RETHINKING POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Confronting Peace

Local Peacebuilding in the Wake of a National Peace Agreement

Edited by Susan H. Allen · Landon E. Hancock
Christopher Mitchell · Cécile Mouly

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Rethinking Political Violence

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Preface and Acknowledgments

We have been heartened by colleagues' growing interest in local peace and in the stages of conflict that come after peace agreements. Peace is built and experienced locally, shaping individual lives. And, conflict continues in the days and years after peace agreements are signed. Here, we turn our attention to both the local peace and the post-agreement phase. What is the experience of local peace communities, after agreements have been signed? Addressing this and related questions has been a team effort, involving all the authors whose work appears in this book, as well as many additional colleagues.

The editors would like to thank the Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution (formerly the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution) at George Mason University, and in particular the Center for Peacemaking Practice, for offering its facilities at Point of View in Virginia for the initial meeting that led to the idea of writing this book and for providing us with a small grant to make this meeting possible. Susan H. Allen would also like to thank the Carter School for her study leave, which enabled her to work on this edited volume, for funding her participation in a roundtable on the peace process in Colombia that took place in Quito, Ecuador, with the participation of various authors of this book, and for supporting research assistance by Michael Sweigert in the final stages of the manuscript production. Two members of the editorial team took advantage of this roundtable, supported by the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in Ecuador and the office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in the same country, to organize a meeting with contributors writing chapters on Colombia and to further discuss the

book. In addition to hosting the roundtable, Cécile Mouly would also like to thank FLACSO Ecuador for funding the research on Samaniego and her travel expenses to meet with other editors and some of the contributors at the conferences of the International Studies Association in Baltimore, San Francisco and Toronto.

Needless to say, this volume would not have seen the light of day without the support and contributions of all the authors. We are grateful to them for their commitment and for accommodating to our requests. Many of them conducted fieldwork to write their chapter and bring significant insights into how local communities and peacebuilding initiatives have confronted the signing of peace at a national level in their respective country. Additionally, we would like to express our gratitude to Pedro Valenzuela for translating Esperanza Hernández's chapter into English.

Importantly, we would like to thank all the people of the communities or peacebuilding initiatives studied, who took the time to share their experiences with the authors and made this book possible. We are greatly indebted to them and hope that this volume can contribute to making their peacebuilding efforts more visible and helping them to obtain greater support.

Finally, we would like to thank our families for putting up with us during our work on this collection Sarah Roughley and Rebecca Roberts, our editors at Palgrave Macmillan, for their guidance throughout the process.

Susan H. Allen — Arlington, VA
Landon E. Hancock — Kent, OH
Christopher Mitchell — Arlington, VA
Cécile Mouly — Quito, Ecuador

Praise for *Confronting Peace*

"The wider field of peace and conflict studies has long confronted the challenge of ending wars. After thirty years of research tracking negotiations, mediation and agreements, perhaps nothing is more urgent than better understanding of the realities captured in this book. The challenge of confronting peace. The authors and the approach give the volume a deep legitimacy, as the key in this effort requires us to understand the specific processes and innovations needed to bolster and face the many faceted developments that emerge in the aftermath of peace processes and accords. These reflections, research and proposed recommendations offer empirical evidence and grounded learning for improving the chances that social and political transitions can offer both the hope of ending war and of solidifying the changes needed to sustain a more robust peace."

—John Paul Lederach, *Professor Emeritus, University of Notre Dame, USA*

"This fourth in a series of studies on the relationship between national and local level peacebuilding strategies is fundamental reading for scholars interested in what happens at the local level after a national peace agreement has been signed. A diverse group of pracademics in the peace sector from around the world reflect on how the problems that arise from national level peace differ from those confronting local communities. The editors provide a carefully cogent analysis of the case studies presented in order to give readers a highly applied, thorough and useful guide to the challenges and possibilities available to local actors in a post-agreement context."

—Pamina Firchow, *Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution and Coexistence at Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management, USA*

"This book, with its impressive weaving together of peace practice and research, points to a potential new wave in conflict analysis and engagement—*making peace with conflict*. That is, as the case studies in this book amply illustrate, "post" conflict peacemaking is rarely about the end of conflict. Rather, as illustrated in two main "negative" case studies, where peace agreements have so far failed to hold (in Colombia and the Philippines) and other cases of failed peace, seeking and pursuing peace in the face of ongoing conflict is about the daily engagement and commitment of local communities. This is a brave text about the benefits and perils if peace."

—Jay Rothman, *President, the ARIA Group, USA and Israel*

Contents

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Susan H. Allen is Director of the Center for Peacemaking Practice at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University, USA, where she is an associate professor teaching action research, reflective practice, evaluation and other ways of blending research and practice in the conflict resolution field. Allen holds an M.S. and Ph.D. from the same institution in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Karen Bustos holds an M.Sc. in International Relations from FLACSO Ecuador, where she is a member of the research group on peace and conflict. By training she is a lawyer, a specialist in human rights with experience in issues related to peace and conflict, especially regarding victims of armed conflict. She has taught undergraduate courses on the theory of the state and undertaken consulting for, among others, the Victims Unit (*Unidad para las Víctimas*) in Colombia and for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Didier Giraldo Hernández holds a Bachelor's Degree in Basic Education with a concentration in artistic and cultural education from the University of Antioquia, Colombia (2010). He was a music advocate at the Granada Culture House from 1996 to 2015. He is a teacher of Art and Technology in the Department of Antioquia at the Jorge Alberto Gómez Gómez Educational Institute in the municipality of Granada.

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Luis Mario Gómez Aristizábal is a graduate of the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia, where he studied philosophy and literature. He was Director of the Granada House of Culture from 1982 to 2017. He played a role in the creation of the "Union for Granada" movement, served as a councilman and has also been a newspaper columnist. In light of his work, he was awarded the Father Clemente Giraldo civic merit medal for his contribution to the development of the municipality of Granada, Department of Antioquia.

Landon E. Hancock is a professor at Kent State University's School of Peace and Conflict Studies, USA, and affiliated faculty at Kyung Hee University's Graduate Institute of Peace Studies, South Korea, and the Program for the Prevention of Mass Violence at George Mason University's Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, USA. His research focuses on the role of ethnicity and identity in conflict generation, dynamics, resolution and post-conflict efforts in transitional justice. This is coupled with an interest in grassroots peacebuilding, zones of peace and the role of agency in the success or failure of peacebuilding efforts. He is the co-editor (with Christopher Mitchell) of *Zones of Peace* (2007), *Local Peacebuilding and National Peace* (2012) and *Local Peacebuilding and Legitimacy* (2018). His articles have appeared in numerous journals including *Peacebuilding*, *National Identities*, *Ethnopolitics*, *Peace & Change* and *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*.

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Christopher Mitchell has held academic positions at University College, London, the London School of Economics, and in the Department of Systems Science at the City University, London, where he became Professor of International Relations in 1983. He joined George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution in 1988 and is Emeritus Professor of Conflict Research at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution there. He continues to work on practical and theoretical aspects of peace making, and has written books and articles on conflict resolution, on the theory of entrapment, on ending asymmetric conflicts and on a multi-role model of mediation. He has recently co-edited three books about grassroots peacebuilding with Landon E. Hancock, the latest of which, *Local Peacebuilding and Legitimacy*, was published in Spring 2018. His retrospective text book, *The Nature of Intractable Conflict*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in December 2014 and in Spanish as *La Naturaleza de los Conflictos Intratables* (Edicions Bellaterra) in 2016.

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Introduction

Our very first foray into examining local peace in the late 1990s revealed a wide variety of peace "experiences" which could all be seen as a form of "institutionalized" conflict (see Mitchell and Nan 1997). This conception seemed to hold good whether local peace zones, communities or organizations were built from the top down, the bottom up or the outside in. Subsequent research produced three collections of studies seeking to understand better the creation and survival of local-level peacebuilding. The three studies in this series all aimed at dealing with different aspects of local peacebuilding in what might, paradoxically, be termed "normal" abnormal circumstances—that is, when people in grassroots communities and associations were having to deal with an environment characterized by nation-wide violence, displacement, insecurity and death. The first book dealt generally with various examples of a local search for sanctuary—for safety and security in conditions of civil war (see Hancock and Mitchell 2007). The second was more concerned with linkages between local peace initiatives—what Mary Anderson and her colleagues (2013) refer to as "peace writ little"—and national-level peacemaking efforts, together with the manner in which these efforts reinforced (or worked against) one another (see Mitchell and Hancock 2012). The third set considered various ways in which the different actors in intra-state conflicts—insurgents, incumbents and interveners of various sorts—achieved some level of legitimacy that enabled them to carry on with their efforts, constructive or destructive (see Hancock and Mitchell 2018).

By contrast, this present collection focuses on local peace communities and organizations when they find themselves in the aftermath of a negotiated national "peace" agreement, when major combatants have—finally—managed to hammer out an often fragile deal and people at the grassroots have to try to make many of the terms of that agreement "work" at a local level. In other words, local communities and organizations find themselves confronting "peace" and the aftermath of widespread violence and destruction. They do this while—theoretically—enjoying the support of, and resources supplied by, national or regional governments, or by international supporters. However, more often, local communities have to rely upon their own efforts, initiative and resources, with the last often being in very limited supply.

Hence, the chapters in this book are very much focused on the problems of "peace." They examine how local peace communities have fared in the aftermath of an often long drawn-out, intra-state struggle usually characterized by a widespread violence that is difficult to draw to an end. The context thus involves widespread damage—both physical and psychological—that is difficult to forget, let alone forgive; widespread mistrust and an unwillingness to compromise on all sides. Often, the issues in contention underlying the struggle have not been completely resolved and the danger of a rapid re-ignition of the conflict remains high. New problems have to be faced, old issues—safety and insecurity—emerge in new forms and constant dilemmas—development and unemployment—remain to be faced and even increase in complexity. At the local level these complexities of peace often seem to be no less than those arising from civil war.

Moreover, the authors of the following chapters have themselves faced considerable analytical problems in trying to deal with this focus of local peace communities in times of "national peace" and in trying to suggest some general lessons by comparing cases of local, post-agreement peacebuilding efforts from different countries. However, our shared central theme was initially rather straightforward: What obstacles and opportunities confront local peace communities and organizations—and their previous grassroots initiatives—once some form of national peace has more or less been achieved?

The book, then, is divided into two main sections, together with this introductory chapter and a concluding one highlighting any common lessons we think we may have discovered from our case studies. In this book we feel that the term *post-conflict* peacebuilding is rather misleading. This term is largely focused on top-down, "partial" peace, arranged (or

misarranged) by some kind of a "deal" at the elite level between state agents and the commanders of at least some of the insurgent organizations. Moreover, it suggests that the conflict is ended and that it has been finally resolved, which is often far from the situation on the ground. In most of the cases discussed in this book, an agreement may have resulted in diminished violence (or it may not) but the conflict often continues in some modified form. Hence, in the following chapters, we highlight the challenges and possibilities of addressing ongoing conflict issues in the *post-agreement* phase of conflict.

Following this brief introductory chapter, in the following one (Chap. 1) I begin by outlining some shared analytical dilemmas. These include asking what exactly is meant by a national "peace" agreement following a protracted intra-state conflict, and how does the nature of this peace affect local communities, especially those who may have already established their own form of peace in their own locality. We then look at the effects of previous—often failed—peace agreements on local communities and then at the latter's actual experience of violence and instability. We then return to issues likely to arise in a post-agreement period. Finally, we present the framework of questions posed to the authors of the chapters.

The chapters that follow in the first major section of the book are all addressed to the recent peacebuilding experiences of local communities in Colombia. Since the conclusion of the Havana Agreement at the end of 2016, local communities there have been dealing with and reacting to the effects of a national peace agreement negotiated between the Colombian government and the leaders of one major insurgent movement, the FARC. Some of these peace communities are organized on a regional basis, while others have arisen to promote local peace, security and development in often remote municipalities. Esperanza Hernández Delgado in Chap. 2 thus describes the impact of the "Women Weavers of Life" throughout a large swathe of Putumayo in the south west of the country, while Mery Rodríguez and Fernando Sarmiento's chapter (Chap. 3) takes up the study of the Development and Peace Program in the Magdalena Medio region, and examines the effects of the Havana peace accord on this longstanding peace organization based in communities along the River Magdalena. In Chap. 4, Ana Isabel Rodríguez Iglesias, Noah Rosen and Juan Masullo focus on the impact of the 2016 partial peace agreement on ethnic communities in Chocó through their study of the "Humanitarian Agreement Now" movement and its activities, both before and after the Havana accord.

The next three chapters examine the challenges posed by the Government-FARC peace deal on three municipalities, and the way in which local people have had to adapt to new circumstances within those communities. Cécile Mouly and Karen Bustos in Chap. 5 deal with the hopes and fears of local dwellers in the municipality of Samaniego in Nariño, while Camilo Pardo-Herrera and Raquel Victorino in Chap. 6 survey the problems faced by local people in Policarpa, a municipality also in Nariño, which has suffered from prolonged state neglect and an extended period of guerrilla presence. In both communities they find doubts about whether any genuine form of stable peace has been achieved. Chapter 7 by Laura Villanueva, Claudia Giraldo, Luis Mario Gómez Aristizábal and Didier Giraldo Hernández is more up-beat. Their study of Granada in Antioquia focuses on the various initiatives that local groups and individuals have undertaken to restore infrastructure, education and, most importantly, relationships in this hard-hit part of the country.

In the second major section of the book, the focus switches from the effects of national peace on local peacebuilding in Colombia to a wider consideration of how local communities in other countries have coped with the demands of peace implementation once an elite agreement has been concluded. Paul van Tongeren's comprehensive survey of local peace committees (LPCs) in five African countries in Chap. 8 sets the scene for three subsequent case studies on peacebuilding processes in specific countries. Van Tongeren's comparative survey involves an examination of LPCs in South Africa, the DRC, Sudan, Kenya and Burundi, drawing interesting comparisons from seemingly very diverse examples of connections between national peacemaking and local peacebuilding. René Claude Niyonkuru and Réginas Ndayiragije in Chap. 9 extend the analysis by a detailed and up-to-date evaluation of local peacebuilding in Burundi, and ask the question: Whose version of peace will prevail in that strife-torn country, and with what result? The last two case studies in the book focus on the long drawn-out struggle in the south of the Philippines and the impact of the equally long drawn-out peace process between the government there and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Wendy Kroeker and Myla Leguro in Chap. 10 examine the efforts of local religious leaders in Mindanao to bring together their followers into a less contentious relationship. Megumi Kagawa, in contrast, in Chap. 11 focuses directly on the challenges the National Peace Agreement presents to locally negotiated deals in two communities where security had previously been in the hands

of the MILF insurgents, but which at some not-too-distant time would have to be handed on to the state.

All of these different chapters present a variety of insights and lessons for scholars and analysts interested in long-term peacebuilding, "from the ground up." The book concludes with a chapter (Chap. 12) by Landon E. Hancock and Susan H. Allen, seeking to distill from very different experiences guidelines that might emerge for local leaders seeking to cope with problems of peace. The one thing it initially seems safe to say is that whatever might be the problems of trying to maintain safety and security in the midst of an intra-state war involving widespread violence, those confronting local leaders in the immediate aftermath of any negotiated peace are equally complex and difficult, if possibly a trifle less dangerous. The book is an effort to throw light on the nature of such problems and—hopefully—suggest some practical solutions.

Christopher Mitchell

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CHAPTER 1

The Problems Peace Can Bring

Christopher Mitchell

"Post-War"

One familiar type of protracted conflict, *inter-state* or *transnational* wars, seldom end neatly on a specified date.[1] In many cases, if one examines the "ending of the conflict" in detail, there is often no clear dividing line between "during the war" and "after the war". Often there is a long "gray" period between the ending of open warfare or organized mass violence on the one hand, and a widespread, stable "peace", even if the latter only exists in the sense that violence, damage, and danger stop being a serious threat to "getting back to normal". In this gray area, peace is being worked out as the various communities deal with the problems and opportunities presented by the new situation. Those involved must cope with changed relationships brought about by the conclusion of a peace

[1] Even the Second World War did not end neatly on May 6, 1945, in Europe or on August 8 in Asia. In many parts of the world, large-scale fighting continued for some time—in Greece the civil was lasted until 1948 while in China the violent stage of the Nationalist-Communist struggle only ended in 1949 with the collapse of Kuomintang.

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agreement, even if the latter is only an armistice, anticipating a later negotiated peace treaty.

If this is true of *inter-state* wars, it is even more true of protracted *intra-state* wars, the conflicts that typify the post-Cold War world of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.[2] Many of these conflicts involve long struggles over intractable issues that often appear to devolve into questions of survival. They are also asymmetric in the sense that one side usually controls the apparatus of the state, perhaps with the support of a majority community, but the other has enough support and resources to keep on with the struggle, despite setbacks and defeats. Sometimes, the incumbents win, as in the case of the Sri Lankan Government's final defeat of the secessionist LTTE in 2009, and an uneasy, one sided "after the war" descends upon the country. More rarely, the insurgents succeed in their objectives and face a complex post-conflict situation. On many other occasions, a national-level compromise agreement is painfully negotiated by the adversaries and some kind of peace is achieved at a national level—El Salvador or Guatemala in the 1990s—or at least throughout the regions that have seen continuing violence and disruption—Northern Ireland following 30 years of "the Troubles" terminating in the "Good Friday" 1998 Agreement.

Alternative Forms of National "Peace"

The major question with which we are concerned in this volume is what effects do the achievement of a negotiated, national peace have upon those grassroots communities and organizations that have already been working for some form of peace at a local level. Answering this question clearly poses some major conceptual difficulties, one of which involves the rather vague use of the term "national level peace" in describing many recent conflicts that have come to some kind of ending.

For a start, there is the question of phases. A national "peace" can describe at least three sets of circumstances which, at different time periods, can affect local communities in a country that has been suffering from a protracted civil war, long revolutionary struggle, or protracted secessionist movement:

[2] According to the UCDP/PRIO data set, during the immediate Post-Cold War period, which witnessed the most widespread armed conflict of all the post-1945 era, of all the 121 ongoing conflicts between 1989 and 2005, 97 were intra-state struggles (Harbom et al. 2006).

- A post-agreement *transition* phase in which the provisions of the agreement regarding the central issues in conflict and the behavior of the adversaries has to be modified in line with the terms of the agreement in the short term and throughout the country.
- A *normalization* phase during which new relationships have to be built up and tested, new institutions put into place, trust built up, and adversaries learn to coexist—or even cooperate—over the longer term.
- A post-conflict *consolidation* phase, during which any issues in contention are dealt with peacefully, widespread reconciliation occurs, and the idea of using violence as a means of attaining goals is not seen even as a remote possibility.[3]

While these phases often overlap, I would argue that it is the first of these—the post-agreement phase, which can, in fact, last a very long time—during which peace is most fragile and vulnerable, both at the national and at the local, grassroots level. In such circumstances, mistrust between erstwhile adversaries is at its height, the terms of the agreement are most open to alternative interpretation, opportunities for spoilers to undermine the implementation of key parts of the agreement are most prevalent, and tensions between the provisions of the national-level agreement and existing peace practices at the local or regional level are most likely to arise. In practical terms, local communities face huge problems of reconstruction—of homes, schools, clinics, roads, and bridges—as well as of livelihoods and relationships. Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) return and need to be reintegrated in often devastated communities. Rival combatants need somehow to be reintegrated into civilian life. Most importantly, minimal safety and security have to be re-established at both the national and local levels.

A whole range of such factors need to be taken into consideration in trying to answer questions about interactions between national- and local-level peacemaking and peacebuilding and the way in which they reinforce or undermine one another. At the very least, the basic issue of who is involved in the peace agreement—and who is left out—seems quite crucial to the list of problems a national agreement might bring to local

[3] This scheme echoes Paul Collier's three phases of: peace onset (approximately 2 years), post-conflict I and post-conflict II (4–5 years each), although many authors warn against assuming that linear progress through—say—a decade is the norm.

communities in a post-agreement phase. Does the national-level agreement involve all the combatants or merely some of them? If the "peace" involves leaving out major players in the conflict, rather than just the inevitable fringe "spoilers", what additional major problems does this impose at both the national level and upon local peace-seeking and peace implementing communities? Are we confronting a situation resembling the marginally supported and fairly impotent "Continuity IRA" rejecting the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, or one in which some really major players in the civil war consistently reject deals worked out with the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) in Monrovia?

Quite apart from the detailed terms of a nationally negotiated peace agreement, who is not included in the process seems crucial to the implementation problems likely to face local peace communities and organizations. We can suggest three alternative models:

1. A *bilateral* national peace agreement involving government incumbents and a single, unified insurgent organization and dealing with compromises on the major issues in contention. (The 1999 Lome Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone.)
2. A *multilateral* national peace agreement between the incumbent government and a coalition of insurgent organizations, sufficiently cohesive so as to be able to negotiate and implement a deal on behalf of all opposition forces. (The 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement between the Sudanese Government and the South Sudanese *Anyanya*.)
3. A *partial* national peace agreement, involving the incumbent government and one—or even several—of the insurgent organizations but excluding other major adversaries who continue or even escalate the conflict. (The 2016 Havana Agreement between the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionaria de Colombia (FARC), which did not involve the insurgents of the ELN.)[4]

[4] Alternatively, both Stine Hogbladh (Hogbladh 2011) and Christine Bell (2006) distinguish between those substantive peace agreement which are "full" and those which are "partial" depending on the scope of the agreement and the range of substantive issues covered by the terms of the deal.