



The War on Terror and the Onslaught on Development

Kasturi Sen, October 2007

This briefing paper outlines some results of the activities of INTRAC, the International NGO Research and Training Centre, over the past year through workshops and research into counter-terrorism and its implications for development NGOs and civil society. The three main areas of focus have been to assess the implications of anti terror legislation on the function of NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs) by region, both in terms of actual and perceived effects of the 'war on terror' (WoT); to understand the implications of counter-terrorism for official development assistance (ODA) and, finally, to try and set the empirical evidence in some form of conceptual framework for understanding trends and assessing their policy implications.

The issue of terrorism continues to dominate discussion in the print media, the internet and in a growing and voluminous literature that has been generated as a result of attacks against targets in the global North and South¹ and events in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Here, at the front line of the WoT, violence, insurgency and counter-insurgency are daily occurrences for defenseless civilians.

A common governmental and multi-lateral response has been the creation and enforcement of various counter-terrorism measures, laws and practices (CTMs) intended, in theory, to reduce the risk of terrorism. In practice, however, since the beginning of the WoT, there has been heightened tension and an escalation of violence throughout the world. Millions of people have been uprooted and civil society in most countries faces major threats to having a voice at all.

NGOs have increasingly found themselves at centre stage with accusations of being at risk of becoming potential conduits to terrorism, charges regarded as proven unless they demonstrably comply with a growing and complex body of rules and regulations. These rules and measures have grown in tandem with a rapidly expanding security industry – including private military corporations (PMCs)² – that is global and increasingly sophisticated.

Making an Industry out of Terrorism

The securitisation of society has in our view also become a free-for-all for the private sector, with ever-increasing new systems of

¹ This includes both attacks in New York, London and Madrid and those in Southern countries including Kenya, Tanzania, Indonesia and India which have been equally devastating, but the human cost of which is often overlooked in the Northern-focused discourse on terrorism.

² PMCs have thrived under the Bush Administration. Among their many roles are supplying bodyguards for the Afghan president, building detention camps at Guantanamo, protecting US personnel in Iraq and training military forces for the US government in third countries. The fact that PMCs are not bound by international law is highly problematic.

surveillance being developed and marketed by countries such as Israel, the UK and the US, who view themselves as lead nations in the war against terror. These technologies are intended to monitor the activities of potential terrorists and to protect innocent citizens from terrorist threats.

The new technologies are supported and boosted by a burgeoning academic industry keen to support surveillance with applied research in the field of defense and security.³ Such activity is most apparent in the United States, but also in the UK as numerous seminars and conferences discuss methods of managing risk and the terrorist threat. This ever-tightening relationship between academia and defense – as researchers help governments, foreign and home ministries and defense departments to scrutinise every potential risk from would-be terrorists – is insufficiently documented, as with many other aspects of security and surveillance.

In principle there is nothing wrong with such collaboration, but the scope, extent and lack of transparency of this work is questionable. There appear to be increasingly large amounts of funds allocated to such research – often without any concrete benefits – at a growing number of research institutes devoted to examining the threat of biological terrorism, suicide bombings or the psychology of disaffected minority cultures and their would-be terrorist proclivities.⁴ Regardless of the actual extent of random terrorist violence, never has assessment of this risk been such profitable business for entrepreneurs in academia, defense and security-related private sector industries.

Two main issues may be raised. Firstly, the opportunity cost of this type of investment needs to be questioned. How does this affect public expenditure on development aid? It is by now also manifestly clear that the overall WoT has been unable to reduce

the threat of terrorism, certainly in the front line states – Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The price paid by neighbouring states is also high in terms of the insecurity and risks generated by participation in the WoT.⁵ Secondly, under such pressure there is a risk of that independent opinion may be falling by the wayside, as more and more individuals and organisations receive funding to monitor and map terrorism. While NGOs and civil society groups are often bypassed in closed-door discussions, they experience the harsh fruits of surveillance in the field with ever increasing frequency.

Efforts to bring some of the effect of anti-terror policies and policies of surveillance into the public domain are bearing fruit. Through the internet and lobby groups, civil society organisations and human rights lawyers are challenging detentions without trial, confessions based on torture, disappearances and unlawful killings and loss of the rights to assemble and dissent from government policies.⁶ This is also evidenced by the findings from several regional workshops held by INTRAC in 2006-2007.

In terms of the effects on development aid, the Philippines-based organisation the Reality of Aid⁷ cogently argue in their 2006 report that the greatest price of the global war on terror is being paid for by the poor as official development assistance (ODA) is increasingly linked to security and geopolitical interests. Their claim, which is supported by trends in ODA expenditure, is that security-led policy-making is having negative consequences for the *human security* of poor people whose developmental needs are being ignored. ROA notes that the WoT has generated pressures “to make national security the key foreign policy objective in most donor countries, subordinating development policy and peace operations to these national interests”. Most major donors have explicitly stated that development policy should be closely

3 An example is provided by the Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (www.ssrnetwork.net). Based at the UK's University of Birmingham, GFN-SSR is a public-private partnership which includes DfID, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and a range of US and European organisations concerned with SSR.

4 Samad Y. and Sen, K. (2007) *Islam in the European Union: Transnationalism, Youth, and the War on Terror*, Oxford University Press. www.euro-islam.info/spip/IMG/_article_PDF/article_303.pdf

5 Highlighted in particular by INTRAC partners in the Central Asia workshop convened by the International Centre InterBilim, Kyrgyzstan 2006.

6 These include the International Commission of Jurists, the Asian Commission for Human Rights, the South Asia Forum for Human Rights and Amnesty International.

7 www.realityofaid.org



Security-led policy-making is having negative consequences for the human security of poor people whose developmental needs are being ignored.

aligned with foreign policy in order to overcome perceived threats to national security". As an example, the EU's revised Cotonou Agreement has declared counter-terrorism as an essential condition for EU aid.

In an earlier study of ODA, Cosgrave (2004) shows that up to one third of the increase in ODA since 2001 has been diverted to the front line states in the WoT as 'peace keeping operations' or as 'humanitarian aid', possibly at the expense of real aid to deal with poverty and need arising out of inequality and mal-development."⁸

This increasingly common approach among major donors has caused serious concern among NGOs monitoring the work of multilateral organisations such as the EU. European spending on security, euphemistically often termed 'peace-keeping', is outpacing that earmarked for poverty alleviation, well-being and development. The European Security Strategy (ESS),⁹ a document adopted by the European Council in December 2003, reinforces this growing schism about the meaning of 'security'. The ESS argues that a precondition for development aid is the ability to deal with 'new security' threats.

The definition of security is not universally shared. Most donor states increasingly focus on 'military security' whilst civil society groups, notably in the South, view security in quite a different light. INTRAC's partners in workshops convened across the globe have argued that the 'new security threat' is in fact the 'appropriation of development' for a rich transnational elite at the expense of the majority of the world's population. They suggest that the real meaning of security should relate to challenging poverty and inequality.

The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development¹⁰ (DAC) has been debating the issue of the boundaries between security and development-oriented aid even though its mandate is to keep clear of military- and defense-related issues. There is pressure, however, on the DAC from member countries to change its rules so that spending on peacekeeping and 'peace enforcement' is included as a sub-category of aid. This would allow the DAC to show this area of spending as part of its contribution to development at a time when Reality of Aid (together with other civil society groups monitoring aid levels) show falling trends in ODA in real terms.

There is also concern in the development community that the WoT has affected the allocation of aid to development projects

in middle-income countries: especially in Latin America, India and other South Asian states where neo-liberal creation policies and the creation of new wealth is premised on increasing absolute poverty among large sections of the population, but without recognition of the implications of the widening gaps these policies have created.

Security and Civil Society

Integral to the discourse on terror and its numerous manifestations has been the enactment of legislation and codes of conduct at national and regional levels. Ideas and information have been shared through international collaboration between governments, most notably that of the US, which plays a lead role in the global WoT. The focus of much of the legislation often appears to go beyond legitimate needs to ensure NGOs are transparent and accountable. In many cases laws verge towards the criminalisation of communities. This is at odds with the previous acknowledgment among major donors that vibrant civil society is a prerequisite to democracy. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the same governments, for example, had lauded the role of civil society in fostering pro-democracy movements. Today, however, the focus is on control and monitoring and the apparently pressing need for enormous scrutiny of organisations, peoples and borders.

An example is provided by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)¹¹, an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to trace potential money laundering activities. FATF has in recent years focused much of its energies on inspecting the financial transactions of NGOs. The role of FATF should, in theory, be to control transactions that are criminal in nature, but the reality is that some countries have used FATF affiliation to justify blanket bans on NGOs and CSOs receiving overseas funds without prior scrutiny of money laundering or other such criminal activity. This has led to arbitrary freezing of the assets of many NGOs without the agencies being given access to the evidence against them or opportunities to demand due legal process. Examples are provided by the Somali Development Bank and countless other Muslim charities in the US whose funds have been arbitrarily blocked in this manner since 2001. Such high-handed action has serious implications for humanitarian work, particularly for vulnerable conflict-affected populations in places such as Iraq and Palestine.¹² In countries of the South individuals involved in the defense of citizen's rights have been stigmatised and hounded. In some cases the new security measures have been used against civilians, leading to the detention, disappearance and deaths of social activists who defend the rights of the poor to land and livelihoods. Since 2001, for example, hundreds have disappeared

8 Cosgrave, J, (2004) *Impact of the War on Terror on Aid Flows*, ActionAid www.actionaid.org/docs/terror_aid.pdf

9 www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=266&lang=EN&mode=g

10 www.oecd.org/dac

11 www.fatf-gafi.org

12 See Ontrac33 www.intrac.org/docs.php/2554/Ontrac33.pdf

in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan alone. Amnesty reports similar cases of disappearances in other countries as far apart as Egypt and Indonesia and more recently in the Philippines. Information on how disappearances create terror and silence dissent has only become public knowledge through systematic documentation by human rights groups. Most of the governments involved in terrorising their populations remain closely allied to the major Western powers, both economically and as supporters of the WoT.

There has been a dramatic increase in shared intelligence gathering and security activities between countries. The UN's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC)¹³ has worked with the US to promote the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Despite increasing efforts by the UN to work with civil society as part of the current humanitarian reform process, the CTC excludes civil society. The umbrella agencies representing civil society in the world's major humanitarian and development forum, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) are not invited to annual CTC meetings. The US set up the Agency to Monitor Terrorist Financing after 9/11, which seeks to prevent money laundering by charities.¹⁴ The European Code of Conduct (2005-6) for Charities¹⁵ tries to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate charitable activity. There are matching agreements on cross-border sharing of information on immigration and emigration within Europe, between Europe and the US (air passenger details), monitoring financial transfers between banks, and sharing of information between estate agents and Homeland security departments. These support a growing industry of intelligence gathering about individuals and organisations. There is growing concern about these developments especially among humanitarian relief organisations who argue that the UK Homeland Security Department (a term copied from the US) is overly influenced by the views of security agencies.

In the UK (chair of FATF in 2007) the government has, like several other states, recently enlisted the country's charity regulator, the UK Charities Commission¹⁶, to work closely with the Department of Homeland Security, and help monitor potential terrorist threats through charitable organisations. Civil society groups have argued that such close association of a regulator with the state undermines the established purpose of the commission to provide independent guidance to charities to

comply with legislation. It also contradicts the spirit of endeavours such as the Montreux Initiative.¹⁷ In the UK the British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND) network has argued that regulator roles should not be closely associated with government or the sector it is supposed to regulate. In August 2007 BOND commented on the UK Home Office Review of Measures to Safeguard and Protect Charities from Terrorist Abuse by arguing that charities should not be singled out by their religious or cultural identity. It also warned that current UK anti-terrorism legislation risks damaging the thriving and dynamic voluntary sector in the UK with a rich tradition of development work¹⁸. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations, (NCVO), the main umbrella body for UK NGOs, supported this reservation.¹⁹ BOND has also requested clarification from the UK government that 'lists' proscribed in the US cannot automatically be enforced in the UK, especially where no evidence has been made public.

In the US a series of Directives and Acts since 2001 make clear the duty on NGOs to report regularly to the State Department on their activities and field operations. The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (the PATRIOT Act)²⁰ is a substantive piece of anti-terrorism legislation focusing on the control of people, borders and CSOs. It obliges NGOs to obtain legal certification from their grantees in order to provide assurance of that those in receipt of US funds are not providing material support to terrorists or terrorist organisations. The problematic, and often ideologically motivated, definitions of what makes an organisation credible or not, has led scores of NGOs, especially those working in the humanitarian field in conflict zones, to lose funding and close down.

NGOs in the US have complained that their 'voluntary' compliance with US codes is a misnomer as new measures are introduced without discussion and are thus not voluntary at all. Meanwhile CS groups in Canada argue that anti-terror legislation was created under pressure from the passing of similar legislation in the US and UK – the PATRIOT Act and the UK's Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act (ATSA, 2001).²¹ Canadian civil liberty groups argue that their anti-terror legislation contravenes Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that the WoT has no 'sunset clause', which means that the anti-terrorism agenda could modify the Canadian justice and

13 www.un.org/sc/ctc

14 <http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/archive/2004/jan/07.219982.html>

15 http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/code_conduct_npo/draft_recommendations_en.pdf

16 www.charity-commission.gov.uk

17 The Montreux Initiative was set up in January 2005 by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to enable Muslim NGOs to comply with CTM legislation. www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/topics/peasec/peac/confre/conrel.html

18 BOND (2007) *Submission to the Review of Safeguards to Protect the Charitable Sector from Terrorist Abuse* www.bond.org.uk/pubs/consult/terrorismreviewsb.pdf

19 www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy/index.asp?id=5976

20 www.lifeandliberty.gov/index.html

21 www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010024.htm

There is no adequate definition of terror, allowing states to define their opponents, including community-based groups, as terrorist supporters.



judicial system irreversibly and forever change the relationship between the state and its citizens. Canadian CSOs also argue that it is clear that anti-terror legislation is having a devastating impact on civil society as a whole, especially for immigrant and refugee communities, leading to the dislocation of families and often also to the abandonment of children.

Throughout the world the WoT has made a severe dent in community and social solidarity. These and other long-term implications for development effects seem to be of little interest to donors in comparison with the amount of research being funded to examine and contain terrorism. It is particularly pertinent that the climate of fear and mistrust that is being generated at the level of the community (spying upon and policing one's neighbours and local civil society) is likely to have negative implications for state-civil society relations as well as on relations between communities, stirring up communal tensions. All combined, this is likely to have serious consequences for democratic institutions throughout the world.

ODA, the WoT and Civil Society

There is growing and widespread recognition that governments are tying their foreign policy interests with those of national geopolitical security and that this is now factoring into their ODA. In Denmark for example, the government has taken a strong position aligning security interests with its foreign policy as being of primary significance.²² By 2003 some 18 Western countries had made similar statements prioritising security in their foreign policy.²³

The extent to which development aid is now tied to the security interests of Northern donors is a growing and legitimate concern for NGOs and CSOs and among development practitioners and researchers, particularly in the light of the absence of any clear definition of what could constitute 'terrorist' activity. The lack of an adequate definition of terrorism has led many states to define their opponents as 'terrorists' and to use to their advantage the broadest definition by which advocacy and community-based groups may be construed as terrorist supporters.

CSOs have been forced to react to the complex and mounting legislation to supposedly detect and contain the threat of terrorism. There has been serious concern and outrage from lawyers and citizens groups at the concerted attack on basic human rights and undermining of international human rights law. In many cases laws hastily passed as emergency measures do not adhere to internationally negotiated agreements on human rights and the rights of citizens. Much recent legislation risks the abandonment of national commitments to international human rights laws. As a result of the WoT, for example, both the European Convention on Human Rights (1950) and the Geneva Convention of Human Rights (1948) have been bypassed by extraordinary measures and special powers passed by many Northern and Southern governments. In the name of national security this could in the long run have negative effects on international laws intended to support world peace. Hence 'secret evidence', 'secret trials', 'extraordinary rendition', 'enemy combatants' and 'indefinite detention' are part of the new terminology associated with the inexorable rise of the security paradigm.

These trends not only target individuals, but place agencies at risk of seizure of funds and forcible closure. Muslim charities are disproportionately affected, often with little presentation of evidence. NGOs and CSOs are reported to have been closed down in the US, Russia, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Belarus and Kazakhstan with little or no regard to due process. It is clear that NGOs working with local communities, wherever they are in the world, today face the risk of unintentionally violating ambiguously and poorly defined legislation intended to benefit the state rather than civil society.

Despite ongoing and unknown risks involved in development and humanitarian work many NGOs are seeking ways and means to comply with anti-terror legislation, while simultaneously continuing their work in development. Analysis of threat risks and methods of compliance are being discussed at numerous civil society forums including most recently at the meeting of CIVICUS. There a formal mechanism was

22 Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Principles Governing Danish Development Assistance for the Fight against the New Terrorism*, www.um.dk/en/menu/DevelopmentPolicy/DanishDevelopmentPolicy/FightagainsttheNewTerrorism/

23 Reality of Aid (2006)

established for monitoring closures and other actions against CSOs.²⁴

Although there is great awareness and concern among CSOs about the risks, resulting in debates and exchanges on the issue, the possibility of unintentional violation of anti-terror legislation remains as a real and ongoing threat with little recourse to justice. The outcome of a violation, whether in the South or North, would include civil and criminal penalty, as well as the loss of charitable status. A recent report from NCVO suggests that not only in the UK but throughout the world Muslim charities are at greatest risk of being arbitrarily labeled as supporting terrorism, and that this labeling can often be arbitrary and disproportionate.²⁵ Governments of many countries are now monitoring the activities of NGOs as well as creating codes of conduct – such as the European Commission Directives, December 2005 – often with little public debate or discussion. This is failure of transparent governance, justified on grounds of national security. Legal opinion is alarmed by the plethora of new legislation that has been created to fight terrorism throughout the world. The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)²⁶ is among the legal bodies arguing that many of the new laws are unnecessary; in most nations prosecution of violent action could be dealt with through existing criminal laws. The ICJ's Eminent Jurists Panel has observed that “responses to terrorism can be, and indeed are most effective if they comply with international human rights standards. A lesson to be learnt from South Asia is that excessive counter-terrorism laws and practices often prove counter-productive. Abuses lead to serious grievances and discontent and the alienation of communities, instead of isolating terrorist suspects, and thereby risk exacerbating rather than reducing tensions and violence.”

In this complex legal-security environment INTRAC embarked on a series of workshops in several regions of the world, to listen to how the WoT is affecting the development work of NGOs, CSOs and researchers. A common concern expressed by participants is the way the WoT is being used to justify repression and loss of civil liberties and how this impedes the work of those seeking to advocate on behalf of and empower marginalised groups. A related overriding concern expressed in all workshops was the impact of maldevelopment – the opening of national borders for privatisation and multinational investment while subjecting civil society to ever greater scrutiny.

Participants argue that even in economic terms the wars currently being fought in the name of the WoT are expropriating from the

public purse funds that are meant to support reductions in poverty. For example, while aid levels increased by \$27 billion between 2000 and 2004²⁷ very little of this appears to be going either towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or to dealing with issues of inequality and poverty reduction. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan for example, consumed some 40 percent of the additional increase in ODA between 2000 and 2004.²⁸

Development Aid – Reclaiming the Right

To some of the workshop participants it was increasingly evident that the past five years have witnessed a shift in ODA from prioritising achieving the MDGs towards increasing emphasis on security-led policy measures. The MDGs, the culmination of discussion among major donors during the 1990s, were premised on a common understanding of the best way to achieve a holistic approach to development by dealing with poverty and inequality across age, gender and class. The MDGs were placed under the aegis of a human rights framework. However, to many observers this approach appears to have shifted dramatically in the aftermath of the attacks on the US in 2001.

As a result of these changes in the way ODA is thought of and used, CSOs and NGOs have seen the need for research and information into the direct and indirect implications and effects of counter-terror laws and measures upon their capacity to undertake a civil-rights based approach to development. Many current policies focused on ‘security measures’ are being implemented not only in the name of ‘development for security’, but also without much public awareness or debate. They are also couched in ambiguous terms and could be read in different ways. For example, the idea of security in the field of development has generally meant having security in relation to basic needs: for food, clothing, shelter, livelihoods and security against hunger. In many countries of the South these continue to be absent, whilst implementation of the MDGs is faltering.

This is also compounded by the reality of random violence against civilians that has occurred with regular frequency throughout the world. Beall has chronicled both the rising tide of security-led measures to protect the hegemony of the North over Southern civil society and the growing violence against civilians, especially in urban areas where disparities between rich and poor are most visible.²⁹ It is increasingly difficult for non-governmental development actors, or anyone else engaged in

24 www.civicus.org

25 Brown, M. (2007). *Defending Civil Society*, NCVO, London www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/vsmagazine/features/?id=5026&terms=defending%20civil%20society 2007 & also Quigley, N. and Patten, B. (2007) OMB Watch Report www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/2887/1/49?TopicID=2

26 www.icj.org

27 Human Development Report 2005: <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2005>

28 Reality of Aid (2006)

29 Beall, J. (2007) *Cities, Terrorism and Urban Wars of the 21st Century Crisis States Research Centre*, LSE Working Paper no. 9 www.crisisstates.com/download/wp/wpSeries2/wp9.2.pdf

challenging neo-liberal development policies that exclude and marginalise the poor, to avoid being stigmatised, harassed, arrested or seeing forcible closure of their agencies.

One significant effect of the WoT has been to allow democratically elected governments to act with impunity. There is growing evidence in many countries of state complicity in violence and a systematic failure to protect citizens, especially minorities, the poor and marginalised communities. The 2006 Asian Human Rights Commission report provides grim evidence of the substitution of *military* security for that of security based on human development and fulfilment of need. The defence and 'military' view of security has led to widespread abuses of human rights, comprehensively documented by AHRC. They note widespread popular discontent at the authoritarianism, rampant corruption and inability to deliver services and protect rights which characterises both democratically elected governments and military regimes.

In similar vein, INTRAC's regional workshops suggest increased anger among NGOs and CSOs about misuse of executive powers and the climate created by the WoT. Across the globe civil society actors are arguing that not only are basic freedoms being restricted, but that organisations attempting to defend the rights of those facing oppression, occupation or state violence are being stigmatised or excluded through emergency legislation that criminalises their activities. Many participants discussed 'state' violence, which many labelled as 'terrorism' from the state. They are interested in improving understanding the WoT's impact on aid disbursement mechanisms and policies since they have far-reaching consequences for the functioning of development, NGOs and other civil society actors, severely affecting their ability to promote an agenda where the rights of the poor are integral to development interventions.

Moreover, terms such as 'human security' and 'fragile states' have taken on meanings which deliberately invert their original senses. 'Fragility' as with the term *social capital* has become neutralised and taken out of its social context. Fragility is not an abstract condition that rests in a vacuum and should not be used as part of geo-political strategies for political and economic subordination. In the Lebanon, for example, current US-led Western foreign policy is using the notion of fragility and the WoT to incite and rekindle ethnic division that could easily spill over into civil war. Similarly in Gaza a democratically elected government has faced a prolonged donor boycott for its resistance against occupation. The result is an economic siege of historic proportions, with a high price being paid by civilians.

David Keen, a complex emergencies specialist, suggests that it is impossible to understand the current discourse on terrorism or

related concepts such as 'fragile' states without a sense of history and analysis of the role of military interventions over a long period of time. It is particularly important to appreciate the impact of the West's prolonged and largely unconditional support for the state of Israel. "As a result of this primary injustice", he argues, many of the victims of violence of the WoT are "innocent victims, shot in the name of someone else's justice".³⁰

One view from INTRAC's workshops is that the notion of 'fragility' needs to be viewed instead as the direct result of power struggles within and between nations, that can and often does create a 'dominant' power that usurps the rights of the poor, who are a majority of the population in the front-line fragile states.

The past two decades have seen the emergence of neo-liberal economic policies (the 'Washington Consensus') that have rolled back the frontiers of the state, promoted privatisation of education, utilities and basic services and created misery and dispossession. The fruits of neo-liberal growth have remained concentrated in the hands of the few. Today more than one billion people live on less than \$1 per day and more than half of the population of any developing country on less than \$2. This contributes to the grossly unequal distribution of wealth if counted in terms of income alone. Some 40 percent of the world's population struggle to share five percent of global wealth, while the richest ten percent enjoy some 54 percent.³¹

Among the many manifestations of contemporary violence against civilians are state-led violence against indigenous communities in the Peruvian and Colombian Amazon and against subsistence peasants in West Bengal. This tide of violence against civilians, directly and indirectly affected by conflict situations, is of growing concern to those many development NGOs and CSOs who, despite current trends towards dependence, have managed to retain their distance from policies that deny the basic rights of the poor.

The overriding contemporary concern with Northern security has often removed from scrutiny what is being perpetrated on the ground in the name of security. There are those who argue that the WoT acts as a cover for ethnic cleansing in the Middle East and for jobless growth and rampant corruption in South Asia and parts of Africa. NGOs from INTRAC's South Asia workshop claimed, for example, that while monitoring and restrictions were being placed upon civil society activity, the doors were being opened wide for foreign direct investment (FDI). In nearly all of the countries represented at the INTRAC events laws to protect labour rights and the rights of people to their land and to livelihoods are being dismantled. Those who resist laws and policies contributing to maldevelopment – and the NGOs which support them – are being labelled as opponents of the national interest and threats to security.

30 Keen D (2006) "War without end: magic, propaganda and the hidden functions of counter-terror", Reality of Aid (2006).

31 Reality of Aid (2006).

The coming few years will be challenging for civil society, and especially for organisations engaged in advocacy and empowerment which involve challenging governments to ensure the rights of citizens and entitlements to peace, security and stability through a greater share of the fruits of development. Growth without distribution – and its concomitant, jobless growth – has always been a thorn in the side of development policy, but never more so than now, as the aid effectiveness agenda merges with security-led development policies in many regions of the world to create polarisation and chaos.

Meanwhile the WoT and its allied industries continue unabated, in theory to contain actual violence but in effect to also control dissent from current development policies. This is compounded by the reality of random violence against innocent civilians from insurgents. This paradox places CSOs and NGOs as well as social movements of all forms at the front line and threatens the very survival of a vibrant community of non- governmental action.

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About INTRAC

INTRAC, the International NGO Training and Research Centre, publishes briefing papers on policy developments that affect the work of civil society organisations worldwide. The current briefing papers, funded by Swedish development agency Sida, deal with two main topics from a civil society perspective: the securitisation of development and the ‘War on Terror’, and the Paris Declaration and aid effectiveness agenda.

Over 2006/07, INTRAC ran a series of workshops on the role of counter-terrorism measures in international development. These were held in Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe, South Asia, North America, and among the Somali diaspora in Europe. Many of the issues we discuss in these briefing papers were first raised by our workshop partners and participants.

Briefing papers 1-9 can be accessed for free online at: www.intrac.org/pages/policy_briefing_papers.html

INTRAC’s research on national security and development: www.intrac.org/pages/ctm_workshops.html

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