

Reasonable Expectations: Civil Society as Peacemaker

Findings from a Multi-Country Study

A special event in cooperation with:
Project on Leadership and Building State Capacity Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars &
Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

Friday, March 11th
2:00-4:00 PM

Johns Hopkins SAIS
Nitze Building, Kenney Auditorium
1740 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Forum Details:

Civil society has been touted as an important component to addressing many issues in the developing world, such as poverty, state fragility, post-conflict recovery, and authoritarianism. But what exactly is meant by “civil society”? The concept has been associated with various terms from faith-based and non-governmental organizations to the private sector, and from “people power” to warlords. In her new book, *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*, scholar-practitioner Thania Paffenholz analyzes the roles and impacts of civil society in peacebuilding efforts in 13 conflict-affected countries. Resulting from a 3-year effort by a multi-national group of 20 researchers, the book defines civil society, identifies which civil society roles and functions are most effective at differing stages of conflicts, and shows what contextual factors shape how effective civil societies can be. The book provides a basis in actual experience for utilizing civil society’s comparative advantages, for designing civil society programs that have maximum leverage in achieving peace, and for informing donor strategies to assist and fund civil society actors.

Speaker:

Thania Paffenholz

Lecturer and Senior Researcher, Peace, Conflict and Development, Graduate School of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland

Discussant:

Lisa Schirch

Director, 3D Security, Eastern Mennonite University

Moderator:

Michael Lund

Senior Specialist, Conflict and Peacebuilding, Management Systems International, Inc.

Bios:

Thania Paffenholz

Thania Paffenholz is a political scientist by training with a Ph.D. in international relations. Paffenholz has focused her research on conflict analysis and peacebuilding, the conflict-development nexus, the role of development actors in peacebuilding, the aid system's role in peacebuilding/conflict, international peacemaking strategies, and evaluation in peacebuilding. After working as a research fellow at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (1992-1996), she was a peacebuilding officer in the Delegation of the European Commission in Kenya (1996-2000); Director of the Center for Peacebuilding at the think tank swisspeace in Berne, Switzerland from 2000-2003, where she was also a Member of the Executive Board. She was a member of the Board of the Lessons Learned Unit, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (1996-2002), Council Member of the International Peace Research Association (1994-2000), and Member of the Executive Committee of the Peace Studies Section of the International Studies Association (2004-2006). Thania Paffenholz has edited and authored various other books and articles on peacebuilding and the role of development in conflict and peacebuilding, including *'Aid for Peace'* (Nomos 2007), and *"Peacebuilding: A Field Guide"* (Lynne Rienner Publishers 2001).

Lisa Schirch

Lisa Schirch is the founding director of the 3D Security Initiative and a professor of peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University's graduate Center for Justice & Peacebuilding. The 3D Security Initiative is a civil society voice on US security policy. 3D works to gain support for more extensive diplomatic initiatives, smarter development strategies, and human security-oriented defense strategies. 3D connects policymakers with global civil society networks, facilitates civil-military dialogue and provides a peacebuilding lens on current policy issues. A former Fulbright Fellow in East and West Africa, Schirch has worked in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Taiwan, Ghana, Kenya, Brazil, and 15 other countries. She is the author of 5 books on peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Schirch holds a B.A. in International Relations from the University of Waterloo, Canada, and a M.S. and Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University. She is a frequent public speaker and has TV and radio experience discussing U.S. foreign policy.

Michael Lund

Michael Lund specializes in the sources of intra-state conflicts and fragile states, conflict prevention and statebuilding, and avoiding post-war relapses into conflicts. He is author of *Preventing Violent Conflicts* (USIP Press, 1996) and co-editor/contributor for five books, most recently, *Engaging Fragile States* (Wilson Press, 2010), *Security and Development: Critical Connections* (Lynne Rienner, 2009) and *Talking Through Transitions: Engaging Leaders to Build Peace* (Wilson Press, forthcoming 2011). Lund's field-level assessments and policy studies in sub-Saharan Africa, the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, and East Asia have been commissioned by USAID, the U.S. State Department, the Political Instability Task Force (C.I.A.), United Nations (UNDP, UNDP), European Union, World Bank, OSCE, OECD-DAC, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), DFID (UK), CIDA (Canada), the Council on Foreign Relations, Carnegie Commission for Preventing Deadly Conflicts, and other organizations. He has taught at Cornell, UCLA, the University of Maryland, George Mason University, and Johns Hopkins SAIS. Lund has a M.Th. from Yale University and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago.

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