Chapter 2

Perspective on Rebuilding a Collapsed State

It is now a common understanding that the gravest dangers to the global security are no longer military threats from rival great powers, but rather transnational threats emanating from the world's most poorly governed countries. This fact is even more distinct post 9/11. Now, the failed states matter - not just for humanitarian reasons but for national security as well. These 'failed' states, it is believed, breed instability and provide safe havens for drug production and trafficking, international terrorism and other global crime. Today, Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan have vast 'ungoverned spaces' where terrorists can congregate, organise and plan attack. State failure is often accompanied or caused by civil war. After igniting one country, it has the potential for spill-over to neighbouring countries often affecting an entire region. In today's globalised world as interdependence has increased, the threats posed by failed states have also intensified.

Thinkers such as Francis Fukuyama state that, "since the end of the Cold War, weak and failing states have arguably become the single-most important problem for international order" (Fukuyama 2004: 92). Official statements from Washington also agree with the Fukuyama's view. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice had declared that nations incapable of exercising "responsible sovereignty" have a "spillover effect" in the form of terrorism, weapons proliferation, and other dangers (Garfinkle 2005: 47-50). The changed outlook on weak and failing states represents an important shift in US threat perceptions. Before the September 11 attacks, US policymakers viewed states with sovereignty deficits exclusively through a humanitarian lens; motivated by a sense of moral responsibility or simply for reasons of charity, trying to help alleviate global poverty. Failed and fragile states piqued the moral conscience of the developed world especially US but possessed little strategic significance. Al-Qaeda's ability to act with impunity from Afghanistan changed this calculus, convincing President George W. Bush and his administration that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones" (National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2002: 1).

The concern about state failure has led the international community in recent years to follow a two-pronged strategy. First, as international consensus develops
about the future direction of governance of a failed state, it has mobilised significant resources to restore and rebuild the state. Afghanistan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Haiti are all examples of such internationally-led ‘post conflict’ reconstruction efforts. The second and an important approach has been a realisation that prevention of state failure also needs equal attention. Therefore many observers are attempting to define ‘fragile states’ that have the potential of becoming failed states in future, and to tailor specific international development efforts to halting or reversing their decline.

Afghanistan – torn by decades of war, internal strife, and repression – exemplified the dangers posed by failed states. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, in the post-Cold War decade of 90’s the conventional wisdom in the United States and elsewhere held that Afghanistan did not really affect the US interests. Situation changed drastically since September 11 and the threat posed by Al’-Qaeda and the Taliban was recognised, to which the United States responded forcefully and decisively. The present chapter discusses in detail the theoretical concepts of post conflict reconstruction process along with the review of literature. It probes into the problems and prospects of states emerging from the conflict and heading towards the rebuilding process. The factors leading to the states’ failure and the manner in which their deterioration can be prevented have also been examined. It further probes the international response of dealing with failed states and rebuilding the state after conflict.

2.1 Defining State Fragility, Failure and Collapse

There is no universally defined number of weak and failing states. The Commission on Weak States and US National Security estimates that there are between 50 and 60; the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development classifies 46 nations with about 870 million inhabitants as “fragile”; and the World Bank treats 30 countries as LICUS (Commission of Weak States and US National Security 2004; DFID 2005: 27-28; World Bank 2002). These divergent estimates reflect differences in the criteria used to define state weakness, the indicators used to gauge it, and the relative weighting of various aspects of governance.

Since the beginning of the 1990s academics and policy makers have been interested in state failure. The concept of state failure was popularised by Madeleine Albright and others at the United Nations in the early 1990s (Gross 1996: 455-472), although the political scientist Robert H. Jackshon was writing about a similar topic-

Despite the large body of scholarly writings on the subject, there is no agreement on the definition of state failure. The most widely accepted definition is by Zartman, who defines failure as occurring when ‘the basic functions of the state are no longer performed’ (Zartman 1995). A failed state is one that has few or no functioning state institutions that can confer identity and assure security to the population. In the process, the government loses its legitimacy, both nationally and internationally.

Various writings on the subject of state failure tend to use interchangeably the words ‘weak’, ‘fragile’, ‘failing’, ‘failed’ and ‘collapsed’. These terms in practice describe a continuum, with fragile states at one end and failed/collapsed states at the other. The difference between failed and collapsed states is relevant for international action. Jennifer Milliken and Keith Krause have probed the conceptualisation by differentiating between state failure and state collapse (Milliken and Krause 2002: 753-774). In their view state failure is ‘functional’ event that occurs when a state does not fulfil its major responsibilities. State collapse is a much rarer ‘institutional’ event that occur when state institutions crumble completely, leaving political disorder and a void of authority.

Milliken and Krause (2002: 753-774) argue that in recent year’s only states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Congo/Zaire and perhaps Albania seem to fit this definition. Categorising a state as failed or collapsed is important because it helps to distinguish what types of international action are possible. When a state fails, there is still a government to be dealt with – albeit a dysfunctional one- whereas, in state
collapse, the absence of a governing regime can render the standard tools of international diplomacy and/or coercion ineffective.

Although it is often stated that some kind of governing regime is better than no authority at all, with respect both to the well-being of a large proportion of the local population and the benefit to international stability. But, the irony of this argument is illustrated by the situation in Afghanistan under the infamous Taliban regime. The establishment of effective Taliban rule in the majority of the country did not prevent the new regime from sheltering international terrorists, from increasing exponentially the production and export of opium, from virtually enslaving women and from committing atrocities against ethnic and religious minority groups in the north of the country.

Since the post-Cold War upsurge in the phenomenon of state collapse, there has been an ongoing debate between theories of state decline and theories that point to the resilience of the state as the primary model of political organisation. The theory of the decline of the state is a complex proposition based on a variety of political, economic, social, technological and ideological developments around the globe. It predicts that globalisation which involves the ascendancy of transnational activity at both supranational and sub-state level and the increasing political and economic interdependence among states will eventually marginalise the state. On the contrary, the theory of the resilience of the state points to the heightening global problems such as increasing economic and social disparities, as persistent international financial instability, and global environmental demographic pressures.

The propounders of state resilience theory argue that state is the only force that can provide the structures of authority necessary to cope with the incessant claims of competing societal groups and to ensure social justice and sustainable development essential to public order and stability. For Eric Hobsbawn, for example, a major lesson of the twentieth century is that ‘the state, or some other form of public authority representing the public interest, was more indispensable than ever if the social and environmental iniquities of the market economy were to be countered, or even – as the reform of capitalism in the 1940s had shown – if the economic system was to operate satisfactorily’ (Hobsbawm 1994: 577). It appears that the central issue today, in terms of the future of the state, is to identify the mechanisms needed to sustain a dynamic equilibrium between the forces of economic growth and informal
redistribution of wealth, and the forces of social justice and formal social distribution in an intensely internationalised world, both in terms of opportunities and risks.

State collapse is often considered as the ultimate form of state decline: 'the most dramatic examples of the decline in state authority can be found in countries where government and civil order have virtually disappeared' (Schachter 1997: 8). Michael Reisman adds: 'more than any other phenomenon, the disintegrating state has prompted doubts about the future of the state' (Reisman 1997: 417).

State disintegration is also associated with the theories of state decline because it is largely viewed as emanating from the destabilization of the world's domestic political systems in the aftermath of the Cold War and, especially, from the increasing marginalisation of the state as a force capable of handling the impact of globalization and harnessing the growing strength of non-state and sub-state actors. While the forces of international capitalism and globalization are considered to be behind the financial instability and marginalization of certain parts of the world, and thus undermining the authority of the state from outside, the various forms of 'uncivil society', several kinds of non-state and sub-state actors, are the major and most visible forces that erode state authority not only from outside but also from within (Yannis 2002: 821). Richard Shultz put it as follows:

*The end of the Cold War has been marked by an increase in the visibility of several non-state actors. They include extreme ethno-nationalist movements, religious radicals, local militias, international criminal organisations and terrorists, among others.... Some of these non-state actors effectively defy and openly challenge government sovereignty in various regions of the world... These developments result in the disintegration of state structures and authority, growing instability, and the inability of states to govern* (Shultz 1995: 76).

### 2.2 Performance Criteria of State Failure

Nation-states fail when they are consumed by internal violence and cease delivering positive political goods to their citizens. Their government lose credibility and the continuing nature of the particular nation state itself becomes illegitimate amongst the citizens. Under normal circumstances the function of nation-state is to provide a decentralised method of delivering political goods to a certain number of people living within defined border. Modern states look after the welfare of its citizenries. They organise and channel the interests of their people, often but not exclusively in furtherance of national goals and values. States buffer or manipulate
external forces and influences, champion the local or particular concerns of its people, and mediate between the constraints and challenges of the international arena and the dynamism of their own internal economic, political, and social realities.

States succeed or fail across all or some of these dimensions. But, it is according to their performances – according to the levels of their effective delivery of the most crucial political goods – on the basis of which, strong states may be distinguished from weak ones, and weak states from failed or collapsed ones. Political goods are those intangible and hard to quantify claims that citizens make on states. They include indigenous expectations, conceivably obligations, inform the local political culture, and together give content to the social contract between the ruler and ruled that is the core of the government and citizenry interactions (Pennock 1966).

There is a hierarchy of political goods. Amongst these goods security especially human security is of prime importance. The state’s prime function is to provide that political good of security – to prevent cross border invasions and infiltrations, and any loss of territory; to eliminate domestic threats to or attacks upon the national order and social structure; to prevent its citizens from the terrorist attacks; to prevent crime and any related dangers to domestic human security; and to enable citizens to resolve their differences with the state and with their fellow inhabitants without recourse to arms or other forms of physical coercion.

The range of other political goods can be delivered when a reasonable measure of security has been sustained. Modern states – as successors to sovereigns – provide predictable, recognizable, systematized methods of adjudicating disputes and regulating both the norms and the prevailing mores of a particular society or polity. The essence of that political good unusually implies codes and procedures that together comprise an enforceable body of law, security of property and inviolable contracts, an effective judicial system, and a set of norms that legitimate and validate the values embodied in a local version of the rule of law. Another important political good enables its citizen with the political freedom so that they can openly participate in politics and the political process. This good encompasses the essential freedom: the right to participate in politics and compete for office; respect and support for national and regional political institutions, such as legislature and courts; tolerance of dissent and difference; and fundamental civil and human rights (Rotberg 2004: 3).

Various other political goods provided by states, although their privatized variants may be available include medical and health care – at varying levels and
costs; schools and educational institution of various kinds and levels; various physical infrastructure like roads and railways which are the arteries of commerce; communication networks; money and banking system, usually presided over by a central bank and lubricated by a national currency; a beneficent fiscal and institutional contest within which citizens can pursue personal entrepreneurial goals, and potentially prosper; space for the proper development of the civil society; and the methods of regulating the sharing of the environmental commons. Together, this set of political goods, establishes a set of criteria according to which modern nation-states may be judged as strong, weak or failed.

Strong states perform well across these categories and with respect to each, separately. Weak states show a mixed profile, fulfilling expectations in some areas and performing poorly in others. The more poorly weak states perform, criterion by criterion, the weaker they become and the more that weakness tends to slide towards failure, hence the specific subcategory of weakness that is termed “failing” (Rotberg 2004: 4). Many failed states flunk in each of the political goods. But, they need not flunk in all to fail overall, as some political goods like security weigh heavily and are of prime importance. An ineffective security can be a major cause of state failure. In Afghanistan, after the withdrawal of Soviet forces the rapid decline in human security as well as the destruction of the remaining physical infrastructure led to the state failure.

Strong states have full control over their territories and deliver a full range with a high quality of political goods to their citizens. They perform well according to indicators like GDP per capita, the UNDP Human Development Index, Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index, and Freedom House’s *Freedom of the World Report*. Strong states have high levels of security with a well developed infrastructure. They ensure political freedom and civil liberties, and create environments conducive to the growth of economic opportunity. Overall, in strong states peace and the rule of law prevails.

Weak states may be inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints; or they may be basically strong, but temporarily or situationally weak because of internal antagonisms, management flaws, greed, despotism, or external attacks. Weak states typically harbour ethnic, religious, linguistic or other inter-communal tensions have not yet, or not yet thoroughly, become overtly violent. In weak state the deliverance of political goods is diminished
or is diminishing. Physical infrastructure networks are deteriorated. Schools and hospitals show signs of neglect, particularly outside the main cities. GDP per capita and other critical economic indicators have fallen or are falling sometimes dramatically; levels of venal corruption are embarrassingly high and escalating. Weak states usually honour rule of law precepts in the breach. They harass civil society. Weak states are often ruled by despots, elected or not.

2.3 Failed and Collapsed States

Failed states are tense deeply, conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions. In most failed states government troops battle armed revolts led by one or more rivals. Occasionally, the official authorities in failed state face insurgencies, varieties of civil unrest, different degree of communal discontent, and excessive dissent directed at the state and at groups within the state. The civil wars that characterise failed states usually stem from or have roots in ethnic, religious, linguistic or other inter-communal enmity. There is no failed state without differences between communities. In most failed states, regimes oppress their own constituents. Driven by ethnic or other inter-communal hostility, or by governing elite’s insecurities, they victimise their own citizens or some minority. As in the Taliban’s Afghanistan ruling cadres increasingly oppressed, extorted, and harassed the majority of their compatriots while privileging a more narrowly based party, and community.

In contrast to strong states, failed states cannot effectively control their border regions especially those regions occupied by other groups. They lose authority over large sections of territory. Often, the expression of official power is limited to a capital city and to one or more ethnically specific zones. Plausibly, the extent of state’s failure can be measured by the extent of its geographical expanse genuinely controlled (especially after dark) by the official government. Another indicator of state failure is the growth of criminal violence. With the growth of lawlessness, criminal gangs takeover the streets of the city. Arms and drug trafficking become apparent. Ordinary police forces become handicapped. For protection, citizens naturally turn to warlords and other strong figures who express or activate ethnic or clan solidarity, thus offering the possibility of security at a time when all else, including the state itself is crumbling. High rates of urban crime, and the rise of criminal syndicates, testify to an underlying anarchy and desperation.
Failed states exhibit flawed institutions. That is, only the institutions of the executive functions. If the legislature is functioning, it ratifies the decisions of the executive. The judiciary is also hand in glove with the executive rather than being independent. The bureaucracy also exists solely to carry out the orders of the executive and, is often used to oppress citizens. The military of a failed state is also highly politicized, devoid of the spirit that they once demonstrated (Rotberg 2004: 7).

Failed states are marked by deteriorating or destroyed infrastructures. When a state has failed or is in the process of failing, the effective educational and medical systems are privatized informally, and public facilities become increasingly decrepit and neglected. Government employees are not paid on time, increasing their absenteeism from duty. Literacy rates fall, infant mortality rises, average life expectancy declines, and an already poor and battered citizenry becomes even poorer and more immiserated. Citizens slowly realise that the state has abandoned them to their own devices and to the forces of nature.

In a failed state an unparalleled economic opportunity is available - but only for a privileged few. Corruption flourishes at an unusually destructive scale. Escalating levels of venal corruption mark failed states: kickbacks on anything that can be put out to fake tender; unnecessarily wasteful construction projects; licenses for existing and nonexistent activities become more costly; and persistent and generalized extortion becomes the norm. An indicator of failure, but not a cause of failure, is declining real national and per capita levels of annual gross domestic product (GDP, or GNI, in the World Bank’s latest compilations). Inflation usually soars because rulers raid the central bank and also print money. In a completely failed state, the local currency falls out of favour and one or more international currencies takes its place. Business of money changers thrive, and arbitrage becomes a steady pursuit.

A collapsed state is a rare and extreme version of a failed state. In such state political goods are obtained through private or ad-hoc means. A collapsed state exhibits a vacuum of authority. It is a mere geographical expression, a black hole into which a polity has fallen. Afghanistan, Bosnia, Lebanon, Nigeria and Sierra Leone have all been listed into a collapsed state in the 1990s. When those collapses occurred, sub-state actors took over, as they always do when the prime polity disappears. Those warlords or sub-state actors, gained control over regions and sub-regions within what had been a nation state, built up their own local security apparatuses and mechanisms, sanctioned trading arrangements, and even established an attenuated form of
international relations. Despite the transforming of the collapsed state into warlord fiefdoms, there still is a prevalence of disorder, anomic behaviour, and the kind of anarchic mentality and entrepreneurial endeavours – especially small arms and drug trafficking – that are compatible with external networks of terror.

Afghanistan and Sierra Leone have graduated from collapse to failure. Lebanon, Nigeria, and Tajikistan recovered from collapse, and are now weak. Zimbabwe and Cote d'Ivoire are rapidly moving from strength towards catastrophic failure. State failure is a fluid halting place, with movement back to weakness and forward into collapse always possible. Certainly, too, because failure and collapse are undesirable results for states, they are neither inevitable nor unavoidable. Failure is preventable, particularly since human agency, rather than structural flaws or institutional insufficiencies, is almost invariably at the root of slides from state weakness towards failure and ultimately leading to its collapse. Afghanistan's collapse could have been prevented if it would not have been suddenly abandoned by the superpowers. On the contrary, after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, US also lost interest in the faltering state as it was left to decay on its own fate. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Burrhan-ul-din Rabani tried to prevent Afghans other than their own Pashtun and Tajik fellow nationals from sharing the perquisites of governance; their narrowly focused, self-enriching decision enabled the Taliban to follow them in triumph in the 1990s and Afghanistan to descent into all-out terror (Rubin 2000: 1789-1803).

2.4 Small Arms Diffusion, Paramilitary Bands and State Failure

State failure usually results from the prolonged interaction of a number of powerful corrosive factors, including economic stagnation, political and ethnic factionalism, pervasive corruption, decaying national infrastructure and various other associated factors. At an early or intermediate stage of state decline, a complete state collapse can be averted under effective leadership. Even in the absence of such leadership, an ailing state can remain in a weakened condition for many years without slipping into total disarray. But a state's capacity to resist failure can decline swiftly when armed militias emerge or the official security forces break up into semi-autonomous bands. Once established, these groups compete with one another for control of territory, population, and resources – indulging the country to recurring
bouts of violence and disorder. Under such circumstances, the transition from failing to failed state is usually irreversible.

Greatly contributing to the emergence and offensiveness of armed bands is the widespread proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These weapons – assault rifles, submachine guns, rocket propelled grenades, light mortars, land mines and others – have become the regularly used weapons by ethnic militias, guerrilla groups, death squads, warlord armies, and other paramilitary formations. Small arms occupy a middle ground between non military firearms and the major weapons used by modern military forces (Singh 1995). Such weapons are particularly attractive to non state actors because they are cheap, easy to handle, and are readily available from black-market sources. By the end of Cold War excessive small arms have become easily available, in the global market. Thus, making it relatively easy for ethnic militias and other paramilitary groups to obtain sufficient arms to challenge the established forces of the state and wreak havoc in already weak and divided societies (Boutwell and Klare 1999).

The approach of a modern nation-state is associated with the suppression of brigands, private armies, and other autonomous military formations by the central government. A functioning state must be capable of protecting its citizens from external attack and internal disorder. To protect the nation from foreign invasion and to preserve social stability, the nation-state has been endowed by law and practice with certain fundamental powers: to levy taxes, to conscript young men (and sometimes women) into the armed services, and to regulate the production and distribution of firearms. In acquiring these powers, the state also assumes an obligation to protect its constituent population from random and unauthorized violence. When a state can no longer provide such security, its authority withers and failure is unquestionable.

A declining state can continue to exercise some degree of authority, however attenuated, for as long as its monopoly over the legitimate use of violence remains unchallenged. But, once sub state organisations of paramilitary nature, ethnic militias, separatist forces, guerrilla groups, warlord armies and other non state actors – begin to form, the central government must act swiftly to disarm and dissolve these entities or its control over the nation will rapidly decline. Such formations, once established, usually seek to eliminate all vestiges of central governmental authority within their area of operations and to assume for themselves the “rights” of government: taxation,
conscription, resource allocation, and so forth (Reno 1995: 109-120). Hassner has characterised this process as a "return to the Middle Ages," in which central state authority is replaced by a welter of competing power blocs (Hassner 1993: 125-141). In the view of Kaldor this represents the reversal of the process of state building associated with the rise of the modern nation-state (Kaldor 1999: 13-60, 69-89).

The emergence of non-state actors is usually accompanied by several other phenomena that are closely associated with state failure. These include the outbreak of an internal arms race between competing ethnic and sectarian militias, the widespread privatisation of security, and the diversion of scarce resources to arms procurement and military operations. Ethnic and sectarian groups view the formation of armed militias by other such groups as direct threat to their survival. Each party seeks to match the capabilities of its rivals, and, in so doing, triggers further preparations by all concerned - producing an atmosphere of anxiety and suspicion in which even a minor incident can spark a bloody confrontation (Posen 1993: 103-124).

Even more insidious, perhaps is the tendency for armed militias and insurgent groups to indulge into illegal trading activities in order to finance the acquisition of weapons and other allied routine activities. For generating operating funds, such groups are engaged in drug trafficking, smuggling, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, prostitution, illegal logging, or the sale of outlawed animal products (Naylor 2000: 155-182). To counter the non state actors, state has to divert its resources from productive activities to arms procurement and the upkeep of paramilitary organisations. For the state, this means the diversion of funds from development projects and basic civil services to the military. Such a practice inevitably undermines the state's long-term durability and legitimacy. For private firms and individuals, this means the diversion of resources from productive activities to the employment of private security firms (Klare 2004: 116-134).

Another threat to the survival of weak and failing states which is closely related to the rise of paramilitary bands is the widespread diffusion of small arms and light weapons, throughout the society. Due to their easy availability at affordable prices they penetrate civil society at all levels. Although it is impossible to provide an exact tally of all such weapons in worldwide circulation, the numbers are staggering. According to the Small Arms Survey (a project of the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland), there were approximately 550 million small arms in worldwide circulation in 2001, of which 305,000 were thought to be in
private hands and 245,000 in the hands of government forces and insurgent bands (Small Arms Survey 2001: 88-89). Included in this figure are approximately 100 million military-type assault rifles - an amount that includes an estimated 50-60 million AK-47s (Renner 1997: 20).

US – Soviet competition during the Cold War era has greatly contributed to the easy availability of small arms around the world. As part of their policy of supporting the military and police forces of friendly developing nations, Washington and Moscow each provided such states with literally millions of rifles, carbines and submachine guns. In the pursuit of global competition, both the superpowers provided small arms and light weapons to antigovernment insurgents in countries ruled by the allies of the opposing superpower. The United States, for example provided weapons to the mujahideen in Afghanistan, the contrarrevolucionarios (“contras”) in Nicaragua, UNITA in Angola, and antigovernment insurgents in Libya and Cambodia. The Soviet Union, for its part, provided weapons to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the African National Congress, and the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation of El Salvador (FMLN) (Mathiak and Lumpe 2000: 55-80). Weapons supplied during the Cold War period are still in use or have been sold or given to insurgents to other countries. Elements of the Afghan mujahideen, for example, are believed to have provided arms to insurgents in Kashmir (Smith 1995: 61-80).

The end of the Cold War has also facilitated the global diffusion of small arms. Factories that once supplied weapons to NATO and Warsaw Pact forces have found new customers in the developing world – ignoring the political environment in these countries, just to secure lucrative contracts. In addition, the surplus weapons have been offered for sale at very low prices by former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact forces – without taking note of the intended recipient. Such surplus stocks are widely believed to constitute the main source of arms for the conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo and Central Africa.

It can be deduced that the emergence of paramilitary bands and the diffusion of small arms represent a potent threat to the survival of weak and vulnerable states. Together, they form the lethal combination that poses the greatest threat to the social and political stability. Once paramilitary bands are formed and acquire power by the accumulation of substantial stocks of arms and ammunition, that country is destined to face severe problems. The concerned government may not let the situation slip completely out of control and may be successful in averting total failure, but it is
almost certain to lose control of significant areas of the countryside. Often, the restoration of the civil order will need the assistance from the outside forces.

Simply controlling the arms supply to the problem areas will not, of course, eliminate the problem of state failure. So long as the root cause of state unrest is left unattended, weak states will continue to slide towards collapse. Therefore the local and international response must be able to focus on the underlying causes of decay. The priority should be to devise and implement strategies for improving the economic and political performance of failing states. International donors, peacekeeping troops and other intervening forces must take action to prevent the rise of paramilitary groups and the diffusion of small arms and light weapons. Such efforts must, therefore, constitute an essential component of any strategy for averting the failure of weak and vulnerable states and for managing the reconstitution of fully collapsed states.

2.5 International Responses towards Failed States

Two prominent symptoms of failed states are: (i) failure to ensure security for the major portion of the population, and (ii) failure to fulfil the basic needs of its citizens. These symptoms ultimately lead to the loss of the legitimacy of the government both domestically and internationally. Therefore, the international response of dealing with a failed state is to have a new legitimate national government and assisting in the establishment of security and economic development. A very important aspect of rebuilding the failed state is to provide security assistance. This often takes place through the insertion of multinational peacekeeping forces, but in some cases has included offensive operations against insurgents under the umbrella of the United Nations - when authorised by the Security Council, or the United States. Security assistance can also include support for the establishment of the army and the national police.

For the consolidation of the peace in a failed state, the security assistance is complemented by international assistance for economic development, most often coordinated by the United Nations and the World Bank. The economic support is provided in phases. First, donors commit to provide large amounts of aid, far exceeding than what would otherwise be provided to a poor country (World Bank 1997). For example, donor pledges of aid on a per capita per annum basis for some of the recent post conflict situations in low-income countries ranged from $57 for
Afghanistan, $73 for Haiti, $90 for Mozambique to $233 for Timor-Leste (Dobbins et al. 2005). The amount of aid to be provided is based on ‘needs assessments’ carried out by the World Bank and the UN that consider the damage to infrastructure invariably caused by the conflict and the cumulative backlog of investments.

Secondly, the donor countries give due emphasis on showing quick and visible results to the population. This is important as it creates a positive outlook among the people, developing their confidence in the new government. Since much of the basic infrastructure — schools, clinics, roads, water supply, power, irrigation — is usually destroyed by the war and in disrepair from neglect, quick infrastructure rehabilitation is given priority for ‘delivering quick and visible results’.

Thirdly, in post conflict situations the government capacity is invariably weak or even non-existent; most institutions under the control of state are either dysfunctional or require complete re-establishment. The capacity of the domestic civil service is almost non existent, having been destroyed by the conflict. Thus, various forms of technical assistance’ are used to build capacity, often utilising extensive foreign inputs.

The fourth component of rebuilding the state in the post conflict situation follows from the first three. As there is an immediate need of delivery large amounts of aid and quick results — yet government capacity is weak and governance institutions often absent — donors resort to the use of ‘alternative delivery mechanisms’ such as contractors, UN or bilateral agencies, or domestic and foreign NGOs, to channel the aid. The donor funds now instead of being given to the government, as is the normal aid process, they are directly channelled to these external agents outside the control of the government. Many donors also prefer these extra-budgetary mechanisms because of a lack of trust and thriving corruption in government institutions, to exercise the necessary controls that ensure prudent use of the funds.

Finally, the opportunity of a ‘fresh start’ in a post conflict state with a new government is seen as an opportunity to push through a wide-ranging set of political, economic and social reforms. The political reforms are in favour of the move towards democracy, starting with the (re-)drafting of the constitution, the framing of some key laws and conducting the elections. Economic reforms promote the move towards free markets and an open economy. Social reforms can include matters which the people
would have been demanding since long such as a more prominent role for women and protection of minority rights.

After the end of the Cold War in 1989, 13 countries have received international post conflict assistance, 7 of them being the low-income countries, the rest being middle income countries (Table 2.1). When assessed against the two main objectives of international assistance for failed states – improving security and enhancing the well-being of the population – experience with international assistance to post conflict low income countries has been mixed.

Table 2.1: International Post Conflict Assistance Since 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Income Countries</th>
<th>Middle Income Countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Bosnia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Eastern Slovenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Kosovo</td>
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<td>Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
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Table 2.2 summarises the situation. Regarding the security concerns, 4 of 7 low-income recipients of post conflict international assistance were at peace in 2004. Regarding economic development, 4 of them experienced a positive growth in per capita GDP in the first five years after the start of international assistance; some even showed a respectable growth of more than 2 percent per annum. However, this initial growth is basically driven by the expenditures by the peacekeepers and the donors rather than by a fundamental change in the economic structure of the country (Dobbins et al. 2005). Gradually, growth has tended to fizzle as peacekeeping operations wind down and the donors begin to reduce their expenditures. Often, the foreign assistance is not able to reach the needy population and is a source of much discontent in post conflict countries. Consequently, this prevents the newly created governments from gaining widespread legitimacy.
Table 2.2: International Assistance Impact in Post Conflict Low-Income Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Start of International Assistance</th>
<th>At Peace in 2004</th>
<th>Democracy in 2004</th>
<th>Annual GDP p.c. growth-first 5 years (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NA&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>6.3&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adopted Dobbins et al. (2005: pp. 234 and 238); growth data from World Development Indicators 2004.

Notes: a) Somalia data not available but growth likely to be negative; b) Only 2002-2004 data available. 1999-2002 growth likely to be lower.

The international community has also not been very successful in its efforts at promoting democracy. Only 3 of 7 countries were democratic in 2004. Now, Afghanistan has also joined the list of democratic countries. But, like other three democratic countries it also has thriving corruption and suppression of dissent, thus the democracy is still fragile there.

The most disappointing feature of post conflict reconstruction has been the inability of the government to gain legitimacy among the people by failing to deliver a significant improvement in well being. The population in the countries emerging from conflict is initially excited and hopeful, due to the arrival of peacekeepers and the large pledges of aid. However, this initial euphoria is followed by rapid disillusionment when the citizens do not experience any discernible improvement in their standard of living. Even the country’s infrastructure remains in disrepair years after the start of reconstruction adds to the common dissatisfaction. Like in Kabul there is much talk of electricity shortages even today. Many participants in the Loya Jirga held in early 2004 severely criticised the government and the donors for their failure to deliver tangible results and spoke disparagingly about the ‘Land Cruiser elites’ funded by foreign aid. There was much criticism of poor donor performance, the waste of donor funds, and the perceived illegitimacy of numerous donor-funded NGOs (Reuters 2005).
Most of the researchers have probed the experiences with international assistance for post conflict reconstruction and state building and have drawn on some general conclusions. Most of them have pointed on the inherent difficulty of state-building and the severe limitations faced by external agents in their pursuit of this goal. The approach to post conflict state building is ineffective and often serves to de-legitimise the newly emerging government, quite contrary to the objectives of the international community.

Amongst the major conclusions of the scholars regarding the post conflict reconstruction few prominent one are being considered here. First, is the promise of 'quick results' through a massive influx of foreign aid raises unrealistic expectations that are difficult to fulfil. It has been experienced globally that implementing the projects takes more than just money. Most importantly, it requires competent institutions and an enabling environment that emerge only years later. Due to these institutional and policy constraints, implementing the basic infrastructural development projects is very difficult. Such projects take several years to implement in best of the circumstances. Improving the education system, implementing water supply schemes, managing the drainage system or fixing electricity grids takes time and it becomes more difficult if it has to be implemented in post conflict states that possess even weaker institutions and often lack basic security.

In addition, the quest for 'quick and visible results', and the difficulty generally of designing and implementing rural development projects, have meant that most of the initial donor efforts are concentrated in urban areas and, mostly in the capital region. Even there is no proper trickle down effect and the developmental projects remains concentrated in the urban areas leaving the rural poor unaffected. While, most poor people in low-income countries, living in rural areas continue to live under pathetic conditions. This is the major reason why farmers of Afghanistan depend on wealthy warlords or drug barons who lend them money during the times of need. Such wealthy people encourage the poor farmers to grow poppy in return of advance payments.

Another important outcome of a sudden influx of cash from donors inevitably puts pressure on the prices of housing, land and basic commodities, which has a negative impact on the poor. Reliable data on the cost of living are not available in most conflict countries, but anecdotal data and newspapers report indicate this to be a serious problem. The roaring land prices can be noticed in Sherpur adjacent to Kabul.
in Afghanistan. Before 2001, it was a rarely noticed patch of hillside that overlooked the stately neighbourhood of Wazir Akbar Khan. Today it is the wealthiest enclave in the country, a series of gaudy, grandiose mansions that sell for hundreds of thousands of dollars (Felkins 2009).

Secondly, in view of the weak government and because of concerns about corruption, many donors elect to pass their funds through non-governmental or international organisations which then implement the projects. In many cases, the recipient government is totally bypassed and often becomes a mere spectator at an essentially donor-driven show. The local population also begin to think that their government is not able to deliver to its people and they look forward to these external agents as the providers of services. Besides the obvious major cost of disempowering the government, this approach has other drawbacks: (a) it makes the cost of delivering aid very high (according to one estimate in the case of Afghanistan, up to 60 cents of each dollar of an aid project goes into such overheads (Reuters 2005); (b) it fuels resentment that the bulk of the aid is actually going to the donors’ agents rather than to the people; and (c) in some countries, NGOs with doubtful credentials have sprung up to take advantage of the availability of donor funds. Overall, these factors contribute to growing feelings of resentment among citizens and a perception that foreign aid is being grabbed by national and foreign opportunists.

Thirdly, capacity building efforts by the donors have been highly ineffective. Despite the continuous failure in building capacity donors continue to pour funding into this area (World Bank 1996). In many cases the level of funding far exceeds the absorptive capacity of the country and often sucks up whatever limited capacity does exist by diverting the competent government staff with the lure of higher salaries. The large presence of foreign consultants and contractors increases the footprint of foreign aid which, in turn, heightens further resentment among the population.

Finally, the donor community, often in response to various pressure groups in Western countries, usually pushes for a wide-ranging set of political, social and economic reforms far ahead of the government’s ability to foster ownership. These reforms are worthwhile in themselves, but are beyond the capacity of the government to implement. For example, there are currently some 120 laws, drafted by various donors and their consultants, pending approval of the Afghan Parliament. There is little chance of these being adopted other than perfunctorily.
The present approach to international assistance has been ineffective in establishing a strong government in rebuilding of failed state. Thus, there is a need to reconsider the approach. The revised approach has to be more pragmatic about its goals. State building is bound to be a slow process that must evolve through internal forces. It cannot be accelerated simply by injecting large amount of aid. A better approach would be to have a smaller commitment of external funds that can be sustained over a long period of time. The pace of resource commitment should be in coordination with the evolving capacity of the government rather than a quick attempt to accelerate capacity building. The standard 3-year ‘emerging mode’ of post conflict reconstruction, besides being wasteful of scarce resources, is not effective (Francois and Sud 2006).

The transfer of funds by donors needs specific consideration. Presently most of the donors bypass the government by utilising alternative delivery mechanisms as the state is not capable enough. But, capacity building takes place best through gradual ‘learning by doing’. Except for the few large investments, international assistance should be provided through budget support to the newly formed government. The state will then gradually exercise its most important functions: setting priorities, making hard choices, and managing expenditures. Although in this policy there is a risk of leakage of funds, risk needs to be viewed against the alternative of the very high administrative costs donors incur in trying to avoid leakages. Supporting the government’s budget instead of financing costly discrete projects would be more conducive to capacity-building over time, even if it implies making donor funding available in much smaller amounts spread over a period of several years.

There are few more additional considerations that argue for budget support rather than the current donor approach of project aid. First, it would enhance the prospects of donor funds reaching beyond the capital city into the rural areas. Donors have been ineffective in doing this due to various reasons including the security for their personnel. The government, by working through its own systems, would be more effective in reaching the rural poor. A study by the World Bank confirms the feasibility of this approach, noting that there is indeed much more national domestic capacity even in the fledgling situation of Afghanistan than is assumed by the donors (Evans et al. 2004). Secondly, it would reduce the heavy ‘foreign footprint’ of donors that comes to be resented before too long in most countries. Thirdly, it would reduce
demands on already limited government capacity, much of which gets diverted to fulfilling individual donor requirements. Dr Ashraf Ghani, former Finance Minister of Afghanistan is quoted as saying:

_As Finance Minister, I spent 60% of my time co-ordinating donors. Had I been freed from that, I would have been able to raise a lot more domestic resources to carry on more reforms._ (OECD 2005)

Finally, donors must always remember that they are assisting the country which is gradually emerging from a long phase of conflict. Therefore, they need to be much less ambitious in their desires to bring about rapid changes in economic and social policies and allow the emerging governments to deal with these at a pace consistent with their absorptive capacity and internal consensus.

**2.6 Rebuilding the State after Conflict**

In the view of Anthony Giddens modern state “exists when there is a political apparatus (governmental institutions, such as a court, parliament, or congress, plus civil service officials), ruling over a given territory, whose authority is backed by a legal system and the capacity to use force to implement its policies” (Giddens 1993: 309). State building concerns how this process is accomplished. It has two elements. One involves the development of specific instruments states use to control society that is state capacity. Focus is on the monopolization of the means of coercion and the development of a bureaucratic apparatus, organised around rational – legal principles that have the capacity to regulate, control, and extract resources from society. The concern, then, is with the degree of the state. The other element involves how states and societies negotiate their relationship, that is, the kind of state. Attention is directed to the organising principles that structure the state’s rule over society. States can be distinguished according to whether or not they contain institutions designed to incorporate diverse views, hold them accountable, limit their discretion, and safeguard basic individual rights and liberties. Those that do are inclusionary; those that do not are exclusionary (Waldner 1999).

As prevention is always preferable and less costly than remediation, reducing the global incidence of state failure and collapse is essential to the peace of the world. But, at times preventive efforts are unsuccessful ultimately leading to state failure. When this happens, and especially in the cases of states already failed and collapsed, the UN, international organisations, the major powers, regional hegemons, and
coalitions of the willing all have a strategic and moral obligation to support the beleaguered citizens and to reduce losses of life. In such post conflict situations, there is a great need for conscientious, well crafted nation building – for a systematic refurbishing of the political, economic, and social fabric of countries that have crumbled, that are failing to perform and provide political goods, and that have become threats to themselves and others. The outside assistance and support has to provide an atmosphere of security, good governance, and spread a ray of hope amongst the citizens of a failed state.

For rebuilding a state, a lasting ceasefire must be achieved first, before any other improvement measures can be introduced. This may be followed by demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration. This include collecting and destroying weapons, even buried caches, offering former soldiers and their commanders certain incentives that would induce them to comply and cooperate, and ensuring an atmosphere of fairness by the presence of international guarantors. Removing of landmines also becomes a national priority. Former combatants may return to their native land if conditions appear conducive and they have an opportunity of becoming a productive member of the society. For this they are at times provided with materials and cash so that they can begin something a fresh or get involved in agrarian activity.

Along with ceasefire and demobilization, the transitional governing body must be able to deliver security throughout it domain. Roads must be made safe for travellers and commerce. After the Taliban were forced out of Kabul in 2001 and the Bonn Agreement was signed, a small contingent of international peacekeepers established a zone of human security in Kabul. But the countryside was left to the warlords, thus frustrating the interim governments' ability to project power and restore good governance to the entire country.

Without peace reconstruction efforts are futile. In the absence of fundamental law and order, resuscitation and nation building cannot even begin. But, once stability and confidence have at least partially returned in a failed and collapsed state, transitional administration and international agencies can together focus on three primary and parallel goals: reviving battered economies, reintroducing the rule of law, and rejuvenating civil society. In the rebuilding process it is important to enforce certain code of laws. The rule of law can be re-implemented in stages, as human and physical capacity is rebuilt. War ravaged citizens will tentatively support
reconstruction efforts once they are assured that legal safeguards and legal redress will be available. A functioning court system should be among the first political institution to be reborn. The survey data and the logic of state failure process suggest that peace and security, disarmament and demobilization, and the reestablishment of confidence and trust need to be accompanied by a resumed process of law.

The rule of law is extremely complex. But, in a post conflict society rules need not be overly complex. Simple laws that can be communicated directly to affected citizens are important because both citizens and judges are unlikely to be well versed in inherited or reintroduced legal systems. Simple legal procedures will help the magistrates without formal legal training to be fair and inclusive, as well as efficient in their judgements. Moreover, if transparency and ease of understanding is built into legal systems from the onset of the revival of states, the trade-off between independence and accountability for judges become more manageable. Judicial integrity and independence are critical in every state. Mechanisms must be installed to prevent the control of judgements by executives and legislatures. Independent and impartial judiciary is important, but there must also be certain laws to enable citizens against corrupt judges (Ackerman 2004: 170-181).

To have an effective rule of law renewed police force should also be established. Basic infrastructure facilities like roads and telephone networks must be refurbished. To look after health and education, doctors and teachers must be hired and their physical surroundings gradually rebuilt. Such initiatives will re-establish a sense that a new government exists and has begun to work for, rather than against the people.

Police personnel, judges, bureaucrats, and parliamentarians will have to be trained or retrained. Defence forces have to be reconfigured. Strong local leadership needs to be nurtured and strengthened. It should not be like those warlords who can instigate fighting amongst the citizens, but a leadership which can look after the well-being of citizens and their country. Once these advances start to succeed, it will then become important to convene a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution and to anoint an indigenous government through well prepared and well supervised elections. Rushing forward into such a national contest is inadvisable before peace, law and order, and a capable administration are in place. Elections are always essential to the launching of post conflict democracies, but they can also increase competition, polarise already fractured societies, institutionalise existing imbalances
of power, and retard as well as advance the transition from war and failure to resuscitation and good governance.

Restoring the people’s trust in the state provides an essential platform for the reconstruction of failed and collapsed states. Working with local officials to revive optimism and to ensure human security, enhance leadership capacity, and improve the delivery of basic services, are each fundamental components of effective post conflict reconstruction. Improvement in these areas produces trust between citizens and new governments. In post conflict situation, the role of women needs to be given special attention, too, for without restoring the trust and assisting in the revitalization of women and women’s leadership – such as in Afghanistan with seats reserved for women to be elected from each constituency – less can be accomplished and in a sustainable fashion (Widner 2004: 222-236).

When states fail and ultimately collapse, the process of disintegration cripples institutions and destroys the underlying understandings between the government and the governed. Therefore, sustained state building requires time, massive capacity building, large sums of aid from outside, debt relief, and appropriate measures of tutelage. The donor nations and the international organisations must promise not to abandon state rebuilding efforts until the tough work is finished – before a failed or collapsed state has functioned well for several years and has had its, political, economic, and social health restored. The worst enemy of reconstruction is premature exit by international organisations and donors.

2.7 Measures to Prevent State Failure

Policymakers, and the researchers engaged with keeping them updated about current events, too often fail to recognise the budding preconditions and preliminary events that finally lead to ethnic catastrophe and state failure. Foreign policy critics have accused the foreign ministries, as well as the various international and regional organisations of failing to foresee the occurrence of imminent events, failing to prevent outcomes that could have been avoided, failing to anticipate the costs of preventable occurrences, and failing to account for history. But, shortage of meaningful information capable of forecasting potentially risky situations is a source of constant dismay for the research community and the policy makers.

The complexity of acquiring meaningful and informative accounts of country situations and translating them into policy recommendations presents a formidable
challenge. The discrepancy in forecasting crises and state failure is due to the inherent practical and technical limitations in translating complex international information into meaningful signals. The bulk of academic research is useful in understanding the origin of some conflicts, but is less useful in explaining or predicting when or how violent interactions will occur in a way that is directly consumable by policymakers. One response to this problem has been to ensure that policymakers are better equipped to do their own in-field analyses.

For early warning about the risk of state failure, it is significant to have country performance measures for the factors that directly and indirectly influence a country’s security and level of stability. This performance data would help the decision makers in responding to potential, emerging, or existing risks. The data collected from various reputable international information sources is employable only if converted into a meaningful and understandable form and finally an effective preventive action is taken on it. In turn, the process of mainstreaming effective early warning information into operations of states and organisations will set in motion a process of “creeping institutionalisation” toward a “culture of prevention” through norm development, the enhancement of operational responses, and the implementation and evaluation of cost effective structural and operational prevention strategies (Lund 2000).

The policymakers can respond to the early warning information data and analyses provided by researchers through preventive diplomacy. This was suggested by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali in his *An Agenda for Peace*. Boutros Ghali chose to reflect only on preventive diplomacy within a range of conflict management techniques that include peace-building, peacemaking, and peacekeeping and essentially on those activities that usually, but not always, fall under the purview of the United Nations, such as confidence building measures, arms control, and preventive deployment. Preventive diplomacy entails primarily, but not exclusively, ad-hoc forms of consultation using non-compartmentalised and non-hierarchical forms of information gathering, contingency planning, and short-term response mechanisms. The risks are proximate and analysis and action are combined at once in rapid succession (Lund 1996).

Nicolaides has provided a conceptual framework for determining how preventive diplomacy relates to conflict prevention (Nicolaides 1996: 23-72). Preventive diplomacy is an operational response. It is premised on incentive structures
provided by outside actors to change specific kinds of objectionable behaviour. Preventive diplomacy is therefore targeted and short term, and the preventive action taken relates directly to changes in conflict escalation and conflict dynamics (Tellis et al. 1998; Schneider and Weitsman 1997). Ultimately, outside actors influence the incentives of the relevant parties engaged in conflict but cannot change the initial conditions that led to conflict in the first place.

To address the root cause of conflict structural approaches emphasise capacity building in such societies. Structural conflict prevention strategies focusing on human security, conflict transformation, and development, cast a much broader net. They tend to be long-term and are generally applied across various countries covering a range of issues and actors. The objective is to transform conflictual behaviour over time. This change in behaviour can be dependent on institutional inducements – such as membership in international institutions, arms control agreements, and stability pacts, or on the promotion of sustainable development, support for human security, and regional confidence building mechanisms (Nicolaides 1996: 23-72).

The analytical capacity alone will never be sufficient to generate effective responses. Once information is evaluated, a significant gap remains between analysing the information and developing a strategy to deal with a problem. Analysis without significant action by the policymakers is futile. Several problems arise in transforming analysis into action. First, there is a need to know what indicators to look for, and what should set off as a warning, indicating the declining of a state towards failure. Ethnic warfare, regime failure, massive human rights violation, and refugee flows are the result of different combinations of factors. Hence each requires somewhat different models, explanations, strategies and response. Second, there is need for specificity in the combinations of risk factors and sequences of events that are likely to lead to crises and failure. Explanations should identify which measurable conditions, in what combination or sequences, establish a potential for certain types and kinds of crises.

Anticipating state failure is a process based approach requiring sound analysis as well as an explicit connection to policy options for preventive measures. The blanket equation of weak states and global threats provides only modest analytical insights and even less practical guidance for policymakers. Each poorly performing country suffers from a distinctive set of pathologies and generates a unique mixture of challenges, of varying gravity. There can be no one-size-fits-all response to
addressing either the sources or consequences of these weaknesses. Weak and failing states can and do generate transnational spill-over’s such as terrorism, weapons proliferation, crime, disease, energy security, and regional instability that endanger international security.

Development of failed and fragile states is an important priority for the international community and an important complement to international peacekeeping efforts. Building a stable and competent government that can maintain security and fulfil the needs of its people should be the central focus of international support. The current approach of donors – attempting to accelerate development through a large infusion of funds and bypassing the government in their utilisation – is ineffective in promoting the goal of state building, and indeed may undermine it. State building being a complex process cannot be much accelerated by external agents. Institutions will gradually evolve through learning by doing, although it may slow down the speed and compromise on the efficiency. For rebuilding states in post conflict situations donors need to consider channelling their aid through measured budget support that increases gradually over time rather than through externally direct and implemented projects.

In the past, during less interconnected eras, state weakness and failure could be isolated without becoming a global threat. Failure once held fewer implications for peace and security of the world, and for the regions that surround weak and failing states. Now, however, as much as their citizens suffer, the failings of states also pose enormous dangers well beyond their own borders. Ultimately, minimising and preventing the possibilities of failure by strengthening the capacities of the nation-states of the developing world has thus become one of the critical all-consuming strategic and moral imperative of our terrorized time. As much more attention is given on preventing state failure the less time, energy and finances will be later consumed for rebuilding the post conflict states.

2.8 Review of Literature

2.8.1 Historical Perspective

Extensive research work was done on Afghanistan during the decade of eighties after the Saur Revolution when this region became a playground for the two superpowers the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). However, with the withdrawal of USSR and its gradual collapse
the region receded into the background with Afghanistan becoming a forgotten state (Rubin 1995a). Subsequently, the historical buffer state became a failed state (Rubin 1995b).

2.8.2 Emergence and Decline of Taliban

To overcome the atrocities of the mujahideen commanders Taliban emerged. There has been lot of assumptions regarding the rise of Taliban. Saikal (1998), Goodson (2001), Maley (1998a), Nojumi (2002) and recently Gannon (2005) have given a detailed and descriptive account of the emergence of the Taliban. Their works give an idea about the extensive supply of weapons by United States to Afghan warriors in the name of their freedom struggle. It gives an insight that if such weapons are uncontrolled how deadly they can be for the society. Gannon has given a vivid account of causes for the emergence of a movement under the leadership of Mullah Omar. The works of Gannon and Cohen (2005) give a clear picture of Pakistan’s support to the Taliban after their emergence in 1994. Khalilzad (1996: 190-195), Ralph (1997: 111-117; 1998: 109-115) and Maley (1996: 275-276) have depicted the gradual decline of the security situation in Afghanistan from 1995 to 1997.

The motive of the Taliban and their leader Mullah Omar was to get rid of the corrupt mujahideen commanders but the victory of early stages and the gradual support they got from the Pakistan brought them to the stage of ruling Afghanistan. The social policies and the serious interpretation of Islam that Taliban eventually embraced with such vigour came from the outsiders who took over the Afghans trained at Pakistani madrassas, and later by the austere philosophy of Wahabi Islam practiced by Saudi Arabia and the Arab militants who had a major say in controlling Taliban. Marsden (1998) has highlighted the strict rules imposed by the Taliban of which the real victims were the women who were even restricted from doing jobs (Rashid, 2001).

2.8.3 Process of Rebuilding

In the last days of the Taliban rule, the country became a safe haven for the terrorists and their links with the outside world were snapped. The UN and the other relief agencies saw no hope of improvement and new sanctions were imposed on Taliban (Cherian 2001: 56-57). After the tragic incident of 9/11, the United States began its war on terror- Operation Enduring Freedom (Suganani 2003). The massive attack by the US and allied forces began on October 7, 2001. It ultimately forced the
Taliban and Al’-Qaeda fighters to slip across the border into the tribal areas of Pakistan (Griffin 2003).

The Bonn Agreement soon followed. This UN sponsored political process in November 2001 aimed at bringing Afghanistan together under a legitimate central government rule (Griffin 2003: 318). A group of Afghan notables endorsed the provincial arrangement on December 5, 2001. Meanwhile, the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) was set up for duration of six months, which was to prepare the ground for the Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) scheduled to be held in June 2002.

Following the emergency Loya Jirga there were numerous articles based on statistical facts and figures, which dealt with the state building process in Afghanistan. Barakat (2002: 801-816), Goodhand (2002: 837-860), Suhrke and others (2002: 875-892) have focused on preparing the proper ground for the beginning of rebuilding and reconstruction process. Goodhand has analysed the role of aid in Afghanistan. According to him, the earlier experiences in providing aid to this country should be borne in mind before providing fresh aid. Ozerdem (2002: 961-976) has examined the interrelated phenomenon of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants and viewed that it is a very sensitive issue and must be very carefully dealt. Rieck (2005: 31-36) has also observed the inter-linkages between the DDR programme, the role of warlords and the rebuilding of the Afghan National Army. In order to free Afghanistan from the rule of the gun and ensure continuous peace and development in the region, the issue of small arms must be tackled through a genuine and dedicated DDR programme. Tarzai (2005) has amply emphasized this point. The issue of reintegration of former combatants and the success achieved in the DDR process is yet to be examined. The work of Donini et al (2004) addresses the issue of peace building and its sustainability in Afghanistan. The analysis probes the various developmental and peace-building projects undertaken by NGOs and also elaborates the transition in the society due to political and national development.

Rubin’s (2004: 5) work details out the drafting of the new constitution of Afghanistan. On the other hand, Reynolds (2006:104) study reviews the presidential and parliamentary elections. Goodson (2004: 82-99), Rubin (2004: 5-19), Saikal (2002: 47-56) and Marsden (2003: 91-105) have explicitly discussed the state building efforts and writing of the new constitution of Afghanistan. They have focused on the problems of rebuilding and maintaining peace in Afghanistan and the major challenges faced by the administration. Marsden have highlighted the support
provided by the international community to the interim administration of Afghanistan and notes that the pledges made at the Tokyo Conference do not equate to the per capita levels of funding made available for other recent emergencies.

The post-Bonn political situation particularly the ethnic issues and the division within the society have been explicitly discussed by Goodson and Simonsen. Simonsen’s (2004: 707-729) analyses focuses upon the problem of Pashtun alienation and the warlords. According to them, the warlords are a major hurdle in the developmental processes of Afghanistan. However, the fact is that these warlords bear a strong ethnic allegiance among the masses and they cannot be ignored. They are the power centres for motivating the ethnic groups towards the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Qazi’s work (2005: 73-87) attests the importance of the warlords. Gannon (2004: 35-46) the only women journalist to be in Afghanistan during the Taliban days, suggests that while warlords are to be brought under the purview of political development, they also need to be kept under a strict vigil. She has emphasized through her work that the United States has promoted many of the warlords’ in spite of the fact that they were involved in heinous crimes and committed atrocities on the Afghan people during the last decade.

2.8.4 Challenges to Rebuilding

The warlords apart from being a threat to the security also pose a threat to Afghanistan’s cultural heritage as they have been illegally digging the archaeological sites and are involved in the trafficking of antiquities (Schriek 2004). Warlords are destroying the cultural heritage in a similar mode in which the Taliban did by the demolition of the Bamiyan Buddhas (Warikoo 2002). Scott (2001), Roashan (2002), Arenburg (2003), Siddique, have also accepted the security threat and the atrocities committed by the warlords (2005: 73-88). They have looked into the security challenges faced by the Afghan regime and the International Security Assistance Force. Most of the information is factual and the recommendations to deal with the security challenge posed by the warlords is lacking.

There have been numerous Afghan refugees located in Iran and Pakistan, apart from the internally displaced persons (IDPs). Helton (2002:71-82) shows the real picture of the rehabilitation management of the returning refugees and the IDPs. Both groups pose a threat to the stability and adversely affect the weak infrastructure of the state. The UNHCR (2005, 2007) is actively helping the refugees to re-establish in
Afghanistan. It is also pursuing a national strategy for IDPs since 2003. Schmeidl (2002: 7-29) has concluded that policies by regional and international actors toward Afghan refugees have contributed to the development of refugee warrior communities linked to state and international security concerns. The power politics and geo-strategic as well as economic interests also contributed to the security dilemma. These factors need to be considered in future refugee assistance programmes; ensuring human security is not sacrificed. Ghufran’s study (2005: 117-140) reveals that life continues to be uncertain for the refugees as the chances of Afghanistan limping back to normalcy remains bleak. He has discussed the background of Afghan refugee problem that began in the eighties and the current rehabilitation program undertaken by UNHCR and several NGOs. However, the paper lacks a comprehensive analysis of the problems of refugees. Other scholars such as Khattak (2003: 195-208), Dupree (1998), and Ayyubi (2005: 101-116) have also thrown light on the refugee issues and their role in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. Dutta and Sharma (2009: 52-73) have raised the concerns of displaced population from Afghanistan living in India and problems in their repatriation.

The World Bank Report (2005), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Reports on Afghanistan opium survey (2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005, 2006), have given a detailed description of the drug production and the drug economy in Afghanistan. The reports have aptly addressed the causes that led to the rise in poppy production in Afghanistan. The interdependence between the warlords and the drug economy has been attested by Ahmed (2004: 15-17) briefly touching the inter-linkages between the warlords and the drug economy. Koehler and Zuercher (2007: 62-74) have looked into the dependence between state building, narcotics and conflict through an analysis of interviews and survey conducted in the spring of 2005. They have also found that the farmers widely acknowledge the benefits of opium as one of the few available cash crops. As a result, competition over scarce land and propensity for violence are affected by the drug economy (UN, 2005). Rashid (2006: 31-35) has also highlighted the causes for the rise of poppy production. In his view, high returns attract the farmers to grow poppy as well as warlords give advance payment to the needy farmers if they grow poppy. If this cycle has to be ended then the farmers must be provided with other alternatives of livelihood. Forceful methods of eradication will only weaken the position of the government and will have a negative impact on the ongoing economic reforms.
There are covert inter-linkages between drug money and poppy production in the region. (Asmar 2005: 37-42). Asmar views the need for a multidimensional approach to control the poppy production, which includes providing alternative livelihood for those Afghans who are dependent on income from poppy cultivation, boosting the capacities of law enforcement bodies, incorporating judicial reforms and finally having regional cooperation controlling the movement of drugs in the region. It has already been pointed in mid 2002 that the Afghan drug “industry” will continue as long as Afghanistan suffers from two major deficiencies (Peimani 2002). The first is the absence of a strong central government and the other is the lack of a viable economy capable of generating enough revenue for the government and adequate number of well-paid jobs for the people. Thus, the ongoing state building efforts must focus on these two weaknesses if they have to permanently check the poppy production and drug economy in Afghanistan.

Rubin (2006) thinks along the similar lines and views that counter-narcotics development strategies have to be comprehensive. According to him, the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) and the Afghan government’s new Drug Control Policy propose a “pro-poor” counter-narcotics policy that focuses initially on interdiction, law enforcement, institution building, and building licit livelihoods, while investing in infrastructure, protection of rights. It is also necessary to develop an enabling framework for private sector growth that will contribute to welfare of people while phasing out dependence on criminal activity.

2.8.5 Democratic and Economic Reforms

Afghanistan is gradually moving forward to build an effective and accountable Afghan state. The articles by Astri suhrke et. al. (2002: 875-892), Alexander Thier and Jarat Chopra (2002: 893-908) have brought out the details of the Bonn Agreement. Political institutional development and judicial development issues have also been discussed in their articles. These issues have also been discussed in detail by Rubin (2006), Katzman ( 2005) and in the World Bank Report (2005). Katzman has given a detailed description of presidential and parliamentary elections. Rubin has recommended ways to reform the judiciary and the government institutions. The World Bank Report has elaborately dealt with the state building agenda and the strategy and accomplishments till 2005. It has also reviewed the ongoing reforms “work in progress” focusing on interim public administration reforms and
improvements in fiscal management. Yet, the detailed analysis of the newly implemented constitution of Afghanistan is yet to be done.

Rubin and Hamidzada (2007: 8-25), Nixon and Ponzio (2007: 26-40) and Goodhand along with Sedra have closely examined the ongoing state building efforts in Afghanistan. Rubin and Hamidzada have highlighted the achievements in rebuilding Afghanistan from the Bonn negotiations to the Afghan-led London Conference. They have also highlighted the challenges in governance, aid management and regional security dilemmas. Nixon and Ponzio have analyzed the critical connections between central and sub state authority required to complete the transition to democracy. Goodhand and Sedra (2007:41-61) have examined the use of ‘peace-conditionalities’ by international actors to enforce and elicit change in post-war societies, emphasizing how such measures manifest themselves in Afghanistan.


Scholars have highlighted the aid and assistance provided by many nations to Afghanistan but the geopolitical interests of the assisting nations have not been properly dealt with. Every state has its own political and economic interest in assisting the rebuilding process and there is a need to look into this as well. Dhaka and Mishra have highlighted the importance of Durand Line and its rising geopolitical stakes in US’s war on terror (2009: 199-214). On the contrary, Rubin’s focus is on the Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship, which has been tense during the last sixty years. This has been the main source of much of the region’s instability today with continued sanctuary for the Taliban, the foreign Jihadists, and other extremists. He suggests a strategy to deal with Pakistan and resolve their border dispute through second track discussion involving all stakeholders in the border region.

As regards the prospects of stability in Afghanistan, the chances seem to be high. For the first time in history there appears to be a collective will and a promise of sufficient resources to grip with the dynamics of the conflict. Among the great
powers, United States has been the most inconsistent and negligent in its policies towards the region (Austen, 2001:12). A need for consistent support by the United States for the UN-led peace building process in Afghanistan is essential. Without the Western commitment and proper international attention, and keeping in mind the competing interests of neighbouring powers, Afghanistan is bound to fall a victim to the war economy (Atmar and Goodhand 2003).

It is important that Afghanistan must be rebuilt for global security (Nugent, 2003:12-13). Nugent adds that aid packages must be timely provided. However the track record of international community is poor as there is a gap between the promise and the delivery of reconstruction packages. The World Bank (2004b, 2005) has done a detailed study of the investment climate in Afghanistan. Rashid (2006: 31-35) has also pointed out the financial shortfall criticising the US policymakers, who have concentrated on waging a war and do not know how to wage peace. Thus, there is a need of proper and well-planned investment by the US and other aid agencies.

2.9 Summary

The present chapter has discussed in detail the theoretical concepts of post conflict reconstruction process along with the review of literature. It can be deduced from the review of literature that there is a need to do a systematic study of the rebuilding process going on in Afghanistan. The present research has done a detailed study of post conflict reconstruction process of Afghanistan. It has probed the rebuilding of state institutions of governance in the light of Bonn Accord. This is followed by the traditional security sector reforms in the field of army, police and judiciary. For overall progress of Afghanistan the economic progress is necessary. Therefore, the present work has focused on building the formal economy which is necessary for private sector development. A detailed scrutiny of the developmental activities has been undertaken. With several global players working towards the reconstruction process in Afghanistan, the present research is an attempt to study the major challenges to Afghanistan from the Afghan viewpoint in bringing about peace and stability in the region. This study conceptualises the process of completion of the reconstruction of Afghanistan highlighting the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved.