

minority rights group international

The Framework Convention +15 – Opportunities & Challenges

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How is the Framework Convention Relevant to Conflict Prevention?

- Engagement with minority civil society
 - Country visits
 - Alternative reports
 - Visits to minority communities

How is the Framework Convention Relevant to Conflict Prevention?

- Allows for warning signs to be identified
- It is one step up the early action chain from the HCNM
- Distinguishes it from other monitoring mechanisms

Identifying the “fertile ground” for conflict

- Nicaragua example
- After deposing the Somoza dictatorship, conflict between new Sandinista government and Indigenous peoples / Creoles on Atlantic coast

Identifying the “fertile ground” for conflict

- The ‘path to conflict’ framework

(from Creative Associates International, “Conflict prevention: a guide”)

Long-term, proximate and immediate causes

Systemic Causes (dating back to 18th and 19th centuries):

- Region cut off from rest of country by rainforest, no year-round road to capital
- National government neglects region, does not invest in development
- Grievances due to national government's conception of the country's identity as Hispanic and European, failing to recognise diversity of identities

Long-term, proximate and immediate causes

Proximate Causes:

- Situation of uncertainty and transition after dictatorship (transitions correlate with onset of conflict even if => democracy)
- Increased militarisation of the Atlantic Coast by government
- Govt tended to identify all opponents on Atlantic Coast as supporters of Contras; failed to realise many were motivated by desire to protect local identities

Long-term, proximate and immediate causes

Proximate Causes:

- MISURASATA (Atlantic Coast indigenous movement) called on people to refuse to cooperate with Sandinista government programmes, including those aimed at social development

Long-term, proximate and immediate causes

Immediate cause (“trigger”):

- Sandinista initiation of literacy campaign in Spanish
- Minority rights violations involved at all three stages

How is FCNM applicable to this framework?

- Particularly in identifying the systemic causes – e.g. long-term marginalisation & under-development
- But also the proximate causes (phase of build-up to conflict, the fertile ground being laid down)

How is FCNM applicable to this framework?

- Less so with regard to proximate causes (triggers) – because the reporting cycle doesn't allow for fast reaction
- But the triggers are often symbolic – denial of language, the arrest of an important community representative
- FCNM monitoring can identify the warning signs – e.g. a trigger that failed to light the fuse

Link between human rights & conflict – an opportunity for the AC?

- Implementation of Sejdic / Finci – a beneficial impact on post-conflict settlements, not a negative one
- Rise of hate crime, mobilisation of extreme right wing groups

The FCNM + 15: Threats

- Economic crisis and impact on minority/majority relations - how FCNM can help in identifying / addressing these issues

The FCNM + 15: Opportunities

- Migrant communities (not always covered by FCNM but the monitoring can pick up general trends that will affect migrants and more established communities;
- Also to ask the question as to when migrant communities become minorities and whether states should not include them earlier under FCNM

The FCNM + 15: Opportunities

- Strengthening participation in political decision-making
- The EU accession and association processes