



Peace agreements in the 1990s – what are the outcomes 20 years later?

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Umeå Working Papers in Peace and Conflict Studies, no 8

ISSN 1654-2398
Publication date 2015-12-22
@ Authors

Series editor: Professor Anna Jarstad
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Abstract

In the 1990s, a number of protracted armed conflicts were finally ended. This period can be described as a paradigmatic shift with regards to how armed conflicts are brought to an end. When the logic of the Cold War no longer hindered the United Nations (UN) to intervene, the number of UN peace operations rose dramatically and became more comprehensive. In addition, conflicts increasingly ended through negotiated settlements rather than military victory. The peace processes of the 1990s gave rise to great optimism that negotiations and peacebuilding efforts, often with considerable international involvement, would bring sustainable peace to war-affected countries. The outcomes of these peace processes, however, appears to be far from unanimously positive. Today, 20 years after the war endings of the 1990s, it is therefore imperative to critically analyze and evaluate these peace processes and their long-term results. What is the situation like today in countries where conflicts ended in the 1990s? What has become of the peace? In this paper, the long-term outcomes of peace processes that took place in the 1990s are evaluated through brief analyses of a number of cases, demonstrating that the nature and quality of peace today show great diversity. The paper also includes a conceptualization of the "peace triangle" aimed at distinguishing between different forms of peace, as well as a study of the relationship between peacebuilding and democracy in UN peace operations in the 1990s, concluding that outcomes with regards to democratic development in the intervened countries are generally poor.

Keywords

peace processes, peace agreements, peace triangle, peace operations, Namibia, Guatemala, Mindanao, Myanmar/Burma, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Introduction

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In the 1990s, a number of protracted armed conflicts, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Ireland, South Africa, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Cambodia, were finally ended. Furthermore, this period can be described as a paradigmatic shift with regards to how armed conflicts are brought to an end. When the logic of the Cold War no longer hindered the United Nations (UN) to intervene, the number of UN peace operations rose dramatically and became more comprehensive. In addition, conflicts increasingly ended through negotiated settlements rather than military victory (Bell 2006; Wallensteen 2007; Darby and Mac Ginty 2008).

The peace processes of the 1990s gave rise to great optimism that negotiations and peacebuilding efforts, often with considerable international involvement, would bring sustainable peace to war-affected countries. They also came to be seen, and applied, as a model for later attempts at conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Darby and Mac Ginty 2008). The outcomes of these peace processes, however, appears to be far from unanimously positive. Today, 20 years after the war endings of the 1990s, it is therefore imperative to critically analyze and evaluate these peace processes and their long-term results. What is the situation like today in countries where conflicts ended in the 1990s? What has become of the peace?

In this paper, a number of Swedish scholars in peace and conflict studies engage with this problematique through brief analyses of a number of cases where armed conflicts came to an end in the 1990s. Evaluating the long-term results of these war endings, developments in the past 20 years as well as the current situation are taken into account in order to answer the following key questions:

- a) Is there peace today, and if so, what type of peace?
- b) What lessons can be drawn from these cases and how can they inform current and future strategies of peacemaking?

The analyses compiled in this paper are the results of a collaborative workshop engaging with and evaluating the results of the war endings of the 1990s, held in Umeå in November 2015.

Next, the paper proceeds with two conceptual sections. First, Kristine Höglund and Mimmi Söderberg Kovacs present their conceptualization of the "peace triangle"; an analytical tool for distinguishing between different forms of peace, thereby nuancing the discussion of the nature and quality of peace after armed conflicts. Second, Anna Jarstad considers the relationship between peacebuilding and democracy in UN peace operations in the 1990s, concluding that while armed conflict has not resumed in most of the countries where UN peace operations took place, outcomes with regards to democratic development are generally poor.

Five cases where armed conflict was ended through negotiated settlements in the 1990s are then analyzed: Namibia (Johanna Söderström); Guatemala (Abrak Saati); Mindanao, the Philippines

(Malin Åkebo); Myanmar/Burma (Elisabeth Olivius); and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Roland Kostić and Dzenan Sahovic, respectively). While all of these cases experienced negotiated peace agreements in the 1990s, they also display considerable diversity with regards to the presence and quality of peace. Namibia and Guatemala are widely described as successful cases where peace has held, while Mindanao and Burma demonstrate that negotiated settlements may not bring an end to war. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina problematizes the long-term role of the terms of the peace settlement itself for the consolidation of peace, and shows how conflict may be perpetuated even when armed violence does not resume.

These cases illustrate a great variety of outcomes in the aftermath of peace agreements. At the same time the cases also share some similarities. They show that peace agreements have had long-term implications, far beyond what could have been intended at the time of negotiations. To different extent, peace processes have addressed conflict issues, included a variety of actors and changed behavior and attitudes. While the classic conflict triangle assumes that conflict issues, violent behavior and attitudes affect each other and creates a vicious circle, the processes analyzed here shows the challenge of creating a positive spiral towards sustainable peace. In order to better understand the different varieties of peace that do exist, the next section introduces the “peace triangle”.

Peace 20 Years Beyond: The “Peace Triangle” as an Analytical Tool

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Introduction

In the early 1990s, the number of civil wars that ended through the signing of negotiated settlements rose dramatically, including in countries with long-standing and protracted conflict such as Guatemala, Northern Ireland, South Africa and Cambodia. But the peace which has followed in these countries shows significant diversity. While some cases are characterized merely by an absence of violence and remain at risk of renewed warfare, a more peaceful and democratic political order has taken root in other countries. How can we understand the characteristics and quality of peace 20 years beyond the peace agreement?

In this paper, we present the “Peace Triangle” as a conceptual tool developed to capture three main components of peace in the aftermath of a peace agreement: issues, behavior, and attitudes.¹ It represents a way of understanding conflict and its driving forces from the perspective of Johan Galtung’s conflict triangle – in which these dimensions are the constitutive elements of conflict. Translated into the context of post-war societies, the Peace Triangle makes it possible to distinguish different trajectories and peace outcomes in the aftermath of war, rather than treating peace and conflict as binary categories.

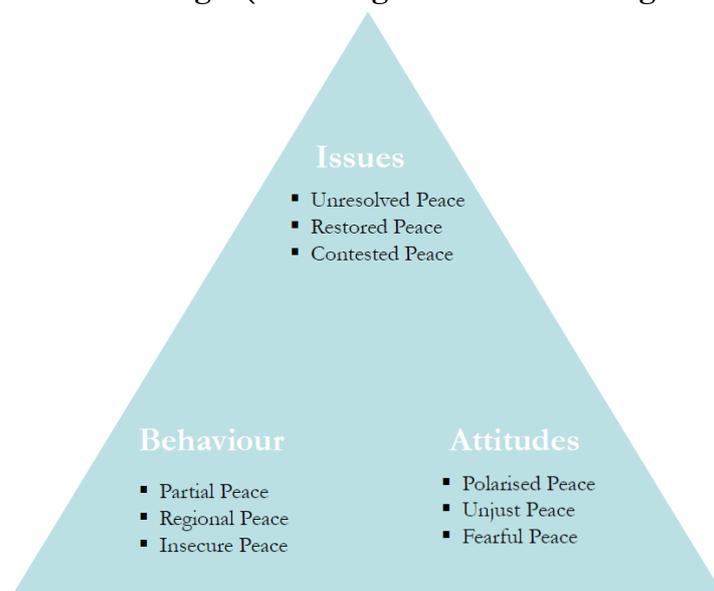
The Peace Triangle

Peace is an elusive concept (Richmond 2005). Theoretically, a key distinction has been made between “negative” versus “positive” peace, where negative peace focuses on the absence of

¹ This text builds on and summarizes the original conceptualization of the Peace Triangle, which is found in Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs (2010).

violence and positive peace in addition implies the presence of, for instance, democracy, justice or tolerance (Boulding 1964; 1978). In practice, however, negative peace has been the principal focus of academic research. For instance, two main journals of peace research (Journal of Peace Research and Journal of Conflict Resolution) are dominated by studies on violence rather than the conditions for cooperation and positive peace (Gleditsch et al. 2014). However, a number of scholars have questioned a binary approach to peace and conflict, suggesting that societies place themselves along a continuum in-between a state of war and a state of peace (Mac Ginty 2006a; Richards 2005). In line with such research, scholars have begun to understand peace processes as inherently conflictual and transformative, fraught with friction (Björkdahl et al. forthcoming 2016). Moreover, efforts to conceptualize and assess peace beyond the absence of violence highlight aspects such as horizontal and vertical legitimacy as key elements of a strong peace (Ohlson and Themnér 2014; see also Wallensteen 2015, who refers to “quality peace”). The Peace Triangle builds on these insights and combines them with Johan Galtung’s conflict triangle, which portrays social conflicts as defined by three core elements: the conflict issues, conflict behavior, and conflict attitudes (Galtung 1969). Issues concern the incompatibility over which the conflict is fought. Behavior captures the means through which the parties pursue the incompatibility, including physical violence, intimidation, boycotts and sanctions. Attitudes relate to psychological states or conditions which arise as both a driving force and consequence of conflict. Conflict attitudes encompass emotional and cognitive processes, including fear and hatred; stereotyping and dehumanization of the other side. In the Peace Triangle, issues, behavior and attitudes as viewed as the key indicators of peace, which make it possible to categorize different types of post-war societies and provide a more nuanced depiction of peace beyond the absence of war.

Figure 1: The Peace Triangle (from Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs 2010, 376)



Issues

A first indicator of peace highlights the extent of remaining conflict issues in the post-war period, which may result in a peace that can be characterized as unresolved, contested or restored. In some instances, a peace agreement deliberately or undeliberate leaves some of the main issues unresolved. Issues considered too difficult to resolve may be left untouched with the intention to be addressed at a later stage, when trust between the parties have been built. In situations of restored peace, the issues fought over have been managed, but the latent grievances that caused the conflict still remain as structural features of society, including, for instance, economic inequality, ethnic discrimination or large unemployment rates. Finally, the new post-war order may create new societal tensions and

generate a contested peace, since peace agreements very often challenge status quo and aim at transforming the power structures of society.

Behavior

A second indicator concerns conflict behavior and the continued presence of violence in society. Three types of situations may arise in post-war societies – partial peace, regional peace or insecure peace. Partial peace represent a situation either of the former belligerents or splinter groups parties maintain violence as a tactic to enforce concessions, demonstrate resolve or express dissatisfaction with the conditions of the peace agreement or the way in which the peace process is developing. Such violence can linger on, without resulting in a return to full-fledged war. Residual violence may also be isolated to specific geographical areas, creating a regional peace in the areas less touched by violence. Such geographical patters may mirror developments during civil war, which often take on distinct geographical characteristics influenced by, for instance, country size, access to infrastructure, and population concentration (Buhag and Gates 2002). Conflict behavior may also transcend state borders and ongoing conflict in a neighboring country may fuel conflict dynamics in border areas via refugee flows and cross-border arms transfer. Finally, many post-war societies are fraught with insecurity due to festering violent crime (Mac Ginty 2006b; Steenkamp 2011). In countries such as South Africa and Guatemala, violent crime rose dramatically in the post-war period. Such crimes may be directly related to the war experience itself through the presence of arms and former combatants, but also as a result of debilitated state structures – including the police and judiciary – to uphold law and order.

Attitudes

A third indicator of peace in post-war societies concerns extent and form of remaining conflict attitudes, which may produce situations of polarized, unjust or fearful peace. In some countries, group relations remain polarized or become even more negative and separated in the wake of a peace agreement. In other post-war countries, an unjust peace takes root due to an absence of reconciliation and accountability measures. However, attempts to rectify the past may meet resistance. For instance, war crimes tribunals or truth commissions may be welcomed by some parts of society, while stirring a sense of injustice in others (Hayner 2002). Finally, the condition of peace may be highly dependent on rule by fear. In some post-war societies, a very dominant strongman takes power and controls the population through coercion and intimidation. Fear is a powerful societal force which prevents individuals to reconcile conflict attitudes.

Concluding Remarks

The Peace Triangle expands the notion of peace beyond the parties' conflict behavior, to allow for an assessment of peace also concerning how the key issues have been managed and the attitudes former enemies hold towards each other. This conceptualization of peace captures the multifaceted nature of post-war societies and is of essence for crafting effective strategies used by both local and international actors interested in the promotion of peace and prevention of violence.

The Undemocratic Peace

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After the Cold War, there were great expectations that the UN would contribute to a more peaceful and democratic world. The great powers did no longer block interventions in each other's spheres of interests. The number of UN chapter VII resolutions increased dramatically after 1990

(Johansson 2009). While not a single new peacekeeping operations were launched 1979-87, twenty new missions were deployed in just five years (1988-1993).

It was not only the case that the number of peace missions increased. The mandates for these missions were also expanded to not only separate the fighting forces and maintain a cease fire, but also to build peace and democratize war-torn countries. Since the 1990s, democratization has become an integral part of international peacebuilding missions to end and prevent new civil wars. The foundation for this practice was outlined in United Nations' seminal document *An Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1995) where former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali described peacebuilding as a form of conflict prevention via social and political reconstruction. The idea that democratic institutions should be promoted in order to accommodate and resolve social conflicts without violence was further developed in the *Agenda for Democratization* (Boutros-Ghali 1996) and in the *Framework for Cooperation in Peacebuilding* (UN 2001). In this way, the mandates of peace keeping were expanded from merely separating warring actors to multidimensional peace operations to promoting democracy by reconstruction of states and institutions.

The new UN policy builds on the old idea that peace and democracy is interlinked and that both peacebuilding and democratization needs to be grass-root driven processes to be successful. Now, more than twenty-five years after the first multidimensional peace operation was launched in Namibia, it is time to investigate what happened to the UN ambition to build peace and democracy at the same time.

During the 1990s a number of long-lasting conflicts came to an end with the assistance of UN missions. Only in one case has conflict resumed; in Mozambique, there is an ongoing minor violent conflict since 2013. The same actors that signed the peace agreement in 1992, Frelimo and Renamo, use violence again over the territorial issue that was addressed but never fully resolved by the 1992 peace agreement. In Namibia, Nicaragua, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Liberia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Guatemala, East Timor, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone there are no large scale conflict, that is, there is a negative peace (Jarstad, forthcoming 2016). However, in many of these countries people often experience fear, especially in relation to politics.

Despite this new policy and heavy investments in peace operations, democracy indexes show a poor result. Even if we include also the post 1990s cases and analyze all cases where major peacekeeping operations have been deployed since 1989, it becomes evident that very few have made improvements that are captured by the well-established indexes set up by Freedom House and Polity IV. Of the 27 locations where major peacekeeping operations have been deployed since 1989, Freedom House only classifies three as Free in 2014. These are Namibia, El Salvador and Croatia (Jarstad, forthcoming 2016).

Most other countries do not show any significant change towards democracy. One group of countries stands out, as they have been stuck in an authoritarian mode for a long period and have turned into consolidated autocracies. Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina have only reached a minimal level of democracy, i.e. political leaders are elected by a popular vote. The same actors that were part of the war twenty years ago are still today part of the government in these countries. This in itself does not imply that a country is undemocratic – Namibia and South Africa are both classified as democracies despite the fact that the same political party has dominated politics since the conflict. However, in many countries where the conflict actors still dominate politics, there are large anti-government protests. The political elite is seen as corrupt and not responding to the residents' needs. In recent demonstrations in South Africa, people carried signs saying: Corruption is killing us! In Cambodia, demonstrations against the corrupt government continue despite violent response by the police. In Lebanon, the protests are

not only about poor waste collection, but against the entire sectarian character of the political system, which has been based on religious representation since the 1970s. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, thousands of people filled the streets in almost every urban center of the country in the February 2014 uprising. People screamed out “thieves, thieves”, and “mafia resign”.

These street demonstrations can be seen as a large trend of protests that have erupted from Cairo to New York. Current protest movements such as the Occupy movement, the Indignados in Spain and the Arab spring demonstrations have been described as a new global wave of protest (Flesher Fominaya, 2014; Krastev 2014). In contrast to many earlier protest movements these movements lack leaders, a clear set of demands, and ideology. In addition they reject formal organisational structures. While traditional protests have been aimed at gaining representation in state institutions, these new protest movements rejects them. Rather than trying to obtain political power, many of these movements have attempted to create their own forms of democracy (Krastev 2014, 6-7). In Bosnia, direct democracy was introduced when plenums, citizen assemblies, became an important part of the Bosnian protest movement. Thousands of people participated in these gatherings, where everyone had the right to speak for three minutes to voice his or her concerns. In four cantons, the local government also resigned, after demands by the plenums, and in at least one canton, Tuzla, a technocratic government was put in place (Jukic 2014). It is clear that these demonstrators want another type of peace that what has been achieved.

Whose peace?

The main beneficiaries of the peace that has been achieved in the countries where conflict ended during the 1990s is the elite. People feel that they have no real possibility of holding politicians accountable and elect others. Peacebuilding has become a matter for the elite and international community, rather than the grassroots. Sometimes, the very peace agreement, which has been negotiated under international auspice, hinders a democratic transition. It is also notable that most peace concepts lack the inclusion of people. I think it is problematic when scholars define peace and apply it to places where the residents largely disagree. When peace is defined in contrast to conflict, it is the elite behavior, elite attitudes and conflict issues defined by the elite that are in focus. While democracy and peace are two analytically distinct concepts, many norms, regulations and institutions associated with these concepts overlap. Similar to the centrality of demos for democracy, the people needs to be brought in to the concept of peace. Likewise, while there has been a lot of talk about local ownership, it has often meant efforts to transfer international ideas and trying to make local actors take responsibility to implement them. The practice of international peacebuilding needs to more seriously engage with the local discourses and movements that exist, beyond those that are created in relation to international donors.

Namibian Peace since 1989: Stunted Promise?

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The Conflict and Its End

Namibia was administered by South Africa since WW1, and between 1966 and 1989 the armed wing of the South West African People’s Organization (SWAPO)² fought various South African forces for independence. Already in 1976 the Security Council passed a resolution in favor of Namibian independence, and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) was authorized already in 1978, even if implementation did not start until 1989. The mission was short

² People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN).

(1989-1990) and its main objective was political. It has been classified as “one of the earliest ‘second-generation’ or ‘multi-dimensional’ peace operations” and noted to have a “clear and comprehensive mandate” and being very well-funded (Dzinesa 2004, 650-652).

The mission has been hailed as a success, some even note it as “the most successful multidimensional peacekeeping operation in its history” (Howard 2002, 99). A book by Zürcher et al sees Namibia as a successful case of democratization, and notes that adoption costs were initially low in Namibia, and regional problems were resolved and helped enable the peace process (Shaffer 2014; Zürcher et al. 2013). Howard continues and notes that the adaptability of the mission was a key reason for this success, and that it avoided being micro-managed from New York (2002, 127). While some lessons from this mission have travelled (see for examples Howard 2002, 128) the Namibian case seems to have limited importance in global comparisons. It is perhaps telling that Namibia as a case has been forgotten among those working with DDR policies (McMullin 2013, 80), and a review of the literature using Google scholar indicates that it has been forgotten as a peacebuilding case in general.

Current Political Developments

The development in Namibia has certainly been positive since the end of the conflict, and the country is today at peace. In an examination of 124 cases of civil war the peace in Namibia is categorized as firm (Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 779). Freedom House categorizes Namibia as free (score of 2.0), whereas freedom of the press is categorized as partly free (score of 33) (Freedom House 2015a, 2015b). Yet, there are worries. While the country has one of the most progressive constitutions in the region, yet the dislike for opposition is clear (Kishor 2014; Sims and Koep 2012). The main problems are the dominant position of SWAPO, high unemployment³ and extensive white land ownership (Kishor 2014). Similarly, Bauer finds reasons for concern when evaluating Namibia’s democracy in 2001 due to single party dominance, centralization of power, “intolerance of democratic political practices, especially among some government leaders” (2001, 33). Focusing more on the assumed success of the peace mission, McMullin makes the following argument:

Aspects of Namibia’s transition are certainly conspicuous in their success. Where neighboring Zimbabwe has all but collapsed, Namibia’s post-independence path boasts an absence of renewed conflict [...]. But a critical literature has also emerged in the intervening years to call into question some of UNTAG’s achievements, focusing on the persistent inequality between the capital city and the north of the country, where most of the population lives. (McMullin 2013, 85).

Namibia is a country that since its independence has been run by one party SWAPO (consistently about 76% of the votes).⁴ The first president Sam Nujoma was in office between 1989 and 2005 (president of SWAPO from 1960 to 2007), as the constitution was changed to allow him a third term. Nujoma was succeeded by Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba (2005 to 2015) (re-elected in 2009). The last election in 2014 brought Hage Gottfried Geingob to the Presidency (in office since 21 March 2015). Melber notes that the party has if anything strengthened its hold on power over the

³ Unemployment rate was reported by Kishor as 51.2%, whereas a more recent article notes that while unemployment rates were high up until 2006 (in the range of 30 to 40 percent), by 2008 it had decreased to only 5.3% (Massó Guijarro 2013, 340). Yet again other sources, like the World Bank, note a steady unemployment rate at 28%.

⁴ Election results for SWAPO over the years are as follows in the national assembly: 56.90% (1989); 73.89% (1994); 76.15% (1999) (Melber 2003, 272); 76.11% (2004); 75.27% (2009) (African Elections Database 2011); 80.01% (2014) (Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia 2014).

years, as they were unable to dictate the constitution on their own. Actual votes have declined, but this has been compensated by lower levels of participation.

Voter fatigue has been investigated by the University of Namibia, and a study found that apathy, a perceived lack of choice and procedural constraints were some of the main causes. Bauer cites one of the conclusions of the study: “The sharp decline in voter turnout suggests that voters are abandoning electoral politics and the actors that operate within. The causes legitimate concern especially since a significant proportion of non-voters is disillusioned voters.” (Bauer 2001, 47f).⁵ Another study (Friedman 2011) has focused on norms regarding paternalism, and is said to demonstrate that since the state is unable to provide the sought after development, this is starting to spill-over into a questioning of the state and its legitimacy, as well as democracy (Williams 2013). As will be noted below, in the discussion of the Caprivi Conflict, one article also suggests that citizens in favor of secession are not active voters (Massó Guijarro 2013, 351).

Returning to the issue of SWAPO dominance, the party has in general been described as hostile to the opposition and toward elements within their own ranks when they differ with the official party line: “Critical voices [...] were labelled as unpatriotic.” (Melber 2003, 274). While ethnicity seems to line up with political party identity, for instance SWAPO is predominantly Ovambo orientated, ethnicity as such seems to be little talked about in public discourses (Massó Guijarro 2013). While it is difficult to claim that SWAPO dominance is the result of the international community’s dealings with Namibia, this pattern was at least not eliminated by the international community’s behavior. Melber quotes Martti Ahtisaari (UNTAG’s Special Representative) on the issue: “As a result (the political forces not affiliated to SWAPO) were eliminated from that political opportunity and that of course diminished plurality and complicated matters. (1999:185)” (Melber 2003, 269).

In an attempt to gauge levels and forms of violence in Namibia today (given the general characterization of Namibia as enjoying a firm peace), the results are in general positive. The country had no incidences of electoral violence in 1994 and 2004, and only violent harassment in 1999, thus it has never been classified as case of high electoral violence (Straus and Taylor 2012, 25, 27). Homicide rate in 2012 was 17.2 per 100,000 (world average same year was 6.2; and average rate for Southern Africa was 30). Yet, protests seem to be more common even if no systematic data has been found to support this. For instance former SWAPO guerillas have protested their living conditions and the government has often responded with extending work opportunities for former SWAPO combatants (Simon 2000, 113). The country also witnessed a secession attempt in the Caprivi strip (Bauer 2001, 53). Yet the conflict has received little attention. Unreliable sources (Global Security 2011 among others), describe the conflict as active between 1994 and 1999, whereas others limit the time frame of the conflict to events in 1998 and in particular to August 1999, with human rights abuses on both sides (Melber 2009). At least 14 people have been killed as a result of the conflict. The Caprivi Strip, with a population of about 80,000 in 2004,⁶ has shifted in its belonging in the past⁷ and the conflict has deep roots. Most of the leaders of the so called *Itengese nation*⁸ were arrested and have been put on a trial for treason. Two leaders went into exile in Denmark (Melber 2009; Massó Guijarro 2013). During the last 12 years, 121 individuals have stood on trial for treason among other charges related to the Caprivi conflict.⁹ In total they have been

⁵ Voter turnout has since this article actually increased. Parliamentary voter turnout (as percentage of voting age population, not as percentage of registered voters) was as follows: 101.65% (1989); 63.78% (1994); 61.71% (1999); 80.23% (2004); 67.53% (2009); 74.00% (2014). Presidential turnout was as follows: 62.22% (1994); 62.21% (1999); 80.85% (2004); 67.62% (2009); 73.75% (2014) (IDEA 2011).

⁶ The population of Namibia is today about 2.3 million, at the time of the mission 1.8 million.

⁷ The area was not a part of Namibia prior to 1989.

⁸ The claim for independence was made in 2002.

⁹ Originally 132 individuals were detained. Some of the prisoners died in custody. None were allowed bail. Amnesty International has critiqued the government on the holding of political prisoners.

imprisoned for 16 years awaiting the verdict. In September the verdict finally came, and 30 individuals were convicted of treason, as well as murder and attempted murder (Menges 2015). The scant attention given to this secession attempt is disturbing, and I share the surprise noted by Taylor in Melber's piece on the event: "the 'secession attempt – southern Africa's most recent instance of rebel armed insurrection – has surprisingly received barely any thorough analysis'" (Taylor (2008: 326) cited in Melber 2009, 464).

Finally, given my own interest in ex-combatants in particular, I have chosen to highlight some findings related to this group. The Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) program was not run by UNTAG but incrementally expanded by the Namibian government after demands from the veterans themselves. Ex-combatants as a category has not faded away, but remain a salient category and make up about 5% of the population (McMullin 2013, 79). The legacy of SWAPO as a party is closely entwined with the notion of them as the liberators of the nation; the liberation narrative is central to who SWAPO is and their legitimacy. It is therefore not surprising that the state has treated various groups of veterans differently. In particular, SWAPO veterans in contrast to e.g. former South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF) and Koevoet paramilitary police, have embodied the notion of a hero rather than just a security threat or someone in need (McMullin 2013, 103; Metsola 2015, 189-248). Thus, not all former combatants are equal, yet being a veteran is a position of political power. This is the result in part of the reintegration policies and processes, but also of a larger debate about liberationist history in Namibia which is used in debates over others issues such as land, jobs and education. This is why Metsola expresses "the significance of participation in liberationist history as a criterion of full membership in the political community" (Metsola 2015, 248). Namibia was fortunate enough to be in a position to handle reintegration programs and demands on their own, due to a strong state and economy, and as such this policy area became entwined with state formation in Namibia. Equally, however, it has become entwined with the making of SWAPO. And as Metsola notes, there has been no public scrutiny of the misdeeds during the struggle akin to the TRC process in South Africa (Metsola 2015, 238). Perhaps this is why the party has been so adamant about repressing internal conflict.

Applying the peace triangle as suggested by Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs (2010), the Namibian case is hard to categorize as a particular type of peace. The main conflict issue is resolved, even if land distribution is still problematic. In terms of peace behavior, levels of violence are relatively low, yet homicide rates are above the world average and the Caprivi Strip conflict does raise questions. Examining peace attitudes using Afrobarometer data (Afrobarometer Data 2014), a large majority does not fear or have experience with crime and violence, and as many as 65% have no fear of electoral violence. However, only 28% believe the opposition should criticize the government, and as many as 20% do not trust the opposition at all. Thus, Namibia's peace does not seem to be particularly deficient, whereas there are obvious democratic deficits.

Concluding remarks

Are there any lessons we should learn from the Namibian case? Any insights into how current challenges can be dealt with? The first question to answer is whether new cases can be compared with Namibia. There is often talk of Namibian exceptionalism, and while this is partially true, we should be careful to rule out such comparison. Do other cases face similar challenges? If not, the success of the UN may not be as transferable as others make it out to be. More important, perhaps is whether the UN mission itself is comparable, particularly given the clarity of the mission, its clear exit conditions, the long preparation leading up to it and its funding.

I would like to highlight a few opportunities or challenges that at least to me seem noteworthy. SWAPO dominance is one of the main challenges today, and thus the question of what voices are recognized as legitimate internationally may matter a great deal. Not only in terms of leverage, space

and voice in the transition process itself, but also because it may carry long term consequences for pluralism like the Namibian case seems to suggest.

Melber makes a critical reflection related to some of the democratic shortcomings in Namibia, namely that the colonial legacy was the main menace the new state tried to deal with, rather than democratization. Yet, even in relation to the colonial legacy Melber is pessimistic and notes that there are “lasting structural and psychological effects resulting from the colonial legacy” in Namibia (Melber 2003, 267). This may be central in understanding why we only see election deep democracy in Namibia today.

Finally, I want to comment on the centrality of having the capacity for doing politics; a state that can respond to demands from citizens even early on in a transition process is more likely to develop the typical relationship between the state and its citizens. Parts of the peacebuilding process can be more locally owned and change over time. Naturally, this is also dangerous as it gives the state tools to entrench specific identities and narratives about itself and the ruling party as Namibia has demonstrated; status signaling matters. The question of who you were in the war lives on, many years after the end of the conflict.

Guatemala: twenty years after the signing of the peace accords

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Introduction

Next year, 2016, marks the twenty-year anniversary of the signing of the “Accord for a Firm and Lasting Peace” between the government of Guatemala and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Front (URNG). The signing of the accord marked the end of an armed confrontation that had lasted for 36 years. The purpose of this section of the paper is to i) explore, in brief, developments in Guatemala since 1996, in order to, ii) draw conclusions as to whether or not peace prevails today. The final part of the section discusses some lessons that can be learned from the Guatemalan peace process which may be of relevance for current, and future, peace processes.

What has happened since 1996?

Open warfare between the military and the guerilla alliance URNG had already come to an end prior to the signing of the peace accord in late 1996. After nearly four decades of fighting, the URNG had become increasingly weak, increasingly disorganized as well as increasingly unable to find financial means for continuing the war. Because of these circumstances, the movement was successfully demobilized and disarmed, even ahead of the time schedule prescribed in the peace agreement, and by 1998 it had turned itself into a political party. Perhaps a bit surprisingly, the ending of open warfare was actually not the primary challenge in Guatemala (Stanley & Holiday 2002). The main challenge, rather, concerned how to achieve democratization, justice and social/cultural inclusiveness in a country with a considerably high degree of discrimination against its majority indigenous population (Brett & Delgado 2005). In responding to this challenge, the peace agreement addressed issues of how to democratize the state apparatus (including how to reform the legislature, the executive branch, the judiciary), how to achieve fair economic and social development, how to involve the indigenous populations living in rural areas in decisions concerning their land, and a number of other issues that, if implemented, would have resolved some of the main causes of the conflict as well as brought significant and necessary changes to the structure of the Guatemalan state.

The requirement for being able to implement the peace accord, however, hinged on constitutional reforms, which was also stipulated in the peace agreement. Hence, without the necessary constitutional reforms, the peace accord, lacking legal standing in itself, could not be implemented. The constitutional reform process was, in turn, to be organized in a manner so that the Guatemalan population could participate in the making of the constitution; it was conceived as essential to allow, primarily the disenfranchised indigenous population, to be involved in formulating the social and political pact that was to guide post-conflict Guatemala (Brett & Delgado 2005, 6-7).

Though the constitution making process was quite successful from a public participation perspective in terms of getting indigenous people involved in the process as well as a broad array of people from various human rights groups, women's rights group, and peasants' organizations, the document that emanated from the process never entered into force (Stanley & Holiday 2002; Brett & Delgado 2005). When the constitution reached Congress, its members, fearing the loss of power in a new constitutional order, agreed that they were not satisfied with the content and therefore substantial modifications to the document were made. These revisions were carried out without consulting the people, which likely explains why the Guatemalan citizenry rejected the constitution when it was finally put up for a referendum in 1999 (Brett & Delgado 2005).

As a direct consequence of the constitutional draft being rejected, the implementation of the peace agreement has proven to be difficult. Though the URNG have refrained from picking up their arms again, the main purpose of the agreement which was to restructure the Guatemalan state to bring it on path towards democratization has not been realized. As far as democracy levels are concerned, data from Freedom House indicates that the country has not been successful in terms of increasing its level of democracy since 1996 and onwards – Guatemala's democracy score has rather remained quite constant during the past two decades (Freedom House Country Ratings and Status 1973-2014). Democracy data from the Polity IV Project reveals the same trajectory (Polity IV Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2014).

As a consequence of the unsuccessful implementation of the peace accord due to the rejected constitutional draft, deep social inequalities persist in Guatemala, as does a high level of impunity for crimes committed, both by members of URNG and the military, during the war, as does very high levels of violence. In fact, in the post-conflict period, the average annual number of killings in Guatemala is almost as high as the same average number for the 36 years during which the war lasted (Dinesen et al. 2013).

Twenty years along the line, but is there peace?

If peace is construed simply as the absence of war, then there is peace in Guatemala. At the same time, the country appears to be far from achieving the stability that was envisioned in the peace agreement nearly twenty years ago. Though civil war has not resumed, extremely high levels of violence and a stumbling (at best) democratization process makes it difficult, and perhaps even misguided, to refer to the situation in Guatemala as one characterized by peace (just because there is an absence of war). Rather, circumstances give the impression of a country that is stuck in a state of “no war no peace”.

In attempting to sort out which type of peace that is actually present in Guatemala, the classification of different types of peace developed by Höglund & Söderberg-Kovacs (2010) is a useful analytical tool. Following their classification of nine different types (Höglund & Söderberg-Kovacs 2010, 376) of peace (unresolved peace, restored peace, contested peace, partial peace, regional peace, insecure peace, polarized peace, unjust peace and fearful peace), the case of Guatemala can perhaps best be described as a situation in which we find an “insecure peace” as well as an “unjust peace”.

The peace in Guatemala is insecure in the sense that levels of violence are, as stated above, still exceptionally high. The protracted conflict that lasted almost four decades appears to have contributed to developing a culture of violence that has persisted in the aftermath of the signing of the peace accord; a situation in which acts of violence, in the words of Steenkamp (2005, 254) have become “socially permissive”, and where the society’s norms and values have been so severely affected by the war that social tolerance for individual’s violent behavior has increased. According to a recent Human Rights Watch report for Guatemala, criminal organizations engage in extensive acts of violence, human rights defenders are often attacked as are trade unionists and journalists (HRW 2015). The perpetrators of these acts are seldom brought to justice. The issue of impunity actually ties into the other type of peace that is presently characteristic for Guatemala; the “unjust peace”. The culture of violence is joined by a culture of impunity. Though a Commission for Historical Clarification was set up in 1997 (to conduct its work until 1999), in order to shed light on the human rights abuses that were carried out during the war, the commission was not allowed to disclose any names nor was it allowed to call for persecution in its report. In 2006, the UN and the Government of Guatemala signed the Agreement to Establish the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). The commission was established the following year with a mandate stretching until September 2015. Though some progress has been made during recent years in prosecuting individuals who have been engaged in extrajudicial killings and torture, trials appear to be slow processes delayed by different stalling-techniques by defense lawyers. In 2013, however, ex-dictator Efraín Ríos Montt was tried and found guilty of having been responsible for the killing of nearly 2,000 indigenous Maya during his rule covering the years 1982-1983. He was sentenced to 80 years in prison. The Guatemalan constitutional court, nevertheless, overturned the ruling within weeks of the verdict on the grounds of procedural errors. A retrial was set for the beginning of 2015, but by then it was decided that the 89-year old Montt was mentally unfit to stand trial on genocide charges (The Guardian 2015).

Lessons learned

Much can probably be learned from the Guatemalan peace process, and all of these lessons will not be elaborated here. Rather the focus, as far as “lessons learned” is concerned, will be directed towards the potential problems of merging a peace process and a peace agreement with a constitution making process.

Considering the Guatemalan case, it would in hindsight appear that combining a peace process with a constitution making process can imply problems down the road, and particularly so if the peace accord in question cannot be implemented without constitutional reform. This is not to say that constitutional reform should not be pursued in the aftermath of violent conflict; rather the contrary. Many times, it is necessary to engage in a comprehensive reform of the constitution, or even a complete overhaul of the existing document to create an entirely new one, in order to address the root causes of the conflict. But in general, it would seem more appropriate to have another overall guarantor for the implementation of the peace agreement that does not rely on specific constitutional revisions. The intertwined combination of peace agreement-constitution making process becomes even more challenging when public participation during the course of the constitution making process as well as a final referendum to pass the constitution is a requirement for the implementation of the peace accord. In essence, this means that whatever negotiations/deals/compromises that have been reached by the main parties of the conflict can be overrun by a no-vote on the constitution in a public referendum.

If, for some reason, the peace agreement needs to hinge on constitutional reform in a particular context, then some rules of procedure guiding the latter might be advisable. For example, it is, in general, probably not advisable for a Congress (as in Guatemala) to be a constitution making body while at the same time conducting its ordinary legislative duties. In the Guatemalan case, this

element of the constitution making process (making it mandatory for the text to pass Congress before being the subject of a popular referendum) implied that the members of Congress had the opportunity to draft laws that would guide their own political future. In circumstances like these, it is advisable to employ separate constitution making bodies, whose members are popularly elected, that are only installed for the purpose of reforming the constitution, that are dissolved immediately after the draft has been produced and either passed or rejected, and whose members are not allowed to run for public office for a decided number of years after the ratification of the constitution.

A failure or a stepping stone to peace in Mindanao? Revisiting the 1996 Peace Agreement 20 years later

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Introduction

This section of the paper explores the long-term effects of the 1996 Peace Agreement in Mindanao, the Philippines, 20 years after its settlement. Since the beginning of the 1970s, Moro nationalist groups have been fighting for self-determination for Mindanao located in the southernmost of the Philippine archipelago. After more than two decades of violent conflict, in 1996 the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) agreed on a comprehensive peace accord to end the protracted violent conflict. The agreement was framed as the “final peace agreement” aimed at settling the remaining disputes over the implementation of the Tripoli Agreement reached 20 years earlier in 1976 (Peace Agreement 1996). Today, another 20 years have passed since the peace treaty was sealed. This invites analysis of the settlement’s long-term effects on peace and security in Mindanao. For this purpose, the section will address three questions: First, how have peace and conflict evolved in Mindanao since the 1996 Peace Agreement? Second, how can we comprehend the situation in Mindanao today 20 years later? Third, what insights can be drawn from the Mindanao case to inform future attempts to resolve contemporary violent conflicts and to build sustainable peace?

The 1996 settlement: both an ending point and a starting point of war

The 1996 peace agreement between the government and the MNLF was the result of a lengthy process. Negotiations in the 1970s and 80s – backed by Libya and a couple of other Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) member states – had resulted in agreements on greater autonomy for assigned territories in Muslim Mindanao.¹⁰ Still, neither of these agreements brought an end to the war. The implementation was poor; the MNLF repeatedly claimed that it had not achieved the amount of autonomy promised by the government and that Muslim Mindanao was still being marginalized and economically neglected (Chalk 1997). In 1996 the armed conflict between the government and the MNLF was finally ended, and both parties have stayed committed to the agreement ever since. However, the peace settlement did not mean an end of war in Mindanao. Instead, the war continued with other groups who rejected the 1996 Peace Agreement, in particular with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which splintered from the MNLF in the 1980s. The MILF transformed into the largest and most well-armed rebel group in the Philippines in the 1990s with an estimated 12,000 fighters (ICG 2012). While the MNLF had announced already in 1976 that it dropped its demand for independence, the MILF claimed recognition of the Moros’

¹⁰ The foundation of the agreement had been outlined earlier in particular in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, the 1987 Jeddah Accord and the 1989 establishment of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

right to their “homeland” and for their grievances to be addressed within an independent state (Santos 2005).

The two decades following the 1996 Final Agreement have thus been pervaded by the continuation of war between the government and the MILF. In parallel with war-making, almost immediately after the 1996 Peace Agreement the government also commenced a process of talking peace with the MILF. Generally, periods of peace talks and ceasefire have been punctuated by periods of either stalemate or the resumption of heavy fighting. Gradual progress has been made from one attempt to the next, albeit limited and in a slow pace (e.g. ICG 2012; 2011).

In parallel to war-making and peace negotiations with the MILF, the process of implementing the 1996 Peace Agreement have remained on the table between the government and the MNLF. However, in the context of the ongoing war with the MILF the amount of attention directed to this implementation process has been comparatively limited. Ten years after its signing an estimated 56 percent of the provisions of the accord had been implemented (Peace Accords Matrix 2015). Seemingly, the eagerness to reach an agreement left it without complete and effective mechanisms for its implementation (e.g. ICG 2004). Consequently, in 2006 the parties initiated a process to address the poor implementation, but in practice little progress was being made. Furthermore, from the very beginning the MILF and other armed groups in Mindanao considered the 1996 Peace Agreement as flawed and rejected its very existence. In addition, the poor implementation was put forth by the rebels as evidence that the government was lacking both the will and the capacity to undertake its promises.

Since 2010, the government’s policy for guiding the Mindanao peace process has been framed as a strategy of “convergence”, bringing together three central components deemed necessary to reach peace in Mindanao: a peace agreement with the MILF; a reform of the dysfunctional Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); and a review of the final peace agreement with the MNLF (ICG 2012). However, negotiating simultaneously with MNLF and MILF have seemingly posed difficulties. The chairman of the MNLF, Nur Misuari, have described the government’s negotiations with MILF as “illegal” since, according to him, there already is a final peace agreement (Rood 2012, 271-272). The MILF, in their turn, have deemed the government’s contacts with the MNLF as irrelevant and expressed concern that bringing in the problems of the 1996 Peace Agreement would “burden” the ongoing peace process (ICG 2011, 5).

Since 2000, an estimated 4 million people have been displaced in Mindanao due to the armed conflict between the government and the MILF, violence by other smaller armed groups, crime related violence, and clan violence often driven by political rivalries and land disputes (IDMC 2015). Conflicts due to separatism is generally regarded as the main challenge to peace and development for the 15 million inhabitants of Mindanao and nearby islands. The conflict has resulted in poverty and breakdown in rule of law and governance, in addition to thousands of casualties and people displaced by the long-drawn war.

Current status of war and peace

After a serious breakdown of a draft agreement in 2008, a government shift of 2010 generated momentum in the peace process which eventually resulted in the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro signed by the government and the MILF in 2014. With the signing of this accord the prospects for peace in Mindanao seem more promising than ever. At the time of writing, the government and the MILF have maintained their commitment to the peace accord that will establish a new self-governed political entity in Mindanao in 2016, thus replacing and territorially expanding the dysfunctional ARMM. Before the new entity is put in effect the power-sharing agreement must also be approved in Congress and in a referendum in Mindanao. In the meantime,

some initial measure have been taken. By March 2015, MILF members and their families registered to vote in 2016 elections which was seen as an important symbolic first step in integrating the rebels in the political process (Buenaobra 2015). A process of decommissioning MILF weaponry and of returning combatants to civilian life started in June 2015. The process of implementing a socio-economic development plan for Mindanao, in order to produce a sense of normalcy for people in the war-torn areas, continues since late 2014 (Rodd 2015).

However, recent violent developments in the region – together with the experience of past failures – reminds us that a transition from war to peace seldom evolves along a straight forward track. Since 2014, armed groups that are not party of the peace accord have continued to launch sporadic attacks across Mindanao, many with a deadly outcome. In particular, the violence has included the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) which was established in 2010 after splintering from the MILF due to serious disagreements over the peace negotiations with the government. In February 2015, the government launched an “all-out war” against the BIFF (The Philippine Star 2015). Within a few months an estimated 125.000 people had been displaced (OCHA 2015). Contemporary violence in Mindanao can also be traced to the Abu Sayyaf Group which since the 1990s advocates for an Islamic state in Mindanao and, in contrast to the MNLF and the MILF, persistently have refused to engage in any negotiations with the government. Kidnappings, bombings and other violent attacks by the Abu Sayyaf Group have for long been a source of insecurity for people in the region (Schiavo-Campo and Judd 2005). With reference to Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs’ (2011) peace triangle typology it can thus be suggested that the recent peace settlement between the government and the MILF has produced a “partial peace”; while the agreement has brought an end to full-fledge war in Mindanao other armed groups nonetheless continue to use violence.

Furthermore, while a cessation of hostilities has held between the government and the MILF for more than four years and generated a more peaceful atmosphere in Mindanao, recent fighting has also included these two parties. In January 2015 an anti-terror operation aimed at capturing a militant leader in MILF-controlled areas ended in the killing of more than 60, including police and special action force commandos, MILF and BIFF members and a few civilians (Rodd 2015). The fact that the parties managed to avoid a resumption of war in the light of this incident and remained committed to the peace accord is a promising sign. At the same time, recent developments in Mindanao raises questions about what type of peace that the 2014 settlement and the new political entity will be capable of bringing about, if it is accepted by Congress and voted in favor in Mindanao. A public poll launched after the January incident indicate that the public sentiment has shifted, and some national politicians have seemingly become more skeptical to the pending bill (Rodd 2015). A new political entity will face many challenges that lie at the core of the protracted conflict, including socioeconomic deprivation and political marginalization. The political aspect of the settlement is still to be consolidated.

Insights derived from the Mindanao case

20 years after the government-MNLF peace accord Mindanao is still conflict-ridden and to large extent characterized by insecurity and underdevelopment. The implications of the 1996 peace settlement can be interpreted in two ways, both of which seem to have merit. On the one hand, the settlement can be gauged as a failure. Although it brought an end to fighting between the government and the MNLF it did not bring about peace in Mindanao, not even in the sense of a negative peace. Instead, for the subsequent two decades the violent struggle continued with other armed groups who did not support the settlement. In addition, it failed to adequately address important issues such as land rights, and it did not improve the living standard for people in the region (c.f. Bertrand 2000).

At the same time, the 1996 settlement can also be seen as a stepping stone to peace in Mindanao; as one essential part that together with other measures has contributed to the overall transition from war to peace. After the 1996 peace treaty with the MNLF, the Philippine government engaged in several peace initiatives with the MILF before concluding the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro in 2014. These attempts to large extent built on previous agreements, including the ones reached with the MNLF. Throughout the conflict trajectory numerous agreements have been reached between the government and Moro rebel groups, with each new agreement generally acknowledging the content of previous ones. While the history of broken agreements serves as a reminder of the many challenges embedded in the Mindanao peace process, hopes are high that the treaty of 2014 will finally mark the end to the protracted war.

Nevertheless, the current peace agreement in Mindanao should best be understood as a roadmap for peace rather than as an outcome of the conflict. Many potential challenges still lie ahead. This includes how to produce a peace settlement that can receive an adequate support from different groups in Mindanao, including separatist groups besides the MILF as well as non-Muslim residents in Mindanao and other stakeholders to the conflict. So far, peace attempts have to large extent been characterized as bilateral undertakings between the government and the at the time largest most organized armed group. For the government, this approach has seemingly been part of an incremental strategy aiming at ending the violence with that particular group and in addition turn the group into a useful “partner” for dealing with other violent elements in the region. Nevertheless, the Mindanao case clearly illustrates the difficulties of consolidating peace when there is no common vision of what a future solution should look like, in particular in the context of intra-party rivalry. Furthermore, experiences from peace attempts in Mindanao underline the importance of the implementation of agreements. Failure to implement important undertakings can lead to increasing mistrust between the parties to the agreement and, if there is no peace dividend, also among the public. Finally, it can be noted that a failure of the peace accord risk leading to a severe increase in violence and a prolonging of the war, as has happened several times before in Mindanao. The developments in the near future will be important in determining whether or not Mindanao will continue along the initiated path towards peace.

Burma: twenty years after the ceasefire movement of the 1990s

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The ceasefire movement in Burma

At the beginning of the 1990s, the military government in Myanmar/Burma¹¹ saw its rule increasingly threatened by widespread armed ethnic insurgencies as well as a non-violent pro-democracy movement with growing international backing. In order to shore up its strength and secure its hold on power, the government began to pursue a radically new strategy, seeking to negotiate ceasefire agreement with ethnic insurgency groups (Charney 2009, 188). A major development setting the stage for this change in the nature of the conflict was the disintegration of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) in 1989 following the mutiny of its ethnic minority components. For the government, these events opened up the opportunity to neutralize its hitherto largest military opponent, and it moved quickly to negotiate ceasefire agreements with ex-CBD ethnic military groups. (Transnational Institute 2009). However, additional ceasefire agreements with other ethnic insurgency groups followed; between 1989 and 1995 agreements were brokered with some 25 different armed groups. Some of the main groups, who had been engaged in long-

¹¹ Henceforth I will use the term “Burma”. In 1989, the military junta renamed the state *Myanmar Naing-ngan*, but “Burma” remains widely used.

standing armed struggle against the government, were the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) which signed a ceasefire agreement in 1994, and the New Mon State Party (NMSP), which agreed to a ceasefire in 1995 (South 2008, 119-123). After more than 50 years of civil war, the wave of ceasefire agreements in the 1990s significantly reshaped the Burmese political landscape and represented a promising shift away from armed violence in large parts of the country.

The terms of the ceasefire agreements generally meant that the ceasefire groups were allowed to retain their arms and the control of their territories, provided that they did not fight the Burmese military, the *Tatmadaw*. The resolution of political issues were postponed until a new constitution would be introduced. In addition, a Border Areas Development Program was established to bring economic development to war-weary communities in ceasefire areas (Smith 2007, 40-42). Areas controlled by a ceasefire group were given the status of “special regions” and were relatively autonomously administered by the ceasefire groups (Transnational Institute 2009, 13). However, while the ceasefires of the 1990s represented a significant change in the nature of the conflict, at least in some areas, a national solution to the civil war in Burma has remained elusive until very recently. Since 2011, significant steps towards democratic reform has been taken, accompanied by a renewed peace process which has included attempts to negotiate a national ceasefire (International Crisis Group 2014, 2015).

Developments in ceasefire areas since the 1990s

While information and assessment of the situation in Burma’s ceasefire areas is quite scant, commentators agree that the ceasefires of the 1990s did bring a number of positive developments in many areas (South 2008; Smith 2007; Transnational Institute 2009). Firstly, the end of fighting has brought relief to local populations and reduced the number of conflict-related casualties. Further, the most serious forms of human rights abuses such as murder, rape, torture, forced labor and forced relocation has generally decreased, if not ceased, in areas where ceasefires have held. Thus, people in these areas have been able to live in relative security compared to people in areas of ongoing armed violence, and humanitarian conditions have reportedly been better in ceasefire areas (South 2008, 130; Transnational Institute 2009, 20-21). Secondly, the ceasefires have opened opportunities for ethnic minority groups to reengage in national politics, for example through participation in the National Convention, a process aimed at drafting a new constitution. While the political demands of ethnic minorities have yet to be met, this made national politics an available forum for raising ethnic issues and increasing their salience. More space for the rebuilding of civil society in ethnic minority communities have also been created (Smith 2007, 41; South 2008, 128-130). The increased space for civil society initiatives is, according to South, one of the most significant yet underestimated benefits of the ceasefires. Thirdly, to varying degrees, the ceasefires have brought economic and developmental dividends to former war zones that had suffered from decades of violence as well as government neglect (Transnational Institute 2009, 21). Access to social services, such as health care and education, has generally increased after ceasefire agreements have been established (Jolliffe 2014).

However, more critical assessments of the impact of the ceasefires are often expressed, not least by ethnic minority leaders and opposition groups in exile. To them, the ceasefires have often been seen as representing failures and co-optation with regards to the political goals of ethnic self-determination and territorial autonomy, and groups agreeing to ceasefires are considered as traitors and political sell-outs (South 2008, 121-125). Thus, within many ethnic minority groups the ceasefire movement has created new dividing lines and new conflicts; indeed, to divide and conquer was no doubt a conscious aim of the government’s refusal to negotiate ceasefires with ethnic coalitions rather than individual groups and breakaway factions (South 2008, 119). The extent to which the ceasefires will actually bring peace is also questioned by critical ethnic leaders. As expressed by a representative of a non-ceasefire group in 2010,

The ethnic betrayal groups, they create a lot of conflict. Now they follow SPDC but they will only get kicked out [...] They would like to have peace, but it will only be worse. They have to join the SPDC military, and will have less opportunities.¹²

Besides the lack of progress with regards to the core conflict issues between ethnic minorities and the government, negative impacts in ceasefire areas have been argued to be Tatmadaw expansion into and increased militarization in ceasefire areas, and continued abuses of civilians by the Tatmadaw as well as by ceasefire groups now given a government sanction to exploit the population in their areas. Particularly in areas where control is contested, the local population has been “taxed” by government forces as well as by one or several ceasefire groups (South 2008:121, 130-132). Further, economic “development” projects have in many areas been implemented through the confiscation of land, leading to continued forced displacement, and associated with unsustainable and sometimes illegal extraction of natural resources by predatory companies, ceasefire groups and government agents. Indeed, despite the end of armed fighting the ceasefire economy has taken on, even enabled, many of the features associated with “new wars” political economy (Smith 2007, 42; Kaldor 2012; Duffield 2001).

The ambiguities of the effects of the ceasefires and the variations between different ceasefire areas can be illustrated by the PaO National Organization (PNO) ceasefire and the KIO ceasefire. The PNO ceasefire can be argued to be one of the most successful cases, in many respects. After agreeing to a ceasefire in 1991, the PNO was granted territorial control of Shan State Special Region-6, several business concessions as well as substantial governmental development assistance, for example the building and staffing of several schools. The PNO established the Ruby dragon Company to take advantage of the new economic opportunities, and has shown significant commitment in investing its revenue in community development. Local people who used to be subject to various conflict-related abuses express great support for the PNO leaders and for the ceasefire. However, critics argue that material improvements have come at the price of acquiescence with government politics. The PNO has not, since the ceasefire, actively promoted national political change or challenged the government politically. In addition, it has been argued that the expansion of government education has contributed to increased “Burmanization” of PaO communities, for example through the promotion of the use of the Burmese language (South 2008, 124; Transnational Institute 2009, 17).

The KIO, one of the major ethnic insurgency groups, signed a ceasefire agreement with the government in 1994. After the ceasefire the KIO retained control over a large territory in Kachin State, but it was quickly plagued by internal splits. As a result, authority in the KIO territory has been characterized as overlapping and indefinite, with the Tatmadaw taking quite a controlling approach (Callahan 2007, 42-44). Moreover, Kachin State has seen recurring violations of the ceasefire as well as continuing human rights abuses. Thus, the security and humanitarian situation for the people in this area has not improved as significantly as in some other ceasefire areas (South 2008, 159). The KIO has continued to demand political dialogue with the government and push for ethnic autonomy in a federal, democratic state. Thus, the KIO has not given up political demands for a national solution (Transnational Institute 2009, 17). As a consequence, South argues, the ceasefire area administered by KIO has been denied the economic opportunities and development assistance granted to the PNO (2008, 125). As a result of these shortcomings, frustration with the ceasefire quickly grew, and finally led to the resumption of armed struggle by the KIO in 2011. Today, violence in Kachin State, and the unwillingness of KIO to agree to a national ceasefire, is a major stumbling block in the ongoing peace process (International Crisis Group 2013; 2015).

¹² Interview by author, Mae Sot, Thailand, 7 November 2010.

Drawing on Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs' classification of different types of peace, it can be argued that the ceasefire agreement of the 1990s established an *unresolved peace* in many ceasefire areas. Thus, conflict behavior was regulated and violence decreased significantly, but the core political conflict issues were left unresolved (Höglund & Söderberg Kovacs 2010, 376). As the KIO example illustrates, unresolved peace may easily give rise to frustration and a resumption of armed conflict. Further, to the extent that the signing of ceasefire agreements in itself has caused new divisions and conflicts within ethnic minority groups, the post-ceasefire situation in some areas can also be described as *contested peace* (Höglund & Söderberg Kovacs 2010, 378). When considering the impact of the ceasefire movement on the Burmese civil war as a whole, it can be argued that the ceasefires of the 1990s resulted in the establishment of partial and regional peace (Höglund & Söderberg Kovacs 2010, 380). That is, while some armed groups in some areas ceased to use arms, other groups in other areas have continued to do so throughout the twenty years that has passed since the ceasefire movement of the 1990s.

Concluding remarks

The case of the Burmese ceasefire movement of the 1990s demonstrates the value as well as the limits of ceasefire agreements that do not include measures to address the key issues and root causes of the conflict. In accordance with Åkebo's findings, such ceasefires can lead to significantly reduced levels of violence and an improved security situation for people affected by war. The value of this in itself should, as examples drawn from the Burmese case illustrates, not be underestimated. Nevertheless, in the absence of political solutions and a democratic transition, ceasefires are less likely to contribute to the making of a lasting and legitimate peace (Åkebo 2013, 201-213). As the case of Burma's ceasefire areas pointedly illustrate, when core conflict issues are left unresolved, conflicts become "frozen" in a state of "no war, no peace" despite reductions in levels of armed violence (Åkebo 2013, 32; Aggestam and Björkdahl 2011, 4; Mac Ginty 2008).

Bosnia and Herzegovina: two decades of diplomatic counterinsurgencies and the struggle for political influence

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Introduction

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that officially ended on 21 November 1995 is often considered the bloodiest European war since World War II. Besides its gruesome character, the war was also one of the more complex and multi-layered conflicts, most commonly defined by the interethnic war between members of Bosniak, Croat and Serb communities who fought over territory, but which also included elements of external aggression by neighboring Serbia and Croatia, an intra-ethnic Bosniak war in Western Bosnia, and a local genocide against Bosniak men in Srebrenica. Considering the complexity of the war, it is not surprising that a peace agreement was almost impossible to negotiate. Taking place in a period of unipolarity and global dominance by the US, it is not surprising that the US chief mediator Richard Holbrooke and his diplomatic staff played a dominant role during the negotiations in Dayton (Kostic 2009; Bildt 1997; Holbrooke 1999). However, despite its supremacy, the US needed the support of the Contact Group for former Yugoslavia, particularly Russia and Germany, to bring the regional powers Serbia and Croatia to the negotiating table, and coax them into negotiate a peace agreement with Bosnian governmental representatives on the behalf of Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). As a result, the General Frameworks Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be viewed as a

structural and normative compromise between interests and demands of global, regional and local parties involved in the war in BiH.

Structurally, the enclosure of the interests of global, regional, and local parties resulted in a complex constitutional structure in the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina consisting of two entities: the *Republika Srpska* (RS), which is demographically dominated by Serbs, and the Federation BiH, which is primarily shared by Bosniak and Croat populations. The Federation BiH is further divided into ten cantons: two of which are ethnically mixed and eight which are ethnically dominated either by Bosniaks or Croats. Since the 1999 international arbitration, there is also a District of Brčko, which has an international supervisor but is formally under the direct administrative control of the state BiH. In addition, in order to ensure that no community could dictate its political will to others and to protect the national interests of each community, a complex set of veto rights was included in the complex power sharing arrangement of post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Normatively, the peace agreement has been viewed as a combination of principles for the consocietal organization of the state with a strong emphasis on communal rights in combination with liberal provisions that place emphasis on the individual rights of every citizen (Nystuen 2005; O'Brien 2005). In addition, by accommodating the political demands of each of the three communities in BiH, the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) implicitly legitimized three group narratives about the conflict, while at the same time stipulated a commitment to transitional justice and delivering truth and justice to individual victims (Williams and Scharf 2002; Kostic 2012a).

A brief history of political developments since 1995

Presence of ethnonational parties who directly opposed the implementation of DPA was from the outset detected by the external custodians of Bosnian peace as a major peacebuilding weakness. The US and UK-led international implementation of the DPA was thus from the outset envisaged as the set of diplomatic counterinsurgencies with the goal to eliminate the regime of ethnonational parties, particularly the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ), while establishing and promoting civic parties that would ensure a transition to an organization based on civic principles (Leroux-Martin 2013a; Swain 2003). In the RS during the period of 1995–2006, this involved the organization, financial support and promotion of Milorad Dodik and his Serbian Independent Social Democrats (SNSD). In the Federation BiH, the international community supported the creation of various smaller Croat parties to eliminate the HDZ's political influence among the Croats in BiH (Kostic 2012b). In addition, the US and the UK gave financial and structural support to the Social Democratic Party BiH (SDP BiH) in order to minimize the role of the main Bosniak ethno-national Party of Democratic Action (SDA). By combining political and military measures such as changing the election rules, creating governing coalitions, implementing sanctions, and removing elected officials, as well as occasionally deploying military force to raid banks and TV stations with links to the three major parties, the international community was able to weaken the power of the three main ethnonational parties (Kostic 2014). In terms of some of the key achievements, the international community managed to ensure the return of many refugees and internally displaced persons, improve the overall security situation, implement property returns, create common personal documents, form the State Court BiH with the War Crimes Chamber as well as unite entities armies into a single BiH military. Most of the state sector economy was privatized under the supervision of the IMF and the World Bank (Donais 2005), and BiH markets were liberalized and opened to global companies, although the unemployment figures remained at the high level of 40 per cent. In 2002, BiH became a member of the Council of Europe and by 2006 was viewed to be on the reform path to fulfil the requirements for EU and NATO membership. However, the assumed path towards reform would

be drastically interrupted by the escalating geopolitical struggle between the US and Russia on the global scene with spillover effects in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹³

2006 marked a watershed period in Bosnian politics. The Western-supported Milorad Dodik and his SNSD won a landslide victory in the RS against the SDS, while in the Federation BiH, an SDP candidate won the race for the Croat presidency seat defeating, with the help of urban Bosniak votes, an HDZ candidate. Despite the fact that in 2006 the SNSD stalled the police reform that was supposed to result in unified and state-managed police forces, encouraged by overall political developments in the area, in 2007 the OHR – with the backing of the US and UK – initiated the process of phasing out the veto right of entities in order to reduce the possibility for the RS to block the work and decision-making of state institutions (Leroux-Martin 2015). This was particularly important when considering the process of accession to NATO, which is strongly opposed by a majority of RS inhabitants.¹⁴ Milorad Dodik and the SNSD stopped this change by defeating the OHR in the Peace Implementation Council with the help of Russia, while provoking a rift between the US and the UK on one side and key European members and Russia on the other (Leroux-Martin 2015). In 2009, the US and UK diplomats initiated an attempt to remove Dodik and the SNSD whereby a US prosecutor working at the State Court BiH Corruption Chamber began preparing charges against Dodik and his networks of embezzlement and corruption.¹⁵ The SNSD, which won the 2010 general elections in RS, threatened to organize a referendum regarding the existence of the State Court BiH and its jurisdiction in the RS. In the political battle that ensued between the OHR and SNSD, the European Commission mediated and agreed in 2011 to initiate a structured dialogue on the judiciary in BiH, removing international judges and prosecutors from the State Court BiH in the process (Leroux-Martin 2015). Once again, the US and UK as well as the OHR were against the solution that was supported by the European members of the PIC and Russia (Leroux-Martin 2015). By 2013, NATO started a major strategic communication operation in the RS to change the populations' opinion regarding the organization, while the US and UK turned their political support towards the SDS in Republika Srpska.¹⁶ In early 2014, urban centres of the Federation BiH were hit by protests sparked by general dissatisfaction with the mismanaged privatization of state firms, high unemployment (43 per cent in 2013) and general poverty. Yet the 2014 general elections resulted in the victory of the SNSD in RS, and the Bosniak SDA and Croat HDZ in the Federation BiH. The current governing state coalition formed by the Bosniak SDA, Croat HDZ, Serb SDS, and pro-Bosnian Democratic Front (DF)¹⁷ has committed to implement the structural reforms required in order to submit an application for EU membership. In 2015, threatened with another criminal investigation into charges of corruption and embezzlement, Milorad Dodik and SNSD, supported by Russia, have initiated another attempt to conduct a referendum on the State Court BiH. The sticking issue of Bosnian NATO membership remains unresolved.

Twenty years of peaceful divisions and no justice in sight

While so much focus in the post-Dayton peacebuilding has been placed on the actors and their behavior in the process, the population's attitudinal changes have not been given much attention despite the fact that attitudes play important role during both conflict and peacebuilding (Höglund and Kovacs 2010). In terms of what unites all citizens of Bosnian and Herzegovina there is a need for more social justice and solidarity. According to a survey of 1500 respondents from 2014, 93.4

¹³ For more on the change of Russo-American relations around 2006 and possible explanations see (WikiLeaks 2015, 217-219).

¹⁴ According to my surveys in 2013, 83,3 per cent of Bosnian Serbs respondents opposed the NATO membership, while 51,8 per cent opposed the EU membership.

¹⁵ Interview with a senior OHR diplomat, 26 November 26, 2012.

¹⁶ Email correspondence with the senior NATO officer stationed at the time in Sarajevo, the information available with the author.

¹⁷ The party was created by a splinter group that left SDP BiH in 2012.

per cent of those interviewed would prefer to organize BiH as a society where individuals have less money but are relatively equal, than to live in a society of extremely rich and extremely poor individuals, while 86.3 per cent agreed that the state companies should be re-nationalized because the existing privatization harms social justice (Kostic and Komsic 2014). At the same time, views regarding the history of the conflict, transitional justice, and the relationship towards the state traditionally vary across communities (Kostic 2012). For example, in a survey from 2013 when respondents were asked if they agree with the ruling by the International War Crime Tribunal for former Yugoslavia on the local genocide in Srebrenica, 76 per cent of the Bosniaks, 67 per cent of Bosnian Croats and only 10 per cent of Bosnian Serbs responded positively. Regarding state symbols, in a survey from 2015, 86 per cent of Bosniaks reported being proud of the BiH flag and the coat of arms, in comparison to 25 per cent of Croats and 6 per cent of Serbs, which in essence represents only a slight change in comparison to the situation from ten years ago (see Kostic 2007, 305). Finally, when asked about their preferred way to administratively organize the state, 78 per cent of Bosniaks preferred a centralized state without entities and cantons. Among Croats the most preferred option is the creation of three entities, with 46 per cent choosing that option while centralized state is preferred by 33 per cent of the respondents. Finally, 56 per cent of Bosnian Serbs indicated that an independent RS is their preferred solution. In summary, twenty years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina could at best be described in terms of a polarized and unjust peace (see Höglund and Kovacs 2010), which is at risk of further destabilization by the geopolitical frictions between Russia and the US and their local proxies who are battling for influence within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

20 years since the Dayton Peace Agreement – Old conflict issues, new arenas of conflict

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In the last two decades, we have witnessed what probably can be characterized as the most comprehensive peacebuilding exercise conducted thus far, the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia Herzegovina. The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia Herzegovina as it is formally named, was signed in November of 1995 in Dayton Ohio, and ratified in Paris in December of 1995 (The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia Herzegovina 1995). It had ended the 3½ year long bitter fighting between Bosnian Muslims (Bosnjaks), Serbs and Croats and introduced a number of provisions defining the future of the Bosnian state and society. It included annexes on military aspects such as withdrawal of forces and cessation of hostilities, a new map of the country specifying which areas are to be controlled by which group, a new constitution based on principles of consociational democracy specifying division of powers and electoral procedures, and a couple of provisions specifying the role of the international community in the coming implementation process. In addition, the agreement included provisions for two more specific issues, return of refugees and protection of national monuments.

The implementation of the agreement has been, and still is, a difficult and troublesome endeavor. The new constitution divided the country into two ethnically dominated entities with comprehensive self-rule, Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina, and only a selected few joint state institutions and functions. Entities, and in particular Republika Srpska, have since the very start of post-Dayton Bosnia worked against any strengthening of the state-level government and its institutions. The Bosnian state has managed to survive only because of heavy international involvement that has safeguarded against a partition of the country. First, there was a

large NATO led military force with the task of overseeing the implementation of the military provisions of the agreement. Then, there was the Office of the High Representative of the International Community in Bosnia Herzegovina (the OHR), an office with the final authority to interpret the agreement and its non-military provisions. Finally, Bosnia has seen probably the largest gathering of aid agencies, governmental organizations and NGO's from all over the world, throughout the 1990s and even 2000s. The massive international involvement was necessary for the implementation of the agreement and Bosnia has quite commonly been referred to as a semi-protectorate in the first post-war years. Bosnian peace was being imposed from above and the political power vested in the OHR has been used a number of times to ban politicians and officials from office, as well as to create and implement legislation, in order to keep the process on track.¹⁸ Poor functioning of the government institutions has led to routine discussions about the viability of the Dayton Bosnia, and the agreement has been contested and challenged by voices arguing that it should be abolished, or at least thoroughly reformed. Now, 20 years after signing of the agreement, Dayton agreement is still being questioned as the Bosnian Serbs under the leadership of Milorad Dodik continue on the path to secession (Zuvela 2015), threatening to split up the country, once again destabilizing the region and perhaps even causing a new armed conflict (Lyon 2015). While successful in stopping the war in 1995, the Dayton agreement obviously hasn't resolved the conflict between the three ethnic groups and the effect on the ground is a weak and poorly performing state with dire prospects for the future.

It is, indeed, an interesting question if Bosnian perpetual political problems are a result of poor implementation of the agreement, poor design of the agreement, heavy international involvement which has caused a sort of dependency syndrome, or the influence of the regional powers on Bosnian politics. A solid argument can be made for all four possible explanations, and most likely, it is the combination of all of them. There is no shortage of critics of the Dayton peace in Bosnia, nor in the academic community. However, the Dayton agreement did stop what seemed to be an unstoppable war and it did create a country where three former bitter enemies coexist. In addition, there are numerous examples of reconciliation between the groups on an individual and communal level. Bosnjaks, Croats and Serbs have on occasion found a way to coexist and even work together and prosper in music, arts, sports and culture, and even through workers unions and war veteran associations (B52 2012). There are plenty of good examples of successful refugee return and communities where ethnic groups function well together. The question is, why hasn't the next natural step taken place? All the preconditions for a transition towards a more peaceful society are in place, yet two decades after the end of the armed conflict the political system on the national level is still deadlocked in the same questions that have plagued the country two decades ago, and peace and reconciliation throughout the society are not occurring as designers of the agreement intended. Rather, there is growing support for the claim that the groups are growing further even apart from each other on the main political issues, territorial and political structure of the country.

The answer to this anomaly, where lack of violence and long period of negative peace, as well as plenty of exposure of groups to each other does not lead to significant improvement of inter-group relations, might be found in the dynamics of Bosnian post-war politics in Bosnia. Even though the conflict between the three ethnic groups has changed from armed struggle to a non-violent political and social conflict, the conflict lines and conflict issues remain the same. The conflict can be characterized as "unresolved" or "frozen" conflict. At the core, the question of ethnic group cohesion and animosity towards other ethnic groups is as present today as it was in the mid-1990s. The conflict has simply moved from one arena to others.

¹⁸ For more on the OHR and use of OHR powers, see Dzenan Sahovic. 2007. *Socio-Cultural Viability of Intervention in War-Torn Societies. A Case Study of Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

An extreme case in point illustrating this is memorialization of the wartime suffering. In recent years, almost two decades after the war, all three sides are increasingly disagreeing on facts of history. The issue of genocide in Srebrenica in 1995 is the best example how different groups realign on opposite side of the issue in order to promote their wartime agendas. More than 8000 men and boys were brutally murdered by the Serb forces after the fall of Srebrenica enclave in Eastern Bosnia in July of 1995. This was the most vicious war crime in the Bosnian war and it was a starting point of international action that eventually led to signing of the Dayton agreement. Since then, thousands of bodies have been found in numerous mass-graves in the area and identified by the internationally led Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP). A number of Serb generals, soldiers and political leadership have been convicted of this war crime in the Hague Tribunal, and international courts have ruled that Srebrenica massacre is an act of genocide. Yet, Republika Srpska refuses to acknowledge this to this day. Strategies for dealing with the issue have changed over the years, and included flat-out denial that Srebrenica ever occurred, practical obstruction through refusal to grant permits for building of the Srebrenica burial ground and memorial center, a game of numbers arguing that number of victims is far fewer than 8000 and that the Serb casualties have been as large, and many more. Every year, on 11th of July when memorial services commemorating the Srebrenica genocide take place in Srebrenica and thousands of Bosnjaks gather to bury the newly identified bodies, the local Serb population of Srebrenica simply ignores the event and Republika Srpska political leadership fails to attend. Regardless of context where it is mentioned, Srebrenica genocide is denied, diminished, or ignored (Sahovic 2015).

On the other hand, the Bosnjak community is doing its utmost to push the Srebrenica genocide as high on the agenda as possible, as a tool of de-legitimizing Republika Srpska. Burial ceremonies and commemorations of the genocide go far beyond memorialization and mourning for the benefit of survivors and the families of victims. Srebrenica has become a much larger political spectacle. While numbers vary from year to year, it is common that more than 50 000 visitors attend the event. Observers have noted that these mass-gatherings have become ground-zero for Bosnjak nationalism, and Srebrenica is becoming for Bosnjaks what Kosovo-polje is for Serbs – a place of birth of the nation. The notion that recognition of Srebrenica as genocide by the Serbs also means admission of guilt for the war itself is common in the Bosnjak community and a lot of political capital is invested in forcing the Serb side to acknowledge Srebrenica as genocide. So much so that a UN resolution naming Srebrenica a genocide, which was put on the Security Council table by the UK and vetoed by the Russians in the summer of 2015, became the largest political issue of 2015, the year of 20th anniversary since the war (Sahovic 2015).

In other words, both communities and their political elites are using Srebrenica as an arena for continued conflict along the same 20-year-old conflict lines.

Yet another example is the city of Mostar and its cityscape. The Croat forces destroyed the Old Bridge in Mostar in 1993. The bridge was joint cultural heritage of all three ethnic groups, yet the destruction by the Croat side, and the fact that it is heritage of the Ottoman rule in Bosnia, made it into an important Bosnjak symbol. In late 1990s and early 2000s, the bridge and the old town in Mostar were rebuilt with the help of the World Bank and UNESCO, a process eagerly pushed for by the Bosnjak community. The Croat community in the divided city was largely against rebuilding of the bridge and the old town with its mosques, viewing it as a victory for the Bosnjak side as it made the Mostar city center into a Bosnjak area. Rather, the Croat community invested in building of a large cathedral with an out of proportion sized tower, and a cross statue on a hill above the town. Slowly, the architecture and the cityscape of Mostar, together with numerous nationalist graffiti, became a sort of a battlefield where Croats and Bosnjaks fight for visual domination over the city (Armakolas 2012).

These issues, burial ceremonies in Srebrenica and architecture and cityscape of Mostar, although seemingly minor when considered in light of questions of war or peace, are amongst the most important battlefields of post-Dayton Bosnia. To be, or not to be, for Bosnia Herzegovina is asked and answered there. The same conflict continues, yet without guns and casualties. International community and the OHR have successfully ended the war and moved the conflict from an armed one to a political one. Arenas have changed, but the underlying conflict remains the same.

This notion of continuation of war by peaceful means is not a complete novelty. This is reversing of Clausewitz famous “war is continuation of politics by other means” (Howard et al. 1984, 87). Yet, we do not fully understand the mechanisms of conflict when one arena is closed and other open. This is commonly visible when diplomats, peacebuilding practitioners and academics underestimate the political importance of seemingly less important events in post-conflict societies. A sports event, or a cultural event, or a history book, can indeed become an issue of significance for the question of peace or war. One new interesting notion might help us understand the mechanisms deeper. Recently, there has been an increasing debate about peace and resilience (Johansson 2015). The question asked by scholars is what makes peace a resilient peace, i.e., able to withstand jolts and stresses, and change and evolve, without re-eruption of violence. While this is the main use of the term resilient peace thus far, there is space for thinking about resilient war as well. What makes a conflict resilient, i.e., able to withstand jolts and stresses, external pressures and uncontrollable events. Can we understand the Dayton Peace Agreement and the international involvement in Bosnia Herzegovina as a “jolt” to the conflict? An argument can be made that entire investment in Bosnian peace has achieved little more than close one particular arena, the battlefield, while moving the conflict into political, cultural, social and economic arenas. This is of course not so little in itself, considering the complexity of the conflict in 1990s. However, Bosnia is an interesting case study, as our understanding of how imposed peace influences post-war societies in broader terms is not good enough to inform future complex peacebuilding efforts.

The natural empirical and policy relevant follow-up question is, of course, what makes a conflict a resilient conflict? There are three usual suspects, as in all social sciences, actors, institutions and culture. Similarly as many have studied actors, institutions and cultures and how they transform from a violence to peace, there might be a need for studies of how and why actors, institutions and cultures resist peaceful developments and remain locked in a conflict despite decades of coexistence in a non-violent environment. What are the conditions that enable sustained conflict lines, albeit in different arenas?

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