

Conflict Transformation: Reconciliation versus divided societies

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A Smart Power Approach
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Dr. Sabine Collmer
George C. Marshall Center

Content

- ❖ Divided Societies: Why reconciliation?
- ❖ The Process
- ❖ The Tools

Divided societies

Historical cases:

- South Africa
- Burundi / Rwanda
- Fiji
- Morocco
- Argentina

Political dimension:
transformation towards
reform: -- peace and
stability...



Characteristics of deeply divided societies*

- Societal cohesion and identity is attached less to the nation-state than to lower-level entities (clan, ethnicity, religion, geographic/regional affiliation)
- In conflict situations, people seek security in strengthening the group's internal cohesion and in sharpening definition of external threats and enemies.
- These dynamics help create *factionalization* and *diffusion of power*.
- Long-standing “*protracted*” conflicts (and fears) with the “*enemy*” next door
- “Intervention” is legally restricted, lack of adequate concepts and modalities for intervention...

Reconciliation – initial take

- R~ is ...”a way to transform individuals, and the whole of society.”*
- “Generally speaking, reconciliation describes coming together; it is the antithesis of falling or growing apart”**

* Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu (2007); **Daly/ Sarkin (2007)

Case study: Ex-Yugoslavia

*`Reconciliation is for priests.
I tell people 'hate each other, just
don't kill each other!' –*

*Zarko Puhovski**

* in: Nicole Bryant: Reconciliation in former Yugoslavia. 2010.

Or ...

“Reconciliation is not just healing relationships between people or groups, but within yourself, with the life you have and the choices you have made”

(Ivan, Croat war veteran and peace activist, in:
Bryant 2010:171)

Why reconciliation?

Desmond Tutu
on forgiveness...



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raG6eLL-LM0&feature=related>

The Process of Reconciliation

John Paul Lederach

**Prof. of International
Peacebuilding,
University of Notre
Dame, Indiana**

„Building Peace“

1997

**„The Little Book of
Conflict
Transformation“**

2003



>> Pioneering work on conflict transformation, Lederach has helped design and conduct training programs in 25 countries across five continents.

„The Building of Relationship“

No mechanical formula:

„Anyone who has lived in settings of protracted conflict or engaged in peacemaking activities in divided societies knows that standardized formulas do not work“.

>> Need: to address the unique human dimensions !

Paradox: 'Neighbors' locked into long-standing hostile interaction, deeprooted animosity, severe stereotyping....

>> Concepts must be responsive to the subjective realities of people!

>> **Call for innovation:**

Not mechanisms to minimize the contact of conflict groups, but a catalyst for the reconciliation process is needed: →

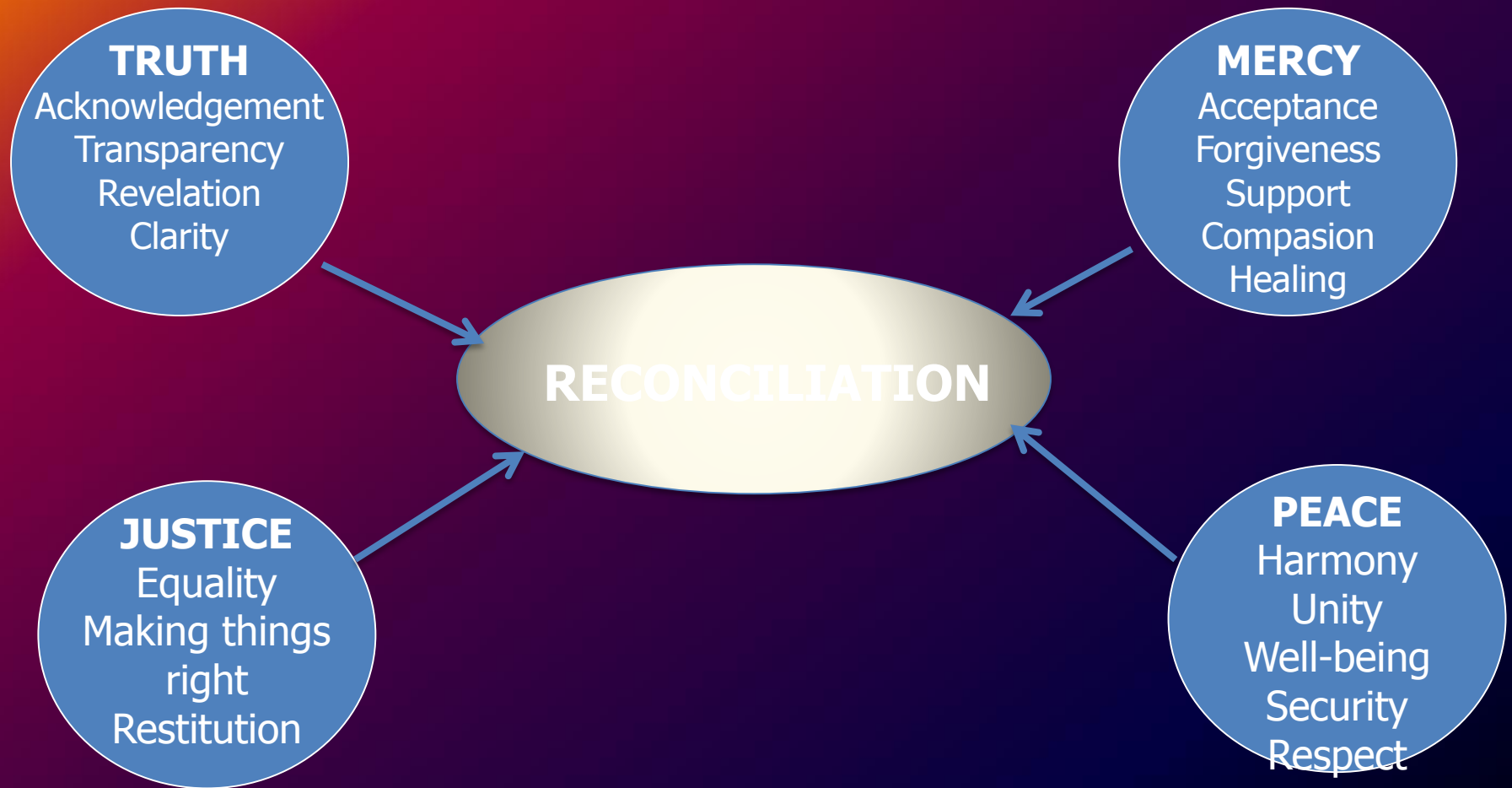
....tools that *„engage the sides of the conflict with each other as humans-in-relationship“*

>> view: protracted conflict is a „system“ → systemic, holistic approach!

3 Elements of the process:

- Relationships (after conflict) are key!
 - Acknowledging the grief, the memory of injustice and the trauma of loss must be possible and is decisive !
 - Recon~ process must envision a better future:
a „shared future“!
- >> Recon~ process: A place „where concerns about the past
and the future can meet“
(Lederach 1997:29)

Innovative concepts should include these elements:



Recon~ as a „social space where people and things come together“

Source: Lederach 1997:30

How to spark and sustain the process?

Different types of actors – different levels of leadership-
different approaches:

Level 1: **Top Leadership**

Level 2: **Middle-Range Leadership**

Level 3: **Grassroots Leadership**

Source: Lederach 1997: 37-55.

Actors and Approaches in Peacebuilding

Level	Who ?	Approach ?
Top level	Military/ political/religious/ leaders w high visibility	Focus on high-level negotiations/ Emphasizes cease-fire/
Middle-range	Leaders in respected sectors Ethnic/religious/ Academics/intellectuals/ Humanitarian leaders	Problem-solving workshops/ Training in conflict resolution/ peace commisions
Grassroots	Local leaders Leaders in indigenous NGO's / Community developers/ local health officials/ refugee camp leaders	Local peace commisions / grassroots training/ bottom-up approach psychosocial work

Part III:

The Tools

International Criminal Tribunals



„Challenging Impunity“

>> ICTR:

<http://www.unictr.org/tabid/101/default.aspx>

(Rwanda)



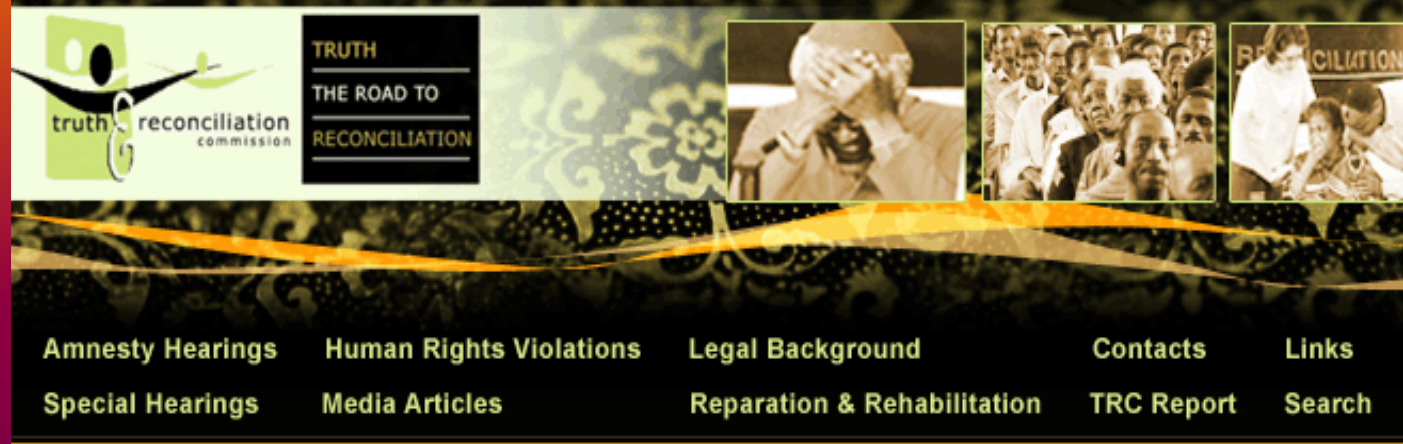
>> ICTY:

<http://www.icty.org/sid/10874>

(Former Yugoslavia)



Truth and Reconciliation Commissions



"... a commission is a necessary exercise to enable South Africans to come to terms with their past on a morally accepted basis and to advance the cause of reconciliation."

Mr Dullah Omar, former Minister of Justice

Mandate period: 1960 – 1994 (!)

>> „truth telling“

>> South Africa

- Testimonies
- Investigations into exhumations
- Special Hearings
- <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/index.htm>

Transitional Justice

>> Grassroots
justice



>> Community Justice
(Rwanda)

Gacaca court system is a *bona fide* development of a grassroots, restorative and reconciliatory justice project



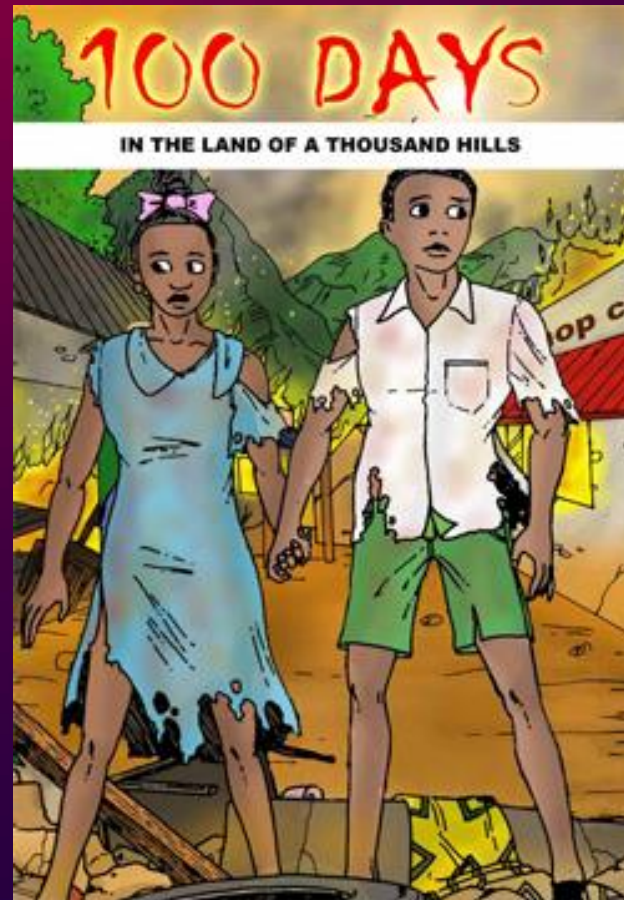
Healing process

„Creating narratives“

>>

<http://www.unictr.org/tabid/2225/default.aspx>

(Rwanda)



100 DAYS - In The Land of a Thousand Hills

Cartoon Book explaining the 1994 Rwanda genocide for children
The goal is to create an illustrated narrative that will convey the events of the genocide at both personal and national levels to children eight years of age and above

Healing process

>> history books ??

>> divided schools ??



"Let's live in peace, tolerance, unity and reconciliation. Let's uproot the ideology of genocide," warns a sign in the picturesque school grounds (Kigali, Rwanda).



„Divided schools in BiH*“

*= http://www.unicef.org/bih/media_14093.html

Curricular Reform

>> Promoting and protecting multiethnic and multicultural societies

>> BiH:

<http://www.oscebih.org/Default.aspx?id=31&lang=EN>



- the removal of offensive and hate speech,
- the introduction of reform, including elements of diversity and tolerance, to textbooks and curricula, and
- the organization of trainings for textbook authors, reviewers and teachers.

„Guidelines for Textbook Writing“: www.oscebih.org

(Re-)building trust



>> Community efforts

>> Civil society

>> psycho-social recovery mechanisms

- **Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN)**

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a three-year project funded by the European Commission and aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU institutions. [More:](http://www.eplo.org/civil-society-dialogue-network.html)

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Discussion points ...

- Do the countries of W-Balkans bear the characteristics of “divided societies”: Why/why not ? What did change before/after the conflict settlement?
- Which role did reconciliation play:
 - In the programs of political parties and leading politicians?
 - In the programs and approaches of external actors (INGO's / NGO's) in the region?
 - Which specific variation or shape did the reconciliation process in the case study regions assume?
 - Which obstacles /spoilers of the process did occur?
- - How do people - on the grassroots level – feel about reconciliation?

References:

- Bryant, Nicole: Reconciliation in former Yugoslavia: Underlying motivations and reasons for resistance. Diss. Rutgers University. Newark, New Jersey, 2010.
- Lederach, John Paul: Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in divided societies. Washington 1997.
- Daly, Erin / Jeremy Sarkin: Reconciliation in Divided Societies. Finding Common Ground. University of Pennsylvania Press. 2007.