Summary of Main Speech and Conclusive Remark by **Jean-Marie Guéhenno**
at Seminar, "Inclusivity in Rebuilding States: Focusing on Inclusivity of Peace Negotiations and
Its Impact on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding" (6 June 2013)

Jean-Marie Guéhenno

Main Speech :

Mr. Guéhenno thanked the Japanese and the Tanzanian missions for initiating the seminar on this
very important, sensitive, and difficult question.

Mr. Guéhenno stated that more and more wars do not end in a military victory; thus, peace
agreements define peace after the war. More non-state actors are also involved in conflicts. Thus,
the matter of inclusivity becomes more challenging.

There is a growing understanding that if peace is to be sustained, it has to have a broad base.
Which groups without guns should be included? This topic is very important for the UN because
the UN is often better positioned to make tough decision on the broader participation; of course,
the UN needs to talk with member states and stakeholders, but it might be able to take further
steps to ensure inclusivity than many member states could do. Thus, this discussion with such
distinguished representatives of member states and the UN Secretariat is particularly topical and
important.

Guéhenno stressed that peace is a process, not an event. Peace agreements are not the end of war
but should be the beginning of a new phase of peace. He then formulated four questions:

(1) Which parties within an afflicted country should be included in the peace process?
(2) Which actors outside of the country should be included in the peace process?
(3) Which national actors in a conflicted country that did not fight should be included? What is
the best balance of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach?
(4) When we look at all conflicting needs, how can we reconcile those conflicting needs and
create long-term peace?

(1)   On the first question (Which parties within an afflicted country should be included in the
peace process?), Guéhenno stressed that there is a fundamental tradeoff between participation
and exclusion. Participation creates legitimacy; exclusion can create spoilers. We cannot escape
from this tradeoff. The question of this tradeoff becomes very sensitive when you might exclude
some parties. Guéhenno stressed that there seems to be an international trend toward less, rather
than more, inclusivity. Guéhenno argued that the ICC has a major impact on peace negotiations.
There is a growing assumption that talking to the enemy is an award. That attitude often
underestimates the resilience of the enemy. And continued demonization of an enemy can come
back to haunt us. He stated that everybody at the Bonn Conference for Afghanistan in 2001
believed that the Taliban should not attend. In 2002, Ambassador Brahimi told him that the

Taliban had not vanished. Now we have a lot of discussion on how to engage with the Taliban. But it would have been much wiser to engage with them when they were much weaker and marginalized. It may be academic, though, as it was in reality difficult, but it may be an issue that we should think about in the future. It is true that exclusion can sometimes weaken conflicted parties. But sometimes exclusion might not be beneficial to the parties included because it might strengthen other, more radical groups. Guéhenno indicated that the exclusion of Hamas might strengthen more radical groups in Gaza.

(2) On the second question (Which actors outside of the country should be included in the peace process?), Guéhenno stressed that there is also the same trade-off between inclusion , which creates legitimacy, and exclusion, which creates spoilers. As the world has become more polarized, the tendency by the international community to exclude states who challenge the status quo has increased. The tendency of exclusion is on the rise. This question of external actors is getting more important for organizations like the United Nations. Do we want a world, Guéhenno asked, where there will be no place where the worst of the worst can be engaged? We cannot put them on Mars. The UN is a convenient place in which to create spaces for people and nations to be included. He emphasized that it is a difficult but topical question for the UN.

He also raised other issues to think about concerning including external actors: If we include regional actors, are we importing regional conflicts into domestic conflicts? At the same time, without understanding the regional dimension, it is difficult to find solutions for some domestic conflicts. Syria is a prime example of the difficulty in answering these questions, as there are differing views on which regional powers should be included in the Geneva II conference. It shows the great difficulty of balancing the "need not to create regional spoilers" and the "need not to make complicated conflicts more complicated" by including more external actors.

There's also the question of national sovereignty—how the inclusion of outside actors in the peace process will be perceived by those inside the country. When a civil war ends, the people in the country should define the future of their country. But the complication is that many conflicts have internal and outside dimensions, and those two are intertwined. DRC is the typical case. Congolese people are skeptical that their neighbors are influencing internal issues that should be dealt with by the Congolese. There is also the need to balance legitimate national ownership and the need to include regional actors so that they will become part of the solution, not part of the problem.

(3) Regarding the third question (How to include actors who did not fight in the war), Guéhenno believes that a bottom-up approach is more useful than a top-down one. Even the groups who have the guns recognize that they should not dictate the terms of peace. And long-term peace or sustainable peace can have a much better chance if a broader spectrum of people are involved in the peace process; thus, a voice must be given to those "with no guns," so that critical mass is reached and they become a lobbying force to support peace. "People with guns" will have second thoughts before destroying the peace.

A prime example is Liberia, where the role women played in the peace process was quite extraordinary. The people with guns tend to be polarized. Civil society is a neglected group, and

civil society has a bridging role to play, as it can sometimes cross the division of the most polarized in a way that governments are unable or unwilling to do. Of course, there is always the risk that civil society may be manipulated. However, the inclusion of civil society can create an awareness that didn't exist before.

How to reconcile these different questions? Guéhenno answered that the dominant theme throughout these questions was the need for astute political judgment. It requires political judgment and knowledge to understand the political dynamics on the ground. The dynamics, trends, tactics, and interests of players must be assessed. Of course, this is often extremely difficult or even impossible to achieve, especially in cases like Syria. Deep knowledge is needed to judge who should be included and excluded.

Guéhenno said that he personally leaned toward more inclusion rather than less, though he stressed that inclusion was not always an either/or question. For example, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue and other foundations and NGOs can sometimes reach out to groups that have been officially excluded, with the consent of governments. The government might not want to confer legitimacy on those groups but may still want to engage with them. Thus, NGOS can play an important role in advancing the political process.

On the other hand, registering parties as terrorist groups is not so helpful. The negotiation of preconditions for inclusion can further delay political talks. The format of the negotiation process can be well designed in a way that can address sovereignty concerns, so that external actors still can be part of the process but the most important decision-making power is left with national actors.

In conclusion, if well-conducted, negotiation of a peace agreement can be the best introduction for the necessary "give and take" which is required for long-term peace. If we cannot design the framework that will allow people to talk each other, it is very unlikely that they can work together in the future to rebuild countries. It becomes almost impossible if most of the important parties are excluded from the state rebuilding process. Thus, negotiators should design the peace process by addressing the foundations of inclusive political process and negotiation.

Conclusive Remark:

Guéhenno presented four points as his concluding remarks.

(1) The states and the UN should have different approaches for inclusivity. The states sometimes use inclusion and exclusion of some parties as leverage or power, but the UN's currency is impartiality, and impartiality comes from inclusiveness; thus inclusivity is more important for the UN than for its member tates.

(2) It is very important to have a strong bottom-up approach in peace negotiations because it is the only way for society to allow many communities of people to participate in the peace process. Inclusion of people who did not directly fight is crucial because those people—

women, civil society, and the vulnerable—can be very strong forces to defend the peace process.

(3) Peace is a process, not an event. As Scott mentioned, it might not be the Bohn conference in 2001 that failed but the process after the conference. This experience gives us the insight that we should be modest enough to accept that there are many things that we do not know, as a famous scholar says (Laugh). The process can change very quickly; thus we should never say that we know the future.

(4) Outside factors are crucial. There is a very difficult dilemma between local ownership and outside influence. The outsiders can make suggestions and give advice, but we should not give suggestions and recommendations without modesty. We should always advise the people who have been engaged in a conflict with respect and humility because at the end of the day, it is them and their leaders who will determine their own future.