The Role and Functions of Civil Society in Countries Affected by Armed Conflict

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Abstract- Nowadays there are different definitions of civil war, or there are attempts to separate it from some other phenomena such as terrorism or armed conflicts of low intensity. They are often linked to a particular ideology, as well as the political consequences that an armed conflict would have if it was characterized as a civil war. International law requires that the conditions under which certain phenomena can be called a civil war arise from the Geneva Convention. Such wars are one of the reasons why humanity today suffers, and especially the countries of the third world, primarily because of mutual knowledge of the warring parties and hatred. All this causes thousands of victims, thousands of missing persons, rape of women, large migrations, and the destruction of civilian and cultural sights and historical monuments, which was the case in civil wars from South Sudan, through Somalia to Angola. Civil society and its engagement are important actors in peace building processes. As such, it is fundamentally focused on building and strengthening civil society, especially in countries experiencing armed conflicts. In such environments, civil society plays an important role in reducing violence and easing the conditions necessary for building a sustainable peace. However, despite the increasing emphasis on the role of civil society in peace building, little systematic research has been undertaken to empirically support this assumption. Some studies have shown the relevance of the seven functions of civil society that differ in different phases of the conflict. Although there has been a significant increase in peace building initiatives with the strengthening of civil society, these initiatives have not been followed by systematic research programs. As a result, we know little about the role of civil society in peace building, including its potential contribution to reducing violence, ending armed conflicts, and building sustainable peace thereafter. The effectiveness of civil society varies considerably from function to function. When implemented, civil society functions such as protection, monitoring, advocacy and relief were often very effective. In contrast, efforts aimed at socialization and social cohesion have generally had a very low level of efficiency in terms of reducing violence, contributing to agreements and maintaining peace. This is due to the way in which most of the initiatives within these functions have been implemented, as well as the way in which certain factors influenced them. Solving various conflicting lines within societies is a matter of preventing violence. The fact that armed conflict drastically changes the lives of all people, at all levels, with individual changes in attitudes and behavior (for example, questions of trust and mistrust), causes economic and social changes, with the final changes in the power relations in communities, regions and society as a whole.

Index Terms- civil war, civil society, armed conflict

I. INTRODUCTION

The civil society and its stakeholders have become important in development cooperation, at least since the mid-1980s. This change started with increased participation of voluntary agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the framework of development cooperation. This can be attributed mainly to the neoliberal model of development (Debiel and Sticht, 2005) in the 1980s, which prompted a very skeptical attitude towards the state and favored the privatization of state goods and infrastructure services. Civil society and its engagement are important actors in peace-building processes. As such, it is fundamentally focused on building and strengthening civil society, especially in countries experiencing armed conflicts. In such environments, civil society plays an important role in reducing violence and easing the conditions necessary for building a sustainable peace (Glasius, 2004). However, despite this growing emphasis on the role of civil society in peace-building, little systematic research has been undertaken to empirically support this assumption. Some studies have shown the relevance of the seven functions of civil society that differ in different phases of the conflict. With the proliferation of armed conflicts in the 1990s, and the increasingly complex peace-building efforts facing the international community, peace-building is increasingly focused on the potential role of civil society. Although there has been a significant increase in peace-building initiatives with the strengthening of civil society, these initiatives have not been followed by systematic research programs. As a result, we know little about the role of civil society in peace-building, including its potential contribution to reducing violence, ending armed conflicts, and building sustainable peace thereafter (Abiew and Keating, 2004). Citizens' participation in political decision-making is the basic concept of functional democracies. Civil society therefore has an extremely important role in democratic societies. This is equally reflected in the discourse of international cooperation. Armed conflict constitutes a fundamental obstacle to the development of every society. During and after the conflict, high expectations are placed on the de-escalating power of civil society and its contribution to sustainable peace. From this perspective, citizens, communities and civil society organizations are perceived as key

actors in overcoming the existing lines of conflict, and organized violence. With the spread of the conflict in the 1990s and increasing the complexity of peace-building efforts to deal with the international community, including significant failures such as those done on Somalia and Rwanda, the peace-building discussion has increasingly focused on the potential role of civil society. This led to a massive an increase in peace-building initiatives in civil society, but, interestingly, did not fit researchers and debates about the nexus between civil society and peace building. To date, there has been little systematic analysis of the specific role of civil engagement and civil society in the context of armed conflicts, and even less in terms of its potential, constraints and critical factors.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOWARDS CIVILIANS DURING ARMED CONFLICTS

Throughout history, the battles led to large, remote settlements the poles where the armies measured their strengths. So, the term is a battlefield in that time was geographically limited, while the destruction was limited by range then the weapon. The civilians in the occupied area also had time to recover escape the enemy, even though they were not spared the plunder the invasion of the hostile army. Somewhat paradoxically, but with the development of new technologies and the type of weapons, the methods of warfare change, and civilians are increasingly "involved" in the events of the war and more and more directly affected by the hostilities.The fact that armed conflict drastically changes the lives of all people, at all levels, with individual changes in attitudes and behavior (for example, questions of trust and mistrust), causes economic and social changes, with the final changes in the power relations in communities, regions and society as a whole. The relationship that exists with the international community towards civilians and their facilities during armed conflicts taking place in the territory where these facilities are located and where those civilians live is viewed from the legal point of view. The above issues are multifaceted in a socially relevant and significant manner. The role of the international organization of the protection of civilians and their facilities is a sensitive political issue, due to the different views of the parties involved in armed conflicts, the one in power and the one who wants the government to take over. Therefore, both sides are referring to the regularity of their attitudes, and additional influence is created by states that do not participate in the conflicts. The regularity or irregularity of warring parties in the civil war is not in the scope of our research, but it shows the degree of protection of the rights of civilians and their property within the Geneva Convention. Therefore, the rights of civilians in this situation are mainly related to the interest of the politicization of another state, as there are examples throughout history. The United Nations has adopted a charter in which Article 4, paragraph 2 states that it does not propagate the application of armed conflicts among states. However, this regulation did not define armed conflicts within the country itself. Therefore, such conflicts within the country are led by groups of people who carry out various activities such as protests, armed rebellions against the state, provoking disorder within the state, plundering property, which in the end can result in a civil war, all of which significantly weakens the state in all fields, endangering social peace and stability. The emergence of armed conflicts in the country itself is mainly of interest that can be apparent or covert, and in which different elements such as religion, tribal affiliation, different political attitudes, economic interests, ethnic conflicts, etc. are used as a cause. Nowadays there are different definitions of civil war, or there are attempts to separate it from some other phenomena such as terrorism or armed conflicts of low intensity. They are very often related to a certain ideology, as well as the political consequences that a particular armed conflict would have if it was characterized as a civil war. International law requires that the conditions under which certain phenomena can be called a civil war arise from the Geneva Convention. Such wars are one of the reasons why humanity today suffers, and especially the countries of the third world, primarily because of mutual knowledge of the warring parties, mutual hatred, all of which causes thousands of victims, thousands of missing persons, rape of women, large migrations, demolition of civilian and cultural sights and historical monuments, which was the case in civil wars from South Sudan, via Somalia to Angola and Libya. Civil war does not leave any less consequence than the war between the two countries, because in the civil war, the number of dead civilians is high. Although cruelty is almost always present in wars, it cannot be denied that old civilizations such as China, India and some African people, and then adhered to certain humane principles during armed conflicts, and religion had a powerful impact on the application of human principles in armed conflicts, such as changing and providing care to opponents, eating and accommodation of these soldiers, and so on (Schmidt, 2000). French thinker Jean Jacques Rousseau in his book emphasizes that it is necessary to make a distinction between civilians and warriors, which is the main thesis of Human International Law. In practice, countless times it has been confirmed that the war is not affecting only the warring fighters, but also civilians and their facilities. However, although there are similarities in the position of civilians and their facilities in various armed conflicts between countries, international law has not seriously taken into account the position of civilians in the event of a civil war. International conflicts have been in the focus of international law since the 19th century, which is not the case with a civil war, where it took a lot of time, victims, and suffering to take this type of war conflict into serious consideration. The main reason for the long period of undefined civil war relations under international law is that they cannot clearly distinguish warriors from insurgents, because the countries are sovereign, and every other country has a different opinion on a country affected by the civil war. The organization that played a key role in these wars is the Red Cross, with its founder of Swiss origin Henry Donan, who propagated aid to the victims of each war. At the very beginning, the Red Cross organization had narrow-minded activities, but despite numerous problems and risks, it remained consistent with its parole, which puts human victims at risk in front of every risk. On August 12, 1949, the fourth Geneva Convention was signed, which represented a revolution in the field of humanitarian international law. Then, for the first time, a special article on armed conflicts

within the state was adopted, the third joint member, but developments in the world and the emergence of new technologies have shown that there are many shortcomings in the laws that were adopted at that time. Due to the process of globalization and transition, the Red Cross played a significant role in the preparation of two additional protocols for the Fourth Geneva Convention, 10. juna1977. years. The first protocol relates to armed conflicts between countries, and puts other emphasis on internal conflicts, ie war. We are especially interested in another protocol because it sets two parallel systems of international protection for people. The first system is applied in the events of a civil war emphasizing the conditions for the third common member to apply. The most important thing is that citizens and their facilities are maximally protected in these armed conflicts. The international community's contribution to the protection of civil rights in armed conflicts was modest, but it should be emphasized that a positive impact on civilization was achieved, however, since many countries adopted these laws, and in addition to the conflict-affected sides, they took all into account the protection of civilians and their facilities. In order for the implementation of the Convention to be widely and widely accepted by all countries, it is necessary to create an environment that guarantees the enforcement of all the laws in force.

III. CONCLUSION

The complexity and dynamics of political, economic and social processes in the modern world require governments to be and state institutions quickly adapt to change and react readily in different (crisis) situations. Inclusion of citizens and their associations in the process of formulating and implementing (practical) policies to which the country responds to different challenges is one of the prerequisites for this. The effectiveness of representative democracy, news on the principles of the division of power, free elections and multi-party system, is increased by the introduction the principle of participatory democracy. Participatory democracy implies the permanent involvement of citizens in the processes of managing public affairs, and not just at the time of the election, when their participation is reduced to selecting the holders of power at different levels. This type of democracy implies that citizens have at their disposal different mechanisms that allow them to express their needs or attitudes on certain topics. These attitudes are then translated into practical policies. Citizens, therefore, have the right to ask, know and be informed about all decisions and processes affecting their lives. It should also be borne in mind that citizens are those who pay state administration, and that it has an obligation to act in accordance with the guidelines and priorities established by them. With the spread of the conflict in the 1990s and the increasing efforts to build the peace of the international community, stakeholders and peace-building discourse were increasingly focusing on the potential role of civil society. This has led to a massive increase in peace-building initiatives in civil society. There is a systematic analysis of the specific role of civil engagement and civil society in the context of an armed conflict, but less in terms of its potential, constraints and critical factors. Our work provides an overview of the notion of civil society and understanding in different contexts. He creates an analytical framework of the functions of civil society arising from the theory of democracy, discourse on development and knowledge of the case study, which in turn applies to the context of peace building. The theory and practice of peace-building is analyzed in terms of the functions of civil society and their importance, scope and content. The results show that the very existence and support of civil society does not automatically lead to peace-building. A good understanding of the role of civil society and peace-building potential is needed. It is also important to recognize that certain roles and functions of civil society vary depending on the conflict phases and may not all be equally relevant and effective at all stages of the conflict. Nevertheless, civil society plays an important role in building peace. Based on the analysis of the functions of civil society, this paper concludes that civil society can make a significant contribution to peace-building in the short term, but also in the medium term and in the long run. Democracy research shows that civil society played a key role in democratic transition in Eastern Europe. The most visible result of peace-building in civil society shows a direct correlation between the involvement of civil society in peace negotiations and the sustainability of the agreement, the greater the participation of civil society, it is more likely that the peace agreement will be sustainable. It seems that the most important role of civil society in peacebuilding is advocacy, especially in terms of safeguarding civil society's votes and bringing important peace-building questions. Other civil society roles are also important for peace-building, in particular monitoring respect for human rights as it contributes to the protection of civil society and through joint activities that can build ties between divided societies.

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