

# Global Agenda Council on Fragile States 2012-2014



## Understanding/Context

Some 1.5 billion people in an estimated 40 countries live marked by persistent vulnerability and fragility. Various referred to as “fragile and conflict-affected countries”, these are countries confronted by a myriad of simultaneous and often overwhelming challenges, including armed conflict or political violence; serious and persistent human rights violations; and threats from organized crime and terrorist networks. Looked at through a different lens, however, today’s fragile states are potentially tomorrow’s emerging markets. More than three-quarters of states classified as “fragile” possess extensive mineral and energy resources and post impressive growth rates. For instance, in 2013, many fragile states posted growth rates of more than 5% – the Democratic Republic of Congo (8.2%), Cote d’Ivoire (7.0%), Timor Leste (10.0%), Afghanistan (6.5%) and Haiti (6.5%). These compare to a projected growth of 1.3% in advanced economies, and a contraction of -0.3% in the Eurozone.

## Shaping the Agenda

The Global Agenda Council on Fragile States has focused its efforts on promoting greater awareness and recognition of the “emerging” or “frontier” possibilities – the great opportunities for development – in fragile states. The Council developed a white paper to make the case that fragile states are dual in nature – both vulnerable and full of promise – and therefore require greater engagement by investors and the international community. The premise of the white paper was at the core of a lunch session held during the Annual Meeting 2013 in Davos entitled “Building Resilient Economies.”

The Council also participated in a discussion held during the Summit on the Global Agenda 2012 in Dubai on the role of peace, security and human rights in the new Millennium Development Goals. The results of the discussion were transcribed into a joint op-ed, published in The Huffington Post in March 2013, ahead of an important meeting in Bhutan of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons. Similarly, the Council contributed to a discussion across the Network of Global Agenda Councils to address the opening up of Myanmar. Finally, the Council contributed its ideas for a chapter in the book entitled *Natural Riches? Perspectives on Responsible Natural Resource Management in Conflict-affected Countries*.

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Over the coming year, the Council plans to produce a white paper on investment in fragile states, to be launched at the Annual Meeting 2014. In tandem, the Council will support the publication of a special edition of *This is Africa*, dedicated to the opportunities presented by fragile states.

## Contact Information

**Council Manager:** Isabel de Sola, Associate Director, Global Agenda Councils Team, [ids@weforum.org](mailto:ids@weforum.org)

**Forum Lead:** Martina Gmur, Senior Director, Head of the Network of Global Agenda Councils Team, [martina.gmur@weforum.org](mailto:martina.gmur@weforum.org)