Peace and Beyond

Reflections on building inclusive and sustainable peace

#peaceandbeyond

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Foreword

2018 saw the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement. With our partners, Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, and in association with the Centre for Peace Building and Democracy, we convened the Peace and Beyond conference, held in Belfast 10–12 April 2018, to mark that moment. It brought voices from around the world together to consider how peace is built and sustained, and how a range of actors, from politicians and academics to civil society groups and artists, help a society transition from the triumphal moment of signing a peace deal to the long and complex process of rebuilding their communities together.

The anniversary had extra poignancy for me. In 1976, my father, Christopher Ewart-Biggs, then newly arrived British Ambassador to Ireland, was assassinated by the IRA. A young civil servant, Judith Cooke, also lost her life in the attack, and two others were injured.

My mother, Jane, chose in the days after this tragedy not to condemn or seek retribution, but rather to look for ways to live my father's ideals and hopes for peace in Ireland. The day after his death, she publicly voiced her commitment to the Irish people and to joining others in the pursuit of peaceful resolutions in Ireland. She dedicated her life going forward to the peace movement, joining Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams and many others in their efforts. I will always be hugely grateful to my mother for bringing me up in an environment of forgiveness and positivity in the face of deep personal tragedy, as it allowed me to look forward and to have loving affinity with a country and people, rather than to be constrained by bitterness.

It was therefore a special moment to present the Christopher Ewart-Biggs Memorial Prize at the Peace and Beyond conference. Founded in memory of my father, the prize aims to recognise literary work which promotes peace and reconciliation in Ireland, a greater understanding between the peoples of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and closer co-operation between partners of the European Community.

The aim of building trust, understanding and co-operation is also central to our work at the British Council. At this time, the need to build trust, encourage dialogue and restore relationships is more crucial than ever, yet it is a daunting task.

Around the world, there is diminishing trust in public institutions, and in leadership. Perhaps we should not be surprised by the erosion of confidence in the old order. There have been significant social and political changes worldwide, yet many people feel that the promised improvements they believed would accompany those changes have not been delivered. Inequality and exclusion remain the reality for many.

Yet we must find a way together to resist the challenges to the peaceful societies we are trying to build. At the British Council, we are committed to making a lasting difference to the prosperity, security and influence of the UK and to stability globally, by building long-term, peaceful and respectful relationships between the people of the UK and people worldwide.

That may be through working to support the rule of law in Nigeria, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable young people in the Middle East and North Africa, or building the capacity within civil society groups to develop peacebuilding initiatives. It can also be the sharing of international research, learning and practice through events like Peace and Beyond.

We work both top-down and bottom-up; with ministries and policymakers, academics and practitioners, young people and grassroots organisations. And we work across sectors: through sports, arts, culture and education. For example, in Pakistan we have a programme that uses football to bring young people together and overcome cultural and religious barriers, and in Syria we support artists to play an active role in helping Syrian refugee communities to recover and become more resilient.

In this, our values are closely aligned with the aims of the Peace and Beyond conference as covered in this publication, and in the hope for a world that respects and celebrates the richness that diversity offers.

I am delighted to share this publication with you as part of our acknowledgement of all those courageous and inspirational people globally who commit their lives to creating a more peaceful world.

Kate Ewart-Biggs
Director, Global Network, British Council

Editorial

'Peacebuilding is an approach that addresses the culture of violence, by transforming it into the culture of dialogue.' John Paul Lederach, *Preparing for Peace.*

For the British Council, this year has offered an opportunity for new and concerted dialogue on the role of cultural relations in peacebuilding – building trust and sustaining inclusive partnerships, working through arts and culture, education and civil society, and with women, men and young people.

2018 saw the launch of the United Nations's Sustaining Peace Agenda, in which the UN renewed its commitment to peacebuilding, placing greater emphasis on conflict prevention and addressing the root causes of conflict, as well as highlighting the need for international partnership and co-operation, and emphasising the role of women and youth in building and sustaining peace.

2018 marks the centenary of the Armistice, which brought to an end one of the deadliest conflicts the world has ever seen. One hundred years after his birth, we remember Nobel Peace Laureate Nelson Mandela, and in doing so we celebrate the impact he had on his country, and the inspiration he continues to offer to leaders worldwide. This same year we mark the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, which brought to an end a period of violent conflict often referred to as 'the Troubles' and that developed cross-community consensus for peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

It was in this context that practitioners, academics, policymakers and young leaders from 28 countries gathered in Belfast in April 2018 for Peace and Beyond, a conference designed to garner research, share experience and encourage new thinking in the field of peacebuilding and reconciliation. Over three days, participants immersed themselves in each other's experience to develop their own peacebuilding policy and practice, in what one delegate called 'a masterclass on critically reflecting on the possibility for dialogue, disagreement and forgiveness'.

Through this conference, and the work that follows, we want to explore how cultural relations can contribute to positive peacebuilding – that is, not just the absence of violent conflict, but the rebuilding of trust and the restoration of relationships; the creation of systems that serve the needs of the whole population; and the constructive resolution of conflict.

For this publication, I invited a number of Peace and Beyond workshop speakers to develop the content they presented at the conference. Some have drawn on the vitality of the conversations they took part in; others have taken inspiration from the conference and woven it into their own, often deeply personal, experience.

It is a privilege to include a Nobel Peace Laureate as our opening contributor. We were delighted that President Santos was able to send a video message to the conference delegates, and the fact that he has also contributed to this publication speaks both of his commitment to peacebuilding, and the connections that have been built between Colombia and Northern Ireland in their support of each other's journeys to peace. Here, he speaks from the heart of the challenges of nurturing a peace process, and of the rewards that have already been reaped. It is though, he notes, a slow and complex process.

The reflections in this collection fall, broadly, into two main themes. The first is of memory, and how history and narrative can be used to promote either conflict or peacebuilding.

Bekim Blakaj of Kosovo's Humanitarian Law Center [sic] traces the thread between rule of law, transitional justice and reparation initiatives following the war in former Yugoslavia, but notes that 'acknowledging and dealing with the past' is the first step.

Maria Emma Willis's contribution is, at times, hard to read, in its outlining of the violence faced by women in Colombia. In her essay, she warns that harking back to a time before conflict, and memorialising it as idyllic, serves no purpose in developing a just and inclusive future. 'The discriminations and exclusions faced by women are best understood when the past and the memories it evokes are brought into the discussion and shed light on the mechanisms that keep the inequities in place.'

Fergal Keane, who was awarded the Christopher Ewart-Biggs Memorial Prize at Peace and Beyond, noted in his book *Wounds: A Memoir of War and Love* how he had tried to understand 'how the act of killing reverberates through the generations'. Candice Mama here weaves her own personal, inspirational story of tragedy and forgiveness with the journey of South Africa following the end of apartheid. In doing so, she provides as compelling account of the conference session on intergenerational trauma. 'I am a passionate believer in my generation,' she notes, asking that young people's voices are allowed more prominence when post-conflict societies begin the painful task of rebuilding.

Both Paula McFetridge and Cindrella Mizher, in reflecting on their home cities – Belfast and Beirut – speak to us of how memory of conflict is woven into the fabric of their surroundings, and how cultural practice is used to reflect on memories, interrogate the past and 'reconcile collective agony'.

The second theme is of co-operation, of partnership, of bridges, rather than walls, being built between communities and countries. This echoes the conference speech of philosopher and academic Onora O'Neill, who quoted Robert Frost:

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down!

Eamon Gilmore reflects on international co-operation, bringing both his experience of the Northern Ireland peace process, and his time as EU Special Envoy to the Colombian Peace Process. His chapter offers a thoughtful account of how the multiple international partners worked together to support Colombia in its journey toward peace.

Cities have been described by Pathways to Peace Director David Wick as the 'structural level where the Culture of Peace rubber meets the road… the city [has] the reach, authority, responsibility and influence to set the positive tone and direction for so many people'[1]. Jo Beall examines the notion of cities as the new arenas at the frontiers of peacebuilding, incorporating the examples of Belfast, Tripoli (Lebanon) and Derry/Londonderry that were shared at the conference. Here, the power of collaboration and connection runs through all the initiatives discussed, helping once divided cities towards re-emerging as vibrant spaces of innovation and energy.

Increasingly, international co-operation and collaboration is facilitated by technology, allowing activists and practitioners to support their peacebuilding efforts, and to provide 'alternative space' for communication and mobilisation. Yet, as well as fostering social cohesion, the potential for some new technologies, such as social media platforms, to increase fragmentation is much discussed. In her essay, Diana Dajer talks about 'cracking the code'; by assessing the wide range of potential peace-tech interventions, she shows that we are just at the start of this particular conversation.

Finally, John Brewer of Ulster University draws us back to the core purpose of the British Council's work – that of building trust – with his chapter on the role of social trust. Crucially, he reminds us that we need 'a type of trust with deep roots', and that 'creating the social conditions for trust is thus the responsibility of us all'.

As John Paul Lederach noted, in peacebuilding, we aim to transform a culture of violence into one of dialogue. I hope that this publication, the conference from which it emanated, and our ongoing work, contributes to that aim.

Christine Wilson
Editor

1.   www.peacedayphilly.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Culture-of-Peace-Description-2-14.pdf

Building peace: all for one and one for all

Juan Manuel Santos Calderón

It would have been a great pleasure for me to join the Peace and Beyond conference in Belfast in April 2018. Twenty years ago, this date marked what may have seemed an improbable agreement between enemies; in doing so, it returned hope to Europe and the whole world. And as it did 20 years ago, the world today applauds the perseverance and determination that made that Good Friday/Belfast Agreement possible.

The commitment to the construction of a stable and long-lasting peace is paradigmatic for us, because after two decades it has not lost its vigour; to the contrary, it is increasingly alive day after day in the actions and in the hearts of the British and the Irish people.

Northern Ireland's peace process was one of my main sources of inspiration when I made the decision to negotiate with the now-extinct FARC guerrillas. Experience had taught me that it is much more popular to wage war than to pursue peace, but it was also clear that the Colombian people could not be condemned to another half-century of death and suffering.

It was a long and difficult process. However, we dared to be audacious and innovative, and that is why – for the first time ever in the history of armed conflict resolutions – the victims and their rights were at the core of the agenda and the solution. Furthermore, and again, for the first time, an agreement was reached to create a transitional justice system, thereby ensuring that there would be no impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

And, fulfilling the purpose of every peace process – that is to swap bullets for ballots – the FARC is now a political party that is championing its ideals in the playing field of democracy.

The benefits of the process continue to unfold. We are no longer the second country after Afghanistan in number of victims of anti-personnel mines. Thanks to peace, we have managed to decontaminate 3,800,000 square metres since 2016, because we can now reach remote areas where access used to be impossible. Our goal is to clean up the whole national territory by 2021.

And we are rediscovering our territory, and finding new windows of opportunity. Ecotourism is booming, renewable energies are gaining strength, and we have even found new fauna and flora species thanks to scientific expeditions into places that the conflict had made inaccessible for decades.

I believe that building peace is like building a cathedral: difficult, complex and time-consuming. You have to lay brick by brick. The process is slow, and in Colombia, we are just beginning. Yet we have been careful to ensure that we are building on sound foundations. The thousands of lives that have been spared are a signal for us, showing that we did the right thing and are on the right path.

The support of the international community in building that architecture of a different Colombia, without the burden of war, has been essential. Having the encouragement and the experience of countries such as the United Kingdom motivates us to persevere in the face of the difficulties yet to come.

That support has been exemplified by the British Council. On its 75th anniversary, I said:

'If the British Council helped us thrive amid violence, we hope it will continue to accompany us in building peace. The challenge of achieving a lasting and sustainable peace necessarily means strengthening our culture and education. And who better than the British Council to support us in this mission?'

I am delighted to see its work continue as a promoter of bonds of understanding between peoples, through culture and education, and this endeavour is even more valuable and necessary at this stage in our history. And I am thrilled to see the British Council reflecting on how its work can promote and support the building of long-lasting peace.

Peace and Beyond placed intercultural dialogue, international partnership, and the sharing of global knowledge and experience at centre stage. These efforts must continue in order to face one of the biggest challenges that lie ahead of us all: to change the culture of violence for a culture of coexistence, inclusion and tolerance.

For, at the end of the day, we are one world. We are one people and one race, which is called humanity.

Juan Manuel Santos Calderón GCollH GCB
was President of Colombia from 2010 to 2018.
He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016

'Building peace is like building a cathedral … You have to lay brick by brick'

From conflict to rule of law: experience of transitional justice in Kosovo

Bekim Blakaj

Establishing the rule of law after conflict is a crucial task for the authorities in any post-conflict country. Very often in the aftermath of the conflict, victims and their families are demanding justice. In some cases, groups of victims openly fuel the creation of an environment for revenge, while perpetrators seek any possibility to avoid processes of accountability. There might be interested groups in favour of amnesty, who sometimes show that they can destabilise a fragile peace process.

In such circumstance, the authorities, in some cases international peacekeepers, must establish a balance between demands for justice, truth seeking, reparation and guarantee of non-repetition, and the need to secure immediate peace and set the path for future reconciliation.

In this essay, I will lay out some of the aspects of transitional justice I think most relevant, including the need for criminal prosecutions, the requirement for truth-seeking, functioning mechanisms for reparations for victims and institutional reform. I will then consider the situation of conflict surrounding the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the issues that followed, particularly for civilian victims, before turning to how Kosovo has addressed these. Finally, I will make a number of recommendations to support justice and reconciliation in the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Components of transitional justice

To reduce impunity, fulfil the rights of victims to justice and restore trust of citizens in institutions, whenever possible after conflict *criminal prosecutions* should be undertaken to ensure that as much as possible perpetrators will face trial. This will provide the opportunity to have court-established facts about some mass or individual crimes, which will contribute the creation of an accurate narrative about the past. Criminal prosecutions will enhance the creation of the rule of law and contribute to non-repetition of such crimes in the future.

Unfortunately, there is no case of conflict where all perpetrators have been prosecuted in the courts. This means that there is no detailed established narrative about crimes during conflict. In such cases, most victims remain uncounted and unacknowledged. There is also a risk that some of the events that took place during the conflict can be subject to revisionism, which leads to the creation of false history and can undermine peace. These are the reasons why *truth-seeking mechanisms* are of crucial importance in the transitional justice process. Truth also allows victims to obtain redress and complete the grieving process.

In post-conflict societies, the *right to reparations* is also a central element of the establishment of the rule of law and for instituting a culture respectful of human rights and promoting solidary between citizens.[2] Furthermore, it is an extremely important aspect of the delivery of justice to victims, and consequently, an essential transitional justice component, entrenched in international standards of criminal law, by which the state of Kosovo must abide.[3] While monetary compensation is the most common form of reparation, different methods can be used,[4] all executing the important psychological and social functions of the reintegration and rehabilitation of the victimised.

All three above-mentioned mechanisms of transitional justice contribute to non-recurrence, but there is also a set of *institutional reforms* which can further foster non-recurrence. All security institutions, such as the police and army, as well as the judiciary and civil administration, should be part of reforms. These reforms should first involve a vetting process, in order to remove from their official positions all persons who were engaged in abusing human rights during the conflict. Structural reforms, transforming legal frameworks and education of public officials are elements of institutional reform as well, which will ensure accountability, independence and the protection of human rights.

Consequences of the war in the former Yugoslavia

It is estimated that during the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, from 1992 until 1999, around 130,000 people lost their lives, were killed or went missing during the wars in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. More than 10,000 people today are still counted as missing persons in former Yugoslav countries. There are other categories of victims – numbers run into the millions – such as those who experienced sexual violence, those exposed to torture and cruel treatment in detention centres, those who had to flee their homes and lost their property, and those who never returned to their homes. For most of these categories of victims, we will never know the exact number and scale of these crimes.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was a UN court of law that dealt with war crimes that took place during the conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s. During its mandate, which lasted from 1993 to 2017, it irreversibly changed the landscape of international humanitarian law, provided victims an opportunity to voice the horrors they witnessed and experienced, and showed that those suspected of bearing the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed during armed conflicts can be called to account.[5] Despite the fact that the ICTY has accused 161 perpetrators of committing war crimes in territories of the former Yugoslavia, and bearing in mind that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo have pursued war crime trials for alleged perpetrators, most victims have never seen justice. When it comes to the right of victims to know the truth, many family members of the victims of war have been denied their right to know the truth about the circumstances in which their loved ones were killed or went missing. This right is mentioned in a set of principles for the protection and promotion of human rights through action to combat impunity, of the UN Commission on Human Rights:[6] Principle 4 articulates that 'Irrespective of any legal proceedings, victims and their families have the imprescriptible right to know the truth about the circumstances in which violations took place and, in the event of death or disappearance, the victims' fate.'

2. Victims' Right to Reparations in Serbia and the European Court of Human Rights Standards' (2014/2015), pages 3–4.
3. 'Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law' (2005).
4. A full spectrum of measures including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.
5. www.icty.org
6. http://undocs.org/E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1

There is no accurate register of victims of the wars of the former Yugoslavia. Those registers of victims which do exist, drafted by authorities of those states, are one-sided, showing only victims of particular, majority ethnicities. Until now there has been no serious attempt to set up a truth commission. The only inclusive initiative for establishing a truth-seeking mechanism is through the RECOM Initiative.

The coalition for RECOM defines it as: 'an official, intergovernmental commission to be jointly established by the successors of the former SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]. As an extra-judicial body, the task of RECOM is to establish the facts about all the war crimes and other serious war-related human rights violations; to list all war-related victims, and to determine the circumstances of their death; to collect data on places of detention, on persons who were unlawfully detained, subjected to torture and inhuman treatment, and to draw up their comprehensive inventory; to collect data on the fate of the missing, as well as to organize public hearings of victims' testimonies and the testimonies of other persons concerning war-related atrocities. The Regional Commission is to be independent of its founders and funded by donations'.[7]

Despite the RECOM initiative's efforts to create this register, the countries involved have not done much in the way of reparations for victims. Most victims have remained without any kind of reparation or compensation. Even symbolic reparation, such as letters of apology or memorials, have not acknowledged all victims, so even these symbolic forms of reparation are one-sided in post-Yugoslav societies. This lays the foundations for an exclusionary peace.

When it comes to institutional reforms, seen by transitional justice scholars as likely to reduce the possibility for recurrence of conflict, all countries of the former Yugoslavia that went through conflict in the 1990s have neglected this. No appropriate education programme was designed for public officials, the security and justice sectors, or students. As a consequence of the lack of institutional reform, those sentenced by the ICTY for committing war crimes have been greeted as heroes on their return. This illustrates the attitude of the authorities towards crimes committed in the past and the neglect of the rights of victims. More than that, this attitude of authorities of former Yugoslav countries is hindering the process of sustainable peace and reconciliation. Persons who are convicted for war crimes in ICTY have taken up important public or political positions in their respective countries after serving their sentences, such as general

Vladimir Lazarević, who is employed as a professor at the Serbian Military Academy,[8] or former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) member Lahi Ibrahimaj, who was elected as MP in the Kosovo parliament. With this in mind, it is easy to see why victims' communities have difficulties in regaining trust in the institutions.

Kosovo case study

A very short summary of the Kosovo war was best explained by SENSE Center for Transitional Justice in its interactive narrative 'ICTY: The Kosovo Case, 1998–1999':[9]

'The political crisis that had been developing in Kosovo from the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s culminated in an armed conflict between the forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Serbia and the Kosovo Liberation Army, or KLA, from the beginning of 1998. During that conflict there were incidents where excessive and indiscriminate force was used by the Yugoslav Army and Serbian Police units of the Ministry of the Interior, resulting in civilian deaths, population displacement and damage to civilian property. Despite efforts to bring the crisis to an end, which included sending an international verification mission to Kosovo, the conflict continued through to and beyond 24 March 1999, when NATO forces launched an air campaign against targets in the FRY. The bombing campaign ended on 10 June 1999, followed by the withdrawal of FRY and Serbian forces from Kosovo.'

Unfortunately, even after the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, crimes were not stopped, with too many people killed or going missing.

Existing post-conflict justice initiatives in Kosovo

When speaking about *right to justice* it is necessary to explain that war crimes in Kosovo were preceded by so-called hybrid panels in Kosovo. Indeed, international prosecutors (UNMIK and EULEX) were in charge of investigating and drafting indictments and representing them in the trials. Also, judging panels were composed by mixed judges, in most of cases by two international (UNMIK and EULEX) judges and one domestic judge. Only from 2017, when a department for war crimes was created within the Special Prosecutor of the Republic of Kosovo (SPRK), did domestic prosecutors have the mandate to investigate, write and represent indictments in the courts.

7. http://recom.link/about-recom/what-is-recom/
8. www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-war-criminal-will-teach-at-military-academy-10-18-2017/1431/5
9. http://kosovo.sense-agency.com/

From the end of the war until the present day, the justice system has initiated and filed 48 indictments: 12 of them against Serbs who were suspected of committing war crimes; 19 against Kosovo Albanians who allegedly committed war crimes; two against Kosovo Montenegrin citizens; and one against a Kosovo Roma. In total, 112 people were accused of war crimes, among them 61 Kosovo Albanians, 48 Kosovo Serbs, two Kosovo Montenegrins and one Kosovo Roma. From those 48 court cases for war crimes in Kosovo, only 38 people were sentenced with final verdicts for committing war crimes, 34 of them are Kosovo Albanians and four Kosovo Serbs. Others were acquitted in absence of evidence and 29 indicted persons (27 Serbs and two Albanians) escaped from detention centres and were never arrested again. The Kosovo penal code does not foresee trial in absentia, hence there was no trial for fugitives. Having in mind that during the war (and its aftermath) in Kosovo more than 10,000 people lost their lives (were killed or went missing), then it is obvious that the vast majority of families of victims have not seen justice. They are living with their pain without hope that the perpetrators of crimes will be prosecuted in front of courts.

Reparation

Families of victims cannot be satisfied with the reparations in Kosovo. Except for reparations on the basis of law, reparations on the basis of court decisions have been rare. Due to the small number of trials for war crimes, the victims of war have not had the opportunity to file private claims for compensation for their losses.

There are two laws enabling victims to apply for reparation, which is received in the form of monthly pensions. These laws are the Law on the Status and the Rights of the Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Civilian Victims of War and their Families;[10] and the Law on Missing Persons.

These two laws differentiate between civilian victims whose remains have been found and identified, and missing civilians, when establishing the requirements necessary to receive benefits. The law on reparations defines *a civilian victim* as: 'A person who died, or who was wounded and then died, at the hands of enemy forces, between 27/02/1998 and 20/06/1999, as well as persons who have suffered as a consequence of the war, within three (3) years after the war ended, from explosive devices left over from the war'.

The law on missing persons defines a *missing civilian* as: 'A person whose whereabouts is unknown to his or her family members and who, on the basis of reliable information, was reported missing during the period between 1/01/98 and 31/12/00, as a consequence of the war in Kosovo during 1998–99'. The discrepancy on the time frame for recognition of civilian war victims and missing persons creates confusion and discontent to the families of victims, especially to the families of missing persons, who were abducted after 20 June 1999. This is due to the fact that they are eligible to receive a monthly pension as the family of missing persons, but when the remains of the missing person are identified and handed over to the family for burial, then that person is no longer missing but becomes a 'killed person'.

The Law on Reparations does not recognise as civilian war victims people who were killed after 20 June 1999, so the families of missing persons after this date immediately lose the right to reparation once the remains of their loved ones are identified and handed over to them. So, the Law on Reparation is discriminatory towards families of victims who have been killed or missing after 20 June 1999, most of whom were from the non-Albanian community.

Institutional reforms

At the end of the war, Kosovo found itself without government institutions, as Serbian authorities who had made up much of the civil service and security sector left immediately. The UN resolution no. 1244 gives the mandate to UN Mission to Kosovo (UNMIK) to administrate Kosovo, and this was to create new Kosovo institutions. In this sense, Kosovo did not need to undertake vetting or structural reforms. Under the assistance and support of the international community, Kosovo undertook significant institutional reforms as part of efforts to ensure non-recurrence of conflict. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of the guerrilla forces known as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was conducted immediately after the war. This process was successfully accomplished within three months. According to the study 'The Kosovo Protection Corps in a Transition':[11]

'The demobilization of the KLA took place in the summer of 1999, and went smoothly. By March 1999 there were approximately 18,000 KLA combatants and according to a recent German study of the demobilization, the vast majority returned to the roles they had performed in previous civilian life. Between 3,000 and 4,000 have been involved with the Kosovo Protection Corps, the KPC, and some have joined the new Kosovo Police Service.'

10. www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Law%20on%20the%20status%20of%20the%20martyrs%20of%20war.pdf
11. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/38771/2003_Jul.pdf

The process of transforming legal frameworks in Kosovo was easier than in other former Yugoslav countries, because Kosovo adopted a new legal framework, beginning with its constitution and moving through to laws and regulations. Again, with the heavy support of the international community, Kosovo adopted a legal framework with the highest international standards of human rights. Because of its unresolved political status, Kosovo was not able to ratify conventions on human rights, but it integrated all provisions of these conventions in its legal framework, in constitutions and laws.

However, it is obvious that the laws have not been fully implemented. As an example, the law on official language stipulates that Albanian and Serbian languages are official and equal in the entire territory of Kosovo. However, it has not been implemented in practice and when authorities are questioned about it, their answer is that there is a lack of budget to fully implement the law.

Some elements of institutional reform have not been implemented, or if they have, then they have not been done so properly. Kosovo authorities have failed to set up a mechanism to prevent those sentenced for war crimes or crimes against humanity taking political or institutional positions after they serve their sentence. As noted earlier in this essay, one has taken up a position as an MP. I believe this is morally unacceptable and that it humiliates victims once again. I suggest authorities need to design mechanisms which prevent not just those who have been sentenced, but even those accused of committing war crimes, to take up this sort of position.

Another element of institutional reform which has not been implemented is in relation to education, and this should be implemented in different layers. There should be training programmes for public officials and employers in public administration on applicable human rights and international human rights standards. The Ministry of Education should design a curriculum for secondary school on the transitional justice mechanism and its importance for the post-conflict society. This is crucial because there is a huge deficit of knowledge among youth in Kosovo on those mechanisms, and their implementation is very often misunderstood, sometimes creating tensions among different ethnic groups. This in turn raises concerns about future peace.

Among all aspects of transitional justice implementation, Kosovo has mostly neglected those mechanisms which fulfil the right to know. For more than 15 years after the end of conflict in Kosovo, authorities have not initiated any serious project or activity to inform its citizens about casualties during the war. This has led to a situation where Kosovo citizens have started creating their own collective narrative about the past, which mostly relies on inaccurate and biased sources of information. As a consequence, most Kosovo Albanians think that the only victims during the war are Kosovo Albanians, killed or abducted by Serb forces. They believe that the number of killed or missing Albanians is much higher than it actually is. They also do not have information about non-Albanian victims, especially Serb victims. In fact, Kosovo Serb victims are not acknowledged at all by the majority of Albanians in Kosovo.

A similar situation exists among Kosovo Serbs and Serbs in general. They do not have accurate information about crimes committed during the war, especially those committed by Serb forces. They believe that the biggest victims in Kosovo are Serbs and that Albanians who were killed or went missing were members of the KLA, so were legitimate targets of Serb forces. In the absence of a serious, unbiased and unified initiative to establish a truth-telling mechanism, the space for manipulation of war casualties was created. Ethnic groups in Kosovo are about to create their own national narratives which are in discrepancy to each other. This is enhancing the division between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo.

This is one of the reasons why the Humanitarian Law Center (HLC), which is based in Serbia, and the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo (HLCK) have been implementing a project called the Kosovo Memory Book [12] since 1999. The aim is to document all human losses during the war and in its aftermath in Kosovo. In order to have as accurate as possible information about casualties, HLC and HLCK have created a database where all collected documents are uploaded and analysed. Almost 20 years after the war, this database contains more than 16,000 testimonies of family members of victims, eyewitnesses and survivors of crimes, and has documented 13,535 killed and missing persons, in the period of time from 1 January 1998 until 31 December 2000.

12. www.kosovskaknjigapamcenja.org/?page_id=29&lang=de

Thousands of other types of documents have been uploaded and analysed in the Kosovo Memory Book database. This recording of casualties has been recognised internationally as comprehensive, systemised and extremely accurate. [13] It can therefore be a very useful tool in providing assistance to victims in the post-conflict context, and in particular the realisation of their right to reparations.

The above graph shows the numbers of killed and missing persons during the war and in its aftermath in Kosovo. Around 75 per cent of all casualties were civilians who did not take an active part in the conflict; 1,446 victims were under the age of 18, and 3,051 other victims were over 60 years old. These statistics help to demonstrate the extent of war crimes committed during the conflict, and that civilians were not protected from indiscriminate attacks.

War victims by age and ethnicity

Albanians

Serbs

Roma and others
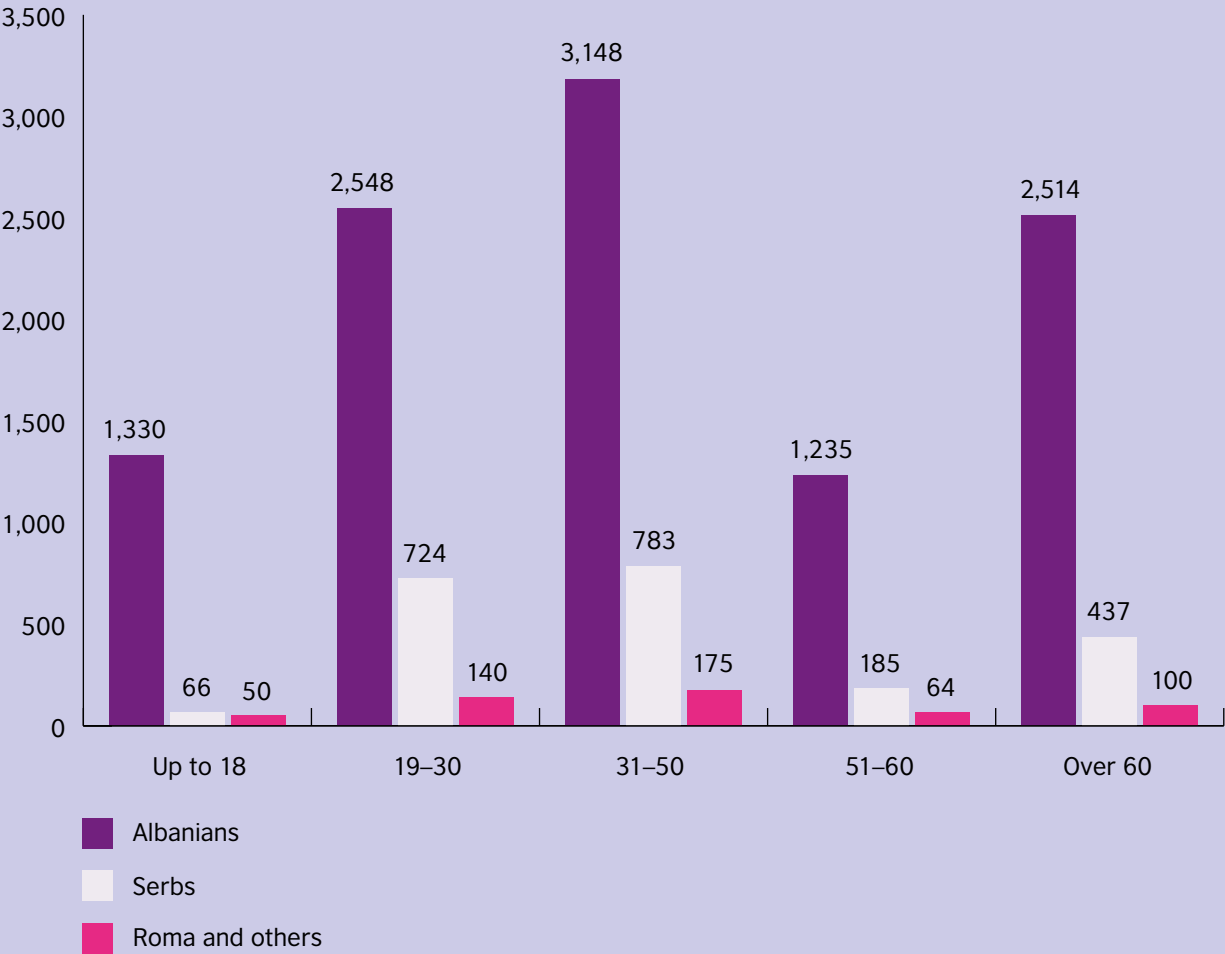
13. The Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG) concluded in 2014 that the KMB 'documents all or nearly all the human losses during the conflicts in Kosovo over the period 1998–2000 [...] it is very unlikely that there are more than a few tens of undocumented deaths' – Kruger and Ball (2014) https://hrdag.org

Any country which inherits such an extent of crimes from the conflict should take steps to implement transitional justice mechanisms in order to address such gross violations of human rights and to enable victims to fulfil their rights to justice, reparation and the right to know. Unfortunately, as with other former Yugoslav countries, Kosovo has not addressed the needs of war victims in a satisfactory manner.

What is the future of reconciliation in the former Yugoslav countries?

In 2017, the President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, initiated the creation of a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This has not yet been established, but the team that will lay the ground for the Kosovo TRC is now in place and it is expected that the TRC will be created within the next year. It is too early to assess if this initiative will contribute to the development of more accurate narratives about the conflict period and its aftermath, but it is promising to see an inclusive consultation process, in which all stakeholders, including ethnic communities, have been involved.

Bearing in mind the consequences of the Yugoslav wars set out earlier in this chapter, it is of crucial importance that there is enhanced co-operation among countries of the former Yugoslavia, in order to implement more effectively the mechanisms of transitional justice and provide victims and their families with more opportunities to access their rights. This could happen in a number of ways.

Strengthening co-operation between prosecutors' offices would result in more court cases for war crimes. While there is already a degree of co-operation between Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian prosecutor offices, there is none between the offices of Kosovo and Serbia. This has resulted in the provision of more space for impunity in both countries.

Another field where former Yugoslav countries could work together is in relation to reparations. Many victims of war crimes and their perpetrators are now living in different countries, either as victims have moved to another country as refugees, or where perpetrators committed crimes in a neighbouring country. This means that victims can very rarely seek reparation, especially where there was no criminal prosecution of perpetrators. Although some former Yugoslav countries have created legal infrastructure to support families of victims with some kind of reparations, it falls short. As noted previously, there is also a lack – across the former Yugoslavia – of symbolic reparations.

Finally, former Yugoslav countries must co-operate closely to establish the truth about those killed or missing by collecting the facts about war crimes and creating an accurate narrative about war casualties in the wars which followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

In the absence of this, each country will have its own official 'truth' about the wars, which will not be in line with the 'truth' of neighbouring countries. This bodes ill for peace in the future.

To this day, the only serious initiative to prevent this revisionism and to establish the facts about war crimes in the former Yugoslavia is the RECOM initiative, which I mentioned before. I believe this offers a unique opportunity for former Yugoslav countries.

Let us not forget that the first step in moving from conflict to establishing the rule of law is acknowledging and dealing with the past.

Bekim Blakaj is Executive Director of the Humanitarian Law Center in Kosovo

'Truth-seeking mechanisms are of crucial importance in transitional justice process'

Engendering peacebuilding processes: learning from women's experience of war and peace in Colombia

Dr María Emma Wills Obregón

In April 2018, I spoke at the Peace and Beyond conference, offering the keynote address at the session 'Engendering the peacebuilding process'. I shared the table with Professor Monica McWilliams, Emeritus Professor, Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University; Michael Potter, Visiting Research Fellow, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast; and Dr Sanda Rašković Ivić, Former President of the Democratic Party of Serbia, and former Commissioner for Refugees, Serbia. Each enriched the conversation with ideas, life experience and comments. I want to thank the organisers once more for an extremely eye-opening opportunity.

In this essay, I offer my reflections on the notion of a gender-sensitive peace, drawing on the Colombian experience in particular to highlight the complexities of the subject. My current experience at Colombia's National Centre for Historical Memory leads me to focus on the role of the past, and the importance of memory in this process, as well as the notion of extending a hand and building a bridge with the other, in order to address past conflict and to move forward.

Academic research has become increasingly involved in trying to uncover the mechanisms and processes that have for so long maintained women's exclusion and subordination in the political arena. Political scientists, sociologists, historians, anthropologists and philosophers have made enormous contributions to our understanding of this long-term process of exclusion in the modern world.[14] Simultaneously, social movement activists have insisted on women's inclusion, not only in party and institutional politics 'as usual', but also at exceptional times: during peace negotiations or transitions from dictatorships to democracy. Academics and social movement advocates have made some progress, and have been able to articulate an agenda that has even been translated into a United Nations Security Council Resolution.[15]

However, this advancement has not been exempt of controversies. Although very few people today would deny that women have been excluded from these places for too long, some simplify the solution by thinking that inclusion only refers to a physical process. They believe that by bringing women – their presence – to political parties, parliaments, government, or the negotiation table, the *representation* of women's interests, claims and aspirations will be guaranteed in these political arenas.[16] This plain answer to a complex challenge is based on the false assumption that having a woman's body by itself implies a political stance towards women's discrimination. However, the presence of female bodies in circles of political power is far from delivering a critical mass defending women's rights to inclusion and non-discrimination,[17] be it 'politics as usual' or at more exceptional times.

Women are far from constituting a homogeneous interest group or a community of values.[18] While some women cringe when confronted by the idea that they face certain specific discriminatory practices exactly because they are women, others accept it and advocate for conservative solutions, while others propose liberal or radical policies to overcome discrimination and exclusion. In the political arena, we have seen both women in power who defend authoritarian policies detrimental to women's equal rights,[19] as well as leaders fully committed to transformative policies.[20]

With these considerations in mind, it should be clear that engendering peace processes requires more than just bringing women to the table. It alludes to a consistent effort to *represent women's interests* at crucial times, when new norms and social pacts are being drawn to drive societies caught in violent dynamics towards a conviviality based on resolving conflicts through dialogue, imaginative protests and compromise. But, how and where are women's interests shaped?

This shaping takes place in communicative arenas[21] where women from different paths[22] identify some common issues and values through sharing their life experience, and build a minimum set of interests to advocate for[23] as well as a political stance to defend them. This communicative construction is at its best when it combines top-down and bottom-up dynamics, bringing together local women and female leaders, academicians and politicians to discuss and build a common ground for political action.

It should again be noted that this process of agenda construction, by drawing commonalities among some women, simultaneously builds differences with others who advocate for opposite perspectives. In other words: in these arenas, consensuses as well as disagreements are born, and these *contentious interactions* should be welcomed as part of a pluralist process that produces women's interests, their visibility and advocacy in the public sphere.[24]

14. Phillips, 1996 and 1998; Mouffe, 1993; Fraser, 1997; Young, 1990; Luna and Villareal, 1994; Velázquez, 199.
15. www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/
16. Michael Potter, who shared the table with me, made the same distinction between presence and representation.
17. Wills, 2007.
18. Phillips, 1998; Pitkin, 1967.
19. Blondet, 2002; Jacquette and Wolchik, 1998.
20. Leon, 1994; Bernal, 2015.
21. Fraser, 1997; Eley, 1990; Wills, 2007.
22. Different either in social, ethnic or religious origins, or sexual orientation.
23. Pitkin, 1967.
24. Mouffe, 2003, 2007; Fraser, 1997.

In the following pages, I want to make two arguments. The first one contends that this representational process of interest building should not only revolve around present-day concerns. The discriminations and exclusions faced by women are best understood when *the past and the memories* it evokes are brought into the discussion and shade light on the *mechanisms* that keep the inequities in place. In other words, conversations around women's interests and aspirations should look not only to the present conditions they face, but also to their history as constructed by professional historians, as well as by women advocates, practitioners and community leaders with their personal and collective memories. This is so because looking at the past from a historical memory perspective allows for a *complex* understanding of the present and opens a door to imagine possible roads to achieve a more inclusive and equitable future, taking into account the entrenched long-term barriers that deter change.

The second argument points at the fact that the process of consensual building of agendas should always remain alert to the perspectives left out and try to maintain bridges and conversations with sectors 'on the other side of the fence'.[25] This is so because the conversation by itself has a pedagogical value and crystallises what is at issue in a peace negotiation: the willingness of adversarial sectors to sit down around the same table to discuss and explain their opposing views. When this effort is left out, women's issues run the risk of being manipulated by political sectors and mobilised against the whole negotiation process, as happened in Colombia.

I will undertake the demonstration of my first argument – the value of a historical memory perspective – by drawing extensively from the Colombian case. I will concentrate on issues of gender-based violence (GBV) and particularly sexual violence (SV). I have chosen this specific issue because I believe that during armed conflicts, women suffer from particular repertoires of violence, which they face from specific starting points embedded in *previous* gender inequities that place them in vulnerable conditions. I also concentrate on this issue because it also allows me to tackle complex matters such as the *'continuum'*[26] of GBV. To do so, I concentrate on what I learned from women's experience on GBV and SV *before* any of the armed organised actors was present in their lives. Through their child and youth memories, I discover the *hidden* stories of violence I had not seen, neither in the academic accounts of our recent past nor in the media. I share my discomfort of belonging to an academic world that has *failed* to meet the expectations of contributing to a transformative understanding of the inequities and violence faced by my women fellow citizens.

I then turn to the patterns that arise from women's stories of their experience *during* the years of conflict on GBV and SV exercised by the armed actors. I try to answer the following puzzle: *was the GBV and SV performed by the armed actors just the same type of violence women had endured before the war?* Was it just more of the same? Did we see a straightforward magnification of the previous violence? Or did the war bring new ways and meanings to the repertoires of violence against women? In other words, I try to tackle the 'continuum' issue from an empirical and case study perspective (Colombia) and point to the fact that between daily GBV and war-related GBV, there is a strong mediation played by each of the organised armed actors: paramilitaries, guerrillas and state agents displayed, each, *very specific repertoires of GBV and SV. Instead of having a homogenous continuum displayed by all actors, the variations among them are deep and strong, expressing quite specific representations of womanhood and gender in each armed organisation. Hence, GBV, instead of being mirrored in the war scenarios, was refracted through the prism of each armed organisation, giving way to different GBV repertoires.*

As for the second argument, I analyse how the Peace Accord signed between the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) and the government was a product of an extraordinary effort of consensus-building in Havana that brought together women from the guerrillas, the government, victims and international facilitators. Such a successful outcome was the result of the top-down and bottom-up process of interests and value-building galvanised by the United Nations Resolution 1325 during Colombia's peace negotiation. However, the Accord was drawn in Havana, far from Colombian public scrutiny. There was little debate over the terms of the Accord during the whole process. Regarding the advocacy of women at the negotiation table, they concentrated on the terms of the Accord, but paid no attention to building the necessary bridges with women and sectors on 'the other side of the fence'. This opened the way for the political opposition, using the inclusion of the gender perspective to mobilise conservative religious sectors against the pact. The plebiscite was lost, and certainly the politicisation of religious communities played a role in this outcome.

25. Identity building is based on constructed similitudes and differences upon which frontiers are drawn. See Mouffe, 2003.
26. The continuum alludes to the bridges connecting the occurrence of violence against women in daily 'normal' life and at exceptional convoluted times of political unrest or war. This is so because in the cultural realm at a global scale there is a normalisation of this violence.

I conclude by highlighting that gender-liberal advancements can trigger fierce reactions from men as well as women, and these reactions can be mobilised against peace accords if no efforts are drawn to expand support for the terms of the negotiation among conservative sectors. Women activists and negotiators need to simultaneously *weave coalitions at the negotiation table as well as alliances with different political forces outside the table* in order to prevent backlashes once an agreement is reached.[27]

1. A sense of mourning: the hidden stories I had missed

As already said, at the negotiation table, a gender perspective focused on transforming discrimination and violence against women should not only take into account what happened to the women during armed conflict, but should also bring to the fore the entrenched and discriminatory violent practices women and girls suffer in their daily life that have not been sufficiently addressed either by the state, the parties or civil society. This is because negotiations are momentous opportunities, when societies face their own history to reflect on their trajectories and rethink where they have come from and what kind of future they want to achieve.

Some of the hard questions relate to the long-term structures – cultural, economic, political and religious — that might explain why the armed conflict started: was the society as democratic as it claimed? Why did the armed conflict start? What were the unfulfilled promises and grievances that ignited the violence? Why were the conflicts dividing society not being resolved through the institutional mechanisms in place? And what does daily GBV tells us of the entrenched ways of constituting gender power and exerting it in a specific society?

In this section, I want to share with you two different stories that illustrate the normalisation of GBV and SV in daily life in Colombia. These stories bring to the fore how violence related to the armed conflict is not the only one suffered by women and girls.

A must: taking into account the regional variations and identity differences

The first one takes place in Trujillo, a small village that was (and unfortunately still is) coveted by different armed actors because of its strategic position in the Colombian West Cordillera connecting the Valle del Cauca to the Pacific coast.

We had organised a collective historical memory workshop with both women and men. During the different moments of collective memory weaving, all the participants had drawn an idyllic story of their common past: before the arrival of the armed actors, life was easy; there was plenty of food; peasants were organising around co-operatives with the help of an involved priest; and there were no conflicts among neighbours.

I was starting to feel uncomfortable with the narrative of a perfect harmonious past devoid of conflicts, when, during lunch, outside the formal agenda of the workshop, I casually asked about childhood memories, first-time kisses and first love. There were some giggles and surprised faces, and then an older woman started a long remembrance of her childhood that left me aghast:

> *I remember my childhood as very violent. Since I can remember, I've been a peasant, always working in the field.*
>
> *I remember my dad: he was a dictator in his own house... I was my dad's worker until the age of 13. I ploughed the land with him, planted corn and beans in the fields...*
>
> *When I was 15, turning 16, he forced me to marry... Before I got married, no friend could get close to me. My father married me to the man he chose. He was 60 and I had just turned 16. That's how my life started, and what started on a bad foot, could only end badly.*
>
> Adult woman, Trujillo, 2008

The woman told her story without flinching, in a neutral matter-of fact voice, devoid of anger or sadness. Life, it seemed, should be expected to unravel this way for young girls and women.

As a privileged[28] academician working on gender and citizenship formation, the stories of women victims of war allowed me to go beyond certain comforting assumptions and understand not only the horrors of the armed conflict, but also the enormous breach between the life conditions of rural and urban women in Colombia, and more precisely between peasant women and professional women coming from privileged backgrounds. It made me aware, from an intellectual perspective and a bodily involved experience, that understanding gender violence in a particular country demands a *regional and even a local community approach*.

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27. Dr Sanda Rašković Ivić also made a strong point of concentrating in coalition and alliance´s building.
28. My privileges come from my class origins, my race and my heterosexuality. In Colombia, I would probably be seen as 'white' and some would even wonder if I was foreign (I am very tall for Colombian standards). By class, I received private education in the best schools, learned English and French during my childhood years, and had gone beyond a BA to get a master's degree in Montreal and then a PhD in the USA.

As with other political processes, data and sources relating to the national level often lead to generalisations about a country obscuring local and sectorial variations.[29] In other words, research has to go beyond the national by bringing data and voices from the regional and local, and should combine quantitative data collection with the careful and empathic listening of local women from different salient groups[30] and ages. Numbers, when relating to stories of gender violence, are blurry indicators of what really happens on the ground and can be misleading if not complemented with local participatory memory building.[31] This is so because GBV and SV is surrounded by 'a structural imposition of silence',[32] as victims are often still presumed responsible for this violence, and publicly humiliated and stigmatised when they finally gather the courage to speak up.

Hence, safe spaces, as well as an intersectional approach that takes into account social, ethnic, age differences and subnational gender arrangements,[33] are necessary to uncover what lies hidden beneath the surface.

The reproduction of gender violence as a system: women as enablers

The second story refers to the experience of a young woman who participated in another workshop held in Magdalena, a region on the Caribbean Colombian coast. This time, we were working in small groups listening to different stories of daily life before the armed groups arrived. Again, I asked about relations between women and men, girls and boys, and youths in general, when suddenly a young shy woman who had remained silent all the while, said she wanted to share a story she had till then kept to herself. All the others remained still while she shared with us her memories of brutal years.

With my husband, I had a horrible life. By his side, life was terribly cruel [...] When I married I thought my husband was going to treat me well. At the beginning he more or less treated me well (but) after six months he began mistreating me terribly ... He hit me. I tried to defend myself, but he was 25 or 26 years and I had just turned 15.

One day he went out to collect his salary. I had nothing in the house because it was market day and he went out to pick up the money we needed to buy food. I had nothing to give the children, no sugar, nothing. I was in despair, shut up in my house because I did not like going out. What was I going to do? It was six, seven at night and the children kept crying... I went to my neighbour next door and told her:

–Please, give me a little sugar to feed the children.

–And what about your husband?

–He went to collect his pay but has not returned.

–Ha! He must be drinking.

... This man did not show up till four in the morning. He arrived totally drunk. When I complained, what did he do? He found an electric cable and whipped me... That man spanked me. The blows forced me on my knees. That man left me full of bruises. I screamed and he got even madder. It was terrible.

Of the ten years I spent with him, I cannot remember a single good experience. Look: I am all bruised. My body is full of scars from bites he gave me.

[When I sought refuge in my mother's house], my mother said I had to put up with him, that I had to be there with him because he was the father of my children [...]

We had to obey mums and my mum told me to go back to him.

That's the way life is.

'Laura', woman victim, Magdalena 2008[34]

Even today when I read the transcripts of this story, I wander how we, in academia, can talk with such certainty of Colombia as a consolidated democracy. Of course I partly know the answer. Considering indicators of traditional public politics,[35] Colombia passes the test. We have a multi-party system; elections are held periodically; we have a free press; and although weak, there is a separation of powers and a shaky but still working rule of law.

29. Gibson, 2005.
30. While in some countries the most prominent differential criteria used to establish hierarchies are ethnic or racial, in others it can be religious or ideological.
31. Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica and University of British Columbia (2013).
32. Roth et al., 2011.
33. Gender arrangements are the cultural, social and political patterns arising from the rules, both formal and informal, applied by societies and communities to regulate the relationships between genders. These arrangements crystallise both in formal rules (i.e. constitutional charts, laws and public policy documents) as well as informal cultural rules and conventions (habits and daily practices) that assign heterosexual masculine and feminine dichotomous attributes, and based in this cultural attribution, impose roles and differentiated places on which power relations are structured. In most pervading societies, the masculine-heterosexual tends to subordinate and devalue the feminine and other genders. These role assignments, although historically constructed and dynamic, ends up being perceived by those enacting them as biologically grounded (natural, normal) and perennial (Scott, 2008). This paper argues that beyond the national gender arrangements, academia, the media, advocates and policymakers should pay attention to gender arrangement variations between regions and communities.
34. For security reasons, all names have been changed.
35. Usual indicators of a democratic regime are: regular elections, freedom of speech and press, multiparty system, rule of law, accountability, and absence of political violence. This latter indicator alludes in most cases to persecution of political militants leaving out GBV.

These indicators show how such standard definitions of democracy centred on public life still leave out a thorough scrutiny of what happens behind closed doors, in the private arena. However, if we continue to use the same indicators to characterise regimes (and name realities), *leaving out of the picture the patterns of daily intimate life*, we are complicit, as scholars, in hiding from public scrutiny this violence. It seems to me obvious that Laura's life is far from evolving in a democratic way. Hers is a story of humiliation and of a constant infringement of her dignity as a human being and her rights as a citizen.

A second awareness emerges from this narrative. GBV, more than a practice between a single man and a particular woman, is really a complex system with many persons being involved playing different roles. In these violent systems, female figures of authority, i.e. the mother or the grandmother, are the *enablers/ gatekeepers*. Having a gender perspective demands a complex understanding of the cogs and gears that keep the system in place, including women's complicity and their role in maintaining authoritarian gender-violent world-views and practices.

It also points at the fact that even before a society dives into an armed conflict, the past, often remembered as a kind of lost paradise, is often plagued for women and girls with violent, humiliating gender practices locked in silence and shame. Academia and historical memory practitioners have to develop the tools to allow the 'dark side' of the past to surface so that it can be faced and transformed.

Transitions from war to peace are also periods of reflection about what spurred the war and kept it going. Identifying the causes and delineating the problems that led a society towards armed conflict seems a necessary step to go forward, as it points to the issues that need to be addressed to overcome the violence. Most of the literature on internal wars concentrates on economic, political, institutional or religious long-term divisions and grievances; in other words: it turns its attention towards cleavages and motivations pertaining to the public sphere.

Less consideration has been given to gender issues. Although it might be too soon to think of gender privileges and power as root causes of an armed conflict,[36] previous patterns of daily GBV can shed light on the violent repertoires used by armed actors. Hence, certain problems should draw more attention from the academic community: should we expect a high prevalence of GBV in armed conflicts when individuals are socialised to devalue women and girls and previously used GBV in their daily routines? How is a particular armed conflict shaped by the preceding existing GBV?

In the next section, based on the Colombian case, this question will be tackled by analysing the GBV and especially SV repertoires used by the different armed actors.
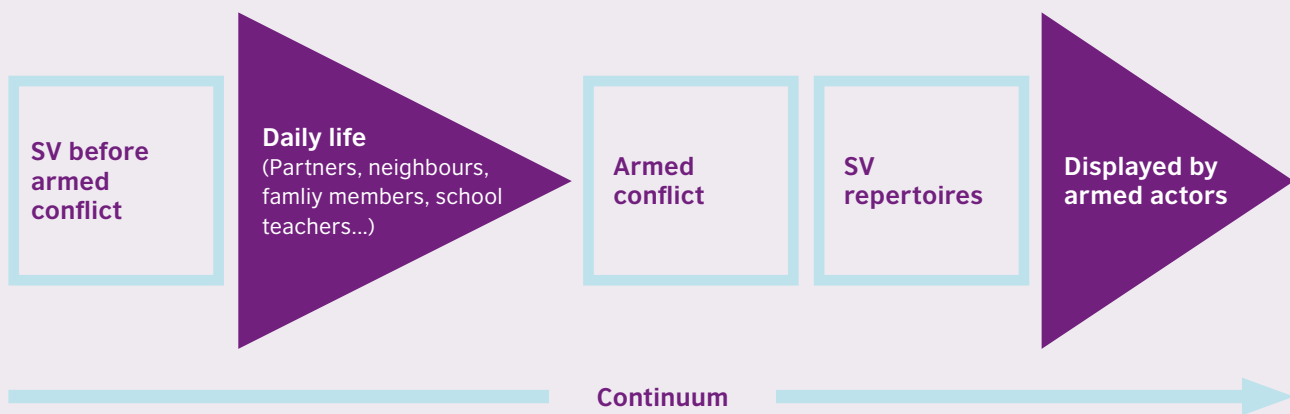
36. Gender privileges and power have and still play a fundamental role in elucidating the repertoires used by armed actors but the academic literature has not been able to demonstrate they have played a part in originating, in modern times, an armed conflict.

2. GBV and SV during war: is it just more of the same? The determinant role of armed organisations
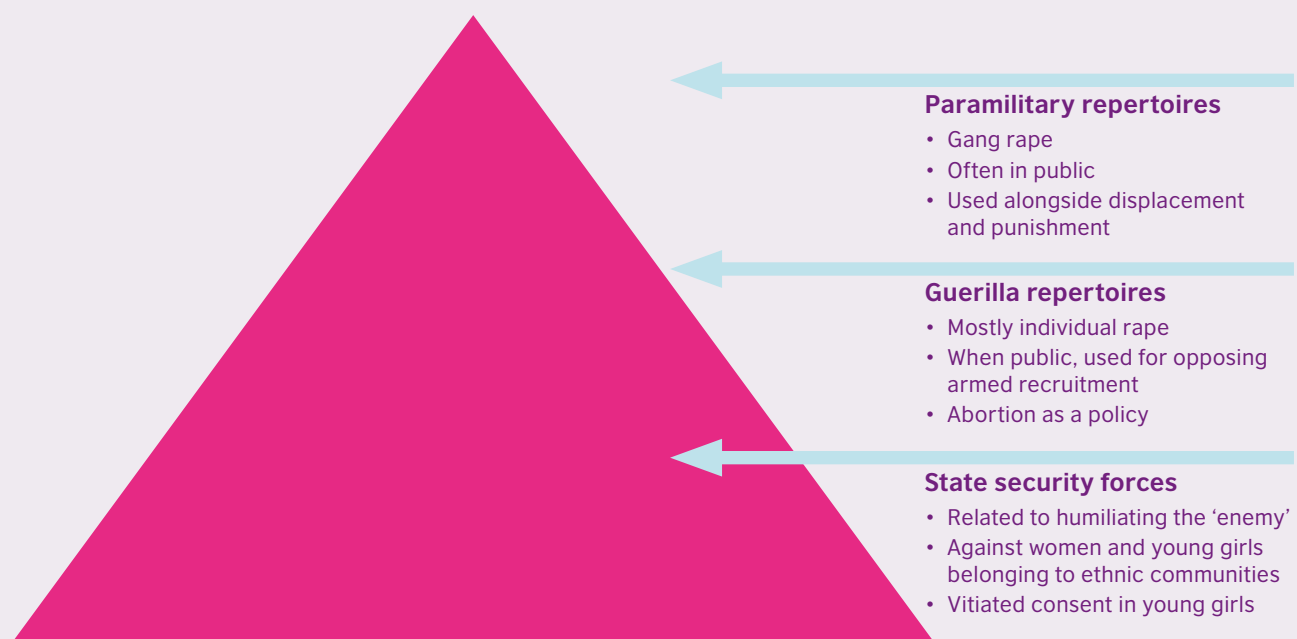
In an armed context, previous GBV, and particularly SV, can simply become magnified (continuum), used scarcely by one party while perpetrated extensively by another; be highly prevalent as a whole, or not featured at all.[37]

In Colombia, according to the Public Health Surveillance System, between 2015 and 2016, there were 24,819 rape reports, 87 per cent of them against women and 13 per cent against men. In a country where victims are still shamed and stigmatised, the numbers seem high.[38]

Now, how does this violence translate into the armed conflict dynamics? Do all the groups use GBV and SV in the same fashion and under the same circumstances? With the information we have, the answer is no. The repertoires of GBV used by armed actors vary strongly among them (see illustration).

| SV before armed conflict | **Daily life** (Partners, neighbours, famliy members, school teachers...) | Armed conflict | SV repertoires | **Displayed by armed actors** |

Continuum

SV repertoires performed by armed actors in Colombia

Paramilitary repertoires
• Gang rape
• Often in public
• Used alongside displacement and punishment

Guerilla repertoires
• Mostly individual rape
• When public, used for opposing armed recruitment
• Abortion as a policy

State security forces
• Related to humiliating the 'enemy'
• Against women and young girls belonging to ethnic communities
• Vitiated consent in young girls

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37. Wood 2009a; Wood 2009b.
38. There is a lack of comparable indicators of GBV and SV in Latina America, which is a symptom of the lack of attention it has received until very recently.

Starting with numbers, according to the Conflict and Memory Observatory, 15,692 persons reported having suffered sexual violence assaults related to the armed conflict from 1959 till 2017. Although many victims did not identify their perpetrators when giving their testimony, at least 6,226 mentioned paramilitary groups, 4,873 pointed at guerrillas and 332 to state agents.[39]

However, as said in the previous section, numbers are hazy indicators of what happens to women and girls in a particular war context. In order to uncover the logics of GBV underlying an armed conflict, repertoires[40] have to be taken into account. The answer to how GBV is used, by whom, when and against whom, constitute the evidence needed to establish those repertoires. In Colombia, listening to women and girls who were victims of GBV and SV and who came from different regions, allows us to draw a preliminary picture of how guerrillas, paramilitaries and state agents practised violence against them in quite different repertoires.

Paramilitary repertoires

From a national perspective, records of paramilitary GBV including SV, revealed patterns: most cases were performed in gangs and either the harmed bodies, or the actual acts were public – or both. In many GBV cases perpetrated by paramilitaries, these events occurred simultaneously with massacres and forced displacements. Women with social leadership, or who occupied certain types of positions (health promoter or teacher, for example), were targeted and stigmatised as members of the enemy ranks, and abused with fierce displays of sexual violence. In such cases, the female body became an analogy of a territory to be colonised and domesticated.

When the paramilitaries became the dominant force in a territory and established themselves as the governing authority, their members boasted of their power by publicly 'appropriating' the women and young girls. Sexual violence was also publicly used to punish women who transgressed their social codes in everyday life and break down the spirit of leaders who challenged their authority.

Although these patterns were common among paramilitary structures, there were variations between units displayed in different regions showing again how important it is for research methods to include participatory community storytelling, an analysis of regional gender arrangements and an intersectional approach.

I will give a few examples of these regional and sectorial variations. In the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, under Hernán Giraldo's control, he, as 'supreme' commander, imposed 'tributes' to the families in exchange for 'favours' and 'protection'. Ranking high among the tributes was his unquestionable access to the virgins of the community reminiscent of the *'droit du seigneur'* in feudal Europe. His nickname, 'The Drill', accounts for this systematic imposition. The men under his authority replicated this practice following his example. The commander´s behaviour 'normalised' this violence.

In Putumayo, in southern Colombia, a coca-producing frontier region, the paramilitaries transformed specific houses into prisons where they kept women as sex slaves. They humiliated families, and in particular young and adult women, forcing them to parade in front of all the neighbours to attend sexually transmitted diseases controls. Through daily references, they established deprecating frontiers between 'clean' and 'contaminated' women. Their actions and discourse fragmented families and stigmatised women and girls, some of whom were expelled from their own emotional networks, leaving them 'outside' and forsaken.

In Montes de María, commanders, in order to establish their hierarchy, organised beauty pageants to choose the girls considered the most beautiful. By doing so, they sent a message not only to the communities, but also especially to other men. Gender hierarchies involve not only power imbalances between women and men, but also among men, and among different sexual orientations and genders.[41]

If we bring into account ethnic differences, although Colombia's armed conflict is not triggered by and perpetuated through the use and abuse of ethnic differences, indigenous peoples do occupy territories coveted by the armed actors, either because they are rich in minerals (gold, coltan, oil and coal) or because they stand along the trade routes of illegal goods. In order to acquire dominance over those territories, paramilitaries targeted women to warn the communities of what they were capable of doing and spread terror among the whole ethnic community. Such was the case of Portete, in Guajira. The Wayuu norms of war prohibit any attack on women and children. However, the paramilitaries strategically targeted the female leaders and authorities protected by these indigenous codes of honour. By doing so, the perpetrators wanted to humiliate the whole community and explode their sense of belonging to a collective body. The violence came with the public exposition of the tortured bodies aimed at producing a wave of terror to control the entire population. It sent the message that the perpetrators had no moral limits and were capable of executing unimaginable crimes from the ethnic community's perspective.

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39. Numbers should always be used cautiously and with a grain of salt because, as said before, victims tend to keep silent in order to avoid revictimisation.
40. Charles Tilly developed the concept to understand contentious collective action. He pointed at the fact that collective actors learn the ways to express their claims in the 'theatre' of contentious dynamics, and can and do innovate in each confrontational cycle their learned repertoires. See Tilly et al. (2003).
41. Walker (2009).

As for the women recruited by the paramilitaries, they were few in number, and most of them played traditional feminine roles. They worked washing clothes, cooking or nursing. Some reported that other male recruits simply assumed 'sexual services' were part of their daily chores. A few powerful women played the role of brokers and PRs, and arranged meetings and pacts between the paramilitary commanders and the politicians in the regions under their dominion.

Going back to the effort to infer from all these stories a general characterisation of paramilitary repertoires, it is possible to grasp that these armed structures inculcated in their recruits, through daily training and the use of obscene language to refer to women, a representation of the feminine as either naturally subordinate to men or non-human. Under their rule, women and girls should behave in submissive ways towards men, remain quiet and accept with resignation men's wishes, and keep their place (home and childrearing). Those who resisted their rules were publicly punished. Their bodies were seen either as canvases to send messages to the enemy or the communities under their control, or as objects to carve and boast of their arbitrary and unlimited power. *Through their daily governance habits, a deeply patriarchal social order took shape.*

Alas, the Post-Demobilisation Armed Groups, trained first under paramilitary supervision, continue today with these repertoires and inculcate in the neighbourhoods or territories under their control these patriarchal, despotic and ferocious orders.

Guerrillas' repertoires

Certain patterns also emerge from the analysis of the guerrilla repertoires of violence. In contrast to the paramilitaries, guerrilla recruits imposed sexual violence individually in private spaces, hiding it from the commander's eyes. Most targeted a chosen woman or young girl, flirted with her, and when confronted with a 'no', coerced her to have sexual relations under the threat of forced recruitment of her brothers or herself, or under threat to harm any member of her family.

Sexual violence was also used more openly as a punishment inflicted on women who publicly opposed the recruitment of youngsters from the community. Or in a case reported in Tolima, the woman was raped because she was accused of being a whistle-blower and of collaborating with the 'enemy'. In most of these cases, the threat of reprisals against the family weighed heavy on the victims who remained silent and, as in a nightmare, were later accused by their own relatives of having acquiesced to these relationships. In the worst cases, families retaliated by excluding them.

More recently, there was a massive FARC gang rape reported in 2003 in Guaviare, amid a heavy dispute between paramilitary and guerrilla units. This shows that, in such a prolonged armed conflict, a mimesis effect between different armed actors can occur. Guerrillas from the FARC copied a paramilitary repertoire. In the midst of a scenario of confinement, the women were gang raped by members of this guerrilla group.

As for the women and girls who were recruited, numbers were higher than in the paramilitaries.[42] Some talk of how they experienced a language of equality unknown to them in their daily life. They emphasise how women and men performed the same chores, carried a gun and went into the battlefield. The darker side of these stories relate to forced family planning and forced abortion. It is important to point out that the application of the norm – not being able to continue with the pregnancy – had variations depending on the place that the woman occupied in the internal hierarchy of the organisation and her class origin.

Police and armed state forces repertoires

In the records gathered in the Magdalena region, we could only identify a case of a woman raped and murdered in a territory presumed under the control of the 'enemy'. All its inhabitants were stigmatised as guerrilla members according to the people who filed the claim and who accused the military of operating hand-in-hand with the paramilitaries in the region. Her tortured body was left on the road to send the message to the entire community.

In the National Report on Sexual Violence, Emberá indigenous women report having been accused of being *'guerrilleras'* or having been the victims of sexual violence when employed as domestic workers by alleged members of the state security forces. Members of these security forces were also often accused of modalities that do not 'leave physical traces', such as forced nudity and touching.

Violence against indigenous women expresses the overlap of gender and ethnic discriminatory degrading representations among state security personnel.

But most reported cases refer to agents who took advantage of their investiture. In precarious and vulnerable contexts, young men wearing a uniform are seen by girls and adolescents as an exit door (even if it is not) of precarious conditions. The men flirt with the young girls, who hope for a long-term relationship. In such unequal and inhospitable circumstances, these relationships should be seen as the product of a *vitiated consent*.

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42. Some say that more than 40 per cent of guerrilla members were women.

These events are not only a matter of individual decisions taken by young men with no relation to the institution to which they belong: as soon as the girls or young women become pregnant, their partners are transferred to another battalion. With that transfer, the commander and the institution itself become cogs in this anti-democratic and macho system that celebrates, instead of condemning, these asymmetric relations between men in uniform and girls without hope and with no opportunities of a better future.

In addition, in territories where the state presence is precarious and other armed actors can again exercise dominance, the establishment of a sentimental relationship (forced or not) with agents of the state security forces puts these young women and girls in a place of enormous vulnerability. When the dominant actor changes and the region fall under the control of the opposite armed actor, the women and young girls are stigmatised as being of or belonging to the enemy lines and punished openly.

Recapitulating: from the stories and the numbers, Colombia can be said to be quite a dangerous country for women and girls. However, this violence does not automatically translate into the same prevalence and repertoires among all the armed actors. The striking variations among them show the important role each organisation played. The left–right ideology might explain this variation,[43] as well as the representations of the feminine inculcated in daily routines and armed training. In other words, organisations and commanders, through their orders, strategies and example, inculcated different ways of behaviour towards women and girls, and hence should be accountable for what happened to them in the regions under their control.

This means that building an agenda to bring to the negotiation table should take into account both the daily GBV women and girls suffer before the armed conflict intruded in their regions, as well as the mechanisms used by each armed organisation to inculcate in their own recruits the normalisation of specific GBV repertoires. Each organisation should be held accountable for such repertoires.

3. Engendering the Havana talks but leaving out alliances with women on 'the other side of the fence'

When the Havana talks between the Colombian government and the FARC were publicly acknowledged in October 2012, they started from a 'gender-neutral' position. Mostly men made the teams and when women sat at the table, they were located (literally and symbolically) behind the male plenipotentiary.

However, this gender-blind position did not go unnoticed. Feminist NGOs, women victims' organisations and international agencies formed a critical mass of advocates who adamantly demanded the full participation of women at the table voicing their claim: 'Peace without women has no meaning.'

Because of the pressure, a gender sub-commission was finally established in June 2014. The Havana talks brought together the leaders of different feminist currents and social movements, galvanising a critical mass of women with years of advocacy experience. Intergenerational conversations took place between women who had gone through peace processes by the end of the 1980s and women from the FARC and government delegations. Legacies and lessons learned were shared and gave way to a gender-sensitive language and a gender perspective in each of the points of the agenda: rural reform; democratisation; disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration; and victims.

Analysing the content, the Accord did neither addressed GBV nor SV in daily life in the second point relating to democratisation of culture and politics. On the participation of FARC members in Congress, their newly created party was allocated five seats in the Lower Chamber as well as five seats in the Upper Chamber. There was no mention of quotas for the FARC women, although as already said the guerrilla has an important number of women combatants.

Although these absences can be seen as shortcomings, the fifth point, 'on victims', referred to sexual violence rooted in the armed conflict and demanded the creation of a specialised team to investigate its occurrence. The Accord also mentioned the need to offer 'psychosocial care for the emotional recovery of victims according to the specific damage they have suffered, including the particular effects of victims of sexual violence'.[44] Amnesties and pardons were explicitly prohibited for sexual violence.

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43. Guerrillas adhere to leftist ideologies, while the paramilitaries are pro-status quo and right-wing.
44. Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera, 24.11.2016.

Apart from the silence regarding the gender aspects of democratisation and the lack of political quotas for the women, the Accord really included women and girls, as well as LGBTI sectors in the other points of the agreements. The Integral Rural Reform included property rights and access to credit and expert advice for women. The work of the Gender Sub-Commission was celebrated by many liberal and radical activists, and with good cause, as the result was an engendered peace agreement (with the exception on democratisation already mentioned).

However, these steps forward spurred a backlash. Conversations had been held in Cuba, far away from Colombia. Many Colombians had little idea of what had been negotiated between the teams.

When the government called a referendum to endorse the agreement, the anti-Accord forces played on this lack of information and mobilised different sectors to vote 'no' for diverse reasons. One major argument was that the Accord was against the nuclear family and advocated for LGBTI sectors and an LGBTI-inclusive education inspired by a 'gender ideology'. This 'gender Ideology … would be detrimental to the family, nature, religious beliefs and society as a whole'. [45]

To understand why the family and LGBTI rights are such sensitive topics, one has to take into account that Colombia is one of the few countries in Latin America that established a concordat with the Vatican, giving predominance to the Catholic Church over education for more than a hundred years (1887–1993). From a short-term perspective, the Procurator-General of the Nation was in the hands of a far-right man, Alejandro Ordoñez, who mobilised public opinion and members of different churches against the Accord.

On 2 October 2016, the plebiscite was lost. The 'no' vote won by a short distance and the Accord had to be renegotiated. A new text, the 'Accord of the Colón Theatre', was signed a few weeks after, at the end of November. In this new agreement, the Church appeared in different sections: as a community victimised by the war and as an actor playing a role in the rehabilitation process of drug consumers; the nuclear family also had a place as a victim of the war; the gender perspective was replaced by a more individualistic approach; and no reference was made to LGBTI sectors. [46]

One major gain came out of the renegotiation: 'A special instance was created to monitor women's rights; and in the Framework Plan for the Implementation of the Agreements, special treatment should be given to women by creating public policies, programs and reforms that take into account their particularities. The plan includes impact indicators.' [47]

However, these results point at the fact that engendering peace pacts at the negotiating table should also become tuned with society as a whole. Pacts are concerted between negotiating elite teams, and of course women should have a prominent place from the beginning at these scenarios. But these pacts lack the transformative power if social forces do not support and surround them. Alliances 'back home' and bridges with 'women on the other side of the fence' are as important as what happens at the table.

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'Engendering peace processes requires more than just bringing women to the table'

45. Gómez, 2017: 16.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*

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Re-memory and transferred trauma: dealing with the past in post-conflict settings

Candice Mama

In her opening statement at her session at Peace and Beyond, Professor Pumla Goboda-Madikizela said: 'How to deal with trans-generational trauma in post-conflict societies is one of the most urgent questions of the 21st century.'

That set the tone for the conversations that would follow. What are the solutions to dealing with intergenerational trauma and how does intergenerational trauma affect victims, perpetrators and the new generation?

The panellists and delegates had come from over 20 different countries from around the world. Some countries were dealing with past conflicts; some had conflicts still ongoing. We came to Belfast to learn from their experiences in dealing with the past and planning for the future.

Intergenerational trauma and mental health

The chair, Professor Joanne Hughes, started the session by addressing the idea that a generation of young people in Northern Ireland continue to be affected by a legacy of conflict that lasted more than 30 years, and is reflected not least in the deep segregation that continues to characterise daily living for young people from the two main communities (Catholic and Protestant). Other manifestations of the conflict years were noted, such as high levels of unemployment and social deprivation in some areas, substance abuse and mental health issues.

As community worker Jackie Redpath stated later in the session, this has given rise to Northern Ireland having the highest suicide rate in Europe, with far more people taking their own lives within the newfound peace than during 30 years of conflict.

Northern Ireland statistically has the highest amount of PTSD compared to other conflict-affected areas. PTSD and traumatic memory, or, as Professor Pumla referred to it, 're-memory', was a theme touched on by all speakers during the session as the biggest hurdle to moving towards dealing with traumas of the past.

Professor Pumla described traumatic memory as being inscribed in individuals and forming a persistent narrative of suffering, both individually and collectively. She stated that it was only through confronting and being able to work through the past that those affected could move forward. I articulated my belief that the problem stems from the lack of understanding of past conflicts and reimagining what exactly occurred. The latter is often reflective of poor historical education and inadequate debriefing of those who had been directly affected by the conflict.

During the discussion I used my own personal case study to illustrate the effects of choosing both to ignore and address the issues of the past.

'It was only in going through this process that I had enough information and context to forgive my father's killer'

Case study

I was born in 1991 in South Africa, a country that was gripped by the grossly violent and oppressive system of apartheid. This is my story.

My dad, Glenack Masilo Mama, was brutally killed in a vicious and unjust time in our country's history. My memories of him were nothing but compilations of different people's stories and pictures we collected over time.

However, the one thing I knew for sure about my father was that he had been tortured and then burnt to death by a man named Eugene de Kock. De Kock was a former South African Police colonel. In 1996, he was sentenced to two life sentences plus 212 years in prison on counts including crimes against humanity, murder, attempted murder and kidnapping.

In September 2014, The National Prosecuting Authority reached out to my family to enquire about whether or not we would like to meet him. As many would imagine, it wasn't a decision we came to without many dinner-table discussions and some trepidation from members of the family.

We agreed to schedule our meeting for the following Tuesday. In the days to come, a sense of self-reflection overcame me. I went on to read numerous articles and books about the man dubbed 'Prime Evil' and his legacy as the face and embodiment of an unjustifiable system of hate and oppression. In meeting him I was choosing to learn and confront my past memories.

Growing up in a house where reading and reflections were encouraged, I was able to contextualise my dad's killing. Which, in my mind, made his death mean something. He died fighting a system and wanting a different country for my brother and myself, which we are extremely fortunate to now be living in.

This made me realise I couldn't hate de Kock because love and hate cannot operate in the same space. If I wanted to resent him, I would never be able to fully enjoy the life my dad and so many others willingly or unwillingly died for.

He had robbed me of a father and I had subconsciously given him 16 years of my anger, anguish, sleepless nights and bouts of severe depression, as well as suicide attempts. Then one day, I just refused for him to take away my joy and enthusiasm for life any more than he already had.

So I did what I had to do and I forgave him.

At the age of 23, there I was with my family ready to finally meet the man who took away not only my father, but so many others. I was surprised at how I froze and allowed my mother to lead the line of questioning until I became present again.

With every question asked and every answer given, my empathy grew for this complete stranger, who spoke so sincerely that I couldn't help but let my defences down.

I looked on in awe as I witnessed myself crying not because of who I had lost, but because I saw a man who was created by a regime and who took the fall for a government. A man who lost so much more than I would bear had I been in the same situation.

I left having felt like I had just been lucky enough to meet one of the most brilliant thinkers of my time and someone who was also a victim to a system of indoctrination. I had forgiven him then, but having met him, I can say I have been changed by this encounter forever.

A few days later I went on to write an open letter to our judicial system. It included the following:

'The African National Congress's strategic objectives are to build a united non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous society. I believe in order to do that and fulfil the vision of the greats like Nelson Mandela, we have to go through the reconciliation process as a country, because there can be no progress without reconciliation.

As was the mantra within the struggle: 'The main enemy is the system and those who continue to support the system.'

Therefore, should we not extend a courtesy of fairness to a man who was ordered to commit those atrocities in the same way we extended a courtesy of fairness to those who ordered him to commit them?

This doesn't make Eugene de Kock a martyr in any way, shape or form. It does, however, mean we remove the venom in our system as a country to move forward uncrippled by the past.

As former statesman Nelson Mandela said: 'Forgiveness liberates the soul.'

As a member of the 'next generation', the statistics given by the panellists on mental health affecting youth in post-conflict societies today resonate with me. It is important that the youth affected are neither invisible nor voiceless, not simply statistics. This is the value of sharing and reflecting on personal stories during dialogues such as that offered by the Peace and Beyond workshop.

Another deeply profound personal story was shared by Ziaad Saab, President of the Lebanese peace and reconciliation NGO Fighters for Peace. He clearly recalled that as a young man, he listened to stories his family would tell and retell about his grandfather's role as hero and martyr during the revolution against the French Mandate. He noted: 'It wasn't hard for me to pick up a weapon for the first time.' He subsequently became a leader in the military wing of the Lebanese Communist Party.

Through those stories, the traumatic memories of his family was passed on to him. Professor Pumla described this as transferred trauma, in which descendants take on the burden of trauma and adopt it as their own.

Transitional justice

Ziaad stated that very little transitional justice – that is, measures that attempt to redress the legacy of human rights abuses – had taken place in Lebanon. South Africa had at least held the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which although it was seen as flawed, gave victims a safe place to find out what had happened to their loved ones. Professor Pumla described the process as '...like a brick being pushed off my shoulder.' However, outside of the comfort of 'knowing', she proposed that more needed to be done in addressing the afflicted trauma, and all panellists agreed that knowing is not enough, and that there needs to be tangible action to address the trauma experienced after major conflicts.

Jackie Redpath said there were parallels between South Africa and Northern Ireland, and called the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement as the 'Nelson Mandela moment' for Northern Ireland. It was seen as a major step in addressing the conflict because, as well as the political angle, there was strong engagement from civil society, and thus it felt like it belonged to the people. However, he also stated that what had started as the people's agreement became increasingly political and bureaucratic, limiting the crucial involvement of civil society. The focus on establishing political structures meant that many people did not feel they were reaping the benefits of what they believed was to come from the agreement.

And thus the resonance back to South Africa, where once Nelson Mandela was released there were promises of radical economic transformation and land redistribution. However, 24 years after democracy, and with the Mandela euphoria diminished, there is displeasure among those who believed that there would be more immediate and tangible changes to their living conditions.

As Professor Pumla pointed out, trauma continues to live on when marginalised groups continue to be victimised – and that includes economic victimisation. In South Africa, as well as in many post-conflict societies, many people still live within the confines and restrictions of the past, and thus cannot escape the past.

The post-apartheid generation in South Africa is often referred to as 'born-free'. Yet this is contentious. What exactly are they born free from? Certainly not poverty or discrimination. There remains a very large gap between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots. Next to every wealthy suburb there is an impoverished community; many of the people who live in poverty work for the elite.

In addition, those who have directly or indirectly benefited from the past are placed in better economic situations, receiving quality education and being allowed to live in good living environments – yet many refuse to acknowledge the benefits they received or that they continue to enjoy.

The ongoing inequality gap, and the lack of empathy from those in privileged positions to recognise this and address it, leads to resentment, and the potential for conflict to re-emerge.

Education's role in intergenerational trauma

One key theme addressed by panellists – representing Northern Ireland, South Africa and Lebanon – and audience members was the need for historical education in schools. There was a strong feeling across the board that this was lacking.

As a speaker on trauma and forgiveness, I have travelled and spoken at high schools and universities in South Africa. One thing that has always stood out very clearly was the failure of historical education. In the question and answer sessions in which I would engage with students, they displayed a lack of understanding of apartheid; often, their only knowledge stemmed from an understanding of racial division as caused by apartheid, rather than the system itself.

Apartheid to them was represented as a past war with only two key figures: Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk. The significance of this point resonated with opening remarks made by the session chair, Professor Joanne Hughes, Director of the Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University Belfast, when she referred to the need for young people to have access to holistic and multi-perspective critiques of local politics and history through education curricula.

I too remember spending less than six months in the duration of my schooling career learning about South Africa. Most of our historical education was focused on the cold war and conflicts that did not affect my own country. I had to seek my own education in order to be able to fully understand the era in which my father was killed and contextualise it in a way that allowed me the freedom to correct my traumatic memory. It was only in going through this process that I had enough information and context to forgive my father's killer.

Before I took that step, I was like many young people I still see today. I theoretically understood the very basic nature of apartheid, but not its brutality – which raised two problems. The first being that black students understood they were disadvantaged; however, they did not understand exactly how this had occurred. This turn left space for certain leaders to rewrite their own version of history and to radicalise those who had no other understanding. The second issue was that white youth dealt either with a silent guilt they were too ashamed to address, or they believed that they had done nothing wrong and therefore refused to acknowledge any privilege they received.

This has contributed to the development of a new wave of extremist leaders in South Africa who have capitalised on the poor quality of historical education, and the people's frustration at the lack of change within their immediate environments. This has allowed the youth to be more prone to being persuaded by the revisionist history promoted by emerging political parties and leaders.

Education is a vital element in building social empathy. More importantly, it's vital in ensuring the past will never be repeated and, as Jackie Redpath said, 'leave behind a generation that will re-emerge and do greater damage'.

And we should not forget that education need not only happen through the formal education system. Ziad Saab's work with Fighters For Peace shows that. They unite former combatants who had been in the Lebanese Civil war, but only those who have can address their own role and conduct, recognising their mistakes and speaking freely about why they are now committed to peace and reconciliation. They then engage with young people by travelling across Lebanon and holding discussions with them about the war.

This is all in an attempt to address the result that the conflict is considered a taboo in Lebanese society, and it is not taught in schools and universities. Thus the telling of stories is left to former soldiers who may be stuck in the past. As noted above, this risks potentially transferring their trauma to a new generation.

Fighters For Peace also use the arts, such as film-making, to effectively communicate memories and the experience of conflict and suffering in a safe space whereby others can learn, and so those traumatised by conflict can express it in a creative way, and know they are not alone.

When people know their country's collective trauma and past they can choose to acknowledge the pain caused and help ensure it will never be repeated. This gives people space to embark on the journey of personal, and later collective, forgiveness.

I am a passionate believer in my generation, and so I think it is important to encourage more dialogues such as the Peace and Beyond conference, and to include young people and the post-conflict generation, to allow us to be part of the way forward.

Young people no longer want to be spoken for; they want a platform to speak to the issues that deeply affect them in their everyday lived realities. What happens when this doesn't happen? An example is the 'Fees Must Fall' movement across universities in South Africa.

Youth from low-income households have been given the opportunity to attend university; they witness the large gap in inequality, and the gloomy contrast between their reality versus that of their more privileged counterparts. They also note the lack of acknowledgement of both disadvantage and privilege within higher education. All of that, as Professor Pumla noted, means they are constantly reliving a conflict that was supposed to have ended, and be suffering a trauma that has been handed on to them by previous generations.

The Peace and Beyond conference was successful in celebrating the attainment of relative peace in Northern Ireland and various countries that are transitioning from conflict. Furthermore, one of the main advantages of the conference was that it allowed all those in attendance to discuss the lived realities of what happens once peace has been agreed upon, addressing the questions of how those who have fought can deal with their own trauma and avoid transferring it to the next generation, and what the balance is between state and personal accountability in order for peace to be sustained.

When Nelson Mandela stepped out of prison, the hope he symbolised was felt around the world. Many people held on to that dream of a utopian society with the expectation that this would just seamlessly unfold. However, as in my own personal experience, it is up to the nation to equip its people with the capacity and tools to confront the past. Then it is up to the individuals to take those tools and choose to move forward.

What I took away with me from Belfast was the following: that to deal with trans-generational trauma in post-conflict countries there needs to be acknowledgement of the trauma experienced; adequate education for the new generation; and understanding that while hope is crucial, it needs to be accompanied by action.

Candice Mama is a forgiveness advocate and reconciliation ambassador

Opening dialogue between communities: arts in the aftermath of conflict

Paula McFetridge

Founded in 1994, Kabosh is a Belfast-based theatre company which creates original work for performance in a range of spaces.

Each project is inspired by the people, spaces and places in the north of Ireland and most of the work addresses the legacy of our violent conflict. We aim to give voice to those who don't have a voice. We aim to humanise those we perceive to be 'other', thereby challenging preconceptions. We aim to create work of high quality that provokes informed discussions around sensitive themes of reconciliation. It is theatre for positive social change.

The Kabosh canon is commissioned from professional Irish playwrights, but the method of gathering source material varies. On each project, the company works with a community organisation to provide necessary introductions, assist with identifying source material, develop grassroots partners, co-facilitate post-show discussions, liaise with community gatekeepers to maximise engagement and provide long-term support to audiences.

Often a project is the result of a playwright creatively responding to an oral archive undertaken by a community agency. The archive then becomes the catalyst for a fictional drama. The gathered stories are not presented verbatim. This ensures both the original keeper of the story and those who have never heard the narrative before are challenged and encouraged to engage with it. If an oral archive isn't the source material, researching a site and/or subject highlights incidents or characters that provide motivation for a creative response. Basing a new play on a truth, a remembrance, gives it an authenticity that enhances impact and makes audience dismissal more difficult, particularly when dealing with subject matter that challenges deeply held beliefs. From this kernel of actuality, a playwright can imagine outcomes and create a fictional provocation that asks pertinent questions, challenges preconceptions and offers alternative thinking. Impact is heightened for an audience as occurrence of the narrative is a possibility.

Work that is created for a specific location is also inspired by anecdotal stories from site managers – experts with a knowledge of the history of a place. When these individuals are empowered to share their knowledge, they become ambassadors for the project and maximise community acceptance and engagement. They provide informed introduction to site-users and the neighbouring community.

The curation of post-show discussions provides an important opportunity for audiences to air their responses to the difficult subject matter in a facilitated environment. The make-up of the panel is determined by the project and the location of the performance, ensuring a balance of voices to serve as a catalyst for informed discussions. Panels often include a member of the creative team, an individual connected to the kernel of the story, and a member of the community hosting the production or a local expert. Discussions are always animated; they begin with an initial response to the production and quickly move onto issues of social importance: political representation, community development and overcoming the legacy of conflict. The audience collectively examine the micro and the macro, often sharing personal testimonies for the first time and giving voice to deeply held beliefs. On occasions these conversations are archived; this is dependent on audience agreement, if it is felt that dialogue will still flow freely, and company resources.

The project descriptions below illustrate the range and diversity of Kabosh's political work.

Green & Blue by Laurence McKeown (2016–)

Based on an oral archive of serving Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and An Garda Síochána police officers, *Green & Blue* explores the realities faced by the individuals who patrolled the Irish border during the height of the conflict.

The title of the play reflects the colour of the two police uniforms: green was worn by the RUC in the north and blue was worn by the Garda in the south. It also reflects how we see the uniform and not the person, and how the policemen see themselves as uniforms, as this extract from the play indicates:

> GARDA O'HALLORAN: At one point we took on a role that became an identity and that identity now defines us. I'm no longer Eddie nor you David. I'm a Guard, you're a Peeler. We're a uniform, not real people. And rightly or wrongly we now view the world from that perspective.

> *Green & Blue* looks at the person behind the uniform and the different experiences of the individuals on either side of a man-made line in the ground.

> '…a simple but effective way of exploring two sides of one conflict' – Belfast Telegraph

To assist a society in dealing with conflict there is a need for a broad range of voices to be heard. There are many narratives that only a small group of peers have knowledge of. Part of the artist's role is to identify these gaps and give a voice to the silent. The voice of uniformed policemen was missing in the Irish narrative. It is also not possible to truly consider a healthy, peaceful society without informed conversations about policing.

Peacebuilding charity Diversity Challenges, which has spent many years facilitating storytelling about the conflict in the north of Ireland, initiated 'Voices from the Vault' to collect oral histories from former police officers and their families, with the aim of enhancing understanding of the past. Transcripts of the interviews were published on a dedicated website. To ensure these stories reached a broader audience, they invited tenders from artists to animate the material. Playwright Laurence McKeown secured the tender.

To ensure the archive-contributors felt a sense of project ownership, several private readings were facilitated for committee members over the course of the 12-month script development. These readings were followed by discussions where themes, characters and concepts were debated.

It is difficult to manage community expectations when fictionalising actual testimonies. One of the major challenges is how to maintain artistic independence and integrity when re-imagining individual voices. The complexity of this is dramatically increased when advisers are not only representing themselves but their community. The individual has a heightened concern of misrepresentation. Narrative negotiation can be arduous and emotional – each contributor feels intensely responsible to those they represent. As Artistic Director of Kabosh, I facilitated this communication between Laurence McKeown and the Diversity Challenges committee, with the aim of keeping the contributors onboard while ensuring the artist wasn't compromised and his narrative diluted. Working so closely with the represented community ensured the production had invaluable advocates for audience development, as well as ensuring project authenticity through informed advisors for uniforms, terminology, props, etc. Design inaccuracies allow audiences to dismiss narratives they are wary of – they tend to equate physical errors with untruths in the story, and they grasp any opportunity to dismiss what they consider difficult to hear. Impact is maximised with quality work that embraces authenticity, such as when the characters have period-specific uniforms, the correct armoury is used, as well as ensuring any dramatic action (loading weapons, searching vehicles or radio communication) is conducted identical to military training. If the fabric of the production is real, then the narrative can take artistic licence while keeping the audience on-side.

As Laurence McKeown is a Republican ex-prisoner and former hunger striker, there were members of the 'police family' who found it difficult to come to terms with his being appointed as playwright. Through engagement in the process and/or experiencing the production, many preconceptions were effectively challenged. Other communities were encouraged to engage with the narrative because of Laurence's past. The ultimate consideration was how to nurture a trust based on integrity and an acceptance of different histories.

As part of the contract for this project, Kabosh agreed to stage two private performances north and south of the border. This was to allow past and present officers to engage with the production and debate its themes in their own environment. Post-show discussions often have input from contributors to the oral archive and Diversity Challenges members. To date, this production has toured extensively across Ireland playing prisons, theatres, community halls, historical ruins and schools, as well as being presented in Dresden and Paris.

Those You Pass On The Street by Laurence McKeown (2014–)

Those You Pass On The Street explores the complexities of dealing with the legacy of conflict, especially when that conflict is localised and personal. It contrasts party-political positioning with individual needs. It challenges the view that any mechanism for dealing with the past is simply about 'whose side gets what'. The play presents the difficult concept of whether the right to move on from a violent past is personal, whether you have the right to do so without your action being selfish – should you take into consideration the impact of your action on family, friends, peers and community? Particularly if they are at a different place in the process of dealing with the past, or particularly when they see your action as betrayal.

The central character, Elizabeth, walks into a Sinn Féin constituency office seeking assistance regarding anti-social behaviour in her area. Frank takes her details and promises to look into it. He later learns from his colleague Pat that she is the widow of an RUC policeman, killed by the Irish Republican Army. He is warned to tread carefully. This brief encounter poses challenges for personal preconceptions and beliefs, straining family and political beliefs.

> PAT: What if an explanation is not enough? What if they want to meet the one who killed him? What if they need to hear it from the one who pulled the trigger? It's always back to the big picture Frank and asking what if? Why do this? Do we need to do this? Of course, on a personal, human level the answer would be yes. But we can't afford to approach it from that perspective. It has to be strategic. It has to be political. It has to be collective. There's too much involved, too many implications.

Cross-community project *Healing Through Remembering* (HTR) wanted to commission a piece of theatre that would assist the public to deal with the legacy of the conflict. They wanted a provocation to stimulate animated debate around pertinent themes that could be taken into a broad range of community settings. Private readings were hosted for members of the HTR committee to allay concerns that one community may be more receptive to the narrative than another. Facilitation of these meetings needed to be sensitive to ensure perceived community reaction didn't result in the narrative being safe and non-confrontational.

At the core of the play is an action that took place – the wife of a murdered RUC man did walk into a rural Sinn Féin office for assistance. The rest of the play is fictional. Often in post-show discussions this fact is shared with the audience, so they cannot dismiss the premise of the story. It supports them in imagining what the potential fallout of this single action is. They are then more receptive to go on a journey created by the playwright, put themselves in the shoes of the characters and self-reflect on the impact of conflict. Given the controversial subject matter that you want an audience to consider, they will look for a way of undermining the material, so they don't have to undergo self-reflection.

Again, authenticity was enhanced with input from HTR members regarding the pain experienced with the murder of a loved one. This supported the actors in sourcing a multi-faceted emotion.

Examples of audience feedback:

'We all have our stories to tell and we mostly know the stories of people in our own communities when it is more important to learn the stories from the other communities. We need to keep talking, but more importantly, we need to keep listening'

'Made me think about how far we've come, and how much hope there is for the future'

The set for this production underlines the effort an individual makes to take that first step forward when attempting to address issues from the past – it is simply two empty doorframes which provide a visual underlining when a character enters or exits a space that is not theirs. These doorways are the borders that must be traversed for communication to begin. Also, the four characters are always on stage, so they can bear witness to each other's journey, which has resonance for the communal experience by the audience.

Those You Pass On The Street has toured extensively into a broad range of spaces across Ireland. To ensure this piece of work is still relevant after four years on the road, some social references have been edited to reflect cultural changes – this means the play can never be considered a history piece and open for dismissal. Its impact remains fresh. It is a human story for now.

The production has also played to capacity audiences at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa, on the genocide memorial in Kigali, Rwanda as part of the Ubumuntu Arts Festival, and at the Societaetstheater, Dresden. On each occasion the production themes had considerable resonance for these post-conflict audiences and resulted in animated discussions. Through gaining a knowledge of the Irish conflict, international audiences reassessed their own experiences.

The West Awakes by Kieron Magee, Jimmy McAleavey, Laurence McKeown and Roseleen Walsh (2010–17)

The ever-increasing number of visitors to Belfast since the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement want to experience an authentic city, have access to local communities and personal narratives, and visit the iconic landmarks associated with the conflict. They have an expectation of high-end cultural tourism. Building on the success of the existing political tours of west Belfast, Kabosh commissioned four playwrights, each choosing a location along the historic Falls Road, beginning at St Comgall's School, and taking in Conway Mill, An Chultúrlann (a Gaelic arts hub), the City Cemetery and Milltown Cemetery. Each playwright was contracted to liaise with community experts at each site and script a 10- to 15-minute play set before 1969, when the most recent conflict started with the Battle of Bombay Street on the Lower Falls Road.

The project aim was to put the first-person narrative from Coiste (support agency for Republican ex-prisoners) tour guides into an historical context. Each tour guide tells the story of the Falls Road and the local community from 1969 to the present day, sharing their personal experiences of the British/Irish conflict and reflecting on the local and wider history of Ireland as they lead the audience from Divis Tower to Milltown Cemetery. (For those with mobility problems Kabosh partnered with Taxi Trax, who transported the audience in black taxis and the local drivers provided the tour.) The two-hander plays pop-up (guerrilla-style) on locations along the route as part of the two-and-a-half-hour living history tour.

An extract from the play at Conway Mill by Roseleen Walsh:

BIDDY: Poverty is a terrible thing, but so is the love a mother has for her children; it's not only terrible but frightening the lengths a mother will go to to protect her child! I may have been powerless against you BILLY because of poverty, but, for my children with all my weakness, I'd move mountains; (whispers softly) or at least I'd try!

Each play brings to life the rich and vibrant history of this unique area of the city of Belfast. The plays focus on men and woman who played key roles in the life of the Falls Road, exploring censorship within the British media, the industrial heritage of the area, origins of the Irish language, class politics and the power of the unions.

'*The West Awakes* provokes a response from its audience, forcing conversation and ultimately a greater understanding of our own collaborative identity' – *Irish Theatre Magazine*

The project appeals to local, national and international visitors, but it is also a unique way for the local community to experience their culture and landscape, and that of the 'other' community as told by them.

Since its inception this project has been revived on a regular basis for local festivals, tourism events, one-off commissions and international field trips. Each of the plays has also been performed in isolation without the linking tour guide at relevant conferences and events locally, nationally and internationally, highlighting pertinent issues of social and political importance.

The methodology for this project (short plays exploring social and political history performed in unusual locations as part of a guided walking tour) was utilised for *Shankill Stories* by Seth Linder on the Shankill Road. These tours were delivered by a member of the Shankill Area Social History Group examining military past, the impact of the Troubles, contemporary Unionist culture and the economic impact of industrial decline. The dramas were staged at Shankill Cemetery (grave robbing and body snatching), Shankill Library (the painful impact of the Battle of the Somme in the First World War), the Hammer area (women in the linen mills) and local community centre the Spectrum (the history of the area).

In addition, both *The West Awakes* and *Shankill Stories* were developed into an immersive digital app entitled 'Streets of Belfast'. This allowed audiences to experience the story of these two roads, told by its residents, from the comfort of their own environment. This is important for those who are still not ready to walk along either of the roads as they feel threatened by the single community identity of each (Falls: predominantly Catholic, Nationalist, Republican; and Shankill: predominantly Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist). The app also facilitates archiving the narrative and fabric of these infamous thoroughfares at an important period in history. The participating communities are also empowered by others bearing witness to their history as told by them.

Two Roads West by Laurence McKeown (2008–13)

Two Roads West tells the story of Rosie, back from London after 40 years, looking for memories of the city that once was. Her guide to the Belfast roads is taxi-driver Bill, cynical, world-weary, but not without hope. As the journey unfolds a connection is made. It is performed for an audience of five, in a black taxi that travels up the Falls Road, through the interface peace wall (a metal gate was opened for each performance to allow access), and down the Shankill Road.

The fabric of the two roads and its citizens are the backdrop to the story – they are a third character. In the aftermath of conflict arts projects such as *Two Roads West* can provide reasons for individuals to journey into the other neighbourhood. An essential first step in informed dialogue.

> BILL: As long as it's the complete past, warts and all. If you just choose the bits that suit then you live in denial, thinking of a time when it was all supposed to be glorious.
> ROSIE: Well maybe when we look back on things we remember the good and forget about the bad.
> BILL: But then we never learn from the past. We end up with a distorted view of it which informs what we do now.

The play explores issues of identity, politics and change, and how space can look much different depending on our experience of it, the information we have, and what position, geographically or time-wise, we look at it from. It examines how we remember and often misremember.

'The concept that we ain't so different ain't so different, but what is different is this beautiful play's attempt to say we have more in common than apart' – *Culture NI*

In developing the script, Laurence McKeown met with several community leaders to ensure the political and historical fact was accurate, and to ensure ownership by residents. In addition, advice was sought from local activists regarding iconic landmarks for the taxi to pause at, and the characters to comment on, so due consideration was given to the narrative the local community would like explored. To keep the production live, the script was updated on a regular basis so any physical changes on the production route (such as murals, building work or demolition, and signage) were reflected.

For many local audience members, the production was the first time they had ventured to the other side of the peace wall. Often audiences didn't look at the actors but rather treated the experience like a radio play and watched the city unfold before them. They had safe access to un-curated daily life while listening to a drama. They were afforded the opportunity to look at their city with fresh eyes.

This project was reinvented for the Derry/Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013 and involved the audience journeying through the city in a taxi taking in the historical city walls, the Unionist Fountain area enclave and into the Nationalist Bogside area.

The following principles underpin our work.

How to avoid retraumatising

Our ability to come to terms with conflict, and reconcile ourselves with its legacy, is determined by where we are on a time/geography axis to the source of violence: that is how recent/distant it was, whether we are in the same location, and how much we were impacted. Distance gives perspective. As an artist, determining what new narratives our audience is ready to consider directly impacts what we stage. An audience will simply reject a narrative or have a shallow engagement if they are not in a personal space where they can hear alternatives. This is very individual, which is why it is important to create work that can be revived and remounted for audiences when they are receptive.

There are several Kabosh projects still touring into communities five years after their premiere, performing to audiences who are only now ready to engage with the subject matter. Getting the timing of stagings right can only be done in association with agencies and individuals working within the community. They are experts in what might be well received and what may be too early in a community's development. When these gatekeepers become performance hosts, the impact is deeper, as they are trusted by the community; often this trust has been built up over a considerable period of time. Their presence, and their advocacy for the project, encourages the community to be receptive to the challenges thrown up by the production.

The artist must be prepared to listen when community agencies state their community isn't ready to explore certain issues of conflict resolution. Given the sensitivity of the themes, the artist must be cognisant that any timeframe for reconciliation is personal, as it can do untold damage when a community is forced to address issues before they are ready.

Single identity engagement

Too often when utilising arts to effectively address social issues, we measure success on the basis of getting different communities together to share their own testimonies and discuss their relationship with conflict. We progress to these 'Romeo and Juliet' projects, where we choose participants because of their perceived differences and to meet a quota, with unnecessary haste. The value of single-identity work is regularly under-estimated. In the north of Ireland, funding and policy often dictate that we move to cross-community work to demonstrate impact.

This can tend to produce a thinner reconciliation that simply means 'no violence' as opposed to the development of empathy and acceptance. Many members of society who lived through conflict have not been afforded facilitated environments where they can share personal experiences; they have frequently suppressed trauma and define themselves as unaffected. They have suppressed reactions as they opt to 'get on' with existing, ensuring they put in place the 'necessities of life' – education, healthcare, employment and housing; they never consider themselves as victims, but the pain is just below the surface, and unless we offer safe environments where informed conversations can take place, sectarianism will implode. Suspicion of the 'other' will germinate fear that can easily result in violence.

Crossing borders

Our work often encourages audiences to cross physical borders: traversing a peace wall (as in *Two Roads West*), entering a building associated with an opposing identity (as in attending *Green & Blue* in a Republican club), or walking through a community (as in *The West Awakes*). As well as taking the audience on an emotional journey, the theatre offers a reason for geographical exploration – borders are crossed. Having access to someone else's space begins the process of challenging prejudice.

Attending theatre is a collective activity, but the experience is individual. Memories are subjective; they can change with time and often we mis-remember, so it is important that theatre offers an alternative lens through which to view the past and challenge our recollections. This is particularly important when memories are painful, as we often form an acceptable perception of this past, so we can cope with its existence. These memories need interrogation and we need a facilitated opportunity to discuss them. Unless conflict and post-conflict communities are afforded these opportunities, the legacy of the past will lie dormant just below the surface, and with a distinct possibility of re-surfacing. When cultural memories are not dealt with, the cycle of violence can reignite in this pain.

The arts in the aftermath of conflict are essential in opening dialogue between communities. They bear witness to those we perceive to be other, challenging perceptions and building bridges through education and sharing of histories. Staging an alien narrative in a community setting allows for safe conversations that examine volatile issues around lack of integration. The perceived political independence of the artist allows difficult questions to be asked.

These issues emerge from our work and may be applicable to similar projects in other places marked by violent conflict.

Assessing impact

The impact of this work is experienced in the quality of post-show discussions. They are always animated. Audience members often thank the actors for reminding them they existed, that they are grateful that their pain is finally acknowledged and reassured they are not alone.

Quantifying impact is difficult, but Kabosh has developed an outcomes evaluation system to measure extent of audience attitudinal change regarding production themes. User-friendly evaluation forms are completed by audience members where they indicate attitudes on a sliding scale pre- and post-production. There is also space for additional comments. Through this system company output can be improved and impact can be articulated.

Long-term attitudinal change is notoriously difficult to assess, so Kabosh develops proactive links with community leaders to allow for different projects to be brought into communities when they are ready; the company has developed a canon of work exploring conflict resolution that ranges in sensitivity for different communities. These requests for new and repeat visits are quantified. Given that the work is designed for revival, Kabosh can respond to requests from different communities and/or venues when they arise. A tangible indication of impact is the number of performances delivered and how demand is ongoing.

Many of the projects also serve to become catalysts for new stories; audiences recognise that their voice is under-represented and feel motivated to share. Kabosh is constantly adding to its canon of post-conflict work motivated by community interest.

There is recognition for the invaluable role academic scholarship can play in evaluating and critiquing creative work, researching assessment methodologies, framing the work within a global context and developing user-friendly tools for data collation which the artist often does not have the resources to undertake. Artists are always looking to the next project and have limited time to explore long-term impact or intensive appraisal, which often devalues creative industry legacy within reconciliation. Artistic/academic partnerships offset this weakness.

Academia can also distil practice ensuring it is archived for future revival and taught to emerging artists and communities. Through mapping and cataloguing both process and product alongside project outcomes, this helps the artist define transferrable methodology for sharing locally, nationally and internationally. This sharing can take place within the formal education system and through workshops for practitioners.

Too often, academic knowledge as impetus for projects is underestimated by academics and the arts community – both are coming from a subjective interest base with refined knowledge determined by event and individual. There is value in academics being the catalyst for projects.

The transnational nature of this work

In recent years Kabosh has toured work about the conflict in the north of Ireland to Nigeria, South Africa, Rwanda, Germany and France. On each occasion, the performance led to informed, emotive conversations about the legacy of conflict, personal impact, and hope for the future. Experiencing human narratives of international conflict resolution provokes a reassessment of personal context. We remind audiences their memories are fluid, malleable and that this makes positive change possible.

In addition, methodology is transferrable across borders. There are many conflict zones that do not have a history of utilising theatre to deal with social issues. There is limited collaboration between artists and community-based NGOs. It is important to share the role artists can play in challenging myths, confronting prejudice, representing trauma and ultimately assisting individuals process the legacy of conflict.

Care of the artist

Difficult subject matter can be explored by professional actors, as they are perceived to be neutral, outside of the community. They can embody controversial characters, giving voice to polarised thoughts, aggressively challenging what is considered acceptable because the public don't consider them to be from a specific community, with an inbuilt loyalty or even carry personal baggage.

But as producers, it is important to remember that artists are individuals, from a specific community, part of the electorate. They can't be neutral. Undertaking work of this nature is emotionally challenging; for the sake of wellbeing, it cannot be undertaken continually. Given the goal is to encourage honest, emotive conversations, inevitably it results in audiences sharing personal narratives. The artists become keepers of these stories. This can be overwhelming.

Commemoration

Anniversaries offer an opportunity to interrogate the past within a new context. They offer a political willingness for investment, a community appetite for celebration, and an academic desire to garner responses from a range of informed voices. It is important that communities mark these historic occasions within their own settings and share their voice with other communities who haven't previously engaged with the narratives. Too often, commemorations host the acceptable narratives, memorialise rather than interrogate, and the opportunity to examine the past isn't embraced. This does not allow for a reassessment. We should aim with each anniversary to move the conversation forward. We should not find ourselves asking the same questions year on year. If we do, then we are not staging work that is attuned to the context of the production – we are not taking full advantage of the opportunity an anniversary offers.

In conclusion, in utilising theatre to assist with addressing sensitive issues around conflict and post-conflict, the responsibility of artist towards audience is heightened. Being acutely aware of production context is key. Striving to stage a production when a community is ready to really hear the subject matter, when they are ready to listen to a character. This is affected by what is being discussed (policing, victimhood or sectarianism), where it is staged (a single-identity community space, a perceived neutral non-arts space or a theatre), when it is staged (as part of a commemoration/anniversary event, as part of a grassroots development programme, the time of year and distance from conflict), and why it is happening now. There are occasions when it is not the ideal time to ask probing questions, when the community is not in a position to be open to new ideas, when the risk of retraumatising is heightened – the artist can still avail of the opportunity to gather first-person stories, research histories and explore community contacts with the aim of examining the event in future years.

The language of conflict and post-conflict is universal – we are dealing with the same issues: how can we move on without betraying the memory of a loved one or our community? How to avoid passing bitterness onto the next generation and repeating a cycle of violence? Is it possible to draw a line under the past or must we forgive and does that mean forgetting? How to reconcile oneself with the terminology of 'post-conflict' such as victim, survivor, perpetrator etc.? How to reimagine new possibilities for policing, justice or social structures?

We consider conflict parochial, but it is often easier to consider one's own history through engaging with another's. Sharing that termination of conflict is achievable, and difficult conversations can begin to be had, which generates hope for an inclusive, peaceful society. Theatre is an ideal live, communal medium to do this.

Paula McFetridge is Artistic Director of Kabosh Theatre Company

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'When cultural memories
are not dealt with, the cycle
of violence can reignite
in this pain'

Beirut: a city of open wounds and accidental beauty

Cindy Mizher

I am writing this from Beirut, a place that I call home, described by Kaelen Wilson-Goldie (2009) as 'home to one of the most active and dynamic contemporary art scenes in the region'. It's a place where the aesthetics of war are still vivid and interchanging, in arts as in our daily life, impacting our relationships between conflict, culture and identity.

As a Lebanese citizen born in 1986, I am part of the generation that was raised on the myth and ruins of an internal bloodbath that had officially ended. However, I had to deal with a different kind of conflict as a child, since my memory of violence was (and still is) heavily saturated with Israeli wars and air strikes before 1996, and after 2006.

As my life led me to become part of the cultural scene in the country, I came to understand that violence constructs a major part of the identity of my generation – violence that is not always apparent, but rather masked in cultural and societal practices that shape the norms of our 'togetherness' as a post-war nation.

The subjects of violence and war have dominated the work of Lebanese artists. That does not come as a surprise, as the majority of the artists present in the scene currently have witnessed at least one war, whether they were raised in the bloodiest period in contemporary Lebanese history between 1975 and the 1990s (the agreed period of the civil war), or whether they have lived through the aftermath of repeated internal conflicts providing the continuity of the struggles that supposedly ended with the Taif Agreement of 1989.

My generation of cultural actors raised questions about our ability to ever live in peace; we moved towards making space to generate new artistic identities not necessarily related to war, as part of our rebellious mark on the scene. We asked questions around the notion of our identity beyond the hummus and the tabbouleh, and the unspoken agreement of the wildness of Lebanese nightlife no matter the intensity of the situation; questions aiming to analyse the diversity of the whole fabric of Lebanon with all its problematic contributions to the conflict; questions that aim to expose the post-colonial influence of the West, and the imposed image of the open-minded Lebanese versus the threats of fundamentalism.

However, no matter how our questions were posed, we all inevitably come back to the starting point: the internal power dynamics that created the civil war in the first place, those still marking the daily lives of the residents of this country, because it still allows the same people to take the lead in the political life of the nation, and its surrounding states.

It is easy to say that we do not have an identity because of the war, yet it is ironically the common denominator that defines us from outside and from within, and perhaps it is the biggest element of our collective identity. Almost 30 years have passed since the war ended and we are still producing art around it – not because we are not able to let go, but because it is still here, occupying public spheres, spaces and discussions.

In a politically charged country like Lebanon, it's significant to note that the Lebanese population have always had something to say about the situation, expressions that helped vent the frustrations, but that also led to conflicts and public drama. Flipping lightly through recent Lebanese history, you would find a country that has undergone a long bloody civil war that still takes its toll on the society/s; add to that a long conflict with Israel that left it drained and sparked even more internal conflicts. Still, through all of that, and bearing in mind that it's a population that lacks a common documented history, the Lebanese people have proved their resilience. With all their contradictions, fractions, conflicts, brutality, bloodsheds, displacement, more than 17,000 missing people and tragic losses in each family, they are still here and are still creative.

Today, almost 30 years after the official end of the civil war, we can easily acknowledge that those who documented those events through their experiences and productions, were artists that tackled the memory of the conflict and attempted to reconcile the collective agony through acknowledging the current political facts. Understanding the weight of the Lebanese wars was at various times put on the shoulders of the generation of artists that was born into it. Chad Elias (2015) notes: *'Working across the fields of photography, video, and live performance, a generation of artists who grew up during the wars… have made artworks that provide platforms for the critical examination and recovery of collective memory in Lebanon. By conducting archival research, unearthing ephemeral artefacts, and collecting eyewitness testimonies, these artists seek to bear witness not only to the physical violence of the recent past, but also to the mnemonic damage caused by it.'*

The artistic scene in Beirut can be seen as a reflection of the image of the country's divisions and fragmentations. The interventions deployed in Beirut establish a common ground that can be built upon and which invite the Lebanese to employ art in the service of the city. This support needs to be activated by civil society institutions and parties interested in the arts, especially in light of the absence of the government's role. I reflect below on two examples of how architecture and art are intertwined in memorialising the war.

The Burj el Murr (Murr Tower) incident – why war monuments should stay war monuments

The 30-plus-storey Murr Tower, with its numerous open window frames, began to rise in 1970, and remained the tallest building in Beirut until the construction of Sama Beirut. The Murr Tower's construction was stopped at the beginning of the civil war in 1975 so that the building could be used strategically in the battles, where members of the Phalanges, Al-Ahrar, the Amal movement, as well as the Lebanese military forces, the Syrian army and the Palestinians, all took turns in controlling it. Making use of its location between the eastern Christian and the Muslim west in the city, the tower was both a fortress and a host to elite snipers, providing them the best view overlooking most of Beirut's streets.

The tower still stands incomplete: a naked, concrete, grey building standing amid the renovated yet empty downtown of Beirut and the Hamra area, controlled by the Solidere company. Solidere holds a major responsibility for the drastic actions of reconstructing the damaged concrete structures after the Taif Agreement, simultaneously deconstructing the collective memory of downtown Beirut, and wiping its history, while evicting its locals to make room for new rich tenants.

With the new post-war function of the building as a military base, the tower remained an empty unreachable piece of grey concrete, reminding Beirutis daily of the agony that was once there. As a monument that occupied a great deal of the spoken and written documentation of the civil war, it attracted many artistic interventions around it, yet no artist, nor anyone unconnected to the military, could access it – until very recently.

On a breezy day in mid-May 2018, Beirut woke up to the sight of colourful fabric hanging from the window frames of what was once a dead – and deadly – tower. The cloths, resembling the typical coloured nylon drapes of the Beiruti balconies that paint the city's visual identity, blended the tower into the urban colour palette, and suddenly it was not so alien any more. The concept, despite its simplicity, had a huge impact on those who passed the building daily; it caught their eyes and breath. For many people, including me, the movement of the drapes dancing in the wind felt also as if they were turning a page in time: giving us a new start, a new beginning, a new set of possibilities of what is yet to occupy that painful static space. Seeing an artist accessing this war monster gave the cultural community a renewed sense of ability, having been paralysed by an atmosphere that encouraged a less thoughtful, more mindlessly positive approach to artistic interventions.

Through artist's Jad El Khoury's installation Burj El Hawa (the tower of the wind), we could see a sea of possibilities for our interventions in the space. Sadly, that sense of empowerment and euphoria did not last long. Although Jad had certainly obtained all relevant permits from governmental and military bodies, and from Solidere, and had fulfilled all his duties, he was given two days to dismantle the work from the building by Solidere with no further explanation. The life that had come back to the Murr Tower did not last. Thirty-four floors representing torture, kidnapping and the unknown fates of thousands during the civil war were no longer transformed. Yet to many artists, this action merely compounded their sense that there was already a sense that the powers-that-be were disrespectful of both the city's architecture and its memories.

The question remains as to why such a peaceful artistic intervention would require such rejection. Is it possible that there are those who do not want art to beautify the building, or expose its value, while reminding the Lebanese of its significance? Or is it because it is not in their interests to heal the wounds of the conflict in a politically charged city? What a shame it would be if the only proposal that wins favour is that of demolition, making room for another skyscraper built over the memory of the city that will soon be forgotten.

Beit Beirut: turning war monuments into a place to reconcile and shape the collective memory

My first real encounter with the Barakat building was in 2005, as I took part in a silent sit-in in support of dialogue and reconciliation between the different Lebanese affiliations. The year 2005 was critical for the country, as the ghost of the civil war started re-emerging following consecutive political assassinations, as well as a public demand for reviewing the Syrian militant interventions in the country.

In light of the tensions that have existed – still exist – between the parties involved in the Lebanese conflict, the sit-in was intended to express indignation over the political situation at the time. We were situated in the hall of a building destroyed by the recent war, and thus a marker of its bloody history. The location was strategically chosen for its symbolic qualities, helping the protesters to present their concern towards the future of their city, and country, while still reminding people of its destructive effect, still markedly present on the building.

The Barakat building (named after the family that owned it) is an architectural monument located on the former 'seam lines' where opposite sectarian residential areas intersected in Beirut, and which has changed its face with construction and demolitions to make room for modernity. Throughout all the aesthetic changes in its surroundings, Barakat remained a place that would revive the memory of the Lebanese nation and show the material and human cost of the war. The building remained deserted until very recently, having been the action point of some of the most skilled snipers throughout the civil war. Through neglect, the building remained as a witness to a bloody history, with the marks of bullets and bombs still visible on its yellow walls. But with the efforts of the community, architects, scholars and activists, the city council agreed to restore the space instead of tearing it down.

The extensive campaign to save Barakat served to celebrate the resilience of the local people, who chose to preserve the collective memory of the city, and to link memory and public space. It asked: how can we commemorate the war and avoid its return if we do not speak about it? It recognised the need to bring this memory of war into schools, institutions and public spaces, and that space must be preserved in order to do that.

After a lengthy rehabilitation process Barakat opened its doors in 2017 under the patronage of the municipality of Beirut. Architect and artist Youssef Haidar intervened in the restoration of the building, aiming to keep its visual identity, but also turning it into a functional entity to be used publicly.

It changed its name to Beit Beirut (Beirut's home), and became the first memory museum in the city. The artists who first accessed the space found material that belonged to the initial residents of the buildings, all of which helped to tell the story of the building before war, and through it some of the story of the city. As the space stands now with no official programming structure, it still serves as a museum of memory; each of its rooms holds traces of a time that must be remembered.

Having overcome a rough start, Beit Beirut has opened its exhibition spaces, auditoriums and halls to host the cultural activities of the city and is now much in demand.

The current scene, swimming against the (main)stream

Today, we see many Lebanese artists and curators using artistic interventions to express their multiple identities and their relationship to a conflicted and complex city such as Beirut. They aim to address their traumas, question their identities and deconstruct war, but also to communicate the vast social changes that have been hard to articulate in the mainstream.

So Lebanon, long a source of inspiration for many, now has a huge array of interventions in art concerning war, memory and reconciliation, and this is seen in each generation of artists that emerges, as well as in the avant-garde scene.

We need to acknowledge that the memory of all the residents of Lebanon is saturated with art that directly addresses their lived experience and the experiences of those who have gone before; that is a responsibility taken by the artistic community that is rarely acknowledged, and it has an impact that is definitely worth further exploration.

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'Almost 30 years have passed since the war ended and we are still producing art around it'

Third parties: when and how do they make a difference in conflict interventions?

Eamon Gilmore

On 1 October 2015, the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Vice-President (HRVP) Federica Mogherini, appointed me as the EU Special Envoy for the peace process in Colombia. Announcing my appointment, she said: 'Mr Gilmore's direct involvement in the Northern Ireland peace process makes him an ideal envoy. It is a signal to the Colombians that the EU is standing by their efforts to put an end to one of the longest-running and most murderous conflicts in the world.'

For the past three years, I have been travelling regularly to Colombia, and especially to its conflict-affected territories, as well as to Havana and Quito, the venues for the negotiations with the FARC and the ELN respectively. I have been meeting with government leaders and officials, negotiators for the guerrilla organisations and opposition figures, as well as representatives of civil society and others.

I have been liaising closely with colleague envoys from the UN, USA, Norway and Cuba, as well as many other representatives from the international community, as we work collectively to help Colombia build a lasting peace.

Colombian conflict

Apart from four years in the 1950s, Colombia has been a continuous democracy since its independence from Spain in 1819. It was Latin America's first constitutional government, and it abolished slavery ten years before the USA. It is one of the world's longest and most enduring democracies.

But it has been plagued by violence, throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. In 1948, the assassination of the Liberal Party's presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, triggered a period of conflict, known as 'La Violencia', between supporters of his party and those of the Conservative Party. This civil war, which claimed the lives of 180,000 Colombian people, was ended after a short period of military rule, when the two parties agreed to rotate the presidency and executive power every four years.

This arrangement, however, was seen by many marginalised people in the territories as a deal between the political elites based in Bogotá, and one that did not address their need for land reform in the rural areas. The agitation for land eventually led to renewed violence, the emergence of the FARC and other movements, and to a guerrilla conflict which has lasted since 1964.

More than 220,000 people have been killed, and 40,000 people are still missing. More than six million people have been displaced from their homes. Over the 54-year life of the armed conflict, there have been many guerrilla and paramilitary actors, including the ELN, the EPL, M19 and a variety of armed groups that had been formed either in response to guerrilla violence, or arising from the illegal drugs trade or other illegal economies. The biggest actor by far was the FARC-EP commonly referred to as the FARC formed in 1964, and which at its peak had a full-time army of 20,000. Even at the end, when it laid down its weapons, it had over 7,000 full-time combatants.

Colombia's peace process

Successive Colombian governments tried to end the conflict. Every Colombian president since 1980 attempted to either defeat the FARC or to make peace with them. In 1985, an attempted peace agreement ended in failure when, according to the FARC, 5,000 members of a new political party (Unión Patriótica), which they helped to establish, were assassinated, mainly it is said, by right-wing paramilitaries.

In this century, President Álvaro Uribe (2002–10) pursued an aggressive policy of 'democratic security' and attempted to militarily defeat the FARC. The Defence Minister who, for a time, managed this strong security policy in the Uribe administration was Juan Manuel Santos, who was elected president in 2010, and re-elected in 2014. He decided to attempt peace negotiations with the FARC. Initially, this involved a two-year period of informal, exploratory contacts with the FARC through civil society, church and some international back-channels. This informal phase resulted in the construction of a six-point agenda for formal negotiations, which were then hosted in Havana by the government of Cuba.

The negotiations in Havana lasted for four years and resulted in a 'final agreement' in August 2016. This 'final agreement' was formally signed by President Santos and the FARC leader, Timochenko, at a ceremony in Cartagena on 24 September 2016, but was narrowly rejected by a small margin (49.8 per cent in favour and 50.2 per cent against) in a plebiscite which was held a week later on 2 October. Several factors contributed to this unexpected result, including opposition to perceived leniency for the FARC in new forms of transitional justice, and the reserving, for a time, of unelected seats for the FARC in the Senate and Congress.

Following the rejection of the peace agreement in the plebiscite, President Santos invited opponents, including former President Uribe, to participate in a national dialogue, and the government and the FARC negotiating teams returned to Havana to renegotiate the agreement. A 'revised agreement' was concluded, and approved by the Colombian Parliament in December 2016, despite continued opposition from former President Uribe, and his Centro Democrático party. As was subsequently confirmed by the Constitutional Court, a referendum or plebiscite had not been constitutionally required in the first place, and parliamentary approval was sufficient.

Implementation began on 1 January 2017 and, in July the FARC completed the laying down of arms and subsequently transitioned from an armed guerrilla movement to a political party. They contested their first parliamentary elections in March 2018.

While there was considerable international third-party involvement in the negotiation of the peace agreement, the process itself was essentially Colombian. The agreement was negotiated directly between the government of Colombia and the FARC. There was no mediator, no peace-broker, as there had been, for example, in Northern Ireland, where Senator George Mitchell chaired the talks which led to the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement.

In Havana, each of the two sides had a six-member negotiating team, led for the government of Colombia by former Vice-President Humberto de la Calle, and for the FARC by Ivan Marquez. This 'main table' was supported by sub-commissions which addressed each of the six points of the agenda: (1) comprehensive rural development; (2) political participation; (3) end of the conflict; (4) solution to the problem of illicit drugs; (5) agreement regarding the victims of the conflict; (6) implementation and verification mechanisms. In addition there were separate sub-commissions to address important dimensions such as gender. The membership of these commissions varied, depending on the issues being considered at different times, and they also drew on voices from outside the negotiating teams themselves. For example, representatives of civil society organisations, of victims, and of Afro-Colombian and indigenous peoples were invited to participate in the Havana process from time to time.

Normally, the outcomes of the detailed negotiations in sub-commissions were reported to the main table and, if agreement were signed off there, a joint statement was then issued to announce that agreement had been reached on this particular point, or sub-point, of the agenda. All of this, however, was subject to the proviso that 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed'. But the periodic joint statements served to build confidence between both sides, and to communicate to a sometimes sceptical public that progress was being made.

Press and public access to the peace talks were quite different in the cases of Colombia and Northern Ireland. The talks in Belfast took place in private, but the press was a constant presence outside the venue, regularly interviewed the participants as they went in and out, and were clearly well briefed, by all sides, on the progress of negotiations. Therefore, the public was contemporaneously informed of the difficulties being encountered, and of the compromises which were being made. The talks in Havana were at some physical and communication distance from the Colombian population, who were often surprised by the content of the periodic announcements on points of agreement.

No formal mediators

Unlike in Northern Ireland, the Colombian peace process was not a formally mediated peace agreement, but both President Santos and the FARC have stated many times that it could not have been achieved without international help. The 'guarantor countries', Norway and Cuba, were involved from the very beginning. Norwegian diplomats facilitated some early informal discussions. The decision by Cuba to host the talks was essential, first because these talks could not be held in Colombia itself, and second because the FARC negotiators and leadership felt that Cuba provided a safe and understanding home for the talks.

Both Norway and Cuba appointed experienced diplomats (Dag Nylander and Rodolfo Benitez respectively) as their envoys. They stayed close to the direct talks throughout, and although they were not formal mediators, they performed a de facto mediating role throughout. This was recognised at formal, public events to announce progress in the talks, when Nylander and Benitez were asked to read out the agreed texts, before they were signed by the principals.

Chile and Venezuela were nominated as 'accompanying countries' for the talks, and their ambassadors and embassies stayed close to the talks and were an important source of regional support to both sides.

The United Nations supported the talks process from the beginning, and played an essential and imaginative role in implementation. Addressing an EU event on 31 May 2018, former Assistant Secretary-General of the UN Jeffrey Feltman said that initially the UN had not envisaged an active and direct role in the Colombian peace process, but that eventually the UN would perform a very central and necessary role in implementation. As that critical role became apparent and inevitable, the UN Secretary-General appointed an envoy, Jean Arnault, who played a key role in Havana, and who was later appointed by the Secretary-General as his special representative, leading the successive UN missions on implementation.

In 2015, and as the Havana talks were approaching their final stages, both the USA and the EU appointed special envoys (Bernard Aronson and myself respectively). Germany appointed Tom Koenigs as its envoy, and I worked closely with Tom to bring the European perspective to the process.

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean State (CELAC) provided overall American and regional support. Jonathan Powell, the former Chief of Staff of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and who had an intimate knowledge of the Northern Ireland peace process, advised President Santos. At different stages of the negotiations, expert international assistance was sought from those involved in peace negotiation in several countries, including South Africa, Ireland, Guatemala and El Salvador.

Although there was a large cast of international and other third-party supporters and advisers, the government and the FARC, as the principals in the process, never ceded control. Instead, they drew on the best from the experiences of other peace processes, and from the advice and expertise of all those accompanying the talks. This is reflected in the wide range of international bodies which were requested by the parties to accompany the implementation of many key parts of the agreement (Chapter 6 of the agreement). Both the government and the FARC maintained their own separate contacts and dialogues with the third parties. There was no formal co-ordination of the third parties, but informal contact and communication was maintained by the international third parties, particularly by those of us who attended in Havana.

The UN

The most important was (and still is) the role undertaken by the UN. In accordance with the terms of the agreement, a tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mission (MVM) was established to oversee the laying down of arms by the FARC. Its three component parts were the UN (in the basis of a Security Council Resolution) the FARC and the government of Colombia. The mission comprised 500 unarmed personnel, mostly military, drawn mainly from South American states. It functioned at national, regional and local levels, where it oversaw the movement of FARC former combatants into 26 'zones', where, over a six-month period, they laid down their weapons, with the arms registered and stored in secure containers for destruction. The MVM also oversaw the identification and the taking control of over 900 arms dumps throughout the country. The MVM functioned as a tripartite mechanism at all levels, with a UN officer, a Colombian army officer and a FARC representative comprising the triumvirate, including at the level of the zones.

The MVM was succeeded by a second, somewhat smaller, UN mission, whose function was to oversee the security commitments in the agreement in the early post-conflict period. This mission was also tasked with joint monitoring of the bilateral ceasefire between the government of Colombia and the ELN from September to December 2017. The second UN mission is intended to last for an overall period of three years, renewable each year by Security Council Resolution, following a request by the government.

The EU's role

The peace agreement itself allocated accompanying roles on implementation to different parts of the international community. 'The FARC-EP and the National Government have agreed that the international accompaniment of the following countries and international organisations shall be sought for the implementation of the Agreements, in each of the items in the General Agreement to End the Conflict' (6.4.2).

Accordingly, the EU was asked to provide international accompaniment in three areas:

1. on Chapter 1, dealing with rural development, along with the FAO, the International Peasant Movement (La Via Campesina), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

2. on Chapter 3, in relation to the reincorporation of former combatants into the political, social and economic life of the country. Also asked to accompany this objective were UNESCO, UNDP, the Latin American and Caribbean Continental Organisation of Students (OCLAE) and the Organisation of Ibero-American States (OEI)

3. on Chapter 3, in relation to the establishment of a Special Investigations Unit to address criminal organisations which are targeting social, political and human rights activists. The USA was also asked to accompany on this matter.

The EU willingly accepted these three accompanying roles, and indeed, had been preparing for them for some time. The relationship between Europe and Colombia is long and deep. The EU itself has been working with Colombia on development and humanitarian issues for more than two decades. Much of this work has had a peacebuilding focus, such as EU support for Peace Laboratories, which assisted community-based efforts to build peace in the territories. Since 2000, the EU as a whole, including its institutions and its member states, have committed over €1.2 billion to peacebuilding projects in Colombia.

Over the past decade, the relationship between the EU and Colombia has deepened. A free trade agreement was made between Colombia and the EU in 2013, and in 2015 Colombian visitors were given visa-free access to the Schengen Area. On international issues, the EU and Colombia consider each other to be important partners. EU support for peacebuilding in Colombia therefore is an integral part of the wider relationship between the country and Europe. There is a similar context for the support for the Colombian peace process from every other donor country and international organisation.

In the case of the EU (and I highlight this only because I am most familiar with it), financial support for the peace effort was provided through the EU's Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI), the Instrument Contributing to Security and Peace (ICSP), DEVCO in relation to development funding, and ECHO on humanitarian needs. In 2015, it was decided to establish an EU trust fund to financially support the implementation of peace in Colombia. That fund of approximately €100 million is supported by 19 of the EU's member states and is principally resourced through DEVCO. In addition, the European Investment Bank has made available €400 million in loan finance and has recently opened a regional office in the EU delegation in Bogotá. On 31 May 2018, the HRVP announced a further €15 million to support reincorporation, bringing to over €600 million the total amount of EU funding for the implementation of the Colombian peace process. In addition, many of the EU member states are providing bilateral support, or additional funding through the UN. Norway, Switzerland, the USA and Canada are all providing financial support.

Finance, while important, is not the only way in which countries express their support. Diplomatic and political support is expressed through the embassies in Bogotá, through visits to Colombia by ministers and officials from many countries. In the case of the EU there have been visits by several commissioners, Commission and EEAS officials and by the European Parliament, as well as my own regular visits as special envoy.

On my appointment in 2015, the HRVP described my role as follows: 'Mr Gilmore's mission will be to relate to all parties in Colombia and to facilitate the co-ordination of actions and initiatives in support of peace, thus contributing to the smooth implementation of the future peace agreement for the benefit of all parts of Colombian society. He will also liaise closely with other key actors at the regional and international level.'

At that stage, it was envisaged that negotiations would conclude by 23 March 2016, the date set by President Santos when he announced the final stage of the talks September 2015. However, a final agreement was not reached until August 2016, so I travelled on several occasions to Havana to meet with the negotiators from both sides, other special envoys and the representatives of the 'guarantor' and 'accompanying' countries.

At those meetings, I conveyed the EU's strong support for the talks process, including the unanimous support among the EU's 28 member states, and the strong support expressed in resolutions of the European Parliament. I also discussed how the EU could contribute to implementation, and the three 'accompanying roles' which were eventually identified, arose from those discussions.

Those discussions in Havana also enabled me to develop working relationships with government and FARC negotiators, and with international envoys, many of whom would occupy key positions in the implementation phase. The meetings in Havana also provided a means to talk with the FARC, who at that stage were still listed by the EU as a terrorist organisation and against whom sanctions applied. They were also (and still are) listed by the USA. By talking with their negotiators in Havana, both Bernard Aronson (the US envoy) and I were able to assure them of the considerable international support for the peace process, and to encourage them to reach agreement with the Colombian government. I believe that this international support and interest, which we were able to convey in person in Havana, helped to build confidence, which in turn helped in the reaching of agreement.

Building confidence: delisting and demining

A particular issue that was raised with me, at an early stage of my discussions in Havana, was the possibility of the FARC being removed from the EU's terrorist listing. I explained what I believed would be required from the FARC before delisting could be considered, and then the procedures which would have to be followed within the EU for the Council to make a decision by unanimity. When the final agreement was concluded in August 2016, the 28 member states, in the Council, decided to suspend the sanctions which applied to the FARC, effective from the signing of the Agreement in Cartagena on 24 September. This decision was to be reviewed by the Council six months later, which period would coincide with the timetable for disarmament. That timetable was disturbed by the defeat of the agreement in the plebiscite on 2 October, so the initial six-month review extended the suspension of sanctions for a further six months, by which stage the FARC had disarmed, and had committed to pursuing their political objectives by peaceful and democratic means. At that point the EU agreed to remove the FARC from its list of terrorist organisations.

Another confidence-building measure, which the EU had agreed to finance, was also the subject of my discussions in Havana. This was a project on demining that was piloted in Santa Helena, Meta and in Orechon. A large part of the lands of Colombia had been contaminated by landmines throughout the 50-year conflict. Many of these mines were crude hand-made devices, which had been planted by guerrillas at various times. The locations of theses explosive devices were unknown or at best uncertain, but they had the potential to kill and maim long after the conflict was ended, and their presence resulted in large tracts of land being unusable for normal purposes. The random lethality of the landmines was made tragically clear at the very moment that the final agreement was being signed in Cartagena, when in a different part of the country a young boy chased a football into a wooded area, stepped on a landmine and was killed.

The demining projects required officers of the Colombian army to work jointly with commanders of the FARC-EP, in order to map and identify areas of land which were contaminated with landmines, and then to work together in the difficult and dangerous tasks of removing the devices from the ground and neutralising them. These early demining pilot projects, which were carried out while the talks were still taking place in Havana, resulted in three main achievements.

First, they developed the model for more extensive demining activity after the peace agreement was concluded. According to the message from President Santos to the Peace and Beyond conference in April 2018, Colombia has now dropped from the second most mined country in the world to tenth, and the target is to have the country completely free of landmines by 2023. Apart from the lives and limbs which will be saved, Colombia will also benefit from additional land that can be put to productive use.

The second achievement was the confidence and trust that the pilot demining projects brought to the talks process. Even though there were often difficulties in the talks, and disruptive incidents on the ground, the fact that army and FARC personnel were now working together in joint projects, enabled the military and FARC representatives in Havana to make progress. It also paved the way for the subsequent excellent co-operation between the FARC and army in the UN MVM.

The third achievement was the much-needed urgency which it helped bring to the talks process towards the end of the long four years. A key requirement for successful demining is to identify the locations where explosive devices were planted. Only those who planted them know those locations. Even in the best of circumstances, it is difficult to retrace. Devices were sometimes planted in the confusion of battle; the physical appearance of terrain changes over 50 years; recall can become unreliable and device planters may now be reluctant to admit responsibility. But mapping mined areas becomes almost impossible if those who planted the mines are already dead. With the passage of time this was becoming an increasing problem. There was therefore no time to be lost in reaching the final agreement and developing a comprehensive map of mined lands.

It had been expected that the negotiation phase of the Colombian peace process would end with the final agreement in August 2016. However, the unexpected rejection of the agreement in the plebiscite on 2 October resulted in renegotiation. President Santos sent his negotiators back to Havana to meet with the FARC, and he and former President Uribe agreed to meet in the commencement of a national dialogue. The international community played an important role at this critical time. All encouraged the government and the FARC to renegotiate, and encouraged opponents of the agreement to accept reasonable compromise. The HRVP asked me to return to Havana and to join other envoys in supporting efforts at renegotiation. The timely announcement that President Santos was to receive the Nobel Peace Prize not only encouraged him to continue his efforts, but also communicated to the Colombian public that peace in Colombia mattered to the wider world. The renegotiation was successful and achieved in a remarkably short period of time.

Patience and persistence

The negotiation of any peace agreement is difficult and takes time, patience and persistence. In both Northern Ireland and Colombia, the period of formal negotiations lasted for about four years: in Northern Ireland from the first IRA ceasefire in 1994, until Good Friday 1998; and in the case of Colombia, the Havana talks lasted from 2012 until 2016. In both cases, the formal negotiations were preceded by informal contacts, and by earlier unsuccessful efforts at negotiating an end to the conflicts. In both cases, implementation proved to be as difficult, if not more so, than negotiation. Northern Ireland has encountered institutional stalemate (even as it marked the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement), and Colombia is also facing many challenges in the implementation of its agreement.

Much has been achieved in Colombia in the relatively short time since the end of 2016. The FARC has disarmed and transitioned to a political party. Negotiations are taking place with the ELN, offering the prospect of a final and full end to all politically motivated violence in the country. Most of the legislation to give effect to the agreement has been enacted, albeit some if heavily amended. The main institutions, including the truth and transitional justice architecture, have been established, and have started to hear evidence and examine cases. The Constitutional Court has upheld the agreement in successive judgments. The process of implementation is under way. The country has just held its most peaceful elections in decades.

But there are big challenges. Although violence and killings are well down on the height of the conflict, the past year and a half has witnessed killings of social leaders, political activists and human rights defenders. There has also been a high level of violence in territories vacated by former FARC combatants and in areas where armed groups are battling for control of the illicit drugs trade and other illegal economies. In many parts of the country there is still very little presence by the state, and scant police or army protection for local communities. The deteriorating situation in Venezuela is also impacting on Colombia. They share a long border and, over the past year, more than a million refugees from Venezuela have entered Colombia, mostly in areas which are already challenged, giving rise to a growing humanitarian crisis.

The peace agreement is an opportunity for Colombia. The country's reputation is greatly improved and there is unprecedented international interest in the country. These are ideal conditions for increased trade and investment, which will bring jobs and increased prosperity. This in turn can be used to address the social, regional and economic inequalities in the country that have been the source of guerrilla activity in the past. The end of guerrilla conflict will also give the state a better opportunity to tackle organised crime and criminal armed activity, much of which is linked to drug production and trafficking.

Continued international support for peacebuilding in Colombia is very important at this time. I travel to Colombia every six weeks or so. On these visits, I normally meet with senior government figures, with representatives of the opposition, with the FARC, with members of the Senate and Congress, with civil society organisations and church leaders. I also travel out of Bogotá to visit areas affected by the conflict and to see projects which are being funded by the EU and our member states. I co-ordinate with the ambassadors and embassies of EU member states, and countries such as Norway, Cuba, Canada, Switzerland and others that are closely supporting the peace process. In particular, I meet and liaise closely with the UN mission, led by Jean Arnault, and with the substantial UN presence in the country, through Resident Co-ordinator Martín Santiago. I also work closely with the OAS, which brings crucial regional understanding and support for the process.

Northern Ireland experience

From the experience of Northern Ireland, I know the importance of international support for a peace process. The role of US Senator George Mitchell in chairing and moderating the multi-party talks, which led to the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, has been well documented and acknowledged. Senator Mitchell and President Bill Clinton, who appointed him to the role, were deservingly honoured with the Freedom of the City of Belfast in April 2018, marking the 20th anniversary of the signing of the agreement. But they were not the only international third parties in Northern Ireland. We should remember too the work of Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, Cyril Ramaphosa (now President of South Africa), General de Chastelain of Canada, and others, who monitored arms decommissioning and accompanied implementation of the agreements. There were individuals such as Richard Haas and Senator Gary Hart, both US envoys, who have done excellent follow-up work in recent years, particularly in relation to victims and to the past.

The role of the European Union in supporting the Northern Ireland peace process is often overlooked, or taken for granted. In fact, the EU was the biggest international financial supporter of the peace process in Northern Ireland. To date, the EU has contributed €1.5 billion to fund projects to support peace in Northern Ireland. It is currently on its fourth successive round of peace funding; the continuation of such funding will, no doubt, be a subject for settlement in the consideration, now under way, of the EU's next seven-year multi-annual financial framework.

The EU's contribution to peace in Northern Ireland was also more than financial. Less than a year after the UK's embassy in Dublin was burned down by an angry crowd protesting the 'Bloody Sunday' killing by British soldiers of 13 unarmed civil rights protesters in Derry/Londonderry, the UK and Ireland both acceded to the EEC in January 1973. These were very difficult times for relations between the UK and Ireland. By working together in Europe, Irish and British politicians and civil servants developed a collaboration, and sometimes friendships, which created the space for discussion about Northern Ireland. This gave rise to the attempts at settlement, and eventually to the joint approach of the two governments which resulted in the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement.

Indeed, the content of the agreement itself was made possible by the fact that both countries were member states of the EU (in 1998, there was not even a remote prospect that either Ireland or the UK would ever leave the EU). For example, the central question of national identity could be resolved because both countries shared membership of the EU, with a shared European citizenship and shared laws over much of our lives. This applied to everybody, whether British or Irish. Brexit has unfortunately put the seams of this and subsequent agreements under severe strain.

Comparisons

The Northern Ireland and Colombian conflicts were very different. The Northern Ireland conflict had its roots in national identities, overlaid by religious affiliation, whereas Colombia's conflict had its origins in social inequality and exclusion, especially in rural areas, and in access to land. The scale of the Colombian conflict was much larger and its duration longer, although proportionately, Northern Ireland was arguably more intense. But the paths to negotiated peace settlements were remarkably similar. Both began with informal exploratory contact, both took four years of formal negotiation, and both used international third parties, although in different ways.

In the case of Colombia, a third party (Cuba) hosted the talks with support from Norway. The Northern Ireland talks took place in Belfast. The Northern Ireland talks were chaired by a mediator (Senator George Mitchell). This was necessary because of the three strands: (1) internal to Northern Ireland, involving ten political parties, some of whom were linked to the armed organisations; (2) north–south, between Northern Ireland and Ireland; and (3) east–west between Britain and the island of Ireland. Negotiations were complex, involving two sovereign governments and ten political parties.

The Colombian talks were directly between the government and the FARC. There was no mediator, but there was an international presence: from the guarantor countries throughout the process, and from others, including the USA and EU, at a later stage. In both cases, the nature of international involvement was political, diplomatic and financial. Apart from EU funding, the Northern Ireland peace process was supported by the International Fund for Ireland to which the US, Australian and New Zealand governments contributed. The amount of the funds contributed was less important than the signal of international support.

In the case of Northern Ireland, support from successive US presidents was crucial when difficulties arose in implementation. The parties to the agreement, and the two governments, repeatedly turned to US presidents and their administrations to encourage their partners to honour the agreements and to resolve differences in interpretation and implementation. St Patrick's Day events in Washington often provided the opportunity for these interventions. In Colombia, the international community played a similar role in the immediate aftermath of the plebiscite in 2016.

One significant difference between the two cases relates to the role of the UN. It had no involvement either in the negotiation or implementation of the peace agreements in Northern Ireland. In the early stages of what is sometimes referred to as 'the Troubles' (immediately following Bloody Sunday, for example), Ireland sought to involve the UN, but this was emphatically rejected by the UK, which at that time regarded Northern Ireland as an exclusively internal concern. By contrast, the UN has played an essential and innovative role in the Colombian process. The UN was actively involved in the design of parts of the agreement; and subject to UN Security Council Resolutions, the UN led the MVM on disarmament and is now almost halfway through a second three-year monitoring mission in the country.

International support: when and how?

The experiences of both the Colombian and Northern Ireland peace processes demonstrate, first, that international intervention in conflicts do make a significant difference. Almost all of the participants in both processes attest to this. But when and how? And perhaps just as important, who?

The Northern Ireland process was itself international. The Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was not confined to the relations between the communities and the political institutions within Northern Ireland. It had two further interconnected strands, covering the relationship between north and south and the relationship between Britain and Ireland. The Colombian agreement was about the internal affairs of Colombia. But both agreements were shaped by international third-party involvement and by international experience. In both cases too, the international community, in differing forms, provides a range of supports for the maintenance and implementation of the agreements.

A session at the Peace and Beyond conference of April 2018 addressed this question. As session chair Fionna Smyth put it: 'Drawing on three case studies, this workshop will explore the extent to which international third parties have shaped and underpinned settlements, and the extent to which they complicate or even obstruct settlement through their own international interests.'

The examples of Northern Ireland and of Colombia are both strong examples of 'shaping' and 'underpinning'. So too was the case study of South Africa set out by Reverend Dr Liz Carmichael, who drew on her experience as a doctor working in a hospital in Soweto, where she had co-led contact and reconciliation programmes. She also talked about her work as an ordained priest, especially in spirituality and theological education, and in serving on local and regional peace committees under the national peace accord.

Dr Byron Bland, who had over 25 years' experience in Northern Ireland and 15 years' experience in the Middle East, and who is now applying what he has learned to conflict situations within the US, spoke of his relevant work at Stanford University. He identified four key questions in negotiations where third parties are 'brokers':

1. The question of a 'shared future': are the parties willing to envision a future for the other side that it (the other side) would find minimally bearable?

2. The question of trust: how can the parties trust each other to honour commitments?

3. The question of loss acceptance: how can the parties accept the losses that a settlement imposes so that they can make the concessions that it requires?

4. The question of just entitlements: how can the parties work together to alleviate the most egregious injustices?

Dr Bland also wondered if, in addressing the role of third parties in conflict intervention, the right questions are being asked in the first place. 'If practitioners knew what researchers knew, what would they find interesting? And if researchers knew what practitioners knew, what would they find interesting?'

Discussion

The discussion that followed raised a number of and cautionary questions:

• Third parties can intervene in several ways, such as in supporting negotiations, building policy frameworks or implementation in the aftermath of a peace agreement.

• There is, however, a vast difference between conflict termination and conflict transformation: after a ceasefire commences or a peace deal has been signed, peacebuilding initiatives need to be put in place to transform the society. What role do third parties have in this process, and how long should they stay engaged?

• There is much emphasis now on engagement with 'civil society', including social, community and religious leaders. But can one person or group validly claim to represent everyone from that particular constituency? How do we ensure that there is a plurality of voices? How do third parties choose who is consulted and who is to be involved?

• Why is it expected that some interests, for example women, should unite in peacebuilding as if they are heterogeneous? There are always differences to take into account, and third parties need to be careful not to 'flatten' voices in the peacebuilding space.

• This, in turn, raises the need for third-party convening spaces that allow for time and dissent when bringing together local civil society actors, building trust between them and ultimately putting forward a positive voice in negotiations.

• Who gets a seat at the table? Local peacebuilders or the INGO representatives? The one who is better resourced and therefore sometimes best placed to tick the 'we have consulted civil society' box?

• Being an 'honest broker' and engaging helpfully in complex, emotive and often polarised contexts requires skill, experience and peacebuilding intelligence. A clumsy intervention can do more harm than good.

• Be aware of the power dynamics between the Global North and the Global South.

Final observations

The Peace and Beyond conference marked the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. It rightly recognised the important contribution of third parties, including international third parties who helped negotiate the agreement and to sustain peace in Ireland. I was honoured to have had the opportunity to contribute my experience of the Colombian peace process in the hope that it will add to our collective knowledge of peace agreements and their lessons for future peacebuilding.

The discussion at the conference widened our understanding of the nature and role of and the potential for third-party interventions in conflicts. The traditional concept of a peace broker, who brings warring factions to the table and persuades or encourages them to sign a peace deal, is too narrow and simplistic. There is a role for third parties in creating the conditions for peace negotiations, even when there appears to be little prospect any adversary talking to the other. There is a role for third parties simply accompanying a talks process; a role for third parties in implementing a peace agreement; and certainly a role for third parties in the many circumstances by which conflict can be prevented.

The third party does not have to be a senior diplomat or politician, appointed by an international body, engaged in high-profile shuttling 'between the parties'. The third party can be a civil society personage, an NGO, a peace institute, a churchperson, a concerned citizen… In most cases, effective third-party intervention will probably be a combination of most or all of these.

Engagement by third parties does not have to be confined to seeking agreement between the warring parties. For peace to endure, victims must be able to find inner peace; people at every level of society should be enabled to live in dignity, free from fear and want; and human rights must be respected. That means engaging too with those who have consistently practised peace and not just those who are latterly preaching it.

Preventing conflict is a continuous and changing challenge; ending conflict is urgent; peacebuilding is slow. To those ends, the work of third parties is complex and bespoke to each different conflict. There are lessons to be learned from every experience and study, which help answer the question: when and how do third parties in conflict interventions make a difference? We can perhaps best answer that question, and indeed other questions about the making of peace, if we succeed better in combining, as Byron Bland wishes, the knowledge of the researcher with the experience of the practitioner. The Peace and Beyond conference has made a big contribution to that endeavour.

Let us do more of it!

Eamon Gilmore is the European Union Special Envoy for the Colombian peace process

'Preventing conflict is a continuous and changing challenge; ending conflict is urgent; peacebuilding is slow'

Cities: the new frontier for peace mediation?

Professor Jo Beall

Introduction

Building safe and inclusive cities that are resilient to social, physical and economic challenges involves the interaction of many city-based actors and institutions, which in turn are influenced by broader national interests and international agendas. In addition to being a social and political process, therefore, conflict management and peacebuilding in cities is also a spatial process, acted out in particular geographies and places, by a multiplicity of stakeholders within and acting upon the city. Just as cities assume specific importance during conflict, so too can they become an essential locus of activity and engagement after violent conflict ceases and during efforts at peacebuilding. Cities can be important sites for forging transitional processes of healing and reconstruction and, when well executed, urban contexts can lead to generative conflict[48] and a sustained peace.

48. Healthy conflict leading to iterative and/or transformative social change (Beall et al. 2013).

Cities and conflict

Whether conflicts are local, national, regional or global, urban centres have become increasingly embroiled, albeit in different ways. Cities can be targets of war, with Coventry and Dresden being quintessential Second World War examples. In the context of global terror, New York's Twin Towers were the symbolic targets of the 11 September 2001 attack. Cities can also be arenas for conflict: think Beirut over the years and Aleppo in the ongoing war in Syria. Equally, cities can be the eye of the storm – havens of relative calm during surrounding conflicts. Take the long-running civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the capital city, Kinshasa, to the west continues to function, while to the east, Goma has fiercely protected itself as a regional centre, a host to international humanitarian organisations and, most importantly, as an urban economic centre supporting cross-border trade. Cities are important spaces too in helping bring conflicts to a conclusion. For example, the capturing of capital cities often signals cessation of violence and capture becomes a symbolic gesture of victory (Beall et al., 2013).

What is clear is that cities are increasingly the centre of conventional and non-conventional warfare, with a new military urbanism focused on cities as conflict zones, counterinsurgency policy shifting from the mountains to the streets and ever more sophisticated technology, rendering cities more legible and accessible as new battlegrounds (Graham, 2010). Under such circumstances what is often observable is the translation of national political contests and goals into the urban landscape, resulting in what Arjun Appadurai once called 'the implosion of global and national politics into the urban world' (Appadurai, 1996: 152–153).

In similar ways, cities can become essential arenas of action in efforts at peacemaking. Peace negotiations reliant on and based in cities can face complex challenges and disruptions along the way. These can be due to issues at national or local level and their intersection with international agendas. Moreover, it would be wrong to assume that cities in transition are characterised by the absence of conflict. Cities are dynamic spaces in which people rub along, confer, disagree and engage in various forms of co-operation and contestation: between government and citizens, workers and employers, service providers and users, producers and consumers, known communities and distant strangers. There is a difference between the 'generative conflict' that is the lifeblood of healthy civic engagement and civil society, and the violence and fear that accompanies destructive conflict (Beall et al., 2013: 3076).

Cities and peacebuilding

Building safe and inclusive cities in conflict-affected situations or transitions to peace requires commitment from city governments and community leaders in promoting positive attitudes and values, building capacity, community planning and strengthening local economies and infrastructure. All are necessary to overcome social fragmentation and other vulnerabilities resulting from conflict so as to respond to the issues and challenges encountered by urban citizens in their everyday lives. National governments and national and international forces need to recognise the importance and value of city government and civil society actors and representatives of urban citizens, and ensure they are central to peacebuilding processes.

How are cities repaired and restored in the aftermath of protracted conflict? What do people need – emotionally, psychologically and physically – to recover from urban violence and to move away from individual and community fear? Why do nation states stumble towards peace and beyond while city governments and populations seem more agile and resilient? These are some of the questions that were explored at the panel on 'Cities in transition: leadership and resilience' at the Peace and Beyond conference in Belfast in April 2018. They were particularly pertinent for participants commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in Northern Ireland, where Belfast experiences strong economic growth and degrees of governance consolidation, while efforts to restore government in Stormont falter. Yet these questions also resonated with the many participants from other countries with a history of war, conflict and the challenge of managing the transition to peace.

From the vantage point of cities, building safe and inclusive urban spaces requires social, cultural, economic and political investment. In this sense, engaging with the spatial fabric of cities is part of peacebuilding (Bollens, 2018). Investment in physical reconstruction can take many forms. Take Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina: a multicultural cosmopolitan city, in which for centuries Muslims, Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs lived together harmoniously. 17th century Turkish bridge that linked these communities was a symbol of this harmony. Surviving both the First and Second World Wars, its very symbolism led to this ancient bridge being blown up in 1993 during the bitter civil war that saw the end of the former Yugoslavia. For equally symbolic reasons, the bridge was reconstructed as a matter of priority when the war ended. In Johannesburg, the Nelson Mandela Bridge was deliberately designed and constructed as a symbolic gesture connecting a former white part of the city with an increasingly cosmopolitan downtown area, reinforced by the development of a vibrant cultural centre for the performing and visual arts. Nevertheless, the legacy of apartheid that saw vast highways and other infrastructure deliberately separating communities on the basis of race or ethnicity remains a concrete manifestation of segregationist policy and planning.

Resilient Belfast

During the protracted conflict known as 'the Troubles' (1969–98), it was hard to imagine Belfast as a city of peace. The alignment between religious identities and political and national loyalties led to the seeming intractability of the conflict. This was reinforced by the micro-territorial geographies, histories and loyalties of cities such as Belfast, which evolved through hundreds of years of political change and social identity formation in the city. Yet on the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, political violence has decreased significantly; the major paramilitaries have disarmed and paramilitary prisoners have been released.

This is not to suggest all is totally well. The Good Friday/Belfast Agreement fundamentally restructured government in Northern Ireland on a power-sharing model, but at the time of writing the national Assembly remains suspended. In Belfast there are intra-community conflicts among the loyalists, sectarianism continues to prevail and the 'peace walls' still stand, separating Protestant and Catholic communities. Indeed, in addition to remaining a physically segregated city, divisions are reinforced by psychic infrastructures.

That said, the city has shown astonishing resilience and stands at an important period in its history. Today, there is a generation of young people now reaching maturity who were not directly exposed to the intensity of the 30 years of political conflict that wracked Belfast. Belfast's Commissioner for Resilience, Grainia Long, pointed out during the Peace and Beyond panel on cities that from this cohort future city leaders will emerge, as will scientists, artists, industrialists and entrepreneurs: 'people who have the potential to make Belfast once again a city on the world stage'.

None of this happened automatically. It has been the result of strategic decisions and investments by a host of city actors, including the development of the city centre and renewal of urban infrastructure. Assisted by the fact that transition has occurred at a time when the city's economy is powering ahead, Belfast City Council and the Northern Ireland Assembly have worked hard to create a 'safe and secure' capital city in which businesses want to invest. As a result, Belfast has benefited from significant private and public sector investment for over a decade. The city has become a magnet for foreign investment in high-tech growth areas. Belfast offers a high quality of life, the pull of a vibrant urban centre and is well connected to a beautiful rural heartland. The yellow cranes that can be seen from Belfast's Titanic centre are a welcome signifier of the city's economic development and growing prosperity, and illustrate how attention to the urban landscape and investment in infrastructure can be an important part of transitioning to peace and beyond.

Belfast's success has to be viewed against the persistence of poverty and inequality. Deprivation was a significant contributor to the original period of violence, and it continues to be a stress factor and contributor to marginalisation and unrest. Living standards in Northern Ireland lag well behind the rest of the UK. Inequality is increasing and a quarter of the country's children now life in poverty, a figure that is expected to rise to 30 per cent by 2020. The Troubles had a particularly damaging impact on the health of Northern Ireland's citizens and a quarter of the population continues to struggle with mental illness. Due to perceptions about personal safety, people are often reluctant to access public services located outside their own areas. This has either created artificial barriers to social services and healthcare or the duplication of such services to serve the two majority communities at considerable cost. The estimated range of additional annual public service costs incurred in Northern Ireland due to division (such as health, policing, justice, education, housing and transport) is between £403 million and £833 million per annum (Economic Policy Centre, 2016). Another longer-term challenge is that during the 1970s tens of thousands of people left Northern Ireland and while there has been an upward trend in population, Belfast as a city remains under-populated, despite ongoing efforts towards attracting returnees and newcomers to the capital.

Returning to Belfast's success story, the growth of a vibrant and progressive civil society is part of it. It has grown up in the city both in spite of but also in response to the conflict. Hard-won expertise has been developed among the citizenry, with people using civic institutions and political engagement to establish more stable and inclusive communities. The city's civic record is a matter of global recognition and interest, in relation to peacebuilding but also beyond it. Yet challenges remain. The as-yet-unresolved legacy of conflict is a febrile common denominator that stands as a constant reminder that constructive effort could unravel.

More than half the population continues to live in religiously segregated communities with little day-to-day contact with each other. These divisions tend to be more extreme in deprived communities, which are often physically separated by barriers. Moreover, the location and function of other kinds of physical infrastructure can perpetuate division. Housing is designed and built to keep people safe by physically facing away for each other. While this may keep people safe, it does not promote mixing or enable sharing of communal public spaces.

Under such circumstances, can cities be agents of change? In her panel presentation, Grainia Long suggested that yes they can, if the leadership has the mindset, strategic intent and capacity to drive that change. In the context of Belfast, the legacy of the Troubles sapped much of the energy out of city leadership. Government structures are fragmented and designed to address individual problems rather than foster joined-up governance. However, Belfast recently joined the 100 Resilient Cities programme, established by the Rockefeller Foundation in 2013. This has helped encourage a strategic focus on urban resilience and has provided an opportunity to strengthen and reinvigorate the city's leadership at a good moment for driving a goal of inclusive growth and enhancing life chances for all.

Grainia Long believes that it is at the geographical level of the city that individual citizens can become most closely engaged with their government. In turn, cities have the potential to be more responsive to the needs of citizens than regional or national governments. As such a city like Belfast can lead on an agenda for resilience that can benefit not only the city itself but also impact across its hinterland and the entire country. As Belfast's first Commissioner for Resilience, she brings to the task long experience of working in the field of housing and place-making and believes that the best city leaders are those with a genuine interest in the lived experience of a city and an understanding of how the stories of people and their lived experiences matter to the whole city. Leading the city through change comes as much from its people as from its city council leaders.

Cities such as Belfast are complex systems made up of people, households, local businesses, voluntary and community organisations, small and large manufacturers, business operators and government agencies. People and institutions do not speak or listen to each other enough; they do not pool their collective capacity as much as they should; they fail to make the best of all their assets in the common good of the city. To reverse this is the founding principle of urban resilience work. Moreover, cities need to share with each other their trials and solutions. If it can do all this then Belfast has a unique opportunity, in the next few years, to bring partners together to think differently about the pernicious problems that face its citizens, and to innovate solutions that come from the city's own brand of creativity.

Belfast has a proud industrial heritage and was and will be again a global centre of production. The spirit of invention and endeavour may have been battered in recent decades, but it remains deeply embedded in the city's psyche. It needs to be rekindled by drawing on the opportunities presented by the young, skilled, energetic population, a committed city government and by Belfast's location as the Atlantic gateway between North America and Europe.

Transforming Derry/Londonderry

Down the road from Belfast, and on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, sits Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland's second city and 2013 UK City of Culture.

The Peace and Beyond cities panel was also joined by Noelle McAlinden, who has worked in the Education, Arts and Culture sector across Northern Ireland for over 30 years and, as former Creative Adviser to ILEX Urban Regeneration Company, was part of the original team that secured the bid and delivered the programme for Derry/Londonderry as the first UK City of Culture in 2013. She noted that the City of Culture Designation was indeed transformative.

'The legacy of being City of Culture 2013 is life and place changing for Derry/Londonderry, drawing us from a turbulent, disputed past to a shared respectful future as a child-friendly European City.' (UK City of Culture Bid, 2010)

She explained 2013 was more than a one-year intervention: it had a catalytic impact, evidenced through increased capital investment, physical and economic regeneration of the city and growth in tourism and the creative industries. There was an increased ambition to support and invest in communities of interest and communities of place. It was also firmly embedded in the strategic context of *'The One Plan for Derry/Londonderry'* that identified tourism, culture and the arts as a key driver for change in the city.

Noelle McAlinden explained how she witnessed first-hand how the 2013 programme used culture to support lasting social regeneration, through engagement, widening participation, and supporting cultural diversity and social cohesion.

The bid document set out a number of guiding principles designed to bring the opportunity for cultural engagement to every citizen, and promote and support that engagement at all levels in new, innovative and creative ways, so that no citizen would be left untouched by the programme on offer during 2013.

Youth were identified as a priority. The key themes of 'joyous celebrations' and 'purposeful inquiry' were highlighted. There was a drive to reconnect with the global Derry/Londonderry diaspora, using the enhanced connective technologies now available.

Noelle McAlinden noted that it is not only investment in physical and economic, or even social, infrastructure, but increased collaboration between all the key stakeholders, including the voluntary, community and statutory sectors, is deserving of attention in peacemaking. A high value should be placed upon partnership working, planned transformation and legacy. In building and sustaining transformation, both economic and social success for all citizens must be prioritised.

She also noted that an important part of the stakeholder engagement process was revisiting 'communities of interest' and 'communities of place', providing access to safe spaces and sanctuaries in which people could connect and engage in positive and practical ways. This led to outcomes such as increased and authentic understanding and communication, the growth of dignity and a sense of a city rising from the ashes: a city not just in transition but transforming; a recognition of and celebration of culture and identity and a sense of civic pride, not just within and across Northern Ireland, but something that translated into a growing confidence on the world stage.

This was particularly evident in the creation of the Peace Bridge that connected a city divided politically and physically; the cultural animation of Ebrington Square, a former military barracks that was reclaimed and became one of the most culturally iconic public spaces; and Krzysztof Wodiczko's public projection from an ambulance, with stories from people who lived through the Troubles, projected onto the Guildhall as part of Lumiere 2013. This was widely recognised as one of the most successful contributions of the year and enabling the city to excel in the lead-up to and during the Feis Ceoil festival of music in that year. The city has subsequently continued to demonstrate the appetite and hunger of a city repositioning itself as increasingly resilient and one that reflects the rebuilding of a better future for the city itself and for its citizens.

Tripoli's roadmap to reconciliation

Tripoli is Lebanon's second largest city (after Beirut) and the largest city of northern Lebanon. The region is one of the most impoverished and neglected, with many unemployed ripe for mobilisation when clashes erupt. An overwhelming number of Tripoli's 500,000 inhabitants are Sunni Muslims who, across the country as a whole, represent 27 per cent of the Lebanese population.

The Syrian Civil War and wider conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa region have reinvigorated flashpoints for inter-group conflict in Lebanon, as well as leading to an influx of 1.2 million Syrian refugees into the country. This has changed the social landscape, and placed high demand on local infrastructure, healthcare, education, housing and employment. The spillover into Tripoli of the Syrian Civil War has exacerbated the Bab al-Tabbaneh–Jabal Mohsen conflict, a recurring struggle between Sunni Muslim and Alawite Muslim residents of these two neighbourhoods. Bab al-Tabbaneh is a Sunni stronghold with close ties with Saudi Arabia, which supports them financially. Around 40–60,000 Alawites live in the Jabal Mohsen neighbourhood of Tripoli (out of a total Lebanese population of 120,000 Alawites) and they have close ties with Syrian Alawites, including the ruling Assad family. They have been rivals since the Lebanese Civil War, which raged between 1975 and 1990.

There was another major cycle of violence between 2008 and 2014. This is because the signing of the Document of National Accord, in Taif, Saudi Arabia on 22 October 1989, put an end to 15 years of civil war, but some aspects of that conflict continued in Tripoli long after the 'Taif Agreement' or Accord. It was not fully implemented, especially the commitment to withdrawing the Syrian Army from Lebanon. This took almost 15 years, which prevented the sectarian groups who participated in the war from taking seriously any reconciliation process.

As with Belfast, the city government in Tripoli was concerned with rehabilitating the physical environment and infrastructure, but unlike Belfast, it neglected the need to repair social relations. Hence, although the various militias were granted amnesty, no attention was paid to the emotional scars of individuals or the need for communal reconciliation, let alone on how to try and achieve it.

Bilal Al Ayoubi joined the panel to discuss the inclusive process of creating a communal reconciliation in Tripoli. With a deep experience of conflict management and peacebuilding in Lebanon, he currently works at the Institute of Strategic Dialogue in their Strong Cities Network programme. This supports community networks to prevent violent extremism and he shared with the conference his experience of developing a roadmap to reconciliation in Tripoli, which aims at creating an inclusive process of communal reconciliation. No roadmap existed and so a number of agencies in the city work to co-design and co-produce one to meet the unique needs of Tripoli.

Findings from the research that underpinned the development of this strategic roadmap, commissioned in April 2017, are sobering and point to two key issues that informed the policy response. First, in politicised and conflicted spaces such as these in Tripoli, there is often a complete absence of trust in politicians and political authorities. Civil society actors generally held the view that the authorities deliberately choose not to invest in rehabilitating and reconstructing such neighbourhoods on the assumption that there will be more violence and conflict to come. Second, a feature that fuels the divide between the Sunni Muslims and Alawite Muslims in Tripoli is the fact that both communities live in closed environments, so that their collective memories of war, whether real or not, become the glue informing their shared realities.

The response to this was to recommend an inclusive urban strategy to be co-ordinated in concert with the Municipality of Tripoli and the Al Fayhaa Union of Municipalities and the relevant ministries. The inclusive urban strategy works to involve people and organisations in the conflict zones in the overall development of the city. A transportation node, a medical hub, or even a waste management and recycling centre should be approached in ways that both provide jobs but also create greater linkages between the different parts of this divided city. The team implementing the roadmap understands that many of the recommendations are longer-term interventions that may be disrupted or otherwise affected by a myriad of variables and that these might operate at a local, national, regional or even an international scale. Nevertheless, the process is as important as the overall goal and may have surprising outcomes born of providing places and opportunities for people to come together safely and in trust.

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Conclusions

In Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen and Iraq, the recent wars and their consequences have been largely urban, with 92 per cent of those killed and injured by explosive weapons being civilians living in populated areas. El Salvador provides another example, not uncommon elsewhere in Central America, where conflict, violence and insecurity are concentrated in cities. Here, local actors took the lead in resolving conflict, working at the community level to facilitate truces among youth gangs and providing training for members. The assumption was that if they had skills, employment and social recognition, they were more likely to turn their back on violence (Wennmann, 2018: 5).

However, local engagement is not always community-led. In a study of three Colombian cities during the civil war years, Gutierrez et al. (2013) look at how and why in the capital, Bogotá, and in Medellín, violence was brought down significantly, while in Cali this did not happen. They put these two 'metropolitan miracles' down to a political settlement between competing elites in each city that involved the local state in improved basic services, providing opportunities for young people and breaking down the spatial segregation of the cities through improved transport and other aspects of urban planning.

Cities are heralded as the new frontier for peace mediation (Wennmann, 2016). Yet documented experience of peacemaking in cities is relatively new, despite the fact that people have been doing it for centuries. Cities are a source of resistance and of human agency from which new beginnings can be forged (Muggah, 2014). Human agency can come from many directions: the grassroots, national governments, metropolitan and local governments, and even international organisations. The point is that they are concentrated in cities, which also hold within them the ingredients and potential for generative conflict and post-violence regeneration. There are real opportunities for the cross-fertilisation of practice between peace mediation and negotiation practice on the one hand and the extensive experience of participatory urban planning on the other. In the case of Belfast, we saw the importance of marrying an understanding of urban planning with social efforts to build resilience and sustain the peace. We saw in the case of Tripoli too that the roadmap to resilience was paved with similar socio-cultural intentions.

Recognising the significance of urban spaces and the spatial fabric of cities is a necessary but not a sufficient condition in city-led peacebuilding. Accompanying it needs to be an understanding of the inevitable social fallout of protracted conflict, and therefore the need to put in place mechanisms and processes that enable people to heal and rebuild trust. This involves rebuilding social and cultural infrastructures to complement and support physical reconstruction and economic renewal. Political will and accompanying resources on the part of local and national governments are critical but need to be exercised in the context of a distributed model of leadership. It matters less whether initiatives are led by the grassroots or are top-down. Indeed, it can be both simultaneously. Of greatest importance is that processes of genuine transition involve multiple actors and agents, including full and balanced involvement of what are often continued conflicting elements of civil society.

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'Cities can become essential arenas of action in efforts at peacemaking'

Cracking the code of tech for peace: international perspectives of peacetech research and practice

Diana Dajer

Technology evolves rapidly. While both Google and Apple launched their applications' stores in 2008, in 2017 the typical UK smartphone user had more than 80 applications on their phone, and used close to 40 per month, spending an average of slightly more than two hours in apps each day (App Annie, 2018).

In the meantime, in 2016 the robot Sophia, developed by Hanson Robotics, became both a Saudi Arabian citizen and the first Innovation Champion of the United Nations Development Programme (Risse, 2018).

In the last decade, this rapid technological growth worldwide has triggered a parallel rising body of projects, literature and conversations around peacetech, a compound of peacebuilding and technology that refers to the strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to build peace (Build Up, 2016a). Scholars, practitioners, researchers and policymakers alike, in places of the world as diverse as Pakistan, Burundi, Colombia and the USA, are engaging in global efforts to use technologies such as geographic information systems, artificial intelligence, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, the internet and radio to support peacebuilding efforts (Build Up and Policéntrico, 2018).

In the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, the Peace and Beyond conference hosted a session entitled 'Peace, technology and innovation', to examine some technological tools that could be used strategically to build peace in different contexts, the process of design, implementation and evaluation of these tools, and the possibilities and risks that the employment of digital tools for peacebuilding could present.

The panel featured a keynote address by Sinéad McSweeney, Vice President, Policy and Communications of Twitter EMEA, and two case studies on tech for peace by Henry Joseph-Grant, Founder of PeaceTech Northern Ireland, and Michaela Ledesma, Programs Director of Build Up. Likewise, it also included an in-depth conversation on the challenges and opportunities around the use of technological tools in conflict transformation in Northern Ireland and around the globe.

This essay provides a background on the state of the art of peacetech research and practice worldwide, and reviews and discusses the main messages from the session, while highlighting connections with relevant research and practice.

1. Technology for peacebuilding: a double-edged sword in constant transformation

Although peacetech interventions and studies have started to bloom in the last decade, it is still in its infant stage and far from being mainstream (Banks, 2013; Gaskell, 2016). Many questions and puzzles around its categorisation (Gaskell et al., 2016) and conceptualisation remain (Welch et al., 2015a), despite the increasing interest of donors, practitioners and scholars (Welch et al., 2015b). In fact, academics such as Firchow and Martin-Shields (2017) have observed that the peacetech field can be categorised as in a state of liminality and ambiguity, with many of its roles and boundaries being established and negotiated.

Hence, one of the most recurrent questions around peacetech is *what exactly is peacetech* (Gaskell, 2015)? Peacetech – a combination of peacebuilding and technology (Gaskell et al., 2016; Puig and Jung, 2017) – explores how technology could be used strategically to build peace (Gaskell, 2016). As Build Up notes, the differentiation 'between non-strategic and strategic uses of technology in the peacebuilding context' is at the core of peacetech's definition, since it intends to 'distinguish peacebuilding actors and activities that use technology as part of their general organisational management [...] from those that use technology with the strategic aim to build peace' (Build Up, 2016a: 6).

Even though there is a scarcity of conceptualisation about what exactly technology for peacebuilding is (Welch et al., 2015a; Firchow and Martin-Shields, 2017), there are at least five identifiable strands of peacetech research and practice, which are useful starting points to shape the conversation around this field, and provide a better understanding of its definition. These areas, often intersecting, are shaping peacetech development and expansion: (i) peacetech terminology; (ii) the technology's categorisation and functions to strategically assist peacebuilding aims; (ii) the technological tools used strategically to build peace; (iv) the methodology, processes and actors involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of peacetech projects; and (v) the sustainability and scalability of technologies for peacebuilding.

1.1 Defining peace and technology in the peacetech compound

A useful way to set the foundations for a dialogue around peacetech is to clarify what peace and tech mean in common peacetech practice. For instance, Gaskell et al. (2016) define technology as 'the different types of hardware, software or systems that enable people to access, generate and share information' (Gaskell et al., 2016: 4). Likewise, it is also useful to clarify, along with Welch et al. (2015b), that the field of peacebuilding has a preference for referring to information and communication technologies, including the web, when referring to peacetech. Correspondingly, ICTs can be defined as 'a diverse set of tools used to create, disseminate, and manage information. These technologies include the Internet, intranets, wireless networks, and cell phones, as well as such services as videoconferencing and distance learning' (USIP 2011: 19).

One of the main challenges presented in the conceptualisation of peace, as Galtung (1967) points out, is that this word is commonly used as an umbrella expression that encompasses global goals and concerns. Nonetheless, three useful notions to elucidate the concept of peace from a sociological perspective are the categories of negative peace, positive peace and imperfect peace (de Vera 2016).

While negative peace refers to the absence of violence or fear of violence, positive peace examines the conditions that allow for social justice, restore social relations and tackle situations of structural violence (Galtung 1996). Furthermore, an imperfect peace refers to those dynamic and unfinished states in which peaceful actions are presented in the midst of conflicts (Muñoz, 2006).

As Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) note, 'Peacebuilding is understood as an overarching term to describe a long-term process covering all activities with the overall objective to prevent violent outbreaks of conflict or to sustainably transform armed conflicts into constructive peaceful ways of managing conflict. This definition, however, is only partial because it is not entirely clear on the scope and time frame of peacebuilding' (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006: 15).

1.2 Using tech for peace

The strategic functions of the tech tools employed in peacetech interventions are as important as the actual tech tools employed to build peace in a peacetech scenario. Still, a recurrent theoretical challenge in peacetech literature is the difficulty in categorising its practices due to their evolving nature (Gaskell, 2015). Nevertheless, there are many efforts in peacetech literature to identify the different programme areas and functions of peacetech.

For instance, noting the overwhelming options for practitioners to use tech for peace, Puig and Kahl (2013) propose four main functions that ICTs can have in peacebuilding: (i) data processing, which involves improving data collection, organisation, and analysis processes; (ii) communications, by providing new avenues for sharing information and stories; (iii) gaming, to introduce elements of gamification that can provide alternative incentives for action; and (iv) engagement, in terms of creating new ways for people to influence, participate or take action in their communities.

Likewise, given that practitioners might find it easier to employ new technologies if they can fit them into existing programme areas, Puig and Kahl (2013) also suggest four main categories of programs for ICT applications: (i) early-warning and early-response programmes; (ii) programmes fostering contact and collaboration between groups in conflict settings; (iii) programmes aiming to promote peaceful attitudes; and (iv) programmes supporting communities to influence pro-peace policies.

Also, observing the need of more theoretical work on the use of ICTs for peacebuilding, Welch et al. (2015b) suggest a possible framework of five affordances of ICTs to support governance in post-conflict contexts: (i) to generate big data, (ii) to promote mobilisation, (iii) for information sharing, (iv) as an alternative 'space' to the physical, and (v) to empower citizens. In this vein, Welch et al. (2015b) use the word *affordance to* discuss the functions of technology, given that this word entail the possibilities that technology offer for action. Furthermore, more recently, Gaskell et al. (2016) proposed a socio-technical conceptual framework of four affordances or functions of technology in peacetech: (i) data, (ii) communication, (iii) networking and (iv) mobilisation.

As the sector evolves, new affordances of technology for peacebuilding that have not been categorised in previous literature are starting to emerge. For instance, one area of increasing attention is the use of technology to support transitional justice efforts (Dajer, 2017). This topic is explored in a forthcoming issue of the *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, which is expected to be published in 2019.

Likewise, another emerging function is the employment of technology to foster the creation of economic opportunities in conflict and post-conflict scenarios, tackling inequality and deprivation issues that often trigger wars worldwide. Accordingly, researchers and practitioners alike are beginning to discuss the challenges and prospects of the use of different technologies and the digital economy to promote economic development in peacebuilding scenarios.

To provide an example, Clemmons et al. (2017) have noted that blockchain technologies might have a positive role to play in a blended finance strategy in post-conflict Colombia. Moreover, observing the nascent emergence of this area, the Build Peace 2018 Conference, which will take place in Belfast in October, will explore the possibilities and limitations of the creative and digital economies to provide alternative economic models that tackle inequality, reduce social exclusion and make communities more resilient to conflict.

1.3 The ever-evolving technologies used for peacebuilding

Contrasting with the challenge of contextualising and categorising peacetech, it is simpler to discuss examples of the tech tools that could be used to strategically foster peace, and the different uses and effects they have had in both research and practice. These technologies vary, and there is a diverse set of tools that have been employed in peacetech over the past decade, from SMS messages to Facebook and drones (Build Up, 2016b).

A way of contrasting how examples of peacetech tools vary year to year, and the different uses they have had, is by exploring the range of projects featured annually in Build Up's Build Peace Conference since 2014 (Build Up and Policéntrico, 2018). This event and community, which has been hosted in Boston, Nicosia, Zurich and Bogotá, and which will take place in Belfast in 2018, brings together 'practitioners, activists, academics, policymakers, artists and technologists from around the world to share experience and ideas on using technology, arts and other innovations for peacebuilding and conflict transformation' (Build Up, 2018a).

For instance, some of the tools that have been showcased over the years involve the use of virtual reality to foster empathy, participatory video and photography to bring new voices to peace processes, platforms to tackle fake news, applications to create and share narratives about conflict and peace, SMS to fight extremist violence, and games to promote social cohesion between different groups (Build Up, 2018a).

Similarly, there is a growing set of case studies portrayed in the academic literature and practice, examining a broad range of tools that have been used to build peace, and analysing critically the effects they have had in different parts of the world. Some examples involve the use of computer-mediated communication to reduce prejudice between different religious groups (Cao and Lin, 2017; Walther et al., 2015), satellite technology as a tool to monitor and document mass atrocities (Wang et al., 2013), education and awareness-raising platforms to prevent and mitigate violence against women in elections (Bardall, 2013), participatory video in post-election Kenya to re-establish relationships and create a shared understanding of the conflict (Baú, 2014), and drones to deliver medicine, food and other aid into hard-to-access areas in Syria (Mooberry, 2015).

1.4 Designing, implementing and evaluating peacetech interventions

A recurrent insight in the peacetech literature is that the process of designing and implementing technologies for peacebuilding is a crucial determinant of its results (Mancini and O'Reilly, 2013; Gaskell et al., 2016; Puig and Jung, 2017). Hence, an area increasingly relevant in peacetech research and practice is the process and methodology used to design, implement and evaluate interventions. Peacebuilding is a highly delicate process, full of risks and challenges. As Build Up and Policéntrico (2018) highlight, 'Peacebuilding is a series of individual and collective transformations that require carefully designed engagement. Bringing new actors and methods into the process enriches the potential for discovering common values, developing inclusive memory and finding new modes of expression' (Build Up and Policéntrico, 2018: 58).

In this context, Puig and Kahl (2013) note that, since technology can be both a connector and a divider in conflict contexts, the employment of a do-no-harm framework is a rule of thumb in tech for peace interventions. In this vein, in addition to a context-based do-no-harm assessment, the authors suggest that, when designing the methodology of projects, there are three issues particular to the introduction of technology. First, the bias of connectivity, addressing issues such as equal access to the tech used and the risk of manipulation by external actors. Second, the relevance of designing for empowerment, avoiding dynamics that might deceive user expectations. Last, the ethical principles, risk and security issues that the intervention might trigger for the participants involved.

These ethical concerns, recurrent in the design and implementation of ICTs (Rogerson, 2009) often call for practitioners to consider the effects of the tech tools employed in the power dynamics, security, privacy and the likelihood for them to increase existing inequalities or violence (Mancini and O'Reilly, 2013; Tellidis and Kappler, 2016).

Accordingly, in a report of a session at the 2017 Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development, entitled 'Reimagining Peacebuilding Through Innovation', Puig and Jung (2017) emphasised the need of ensuring compliance with ethical principles and local ownership of technology to deepen participation. In fact, the authors note that 'Peacetech does not by definition increase engagement in peace processes. In fact, it can be extractive and top down. Session discussions emphasised the importance of locally owned and locally driven technologies in ensuring that technology development is driven by local problems rather than external solutions' (Puig and Jung, 2017: 40).

Furthermore, at the Build Peace 2017 Conference on the relationship between peace, technology and participation, Build Up and Policéntrico highlighted the need of using a participatory design, implementation and evaluation of peacetech projects, 'as technology without participation can exclude rather than empower communities most in need' (Build Up and Policéntrico, 2018: 58). Similarly, Bocanegra et al. (2016) suggest that at least seven actors should be included in a peacetech participatory processes using a context-based approach: (i) the victims directly affected by the conflict, (ii) civil society, (iii) conflict combatants; (iv) the government; (v) relevant non-governmental organisations; (vi) academic researchers; and (vii) enterprises.

Mancini and O'Reilly (2013) in a how-to guide of peacetech interventions, also highlight the relevance of analysing the context before engaging in projects that involve the use of tech for peace, considering issues such as the socioeconomic setting, technology penetration and the demographics. Furthermore, similar to Puig and Kahl (2013), they also suggest that a do-no-harm approach is a crucial duty to avoid knock-on effects that could lead to fatal outcomes.

Additionally, a relevant question around the methodology implemented to design and implement peacetech projects is how to monitor and evaluate their results, given how difficult it is to measure the outcomes and producing a relevant change in terms of peacebuilding in a short period of time. In this vein, Banks (2013) notes that 'technology races ahead at a breathtaking pace, but behaviour change chugs along in a much lower gear' (Banks, 2013: 4). To address this challenge, Firchow and Mac Ginty (2017) recommend using participatory indicators to assess peacebuilding projects, and accessible tech tools for hard-to-access populations, such as mobile phone surveys to evaluate their impact. Moreover, Dafoe and Lyall (2015) warn about a causal attribution of peace results to technological use without a careful consideration of alternative explanations.

A useful guideline to design, implement and evaluate peacetech projects according with the different methodological recommendations discussed above, are the Principles for Digital Development. For instance, they suggest the employment of user-centred design, understanding the existing ecosystem, using open standards, data and sources, adopting a data-driven approach, reusing and improving existing initiatives, addressing private and security concerns, and the application of collaborative processes.

1.5 Sustaining and scaling up peacetech interventions

One of the biggest constraints of peacetech interventions are the challenges and risks for the sustainability and scalability of successful interventions. More often than not, peacetech projects are funded by external donors, and sustaining the use of the technology after the funds run out is a challenge that may have a significant effect on the users' expectations. Hence, a final relevant area of analysis in peacetech research and practice involves the discussion, debates and solutions around designing for sustainability.

Two rules of thumb to follow around the sustainability and scalability of peacetech projects are the guidelines on *Design for Scale* and *Build for Sustainability*, included in the Principles for Digital Development previously mentioned. On the one hand, the *Design for Scale* principle highlights the difficulty of many initiatives to move beyond the piloting scale, and advise the evaluation of the 'trade-offs among processes that would lead to rapid start-up and implementation of a short-term pilot versus those pilots that require more time and planning but lay the foundation for scaling by reducing future work and investment' (Principles for Digital Development, 2018: 1).

On the other hand, the *Build for Sustainability* principle notes that, even though sustainability could mean different things for different interventions, such as institutionalisation of a programme or the self-sustainability of the project through its own revenues, sustainability should be defined and planned from the start, but leaving a space for adaptation in case the needs of the users and the context change (Principles for Digital Development, 2018).

As a result, authors such as Puig and Jung (2017) recommend increasing funds in exploratory work on innovation, whereas Dajer et al. (2018) suggest designing a sustainability strategy at early stages of the project, scaling up with level-headed thinking and attention to detail, and adding dynamics in the design process that secure collective ownership in the mid- and long term. Likewise, Himelfarb and Pope (2015) support a model of social franchising to scale up peacetech interventions.

2. Case studies on the use of technology for peacebuilding

Due to the complexities of both peacebuilding practice and the use of ICTs for social change (Hattotuwa 2004), the code for the use of digital tools to foster reconciliation, social inclusion, and economic prosperity in conflict and post-conflict scenarios is not yet cracked; there are many doubts and uncertainties about how to add tech strategically in peacebuilding interventions to achieve the desired positive outcomes and avoid negative effects.

Still, perhaps one of the few conclusions that scholars and practitioners alike agree on about peacetech, is the fact that information and communication technologies can have both benefits and challenges; they are double-edged swords that can be used both for the most noble causes or the upmost damaging purposes when used strategically for peacebuilding purposes (Bardall 2013; Mancini and O'Reilly, 2013; Shapiro and Siegel, 2015). Hence, the case studies discussed in this section, which were presented during the session on 'Peace, technology and innovation' at the Peace and Beyond conference, address with more detail both challenges and opportunities of the strategic use of technologies to foster peace, and discuss different aspects of the five areas of peacetech research and practice identified above.

In particular, the conversation started with context-setting opening remarks by Sinéad McSweeney, Vice President, Policy and Communications of Twitter EMEA, which portrayed a frame of the conversation and a case study about the use of social media technologies, such as Twitter, as alternative spaces to foster social inclusion, trust in state institutions, and tolerance.

Subsequently, two complementary case studies on using technology for peacebuilding were featured. On the one hand, Henry Joseph Grant, Founder of PeaceTech Northern Ireland, provided an overview on how the digital economy could foster economic prosperity for excluded groups. On the other, Michaela Ledesma, Programs Director of Build Up, presented the results of the project *The Commons*, an intervention to tackle online polarisation with the use of bots, i.e. automation programmes, and discussed the role of technology to both deepen and mitigate social divisions. Furthermore, the seminar hosted a dialogue incorporating perspectives and questions from the speakers and the audience around the nuances, complexities and perspectives of the use of technology for peacebuilding in the past, present, and future.

2.1 Peacebuilding in 280 characters: the role of Twitter to foster social cohesion in Northern Ireland

The role of social media as a connector or a divider in different conflict and post-conflict settings has been a topic of rising interest in peacetech studies (Lynch et al., 2017; Reilly 2016; Young and Reilly, 2015). This issue has become increasingly relevant, as questions emerge around the influence of social media to shape people's political preferences, such as the ones triggered by the case involving Cambridge Analytica (Doward and Gibbs, 2017). Henceforth, as Vice President, Policy and Communications of Twitter EMEA, Sinéad McSweeney's opening remarks on the opportunities and challenges of tech to build peace, provided timely and insightful views about how, despite the difficulties, social media could act as an alternative space to the physical, providing an opportunity for state institutions to foster trust with citizens.

When the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was signed there was no Twitter. Yet, McSweeney shared that a need present at the time, still applicable, was the necessity of fostering trust between the police and the citizens. In this vein, she explained that when Twitter emerged and the police opened a Twitter account, a unique opportunity arose for that institution to have a direct positive connection with the citizens, providing a platform to share heart-warming events – part and parcel of day-to-day policing. This is increasingly relevant for the police since, as McSweeney highlighted by referring a study of Ferrara and Yang (2015), positive content is more likely to be shared than negative content.

Additionally, McSweeney noted that social media appeals to a profoundly human element: storytelling. By providing spaces for new voices to narrate their stories, an avenue for citizens to interact with opposing views in spaces alternative to the physical and share their stories, and providing a platform for social activism, this technology provides a wide range of opportunities to build social cohesion and empower neglected communities, despite the risks of amplification of hate speech and negative content. This showcases an interesting example of some of the functions of technology for peacebuilding identified above.

Addressing the challenges of social media, McSweeney highlighted the relevance of education, teaching the citizens about the positive and negative effects that might come out of its use. Likewise, she stressed that, as a private company, Twitter is engaging in efforts to work with both citizens and state institutions to find the best ways of addressing the challenges inherent to the openness of Twitter as a platform, without affecting the freedom of expression of the users.

Another effect of social media platforms such as Twitter, highlighted by McSweeney discussing a study by Young and Reilly (2015), is the possibility of these platforms to diffuse sectarian tensions throughout contentious marches. The study showed that during parades and protests, social media sites facilitated the empowerment of individuals and groups, by allowing them to communicate their perspectives on many issues. In this vein, stressing that future generations are at the heart of policymaking and their wellbeing is a key concern, McSweeney encouraged the audience to harness tech tools to engage with younger populations, since technology is where they play, work, and plan.

2.2 Creative and digital economies for peace in Northern Ireland

As explained above, a recent emerging use of technology for peacebuilding is the possibility of technological innovation and the digital economy to act as an avenue to foster economic opportunities to tackle inequality, economic divisions and exclusion in conflict and post-conflict scenarios. As connections are being traced in practice around the use of tools such as blockchain and agritech to provide prosperity to deprived communities, and the role of creative economies to boost the economy and foster cohesion and reconciliation, the literature has also warned about the challenges of these tools to deepen inequalities, if not designed bearing in mind the populations in most need and their constraints (Unwin, 2013; Graham, 2014).

In this context, Henry Joseph Grant, Founder of PeaceTech Northern Ireland, a company that supports start-ups in Northern Ireland to provide economic opportunities for marginalised populations, assessed the conditions of Northern Ireland to act as a hub for start-ups in Europe, and concluded that it is in a strong position to provide an ecosystem that supports new companies to scale up. Yet, Grant asserted that a key aspect for the digital economy and the opportunities that it creates to foster prosperity for all in Northern Ireland, is to particularly target the communities that have been left behind from the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and have not benefited from it, supporting the creation of sustainable and scalable businesses that create prosperity for these populations.

The dialogue around the relationship and interactions between peace, economy and tech is at an early stage, and needs to evolve and mature. Nevertheless, in the meantime it is relevant to note that the nascent literature on the issue is not foreign to the risks and opportunities that the digital economy could bring in conflict and post-conflict scenarios. In fact, scholars have warned about concerns around the design, implementation and evaluation of peacetech interventions, and the pivotal need of placing the communities at the centre of the interventions, working with them using bottom-up approaches, empowering marginalised populations and designing context-based interventions that tackle ethical concerns, especially around the risks of actually increasing inequality (Unwin, 2013; Graham, 2014).

2.3 Artificial peacetelligence: using bots to challenge online polarisation

One of the biggest risks of the use of algorithms in social media is the creation of filter bubbles and echo chambers that could increase polarisation (Flaxman et al., 2016; Zuiderveen et al., 2016). There are several studies and projects regarding the effect of technology to both foster social cohesion or increase fragmentation in divided groups (Walther et al., 2015; Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2015; Cao and Lin, 2017). In this context, Michaela Ledesma, Programs Director of Build Up, presented the results of the project *The Commons*, a peacetech intervention to address polarisation on Facebook and Twitter in the United States.

According to Ledesma, the project aimed to fight the effects of social media in polarisation, defined by Build Up as a process that drives groups' political opinions and/or personal values towards opposite poles, creating distorted perceptions of out-group members and decreasing trust. Hence, Ledesma explained that *The Commons* was designed under the assumption that, frequently, people tend to become polarised due to social media, without even realising so. Hence, as highlighted by Build Up, despite the challenges, *The Commons* aimed to move people 'from passively accepting a context that escalates conflict to constructively engaging in mediating dialogue' (Build Up, 2018b).

Consequently, Ledesma explained that the project envisioned to create a scalable model to make people aware of the polarised debate they are a part of in social media, help them reflect and engage with their position in the polarised debate, and offer avenues to take action on depolarisation. To do so, *The Commons* built a process to identify people engaged in political discussions about the USA on Twitter and Facebook, analysed the likelihood that they are polarised or polarising based on their behaviour, used bots to engage with them and organised a network of trained facilitators to follow up on the automated contact through a conversation.

Nevertheless, as explained by Puig (2017), using artificial intelligence such as bots, even with the aim of building peace, involves several ethical risks that Build Up had to face throughout the intervention. For instance, the 'fine line between amplifying a message so it receives the attention we believe it deserves (as we are trying to do) and manufacturing consensus to a point where it loses credibility' (Puig, 2017). This is why, as Ledesma explained, *The Commons* had strict ethical guidelines that informed the design, implementation and evaluation of the intervention, such as the use of non-partisan and multi-partial values, and a do-no-harm approach. Hence, this provides a rich example of many of the complexities portrayed in the previous section, regarding the design, implementation and evaluation of peacetech projects.

The Commons tested different interventions in Facebook and Twitter over six months, to understand strategies for success. As a result, the project identified two automation strategies with a high conversion rate into conversations with facilitators (Build Up, 2018b). On Twitter, the most effective strategy was to tweet messages that used the most liberal and the most conservative hashtags about political topics, pointing out that the conversation was polarised by suggesting people were not being heard. On Facebook, the strategy that worked best involved posting specific prompts on *The Commons*' Facebook page, with micro-targeted ads, directed towards the most polarised cities, as based on political campaign donations.

'The code for the use of digital tools to foster reconciliation, social inclusion, and economic prosperity in conflict and post-conflict scenarios is not yet cracked'

Overall, even though social media can cause both positive and negative effects in conflict and post-conflict scenarios, *The Commons* project is a cutting-edge example of how peacetech interventions, when complying with ethical standards and engaging with context-based solutions, can harness the power of technology to produce positive outcomes.

3. Peacetech and beyond: the start of a deeper conversation

In a world facing increasing digital growth, questions regarding the relationships between technology and society abound, particularly around how to harness the opportunities and tackle the challenges that it brings to solve human conflicts in issues such as peace, social cohesion, reconciliation, prosperity and trust. Yet, as highlighted by McSweeney, 'there is no one technology and therefore there is no one problem'.

Consequently, as seen in the first section of this essay, peacetech scholars and practitioners have made different efforts to reflect critically on the use of technology for peacebuilding, shape guidelines and share lessons on an emergent area with the potential of assisting peacebuilders around the globe to solve the world's most pressing problems.

This is shown with more detail in all the three cases portrayed at the session on 'Peace, technology and innovation' during the Peace and Beyond conference. From different perspectives, using diverse technologies and for different purposes, all the three speakers showed both the broad range of opportunities that technology could provide to strategically foster peace, but also the extensive range of challenges that could emerge around the design, implementation and evaluation of peacetech interventions.

As peacetech advances from a liminal space to a more consolidated and mainstream area, it is pivotal for education, policy and regulation around the implementation of peacetech best practices to also move forward. Issues as delicate as data security, the automation of jobs, antitrust practices, manipulation of public opinion and fake news, inherent to the digital space and everyday more common to delicate trust-building tasks such as peace processes, require being addressed effectively.

The session on 'Peace, technology and innovation' showed that sessions such as the one hosted by Peace and Beyond or the Build Peace conferences are just the start of a deeper conversation that should also inform policymaking, regulation, funding decisions, educative strategies and capacity building. A dialogue that, as peacetech best practices show, should be inclusive, open, transparent and collaborative.

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Taking a leap: building social trust

Professor John Brewer

Contemporary evidence suggests that social trust is not based on economic self-interest, as utilitarianism in the 19th century once argued, but rather, as the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1990) puts it, in the capacity for confidence in the reliability of people, institutions and structures. This embeds trust in the quality of social relationships, rather than on calculations of self-interest.

There is thus a two-dimensional flow in the connection between social trust and conflict. Low levels of social trust can be one cause of the breakdown in social relationships, even in the emergence of communal violence, while societies emerging out of conflict are defined by the disruption in social trust as a result of the violence. With regard to social trust and peace processes, if truth is the first casualty of war, another early casualty is social trust, such that post-conflict societies are marked by low levels of social trust.

In what follows, I will make some observations about the nature and meaning of social trust, reflecting on how it has been negatively affected by wider social changes in society, let alone by war. To understand the operation of social trust in post-conflict societies, I will make three sets of distinctions, which help us clarify what we mean by trust in societies emerging out of conflict. I will distinguish two types of trust, and with respect to one of these types, called social trust, which is the focus here, I will contrast the different levels it operates on and the different stages through which it develops. I conclude by suggesting that victims of conflict are moral beacons from whom we can learn a great deal with regards to social trust.

Types of trust in peace processes

Trust and peace seem a mutual couplet. Yet it is necessary to consider types of trust as they connect to conflict transformation and peace processes. Trust is important to conflict resolution and transformation that stops the war. Participants to a resolution process need to trust one another – and their mediators – or they will not come to the negotiation table, nor stay there, and will fail to agree a settlement. However, ending the conflict is the first part of a much longer process of peacebuilding. The second part is social transformation (on the distinction between conflict transformation and social transformation, see Brewer, 2015; Brewer et al., 2011). If trust is critical to the first part by bringing people to the negotiation table and keeping them there, it is perhaps even more important to the second phase of a peace process, where people learn to live together in tolerance after conflict.

It is worth distinguishing between the forms of trust essential to these two parts. In conflict transformation, trust works between warring political groups enough to get them to make and commit to a political settlement. In social transformation trusts works between ordinary men and women to facilitate healing, reconciliation and tolerance in society. So different are these forms of trust that it is worth referring to political trust as part of the process of conflict transformation and social trust as part of the process of social transformation.

Social trust in late modernity

Social trust is grounded in the quality and frequency of our personal relationships. Sociologists see it as rooted in the density of the social networks in which people are located (for example see Misztal, 1996; Sztompka, 2008). The more people in social networks know each other, the more friends and acquaintances are themselves linked, the more dense social networks become, from which develops what Sztompka (2008) calls 'trust cultures'. The more people interact with people known to each other, the more willing they are to trust them, since their trustworthiness is closely related to their capacity to trust the people to whom they relate and who are known to them. Social trust is like kindness or respect; it spreads around among people linked in bonds of friendship, expanding with the boundaries of social interaction.

Late modern society, however, is becoming less and less capable of social trust. Sociologists refer to late modern society as the risk society (Beck, 1992, 1999), with traditional structures linked to religion, close-knit neighbourhood and dense social networks losing their ability to shape social life, which both increases vulnerabilities and increases sensitivity to and awareness of these vulnerabilities (on which see Misztal, 2011). The boundaries of social trust have narrowed as a result of profound social changes. Close-knit community structures have been replaced by more mobile and frenetic forms of social life that transcend local space and time. As sociologists argue, the social networks that defined the trustworthiness of people, institutions and structures have become disembedded from local family and community structures and from neighbourhood-based friendship patterns. Senses of place are now global rather than local. Thus there are now long-distance families, with their sense of themselves as a family unit kept alive by extended social processes and technology. Social relationships and friendships are no longer embedded in personal relations in local place and space so that social trust is no longer spatial and localised. Social trust therefore needs to be reproduced over extended distances, often by forms of social media and telecommunications that have replaced the face-to-face personal relations that formerly grounded social trust and defined the people who were considered trustworthy. One of the significant social changes that has occurred as modernity has advanced with the emergence of the risk society (Beck, 1992) is that we have moved from social trust to social untrustworthiness as the default social condition. This does not mean an absence of social trust in late modernity, only that social trust has first to be learned.

One of the acute ways that ordinary people have experienced the profound social changes in family and community structures, and in the faster pace of social life that have occurred in their lifetime, is through the boundaries of social trust. Place alone no longer confers confidence in the reliability of people, institutions and community structures. Social trust is no longer a natural part of the social and cultural obligations that formed the local community to which they belonged; they now have to learn, sometimes through bitter experience, who they can trust in a risky and vulnerable society. It is for this reason that Mollering (2001) refers to people in modern societies having to learn the confidence to take 'leaps of trust' in face of the threatening 'unknowables' that shape their expectations of trustworthiness. Clan and kinship systems, and solidaristic, close-knit communities assumed social trust through familiarity; untrustworthiness had to be learned based on experience. It is the opposite in the late modern risk society, where among strangers trust has to be learned.

This significant social change complicates the development of social trust in post-conflict societies as people learn to live together in tolerance after conflict. Conflict polarises people and severely contracts and narrows the boundaries of the people considered as trustworthy. Post-conflict societies are therefore among the most untrusting, despite the significant diminution in their levels of violence; the violence has ended, justifying their depiction as post-conflict, but the legacy of that violence lives on in low levels of social trust. This imposes a significant burden on peace processes, and the extent to which social trust has been garnered offers a measure against which we can assess negotiated peace settlements like the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement.

Social trust after the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement

Any assessment of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement starts badly; disagreement over what to call it was a portent of the contention that bedevils it, with Unionists and Loyalists preferring the Belfast Agreement and Nationalists and Republicans the Good Friday Agreement. For most of the 20 years since its signing, attention, effort and policy has been devoted to getting the structures of governance right, focusing on institutional reform to improve the effectiveness of governance structures and to resolve problematic politics. This effort and policy focus is best described as statebuilding rather than peacebuilding (on which distinction see Brewer, 2015), looking both to improve the institutions for governance and to create new institutions to monitor this improvement (like the Equality Commission, the Police Ombudsman Office, the Human Rights Commission, and the Victims and Survivors Service).

Conflict resolution experts and negotiators in 1998 made two assumptions: that the political trust needed to agree the settlement would resolve problematic politics; and that once problematic politics was resolved, healing in society would naturally occur. The negotiators believed, as it were, that the political trust necessary among the parties to agree the settlement in 1998 would extend to social trust between lay people in society more generally. Despite massive levels of investment in the peace process from the EU and the Irish and UK governments, these assumptions proved naive.

Political trust between the political parties quickly broke down and the terms of the agreement had to go through several iterations to get the power-sharing executive up and running again after several temporary collapses. The executive is currently suspended and has been so since January 2017. Other forms of statebuilding have worked very well, however.

Policing reform, against all predictions, has succeeded. The institutions established to monitor the improvement in governance structures have survived and work very effectively. The central pillar of statebuilding, the devolved power-sharing executive, has, however, no immediate prospect of resumption. Political trust was not deeply embedded enough within the political parties to survive the travails of the peace process.

This is in some part because the question of social trust was largely ignored. Peacebuilding between formerly warring communities was under-resourced and relatively neglected with the emphasis on statebuilding; few policies and practices were established through which healing in society was prioritised, broken relationships restored, social trust rebuilt, fear and anxiety assuaged and by which people learned to live together in tolerance and civility. The brutalisation of everyday life caused by the violence endures as a legacy into the peace process to create polarisation, mistrust and fear (see Brewer et al., 2018b). Paul Gallagher, himself a victim of Northern Ireland's conflict and a leading advocate on victim issues in victim support groups like WAVE and The Injured Group, commented that the seed of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was 'planted in an inhospitable wasteland'. Northern Ireland remains, he said, 'a place devoid of social trust across the community boundaries. The Troubles had destroyed much of the social fabric, as well as the physical space, of Northern Ireland. While there was a strong sense of community within the two respective communities, it was based on the need for the two communities to stay separate, to only trust our "own sort" in order to maintain basic safety and security. There was a dearth of trust between the communities.' (Private communication with the author.)

Speaking on the panel on social trust at the Peace and Beyond conference, Judith Thompson, Chief Commissioner for the Commission for Victims and Survivors, recognised the importance of peacebuilding and of the need to combine it with effective statebuilding. She said: 'Building social trust within and between communities in a society transitioning from conflict is an essential ingredient to reconciliation and building a better future for everyone and the generations that follow.'

This interconnectedness between communities is vital, otherwise 'perverse social trust' can develop, in which people trust according to social and political boundaries rather than on people's individual trustworthiness. In her work as chief commissioner, she highlights her encounters with those directly affected by the conflict, stating she had been 'moved by their resolve and humility in coping with the past and ongoing trauma in their own lives'. With reference to the Victims and Survivors Forum, a civic body made up of victims, Thompson describes how they gave a commitment to building social trust and ultimately, a better society for all, through a deliberative process of looking for solutions to how to deal with the past.

The thoughts of Judith Thompson chime very much with my own, for I want to suggest that Northern Ireland might take a lesson from victims in how to build social trust.

Victims as moral beacons of social trust

I have long been associated with the claim that the majority of first-generation victims are moral beacons in shining a light to the rest of society by their forgivingness, emotional empathy and magnanimity (for example, see Brewer, 2010; Brewer and Hayes, 2011; Brewer et al., 2017, 2018b). Paul Gallagher commented on this view from his personal experience: 'The moral beacons would show others how to rebuild social trust. A type of trust with deep roots, built on a long-term symbiotic relationship with others in their field. They were the people who would get their hands dirty, while others would sit on the garden fence, disparaging the state of the landscape.' (Private communication with the author.)

Based on research funded by the Leverhulme Trust on the emotional landscape of victims in Northern Ireland, South Africa and Sri Lanka, involving interviews with nearly 200 victims and two sample surveys (reported in Brewer et al., 2017, 2018a, 2018b), social trust is still a very problematic issue in first-generation victims. Most interviewees, however, reported on growing social trust over the years. The willingness of the vast number of victims to commit to the peace process and their hope for lasting peace suggests trust will develop, but they were not yet able to increase their feelings of trust dramatically. In short, social trust drops slower than peace. As one Protestant interviewee from Northern Ireland remarked: 'Well I go to and do courses with Catholic people. And we get on great. We have actually been away with Catholic people on residential. They have been through the same thing. They are just ordinary people like me. They have went through the same things, maybe worse. And we have told our stories and they have told their stories and sometimes theirs is 100 per cent worse than what happened to us. And I can empathise with that. And I would turn round and say I am sorry. There was one particular fella told his story and I turned round to him and said sorry. And he came up afterwards to me and he says, "I want to thank you for saying you are sorry. Because you listened to my story. But it was not your fault. And I do not want you to say you are sorry, I would rather give you a hug." So he gave me a hug. And when I got home, he was a Catholic, he sent me a beautiful card to say thanks. And I had never met that fella in my life before. But they went through the same. But the distrust is still there.'

To understand victims' capacity for social trust, I wish to make two sets of distinctions. We might call the first distinction between 'surface' and 'deep' social trust; the second between 'particularised' compared to 'generalised' social trust. The distinction between 'surface' and 'deep' social trust describes the level of trust; the distinction between 'particularised' and 'generalised' social trust describes the stages through which we broaden who it is that is considered trustworthy.

Let me come first to the issue of who is considered trustworthy. Only a very small minority of victims reported a complete lack of social trust in the former enemy, such as this victim when referring to Catholics. 'You couldn't trust them, no way could you trust them. You could be chatting to them in the morning and then they could be behind a ditch and shoot you the next day. How would you come to a compromise with those people?' However, borrowing from Mollering (2001), most first-generation victims were prepared to take 'the leap of trust'. The majority of these, did so, however, in a two-stage process. The key here is to slowly extend outwards the boundaries of those who can be trusted to cover individual members of the erstwhile groups rather than the collectivity as a whole. That is, social trust is first possible in a particularised way, extended to individuals known or who become known, as part of the victims' social network, making them able to trust individuals from the other community whom they knew and encountered, but not yet the 'other' group as a whole. It was trust on a one-to-one basis as the situation demanded it. From this particularised social trust can then hopefully follow generalised social trust, in which negative stereotypes and myths about the whole group are replaced by social trust.

With respect to the levels of social trust, there tends to be a minimal level of 'surface' social trust that facilitates tolerance in the public sphere, such as when in mixed and cross-community settings with individual members of the former enemy. But the deep levels of social trust required in the private sphere, where the boundaries of the trustworthy person are very closely and narrowly defined, is often restricted to friends and kin. This parallels Robert Putnam's distinction between thin and thick trust (2000: 136): 'Trust embedded in personal relations that are strong, frequent, and nested in wider networks is sometimes called "thick trust." On the other hand, a thinner trust in "the generalised other", like your new acquaintance from the coffee shop, also rests implicitly on some background of shared social networks and expectations of reciprocity' (on the application of Putnam's writings on social capital to Northern Ireland, see Graham, 2016). Most first-generation victims are capable of surface social trust, but do not yet consider the erstwhile enemy as equivalent to the deeply trusted family member.

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The point, though, is that this deep level of social trust is not necessary for the public practice of tolerance. Surface trust on a particularised basis is a good basis to start practising social trust in public. The lack of deep social trust reflects the hurt inflicted over the years of the conflict, leaving victims feeling vulnerable. Yet most first-generation victims in all three post-conflict societies were nonetheless willing to take the leap to surface social trust, extended first on a particularised rather than generalised basis. Surface social trust-building efforts among victims on a particularised basis consist of cross-community projects and befriending programmes organised by victim support groups and others, which extend the social networks of first-generation victims to include the 'other'. These social networks of trust, as we might call them, have the effect of increasing the numbers of first-generation victims capable of surface social trust on a particularised basis.

In this fact, lies hope for peacebuilding in Northern Ireland and societal healing. For example, interviewees frequently reported increased understanding and empathy for the members of the former out-group. Taking part in intergroup activities had promoted intergroup befriending and tolerance among individuals, providing clear evidence that surface social trust on a particularised basis is embedded in the quality of social relations in networks of social trust. Two instances can be cited from victims in Northern Ireland.

'We have gone cross-community, which I would not have done. This group has brought me to that stage. It is not the government. It is my own understanding. Because I do not want my grandchildren to go through what my children went through in the Troubles and all.'

'But what I enjoyed was, whenever I first came to the group, I think it was round about 2002 that we became involved in the Cross Border Project. And it was brilliant. We were able to go down and we met women from down the South of Ireland and you listened to their stories. So I think the more you hear from other people as well the more you can relate to them. And you can say to yourself – they are just like us as well. And people can set aside their differences then.'

Conclusion

Reconciliation, tolerance and peacebuilding expand outwards with social trust. However, to paraphrase WB Yeats's poem 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' about peace, social trust drops even more slowly. The hesitant reaching out to the erstwhile enemy requires victims to take a 'leap of trust'. This is more likely to happen in a two-stage process, where victims first learn to trust specific individuals from the other community on a particularised basis, with a level of trust best described as surface rather than deep. Yet it is in these gestures that social generalised and deep social trust is slowly learned. Societies emerging out of conflict thus need to artfully and skilfully construct everyday spaces for trust building, so that networks of social trust can be built slowly and people's confidence in the reliability of people from the other community is restored. Given what I argued at the beginning of this chapter about disembedded social relations and the rise of insecurity and risk in late modernity that negatively affects people's capacity for social trust, these networks of social trust therefore require careful nurturing so people are encouraged to resist any feelings of untrustworthiness and to take the leap of trust.

The argument here is that victims of conflict offer an example of how social trust can be slowly built in a frenetic society in which social relations are now disembedded from close-knit communities and extended kinship networks, truly making them 'moral beacons'. Their levels of social trust were enhanced by participation in intergroup networks. This suggests that social trust can be facilitated by social institutions and by politicians creating conducive environments and discourses for social trust essential. Social networks of trust are facilitated by policies and practices in civil society – in schools, women's groups, churches, universities, trade unions, in youth groups and the like – and they can be easily undermined as people question the confidence they place in erstwhile enemies and as their wider feelings of vulnerability and insecurity increase. Politicians, governments, the media, journalists, public commentators and cultural critics, parents, priests and pastors thus need to choose their words carefully, so as to support rather than undermine lay people's confidence in social trust. All too often careless use of language and senseless behaviour can erode social trust and polarise rather than heal divisions. Creating the social conditions for trust is thus the responsibility of us all if people are to challenge the untrustworthiness that is garnered by the disembedded social relations of late modernity.

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'Building social trust ... in a society transitioning from conflict is an essential ingredient to ... building a better future for everyone.'

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'Peace and Beyond placed intercultural dialogue, international partnership, and the sharing of global knowledge and experience at centre stage'

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