to defend itself in a hostile environment but has not felt able to rely on anyone else to help protect it. Thus, in certain sections of the community, there is a passionate belief in self-sufficiency, open defiance toward the rest of the world and a total disregard of outside public opinion.

The following case study illustrates what happens when trust breaks down completely, how incomprehensible the point of view of each side is to the other, the lengths desperate people will go to survive, and the seepage of criminality into warfare. At the time of writing, the Israelis were planning to withdraw from Gaza and there were a number of initiatives involving third-party intervention that were being explored.

***Gaza: people trapped in violence, the Rafah weapons smuggling tunnels*[30]**

The Oslo Accord (1994–95) granted the Palestinian Authority control over most of the Gaza strip. The agreement specified that the Israeli Defence Force would continue to control a narrow strip between the areas under Palestinian control and the border with Egypt, which is called the 'Philadelphi Route'. Israel claimed that

Rafah, a refugee camp in this area, had become one of the main pipelines for weapon smuggling and was the 'oxygen for the Intifada'.

Tunnels had been built in residential areas in order to avoid detection. The entrances were usually covered by cement and hidden behind furniture or panelling. The weapons smuggled through these tunnels included RPG rocket launchers, AK-47 Kalashnikovs, explosives and ammunition. Because of trade restrictions imposed by Israel on Gaza, the tunnels were also used for smuggling cigarettes, car parts, electrical goods, foreign currency, gold, drugs and even caged birds. This industry has became one of the main means of making a living in the area. A power struggle developed between different clans over control of the smuggling involving terror organisation and crime gangs.

Israel's response to uncovering 45 of these tunnels during the building of the wall along the Philadelphi Road was severe. Israeli helicopters pounded the refugee camp in Rafah with missiles and machine guns.

There was growing opposition among the Palestinian civilian population to the tunnel building and weapon smuggling. This led to demonstrations by residents demanding the securing of tunnels by the Palestinian Authority police force, which conducted a well-publicised operation to expose the tunnels and arrest the smugglers.

Humanising initiatives on Israel's behalf, however, were unrealistic in a climate of hatred. In these conditions the parties need separating out. The situation could be likened to an ugly divorce in which the role of external arbitration and mediation becomes crucial to allow a period of cooling off. When the trust has broken down, one can no longer rely on the goodwill of both sides. Those deeply involved in the cycles of violence are too caught up in the trauma to move beyond their desire for retribution and think about the long-term needs of both communities.

Most Palestinian people see anything that does not end the Israeli occupation as merely palliative. From their perspective the political violence will not be reduced until they experience some legitimate participation in the political process and feel that there is a real prospect of statehood. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza will be seen as an honest gesture only if it is part of a wider withdrawal from the West Bank and offers the prospect of a viable contiguous state for the Palestinians.

What could have been done?

- The Israeli government could reduce the suffering of the Palestinian community by offering to rebuild their homes or offer compensation. If they are unable to do this they could hand the role over to a third party. Such actions would reduce hatred as people would have real physical protection.
- Serious economic investment in the Palestinian territories from the international community would offer a real possibility for economic development and the move towards self-sufficiency. Only real possibilities for economic growth will reduce smuggling. The evident Palestinian entrepreneurial spirit can only flourish in less adverse conditions.
- The use of military strikes may, in the short term, weaken the enemy and its potential to retaliate, but it may be provoking a more cataclysmic event from a more desperate Palestinian population. Military strikes must therefore be reduced.
- Israel is reluctant to entertain the thought that Hamas may be not only the problem but may be part of the solution, and she may need to recognise that more inclusive participation that represents the voice of Hamas will be necessary to reduce the violence.
- The latest Human Rights Watch report (March 2005) examined the homes of 16,000 Palestinians in the Gaza town of Rafah

that the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) have destroyed in the name of stopping arms smuggling through clandestine tunnels. The demolitions have been one of the most divisive issues between Israelis and Palestinians. After consulting tunnel engineering experts, reviewing satellite imagery, and conducting extensive field research, Human Rights Watch showed that Israel's legitimate security concern with stopping the arms smuggling could be met without this massive home destruction – by using anti-tunnelling technology that has been successfully deployed in the far tougher environments along the Korean demilitarised zone and the US–Mexican border.

- In such intractable situations, the possibility of solutions requires a long period of recovery for both sides, long after physical safety has been established. This probably depends on third-party intervention to act as peace enforcers, thereby ending the occupation and offering the possibility of strengthening the Palestinian community and reducing the possibility of political violence.[31]

# 6. Is non-violence an option?

We have to ask what sustained others in the face of equally grave injustice, and what enabled them to transform it. For example, what about the Tibetans, hundreds of thousands of whom were murdered, tortured and driven out of their homeland? What might the Dalai Lama say to a young Tibetan who wants to blow himself up outside a Chinese military camp in Lhasa?

> *If we use violence in order to reduce disagreements and conflict, then we must expect violence every day. Furthermore, it is actually impossible to eliminate disagreements through violence. Violence only brings even more resentment and dissatisfaction.*[32]

Tibetans have not got their country back yet, but by repudiating violence the Dalai Lama has made the Tibetan cause known and respected worldwide, he has the support of most world leaders, Buddhism has become the fourth largest spiritual practice in the world, and there is a growing interest in non-violence across the globe.[33]

## Towards peaceful reconciliation

If we want these ways of pursuing political goals, even in the face of ruthless violence, to become more widely practised, then we need to understand how military and diplomatic intervention can be informed and accompanied by methods which help to establish a

context in which peaceful reconciliation is genuinely possible. This will not happen unless efforts to make and keep peace, develop governance and recover from war are able to address the psychological effects of trauma and humiliation.

On the political level, there is an urgent need to find a political language that recognises trauma, especially in trying to promote dialogue between groups of people who are not fully rational and objective. To what extent can leaders who have a deeply traumatised history think and act rationally? How far do these experiences affect their political judgement? These questions needs to be factored in to make dialogue more effective.

Western democracies often assume that debate needs to be conducted according to rational principles that reflect the values of the West. For example, assumptions are made about secular society, which in the minds of the western power elites reflects democracy, power-sharing and women's rights. However, the experience of secular rule in the Arab world is linked with authoritarianism, while Islamic laws of governance include notions of inclusiveness and welfare, which were not experienced under secular authoritarian regimes. Olivier Roy writes:

> *In the West, secularization is seen as a prerequisite for democratization, but in the Middle East it is mostly associated with dictatorship, from the former Shah of Iran to President Ben Ali in Tunisia . . . in Muslim countries secularisation has run counter to democratization, the best example being the cancellation of the Algerian parliamentary elections of 1992 under the pretence that they would have been won by the Islamists.*[34]

Where communities have been traumatised, they cannot be expected to conduct dialogues according to western rules of rational behaviour. The long-term impact of deep shame and humiliation on people's psychological structures and their effects on political discourse are frequently underestimated.

A deeper level of engagement is required; it is tough and exacting for the international community and it may appear that there is no room for real dialogue as there is such a huge chasm in thinking. What is needed in such cases is the building of relationships that are sustained and nuanced; the kind of communication where real trust can be built over time, in a climate of respect and open dialogue. Violence may reflect a deep history of exclusion and injustices, where the wounds are very raw and the hatred very deep. In this state of mind people do not participate in the kind of discourse with which westerners are familiar. Highly trained and skilled mediators and negotiators are required to engage in this in-depth work.

A new kind of introspection is needed within western political methodology, not least with groups such as political Islam, in which what they have to say is listened to more carefully.

## The role of civilians and civil society

Over ten civilians are killed for every combatant in modern wars[35] and the same is true for the effects of political violence. Our recommendations thus emphasise the role that civilians and civil society, as well as governments, can play in minimising political violence. Some of their most effective methods look to ancient (and very modern) traditions of non-violence.

Non-violence is very definitely not passivity; it requires rigorous training and deep conviction. The effect it has on violent, cruel or angry people is *more powerful than more violence*. It affects them at a profound level. This is the power Martin Luther King taught and used to vast effect in desegregating the deep South. It is what Aung San Suu Khi used when she walked unarmed straight up to the machine guns of Burmese soldiers who had been ordered to shoot the demonstrators she led. It was the power behind the 'Velvet Revolution', which brought down the Iron Curtain. In non-violence you are risking your life (if necessary) so that no one else will be killed, whereas in combat you are risking your life to kill others; and a suicide bomber is deliberately using his or her life to kill others.

Nelson Mandela, who arguably has prevented millions of deaths by

averting civil war through dialogue with the De Klerk government, argued in his trial on terrorist charges before the Pretoria Supreme Court in 1964 that there are situations in which political violence is legitimate. He spoke of a violence that does not lead to loss of human life, and instructed his troops never to plan in advance to injure or kill human beings. Most of the attacks undertaken by the black liberation army of South Africa were on public buildings and strategic targets that symbolised apartheid.

For non-violence to be effective, massive support would be required for it to become a household word, to become the natural alternative. Research suggests that socialising young people to reject violence as a means of problem-solving is key to any sustainable resolution of conflict. This would have to start at the beginning, in families and schools. In Israel, for example, news from the grassroots and the classroom is much more positive than news from political and military leaders.

Non-violent communication training, the brainchild of Marshall Rosenberg, is being used to great effect in Israeli primary schools. In the United States, more than 50,000 schools use a programme called 'Teaching Tolerance'. Children in Boston public schools learn perspective-taking and empathy by writing their personal stories and reading them aloud in class. If peace proves elusive for today's generation of adults, these programmes inspire hope for the next one. Professor Michael Nagler reports that teachers and administrators have been surprised to find that not only do the programmes 'chill' a lot of the violence in school yards and classrooms, but a peculiar pattern emerges all across the country: the biggest troublemakers turn out to be the best mediators. Non-violence starts from a positive statement: 'How can I make a creative, constructive long-term impact on the situation I'm in and, ultimately, on the world I'm in?'

# 7. A programme for change

If terrorism is to be contained and its impact on civilian populations reduced, policies for peace and security will need to be fundamentally rebalanced from the existing bias towards military intervention. We are not simply arguing for a more sparing use of military force – we are arguing that armed intervention should be both preceded and followed by a much wider range of strategies designed to address both the causes and effects of violence, as well as to end the immediate manifestations of conflict.

This analysis leads us to suggest 12 localised and five global practical actions that could help move in this direction. We believe they could be used with positive effects in Iraq, Israel and Palestine and more widely. These principles should inform the development of security doctrines and decision-making by governments, and the conduct of armed forces and development organisations in conflict situations.

## Localised actions

### 1. Avoid, wherever possible, using more violence

Nothing should be done that supports the image of the terrorist as a heroic warrior defending the interests of the people. Incidents like the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib, the killing of innocent civilians in Falluja and tank shells fired into the Gaza strip make it

easier for militants to claim convincingly that their campaign of violence, repugnant to so many outside, is legitimate among their own:

> *The main reason for the failure of the Islamic revolution in Algeria and Egypt was that most people wanted to have nothing to do with men who mutilated and maimed innocent people. In the global context that holds true too. It is the moderation and humanity of the vast population of the world of 1.3 billion Muslims – and their reaction to acts like the beheading of Johnson – that will see us through the darkness that lies ahead and take us toward an end to both terror and the war on it.*[36]

### 2. Show respect

Throughout this pamphlet, humiliation has been identified as a key driver of political violence. Humiliation and degradation are ancient and explosive weapons of war. Conversely, to redress and reduce violence requires systematic training for soldiers and all those involved in conflict, in the necessity for respect for other cultures. **This means that the training of all armed forces should include not only learning about the customs and religious sensitivities of the people involved, and at least the basics of their language, but also education in awareness** – understanding **why** respect is so important. The concept is easy to grasp at the personal level: if someone feels deeply insulted by another, he is hardly likely to behave in a peaceful and cooperative way. Whereas, even if there is profound disagreement, if the other speaks in a respectful, non-aggressive manner, differences can often be sorted out. What is effective between two people is also effective with groups and between nations. The personal is indeed political.

At key moments, respect can save lives in ways that guns cannot. The US officer who ordered his men to 'take a knee' in an explosive encounter with enraged civilians in Falluja was using not only his initiative but his understanding of the need for respect. Great courage is needed to defuse violent situations in this way.

### 3. Improve physical conditions

Reduction in political violence is likely to be achieved by genuine experience of improved conditions. **In Iraq and in the Occupied Territories, therefore, this means creating jobs, encouraging rebuilding, providing access to medical help, re-establishing schooling, removing hindrances to trading, encouraging voter registration and a free press, abolishing curfews and roadblocks as soon as possible and stopping any unnecessary search or intimidation.**

### 4. Include all parties in the peace process

If a framework for conflict resolution does not recognise the importance of popular support, then any peace deal will be less likely to be sustainable, not least because those excluded from the process will attempt to undermine the agreement. A British intelligence officer with years of experience of the Middle East reports that **intervening governments need to be aware that externally imposed top-down political solutions are unlikely to survive unless they go some way to include those previously excluded, particularly when there is such a deep mistrust of the political process.**

### 5. Encourage civil society, and consult

A golden rule for effectiveness in policy formulation is to consult community organisations. This principle is enshrined in the UK Local Government Act 2003, and is equally applicable to areas of political violence. Where there are few community organisations, the encouragement of their growth will prove beneficial. **Social movements such as the Middle East Citizens Assembly (MECA) are new and need support.** They are modelled on the civil society initiatives that prepared Eastern Europe for independence from the Soviet Union and played a large part in ensuring that the revolution was 'velvet' and not bloody. MECA is a participatory organisation to enable people in the region to move from victimhood to being active in society from a sense of shared responsibility. Such an organisation is by definition working at the grassroots level, running training

courses in non-violence, citizenship, non-governmental organisation and civil society. A good model here would be the initiatives taken by Serbians to rid themselves of the Milosevic regime, in particular by training students to monitor elections, and their many initiatives to set up a free press and establish civil society mechanisms.

In Afghanistan, the Coalition for Peace and Unity (CPAU) organised a consultation for civil society groups to which they invited the local warlord, who had a private army of 2000 men. He agreed to attend the first day for reasons of protocol, but stayed the entire week and became deeply engaged with a workshop on de-humanisation. Mohamed Suleiman, chair of CPAU, led the workshop as follows. He drew a diagram of two children born into similar circumstances. He showed child A having a normal, loving upbringing and becoming a doctor. He showed child B losing both his parents in an accident, having to beg on the street to stay alive, being abused and becoming a thief. 'Who', asked Suleiman, 'do we blame? We have to ask why he became a thief. We also know from experience that he can change.' The warlord became so engrossed with this line of reasoning that he decided against the use of force and went home and dismissed his army.

**6. Set up centres of listening and documentation (CLDs)**

These would be responsible for a number of activities including:

- **documenting severe abuse and violations of human rights** such as vigilante killings, torture, rape, disappeared relatives and unlawful arrest, in order to organise, redress and, ultimately, establish some form of restorative justice
- **assessing damage and injury caused by the occupation forces**, making restitution and taking legal and disciplinary action in public
- **deep listening.** The essential principle to be borne in mind is to listen to what local people express as their

needs, to support what they want and feel able to do, and to use the skills already existing on the ground. When large numbers of people have endured horror, it becomes important to create space in which they can humanise their relationships and move beyond demonising the other.[37] Listen carefully to the demands of community leaders and find out what would be the conditions under which the violence could stop. Are there initiatives within the local communities that could be supported to help manage the violence? Where the voice of violent protest reflects a significant aspect of the community, find ways to include it in the political process. This was done with spectacular success in South Africa, and has been the key factor in decreasing violence in Northern Ireland.

**In the case of Iraq, this could have been carried out by the Coalition Provisional Authority and could now be carried out by the Iraqi government in cooperation with the occupation forces and with support from the international community. This concept should also be taken into policy planning, as in the Foreign Office Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit.**

### 7. Trauma counselling

In Croatia, in the midst of the war, a small group of citizens set up the 'Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights' in Osijek. Today it has grown into one of the largest citizen-led peace-building organisations in the Balkans, with over 300 active members. The centre sends 'peace teams' to towns and villages to aid the healing of trauma that has left so many people emotionally scarred. In places where Serbs still live, the peace teams have made important progress in reducing the level of animosity and tension between Serbs and Croats, thus reducing the probability of violence breaking out anew.[38]

The Amman Roundtable cited the examples of the preponderance of women in building the Helsinki Citizens Assembly in Eastern Europe contributing to the non-violence of the Velvet Revolution; the role played by the Women's Peace Party in negotiations for the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland; the initiative of Liberian women to bring about disarmament before elections from 1993 to 1997; the Women's Organization of Somalia, which emerged in the midst of war to prepare the groundwork for peace, and so on.

Wars and violence rest on the presumption that the person or people being attacked are not human. The process of dehumanising the enemy is a defence structure that does not allow space for taking responsibility. Fear shapes the process and allows it to continue, massively reducing the capacity to think about and engage with the other side. With time, a desire for backlash builds up and can manifest itself through physical action. Thus, the question remains whether a balance can be struck between self-protection and preserving the humanity and integrity of the other side.

**Traumas experienced by victims of atrocity need attention and, if possible, healing.** For example, women victims of rape and torture speak repeatedly of the need for psychosocial healing, trauma counselling and support.[39] One way in which this is done simply and effectively is through careful listening, whereby an independent witness or witnesses gives the traumatised person their full attention for as long as necessary, allowing them to discharge their fear, grief and anger. This simple technique takes time and care, but done well prevents anger hardening into bitterness and retaliation. The military needs to consult and work closely with organisations such as the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders and the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture, to set up trauma counselling centres.[40]

### 8. Train and employ a significant number of women in policing duties

Train a significant number of women for the police forces, for regular duties and to address rising violence against women in public places and in the home. In development work worldwide it is now commonly accepted that women are effective agents of change. Women constitute 62 per cent of the adult population of Iraq, and a vast currently unused resource for peace-building.

**In Iraq, this role will require encouragement, support and training by the new Iraqi government.** For example, two-thirds of the teachers are women, but they have yet to receive the funding promised to support their initiatives for post-conflict reconstruction and capacity-building in their organisations. A national education process is needed to inform women of their rights and responsibilities, raise awareness among men of the value of including women in every walk of life, including politics, and expand training programmes preparing women to assume key posts. Connections with women leaders in the West and other Muslim countries should be supported with funding.

All member countries of the United Nations have signed UN Resolution 1325 which recognises the vital role that women can play in de-escalating violence. **In every region, not just the Middle East, it will prove cost effective to allocate funding to training women to play an equal part in peace education, conflict prevention, peace negotiations, mediation and post-conflict reconstruction.** This more formal training helps restrain and influence men of violence.

> In Kenya, for example, where inter-tribal killing had claimed 15,000 lives in Wajir on the border with Somalia, the initiative of a Muslim woman brought together the women of the two tribes to force the men to negotiate. Their commitment was absolute. They said: 'If a member of your family is killed by a member of mine, will you still work with me for peace? If you can't say yes, don't join.' The process was so effective that the Kenyan president gave the woman an office in his government, to extend the practice to other areas of the country.

### 9. Train skilled negotiators and mediators

In order to build dialogue in areas of conflict we will need to train significant numbers of negotiators both at a grassroots level and in the international community. 'Non state actors could provide training in conflict resolution to relevant parties including village elders, citizens, politicians, the military and others.'[41] A roster of eminent persons, experts and ex-military personnel could be created – a group of wise and experienced public figures who wish to be available to use their in-depth skills for mediation.

### 10. Work with religious leaders

In Iraq, various attempts were made to work with imams and sheikhs. However, the initiatives were in many cases stopped by the US authorities before they reached fruition. In other cases, when attempts were made to bring representatives of different belief systems together, a successful outcome was precluded by attempts on the part of western diplomats to instruct the leaders on what they should do.

In other situations, meetings of religious leaders have helped to resolve conflict, or church organisations have acted as mediators, notably in Nicaragua (1984), Mozambique (1992), Guatemala (1996), Sudan (2001), South Africa (1991), Mali (1996) and Liberia (1999). **In Iraq, in particular, even today the occupation forces could, if they showed sufficient respect, develop a relationship with religious leaders and support them to play a much greater part in negotiating an end to violence.** For example, in Falluja after the killing of US contractors in March 2004, a negotiating team of sheikhs from Anbar province proposed to the US forces that if they withdrew to their bases and stayed there, they could guarantee a peaceful situation. This was not accepted by the US military or acted on.

### 11. Bridge-building

Insurgents use violence in an attempt to gain political legitimacy. Giving voice to insurgents could minimise their desire to create more violence and attack a system that excludes them. However, there is a danger of handing over political power to extremist groups, whose

use of violence may have become deeply embedded in their actions, and risks becoming normalised as a mode of communication. Those who resort to violence are brutalised by their experiences. Violence becomes a way of life, and once they have political power it becomes their tool. There are more lessons to be learnt from the Irish case where power was given to men of violence, resulting in continuation of the same violence. In such cases, it becomes crucial to find ways to prevent bullying tactics from taking over and open up conflict-resolving processes to voices that are serious about choosing non-violent options.

The efficacy of bridge-building between communities fractured by decades of violence also became evident in Northern Ireland, where it has been recognised as an essential part of efforts designed to overcome deeply ingrained community hatred and suspicion, with particular attention being paid to schoolchildren. For example, during the late 1980s and early 1990s 'Education for Mutual Understanding' was established to enable children to learn to respect and value themselves and others; to know about and understand what is shared as well as what is different about their cultural traditions; and to appreciate the benefits of resolving conflict by non-violent means. Such processes could be introduced in Iraq with suitable cultural modifications.

### 12. Eventual truth and reconciliation processes

The lies, suspicion and betrayals that characterise war can fester for decades and erupt in further atrocity if not addressed. This needs to be done in public and in a safe and controlled environment, and one of the most effective is a truth and reconciliation commission.[42] To date there have been 20 of these, each building on the lessons of the last, the most well known being held in South Africa from 1995 to 1998. **The British government could take steps to initiate a truth and reconciliation process in Northern Ireland.** The demands of reconciliation with a view to ensuring a peaceful transition to a democratic society often necessitate postponing or rationing justice for the victims and families of gross human rights violations.

In place of conventional justice involving legally sanctioned punishment for crimes committed, efforts are made to expose the egregious acts and systematic violations of the past and to establish accurate and detailed records of them. Debate over the efficacy of truth and reconciliation commissions often revolve around the requirements of expediency and the imperatives of justice and law but, overall, truth and reconciliation commissions do perform a vital restorative function within transitional democracies, and help to break the cycle of violence. In fact, all of the 12 actions recommended above could be used cumulatively to break the cycle of violence described in chapter 5 and illustrated in figure 3.

## Global dimension

### 13. Combine military and civilian peace-building

Policy-makers are beginning to encourage new developments, including a combined military and civilian peacekeeping force. These are structures in which military and non-military capacity can be jointly planned, developed and deployed to the greatest good of the populations concerned. A recent report delivered to European Union defence chief Javier Solana recommends a **Human Security Response Force of 15,000 men and women**, of whom one-third are civilian. Instead of their prime aim being to minimise their own casualties, the aim would be to minimise all casualties. Like police officers and fire fighters, these people would be deployed on human security missions in which they would risk their lives to save others. In addition a Human Security Volunteer Service would be made available both for mid-career professionals looking for a career break, and for graduating students. The principles of service, suggested by Mary Kaldor – convenor of the working group which produced the report – combine traditional military values like heroism, sacrifice and excellence with civilian qualities of enabling and listening to others. The goal of such a force is not victory but the cessation of violence, and first and foremost to protect people, calm violence and establish the rule of law in order to find space for political solutions.[43]

**Figure 3 Transforming the cycle of violence**

At national and international levels, such an initiative may require accommodations on both sides. **Military planners will need to engage with civilian peaceworkers far earlier and more comprehensively than they may feel comfortable with. Conversely, peaceworkers may have to temper their critical independence with a pragmatic commitment to dependence on, and partial 'interoperability' with, military forces, particularly in the early stages of deployment.** But such accommodations must be forged if they provide the best chance of putting right the mistakes of the past and avoiding further unnecessary bloodshed.

In the United States, in response to the challenge of making peace, an actual Nonviolent Peaceforce is being formed to create a 2000-member professional paid corps, along with 4000 reservists, 5000 volunteers and a research division, ready to respond wherever there is conflict around the globe. In four years the project, operating from offices in St Paul and San Francisco, has guaranteed endorsements from seven Nobel Peace laureates, established bases in Europe[44] and Asia, and built up a network of participants and potential volunteers from around the world, emphasising the global South. This new project, if it succeeds, will result in a worldwide peace service capable of intervening in a conflict or incipient conflict more quickly than the UN peacekeeping division and – more importantly – with a different kind of power from that of national militaries:

> *While the US government insists there is no alternative to endless war, the Nonviolent Peace force is quietly attempting to institutionalize a proven alternative. If it succeeds, the world will have two kinds of standing army to choose from.*[45]

### 14. Third-party intervention

In deep-rooted conflict, hatred and mistrust are so profound that it is impossible to build either trust or peace until violence has been contained. In conditions of mutually inflicted atrocity and indiscriminate violence, the parties may need separating out, with the opportunity to cool off until the pain of the trauma is less physical,

and rational thought is more available. There is an important role here for third-party intervention, undertaken by a reliable neutral international body. **It is essential that any form of intervention is not seen as occupation. Critical to this is whether the 'outside' peace enforcers impose their philosophy 'top down' or whether they are prepared to liaise very carefully with the people on the ground, paying full attention to what they would see as an improvement in their lives.**

In a research monograph published by the Project on Defense Alternatives in May 2005,[46] Carl Conetta outlines the issues involved in how a foreign military presence can be perceived as more or less legitimate despite popular disposition against occupation. He emphasises that this depends on how the foreign military relates to local authority and to popular needs and aspirations. Using Iraq as a case in point, he lists three sets of issues that are relevant:

- humanitarian needs, postwar reconstruction and material quality of life
- maintenance of social order and security
- self-determination.

The issue therefore is not only whether intervention is undertaken but *how*, involving carefully constructed partnerships which are seen as strengthening the work that is already being done.

Methods that would help foreign military to establish better relations with local authorities would include:

- agreement with both parties to send in peace enforcers, to establish a separation zone and police a cease-fire
- establishment of some form of trusteeship, where governance of an area had broken down, to restore order and basic safety
- ensuring the safety of refugees where necessary
- involvement in institution-building and the strengthening of civil society

- administration of appropriate humanitarian aid, but always work towards greater self-sufficiency for the community
- working with and supporting grassroots organisations in their work of bridge-building and stabilisation.

### 15. Cut the export of weapons

Four members of the UN Security Council – France, the Russian Federation, the UK and the US – are responsible for 78 per cent of global exports of conventional weapons.[47] About two-thirds of these exports go to developing countries and regions of conflict. This trade in arms foments violent conflict.[48] It is estimated that up to 90 per cent of all illegal small arms trade begins with state-sanctioned trade.[49] The economic arguments for arms export and the rationalisation of the 'need to protect jobs in the arms industry' habitually offered by exporting governments have been comprehensively refuted.[50] **Cutting the export of weapons, on the part of the permanent members of the Security Council, would send a message of greater integrity to the politically violent, as well as decreasing the availability of the tools of violence.**

### 16. Long-term support for peace processes

Often peace negotiations are fragmented and take place at the instigation of particular international players. In the example of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, this was evident in the Camp David process, when the Clinton and Barak governments were obliged to put pressure on the peace process and speed it up in a way that may have been a critical ingredient in its collapse. The United Nations is not a sufficiently trusted player by Israel, and therefore is not seen to be neutral. In addition, there has not been a sustained engaged process that involves all the different players in order to mediate a final outcome.

What is needed is a permanent process able to act as a consistent and stable mediator, taking primary responsibility for any peace process throughout its different stages. **A neutral peace and security**

**commission that has the authority to intervene in all areas of conflict with a long-term commitment can be set up to this effect.** Central to the development of the commission would be that it is permanent, possibly authorised by the United Nations, but at the same time independent and able to act swiftly without bureaucratic limitations. **Research into the establishment of a peace and security commission could be funded by the Advisory Council for the Human Security Commission.**

The commission's task would be to engage all the parties at the different levels of political decision-making and civil society as appropriate. It would insist on the inclusion of all the constituents in the peace process, paying particular attention to those who have been excluded and may have resorted to political violence. Such a process would take as long as is needed, but essential would be consistent proactive engagement in spite of any attempts to derail the process.

In Northern Ireland, Senator George Mitchell's capacity to listen fully ('as long as it takes')[51] to those from all sides has been credited as a key factor in the eventual negotiation of the Good Friday Agreement. Mitchell also observed that a reduction in violence in the context of broad popular support for peace-building is quite different from a reduction in violence enforced against the grain of popular sentiment.

Furthermore, its task would be to be alert to emerging conflicts and to the role of early intervention in conflicts, continuously analysing the effectiveness of different methods of negotiations and mediation and their applicability in specific situations. It would also be empowered with the role to convince governments of the importance of the human security agenda if they are contemplating military intervention and would have the responsibility to insist that any military intervention is closely integrated into post-reconstruction planning.

Such an institution would need to be highly resourced financially and be able to employ those with proven effectiveness in negotiation:

ex-world leaders, military specialists, experts in conflict resolution and human security consultants. This would establish a substantial body of trained mediators drawn from all religious and cultural backgrounds and it would be important to have an equal balance of men and women. Its responsibility would be to track and analyse every conflict consistently, to develop relevant intervention and resolution methods. It would also be responsible for providing mediation, dialogue and intervention in peace processes.

The methodology could learn from the work of the International Crisis Group, which is an independent, non-profit, multinational organisation with over 100 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. It could be funded by a tax on currency speculation (such as the Tobin Tax), and governed by representatives of explicitly neutral countries.

### 17. Establish horizontal networks to combine legitimacy and neutrality

The demand for political legitimacy – the demand to be heard – must be read in terms of the extent to which those using violence reflect the views of the community they claim to represent. In the Gaza strip, for example, where 30 per cent of the population support Hamas, they need to be acknowledged as a serious political voice. People may not like their methods of getting heard and may even have difficulty with the way they wish to organise society, but in the end real security lies not in military strength but in the legitimacy given to those who feel excluded from the political process. In the short term this may reduce the possibility of a western-style democracy, but increase the possibility of creating a national consensus which may be the necessary first step to a more open society and towards stemming the tide of Islamic fundamentalism.

Some people would argue that the legitimacy of local NGO actors is more difficult to confirm than national governments, who are at least elected and therefore accountable to their electorates. Others counter the claim by saying that the legitimacy of western

governments has been permanently damaged by revelations of mendacity to their electorates concerning the reasons for intervention in Iraq. As far as their neutrality in the Middle East is concerned, it would be hard to establish or defend. But such questionable records do not lessen the need for other approaches to build legitimacy and neutrality.

A useful model here would be that of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, which built a broad and active constituency for its work of democracy-building in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Representatives of citizen organisations, then illegal in the countries of Eastern Europe, met annually during the 1980s, first in Helsinki and then in other capitals, to discuss and decide on a viable methodology of democratic accountability. This is the model to be adapted to the uses of the new Middle East Citizens' Assembly.

Under discussion at the Amman meeting on human security in the Middle East in May 2004 was the question of setting up a **human security network**, to include representatives of organisations working on aspects of democracy-building, election monitoring, human rights, mediation, protective accompaniment, women's rights, bridge-building, truth and reconciliation, restorative justice, violence monitoring, weapons collection, and peace and justice education. If such a network were to be adequately funded, from truly neutral sources, it could become the basis for real protection for its members, rather like a trade union. On the same model it could eventually build sufficient strength to address some of the other previously mentioned causes of war – especially resource shortages and the profits being made out of war, including traffic in weapons and women.

# 8. Conclusion

The human aspects of security are frequently neglected because they are considered 'soft'. That is, they focus on addressing real human needs, which, if left frustrated and ignored, fuel the very violence we are trying to avoid. It must be stressed that the options described above are not 'easy'. They require maturity, and intense training, as if to Olympic standards. They do not involve loss of face, nor do they demonstrate weakness. In fact they demonstrate the opposite, a sense of sufficient strength and sophistication to understand the human dynamics of what is taking place in conflict.

Military intervention and its violent consequences may well stimulate further violence, as demonstrated by the insurgency in Iraq. A sequential ladder of non-military options could be a prerequisite, in which each is considered seriously by governments and thus using military force is seen as the last recourse. This would involve paying more attention to the human security agenda specifically because it is local, detailed and long term. This pamphlet has also addressed the need to intervene at both local and global levels and illustrates how one without the other will do little to address the root causes of conflict.

Ultimately a decision will be made to commit to the politics of threat or the politics of inclusion. Threats and the use of violence may well be effective in the short term but over time are more likely to lead to the desire for retaliation and retribution. This pamphlet calls for

something more subtle and nuanced which is slower and more painstaking but requires an attempt to enter into the minds of those who are using political violence, not because it is in any way condoned but because the lesson has been learned that violence is the symptom of a much deeper problem that needs addressing.

The power of change in the human heart is formidable. It is what can transform violent activists into statesmen. The development undergone by Nelson Mandela during his years on Robben Island, after he was convicted of terrorism, made it possible for him to emerge from jail unshakeably committed to negotiation and reconciliation. Had it not been for the depth of his and his colleagues' conviction, there were enough people on both sides ready to have plunged South Africa into a civil war which could have cost millions of lives.

In Iraq and Afghanistan methods such as those described would undoubtedly have taken longer to effect the removal of the regime, and would have posed plenty of difficulties. But they would have resulted in few civilian or military casualties, little physical destruction, and none of the current bitterness and hatred for the occupying forces. Non-military support for progress to a multi-party state could eventually have produced an Iraqi opposition capable of government, as has happened in South Africa, the Philippines, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Timor and so on. By keeping to the principle of enabling a people to decide its own future, rather than imposing military rule, the current level of anger and resentment towards the US and the UK – with all the latent contribution to terrorism – would have been avoided.

War prevention works on the same principle as inoculation for smallpox – it has to be done methodically, with proven vaccines and as a fundamental, properly funded policy. The methods described[52] could be enlarged and established, to be in conscious focus before any action is taken – so that every non-military option is tested before war is started. Policy-makers need to integrate this agenda into their planning, and understand that the current approach being advocated by western governments simply reinforces problems rather than

finding solutions. In this they will find it rewarding to listen to and work with civil society organisations from the majority world. Serious planning and serious funding needs to be allocated to non-military ways of managing conflict. The UK for example currently allocates to conflict prevention and resolution less than half of 1 per cent of the funding allocated for military intervention; and the UK has a better record in this than all except the Scandinavian countries.

The damage done to the fabric of society by any war has to be healed. Innocent people on all sides have been killed, and the resulting rage and grief, if not addressed, will foment revenge and future terror. Women who have been raped go to their graves unable to forgive and forget. Children have been made mute from the horrors they witnessed. Other children struggle to manage stumps of limbs. Other children are yet to be blown to pieces by unexploded bombs.

After a war, re-constructing buildings is the easy bit. Re-building the fabric of society is much more difficult. What is most challenging to deal with, and least attended to, are the deep wounds left in the hearts and minds of those who live on. If these wounds are left untreated, they fester into further horror. That's why serious skill and serious money must be invested in this healing, why human security is the issue of the time, and why war prevention is the coming science.

# Epilogue: after the London bombings

This pamphlet was written and finalised in early July 2005. As the finishing touches were being made to the text, representatives of the world's most powerful nations were preparing to gather in Gleneagles for what was being billed as a historic meeting of the G8 where agreement would be sought on debt relief for African countries and tackling the causes of climate change.

No one could have predicted just how historic that meeting would be. But not for the reasons originally anticipated.

The tragic events of Thursday 7 July 2005 in London brought terrorism back to the front pages and the forefront of people's minds, both in the UK and around the world. Three bombs on tube trains and a fourth on a bus wrought terrible carnage. At the time of writing, a few days after the attacks, Met Police have confirmed 52 dead and 700 injured.

The attacks have served as a brutal reminder of the challenges of terrorism and political violence across the world. Like the attacks in Madrid in March 2004 and New York and Washington in September 2001, they have left individuals and communities shaken. For the families of the dead and injured, the trauma is far more profound and will leave an indelible life scar. Even for those who have not directly suffered a terrible loss, we feel a sense of fragmentation and insecurity, and a lack of certainty about what the future holds.

It is impossible not to feel a terrible rage and sadness at the London bombings. Innocent victims have died and others are seriously wounded. Our first impulse is revulsion, not least because of the level of suffering. We are also left wondering why these terrifying events happened.

Attention will inevitably focus on what can be done, in Britain and elsewhere, to deal with remaining threats to our security and to bring those responsible to justice. In the immediate aftermath, it is clear that the government needs to provide safety and reassurance for its citizens.

At the same time, there needs to be a long-term response to the bombings. Strategies will never be successful unless they address the full range of factors that fuel cycles of violence and influence the use of terror over time. Most importantly, these must address the emotional and psychological causes of violence.

The use of violence can never be justified in any way. But by deepening our understanding of the factors and behaviours that fuel it, we will be nearer to achieving a safer world. Understanding the psychology behind terrorist acts does not imply that we begin to sympathise with the perpetrators. But we can no longer fall back into the illusive comfort of old assumptions and stereotypes. We need to define concrete interventions capable of dealing effectively with such violence as early in the cycle as possible.

Terrorism can be defined as a calculated act of political violence, premeditated, with the intention of creating the maximum public disruption, fear and panic. The ultimate aim is psychological violence – to create an environment in which people no longer feel safe. Although Londoners have shown remarkable strength and resilience in the days since the attacks, the perpetrators appear to have succeeded in spreading fear, at least in the short term.

However, behind many who use violence as a political weapon – which at one level may be a manipulation for power – there are profound psychological issues that need to be explored.

The need to protect peoples' safety should be coupled with an open dialogue about how to deal with this threat. We need to be brave

enough to create forums in which we don't demonise each other but find ways of listening. We might have to engage with ideas and beliefs that we find difficult and that don't fit comfortably with Western values and our version of modernity.

There is no magic bullet, of course. But we hope that in the months and years ahead, this pamphlet will help in providing a road map for political leaders searching for long-term solutions to terrorism and political violence.

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vulnerable part, the more he tries to humiliate others and, in the process, deny those others any normal human emotions. He dehumanises the enemy and attributes all kinds of negative qualities to them. It is a process that prevents a richer understanding and full engagement with other groups and their complexity.

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