

University of Maastricht

**The diminishing respect for Human Rights as an Early
Warning sign in the framework of Conflict Prevention**

Case study: Darfur

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List of Abbreviations

AU: African Union

CPPCRN: Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network

EW(S): Early Warning (Systems)

Genocide Convention: The UN Convention on the prevention and punishment of genocide

ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICISS: International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty

ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

JEM: Justice and Equality Movement

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

RtoP: Responsibility to Protect

SLA: Sudan Liberation Army

SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army

UDHR: Universal Declaration on Human Rights

UN: United Nations

Abstract

Conflict can have many causes, all of which should be considered in the framework of conflict prevention. Here attention will be given on the importance of integrating human rights studies in the field of conflict prevention. In order to show this, we ask ourselves the question how diminishing respect for human rights can serve as a sign of Early Warning in the framework of conflict prevention. To answer this question, the main focus is on two sub questions: how do human rights cause conflict and what is the link between causes of conflict and Early Warning signs. It will appear that, following the Human Needs Theory, human rights violations indeed can be a basis of conflict. Human rights violations, and among them practices of discrimination, on the basis of ethnic differences are often crucial in this aspect.

With regard to the second question, the conclusion will be that Early Warning systems are based on causes of conflict. Thus human rights violations as a basis of conflict can indeed serve as Early Warning signs for that conflict.

As a way of making things less abstract, we will focus on the conflict in Darfur to show the relevance of the theoretical framework.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements
List of Abbreviations
Abstract

Introduction.....	1
1 Theoretical framework.....	4
1.1 Human Rights.....	5
1.2 Civil Conflict.....	7
1.2.1 The changing character of conflict.....	7
1.2.2 Civil conflict and civil involvement.....	9
1.2.3 Civil and ethnic conflict.....	13
1.3 Causes of civil conflict.....	16
1.3.1 General causes.....	18
1.3.2 Diminishing respect for human rights as a cause.....	23
1.3.2.1 Two interlinked theories.....	23
1.3.2.2 The relevance of ethnicity.....	28
1.3.2.3 Discrimination.....	32
1.3.2.4 Genocide.....	33
1.4 Conflict Prevention.....	37
1.4.1 Methods of conflict prevention.....	38
1.4.2 Early Warning.....	42
1.4.3 Sovereignty versus the Responsibility to Protect.....	44
2 Case study: Darfur.....	50
2.1 History of the conflict.....	50
2.2 Integration of the theoretical framework.....	54
2.2.1 Characterisation of the conflict.....	54
2.2.2 General causes.....	56
2.2.3 Diminishing respect for human rights as Early Warning Sign.....	59
2.2.3.1 The Arab-African divide.....	59
2.2.3.2 Early Warning Signs for genocide.....	63
2.2.4 The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur.....	67
Conclusion.....	72
Bibliography.....	75