

# PEACE SCIENCE DIGEST

A PROJECT OF THE WAR PREVENTION INITIATIVE



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Barriers to Peace for Women in Nepal and Bosnia

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Beyond Armed Conflict: Exploring Broader Understandings of Reconciliation in Colombia

Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.

Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.

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Women Learn about Their Rights. Gender Equity Training in Nepal: 18 women and 7 men from local civic societies attended a Gender Equity Training in June 2010

Need for the Digest photo credit: Christin Hume on Unsplash

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#### Disclaimer

Research featured in the *Peace Science Digest* is selected based on its contribution to the field of Peace Science, and authenticated by the scientific integrity derived from the peer-review process. Peer-reviewed journals evaluate the quality and validity of a scientific study, giving us the freedom to focus on the articles' relevance and potential contribution to the field and beyond. The editors of the *Peace Science Digest* do not claim their analysis is, or should be, the only way to approach any given issue. Our aim is to provide a responsible and ethical analysis of the research conducted by Peace and Conflict Studies academics through the operational lens of the War Prevention Initiative.

# NEED FOR THE DIGEST

Peace and Conflict Studies (henceforth: Peace Science) has emerged as an academic discipline with its own graduate programs, handbooks, research tools, theories, associations, journals, and conferences. As with most scientific communities, the slow migration of academic knowledge into practical application becomes a limiting factor of a field's growth, its impact, and the overall effectiveness of its practitioners.

The expanding academic field of Peace Science continues to produce high volumes of significant research that often goes unnoticed by practitioners, the media, activists, public policy-makers, and other possible beneficiaries. This is unfortunate, because Peace Science ultimately should inform the practice on how to bring about peace.

*The research and theory needed to guide peace workers to produce more enduring and positive peace, not only more peace studies, have come to stay. Bridging the gap between the peace movement moralism and foreign policy pragmatism is a major challenge facing everyone who seeks to achieve peace on Earth. (Johan Galtung and Charles Webel)*

To address this issue, the War Prevention Initiative has created the *Peace Science Digest* as a way to disseminate top selections of research and findings from the field's academic community to its many beneficiaries.

The *Peace Science Digest* is formulated to enhance awareness of scholarship addressing the key issues of our time by making available an organized, condensed, and comprehensible summary of this important research as a resource for the practical application of the field's current academic knowledge.

# LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

We are witness to transformative change in our society, both in the United States and around the world. Civil resistance and broader protest movements are shifting social norms and policies, from the March for Our Lives on gun reform to the #MeToo Movement calling out the global scale of sexual assault. Sustained civil resistance movements in places like Hong Kong and Sudan are challenging existing power structures and calling for more democratic and representative systems of government. In particular, these examples demonstrate the power of nonviolent resistance—a deliberate and effective choice and vehicle for social change.

Yet, nearly all nonviolent resistance movements face a common challenge—the temptation to turn to violence, whether among those within the movement or on the part of the government whose policies or behaviors may be the target of the resistance movement. When violence does happen within the context of a nonviolent resistance movement, what happens next matters a great deal. Will government violence encourage a violent response from the resistance movement, escalating the crisis until it descends into civil war like we've seen in Syria? Does government violence against a movement embolden support for the movement if it maintains nonviolence and delegitimizes the government, leading (eventually) to reform like we've seen in Sudan? Or, what happens if an otherwise nonviolent movement turns violent—does support for that movement wither?

Two articles featured in this issue of the *Peace Science Digest* focus on nonviolent resistance movements. In "Limiting State Violence and Activist Violence in Nonviolent Resistance Struggles," we learn strategies for mitigating violence by both the government and members of the resistance movement. Next, focusing on instances of violence from resistance movements, we learn in "Movement Violence Can Lead to a Decline in Public Support" that public support can plummet when a movement turns violent. In both, violence reveals itself to be a strategically bad choice for governments and civil resistance movements alike.

The remaining articles featured here take us to Nepal, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Colombia—all countries emerging from armed conflict and rebuilding their societies to achieve sustainable peace. Each article reveals a different component of building peaceful societies. In "Barriers to Peace for Women in Nepal and Bosnia," we learn about the everyday challenges that women may face in countries emerging from war, including economic insecurity and competing layers of victimhood. In "Masculinities, Militarization, and Myth-Making in Post-Genocide Rwanda," we explore how gender is reconstructed after violent conflict. Particularly, when that process fails to disassociate masculinities from militarization, post-conflict societies never truly emerge with the conditions to facilitate long-term peace. In "Beyond Armed Conflict: Exploring Broader Understandings of Reconciliation in Colombia," we are reminded that reconciliation can be understood in a variety of ways that complicate and move beyond solely the division between civilians and former combatants.

You *Peace Science Digest* Editorial Team,



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# Barriers to Peace for Women in Nepal and Bosnia

Source | Berry, M. E., & Rana, T. R. (2019). What prevents peace? Women and peacebuilding in Bosnia and Nepal. *Peace & Change*, 44(3), 321-349.

## Keywords

women, peacebuilding, peace, Bosnia, Nepal, insecurity, violence, transitional justice, civil war

**Peacemaking:** Conflict resolution activities like negotiation and mediation undertaken to get the primary conflict parties to come to an agreement on substantive issues at stake in a conflict.

**Peacebuilding:** “A broad range of measures implemented in the context of emerging, current or post-conflict situations and which are explicitly guided and motivated by a primary commitment to the prevention of violent conflict and the promotion of a lasting and sustainable peace” (OECD 2005). Entails the transformation of the deeper conditions—especially institutions and relationships—that led to violent conflict in the first place.

**Transitional justice:** Judicial or non-judicial measures taken by countries emerging from armed conflict or repression to address widespread human rights abuses.

Despite progress over the past two decades integrating both women and gender concerns into peace and security practices globally, women are still underrepresented in formal **peacemaking** and **peacebuilding** efforts. To see the breadth of their contributions, one must pay attention to the informal spaces where women contribute to peacebuilding in countries scarred by armed conflict. With that in mind, the authors of this research are interested in the daily lives of women in post-war Bosnia and Nepal. In particular, how do they understand “peace,” and what barriers might be preventing the realization of peace in their lives even in the context of various formal peacebuilding efforts enacted in these countries?

To explore these questions, the authors conducted interviews with women in Nepal and Bosnia in 2016. Both countries experienced post-Cold War armed conflicts, as well as an influx of international actors during these wars and after they ended. Accordingly, these countries are emblematic of formal international peacebuilding efforts, including recent attempts to make peacebuilding “gender-sensitive.” Nonetheless, the interviews revealed significant “gaps...between formal peacebuilding efforts and women’s everyday realities.” Five prominent barriers to peace emerged, common to the two cases: 1) economic insecurity, 2) “contested ‘truths’ about the war,” 3) the “privileg[ing] [of] the experience of some victims over others,” 4) ongoing violence (and/or effects of violence), and 5) continued “spatial” and “temporal” disruption to women’s lives.

The first barrier to peace for many women in these countries is persistent economic insecurity. In particular, women are concerned about older children who are unemployed, and many women also face hardship as widows. In Nepal, widows from higher castes have to contend with especially strict rules and stigma around widowhood, whereas those from lower castes generally face greater overall financial vulnerability. In Bosnia, state pensions for widows are insufficient—though those whose husbands’ bodies were never found face an additional challenge attaining these death benefits. Attention to economic insecurity suggests that international peacebuilding initiatives should prioritize everyday economic well-being, as many women feel they simply cannot participate in trauma healing or justice activities until their families’ economic needs are met.



### Continued reading:

Yazdani, M. & Bradshaw, J. (2019, January). Negotiating at the invisible peace table: Inclusion of women in informal peacebuilding processes. *Kroc Insight*. [http://catcher.sandiego.edu/items/peacestudies/19\\_KrocInsight\\_WPM\\_PDF\\_FNL.pdf](http://catcher.sandiego.edu/items/peacestudies/19_KrocInsight_WPM_PDF_FNL.pdf)

#### Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Krasnic, V. (2012, April II). Women of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Twenty years later. *Foreign Policy in Focus*. [https://fpif.org/women\\_of\\_bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina\\_twenty\\_years\\_later/](https://fpif.org/women_of_bosnia_and_herzegovina_twenty_years_later/)

Inclusive Security. (N.d.) Bosnian women reclaim peace. Retrieved on September 3, 2019, from <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/bosnian-women-after-srebrenica-massacre/#home>

#### Nepal:

Asian Development Bank. (2013, May). The role of women in peacebuilding in Nepal. Asian Development Bank. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/30271/role-women-peacebuilding-nepal.pdf>

Ramnarain, S. (2016, November 28). The gender dilemmas of community-based peacebuilding: A case study from post-conflict Nepal. *South Asia @ LSE Blog*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2016/11/28/the-gender-dilemmas-of-community-based-peacebuilding-a-case-study-from-post-conflict-nepal/>

Thapa, T. (2018). Transitional justice in Nepal. Retrieved on September 3, 2019, from <https://www.newsdeeply.com/peace-building/community/2018/06/15/transitional-justice-in-nepal>



### Organizations/Initiatives:

CURE Foundation:  
<http://www.fondacijacure.org/index.php>

Women for Peace and Democracy-Nepal:  
<http://www.wpdnepal.org.np/>

Second, even though “truth-telling” has become a “core principle of peacebuilding and transitional justice efforts,” helping create a common understanding about what happened during a war or other repressive period, neither Bosnia nor Nepal has achieved this ideal. Instead, due to shortcomings in the design or implementation of transitional justice institutions, debate over the reasons for these wars persists, as does uncertainty about the fates of individual loved ones. The latter problem results in women with missing husbands existing in a state of limbo where they lack a clear societal role (especially in Nepal where social norms and gender roles tend to be more rigid): neither fully wives nor widows, they do not have the closure they need to move on.

Third, a “hierarchy of victimhood”—privileging some kinds of victims over others in terms of recognition or resources—has also limited women’s ability to feel at peace. In Nepal, fear lingers about admitting “victim” status for those on the “wrong” side of the war. Additionally, widows of insurgents are not granted the same compensation as security force widows. In Bosnia, significant international attention paid to wartime rape victims means that women who did not experience wartime rape but did experience other horrors of war might be excluded from certain programs and benefits. Furthermore, international recognition of particular high-profile massacres but not others has left some victims feeling like their suffering has been minimized. These hierarchies of victimhood effectively create divisions between women, possibly preventing organizing on shared women’s issues and hindering peacebuilding efforts more generally.

Fourth, many women still experience violence—or the persistent effects of violence—even after the war is officially over. Most prominent is the existence of intimate partner violence in the wake of armed conflict—likely related to wartime trauma, the availability of weapons, and/or increased levels of alcohol/drug abuse on the part of spouses. In addition, women experience the lingering effects of violent trauma in their bodies and minds years after the wars ended.

Finally, dislocation—both spatial and temporal—makes it difficult for women to find peace. In Bosnia, the war displaced almost half the population, meaning that families are now scattered across the country or the world, creating an inescapable emptiness for many women. In addition to displacement, Nepalese women also face “temporal dislocation,” the sense that their life plans—for education and professions—were disrupted by the war, never to be fully recovered, especially for lower-class women.

Although these barriers demonstrate the continuum of violence and insecurity in women’s lives “between wartime and peacetime,” women in both countries have also developed innovative ways of building peace in their daily lives—whether through cultivating beauty and normalcy in their homes to overcome wartime grief or through creating women-only spaces for building solidarity and healing by sharing wartime experiences, often with women from opposing sides.

## TALKING POINTS

In the context of women's experiences in post-war Nepal and Bosnia,

- Five prominent barriers to peace emerged: 1) economic insecurity, 2) “contested ‘truths’ about the war,” 3) the “privileg[ing] [of] the experience of some victims over others,” 4) ongoing violence (and/or effects of violence), and 5) disruption to women's lives.
- Barriers to peace affect different women differently, depending on their wartime experiences and their various identities, with more marginalized women “often feel[ing] these barriers most acutely.”
- Women find innovative ways to build peace in their daily lives, significantly supplementing formal peacebuilding initiatives.



Photo Credit: UN Women/Gaganjit Singh  
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)  
Mahendri Jadav from Vrindavan shares her struggles as a widow with the women from Nepal and Sri Lanka. Block Aspur, district Dungarpur, Rajasthan.

## INFORMING PRACTICE

This research, along with other work by feminist scholars, serves as a useful reminder that there is a continuum of violence in women's lives not adequately captured in the distinction between war and peace. Even if a peace agreement has been signed and fighters are being demobilized, this does not necessarily mean "peace" has arrived. Ultimately, the only meaningful way to determine whether peace has emerged is to ask those living in the society in question whether their lives are peaceful. These findings from Nepal and Bosnia resonate with thinking on human security, an approach that understands security as being most salient at the individual level and as comprising more than just military threats. Rather, an individual can experience a range of different threats, from inadequate access to food or healthcare to environmental hazards to direct violence against one's person. The particular positioning of women in post-war societies means that they are vulnerable in specific ways to many of these forms of insecurity. Not only are these forms of insecurity themselves important to address, but they also influence women's ability to participate meaningfully or at all in many of the formal peacebuilding programs and mechanisms established by the international community. Whether due to economic insecurity or to the non-recognition of one's victim status, this inability to fully participate in formal peacebuilding initiatives has implications for the more traditionally conceived "peace" process.

For these reasons, international peacebuilding actors should be more attentive to the barriers to peace identified by women in specific post-war contexts while also supporting women's local peacebuilding activities, as these often supplement formal peacebuilding efforts in important ways that meet women's and broader communities' needs. Women, with their frequently shared identities as caretakers and mothers, are often able to find and build connections across other lines of difference in war and post-war contexts. International actors therefore need to see and recognize these informal, women-driven grassroots peacebuilding efforts—even if they are not named as such—as the crucially important endeavors they are, devoting resources accordingly. They should be valued as much as, if not more than, formal peace processes and peacebuilding initiatives, which may not have the reach and responsiveness of these grassroots efforts. At the same time, women's active participation in these informal spheres should not take attention away from the importance of their meaningful inclusion in formal processes, as well, where they are still underrepresented despite UN Security Council Resolution 1325<sup>1</sup> back in 2000—and where their ability to build these connections would add significantly to parties' ability to reach an agreement and make that agreement a smart and sustainable one.

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution passed in October 2000, which calls on member states to incorporate a "gender perspective," as well as to ensure full participation of women, in all aspects of UN peace and security efforts. See full text of UNSCR 1325 here: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

# Masculinities, Militarization, and Myth-Making in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Source | Duriesmith, D., & Holmes, G. (2019). The masculine logic of DDR and SSR in the Rwanda Defence Force. *Security Dialogue*, 50(4), 361-379.

## Keywords

Rwanda, DDR,  
SSR, masculinities,  
militarization, gender

**Masculinities:** qualities or attributes regarded as characteristics of men. The attribution of characteristics as male (as opposed to female) is socially constructed and informs the ways in which men are expected to behave in a specific cultural context. Masculinities are understood in relation to—and as opposed to—femininities, reinforcing a binary gender order where the former are often valued over the latter.

Despite adopting a gender perspective in its disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) programs following the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has emerged a deeply militarized and authoritarian state. When the Rwandan Defense Force (RDF) engaged in the process of state-building and reconciliation, they relied on myths of a Rwandan “gentleman soldier” and of “women as peacebuilders” to repatriate former combatants. Though the RDF seemingly adopted a gender-inclusive approach, these myths reconstructed a traditional gender order that failed to challenge militarization. The authors explore this dynamic by asking, “how has the implementation of a gender-inclusive DDR/SSR program in Rwanda shaped militarized masculinity?”

The authors analyzed government policy documents, training materials from the Rwandan Ministry of Defense, and work from Rwandan historian Frank Rusagara to better understand how masculinity and gendered myths were appropriated by the RDF. In addition, they conducted 65 in-person interviews with male and female soldiers and government officials to examine how these gendered myths were used within the Rwandan security institution.

Rebuilding the Rwandan state after its civil war and genocide in 1994 was no small task. In the following decades, Rwanda built a security infrastructure to implement DDR/SSR programs to “demilitarize citizens and former combatants; to transform military culture to serve the civilian nation-state; and to provide the structural conditions for enduring peace.” For example, the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) was created to implement DDR processes. A gender perspective was incorporated in these DDR processes to accommodate women’s needs in demobilization centers, provide community counseling for women, and develop gender-awareness training for staff. By 2007, the RDF and UN Women (the United Nations gender and equity arm) established a Gender Desk to incorporate a gender perspective into ongoing SSR programs.

Yet, as the authors note, “when formal DDR/SSR programs fail to break the association between manhood and militarism, they are rightly criticized

for failing to transform the conditions that led to violent conflict.” The RDF employed ancient myths, like “the process of Ku-aanda,” which saw pre-colonial Rwanda consolidated through military conquest, and the “militarized soldier-citizens at the center of developmental progress.” Ku-aanda ended during colonization but was reimagined in post-genocide Rwanda as a return to an older, non-European, militarized social order. This constituted a form of “masculinity nostalgia,” longing for a time of “patriarchal power, authority, and gender certainty”<sup>1</sup> when peace was achieved. Soldiers during this time period were mythologized as civilized and governed by a moral code—as “gentleman soldiers”—in contrast to ruthless colonial powers or genocidal Hutu extremists.



#### Continued reading:

USIP. (N.d.). What is UNSCR 1325? An explanation of the landmark resolution on Women, Peace, and Security. Retrieved September 2, 2019, from [https://www.usip.org/gender\\_peacebuilding/about\\_UNSCR\\_1325](https://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325)

WILPF. (2012, November 19). Feminism and militarization: Implementing Women, Peace, and Security. Retrieved September 2, 2019, from <https://www.peacewomen.org/e-news/feminism-and-militarization-implementing-women-peace-and-security>

Sjoberg, L, & Gentry, C. E. (2007). *Mothers, monsters, whores: Women's violence in global politics*. London: Zed Books. <https://www.amazon.com/Mothers-Monsters-Whores-Violence-Politics/dp/1842778668>

Gillard, Z. (2018, November 26). From pillars to progress in Women, Peace, and Security. Retrieved September 2, 2019, from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2018/11/26/from-pillars-to-progress-in-women-peace-and-security/>

While the idea of a “gentleman soldier” was developed to inform the behavior of men in post-genocide Rwanda, the idea of “women as peacebuilders” also took hold, drawing on pre-colonial myths and informing model behavior for women in the newly constructed militarized social order. This gender identity was carefully constructed to reject extreme misogyny and gender-based violence against women while simultaneously downplaying “women’s capacity to be assertive, violent, aggressive, defensive, or hyper-sexual.” Pre-colonial myths supported this effort in emphasizing women’s security. Blending more traditional peacebuilding activities with activities meant to support a militarized, masculine society, the “women as peacebuilders” identity prescribed roles in military support, logistics, medical care, and cultural rituals.

These gendered myths and roles were employed in three ways. First, in “*purifying*” all ex-combatants in re-education camps, which included courses on Rwandan history, politics, and society that reinforced the constructed gender norms of “gentleman soldiers” and “women as peacebuilders.” Second, in “*purging*” *special needs groups* from the RDF, like the 8,400 demobilized disabled servicemen who failed to live up to the myth of a strong, moral soldier-citizen. Third, in *re-establishing the conjugal order* that included a “prohibition of any form of sexual deviance,” including polygamy, intimate partner violence, or infidelity among RDF soldiers. This resulted in “policing” the personal lives of RDF soldiers, rejecting gender fluidity, and establishing the norm for heterosexual couples and monogamous families.

In conclusion, the authors find that while Rwanda’s DDR/SSR program included a gender perspective insofar as it took account of gendered security needs, the program nonetheless had a masculine logic that re-established a strict, militarized, and gendered social order.

1. MacKenzie, M., & Foster, A. (2017). Masculinity nostalgia: How war and occupation inspire a yearning for gender order. *Security dialogue*, 48(3), 206-223

## TALKING POINTS

In the context of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) programs in post-genocide Rwanda,

- Rwanda's DDR and SSR programs promoted masculinities that reinforced an association between manhood and military strength, resulting in the re-emergence of traditional gender norms in a militarized, post-genocide Rwanda.
- Certain gendered myths—like the “gentleman soldier” and “women as peacebuilders”—were used by the Rwandan Defense Forces to re-assert traditional gender roles.
- While Rwanda's DDR/SSR programs included a gender perspective, they employed a masculine logic that never challenged militarization, failing to dispel the association between manhood and military power.

Photo Credit: S. Moutzsis / USAID

Rwanda: Soldier Singing at the 'Club Anit-SIDA' Meeting: A group of soldiers at their 'Club Anti-SIDA' meeting practicing a song they have composed. These soldiers are part of the mobile units of the Rwandan military that patrol the Rwandan borders with Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. They have all had counseling and testing for HIV."



## INFORMING PRACTICE

Incorporating a gender perspective into disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) programs is a key part of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. Yet, it is often assumed that the inclusion of a gender perspective will contribute to a more equitable distribution of power between men and women, reconstruct gender roles in post-conflict contexts, and create a less militarized society. As this article rightly points out, few research studies have examined DDR/SSR programs with a gender perspective, tending to focus only on those that exclude one. Even fewer have examined whether or not a formally developed gender perspective in DDR/SSR leads to these outcomes.

This article is directly relevant to policy-making and peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries, particularly those interested in advancing the WPS agenda. The experience in Rwanda helps to demonstrate how gender norms, particularly masculinities, need to be challenged as part of an overall gender perspective on peace and security in order for the goals of the WPS agenda to be fulfilled. Gender is never “just” about women in society and being responsive to their needs, as important as that is. It’s a lens for understanding how all people operate in a society, including men and other gender identities. At its best, a gender perspective should critically identify and examine the ways in which particular gender norms reinforce militarism and even legitimize and enable armed conflict. DDR and SSR programs should aim to strengthen gender norms that break the traditional association between masculinities and military strength.

# Movement Violence Can Lead to a Decline in Public Support

Source | Muñoz, J., & Anduiza, E. (2019). "If a fight starts, watch the crowd": The effect of violence on popular support for social movements. *Journal of Peace Research*, 56(4), 485-498.

## Keywords

Spain,  
protest movements,  
nonviolent/civil  
resistance,  
nonviolence, riots,  
public support

The choice between violence and nonviolence is available to any protest movement. Opting to engage in violence is more costly to the movement because it increases the chance of state repression and also reinforces the claims of those who oppose the movement. The academic research on this topic shows that nonviolent movements are more successful in achieving their long-term goals, whether influencing policy or bringing about regime change. Many researchers theorize that broad-based public support for protest movements is instrumental to their success and that the use of violence may weaken this support.

The authors of this research were able to test the second half of this theory empirically by using survey data collected from May to June, 2016, in Barcelona, Spain. An unexpected riot erupted over the eviction of a squat group linked to the 15 May Movement—15-M or *indignados*. While this movement garnered high levels of support (upwards of 65% approval in Spain) at its conception, evidence from this article shows that support plummeted 12 percentage points following the violent riots in May 2016.

By 2010, Spain had one of the highest unemployment rates in Europe and particularly high youth unemployment at 43.5%. The government introduced economic reforms, which the labor unions rejected due to concerns that they infringed on workers' rights. This kickstarted a series of mostly nonviolent protests against the reforms. 15-M emerged out of this movement and started to occupy central squares of the country's largest cities. Shortly thereafter, the movement de-centralized, and a variety of local initiatives developed with similar political and socio-economic goals.

In Barcelona around this time, a group of people occupied and started a "free place project" in a former bank. Named *Banc Expropiat* (Expropriated Bank), this project rejected the idea of state or private property and used the space to host food banks, free shops, libraries, and a meeting spot for the local 15-M activists. The city government protected this space for a time, paying the owner of the building approximately \$70,000 in rent to avoid a political confrontation. This changed in January 2016 when the government stopped paying rent on the building. On May 23, 2016, Catalan police carried out an eviction order on *Banc Expropiat*. This resulted in a four-

**Continued reading:**

Fisher, M. (2013, November 5). Peaceful protest is much more effective than violence for toppling dictators. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/11/05/peaceful-protest-is-much-more-effective-than-violence-in-toppling-dictators/>

Peace Science Digest. (2017, September). How do “violent flanks” affect the outcomes of nonviolent campaigns? Retrieved September 5, 2019, from <https://peacesciencedigest.org/violent-flanks-affect-outcomes-nonviolent-campaigns/?highlight=non%20violent%20resistance>

Peace Science Digest. (2017, June). Nonviolent resistance and government repression. Retrieved September 5, 2019, from <https://peacesciencedigest.org/nonviolent-resistance-government-repression/?highlight=nonviolent%20resistance>

Peace Science Digest. (2019, March). Making civil resistance work against rightwing populism. Retrieved September 5, 2019, from <https://peacesciencedigest.org/making-civil-resistance-work-against-rightwing-populism/?highlight=non%20violent%20resistance>

Kolbert, E. (2017, February 27). Why facts don't change our minds. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/02/27/why-facts-dont-change-our-minds>

Singal, J. (2019, July 10). Researchers conducted six studies to investigate how best to challenge science deniers. *The British Psychological Society Research Digest*. Retrieved September 5, 2019, from <https://digest.bps.org.uk/2019/07/10/researchers-conducted-six-studies-to-investigate-how-best-to-challenge-science-deniers/>

**Organizations/Initiatives:**

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict: <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org>

Albert Einstein Institution: <https://www.aeinstein.org>

Nonviolent Action, United States Institute of Peace: <https://www.usip.org/issue-areas/nonviolent-action>

Metta Center for Nonviolence: <https://mettacenter.org/>

day-long riot in which dozens of police and protesters were wounded and property was destroyed.

It was a coincidence that the authors of this article were running a survey on support for 15-M in Barcelona at the time. Their survey yielded a total sample of 1,500 respondents who were older than 18, with balanced distribution by age, gender, and location across 73 neighborhoods. The authors separated the responses into two categories: those that took place before the riots and those that took place after, opting not to use responses taken during the time period the riots were taking place. Importantly, the authors sorted responses according to individuals' initial levels of support for 15-M, determined by their previous voting record in the 2015 general election: core supporters (those who voted for a pro-15-M party), weak supporters (those who voted for the center-left party), those who were indifferent (those who did not vote), and opposers (those who voted for center-right or right parties).

Across all categories, public support for 15-M dropped an average of 12 percentage points from before the riots to after the riots. When examining responses by levels of support based on respondent voting behavior, the authors found a significantly larger decline in support towards the movement among those in the “indifferent” (34-point drop), “weak supporters” (16-point drop), and “opposers” (13-point drop) categories. Those in the “core supporters” category did not express a significant decline in support for the movement as result of its violence.

The findings here demonstrate that the use of violence by protest movements can cause a decline in public support—but that this decline is conditional on individuals' predispositions towards the movement. To explain this, the authors suggest that core supporters are more receptive to the movement's justification for the use of violence. This suggestion is supported by research on how individuals select and process information. Namely, their predisposition toward the movement influences how they take in information about it, as people are more likely to expose themselves to (selective exposure), pay attention to (confirmation bias), and process (motivated reasoning theory) information that confirms their existing beliefs, ignoring or discrediting information that contradicts these.

## TALKING POINTS

In the context of the 15 May Movement (15-M) in Spain,

- In Barcelona, a four-day-long riot associated with 15-M led to an overall 12-point decline in public support for the movement.
- The decline in public support for the movement was conditional on individuals' predispositions towards the movement: while support declined significantly among weak supporters, opposers, and those indifferent to the movement, it did not decline significantly among core supporters.
- How individuals select and process information is important to understanding why levels of support dropped across all categories except core supporters—these individuals were more receptive to the movement's justification for the use of violence.

## INFORMING PRACTICE

Maintaining nonviolent discipline is not only a moral choice but also a strategically wise one for reaching a movement's goals. In particular, this research offers even more support for the claim—advanced by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan in *Why Civil Resistance Works*—that maintaining nonviolent discipline is key to sustaining the broad-based support critical to movement success. Protest movements risk losing public support by engaging in violence. However, they may not lose the support of their most ardent supporters. This produces some challenges for encouraging nonviolence if members are emboldened to act violently by their core supporters.

This dynamic has played out in the *Digest's* hometown of Portland, Oregon, where violent confrontations between far-right, white supremacist organizations and antifa periodically dominate news coverage. Core supporters of each movement believe in what they see as a justified use of violence and deploy recorded instances of the other side's violence to mobilize support. This is not to draw a false equivalency between the sides of this conflict. The far-right organizations advocate for a deeply racist, homophobic, and sexist ideology that is antithetical to a peaceful society. They frame themselves as victims of antifa violence, despite evidence of them instigating and/or seeking violent confrontations. Yet, this framing is effective in gaining support from a broader conservative audience, only reinforced by a tweet from U.S. President Donald Trump threatening to list antifa as a terrorist organization. Paired with a “fake news” crisis, which capitalizes on individuals' predispositions and the tendency to accept only information that confirms their existing beliefs, the result is an encroaching acceptance of violence and white supremacist ideology as a means of political expression. At the same time, applying insights from the present research to this context reveals that the choice of some antifa activists to respond violently to white supremacists may serve to diminish broad-based public support for anti-white supremacist/anti-fascist movements. While being against white supremacy is and should be an obviously easy position to take, antifa's violence may make otherwise sympathetic folks less likely to come out in the streets to join protests against white supremacy or be otherwise associated with them. Further, it gives other, less sympathetic people cover when making absurd comparisons between “both sides.” In the end, this possible loss of public support due to the use of violence will only weaken anti-racist/anti-fascist forces, making it harder to effectively achieve their goals.

# Limiting State Violence and Activist Violence in Nonviolent Resistance Struggles

Source | Bramsen, I. (2019). Avoiding violence: Eleven ways activists can confine violence in civil resistance campaigns.

*Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 36, 329-344.

## Keywords

nonviolent/civil resistance,  
nonviolence,  
nonviolent discipline,  
state violence,  
activist violence,  
Syria, Bahrain, Tunisia

It's a familiar story: A nonviolent movement emerges, vigorously resisting an unjust government who then attempts to portray movement activists as "terrorists" and responds with violent repression. Then, although this repression backfires, due to the clear contrast between the state's violence and the movement's nonviolence, and the movement gains momentum, some activists begin to argue that nonviolence has not "worked" and only violence will effectively protect the movement and/or bring about its goals. With the emergence of armed resistance, the state doubles down on its own violent response, secure now in its public assertions that it is merely "defending" the country from violent rebels or "terrorists." As the country descends into civil war—with both the state and the movement pointing to the other side's violence to justify their need to violently "defend" themselves—casualties mount, and the movement moves further from achieving its original goals.

What can be done to prevent this story from repeating itself—and, more specifically, to limit both state violence and movement violence in a predominantly nonviolent struggle? While the author of this research focuses on how activists can limit violence in a civil resistance struggle as opposed to how they can "win," the two objectives are clearly related—though perhaps in contradictory ways. In particular, state violence against a nonviolent movement can either increase or decrease the movement's chances of success, depending on whether it backfires, bringing more sympathy and support to the movement, or instead "discourage[s] or radicalize[s]" the movement over the long term, causing activists to either give up or arm themselves. Accordingly, the question of whether to try to limit state violence remains a "strategic decision" for activists to make in specific contexts, even if the author contends that limiting state violence is ultimately better for a nonviolent movement's success. With regards to activist violence, the picture is much clearer: according to Chenoweth and Stephan's groundbreaking research, nonviolent movements are more likely than violent movements to succeed, to result in sustainable, democratic outcomes, and to survive repression, therefore limiting activist violence—or, maintaining nonviolent discipline—is unequivocally better for a movement's success.

With these findings in mind, the author examines data gathered from 52 interviews with Bahraini, Tunisian, and Syrian "activists, journalists, and politicians" in 2015-2016, as well as interviews with civil resistance

experts. Five approaches for limiting state violence emerge. Nonviolent activists can:

### Continued reading:

Chenoweth, E., & Stephan, M. J. (2014, July/August). Drop your weapons. *Foreign Affairs*. [http://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Drop-Your-Weapons\\_Foreign-Affairs\\_Chenoweth+Stephan.pdf](http://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Drop-Your-Weapons_Foreign-Affairs_Chenoweth+Stephan.pdf)

Yee, V. (2019, August 20). What 'victory' looks like: A journey through shattered Syria. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/20/world/middleeast/syria-recovery-aleppo-douma.html?searchResultPosition=4>

Wallace, M. S. (2018). Standing "bare hands" against the Syrian regime: The turn to armed resistance and the question of civilian protection. *Critical Studies on Security*, 6(2), 237-258. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2017.1367359>

Bartkowski, M., & Kahf, M. (2013, September 23). The Syrian resistance: A tale of two struggles." Open Democracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/civilresistance/maciej-bartkowski-mohja-kahf/syrian-resistance-tale-of-two-struggles>

Perkoski, E., & Chenoweth, E. (2018, April). Nonviolent resistance and prevention of mass killings during popular uprisings. International Center on Nonviolent Conflict. <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/nonviolent-resistance-and-prevention-of-mass-killings-perkoski-chenoweth-2018-icnc.pdf>

Peace Science Digest. (2017, June). Special issue: Nonviolent resistance. Retrieved September 24, 2019, from <https://peace-sciencedigest.org/special-issue-nonviolent-resistance/>

### Organizations/Initiatives:

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict: [www.nonviolent-conflict.org](http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org)

1) *Disrupt violent action* by “challeng[ing] [its] ‘script’” through confusing, unexpected, and/or humorous actions to which security forces do not know how to respond.

2) *Construct dilemma situations* where using violence would make governmental forces look “silly or powerless.”

3) *Avoid direct confrontation* with security forces, especially in those cases where directly influencing security force behavior is difficult, by choosing methods of resistance that are more dispersed or make it otherwise hard to target activists, such as stay-home strikes or “lightening” protests.

4) *Invite unarmed civilian peacekeepers* or other prominent foreigners to be present at demonstrations to deter violence or otherwise influence security force behavior, especially if these peacekeepers come from countries with close ties to the government.

5) *Demonstrate respect for an opponent group and their traditions* by acting in symbolically potent ways that can gain that group’s sympathy but also make it harder for security forces to use violence.

To limit activist violence, which itself is a method for limiting state violence, the author finds that movement leaders can:

1) *Delegitimize violence* through various mechanisms like nonviolence pledges and speeches and/or leaflets declaring the movement’s nonviolent principles.

2) *Be deliberate about material resources* made available to activists during actions, as these objects—whether flowers or bottles—will partly determine what kind of behavior is possible vis-à-vis security forces when interactions escalate.

3) *Conscientiously manage activists’ emotions* like fear and anger that can quickly turn to violence, especially immediately after traumatic events like state violence, whether this means taking time and creating space to grieve or holding an action that is deliberately silent.

4) *Provide activists with tangible nonviolent alternatives for resistance.*

5) Help activists *develop nonviolent practice* by prioritizing nonviolence trainings that can build an embodied habit of nonviolent responses to specific—often violent—situations.

6) *Enhance the nonviolent movement’s cohesion and develop its organizational structure* by encouraging mass actions, creating common symbols, building on already-existing institutions, and so on, as fragmented movements will be more likely to have violent factions.

By employing these tactics for limiting both state violence and activist violence in predominantly nonviolent resistance movements, activists can not only protect compatriots but also increase the chances that their movements will succeed, enabling them to bring about a more just socio-political order.

## TALKING POINTS

- Limiting both state violence and activist violence in the context of a civil resistance struggle is important to movement success.
- To limit state violence against a civil resistance movement, nonviolent activists should: 1) disrupt violent action through unexpected behaviors, 2) construct dilemma situations that make the use of violence appear silly or weak, 3) avoid direct confrontation with security forces, 4) invite civilian peacekeepers or other prominent foreigners, and 5) demonstrate respect for the opponent group and its traditions.
- To limit activist violence within a civil resistance movement, which can also help limit state violence against it, nonviolent activists should: 1) delegitimize violence, 2) be deliberate about the objects made available to activists during actions, 3) manage activists' emotions that could lead to violence, 4) provide nonviolent alternatives for resistance, 5) help activists develop nonviolent practice through nonviolence trainings, and 6) enhance movement cohesion.

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Protesters outside the Sudanese Embassy in London. Oct. 4, 2013

## INFORMING PRACTICE

More than eight years since the Arab Spring reached Syria, the Assad government is on the verge of militarily re-taking the last rebel stronghold in Idlib province. After about eight years of civil war, over half a million people are dead, 11 million are displaced, and the Assad regime is firmly entrenched—a far cry from activists' demands in early 2011. If there were ever a case to demonstrate that violence doesn't "work," from the perspective of either side, this is it. The government's violence against nonviolent activists initiated a cycle that escalated into civil war, and though this violent strategy may have nearly brought the government military victory, this victory is over a country in ruins with an aggrieved population afraid to speak freely, eight out of ten of whom live in poverty. The turn to violence on the part of the resistance—a decision made by some several months into the uprising that violence was needed to protect the nonviolent movement from the state's violent repression—grew into a many-pronged armed insurgency and ultimately contributed to the escalation to civil war, which massively increased civilian casualties and in the end has not achieved the objectives of the resistance. From even a purely pragmatic perspective, it is worth noting that nonviolence is often abandoned after a few months of "not working," whereas violence is given years and years to "work"—and often with disastrous consequences, both for human lives and for the desired objectives.

This research is extremely valuable in that it provides activists with tools to prevent a similar escalatory spiral from transpiring in other contexts, thereby giving a nonviolent movement its best chances of success. While the author's recommendations for limiting and countering state violence are useful for thinking through specific movement tactics vis-à-vis security forces, her recommendations for limiting activist violence are perhaps even more fundamental to a movement's organizing. Prior to decisions about specific tactics that will make it more difficult for the state to use violence, a movement needs to put significant thought into how it is going to establish and promulgate its identity, principles, and organizational structure in a way that best supports the maintenance of nonviolent discipline.

As the author notes, nonviolent discipline is itself a strong factor in limiting state violence, as a government—and particularly the security forces carrying out its orders—find(s) it much easier to use violent repression if it can credibly claim to do so in self-defense to protect the country and its citizens from "armed rebels" or "terrorists." (Though it is important to add that governments still do often carry out violent repression even against completely nonviolent movements.) Therefore, movement leaders should consider cultivating an ethos where nonviolence is an essential—and publicized—part of the movement's identity and an embodied practice that becomes second nature for activists, even under the most repressive conditions. Doing so may be a considerable challenge, however, given how closely both "resistance" and "protection" are tied to violence in common-sense thinking. Movement leaders must therefore honor activists' need to respond vigorously to acts of state violence as a matter of self-respect and out of concern for security, while also ensuring that such impulses are channeled into tangible and effective nonviolent alternatives. While it is crucial that they inform activists about recent research demonstrating the overwhelmingly better prospects of nonviolent resistance for both movement success and protection, movement leaders also should not depend solely on rational arguments to convince activists of the requirement for nonviolence. They should also understand—and identify actions that fulfill—the emotional needs of their fellow activists, who may not be influenced by appeals to reason alone. For instance, actions like throwing paint balloons (instead of, say, stones) at security forces in Bahrain, the author notes, provide immediate satisfaction to activists who can see for themselves—and make known to others—the impact of their resistance, through their village's color marked on a police vehicle. This is of course just one example, but the larger point is that more thought needs to be devoted to developing tactics that will meet activists' need for real agency against impossibly cruel circumstances, while also challenging false assumptions about the greater effectiveness of violence. Doing so can ultimately mean the prevention of civil war and a better chance at achieving the goals of the nonviolent movement.

# Beyond Armed Conflict: Exploring Broader Understandings of Reconciliation in Colombia

Source | Oettler, A., & Rettberg, A. (2019). Varieties of reconciliation in violent contexts: Lessons from Colombia. *Peacebuilding*, 7(3), 329-352.

## Keywords

reconciliation,  
armed conflict, violence,  
Colombia,  
combatants, attitudes,  
peace, civil war, post-war

In 2016, the government of Colombia signed a peace deal with FARC, the most prominent armed group from the country's previous half-century of civil war. Although the peace agreement was promptly rejected in a referendum—largely due to the perception that it let off former combatants too easily—it was then redrafted and approved by the legislature. While reconciliation between civilians and former combatants remains a central concern, the authors of this research wish to unsettle and expand upon traditional notions of reconciliation. In particular, they contend that existing research on reconciliation has not paid enough attention to forms of violence not directly related to armed conflict. They are keen to examine, therefore, what reconciliation means to Colombians and what factors shape these understandings of reconciliation.

The authors start by discussing the contested concept of reconciliation, which, despite debates in the field, can be broadly described as an overarching process and/or outcome where mutual acceptance, trust, and peaceful relations develop across societal divisions. Instead of arriving at a precise definition of reconciliation, however, the authors are more interested in exploring different understandings of the term on the ground in Colombia.

The authors present their findings from two studies, one quantitative and one qualitative. The first consists of survey results from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), from which they have data for Colombia for 2004-2016 (but mostly focus on results for 2016), with additional data from particularly “conflict-affected rural areas” for 2015 and 2017. Questions elicited views on the prospects for reconciliation with former combatants, what the country's main problems are, what kinds of activities would foster reconciliation, and whether respondents would be willing to have former combatants as neighbors or colleagues. The survey also asked for respondents' victim status and other demographic information. Key findings from their analysis include fairly evenly split views on the possibility of reconciliation with former combatants and variation on both which activities would foster reconciliation and how willing respondents would be to come into close contact with former combatants. Responses varied in some cases according to gender, income, education level, and/or region. Of



### Continued reading:

Daniels, J. P. (2018, August 23). Colombian activists face “extermination” by criminal gangs. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/23/colombian-activists-face-extermination-by-criminal-gangs>

Janetsky, M. (2019, September 8). How to keep the Colombian peace deal alive. *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/08/how-to-keep-the-colombian-peace-deal-alive-farc-duque-uribe-colombia/>

Camargo, R. (2019, April 12). Former FARC combatants face their pasts. *NACLA*. <https://nacla.org/news/2019/04/12/former-farc-combatants-face-their-pasts>

Daly, S. K. (2017, April 21). 7,000 FARC rebels are demobilizing in Colombia. But where do they go next? *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/04/21/7000-farc-rebels-are-demobilizing-in-colombia-but-where-do-they-go-next/?noredirect=on>

Isacson, A. (2019, September 3). To save Colombia’s peace process, prove the extremists wrong. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/03/opinion/international-world/colombia-farc-peace.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pg-type=Homepage>

particular note is the fact that respondents from conflict-affected regions were more positive about the prospects for reconciliation with former combatants than respondents from other regions. Additionally, responses to the question on problems facing Colombia indicated a broad distribution of concerns, including but beyond the armed conflict, similar to those prominent elsewhere in Latin America. One drawback noted with this quantitative study was its narrow conceptualization of reconciliation, as well as researchers’ inability to know exactly how respondents were themselves conceptualizing “reconciliation” in their responses.

The second (qualitative) study consisted of focus groups with 38 university students from Bogotá, Colombia, in 2017 exploring how they think about reconciliation, as well as the violence to which it is a response. What emerged from these discussions was a complex and “multi-layered understanding of reconciliation” focused not just on the legacies of armed conflict but also on other tensions and challenges, including gender relations, cultural difference, and ongoing drug-trade-related insecurity. These highlight the difficulty of pursuing reconciliation when there are existing forms of insecurity that make it hard, if not impossible, to build connections with people one does not trust. Discussants also rejected a clear distinction between “victim” and “perpetrator,” foregrounding instead the concept of “complex actors”—individuals who may be both at the same time. Similarly, reconciliation should be based on the recognition that “we are not absolutely good nor absolutely bad” and requires a willingness to be compassionate towards former combatants and to recognize their ability to change. Although the focus of discussions was mainly on intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of reconciliation, these were seen to be linked to broader societal issues related to reconciliation, including collective memory and the development of an inclusive collective/national identity.

While both the quantitative study and qualitative study point to variation in people’s ideas about reconciliation, the former emphasizes the schism between civilian communities and former combatants, whereas the latter complicates this dividing line and moves beyond it. Together, the two studies suggest the need for a broader understanding of reconciliation that can include settings of chronic violence and societal schisms beyond armed conflict, addressing “broader social relations at different levels.” Accordingly, scholars should attend more to the various meanings attached to reconciliation in different contexts in order to better inform policy-making that can actually address this full range of concerns.

## TALKING POINTS

In the context of surveys and focus groups conducted in contemporary Colombia,

- There are fairly evenly split views on the possibility of reconciliation with former combatants, as well as varied opinions (sometimes along gender, income, education level, and/or regional lines) on which activities would foster reconciliation and how willing respondents would be to come into close contact with former combatants.
- Focus group participants hold a complex and “multi-layered understanding of reconciliation” involving not just the legacies of armed conflict but also other tensions and challenges, such as gender relations, cultural difference, and ongoing insecurity linked to the drug trade.
- Rejecting a clear distinction between “victim” and “perpetrator” categories, some focus group participants indicate that reconciliation requires a recognition that “we are not absolutely good nor absolutely bad,” as well as a willingness to be compassionate towards former combatants and to recognize their ability to change.
- There is a need for a broader understanding of reconciliation that can include settings of chronic violence and societal schisms beyond armed conflict, addressing “broader social relations at different levels.”

Photo Credit: UN Women  
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 Colombia - Growing coffee, sowing peace  
 For Cielo Gomez, every day is a work day, starting with a coffee at 5:30 am. A mother of three, a wife, and now a coffee grower with her own land, it's a labour of love. Gomez and her family live in the municipality of El Tablón de Gómez, in the southeast of Nariño territory, Colombia. The municipality is known for its coffee and scarred by decades of conflict between the Colombian guerillas, army and the paramilitary forces. Its most recent claim to fame is successful land restitution to farmers, with 562 families being part of the programme and 198 restitution sentences implemented since 2013.

## INFORMING PRACTICE

A few years after the signing of a peace deal between the government of Colombia and the FARC, the country is still coming to terms with its past and the massive toll the armed conflict has taken on its citizens. Additionally, a recent announcement by a former FARC commander about returning to armed conflict—itsself a response to the Colombian government's slow pace implementing key aspects of the peace agreement—only underscores the fragility of the peace agreement and the challenges that lie ahead. With thousands of demobilized combatants reintegrating into society, reconciliation between former combatants and local civilians who must now live together certainly remains a priority. But focusing on this divide alone fails to grasp the importance of other divides and insecurities experienced by Colombians in their everyday lives. Reifying this divide also makes it harder to see how these categories—"civilian" and "combatant," "victim" and "perpetrator"—are not as straightforward as they might seem. Instead, those working on the challenge of reconciliation in Colombia and other contexts must attend to the understandings and needs of those most affected by multiple intersecting forms of violence and societal schisms. Instead of designing reconciliation processes around preconceived ideas about who the "sides" are, concerned actors should inquire into the perspectives of those on the ground to see what reconciliation means to them and whom these processes should involve, with the understanding that people who are differently positioned in society and who have different identities will have different experiences and priorities when it comes to violence and reconciliation. On a related note, this research helps us notice the need for reconciliation in myriad settings, including in those countries—like the United States—that are deeply divided even if they have not recently experienced armed conflict within their borders.



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<h2>OUR VISION</h2>	<p>Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.</p>
<h2>OUR MISSION</h2>	<p>Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.</p>
<h2>OUR CORE VALUES</h2>	<p>Nonviolence – We promote strategic and principled nonviolent solutions over any kind of armed conflict.</p> <p>Empathy – We view social problems through the eyes of others and respectfully communicate with each other in the pursuit of mutual understanding.</p> <p>Planetary loyalty – We consider ourselves global citizens, living in harmony with humanity and nature.</p> <p>Moral imagination – We strive for a moral perception of the world in that we: (1) imagine people in a web of relationships including their enemies; (2) foster the understanding of others as an opportunity rather than a threat; (3) pursue the creative process as the wellspring that feeds the building of peace; and (4) risk stepping into the unknown landscape beyond violence</p>
<h2 style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">AREAS OF FOCUS</h2>	<h2>WE SUPPORT</h2> <p>Support Rotary International’s focus on peace by aiding the Rotarian Action Group for Peace with human, logistical and content-related resources.</p> <p>Support development of effective strategies to convince Americans that the United States should not promote war, militarism or weapons proliferation, but rather embrace conflict resolution practices that have been shown to prevent, shorten, and eliminate war as viable alternatives to local, regional and global conflicts.</p> <p>Support building grassroots social movements seeking a world beyond war.</p>
	<h2>WE EDUCATE</h2> <p>Actively contribute to peace science and public scholarship on war prevention issues.</p> <p>Share information and resources with multiple constituencies in an understandable manner.</p> <p>Provide evidence-based information on peace and conflict issues with immediately potential doable policy advice to public policy makers.</p> <p>Advance the understanding and growth of the Global Peace System.</p>
	<h2>WE ENGAGE</h2> <p>Convene national and international experts in ongoing constructive dialog on war prevention issues via our Parkdale Peace Gatherings.</p> <p>Connect likely and unlikely allies to create new opportunities.</p> <p>Participate in peacebuilding networks and membership organizations.</p>
<h2>UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS</h2>	<p>We are at a stage in human history where we can say with confidence that there are better and more effective alternatives to war and violence.</p> <p>A Global Peace System is evolving.</p> <p>Poverty, employment, energy, education, the environment and other social and natural factors are interconnected in peacebuilding.</p> <p>Peace Science and Peace Education provide a path to a more just and peaceful world.</p> <p>Multi-track diplomacy offers a sectoral framework for creating peacebuilding opportunities</p>