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center of conflicts or wars or civil strife, and what the report does lay out, if you want almost a framework from the standing, what is often a very diverse set of circumstances. No war, no conflict, no resource consolation is ever the same. But there are, I think, in the reports some very interesting patterns that are put before us to think about can we get beyond the point where environment and conflict always has to be a story of tragedy with no happy ending?

The three pathways of the report does look at is from the point of view of how do environment and national resource issues one, contribute and drive conflict, because increasingly in our world that is going to be an issue that we are confronted with. It is not just a phenomenon of destruction as a impact as a almost side-event to a core conflict, in fact, natural resource issues, environmental change and the consequences it imposes on local communities, nation states, trans-boundary issues is increasingly going to be a contributing factor and a driver.

Secondly, as we have seen more and more in recent decades, natural resources become, also, a financing vehicle for conflict. Sustaining conflict well beyond the point where conflict has its origin, to actually having become part of a war economy, a conflict economy, and therefore extending conflicts well beyond the point where they have traditionally would have seized either because people, you know, would have made the point they were trying to make or they would have gained control over a resource, and what we see in DRC, what we saw for a long time in Angola and many other parts of the world is that natural resources and environmental assets become part of continuing and continuing to sustain conflicts.

A third part where the report identifies -- and I think it's one that we have paid far too little attention to is that very often these issues can also undermine peace-keeping efforts, and in fact where a political agreement may be reached, the temptation, partly because some people will lose control over resources or they may want to revert after the signing of a peace agreement to a situation during the conflict that in a number of cases -- and the report lays this out very clearly -- a so called relapse phenomenon has become quite common. And if you do not understand how environment and natural resources can undermine very volatile peace agreements and let's say conflict resolution strategies, we actually risk within a year or two or three very often to find ourselves back where we started off from.

The other part of the analytical framework that the report provides is looking a little bit also the impact, the nature of the impact. There are direct impacts and indirect impacts and institutional impacts that the report describes and also provides if you want as a framework

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for trying to understand how we would be able to either avoid, minimize or even prevent some of these impacts from occurring. Now I won't go into detail because Andrew will provide some very live examples of that in a minute.

If we look at the issue of conflict and environment, both from a historical perspective and a scenario perspective, then clearly what the report does show as is that we have a growing number of conflicts over time and certainly a significant number that this report has captured where the linkage between the two, natural resources and let's say growing tension between communities or countries, has become a phenomenon that we have to understand, not as something that is singular, but in fact there is a pattern. There's a trend, and that trend, if anything, is worrying, because it is not one that is declining, it is increasing.

Secondly, that leads us also to -- this is not so much in the report, but we at UNEP are working increasingly under pressure of what scenarios do we discern from a perspective in the future. One indicator of how serious the member states now take this issue is that we have in our new medium-term strategies, six major areas in which UNEP is meant to provide key services to the member states, to the one of the six areas, and this is a

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