

Peace Process: The First Step towards Realisation of Peace : @PKO Now! No.15

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Definition of Peace Process

To realise peace, the international community utilizes several tools, and peace process is one of them. A generic definition of peace processes includes a wide range of activities from a ceasefire achieved by negotiations, signing of peace agreements, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation of former combatants (DDR) to nation-building to name a few. In reality, a peace process can be defined in many ways, so be the definition of the word "peace." The most articulate definition of the peace process which reflects the reality on the ground is "a mixture of politics, diplomacy, changing relationships, negotiation, mediation, and dialogue in both official and unofficial arenas."¹ Peace processes can be categorized into two stages. The first stage is the cessation of conflict, and the second stage is peacebuilding. The first stage can be further grouped into negotiations and cessation of hostilities, while the second is composed of transition and consolidation phases.²[Referred to Chart 1 below]

Chart 1: The Peace Process in Countries with Negotiated Peace Settlement³

Stages	1 Cessation of Conflict		2 Peacebuilding	
Phases	(1)Negotiations	(2)Cessation of Hostilities	(1)Transition	(2)Consolidation
Main Objectives	Agreeing on key issues to enable fighting to cease	Signing of peace agreement Establishing cease-fire Separation of forces	Establishing a legitimate government for effective governance Implementing reforms to build political institutions and establish security Commencing social economic rehabilitation Promoting societal reconciliation	Continuing reform Continuing economic and social recovery Promotion of social reconciliation

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and its Place in Peace Processes

The UN Peacekeeping Operations are also a crucial part of peace processes, which the international community implements through the United Nations capacity. For instance, the UN Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), one of the most attention-grabbing peacekeeping missions today, has suspended its activities due to an increase in fighting and an outbreak of a civil war (at the time of this writing). However, its original mandate, which is to monitor the ceasefire in Syria, is the activity matches the second phase of the first stage: Cessation of Hostilities.⁴

Inaugurating a Peace Process

There are two ways for peace processes to begin. The first way is the facilitation of a peace process by external actors, and for conflict affected countries accepting and working with the external mediations as in the Syrian case (receptive). The second way, particularly exemplified by the Nepali Peace Process, is a more proactive approach that peace processes are initiated by local stakeholders without external assistance. The Nepali peace process

officially began on November 22, 2006, by signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) by Six Party Alliance (major political party alliances in the government) and the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN-M). However, the Nepali case is a rare one as most conflicts end by international interventions and mediations. This is why Nepali people are proud of their peace process as the "home-grown" process.

Challenges of Peace Process

Does a different beginning of a peace process lead to a different outcome: success or failure? Researches on correlations between the beginning and the outcome of peace processes have not been done much and need further study. However, Nepal's peace process shows that it is not how a peace process begins but the process itself, which determines the future of the peace process. The last five years of the grave effort to push the peace process forward has been stalled due to political deadlock, and the Nepali peace process is on the blink of failure. As we can see from Nepali experience, it is the political will which is crucial to implement the process. The difficulty of peace processes can be illustrated by a broken train. It is like fixing a broken train (weak state) while running the track (peace process). The conductor (government or legitimate governing body) of the train needs assistance, hence letting the international community, the UN organisations, donors and experts get on the train to help them fix it. However, it is ultimately the conductor's will to determine the future course and the destination of the train.

The next article "Peace Process 2: Peace Negotiation" (coming on August 31, 2012 in Japanese, English article to follow), will discuss who negotiates what in peace processes.

End Notes

¹ Harold H. Saunders "Prenegotiation and Circum-negotiation: Arenas of the Multilevel Peace Process" *Turbulent Peace*. Washington DC : US Institute of Peace 2001 (pg 483). Saunders, former US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, was deeply involved in Camp David (1978) negotiations as well as Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty (1979). He is currently the president of International Institute for Sustainable Dialogue (IISD). He is a prolific writer with numeral publications. <http://sustaineddialogue.org/>

² Nicole Ball, "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies" in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. *Turbulent Peace*. Washington DC : US Institute of Peace 2001 (pg 721-22). Nicole Ball is a senior fellow at Center for International Policy, Washington DC based research center. She has been researching on a broad range of topics from security to development. To view her official biodata, please visit the URL below. http://www.ciponline.org/about-us/experts-staff/nicole_ball

³ Ibid.

⁴ On UNSMIS mandate, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has submitted a report to the Security Council on 6th of July 2012. In his "Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2043(2012)", he states that " UNSMIS can play a valuable role in supporting political dialogue and local confidence-building, establishing facts on the ground and reporting clearly and objectively to the international community (pg 16)." The current crisis in Syria and the challenges UNSMIS and international community are facing are unfortunately typical example of how waging peace gets caught in political process. UNSMIS related documents: UNSC Resolution 2042(2012)(<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sc10609.doc.htm>)

Annex to SC Resolution 2042(2012) Six-Point Proposal of the Joint Special Envoy of the UN and the League of Arab States(http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/six_point_proposal.pdf)
UNSC Resolution 2043 (2012)(<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sc10618.doc.htm>)