

**George Mason University**

**School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR)**

**CONF 746: Peacebuilding**

Semester: Fall 2015  
Class Time: Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm  
Location: Arlington Campus, Founders Hall, Rm. 210  
Instructor: *Dennis J.D. Sandole, Ph.D.*  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The primary objective of this course is to explore the complex phenomenon of Peacebuilding, a challenging subject matter and enterprise. Peacebuilding not only comprises multiple levels, actors, and sectors -- and, therefore, multiple, often competing definitions -- it is also the most ambitious, the most "macro" expression of the field of conflict and conflict resolution (CAR), operationally as well as conceptually. Most significantly, Peacebuilding tends to be a *failure* in practice. A related objective, therefore, is to explore why this is the case and whether the practice (and perhaps conceptualization) of Peacebuilding can be improved.

Accordingly, we will endeavor to distill from the appropriate literature the essential elements of *Peacebuilding*, exploring the analytical differences but also substantive overlap and possible linkages between various components of what might be termed "*long-term Peacebuilding*" or Peacebuilding "*writ large*": (a) *violent conflict prevention (preventive diplomacy)*; (b) *conflict management (peacekeeping)*; (c) *conflict settlement (coercive peacemaking)*; (d) *conflict resolution (collaborative peacemaking)* and (e) *conflict transformation (postconflict Peacebuilding or Peacebuilding "writ small")*.

The discussion will include types of Peacebuilding such as **reactive** Peacebuilding -- the most common variant -- which is what 3<sup>rd</sup> party interveners attempt either *after* violent conflict erupts or ceases (e.g., the ethnic wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the early 1990s). In reactive Peacebuilding "*writ large*," members of the concerned international community focus initially

on one particular type of intervention (in Bosnia, conflict *management* through the United Nations Protection Force [UNPROFOR]), but if that fails, they may then move on to other types (in Bosnia, conflict *settlement* through NATO bombing of Serbian forces and then, following the Dayton Peace Accords, *peace enforcement* with the Implementation Force [IFOR], followed by the Stabilization Force [SFOR] and currently the European Union Force [EUFOR]). *Reactive* Peacebuilding may develop into the basis for one possible trajectory toward conflict *transformation* (i.e., postconflict Peacebuilding or Peacebuilding "*writ small*": in Bosnia, through the conflict parties taking the steps necessary to achieve eventual membership in the European Union).

By contrast, **proactive** Peacebuilding "*writ large*" is what 3<sup>rd</sup> party interveners would attempt *before* the eruption of violent conflict. In this case, which is strikingly uncommon, interveners design and implement an intervention into a *potential* violent conflict, revealed through early warning, to achieve violent conflict *prevention* -- prevent "the house from catching on fire." If that fails, interveners may then decide to move first to conflict *management* (preventing the fire from spreading) and, if that fails, to conflict *settlement* (coercively suppressing the fire).

If, however, interveners' initial efforts to achieve *proactive prevention* succeed (e.g., the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force [UNPREDEP] in Macedonia), they may then decide to go forward with a strategy of *multi-track*, multi-sectorial interventions in which all categories of Peacebuilding are designed and implemented from the outset *within* a conflict *transformation* framework.

The course highlights *proactive* Peacebuilding as an example of what conflict resolution pioneer John W. Burton refers to as conflict *prevention* and Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall privilege as *cosmopolitan conflict resolution*. Arguably, it is *proactive* Peacebuilding that constitutes the ultimate antidote to violent extremism or terrorism.

The major premise underlying the course is that "national interest" is *global interest* and vice versa, especially within the current parameters of the "*Global Problematique*" -- a matrix of interconnected, interdependent challenges that no one state or international actor can adequately address on its own, but

only by *cooperating*, *coordinating*, and *collaborating* with others. Moreover, to achieve any objective along the violent conflict *prevention* – conflict *transformation* gradient at the local, state, interstate or regional levels, policymakers must pay attention to the global level as well. As Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall (2011, p. 129) put it:

Conflict formations run through our political communities *at all levels*, from the global to the national to the local. Moreover, these conflict formations are *intertwined* ... there is no possibility [therefore,] of addressing local and regional conflicts without also taking the global and international setting into account (emphasis added).

Finally, the course emphasizes that to get the design and implementation of Peacebuilding right, we have to get the preliminary conflict analysis right as well.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Prerequisites:** CONF 501 or 801, or permission of the instructor.
2. **Assessment:** Students will complete the following:
  - A. A midterm paper on the failures of Peacebuilding, addressing what tends to be omitted from such interventions and, therefore, what needs to be included. In preparation for this assignment, students are asked to complete the appropriate course readings (e.g., both books by Autesserre; Ch. 3 in Beswick and Jackson; Ch. 4 in Ramsbotham, et al; and Chs. 1-4 in Sandole, 2010: see below). In addition, students should watch and listen to three videos: a TED Talk by Séverine Autesserre on "To Solve Mass Violence, Look to Locals"; a TEDx Talk by Tim Phillips on "Neuroscience and Social Conflict"; and a TED Talk by Stefan Wolff on "The Path to Ending Ethnic Conflicts" **(15-20 double-spaced pages). Due Wednesday, 11 November 2015 (40 percent of final grade).**

Séverine Autesserre's TED Talk can be accessed at:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/severine\\_autesserre\\_to\\_solve\\_mass\\_viole](http://www.ted.com/talks/severine_autesserre_to_solve_mass_viole)

[nce look to locals?language=en](#)

Tim Phillips' TEDx Talk can be accessed at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfljJGTVcKE>

Stefan Wolff's TED Talk can be accessed at:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/stefan\\_wolff\\_the\\_path\\_to\\_ending\\_ethnic\\_conflicts](https://www.ted.com/talks/stefan_wolff_the_path_to_ending_ethnic_conflicts)

- B. A *final paper* in which students continue the analysis they initiated in their midterm papers and, *on the basis of all relevant readings*, design a Peacebuilding intervention into a particular intractable conflict (e.g., ISIS in Iraq and Syria, Israel/Palestine, Taliban and ISIS in Afghanistan). In their designs, students are asked to pay careful attention to the various actors participating in the intervention to perform a variety of tasks either at the same time and/or sequenced at different points across time. Finally, students should indicate how optimally they would achieve **cooperation, coordination, and collaboration** among those multi-track actors (20-25 pages; 50 percent of final grade; due 9 December 2015).

**NOTE:** Since these two (2) papers are meant, among other things, to demonstrate that students have been in the course, *the papers should contain appropriate references to course concepts and the corresponding readings.* For further clarification -- including about the GMU Honor Code (e.g., avoiding any hint of **plagiarism** at all costs) -- please feel free to consult with the instructor.

- C. Students will also present on the readings required for the course (see below list) and, in general, participate in class discussions (10 percent of final grade).
3. **Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 7:15-8:00 pm and by appointment.
4. **Withdrawal:** The last day to drop the course without incurring a tuition penalty is 8 September 2015.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Students will be asked to read one article, Dennis J.D. Sandole's "A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach," *Peace and Conflict Studies*, December 1998, vol. 5, no.2, pp. 1-30 (which can be accessed online at: <http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/sandole.htm>); and then to examine the following books as best as personal time constraints allow:

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson (2012). *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. New York: Crown Business/Random House.

Autesserre, Séverine (2010). *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge (UK) and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Autesserre, Séverine (2014). *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge (UK) and New York: Cambridge University.

Beswick, Danielle and Paul Jackson (2011). *Conflict, Security and Development: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.

Ghani, Ashraf and Clare Lockhart (2009). *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Junne, Gerd and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) (2004). *Postconflict Development: Meeting New Challenges*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Lederach, John Paul (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) Press.

Lederach, John Paul (2010). *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace. (Reprint Edition)*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Paffenholz, Thania (2010). *Civil Society & Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Paris, Roland and Timothy D. Sisk (eds.) (2009). *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*. London and New York: Routledge.

Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (3rd Edition). Cambridge (UK) and Malden (MA): Polity Press.

Sandole, Dennis J.D. (2010). *Peacebuilding: Preventing Violent Conflict in a Complex World*. Cambridge (UK) and Malden (MA): Polity Press.

Schirch, Lisa (2013). *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward A Participatory Approach to Human Security*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Wenger, Andreas and Daniel Möckli (2003). *Conflict Prevention: The Untapped Potential of the Business Sector*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Zelizer, Craig (ed.) (2013). *Integrated Peacebuilding: Innovative Approaches to Transforming Conflict*. Boulder: Westview Press/Perseus Books Group.

***NOTE: Clearly, it would be unrealistic to assume that all students would have the opportunity to read, digest and discuss all of these readings within the relatively brief span of one semester. However, given the failure of Peacebuilding in general and, therefore, the obvious need to enhance intervention outcomes, students should be made aware of at least a "nonrepresentative sample" of the relevant literature that can be useful to them later as "tools of the trade" in their professional careers!***

### Course Structure

2 Sep: Introduction.  
Student Expectations.  
Course Overview.

9 Sep: The Ontology of Peacebuilding: What is it?

- A. 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Objectives. Peacebuilding "*writ large*".
  1. Conflict Prevention [Preventive Diplomacy].
  2. Conflict Management [Peacekeeping].
  3. Conflict Settlement [Coercive Peacemaking].
  4. Conflict Resolution [Collaborative Peacemaking].
  5. Conflict Transformation [Postconflict Peacebuilding/Peacebuilding "*writ small*"].
- B. Negative vs. Positive Peace.
- C. Minimalist vs. Maximalist Peacebuilding.
- D. Peacebuilding "*writ small*" vs. Peacebuilding "*writ large*"/Long-term Peacebuilding.

Read:

Sandole, *Peacebuilding*, Ch. 1.

Schirch, *Conflict Assessment & Peacebuilding Planning*, Glossary (pp. xi-xiv) and Ch. 1

Zelizer, *Integrated Peacebuilding*, Chs. 1-2.

16 Sep: No Class.

23 Sep: Peacebuilding's Domain: Protracted Conflict.

- A. Worldwide: Anticipated trends in *identity* - ethnic, racial, religious -- and Other Conflicts. Terrorism: "Clashes of Civilization"?
  1. Relations between Europe's Muslim communities and dominant ingroups.
  2. Global distribution of extremist groups, Including the Islamic State.
  3. Global refugee crisis.
- B. Broader Conflict Space: Impact of Environmental Degradation and Resource Scarcities, plus Natural Disasters (e.g., tsunamis, hurricanes, wild fires, etc.).  
US Department of Defense: "Global warming is a *threat multiplier!*"

Read:

Ramsbotham et al., *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*,  
Ch. 3.

30 Sep: Sources of Failure of Peacebuilding.

- A. Gender.
- B. Private Sector.
- C. Liberal Peacebuilding (Top-Down) Paradigm.
- D. Deep-Rooted Causes and Conditions.

Watch:

Autesserre's TED Talk, "To Solve Mass Violence,  
Look to Locals."

Phillips' TEDx Talk, "Neuroscience and Social  
Conflict."

Wolff's TED Talk, "The Path to Ending Ethnic  
Conflict."

Read:

Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo*.

Autesserre, *Peaceland*.

7 Oct: Peacebuilding's Failures, cont'd.

14 Oct: No Class (Columbus Day Holiday).

21 Oct: Enhancing Peacebuilding's Outcomes.

- A. Frameworks to Facilitate Comprehensive Conflict  
Analysis/Assessment.
  - 1. Three Levels of Conflict Reality.
  - 2. Nested Paradigm.
  - 3. Three Pillar Framework (3PF).
- B. Addressing Peacebuilding's Deficits.
  - 1. Conducting a Gender Analysis.
  - 2. Addressing the Deep-Rooted Causes and  
Conditions of Violent Conflict.
  - 3. Incorporating the Private Sector in  
Peacebuilding Interventions.
  - 4. Ensuring that Peacebuilding is Bottom-Up as  
well as Top-Down.



## Read:

Beswick and Jackson, *Conflict, Security, and Development*, Ch. 3.

Ramsbotham et al., *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Chs. 1-2, 4.

Sandole, "A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution."

Sandole, *Peacebuilding*, Chs. 2-4.

Schirch, *Conflict Assessment & Peacebuilding Planning*, Chs. 2-10.

28 Oct: Enhancing Peacebuilding's Outcomes, cont'd.

4 Nov: Brainstorming Deep-Rooted Causes and Conditions.

- A. Individual Level of Explanation (Factors from Biology, Neuroscience, Physiology, Psychology, Psychiatry).
- B. Societal Level (Factors from Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology).
- C. International Level (Factors from IR).
- D. Global/Ecological Level (Global Religion, Technology, Global Finance, Global Warming, Environmental Degradation, Increased Scarcity of Non-Renewable Resources).

11 Nov: Brainstorming Peacebuilding Scenarios.

- A. Identify a *Conflict* that Could Worsen during the Next 5-10 Years (*Pillar 1*). *Options*:
  - 1. US/EU Conflict with ISIS in Syria and Iraq.
  - 2. Israel-Palestine Conflict.
  - 3. US/Afghan Government Conflict with the Taliban and ISIS in Afghanistan.
- B. Explore Conflict Trajectories:
  - 1. Identify the Factors -- "*Drivers*" -- that Could Make the Conflict Worse

or Better (*Pillar 2*).

2. Construct a Scenario Indicating How these Factors Could Combine to Make the Conflict Worse (Worst-Case Scenario = Negative Trajectory) or Better (Best-Case Scenario = Positive Trajectory) (*Pillar 2*).

- C. Design a Strategy for Responding to these Factors ("Drivers") to Either Undermine their Potential Negative Impact or Enhance their Positive Impact on the Conflict (*Pillar 3*).

Read:

Lederach, *Building Peace*, All.

Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*, All.

Ramsbotham, et al., *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Chs. 5-10.

Sandole, *Peacebuilding*, Ch. 5.

Schirch, *Conflict Assessment & Peacebuilding Planning*, Chs. 11-13.

**11 Nov: Midterm Papers Due.**

- 18 Nov: Peacebuilding Scenarios. Specific Components of Peacebuilding: *Addressing State Fragility through Statebuilding.*

Read:

Acemoglu and Robinson, *Why Nations Fail*, All.

Ghani and Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, All.

Parris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*, All.

- 25 Nov: Peacebuilding Scenarios. Specific Components:

- A. *Role of Civil Society.*

Read:

Paffenholz, *Civil Society & Peacebuilding*, All.

- B. *Role of the Business Community.*

Read:

Wenger and Möckli, *Conflict Prevention: The Untapped*

*Potential of the Business Sector*, All.  
McDonald, Ch. 6 in Zelizer, *Integrated Peacebuilding*.

2 Dec: Peacebuilding Scenarios. Specific Components:

- A. *Cosmopolitan Conflict Resolution*
- B. *Development*.
- C. *Approaches to Regional and Global Governance*.

Read:

Beswick and Jackson, *Conflict, Security and Development*, Chs. 1-2, 4-9.

June and Verkoren, *Postconflict Development*, All.

Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Chs. 11-20.

Zelizer, *Integrated Peacebuilding*, Chs. 1-5, 7-13.

D. Integration, Sequencing, and Coordination.  
Wrapping Up

**9 Dec: Final Papers Due.**