



The G20 at the Leader's Level

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SWP

Tom Body, L20 Communiqué on Failing States

L20 Project Meeting Briefing Note

We, the leaders of key industrial and developing nations recognize that failing states pose a serious threat to international stability and security. Failing states cannot provide their citizens with basic and fundamental services, such as education and health, and lack the institutions that respond to the demands of their population. The resulting internal conflict, diseases and economic collapse pose a threat not only to neighbouring states but to the international community at large. A country without peace and security is doomed to a marginal existence since neither its citizens nor other nations will risk investing in its development. Illicit transnational organizations (terrorists, criminals) also find a safe haven in failing states and from there engage in activities, which pose a threat to international stability.

We are determined to face this threat with a creative and effective response, which is comprehensive, complementary and holistic. We are further united in our commitment to invest in preventative measures in respect to states at risk of failing.

A Common Definition

A state can be considered to be a failing state when it is not able to:

- Control its territory and ensure that its citizens are protected from outside forces;
- Maintain the rule of law and guarantee that the rights of its population are respected;
- Support good governance and meet its citizens' basic needs, such as economic security and growth, education and health.

Indicators that states are failing are ethnic or religious conflict, insurgencies, corruption within government institutions. Economic indicators, such as per capita GDP, literacy and life expectancy; social inequality, a high birthrate and a high rate of HIV/AIDS infections are also indicators that a state is failing.

Strategic Support, Targeting Actual Need

The United Nations and other international agencies and national governments are trying to develop a coherent international response to failing states. However, we believe that a systematic and comprehensive international engagement is needed to maximize and leverage international efforts and resources. State failure cannot be managed on an ad hoc basis. Support cannot be provided based on the self-interest of the donors. A response to failing states must be coherent, holistic and complementary. It must address the particular needs of the failing state. Support to a failing state can consist of development assistance, humanitarian assistance, good governance, institution building, etc. There is no "one size fits all" approach. The sequencing and the nature of the supportive actions must be determined by the need.

Investing in Prevention

We are convinced that an international response to failing states must incorporate a preventative strategy, consisting of an early warning system, indicating that a state is at risk, and the ability to respond before a crisis breaks out. Preventative measures will include, but not be limited to promotion of opportunities for economic growth and poverty reduction; supporting and establishing legitimate and transparent government institutions, including law enforcement and military.

We are cognizant of the fact that it is easier to gain public and political support for assisting a failing state than for helping those, which are at risk of failing. The pictures of genocide victims and refugees provide a strong argument in support of assistance. We are united in our commitment to prevent states from failing and will direct our foreign Ministries to sensitize domestic audiences to the need for preventative strategies.

A New Approach

We have concluded that the institutional structures and capabilities of the existing international organizations and agencies are not designed to address the issue of failing states and those at risk of failing in a systematic, complementary and holistic fashion. We therefore pledge our support to the creation of a new institution, mandated to assisting failing states and preventing states at risk from failing.

The new agency, in cooperation with regional organizations and other international organizations as required, will establish a comprehensive monitoring framework including objectively verifiable indicators, aimed to guide it in determining whether a state is failing or at risk to be failing. This assessment will place states along a continuum of failure and also provide a systematic picture of which states are at risk of failing.

The following sequencing measures and principles will guide the stabilization framework of the new agency:

- A diagnostic, to determine the cause (roots) of failure and prescriptions which are situation-specific and which include regard for local traditions and practices, and engage local resources and institutions wherever possible.
- Criteria, which will trigger support to states at risk of failing will be designed to provide the new agency with an early warning system.
- All planning and implementation functions undertaken by the new agency on behalf of the failing states or states at risk of failing will include training components to build up local capacities and ensure sustainability.
- The success of this collective international engagement depends on the proper coordination of resources, sharing of intelligence in a systematic fashion with all members and partners, and sound analysis of political, economic and social intelligence. The new agency will emphasize in-country coordination and dialogue with a wide variety of stakeholders and sources, including NGOs, the local private sector and opposition parties.
- A monitoring framework, including an exit strategy, reflecting indicators of when the state has assumed ownership of the measures and processes introduced and when they have become sustainable.

We are cognizant that this is a long-term commitment in support of failing states and have agreed to commit the required resources towards this goal. To that end, we have agreed to instruct our foreign ministers to establish a Working Group on Failing States and States at Risk of Failing. Their mandate will be to establish the framework required to give effect to the establishment of the new agency. We agree that this new international institution be named **AGENCY FOR GLOBAL STABILITY** and are committed to allocate resources at the outset to foster confidence in this new institution.