

A Study on Theoretical Aspects of Post War Peacebuilding

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ABSTRACT

Post-conflict peacebuilding processes have received wide recognition in the last two decades since the escalation of a number of intrastate conflicts in different parts of the world. Though several countries have concluded peace accords to control the recurring violence, new conflicts keep cropping up across the globe now and then and therefore the issue is now drawing greater attention. In Sri Lanka the civil war ended in 2009 and still there are some critics on peacebuilding process. The objective of this paper is to examine the theoretical aspects of the post-conflict peacebuilding as a direction for ongoing peace process in Sri Lanka. The secondary data have been purely based for this study and they were collected from the UN publications as well as other scholarly published works. The failures of the current prevailing strategies compelled the UN to adjust its own strategies for consolidating peace. It has been generally agreed that the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding was popularised by the United Nations with the work of Boutros Ghali and further developed by following several UN documents. The UN approach on post-conflict peacebuilding, focus on several key areas such as security, political setup, development, humanitarian aspects and human rights etc. Later, while agreeing with the UN notion, several institutions and scholars also developed some new ideas on post-conflict peacebuilding according to their experiences and so modified and elaborated the concept. For instance, they added the concept of transitional justice, which looks into the issues of justice, truth telling and reconciliation, as these are considered essential elements of peacebuilding. This development could be seen when the great powers intervened in the state building of certain fragile states in the late 1990s. For instance, Ramsbotham, Miall and Woodhouse presented a post-war reconstruction/withdrawal matrix in 2011, which details several phases in security, law and order, government, economy, society and international intervention transition sectors. Finally, the study identifies some important characteristics of the concept. First, post-conflict peacebuilding is a significant long term process largely initiated in the context of negative peace, aiming to create positive peace in order to produce a sustainable peace. The post-conflict peacebuilding activities address two aspects of working areas. Firstly, it addresses the immediate outcomes of the war such as in the fields of the security sector, repatriation of refugees and resettlement of IDPs, physical reconstruction, etc., which connect to the humanitarian aspects. Secondly, it overcomes the structural violence and issues in the political, economic, and psycho/social areas by removing structural contradictions and injustice to achieve positive peace in conflict affected societies.

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