

Side Events

Launch of the States of Fragility Report 2016 “Understanding Violence”

30 November 2016, 13:30-14:30

Objective:

Following the launch of the States of Fragility Report Highlights in New York on 22 September 2016 at the margins of the UNGA session, the side event at the HLM2 in Nairobi was the occasion to launch the full report. Featuring panellists from the OECD, Ireland, Honduras and a moderator from g7+, the launch pursued a twofold objective: presenting the findings and recommendations of the Report and raising the issue of violence as a major development challenge, as well as putting the findings into perspective through the lens of the cases of Ireland and Honduras – two different countries that both provided very relevant experiences to draw upon.

Participants:

- Minister Joe McHugh, Irish Minister of State for the Diaspora and Overseas Development Aid, Ireland
- H.E. Ms. Maria del Carmen Nasser de Ramos, Vice Minister of International Cooperation and Promotion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Honduras
- Doug Frantz, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD
- Rachel Scott, Team Leader Fragility, Conflict and Resilience, OECD
- Moderator: Dr. Helder da Costa, General Secretary, g7+

Key issues discussed:

In his opening speech to the launch, Minister McHugh underlined the impact increasing violence and conflict has on development gains, with violence being often at the heart of fragility. He emphasized the importance of the States of Fragility report in advancing our understanding of the complexities of these phenomena and in offering solutions on how to address causes and effects.

Drawing upon Ireland’s experience with their own conflict, he stressed the importance of engagement with affected communities for a successful reconciliation and peace process. During his presentation, he put a special emphasis on prevention, addressing root causes and gender-based violence, which is a priority area of the Irish government. Minister McHugh concluded that the analysis and evidence of the Report will inform Ireland’s policy and programming in the efforts of building a sustainable, peaceful and inclusive world.

Minister Nasser de Ramos stressed the relevance of the Report for Honduras as a country affected by all five dimensions of the OECD fragility framework - political, societal, economic, environmental and security. Elaborating on Honduras’ unprecedented rise in crime and public security issues in the last decade, she stressed the impact of drug trafficking and climate change as external factors.

Against the background of the example of the Honduran “migration crisis”, a consequence of violence and vulnerability originating from organized crime, she commended the Report’s

multidimensional approach to complex root causes of fragility. The Minister also welcomed the Report's contribution to a shift in the understanding of fragility away from a "fragile states list", noting that the link between fragility and economic development is not a linear one. She emphasized the importance of youth and preventive mechanisms. She noted that the Latin America and Caribbean region's engagement in these areas provides relevant best practices that can be shared through South-South and triangular cooperation.

With an increasing concentration of extremely poor in fragile contexts, the OECD's Deputy Secretary-General, Doug Frantz, stressed the need to tackle the challenges posed by fragility for poverty reduction efforts to be successful. Noting that all countries are to some extent fragile, the OECD 2016 fragility framework identifies 56 fragile contexts with 15 classified as extremely fragile. He highlighted the Report's finding that development, peace and security policies and development finance have not kept pace with the new reality of violence and fragility. This calls for a change in programming and finance, given the disconnect between increasing resources to fragile contexts but the persistent reality of fragility. The Report recommends more investment in long-term structural change in fragile contexts and a more equal distribution of resources between fragile contexts.

Rachel Scott then presented the findings of the Report in further detail. She noted that there is a need to broaden the approach to situations of violence outside of open conflicts as well as to post-conflict contexts. This will require putting an increased focus on people in contrast to structures, urban contexts and regional aspects. Rachel concluded with the Report's recommendations to invest more in prevention, adopt measures at donors' domestic level to promote global peace and security, promulgate global norms and recalibrate programming with an emphasis on reconciliation and more patience to deliver results in "soft" areas.

Main conclusions and next steps:

The Report shows that violence is increasing and becoming more networked and complex. Based on the assumption that every country is to some extent fragile, the OECD fragility framework calls for a shift in the approach from a "fragile states list" to a multidimensional understanding of fragility. This implies a change in programming and finance is needed, in order to address the range of different aspects of fragility, including in middle-income countries. The Report therefore recommends enhancing investment to situations of violence outside of conflicts. All speakers at the launch concluded with the Report's call to put an increased focus on prevention and addressing root causes, and to bring together our collective efforts to do so. Two important points can be drawn from the cases of Ireland and Honduras: the experience of Ireland shows the importance of engaging affected communities in the reconciliation and peace process. As underlined by the Honduran minister, external factors can contribute to the fragility of societies.