



Implementing Peace Agreements: Interdisciplinary Approaches on How to Measure Success and Failure

RESEARCH ROUND TABLE

THURSDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2009, 9.15-12.30PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, MAGEE CAMPUS

9.15: Welcome & Coffee, Introduction and rationale of Round Table

9.30-10.10: Dr Brandon Hamber (INCORE) and Dr Kenneth Bush (INCORE),
'Mapping the Peacebuilding Evaluation Field'

Relatively recently a literature has emerged, in part driven by donors, which attempts to evaluate the success and failure of peacebuilding initiatives. This paper maps this field of study and provides insight to its methodologies and controversies

10.10-10.50: Dr Chris Lamont (TJI)
'Images of Compliance in International Relations and International Law'

Compliance is when an actor's behaviour conforms to a given rule or norm. This paper will examine theoretical approaches to understanding compliance in both IR and IL scholarship. Competing causal pathways to compliance outcomes will be explored that identify material and ideational variables.

10.50 - 11.30: Professor Christine Bell (TJI),
'Assessing the Success and Failure of Peace Agreements: The Story this far'

An emergent literature on the success and failure of peace agreements has begun to emerge, with significant policy implications. This paper examines this literature and suggests a range of measures that might be used to measure success and failure of peace agreements if these are viewed as constitutional documents.

11.30-12.30: Summation by Ms Catherine O'Rourke (TJI) and Discussion

The relationship between the presentations will be explored, and the discussion expanded to contribute to knowledge of how peace agreement / process success and failure could be measured and the ways in which measurements construct and idea of what a positive outcome looks like.

While the round table is open to participation (subject to numbers), it will be attended by a number of academics whose research connects with evaluation of specific peace agreements who will be asked specifically to contribute to the discussion.

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BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

The project run by Catherine O'Rourke and Christine Bell, funded by the British Academy, aims to produce a 'human definition' of success and failure of peace agreements, and to illustrate how that definition relates to other possible ways measuring success or failure.

Background to the Project

Post Cold War years have witnessed the proliferation of peace agreements addressing violent social conflict. Since 1990 646 such documents, spanning 85 jurisdictions have been negotiated (Bell 'On the Law of Peace' 2008). Peace agreements constitute the prevalent international approach to ending conflicts occurring primarily within state borders. Literature on peace agreement success and failure is only beginning to emerge, with some of the following conclusions:

- There is high degree of policy and scholarly disagreement over how to measure the 'success' of 'failure' of peace agreements.
- There is considerable dispute over whether a peace agreement should be measured for its capacity to deliver short-term goals such as an end to deaths in conflict, or longer-term goals such as a level of democracy or good governance, the geographic spread of 'peace' benefits, increased democratic dialogue, and increased capacity to resolve disputes without international involvement.
- Within each conception of peace there are further internal disputes: how to count the agreement's ability to stop deaths in conflict for more than five years; how to measure and understand what factors might have been determining with regard to the sustenance or collapse of the ceasefire.
- As regards measuring a conception of peace as constitutionalism, the question is whether this peace can be measured quantitatively at all.

The current project aims to work as a pilot project to examine a 'human definition' of success and failure which will be compared with quantitative and qualitative indicators for assessing the success or failure of peace agreements.

Project Events

As part of the project a number of research round tables will be run. The first of these aims to further the Transitional Justice Institute's commitment to interdisciplinarity as furthered by discussion around the different disciplinary frameworks that constrains what research questions are asked and answered. This round table aims to begin a conversation over the different literatures which have some relevance to how success and failure of peace agreements and peace processes might be measured.