

Nicaragua: From Conflict to Common Cause

■ Alejandro Bendaña

Nicaragua has endured many years of conflict and civil strife. The absence of justice is frequently the main reason for the absence of peace. Acute injustice gave rise to popular struggles and such struggles often entailed violence and repression. However, recent years have seen a transition to peace and the emergence of an active civil society working to ensure that human rights are upheld and promoted, both in the civil-political sphere but also in socio-economic terms. While Hurricane Mitch in which thousands lost their lives, and millions lost their homes, has devastated the country's economic base and set development prospects back by a generation, more than ever hope for reconstruction lies with the people. Bendaña's paper identifies the human resources and social capital or institutions needed for reconstruction and development to work. While his propositions focus on post-conflict rebuilding these are also applicable to what is now a post-emergency situation, which has its own conflict dynamics as people struggle for limited resources.

Peace for what?

Pace so that we can have justice or peace to preserve the *status quo*? The former question is much more complicated because even where the disputant parties have a common interest in peace, they will have significantly different perspectives on the form and content of justice in a post-settlement arrangement. Unfortunately in the modern world there seems to be a pattern of trade-off between peace and justice. The challenge then becomes not to suppress conflict but to manage it and channel it in constructive ways. Constructive conflict engagement is in essence the key to democratic governance and justice.

Twenty years ago many in Central America believed that dictatorships, dependency and systematic human rights abuses could only be ended by war. The evidence was leaning in that direction. The bloody Somoza family dictatorship was overthrown in Nicaragua and some years later in El Salvador and Guatemala the old military dictatorships began to crumble. In Honduras and Costa Rica the US-supported extreme right also lost ground. New spaces began to open, cleaner elections were held, and certain civil and political human rights were reasonably guaranteed. Indeed by the nineties the left could act as a legitimate political force, no small accomplishment in a region where only a few years before anyone promoting left of centre viewpoints was subjected to persecution, exile or assassination.

Was this then the victory of the human rights and democracy movements? Had twentieth century socialist-inclined guerrillas been the catalytic forces in finally bringing about nineteenth century liberal democratic practices to the region? Indeed, being able to walk the streets and trade combat gear for business suits and AK-47s for cellular phones is an achievement of sorts. Certainly, it is no small historic accomplishment in the light of decades of bloody oligarchic rule which the region has endured.

Today, however, Central America has still not achieved the form of people's democracy, with its achievement of universal human rights and social transformation for which so many people fought and died. Such a transformation is still demanded by the vast majority of people in the region, irrespective of the outcome of the armed struggle or the changes brought about by the end of the so-called "cold war" which was never cold in Central America.

New challenges for democracy and human rights

However, as more human rights are nominally enacted, elections take on new meaning, as the left itself becomes an undisputed major political actor, the struggle for greater democracy and full human rights must take on new characteristics. Why? Because we cannot presume that the present versions of democracy and human rights will necessarily continue to evolve in the right direction. Indeed the evidence is now pointing to a reversal in progress. Yet there is – or should be – no going back to the armed struggle.

The reasons perhaps are just as practical as they are moral. People reject war, violence persists and the economy is in tatters. No one remembers what normal times were like. Since 1973 Nicaragua has been hit with nine natural disasters (including hurricanes, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, droughts, floods and even a seaquake) as well as two prolonged wars. The damage inflicted by these various events is estimated to be \$20.4 billion, affecting the country's economic infrastructure and productive base. This sum is about 12 times greater than the country's GNP in 1996 and 22.6 times the value of exports in the same year.¹ The human toll of the conflicts numbered 107,118 deaths, 123,000 wounded and crippled along with 6,533 people who have disappeared. Behind these tragic statistics some 3.2 million people or 77% of the country's population have been affected. Housing, health, education, basic service and commerce, i.e. the human, social and financial resources of the country have all been hard hit thus severely impacting on the country's capacity to recover.²

Under these circumstances, and the psychological pressure of being destabilised and attacked by the most powerful country in the world, is it any wonder that trauma and instability continue to affect Nicaraguans? Upon visiting Nicaragua, one South African visitor commented: "The war is real in Nicaragua, I felt it when I was there, it is still part of people's daily existence and it is going to take a long time for people to summon their courage and strength, to want to take further risks in pursuit of freedom. The irony is that things will not get better until folks say enough is enough". But things are not getting better; the direct violence of war is replaced by the indirect violence of neoliberal economic programmes. Comparing statistics in the UNDP *Human Development Report* for 1998 with those in the

1995 *Report* Nicaragua's human development index ranking fell from 109th to 126th position. This was the reflection of decreasing rates of schooling, increased malnutrition and lower life expectancy at birth.

The latest calamity goes by the name of "globalisation" entailing structural adjustment programmes, reckless privatisation, and unprecedented levels of corruption and external dependence. Commercial and investment liberalisation means new free trade zones where garment factories pay workers a basic wage of only 15 cents an hour, with young women of 14 and 15 working 13 hour days, up to seven days a week and subject to verbal, physical and sexual abuse by supervisors. All in the name of increasing competitiveness within the global economy. At the same time the world is becoming a more unequal place where the richest 20% of the population account for 86% of global consumption. Nor is poverty confined to developing countries. According to the 1998 *Human Development Report* the world's richest nations are home to more than 100 million people whose incomes are below the poverty line and to 37 million unemployed people. They account for 100 million homeless people and almost 200 million of their population die before the age of 60.

Will things have to get worse before they get better? Let us hope not, but there is no reason for optimism. And then when people say enough is enough, how will they say it? Will it be through more bloodshed? Must we go through another cycle of violence, and witness yet more infringements of the most precious human right of all, the right to life and to live in dignity?

The possibility of non-violent struggle

There have been times in the history of Nicaragua, or of Ireland and many other countries for that matter, when the cause of freedom, dignity and self-determination are given a value higher than life itself. I believe this is not something to be criticised, but the question must be posed: how do we arrive at peace and justice utilising peaceful and just means?

Fifty years after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, his teachings on this point are as relevant as ever, even in the Latin American context where he is little known. Today there is an

opportunity, indeed a necessity, to marry the best in the revolutionary left culture with what is best in the peace and civil rights movement. By doing this we rediscover that peace without social change is no peace at all, and that social change brought about by violence may also inhibit and distort the nature of change.

Will active non-violence secure what armed struggle could not? Perhaps it is too early to make a judgement. What is certain is that we cannot give up on the process of pushing social change. The enemy is poverty and violence. Moreover, poverty is a form of violence. Power is at the heart of this equation. Because both poverty and violence are linked to a lack of control over resources, land, skills, credit, knowledge, capital and more broadly the market as well as a lack of influence by the majority poor over government decision-making. Without access to resources the vast majority of people will be trampled upon by a powerful minority. Clearly, then there is a link between the means to sustain human rights and the human rights themselves. Progress is needed on all fronts.

Most suffering in this world is connected and is far from inevitable. In fighting for human rights and democracy we cannot limit ourselves to the symptoms but instead must put our energies and resources into understanding and tackling the causes. There is in effect a great danger that, without a radical vision and practice, we may well end up strengthening the very institutions that are part of the structure which is upholding violence and injustice. In essence there must be a great spirit of rebelliousness against injustice, poverty and anything that oppresses people. In each context activists must know when to confront, when to negotiate, when to combine both and of course how to do so.

There are no blueprints, only moral guidelines. Success will require learning and reflection on past actions, developing new skills and institutions, as well as facilitating personal and communal transformation.

Reconciling human rights

In 1993, the former President of Ireland and current United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson spoke thus of her visit to Somalia: "My inner sense of justice and equality was outraged by what I had seen... Are we not

diminishing our own sense of humanity by failing to address the starvation and destitution of so many of our fellow human beings? How can we assert the universality of human rights by ignoring the life chances of millions of people?"

Of course there are structural factors but this is no excuse for covering up incompetent governments. The World Bank or the European Union undertake poverty assessments in a Central American country in order to prepare a programme for poverty reduction. The resulting documentation does not mention corruption, mismanagement and flagrant nepotism. When one suggests that the failure to confront an issue so fundamental to poverty reduction makes the entire effort dubious, one is told that such a reference would offend the government and the report would be rejected.³ It is a cop-out to conceive of human rights enhancement as the product of improved procedures, problem solving, educational workshops and watchdog tactics. To no one's surprise those charged with managing the global economy have an unbridled capacity to keep rediscovering poverty and the neglect of basic human needs as a root factor in human rights violations. What would be surprising would be for government and multilateral bodies to admit that the global system in which they operate and over which they only have limited control, is in need of major overhaul in order to eliminate poverty and violence.

But let us not hold our breath waiting for a system of self-correction, or be corrected from above. The best defence of human rights is self-defence, and self-defence entails empowerment. For NGOs this should mean that the poor are not only to be heard but also listened to and that their views are reflected and their interests upheld at policy fora. Consultation is not enough, but it is only as far as some wish to go. For good reason because empowerment for the majority also implies some disempowerment of the elite in order to progress toward greater social equality. This also requires structural and attitudinal changes.

Empowerment through popular reconciliation

Popular reconciliation represents one possibility for peaceful social change. Much of the oppression, disempowerment and

frustration that lead to violence stem from the fact that those sectors who are suffering are also divided among themselves. This vision of reconciliation has nothing to do with appeasement, nor is it a conflict resolution model between rich and poor, between the poor and poverty, or the oppressed with the terms of their oppression as some groups, including sectors of the Church would have it. Rather it is a new vision of reconciliation processes as advancing ideas and initiatives aimed at transforming individual and intergroup relationships at the level of the poor. It involves building trust, promoting dialogue and, in the process enhancing peace and transforming individuals.

Thus reconciliation is an instrument for peace, development and democratisation. It is a mechanism for the prevention of community level conflicts. It facilitates communities though providing the skills, reflection opportunities and dialogue channels which they need so as to tackle the problems which divide them. It builds a sense of unity by strengthening social networks and local organisations. As such it is vital to achieving a type of development which has respect for human rights at its core. Article 29 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible." Or as Marx stated, "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

There are no lessons or easy prescriptions in this regard, but we cannot afford to ignore each other's experience. What has been the case in Nicaragua, and is also relevant here in Ireland and elsewhere, is that issues of human and social reconstruction are also addressed by building up democracy at the grassroots levels in order to influence higher spheres of power. Part of this effort is trying to increase citizens' understanding of their rights and of the legal instruments which protect and promote them. Another part consists of building skills in conflict engagement and dispute resolution. How do we start? By seeking out those community-based local leaders who are already acting as agents of transformation, and by helping communities with identifying their own problems, priorities, and potential areas for action.

Such an approach is often referred to as the accompaniment of people who are deemed to be *marginalised* or *alienated*. In many senses it is not they but we who are the truly marginal and alien, because people do not see themselves as outcasts or deviant in the social sense. Offence is taken at being told they are to be "rehabilitated", as though their environment, culture and above all identity must be deconstructed and reinvented. In

Nicaragua communities, and I suspect in Northern Ireland, people often care for the same people, chiefly ex-combatants, who are often stigmatised by the government.⁴ One cannot escape what you are and where you come from and the circumstances in which one has lived that produced one's identity. Still we witness time and time again how outsiders, national or international, go into what they call the "field" and work with what they feel there ought to be and not with what there is, or work on the basis of what they feel people should think and how they should be organised, instead of with what people are thinking and how they are already organised. Such an approach displaces rather than enhances peace-building efforts. Instead, peace interventions and external operations which support this should be viewed as a component of local long-term endeavours.

Human rights and human empowerment

Human rights in countries such as Nicaragua and elsewhere are intimately linked to the political and economic issues which direct the foreign policy of the world's richest nations. Here we run into trouble because foreign policy professionals tend to regard human rights as essentially political and civil, rather than as social and economic in character. That is at odds with the predominant new thinking on these issues, not to mention prevailing realities in much of Latin America and elsewhere, including the way ordinary citizens in most countries look at their lives. Let us be clear that living conditions (food, water, shelter, income) are perhaps more important to people than the right to engage in political debate. The trouble is that where socio-economic standards deteriorate so too does the quality of participation by citizens and democratic accountability. What we then have is a weaker citizenry coupled with a growing mass of disenfranchised.

To make things worse, donors are often more wrapped up on how government relates to subjects rather than how citizens relate to government. "Good governance" is defined in a top-down rather than a bottom-up way. Post-Cold War neoliberal doctrine claimed that liberal democracy and the free market went hand in hand and were sure to produce prosperity for

everyone. In reality there is a fundamental tension between the two. There may be nominal equality under the law but there is no equality in the face of the market. A member of the World Health Organisation Task Force on Health in Development argued that the same policies which liberalise markets and privatise state holdings also tend to promote private affluence at the expense of communal rights and responsibilities. There is evidence that "free" trade and liberalisation have had diverse impacts on the enjoyment of the right to education, access to health care, particularly for the poorest, while at the same time undermining the right to self-determination.

Governments, rich and poor, for the most part do not wish to recognise how the economic and social power bestowed by "free market" policies tend to dispossess the less powerful of their ability to feed and clothe themselves, obstructing their efforts and rights to attain education, employment, health or the full realisation of their human potential. We are outraged and wage huge campaigns in regard to child labour, child prostitution or landmines. Immediately we demand that something be done. But when the child is denied an opportunity for schooling, when the prostitute is on the street on account of unemployment, when mines have to be eradicated from the heart as well from the land are we equally upset? How about the right to education, the right to economic opportunity, the right to peace? Or do we just simply say, let us hope that social programmes over the next generation will deal with this problem so that this child's grandchildren will not have to suffer? What about the fact that 90% of the pharmaceutical industry is in the hands of Northern transnationals whose monopolistic pricing policies make it impossible for millions to have access to essential medicines? Where is the outrage here?

Thus the distinction between socio-economic and civic-political rights is a false dichotomy. The right to life also means support for measures that reduce infant mortality, that increase life expectancy, that eliminate malnutrition and epidemics, that attack the causes of domestic violence and which help people to resolve their conflicts non-violently.

It is of course easier and safer politically to challenge the abuse of state power than to challenge economic injustice. Some effort has been made to address women's rights as human rights taking into account the fundamental principals of equality and non-discrimination. But much more is needed: challenging economic injustice means challenging structural adjustment policies. In donor countries this would mean challenging finance ministries

and government representatives at institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund who take major decisions in this regard. The network of Jubilee 2000 and debt coalitions active in a number of countries are examples of such efforts.

In all this accountability is essential. Commitment 8 of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development committed governments "to ensuring that when structural adjustment programmes are agreed to, they include social development goals, in particular eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and enhancing social integration".⁵

These same governments are also the members of the international financial institutions (IFIs). Thus the IFIs (i.e. the governments) must be held accountable for the impact of their policies. Human rights assessments of the policies and programmes of these institutions and mechanisms for ensuring full accountability and transparency are urgently required.

Transnational Corporations (TNCs) now account for 51 of the world's 100 largest economies and pose a different challenge. These corporations represent an overclass of global actors who are not subject to any binding international codes of conduct even though their operations have major impact on human rights particularly in areas such as labour and the environment. In the push to liberalise the global economy and market access for such corporations calls for their regulation have not met with success.

To reverse this situation a more coherent and integrated approach to human rights promotion is required. One in which trade and environmental concerns are set in the context of both development and economic well being. Just as the governments of the richer industrial nations now tend to accept that there should be no exceptions or moral abstention when it comes to violations of civil and political rights (barring of course good business customers like Saudi Arabia or China), they must also reach a similar consensus in dealing with violation of socio-economic rights. Of course, when those rights are not being questioned at home, it is not surprising that they are not promoted abroad.

Globalisation and human rights – the threat

From a human rights standpoint we must also be quite clear about this phenomenon called globalisation. The danger is that the denial of basic economic and social rights is blamed on so called globalisation, which is regarded by many as some amorphous, inevitable and universal phenomenon. This view must be rejected: globalisation is not the main cause of the poor employment opportunities and conditions prevailing in some countries. Domestic policies still play a more significant role. And whatever diminished capacity states may have to regulate capital is not, as the World Bank suggests, an outcome of globalisation but rather the result of pressures applied by the G7 and the IMF. New instruments are being created to further restrict states and provide even greater freedom to capital. In particular the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment increases the rights of foreign investors without imposing duties and requirements they have to adhere to in order to respect the rights of host communities. Thus such proposals would reduce the capacity of national governments to regulate investment and to protect the rights of their citizens.⁶

The deregulation of labour markets means the undermining of workers' rights and prevents the equitable distribution of the benefits of trade and investment as small producers are forced to compete against TNCs. This is underpinned by an unbridled optimism about the capacity of unregulated markets to promote growth and employment. This is a misguided belief. Without the right conditions, as the United Nations Development Programme has pointed out, growth can be jobless, futureless and rootless. Instead effective protection of human rights, what the World Bank calls "social fundamentals", requires that the state and international bodies re-regulate markets.

NGOs and social activists must contribute to an awareness North and South that in this so-called age of globalisation there are winners and losers and that they are found in the North and the South. Only in this way will the defence of human rights and peace-building form part of the political mainstream in all countries. Human rights are under attack every time politicians, North and South, pay lip service to equality of opportunity while conveniently overlooking the tremendous rise in income inequality over the past twenty years. According to the 1998 *Human Development Report* "the UK stands out for its

particularly steep rise in income inequality over the 1980s". The US, which ranks lowest in the OECD in terms of the human poverty index of the UNDP, is also home to more of the earth's 225 richest people than elsewhere (60 of the total with assets of \$311 billion).⁷

Clearly, then, it is the type of economic growth rather than growth rates per se which is central to human development outcomes. In a global economy where 1.3 billion people live on less than a dollar a day while the income share of the world's richest 20% compared to the poorest 20% has risen from 30:1 in 1960 to 60:1 in 1990 to a staggering 82:1 and according to latest UNDP statistics the type of growth being experienced is chronically unequal. Yet governments and the international financial institutions continue to claim the current path to development through growth is appropriate. In reality it neither makes for economic justice nor economic common sense.⁸

Neoliberalism challenges and obliges us to review our entire notion of human rights. Reaganism, Thatcherism and the Vatican for a time used "human rights" as an anti-Communist weapon. The Berlin Wall was torn down but we still witnessed a reluctance to discuss the relationship between human rights and politics and economics in the so-called West. The Vatican gave indications of change when Pope John Paul II specifically denounced neoliberalism during his recent visit to Cuba, the first time perhaps a Pope has ever employed the term.⁹

Indeed it is time for governments and activists to ask more searching questions about the nexus between human rights and political economy. The alternative is to remain hopelessly naive or to act in singular bad faith. Societies and communities have as many rights as individuals. Rather than focusing on special cases or emergencies in isolation, we must look at politics, economics and development as integrally related.

We must go beyond traditional definitions of human rights which focus mostly on civil and political rights. We must also defend and enhance needs and rights that are equally basic such as the right to a livelihood, protection from abuse, the right to affection, understanding, participation, leisure-time, an identity and freedom. Elections are just a discrete moment on the road to democracy. Peace-building and democratisation take time during which there is a need for people to realise their common interests. As Max-Neef has argued, only a participatory democracy can produce a state capable of generating the active citizenship necessary to defend and practice human rights. The

trappings for formal democracy will only be temporary cosmetics if the social foundation does not allow for genuine participation.

What this means is that human rights advocacy and human rights jurisprudence must continue to move forward in the direction, not of economics, but of ethics. It must raise issues of moral duty, not simply among human beings but between them and the environment. It must focus on building an ethical perspective, not simply as a philosophical exercise, but as a prelude and means to shaping political understanding and practice. We must empirically demonstrate how neoliberalism operates in a global context and highlight the moral implications of the human destruction it carries. The global economy is not like the weather or nature – its results are not inevitable. On the contrary, there is a strong element of deliberate political rational deliberation in its activities. Therefore we must explore the ways in which trade, investment, international co-operation, culture and governance can either help create or destroy conditions under which people can exercise their freedoms and can reach their full human potential.

Globalisation and human rights: the challenge

The global human rights consensus is weak and under attack. Urgent action is necessary to keep the consensus from unravelling. Differences persist: the North often poses as the sole custodian of human rights and moral values, appearing to act as God's terrible avenging angel. The South sometimes shields itself somewhat arrogantly assuming an inverse moral high ground claiming cultural identity, poverty or war as pretexts not to admit to the universality of human rights commitments.

As has been argued above the worth of a human being must not be determined by their output measured in economic terms. Such an approach means we know the price of everything but the value of nothing. This practice is not confined to the countries of East Asia. It is much broader than that, and indeed has its most dangerous expression in the North. Values and definitions of humanity are increasingly handed down and presented as an adjunct of the market and globalisation. As the Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has said: "The challenge we now face is for the different nations and peoples of the world to agree on a basic set of human values, which will serve as a

unifying force in the development of a genuine global community. Only then will we be able to look to a future where human beings are valued for what they are rather than for what they produce." Having said this every attempt must be made to avoid the risk of human rights strategies that dangerously entail taking refuge in a self-defined, moralistic, finger-pointing "political correctness". Human rights promotion thereupon comes to be defined not by the questions it asks, but by a specific set of answers.

We have basic universal norms, but questions appear when we draw links (or fail to do so) between human rights, development, peace and democracy. The insistence, for example, by the United States and other countries in the North on elections and judicial structures as the hallmarks of human rights and democratic processes has deflected a great deal of attention and resources from the much more important mission of strengthening civil society, developing strong communities, providing for basic human needs and stimulating processes oriented toward collaborative problem-solving.

Let us dare put our politics where our principles are. For the NGO community and human rights activists in donor countries it is imperative that concern for the rights of people in the South is matched with an understanding of the concerns of workers, women and the poor at home. Integrating human rights, peace, democracy and development may make life more difficult for NGOs; integrating domestic and external advocacy may raise a few eyebrows, but they have no choice. They must have the courage to say that human rights are not a foreign policy issue nor solely domestic, but a framework of obligations affecting law and policy, affecting morality and justice which are indivisible. Because Nigeria and Great Britain have about the same ratio of income inequality, should we not criticise them equally in this regard?

At the same time we in the South must broaden our actions to take up the concerns of people in the North particularly minorities, that contingent of the South that lives in the North. This may cause some surprise among our funders but we cannot pretend to be struggling for peace and justice in Nicaragua and not be alarmed by developments in countries of the North, and if called upon to lend what little resources we may have to make some contribution.

In our globalised world we must practice solidarity in all directions for it to be effective. The days of the missionary going from the developed North to the underdeveloped South are

over. And if we are to practice human rights interventions, then let these flow both ways, and let human rights be defended both ways. Otherwise the human rights field becomes one more battleground between North and South. In the face of this challenge, the human rights movement must redefine itself by associating itself with the women's movement, the peace-building movement, the environmental movement and, in our countries, the labour and peasant movements. NGOs and others in the fields of environment, development and human rights must work ever closer together in a multi-dimensional approach to peace-building and human rights protection.

I think there is no choice: the entire scheme of representative democracy is in danger, increasingly restricted by global power structures and by our own failures to build countervailing networks. Elections may be routine surgery in the practice of representative democracy, but true democratic practice, measured by accountability, participation, and respect by all for the rule of law and justice, is still in the emergency ward. Yet at the same time the information revolution creates more opportunities for communication and mobilisation among citizens which can help ensure that representative democracy gives rise not to a model of democracy which is little more than a paper exercise, but instead to a participative model, which is more capable of meeting new threats and opportunities.

Conclusion

If the defence and promotion of all human rights is above all a human calling, then the failure to recognise and redress suffering, wherever it may exist, entails a diminution of our individual and our common humanity. We require inspiration and faith, and if we look hard enough around us I am convinced we will find not one but a hundred alternatives in the making. Along with archaic governments in Central America one also finds profoundly democratic and participative politics taking place.

An example of this is a programme for former insurgents and soldiers in Nicaragua, supported by Trócaire. This group, who spent nearly a decade waging war against each other, are now at peace and working together both in terms of peace education but also in building alternative economic opportunities as they recognise that poverty itself remains a form of violence. Their

example has inspired similar dynamics in Colombia, El Salvador, and Guatemala and even in far off Mozambique, where another Trócaire-supported Peace Promoter Network, mainly made up of ex-soldiers from each side, is now turning to community building and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. These Peace Promoters are not neutral in conflicts; they are partial to justice and the interests of the oppressed. But they also want to prevent people from getting killed. This is not therefore a moment for resignation or for optimism. It is a time for engagement.

Bibliography

- Phillip Alton, "Making economic and social rights count: a strategy for the future," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 68, no.2, April-June 1997
- Julia Ausermann, "Securing all human rights for all people", paper presented at seminar organised by One World Action, Foreign Policy in the twenty-first century, October, 1997
- Kevin Clements, "President's Report on the International Peace Research Association", *International Peace Research Newsletter*, vol. XXXV, no. 3, September 1997
- Alex de Waal, *The Times Literary Supplement* and Alexander Coakburn in *The Nation*, 10 June 1997
- Horn of Africa Bulletin* "Relief and development", Life and Peace Institute, Uppsala, vol. 9, no. 6, November-December 1997
- Just Commentary*, "Towards a culture of peace and development", no. 6, Malaysia, November 1997
- Manfred Max-Neef, *Human Scale Development: Conception, Application and Further Reflections*, Apex Press, New York, 1991
- "Opportunity Knocks", *The Economist*, 10 August 1996
- World Bank, *World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997

Footnotes

- 1 World Bank, *Global Development Finance*, 1998
- 2 CEPAL and civil defence estimates cited in *Nuevo Diario*, 28 December 1997; Centro Nicaraguense de Derechos Humanos, *Informe Anual 1997*, Managua, 1998, p.11
- 3 While the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group are associated bodies of the UN system, the World Trade Organisation falls outside the UN system.
- 4 See "Ex-prisoners and social exclusion", *Fortnight*, Belfast, no. 21, October, 1997
- 5 "Poverty is inseparably linked to lack of control over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections. Without those resources people are easily neglected by policy makers and have limited access to institutions, markets, employment and public services." World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995
- 6 Oxfam UK and Ireland Briefing Paper, "The OECD Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI)", October, 1997
- 7 The human poverty index devised by the UNDP in 1997 assesses poverty using a broad range of measures including functional illiteracy levels, the share of the population not expected to survive to the age of 60, the

percentage of the population below the income poverty line and the percentage of the labour force who are long-term unemployed (i.e. for 12 months or more). Among the OECD countries Sweden fares best and the US ranks lowest. In fact the US ranks top of the OECD league in GDP per capita in dollar purchasing power parity terms and Sweden ranks 13th. Hence there are significant differences in country rankings under both measures and the statistics reveal that a strong performance in GDP terms does not necessarily translate into resources being effectively applied to tackling human poverty.

8 UNDP, *Human Development Report 1996*, chapter 3

9 Pope John Paul II referred to this injustice in a 1979 encyclical: "So widespread is the phenomenon that it brings into question the financial, monetary, production and commercial mechanisms that, resting on various political pressures, support the world economy. These are proving incapable either of remedying the unjust social situations inherited from the past or of dealing with the urgent challenges and ethical demands of the present. By submitting man to tensions created by himself, dilapidating at an accelerated pace material and energy resources, and compromising the geophysical environment, these structures unceasingly make the areas of misery spread, accompanied by anguish, frustration and bitterness.... This difficult road of the indispensable transformation of the structures of economic life is one on which it will not be easy to go forward without the intervention of a true conversion of mind, will and heart. The task requires resolute commitment by individuals and peoples that are free and linked in solidarity". John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Redemptor hominis*, 1979, no. 16