Detriments of colonialism on indigenous conflict resolution: an analysis of Pakistan and Tanzania

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Abstract

Since the process of decolonization started after the conclusion of the Second World War, a major victim of this process was indigenous cultures and social structures in most of the former colonies. This paper draws its analysis from postcolonial theory by considering the detrimental effects that colonialism has left on the culture and governance in tribal societies. The paper attempts to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on indigenous/traditional conflict transformation and peace strategies by studying the role of indigenous strategies in resolving conflicts in Pakistan and Tanzania. In Pakistan, the Pashtun Jirga is a council of elders that plays a significant role in mediating and resolving conflicts among Pashtuns, especially tribal Pashtuns. In Tanzania, two cases of extractive resource conflicts in North Mara and Mtwara show how these conflicts have been resolved and what role indigenous strategies played or could have played if they were to be effectively used. In both Pakistan and Tanzania cases, we find that indigenous strategies of peace and conflict transformation are an important and necessary ingredient to conflict resolution. However, despite their significance, indigenous strategies are hardly a priority for respective post-colonial governments and the international community.