



Seminar Summary Report ‘The Politics of Post Conflict Reconstruction in the Republic of Congo (RoC)’

10th June Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

This seminar is part of the Direct Conflict Prevention Programme (DCP) effort at consensus building by providing a platform for sharing information, encouraging policy debates and dialogues on the African Peace and Security Agenda. The aim of the seminar is to stimulate quality discussion, in-depth and constructive interaction between participants.

The seminar aimed at interrogating RoC's, political and economic life since the end of the war. Using the African Union Policy Framework on Post conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRDR) as its point of departure, the seminar proposes some policy recommendations for post conflict societies rich with natural resources.

The seminar was anchored on three interrelated questions: have politics in RoC really changed from the pre-war and war period? Has RoC completely broken free from war economy or has post conflict reconstruction merely legitimised and reinvent it?

It was pointed out that while the AU Policy Framework on Post conflict Reconstruction and Development is a comprehensive approach that

seeks to address the problem of post conflict reconstruction, it is just a reference document to be adopted by individual states to inform their domestic post conflict programmes. As such, the onus of peacebuilding is on individual government. Moreover, it was pointed that post conflict reconstruction is more than a technical exercise aimed at rebuilding lives. It was more of a political venture aimed at reconstituting the distribution of power and resources. Thus post conflict and reconstruction and development is a political venture which in itself is conflictual with regards to managing the various competing interest. As a consequence, how a conflict comes to an end is an important variable in determining the process and outcome of a peacebuilding process.

In the case of RoC, it was argued that post conflict and reconstruction processes was *consensual* effort though some of the political actors did not take part in the process. Moreover it was argued that most of the policy prescriptions that centered around institutional building such as parliament, as called for by the Convention on Peace and Reconstruction have been operationalised. However, governance is still a problem in RoC. As a consequence it was pointed out that while formal institutions have been created, the problem of governance has impeded transformation of stability into sustainable human security.

Against this backdrop, it was further argued that while the ensuing peacebuilding process has nurtured hopes for institution building and political liberalization, and though central authority has been restored and stability returned, the regime has become excessively strong vis a vis human security, as a result of the conceptualisation and implementation of a peacebuilding process that had much to do with the prioritization of a power-building strategy over human security informed by the rationalities of a victor's peace. As such the present peacebuilding process in the country has graduated to nothing but measures and

mechanisms aimed at strengthening and legitimating the regime in Brazzaville while at the same time providing the legitimacy and institutional vehicles to consolidate the pre-war and war politics and alliances