

# INVESTING IN THE CONDITIONS FOR PEACE \*

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The Earth is often referred to as the "Blue Planet" because it's surface is mostly water, and yet over 1.5 billion people suffer from a serious shortage of safe water, while each year more than 10 million deaths result from water borne diseases<sup>1</sup>.

Without adequate water resources mankind will not be able to sustain an expanding peaceful existence on this planet. Further, I believe that our sustainability on earth is inextricably linked to regional stabilities and mutual security. These three components: security, stability and sustainability, comprise what I respectfully refer to as the conditions for peace.

As the Commander/CEO of both the largest public engineering organization and principle water resource developer and manager in the United States and of a significant component of my country's defense establishment I have a somewhat unique perspective. For

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<sup>1</sup>United Nations Development Program-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, Annual Report 1989-90, 1990.

over 30 years I have been on the front lines of the civil works battles of Environment versus Economics versus Engineering and alternatively the military efforts to secure our Nation. Although these two universes are generally considered separate, I have become convinced that they not only intersect, they are interdependent.

Within the universe of my civil experience we recognize that engineering for economic development must embrace environmental values; and, conversely, environmental sustainability is dependent on engineering. The old adversarial theme of development and engineering versus the environment and vice-versa, is giving way to new partnerships. These partnerships, however, can only flourish in a secure, stable, and sustainable world. Thus, I readily link development with the environment and both with security and would respectfully assert that investment for development must be considered in that broader or extended context.

Permit me to explain what I mean by security, stability and sustainability as three pillars which support the conditions for peace. It is only when we have the integration of all three that we can create and maintain those conditions.

The end of the Cold War has brought with it profound changes, and a new era of challenges and opportunities; emerging democracies around the world; new coalitions and partnerships; and the

emergence of an intensely resource interdependent global community.

In the United States, the term security has always been a powerful word. However, its prerequisites and the means to attain it are changing.

Today, from our perspective, the emerging notion of security encompasses a far broader array of conditions, potential threats, and I add opportunities, and will require new ways of dealing with them. These diverse threats include environmental degradation and terrorism, population growth, depletion of natural resources, economic mismanagement and decline, increasing social and economic stratification, health crises, and natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanos. The World Commission on Environment and Development set the stage for beginning to regard environmental quality as a security matter. They said,

"A number of factors affect the connection between environmental stress, poverty, and security, such as inadequate development policies, adverse trends in international economy, inequities in multi-racial and multi-ethnic societies, and pressures of population growth. These linkages among environment, development and conflict are complex and, in many cases, poorly understood. But a comprehensive approach to international and national security must

transcend the traditional emphasis on military power and armed competition."<sup>2</sup>

In this context, security defined as mutual safety and a community of beneficial relationships among and within nations is replacing traditional definitions. This pluralistic concept of mutual security can be attained only within conditions of economic, environmental, social and political **stability**.

**Stability**, (my second pillar) is not preservation of the status quo, but, rather, the establishment of conditions which permit orderly change, and which will allow for democratic institutions and market-driven economies to flourish. However, unless these conditions are established with a long-term vision in mind -- perhaps 100 years -- our long-term stability will be impossible and the sustainability of our mutual security will be at substantial risk.

The message is: **stability** is important, and if the peace and security we seek are to be enduring, it must be based on a foundation of **sustainable** economic, environmental and social development.

The third pillar, **sustainability** is the character of a continuing process of economic and social development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to

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<sup>2</sup>World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987).

meet their own needs. I share the views of the Bergen Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Development. The Declaration states that,

"the attainment of sustainable development on the national, regional, and global levels requires fundamental changes in human values towards the environment, and in patterns of behavior and consumption, as well as the establishment of necessary democratic institutions and processes."<sup>3</sup>

In the last few moments I have shared with you my thoughts on stability, sustainability and security, which I refer to as the conditions for peace. I would suggest that philosophically the Corps of Engineers and the World Bank have a common desire to create and maintain these conditions. Both our efforts can contribute to security, stability and sustainability, and thus prevent or reduce the circumstances that lead to insecurity and conflict in our rapidly changing world, provided our decisions are made in that broader context.

I share the view of the Director of the Environment at the World Bank, Mohamed T. El-Ashry, who recently at the Natural Resource Council of America Award Banquet highlighted the importance that this challenge presents to the World Bank.

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<sup>3</sup>Economic Commission for Europe Region, May 16, 1990.



Meeting this challenge will require a broader perspective in our mutual notions of security. It will require a recognition that security is inherently linked to stability and sustainability. It further requires an integration of security, stability and sustainability into future development efforts.

As agencies concerned for security, we must do more than react to events. We need vision, strategic thinking, leadership and a process for sound long-range planning.

Given this framework, how do we make it work?

In the past we in the Corps used project criteria which required projects to be based on good engineering and good economics. Today, these criteria are not enough. To be successful, projects must have good economics, good engineering and be environmentally sustainable. Additionally, our work is integrated into broader, more comprehensive strategies that look well beyond specific projects; and insures that projects contribute to broader purposes than their immediate obvious outputs; and, that their impacts are assessed in a broad context.

The anticipation and prevention of environmental damage requires that the ecological dimensions of a project, a policy, or an action be considered at the same time as the economic, social and engineering considerations. Proposed development projects or actions should include environment as part of the actual criteria in early feasibility

studies. In doing so, we can plan to avoid adverse impacts, minimize or reduce them, and if necessary compensate for unavoidable effects over the life cycle of the project or action. Simply put, the environmental aspects of all we do must have equal standing among other aspects -- not simply a "consideration," along with economics and engineering. Thus, to extend, or broaden, our previous focus on engineering and economics to the environment, we changed the guiding criteria and standards for our work.

(Pause)

In assisting other nations we will not be successful without one more step. That is, we will fail to create and maintain the security, stability and sustainability unless we fully integrate the concept of **institution building** into our assistance efforts for developing and redeveloping nations.

All nations need effective public and private institutions. A primary objective of development efforts that promote sustainability, stability and security, I offer, should be to contribute to the growth and development of public and private institutional structures. We should transfer the capability to organize, manage and sustain developmental programs and projects. The recipient nation capability to organize, manage and sustain developmental programs and projects must be enhanced in the process. We should encourage public-private partnerships. We should integrate free-market management philosophies into the fabric of such development

efforts. We should be culturally sensitive and not inappropriately intrude into the internal affairs of the nations we seek to assist.

We have been involved in examples of this type of "Nation Assistance" in Latin America, Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. For instance, in Honduras we are assisting in developing a solution to flood problems in the Sula Valley, a prime agriculture region of Honduras. In this effort, we seek to help Honduras develop its own solution that recognizes the local conditions and environment, that considers the long-term perspective, and that utilizes technology appropriate for the size of the project and the capacity of public and private institutions to maintain and support it.

In Krakow, Poland we have entered a three-way partnership with the U.S Environmental Protection Agency and the city of Krakow. The development effort is aimed at retrofitting modern water treatment equipment to help clean up the most polluted water system in Europe. The effort will provide the skills and resources to maintain the water treatment facility and enhance the quality of life.

In this capacity, the Corps of Engineers works as an element of our Defense Department in partnership with our State Department, in support of host nations. Specific activities normally result from coordination among Ambassadors and local US military commanders. The work is done on a reimbursable basis with US, or non-US funds.



We will use these experiences, and those of others, to learn more about, and then build upon what works to achieve sustainability.

In addition to these development efforts we have recently drafted a report entitled, "Water in the Sand". The survey has been designed to add value at minimal costs to discussions of water issues in the Middle East. It recognizes the multi-dimensional aspects of water and provides a historical background on: a collection of water, port and inland navigation data for each country and each major river basin in the region; the trends pushing towards crisis; hydro-political and social dimensions of the region, and alternative ways to cope with the situations. It also provides lessons learned in building cooperation on water resources. This survey will enhance the user's ability to focus future resources on directions that promise maximum pay off through achieving cooperation on water resources in the region.

In reviewing your agenda for this week, I believe that your work will no doubt include serious and reflective thinking about what works in the sustainable development of water resources. The philosophy you have adopted for your water policy review, namely, to invite early participation of potentially impacted people, we have found to be the only practical way to develop water policy and programs in our complex societies. The process you have designed for your discussions, namely, to use facilitated small groups, has become essential in the Corps because it efficiently and equitably helps get all the views on the table.

During this week, you may wish to consider your roles, responsibilities and opportunities in promoting the conditions for peace - security, stability and sustainability; and the critical and broader role of institution building in your development efforts. Projects alone are not enough, even projects that are economically and technically sound may fail to contribute to creating and maintaining the conditions for peace.

As global stewards we all must advance our knowledge of natural and human systems and manage the integration of these systems to assure the prosperity and sustainability of humanity on this planet. We all must create solutions that join economic growth with sound management of our water resources .

I do not presume to suggest how or what the World Bank does, but I have taken the liberty of sharing with you how one institution in our government is attempting to pursue its responsibilities in a manner that supports the broad needs of those we serve within the context of our National and Departmental policies, programs and authorities. I hope that this brief discussion is of some benefit in your deliberations this week.

Water resources are critical to security, stability and sustainability. People will always require water whether for domestic consumption, agriculture or industrial use. As such, we must join together globally

in stewardship of this most precious resource, the very foundation of our "Blue Planet".