

Analysing Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Societies: Lessons from Rwanda and Bosnia

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Abstract

The problem of the post-conflict peacebuilding has been one of the most complicated issues in international security and development. Although the end of massive violence is a milestone, it is important to note that maintaining peace at the end of violence requires that structural, political and social is addressed at a structural level. This paper is a reflection on the experiences of peacebuilding in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are two post-genocide and post-war societies, which developed as a result of extreme violence in the 1990s under high involvement of the international community. The article relies on a comparative qualitative methodology to examine the aspects of institutional reconstruction, strategy of reconciliation and governance reforms, as well as the participation of international actors in both instances. It claims that although Rwanda can be presented as an example of how effective centralized, state-driven peacebuilding can be, Bosnia can be used to show the shortcomings of externally-imposed, fragmented governance structures. The article indicates the lessons that can be learned by peacebuilding practice that include the issue of local ownership, institutional design that is sensitive to context, and stability, justice, and inclusivity balance. These findings help sustain the discussion on ways in which peacebuilding could advance beyond formal peace treaties to long-term and socially institutionalised peace.

Keywords: peacebuilding, post-conflict societies, Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, reconciliation, governance

1. Introduction

Peacebuilding has become one of the main pillars of the international policy of security and development since the end of the Cold War due to the increased understanding that a cessation of violence is not enough to secure lasting peace (Paris, 2004; United Nations, 1992). The spread of intrastate conflict, ethnic violence, and state collapse in Africa, the Balkans, and some regions of Asia and the Middle East has led international actors to implement more holistic ways of dealing with conflicts. These strategies go beyond the conventional peacekeeping to include institution-

building, reconciliation, governance reform, and socio-economic recovery as part and parcel of post-conflict reconstruction (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, 2011). In this respect, peacebuilding aims at removing the structural and relational origins of conflict with the view of eliminating a recurrence of violence.

In spite of its normative attractiveness and popularity, peacebuilding has had disproportionate and frequently controversial results. Whereas certain post-conflict societies have been fortunate to be relatively stable and recover, others continue to live in the rut of political instability, societal fragmentation, and economic stagnation (Richmond, 2011; Wallensteen, 2015). These conflicting findings have even led to long-standing academic and policy discussions on the effectiveness, legitimacy, and sustainability of current models of peacebuilding. Critics state that externally motivated peacebuilding interventions often bring institutional templates that are ill adapted to the local environment, that institutionalize a preference towards short-term stability over a long-term reconciliation, and undermine domestic political accountability (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Paris & Sisk, 2009). Consequently, it is one of the most urgent challenges of the theory and practice to comprehend why peacebuilding is successful in certain settings and fails in others.

Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina are such exemplary post-conflict scenarios that clearly demonstrate the opportunities as well as the constraints of the modern peacebuilding. Rwanda is a country that came out of the 1994 Tutsi massacre, one of the harshest episodes of mass killings in the contemporary world where over 800,000 individuals were murdered in only a hundred days (Mamdani, 2001). The genocide has disbanded social cohesion, ruined state institutions and caused psychological and moral scarring in Rwandan society. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)-led administration, in its turn, undertook a large-scale peacebuilding initiative, which was about restoring peace, reestablishing state power, fostering national solidarity, and seeking retribution against genocide-related offenses (Straus and Waldorf, 2011).

Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its turn, was a result of a long-term ethno-nationalist conflict between 1992 and 1995 after the disintegration of Yugoslavia. This faced a lot of atrocities, mass displacement, ethnic cleansing and genocide, the most notable one being the 1995 Srebrenica massacre (Bose, 2002). The Dayton Peace Agreement officially put an end to the war but created a highly decentralised and consociational political structure that would equalize the interests of the Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats (Belloni, 2007). The post-conflict direction of Bosnia is

characterized by a wide range of international intervention, both by the long-term control of the Office of the High Representative and by the active participation of the European Union and other international forces.

Despite the fact that the cases of Rwanda and Bosnia were marked with sporadic violence and both countries were under the sustained international scrutiny, there has been a sharp contrast in the course of peacebuilding between the two countries. Rwanda followed the goals of a centralized and state-oriented approach that prioritized political control and quick institutionalization, as well as the powerful message of national solidarity, and restricted political pluralism and opposition (Reyntjens, 2013). In Bosnia, in their turn, they accepted an internationally mediated power-sharing model that fixed ethnic identities in the governmental systems with inclusion and conflict avoidance over state unity and functionality (Chandler, 2000). The differences in these strategies present a great prospect of comparative examination of the influence of different strategies of peacebuilding in determining the post conflict outcomes.

The main question that this article poses is the following: What is learned about the experiences of peacebuilding in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina and its application to post-conflict societies? It makes further the argument that the success of peacebuilding can be influenced less by the mere nature or quantity of international assistance and more by the organization and integration of power relations, institutional structures and reconciliation across particular political and social contexts. Peacebuilding within Rwanda was based on solid domestic ownership and explicit vision of state power, which enabled stability and reconstruction but created issues of inclusivity and political openness in the long-term perspective. Extreme external management and complicated institutional engineering marked peacebuilding in Bosnia; it preserved the possibility of future large-scale violence, but institutionalised political disintegration and stalemate in governance.

This article can be seen as contributing to the larger argument on the subject of peacebuilding by comparing Rwanda and Bosnia to identify the trade-offs involved in various models of post-conflict reconstruction. It shows that state-building based on centralization and externally imposed power-sharing, will not be a universal way to solve post-conflict issues. Rather, sustainable peace is one that relies on situational specific solutions that will strike a balance among stability and legitimacy, justice and reconciliation, and international aid and the ownership that is meaningful locally. By so doing, the article attempts to educate not only the

academic debate but also policy-driven initiatives to enhance the practice of peacebuilding in post-violent society.

2. Theoretical Framework

The proposed study is grounded in two perspectives that are complementary yet analytically separate i.e., the liberal peacebuilding and critical peacebuilding perspectives. Together, these frameworks may provide a subtle prism of the examination of the post-conflict peacebuilding processes by allowing to consider both institutional and lived, social dimensions of peace. These two perspectives combined result in the study transcending an institutional analytic perspective of quantifying the political, social and normative frictions to determine the success of peacebuilding in a post conflict society such as Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Liberal peace building paradigm is a commonplace in the handling of international conflicts in the post-Cold war era. It is grounded on the ideas of liberal internationalism which assumes the possibility of sustainable peace by promoting democratic governments, market reforms of the type, rule of law and human rights (Paris, 2004). It is claimed that the violent conflict in most of the cases is a consequence of the weak or illegitimate state, the lack of economic development and authoritarianism. The peacebuilding interventions are, therefore, meant to re-establish the state institutions, election, opening of the economies and inculcation of international normations in the local politics (Küçük, 2025). International organisations, donor agencies and peacekeeping missions particularly in post-conflict countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina where the peacebuilding informed of constitutional amendments, democratic elections, restructuring of the judiciary and integrating the markets have used it (Paris, 2004; Chandler, 2006).

Liberal peacebuilding is one such field despite its widespread use that has attracted a significant criticism. It is thought by scholars that it may be a technocratic and externally-based methodology which is more preoccupied with copying an institution as opposed to contextual (Richmond, 2011). The liberal peacebuilding considers external-democracy and governance ideas, and in the process, it is able to overlook the local relations of power and historical resentment as well as social inequalities, which are gist of conflict. Such premature election and market reform with the unstable post war environment in other cases has only served to polarise political parties, reinforcement of former elites and disintegration of the social structure (Paris, 2004; Kaya, 2024). Also, the emphasis on stability and order can make it difficult to pursue

meaningful reconciliation and participatory politics particularly in a case where the international actors put their emphasis on security in the short-run, and social change in the long-run.

These criticisms have seen the emergence of critical approaches to peacebuilding that dismiss the assumptions and practitioners of the liberal paradigm of peace. The critical peacebuilding scholars think that the sole method to create peace is not through the use of force using externally developed institutional framework, but through an agency based on the local base which is based on social legitimacy and day-to-day dialogue (Richmond, 2011, Mac Ginty, 2011). Following this perception, the meaning of peace has been seen as a negotiation and a conflict process that is constructed as interaction between the international actors and the local communities. Some of the concepts that focus on the adaptation of the externally-led peacebuilding activities by local actors, their reinterpretation, or resistance is called hybridity, resistance, and everyday peace (Mac Ginty, 2011).

Critical peacebuilding has particular emphasis on local ownership since it is claimed that the long-term peace ought to be constructed on the basis of local actors participation in the construction of the post-conflict governance and reconciliation process. It also assumes the social nature of peace including memory, identity, justice and trauma which are mostly overlooked in institution based approaches. The critical scholars fail to view peacebuilding as a linear process of transforming war into the liberal order but, the process is taking place at different times in a different pace across different social spaces (Richmond, 2011; Reyhan, 2025).

Combining both the liberal and the critical perspectives of peacebuilding, the suggested research will seek a hybrid direction of analysis that will capture the structure and the social facet of the post-conflict period peace building. This hybrid approach will be useful particularly when there is a comparison between Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Rwanda model of peacebuilding is state-centric that would prioritize peace protection, institution creation, and national singleness which is partially congruent with the liberal peacebuilding target but limits political pluralism. Bosnia however is an exemplar of externally-directed peacebuilding with the international actors assuming the forefront in the design and oversight of convoluted power-sharing institutions, which may or may not be in line with the spirit of liberal peacebuilding but which may in general be criticism as the loss of local ownership and political accountability (Chandler, 2006).

The framework allows offering a critical assessment of the tradeoff between stability, justice, and inclusivity of the different peacebuilding models. It can also be used to develop the contradictions existing between externally imposed institutional changes and locally situated practices of reconciling and governance. Lastly, by contextualizing Rwanda and Bosnia within a broader context of liberal and critical peacebuilding, this paper is useful in the formation of a more situational view of the process of massaging peacebuilding, maintaining peace, and contention in the post-conflict societies.

3. Methodology

The article is based on a comparative qualitative case study method, which is especially effective in the analysis of rather complicated post-conflict peacebuilding efforts in various socio-political situations (Yin, 2018; George and Bennett, 2005). Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina were chosen as a deliberate comparative case because of similarities in both the nature of structural characteristics such as having a genocide or mass atrocities in 1990s, extensive international intervention, and ambitious peacebuilding agendas, at the same time experiencing drastically different approaches and results (Paris, 2004; Sriram, 2007). This similarity and variation can be meaningfully compared and drawn to lessons based on the theory.

The research is mainly based on the secondary sources of data, such as peer-reviewed academic literature, policy/evaluation reports issued by international agencies like the United Nations, the European Union and the international financial institutions, and the official governmental reports and the texts of peace agreements. These are the sources that offer empirical insight as well as analytical insights into the institutional design, reconciliation, and governance reforms in the two cases (Autesserre, 2014; Richmond, 2011).

The comparative analysis has been designed in four dimensions of analysis. The first one is institutional reconstruction which is used to determine the extent to which the political and administrative structures that existed following the conflict were rebuilt and how much they fostered stability and functionality. Second, the reconciliation and justice systems are examined, focusing on the transitional justice, the truth-seeking and the efforts to heal the society. Third, governance and political inclusion is checked to learn how the power sharing, participation and representation were handled in post-conflict contexts. Lastly is the participation of international

actors to establish how foreign intervention influenced the patterns of peacebuilding, local ownership, and long-term sustainability.

Instead of trying to find statistical generalisation, the methodological approach is based on analytical generalisation, which allows finding patterns, contrasts, and transferable lessons that can be applied to the theory and practice of peacebuilding (Yin, 2018). Through systematic comparison of Rwanda and Bosnia, the paper can add subtle details on the circumstances in which intervention by the peacebuilding can be more effective in promoting sustainable peace.

4. Analysis of Findings

Peacebuilding in Rwanda

The peacebuilding process in the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda is characterized by a very centralized and state-dominated policy spearheaded by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Following the 1994 genocide, the government was focused on restoring the security and reestablishing the state authority, as well as ensuring that the ethnic violence did not recur. At the heart of this policy lay a calculated redefinition of ethnic identity as one of the major causes of historic conflict and the projection of a national identity of togetherness in the form of *Rwandanness* (*Ndi Umunyarwanda*) to supersede Hutu-Tutsi fault lines (Mamdani, 2001; Reyntjens, 2013).

Rwanda institutional reconstruction was swift and that to a great extent successful in rebuilding state capacity and political order. The government has made significant investments in the reform of the public administration, consolidation of the security sector, and delivery of services, which have allowed restoring the most fundamental functions of the state governance throughout the country (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012). These reforms were also supplemented by bold economic reconstruction policies, which put emphasis on macroeconomic stability, poverty reduction and human development. Consequently, Rwanda experienced significant changes in the areas of economic growth, access to healthcare facilities, education, and infrastructure development, which are commonly referred to as metrics of successful recovery after a conflict (World Bank, 2020; Chemouni, 2018).

As part of the peacebuilding strategy, transitional justice was one of the foundations of Rwanda. Multi-layered justice comprising of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), national courts and community-based gacaca courts, was used to pursue accountability of crimes related to genocide. Specifically, the gacaca system was created to deal with the large volume of cases of genocide as well as promote truth-telling, reconciliation, and social reintegration on the local level (Clark, 2010). Gacaca was also criticised as lacking due process, being too political and not reconciling in an even manner, whereas it was also noted that gacaca helped in speeding up justice and decreasing overcrowding in prisons (Waldorf, 2006).

Although there has been no new large-scale violence, there has been a lot of debate on the peacebuilding model in Rwanda. Political pluralism is still restrained, the opposition parties, independent media, and the civil society work under strict limitations. The opponents believe that the process of reconciliation is highly state-controlled, and there is no opportunity to express opposing accounts or bottom-up involvement (Reyntjens, 2011; Thomson, 2013). In turn, even though Rwanda has become stable and developed, concerns about the sustainability of peace in the political context, where inclusiveness has become a secondary concern, remain.

Peacebuilding Bosnia and Herzegovina

Unlike the centralised model of peacebuilding in Rwanda, the institutional framework of the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1995, which officially ceased the war, but locked the ethnic lines into the institutional framework, has informed peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The arrangement formed a highly decentralised consociational system that consisted of two autonomous units an Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska and several layers of government that would address Bosniak, Serb, and Croat interests (Bieber, 2006; Bose, 2002).

Although the Dayton framework was able to stop a recurrence of widespread violence, it also brought about a broken and dysfunctional system of governance. The growth of multiple institutions and veto points has often culminated in gridlock of policies and lack of capacity to execute and/or implement reforms, which is a deterrence to good service delivery and implementation of reforms (Belloni, 2007). These institutional arrangements have been abused by ethno-nationalist elites to find refuge assisting them in resisting assimilation by reinforcing societal divisions instead of eliminating them (Keil, 2013).

International actors have been the center stage in the post-conflict governance in Bosnia through the Office of the High Representative (OHR). The OHR has enacted laws, ousted elected leaders, and directed institutional changes to maintain stability and sustain the Dayton structure with its vast amounts of the so-called Bonn Powers (Chandler, 2000). Even though this international control contributed to keeping the peace and avoiding the collapse of the institutions, the peacebuilding process also weakened the domestic political accountability and the local ownership (Paris, 2004).

There have also been mixed results in the transitional justice and reconciliation in Bosnia. The International Criminal Tribunal of former Yugoslavia (ICTY) also helped in creating accountability when it was used to prosecute war crimes and created an official judicial document of the atrocities including the genocide at Srebrenica (Subotic, 2009). Nonetheless, these court procedures did not build a common social discourse of the conflict. Opposing ethnic understandings of the past continue to exist, and the process of reconciliation has failed to reach into hard-to-reach communities (Jansen, 2016).

This means that peacebuilding has not been completed in Bosnia. Ethno-nationalist politics still prevail in elections, there are slow reforms in governance and socio-economic development is still at par with that in the region. In addition, the inability of Bosnia to become part of the European Union is indicative of dysfunction in the country as well as the constraints of externally inspired peacebuilding approaches which focus on promoting stability rather than revolutionary political reforms (Zaum, 2007).

Combined, the results show the difference between divergent models of peacebuilding that create different results. Rwanda has shown how effective state power can bring about stability and development and has the threat of taking away political inclusion. Bosnia raises the awareness about the threats of externally imposed disjointed institutional orders that maintain peace without healing divisions. These differing experiences reaffirm the need to have context-sensitive peacebuilding that balances the issues of security, justice, and political participation.

5. Comparative Discussion and Lessons

The comparative case study of Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina highlights three lessons pertaining to peacebuilding in post-conflict societies that are interconnected, namely the centrality of institutional design, the role of local ownership, and the tension between stability

and inclusiveness. Collectively, the lessons confront the universalist peacebuilding templates and strengthen the case that sustainable peace is extremely situational (Paris, 2004; Richmond, 2011).

To begin with, the institutional design is very decisive in influencing the results of the peacebuilding. The post-genocide recovery in Rwanda has been supported by a very centralised state model which facilitated quick decision making, unified policy execution and concentration of power. This centralisation enabled the Rwandan government to restore normalcy quickly, restructure institutions and work towards ambitious development and reconciliation plans without substantive bureaucratic fragmentation (Ansoms, 2011; Reyntjens, 2013). In comparison, the institutional design of Bosnia, as has been embedded in the Dayton Peace Accord, has resulted in a highly fragmented and ethnically divided system of governance. This power-sharing arrangement created ethnic vetoes, and undermined state capacity, and created paralysis in institutionalism (Bieber, 2006; Chandler, 2010). The Bosnian case illustrates how peace arrangements, which give emphasis to elite accommodation at the expense of functional government, may hamper the long-term peacebuilding by institutionalising division instead of going beyond it.

Second, the comparison brings out that local ownership is essential to the legality and sustainability of the peacebuilding processes. The peacebuilding process in Rwanda was majorly locally led, as the post-genocide administration was considerably powerful in controlling the political, judicial and reconciliation activities. Even the flaws of such mechanisms like *gacaca* courts were an attempt to entrench justice and reconciliation in the local social context (Clark, 2010). Such level of domestic ownership would increase the policy coherence and decrease reliance on external actors. Conversely, the peacebuilding process in Bosnia has been massively influenced by the international actors, especially the Office of the High Representative (OHR) that engaged in mass powers to legislate and dissolve the elected authorities. Although this foreign control ensured a certain level of stability in the short run, it also led to a lack of accountability domestically as local elites got used to avoiding responsibility by transferring it to external authority (Knaus & Martin, 2003; Chandler, 2006). The experience of Bosnia explains the constraints of peacebuilding as imposed by outsiders and it lends weight to the arguments against liberal peace interventions, which place greater emphasis on international control over local agency (Richmond, 2011).

Third, the cases demonstrate the opposition between stability and inclusivity, a dilemma that constantly arises when it comes to post-conflict governance. The leadership of Rwanda was more interested in stability, national cohesion, and security at the costs of political pluralism and civil rights. The state also did this by limiting ethnic discourse and the opposition politics through which genocide had re-emerged (Straus and Waldorf, 2011). Although the strategy has been effective to avert what would otherwise be a large-scale violence, critics claim that this strategy is likely to bring about brittle peace since dissent is suppressed instead of being resolved through inclusive political discourse (Reyntjens, 2013). Bosnia on the other hand emphasized a lot on inclusivity by the representation of the ethnic groups and the sharing of power. Nevertheless, the model institutionalised ethnic identities as the main source of political participation to the exclusion of the civic alternatives, and the detriment of good governance (Bieber, 2010). The Bosnian example shows how inclusivity as a concept which is narrowly defined in terms of ethnicity could actually undermine democratic accountability and social cohesion.

Collectively, these lessons imply that peacebuilding does not have a universal model. Any effort to make Rwanda centralised into more pluralistic societies can threaten to do what Bosnia did, which is to consolidate authoritarianism whereas exporting Bosnia-style consociation models into other settings dangerously solidifies identity-driven politics and institutional dysfunctions. Peacebuilding should be context sensitive and should also be based on the knowledge of the past experiences in terms of historical legacies, power and societal norms (Mac Ginty, 2011). This is consistent with the emerging research on the concept of hybrid peace, which is based on the interplay of local activities and international standards as opposed to wholesale importation of foreign models (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013).

Additionally, the comparison highlights the significance of sequencing and flexibility in the process of peacebuilding. The focus of Rwanda on security and state building in the immediate post-conflict period is the opposite of what was going on in Bosnia in the same period, where democratisation, reconciliation and decentralisation were the key focus areas supervised by the international community. Unlike either of the approaches, the cases indicate that the peacebuilding policies should be flexible and responsive to the changing circumstances instead of strictly following the pre-determined liberal models (Paris & Sisk, 2009).

Altogether, the case studies of Rwanda and Bosnia support the idea that peacebuilding structures must find a balance between institutional efficiency and political inclusion, focus on authentic

local ownership, and be context-specific. These lessons are still very pertinent in a modern world that is characterized by post-conflict societies that are still grappling with violence, displacement and weak forms of governance and as a result scholars, practitioners and policy makers strive to go beyond the fragile peace towards a stability that is socially embedded and sustainable.

6. Conclusion

The process of peacebuilding in post-conflict societies is neither linear, technocratic, but a long, contested and highly-political process that is predisposed by legacies of historical events, relations of power and societal divisions (Paris, 2004; Richmond, 2011). The relative experience of Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina highlights how the international aid may be essential in ceasing violence and facilitating the reintegration, but the long term peace will be sustainable but dependent on the level of integration of institutions, reconciliation and governance systems in the local political and social settings (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004).

The post-genocide development process in Rwanda demonstrates the usefulness of a centralized and state-driven model in restoring security, rebuilding institutions, and avoiding relapsing into mass violence. High political power, fast institutional entrenchment, and reconciliation schemes led by the nation were some of the factors that led to stability and socio-economic reintegration (Reyntjens, 2013; Straus, 2015). Nonetheless, the Rwandan situation also shows the dangers of stability over political pluralism due to the limitation of the civic space and regulated discourses of reconciliation that can weaken long-term legitimacy and social trust (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012).

Bosnia and Herzegovina, by contrast, is a good example of the shortcomings of externally determined peacebuilding models, which institutionalize ethnic divisions. The Dayton Peace Agreement has been successful in stopping the war, but it created a disjointed system of governance that has limited successful forms of state-building and supported ethno-nationalist politics (Bieber, 2006; Chandler, 2000). Such strong international control contributed to the stability but undermined the local ownership and accountability, making it difficult to find ways of reconciliation and democratic consolidation (Belloni, 2007).

Collectively, these examples prove that peacebuilding cannot have a general model. An effective post-conflict policies need to strike a balance between stability and inclusion, outside actions and the inner ownership, and between the short-term stability and the social change in the long term.

The greatest consequence of this finding to policymakers and practitioners is that they should stop sticking to strict institutional models and instead adopt flexible and situational models that can adapt to the needs of the society. It is only under such adaptive and locally based strategies that the post-conflict societies can be brought out of fragile peace into the realm of durable and legitimacy of the stability.

7. Recommendations

This study suggests the following recommendations to make peacebuilding interventions more effective, legitimate and sustainable in post-conflict societies basing on the comparative analysis of a peacebuilding experience in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To begin with, peacebuilding plans are supposed to be context-sensitive and nation-based. The international actors should not impose their templates of institutional arrangements and instead should assist local governance arrangements that are based on the local histories, social setups, and conflict conditions. Practically, this means that there should be prolonged contact with the local societies, civil societies, traditional leaders, and groups of victims to make sure that peacebuilding activities become socially rooted and well acceptable.

Second, the stability and the political inclusion and accountability have to be balanced. Although the robust power of the state might be required during the short-term aftermath of the conflicts, the establishment of the long-term peace is reliant on the involvement of all individuals in politics, the realization of civil freedoms, and the establishment of believable dissident mechanisms. The governments in the post-conflict environments must gradually increase the political space, and the international partners must be synchronized with the reforms that reinforce democratic accountability without undermining fragile peace.

Third, the peacebuilding interventions should be more concerned with institutional coherence and functionality. Excessively complicated or disintegrated government structures such as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina threaten to cement the separation and frustrate good decision-making. The constitutional and administrative reforms must focus on decreasing duplication, clear mandates and enhance coordination at different levels of government to enhance better service delivery to the population and boost public confidence.

Fourth, reconciliation and transitional justice processes should extend beyond legal responsibility in order to combat psychosocial healing and intergroup trust. More formal methods that

incorporate local reconciliation efforts that are grounded in communities should be encouraged so long as they respect international notions of human rights and can enable meaningful participation.

Lastly, the international players ought to embrace long-term flexible engagement modalities. The process of peacebuilding is not linear and brief funding cycles or untimely withdrawal can undo gains made in hard work. It is necessary to sustain investment in education, inclusion of youths and provision of economic opportunities to counteract the structural causes of conflict and to avoid a resumption of violence.

Combined, all these recommendations support the role of adaptive, inclusive, and locally grounded peacebuilding strategies in the realization of lasting peace in post-conflict societies.

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