



The G20 at the Leader's Level

# L20 and Fragile States Conference

Berlin, Germany May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005



The Centre for International  
Governance Innovation  
Centre pour l'innovation dans  
la gouvernance internationale



Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
German Institute for International and Security Affairs

SWP

## *Paul LaRose-Edwards, L20 Communiqué on Fragile States*

### L20 Project Meeting Briefing Note

We, the leaders of key industrialized and developing nations, recognize the common threats posed by fragile and failed States to both their peoples and to the other nations and peoples of the world.

We are equally cognizant of the joint need and responsibility of the L20 and all other States to concurrently protect both the sovereignty of States, and the well-being of all peoples particularly those in fragile or failed States.

We strongly support the UN Secretary-General's recent statement that "*Sovereign States are the basic and indispensable building blocks of the international system. It is their job to guarantee the rights of their citizens, to protect them from crime, violence and aggression, and to provide the framework of freedom under law in which individuals can prosper and society develop. If States are fragile, the peoples of the world will not enjoy the security, development and justice that are their right. Therefore, one of the great challenges of the new millennium is to ensure that all States are strong enough to meet the many challenges they face.*" We commit ourselves to responding rapidly to his challenges as set out in his report *In Larger Freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*.

We also recognize and endorse existing and evolving international regimes, international partnerships, and international standards at the universal, regional, and sectoral levels that address fragile or failed States. We commit our separate nations to expand those mechanisms and capacities to assist fragile or failed States.

The international community over the past half-century has had an impressive record in evolving international rule of law and the responsibility to protect fellow States and peoples universally. This dramatic evolution is evidenced by the multiplicity of initiatives at all levels of international society and carried out through a huge variety of international organizations.

Inevitably and unfortunately because there are such a plethora of international mechanisms and potential action-takers, there exists a degree of confusion which has resulted in recurring responsibility 'gaps' and response 'gaps'. These 'gaps' can at times condemn fragile States to fail, failed States to long term suffering, and frequently impose huge costs on and even destabilize neighbouring States so as to threaten the well-being and very fabric of their society.

After due consideration of the many challenges, and in close harmony of purpose with the larger international community of nations, we have identified three strategic courses of action open to the L20 States. They are designed to facilitate the aims and objectives of our fellow nation States around the world and civil society at large. They will further our common goals of assisting fragile States to regain stability as free and fair societies, and supporting failed States to reconstruct and resurge as free and fair societies.

Those three L-2- strategic courses of action are as follows:

#### **1. Buttress Other International Organizations**

We the L20 States look to buttress other International Organizations in addressing fragile and failed States. We commit our nations to strengthening the sense of responsibility and developing the response capacities of the various international bodies that we are part of. The list is large and starts with the UN and expands to includes

regional and sectoral groupings that bring or could bring unique solutions and assistance to aid fragile and failed States.

## **2. L20 SitCen on Fragile and Failed States**

We the L20 States have a particularly valuable and unique persona which provides us with an equally unique collective ability to neutrally track and provide a trusted situational awareness of failing and failed States. We will actively pursue the premise that this could be carried out by an L20 SitCen (Situation Centre) on Fragile and Failed States.

## **3. Bringing Our National Domestic Capacities to Bear on International Challenges**

We strongly commit ourselves to taking individual State initiatives that will better prepare our separate States to partake in collective stabilization and reconstruction for failing or failed States. Marshalling the diverse national expertise found both in our government services and in our civil societies at large is key to assisting fragile and failed States to rescue themselves.

These three L20 initiatives are set out more comprehensively in the ***L20 Berlin Initiative on Fragile and Failed States*** below.

# **L20 Berlin Initiative on Fragile and Failed States**

**Berlin Germany, May 18th 2005**

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We wish to recognize the efforts of the UN and its Secretary-General to play a leadership role in addressing fragile and failed States. The 2004 *Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change* is only one of the most recent indicators of the importance that the UN and the Secretary-General ascribe to assisting fragile States. The Secretary-General's own report of 21 March 2005 *In Larger Freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all* reflects his intent to further operationalize ways to assist fragile and failed States.

We particularly wish to affirm the Secretary-General's observation that roughly half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years. He posits a strong argument that the UN lacks the institutional machinery to help countries to transit from war to lasting peace. We strongly commit ourselves to fully examining his argument with a view to supporting his proposal to create an intergovernmental Peacebuilding Commission as well as a Peacebuilding Support Office within the UN Secretariat. We note that he does not believe that such a Peacebuilding Commission should have an early warning or monitoring function.

We also strongly support the many other intergovernmental organizations such as the African Union, European Union, Organization of American States, North-Atlantic Council, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Association of Southeast Asia Nations, and the Organization of Islamic Conferences, who are also expanding their responsibility for and ability to respond to fragile and failed States. Each organization itself will determine what is appropriate and possible for them, and the L20 lauds their respective initiatives and resolve. We hereby re-commit our representatives within those many organizations to expand those capacities to respond as is relevant and appropriate to each organization.

The genius of the International Community is the multitude of organizations that can respond to crises, and that they can respond in so many different ways. This increases the likelihood that a failing or failed State crisis will be responded to, and this response can come from a variety of organizations with unique capacities and expertise.

The weakness of such a diverse International Community is that various issues or crises may not receive a sufficiently rapid or comprehensive response if it is not clear who can and who is responding. An optimum solution is to have neutral coordinating mechanisms that facilitate coordination without attempting to control or direct such independent action.

In the area of humanitarian assistance (emergency relief) the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator heading UN-OCHA (Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs) plays such a unique coordination role. UN-OCHA's success is facilitated, if not fully predicated upon the fact that UN-OCHA is not funded nor mandated to deliver humanitarian assistance. As a neutral and impartial monitor and facilitator, their job is to rapidly identify emergency relief needs, gaps, and further assist the affected countries and the IC to coordinate their respective responses.

The same strategic level coordination is needed for failing and failed States. We feel strongly that it is not appropriate for the L20 to develop its own operational-level crisis response mechanism to directly assist failing or failed States. We merely wish to emulate those functions of UN-OCHA that track crises and what action is being taken or not being taken, so as to identify 'gaps' in International Community response. Critical to such a role is a full situational awareness of fragile and failed States.

## **2. L20 SitCen on Fragile and Failed States**

We the L20 States have a particularly valuable and unique persona which provides us with an equally unique collective ability to neutrally track and provide a trusted situational awareness of failing and failed States. We will actively pursue the premise that this could be carried out by an L20 SitCen (Situation Centre) on Fragile and Failed States.

The disincentive for most intergovernmental organizations to officially declare that a State is fragile and failing is that such statements may automatically trigger a requirement for that organization to act. If member states within a particular organization judge that action may not be possible at that juncture or that action is best taken by other organizations, there will be pressure within that organization to not declare a State to be failing or failed. An L20 SitCen is buffered from this disincentive, as we the L20 have no intention that the L20 per se will take action other than mandating a SitCen to maintain a detailed and credible situational awareness so as to facilitate others in the International Community to take an informed decision on their responsibilities and their responses. The SitCen will provide real-time situational awareness of failing and failed States.

We strongly reiterate that it is not always appropriate nor possible for a particular intergovernmental organization to take action. That decision will remain with each intergovernmental organization. The L20 SitCen will not advocate nor lobby for action, although it will disseminate its strategic picture through appropriate means.

We the leaders of the key industrialized and developing nations commit ourselves to creating a neutral, impartial, and fully representational SitCen to serve as an early-warning on failing States and a long-term situational awareness of the assistance needs of failing and failed States.

The SitCen's purpose is to inform and possibly precipitate action by others. The L20 does not intend to create new response mechanisms, nor do we wish to use the L20 forum or the L20 SitCen to recommend or direct change in existing universal, regional, or sectoral regimes.

We are tasking the Foreign Ministries of three of the L20 States, Brazil, Canada and South Africa to create an operational model of an L20 SitCen and encourage all of the L20 foreign ministries to comment on that model. Interested States outside of the L20 are strongly encouraged to join that debate. The L20 on Fragile States will reconvene in 6 months to take decisions on where and how the SitCen will be established.

The key principles of the SitCen will be:

- a. Neutrality and Impartiality – premised upon common international standards and emerging norms on governance and the responsibility to protect.
- b. Regionally Representative – staffed by individuals from all regions and drawing from a universal network of information sources.

c. Real-time Situational Picture of Fragile and Failed States – this will provide early warning of fragile States, rapidly updated information on failing States, and comprehensive needs assessments of failed States.

### **3. Bringing Our National Domestic Capacities to Bear on International Challenges**

We strongly commit ourselves to taking individual State initiatives that will better prepare our separate States to partake in collective stabilization and reconstruction for failing or failed States. Marshalling the diverse national expertise found both in our government services and in our civil societies at large is key to assisting fragile and failed States to rescue themselves.

Most of the L20 States have developed extensive military response capacities to meet the challenges of failing and failed States. Most recently the G8 Sea Island meeting agreed to enhance the global military and CivPol components of peace support operations. We commend these efforts to expand security sector capacities and wish to strongly support commensurate efforts in expanding the civilian response capacities of our individual States. This includes the need to have national rosters of civilian experts, rapid deployment mechanisms, and enhanced national coordination mechanisms for both contingency planning and the crisis response initiatives of intra-government (all-of-government) and intra-national (all-of-country). Equally there is a commensurate need for increased international (all-of-the-International-Community) interoperability and coordination.

Many of the L20 States have initiated the building of some of those civilian capacities, and some are rapidly reinforcing or expanding such national civilian response capacities. In particular the L20 States encourage nations worldwide to evolve civilian rosters to provide ways for the UN and others to rapidly identify experts particularly with regard to peace operations and other such crisis response initiatives to assist failing and failed states. The resulting international network of ‘national-feeder’ rosters of screened qualified experts will ensure regional recruitment to achieve regional representation and immeasurably increase the ability to bring the right expertise to bear at the right time and in the right place.

However national rosters are not sufficient, and it is important that all L20 States evolve expanded civilian reserves and government led coordination mechanisms to rapidly bring comprehensive national capacities to bear on complex crises.

Since a number of L20 States are currently expanding civilian capacities to mirror and compliment existing military crisis response capacities, we have directed those L20 countries to meet and share lessons-learned, best-practices, and look at future interoperability and coordination. The US, UK, and Canada have offered to take the lead in convening such meetings, and we encourage them to look to invite other interested non-L20 countries as well as the UN, OSCE and the EU. These organizations are quickly expanding and evolving ways to allow national civilian capacities to be channelled into their organizations or to operate in parallel yet in tight collaboration and coordination.

### **Conclusion**

We the L20 States have benefited immeasurably from peace and stability. We recognize and fully accept our responsibility to play a role in facilitating our fellow States worldwide to achieve similar levels of peace and prosperity. We are particularly committed to assisting fragile and failed States by taking individual action; contributing to concerted multilateral action; and providing a neutral situational awareness to help preclude response ‘gaps’ by the international community.

These pragmatic initiatives give voice to our deep-held concern for the well-being of fragile and failed States. They and their peoples represent a moral imperative for the international community to unite in support and solidarity. We the L20 look to play our unique role in the world’s common humanity and resolve to assist fragile States and recover failed States.

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