

Focus: Future of State-building (Summary)

Essay: State-building for Whom?

Toshiya Hoshino (Professor, Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)

The waves of state-building in a broad sense swept over the world due to the large-scale political changes that took place after the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 21st century. State-building was pursued in some instances in the context of new states emerging from dissolution of federal states or secession, and in other cases associated with transitioning to democracies and market economies. However, chaos continues in Afghanistan and Iraq, where attempts were made to establish new states after the overthrow of their governments in the post-9/11 War on Terror. Russia's latest maneuver to build new "states" in pro-Russia regions was a precursor to its aggression against Ukraine. Although state-building is a highly political process, it is the people's will – as well as their history, spirit and dreams – that tends to be drowned out first by the avarice of those in power, the arbitrariness of outside actors, the infiltration of international terrorist organizations and other constant challenges. It is important to incorporate in the state-building strengthening of human resource development so that people, as the sovereign, can exercise their abilities. State-building support that emphasizes local ownership and human resource development is the area in which Japan excels in particular, and it is hoped that people be given opportunities to participate in a meaningful manner. We must not forget the question of for whom the state is being built.

1 Challenges of Ownership for State-building and the Stagnation of International Constitutionalism

Hideaki Shinoda (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

State-building in the 21st century is tied to the narrative of the "triumph of liberal democracy" after the end of the Cold War, and is recognized as the endeavor to form a state that establishes constitutional institutions. International military and aid activities based on liberal democracy have been carried out in the 21st century to promote state-building through the war on terrorism, international peace operations, and development assistance. Major Western countries, which had implemented modern state-building through conversion into liberal democracies, have also tended to provide international support by referencing their own history of constitutionalism. However, state-building activities that follow the prevalent trend in the international community have the limitation that it is difficult to develop a sense of "ownership" among members of the local community. It can be said that the success or failure of state-building activities depends on the extent to which ownership can be established in the development of value norms and military capabilities.

2 UN Assistance for Post-Conflict State-building: The Past, Present, and Future of UN Peacekeeping Operations

Yuji Uesugi (Professor, Faculty of International Research and Education, Waseda University)

This article provides an overview of the past, present, and future of post-conflict state-building assistance provided by the United Nations (UN), focusing on UN peacekeeping operations (PKO). It reviews "successes" in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste and "failures" in Cambodia and Rwanda as examples of post-Cold War peace efforts. It examines the impact of UN PKO involvement on post-

conflict state-building from the perspective of liberal peace and derives the importance of intra-state stability as a prerequisite for state-building. Then, current UN peacekeeping operations in Mali, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic are examined, making it clear that the inability to stabilize a country makes the protection of civilians (PoC) the main mandate of UN PKOs and closes the door to state-building support. Dealing with Islamic extremists tied to international terrorist organizations is a key for envisioning the future prospect of state-building assistance by the UN. As long as eliminating Islamic extremists remains a prerequisite for ending a civil war and bringing stability to the country, there is no place for UN PKOs in assisting liberal state-building.

3 US Military Intervention and Failure of State-building in Iraq

Dai Yamao (Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies, Kyushu University)

This paper focuses on Iraqi state-building after the regime change prompted by the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. It also aims to analyze the problems faced therein.

In the initial stage of the state-building process that began under military occupation, senior members of the former Ba'athist regime were removed, military and security institutions were dismantled and a decentralized democracy was established, all at the same time. Since democratization proceeded without concurrent progress in rebuilding state institutions, political confrontation intensified and the democratic system itself became dysfunctional by morphing into something else. As a result, distrust in politics spread, causing voters to give up on political participation and instead take to the streets. State-building as envisioned by the United States thus ran aground.

The key lesson from the case of Iraq is that it is very difficult to rebuild a stable state by promoting democratization, which disperses power, while dismantling state institutions.

4 Why America Failed: Lessons from the Case of Afghanistan

Daisaku Higashi (Professor, Center for Global Education, Sophia University)

In the wake of the 9-11 attacks in 2001, the United States concluded that al-Qaeda, an international terrorist organization which had a base in Afghanistan, was responsible. The US then demanded that the Taliban government hand over the head of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and all of its members to the US. When the Taliban refused to do so, the US overthrew the Taliban government with a military offensive and started state-building activities in Afghanistan. Twenty years have passed since then. The Taliban revived and regained control of Afghanistan in August 2021 as US troops withdrew. The US stationed over 100,000 troops there in its peak and spent as much as 2 trillion dollars over the past two decades. What are the causes of this failure? This article discusses the following topics: (1) the debate over the role of the United Nations in post-conflict peace-building activities and inclusivity, and how state-building of Afghanistan was positioned; (2) the lack of inclusivity (political exclusion) in Afghan state-building and the reorganization of the Taliban; (3) the attempts at peace negotiations that began after 2010 and their challenges and (4) lessons from the collapse and failure of the Afghan government, and the roles of Japan in supporting self-reliance and stability in Afghanistan from now.

5 The Future of State-building and the Responsibility to Protect: Sovereignty-building as a Way Forward?

Hiroshi Nishikai (Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Seigakuin University)

There has been widespread skepticism and dismay in recent years about the responsibility to protect (R2P) stemming from the failure of the international community to address major humanitarian crises. However, the principle of R2P itself is internationally recognized, and the issue now is not scrapping R2P but rather finding a way to realize the principle. To this end, it is necessary to first reaffirm the complicated relationship between R2P and state-building / peace-building as well as the original meaning of R2P. By reconsidering the relationship between R2P and state-building / peace-building, building “responsible sovereignty”, i.e., “sovereignty-building” emerges as a way for the future. Furthermore, building “responsible sovereignty” based on R2P has its own significance for peace-building or peace formation, this being that it can compensate for the lack of “legitimacy” in peace-building and provide a common goal or guideline for peace-building. If we rethink R2P as described above, it becomes clear that Japan could have a significant role to play.

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