

# FOREWORD

In the second half of the 20th Century, the African Continent, more than any other part of the World has suffered enormously from violent conflict within and between States. This has exacted heavy toll on Africa in terms of human suffering and lost development opportunities. The contagion effects on the neighborhood, in terms of loss of confidence from investors, have been considerable. African leaders have recognized the imperative of preventing and tackling conflict and in recent years the continent has become increasingly stable. Nonetheless this should not obscure the huge challenges faced by post-conflict countries and fragile states in general; how to consolidate peace agreements, rebuild state institutions, provide basic services and relaunch economic activity. This is what provides the so called peace dividends; hope and opportunities for people. For the African Development Bank, addressing these issues, is a key priority, kick-starting the economies, rebuilding institutional capacity and normalizing relationships with international financial institutions.

This report aims to contribute to our knowledge about the nature, causes, and consequences of conflict in Africa with a view to shedding light on strategies to achieve successful post-conflict recovery.

The report emphasizes the critical role of sound economic policies for promoting post-conflict recovery and consolidating peace. It underlines the importance of building strong national institutions for effective economic policymaking and peace building. It argues that state building must feature prominently in international efforts to support the affected countries achieve lasting political stability and sustainable development path.

While this report provides useful insights into these critical development challenges, it also reveals large gaps in our understanding of the issues in question. I hope that this report inspires constructive debate among researchers and policy makers to help better understand what works, and spreading best practice on the continent. Such an endeavor is at the centre of the Bank's new policy frame work on fragile states. I commend the report to our readers.



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