

Introduction

Martina Fischer, Norbert Ropers

The scale and number of violent conflicts after the end of the Cold War have created disillusionment in the world about the possibility of moving towards a new phase of peaceful settlement of disputes at the beginning of the 21st century. It seems that even inter-state conflicts are back on the agenda in the context of the struggle for a new world order between US-led unilateralism and efforts to safeguard the achievements of multilateralism from the last decades.

Most of the current violent conflicts though are, and most likely will be, intra-state conflicts, either connected with civil wars or with the formation of states. It means that either different groups struggle over the control of the government or that governments are set against one or other group, mainly ethnopolitically defined. The issues at stake are to maintain or gain political power, civil rights, cultural identity, economic advantage or natural resources. Some wars spring from the decay and implosion of states, others are targeted at establishing new states. Many of them affect entire societies or regional economies and last over long periods.

While the inter-state conflicts are primarily dealt with and debated within the existing institutions of the international system, it was the focus on intra-state conflicts that led to new practices and institutional orientations, to new discourses and even to a new terminology in the field of responding to conflicts. It is exactly in this latter field where the *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* is located.

It is still an open question in how far this area of work, and discourse of practical and conceptual reflections, will establish itself as an area with a distinct professional identity. But there is no question that many institutions and organisations in the field of development policy and action, humanitarian assistance, human rights, diplomacy and peace work are now heavily involved in activities responding to intra-state conflicts. They have invested time, energy, human and financial resources and many of them have already institutionalised or are prepared to institutionalise their activities in this field.

Several scholars and practitioners have argued that responding to intra-state conflicts should be based on the common understanding of all like-minded actors involved that they must take the root causes of these conflicts into account. Secondly they argue that there needs to be a comprehensive framework for all activities, which is integrated with working on the legacies of the conflict in the realms of rehabilitation, reconstruction, reconciliation, development and state formation. Thirdly there is a widespread understanding that this kind of multidimensional approach, targeted at the root causes of the conflict as well at addressing the implications of many years of violence and hostility, has to be placed on various levels of interaction: the international, national, regional and local. And it has to go beyond the track 1 activities of state actors and mobilise many non-state actors for a broad spectrum of 'multi-track' endeavours.

Implementing such a comprehensive approach is obviously not easy. Furthermore, each and every conflict is different. What might have worked in one situation, is not suitable in another. We are convinced that exchanging and sharing knowledge is essential for moving

towards a better understanding of how to respond to intra-state conflicts. With many colleagues, we share the belief that the time is ripe for summarising the practical, empirical and theoretical knowledge in conflict transformation. Various textbooks, field manuals, and specialised handbooks on conflict resolution, third party intervention and peacebuilding have been published during the past years.

The Berghof Handbook gives an overview of core issues in the field of conflict transformation and on recent developments from the perspectives of academia and of practice. We believe that the combination of the two can make a particular contribution to well informed, enlightened and effective practice. The Berghof Handbook is not a textbook summarising the consolidated knowledge in a well-established discipline. It is an effort to take stock and to draw attention to established practices and concepts as well as to the thorny issues and challenges. The Berghof Handbook is not a collection of recipes nor does it offer a readymade set of tools. It is meant to put the practical routines into a broader conceptual framework in order to understand their functions, strengths and weaknesses more thoroughly.

The aim of the Handbook is to give practitioners and scholars an overview of the currently available approaches, methods, techniques and theories of conflict transformation. This means to document and assess the 'state of the art' in the field as well as to offer opportunities to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches. Moreover dilemmas which have to be faced by individuals and organisations working in and on conflict need to be addressed. Furthermore, we would like to encourage the development of more coherent and theoretically sound concepts to integrate the complexities of the field and to facilitate effective and efficient strategies of transformation.

The Handbook therefore

- describes systematically the field of conflict transformation by summarising concepts, methods, strategies and tools;
- explores the critical debates about theory, both to provide an overview and to overcome the current theory gap in the field;
- examines ways of balancing structure-oriented approaches with process-oriented initiatives of peacemaking and peacebuilding;
- analyses the roles of the various actors in peacebuilding, including international governmental organisations (IGOs), national governments, development agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other players in civil society;
- discusses strategies of co-ordination and networking between these actors;
- reflects upon lessons learned, best practices, and the difficulties of assessing the impact of conflict transformation efforts.

The compilation of such diverse current knowledge is not an easy and straightforward task. Among the predominant challenges in the field are the weak relationships between practice, research and theory. In many areas of conflict transformation we perceive a growing interest in conceptualising and assessing systematically the available knowledge and in identifying lessons, best practices and innovative thinking. However, there are only a few endeavours to develop precise theoretical frameworks and models for contextualising specific practical micro-interventions with respect to their impact on the macro social and political levels. Apart from this general theory gap, specific strategies remain elusive in many individual areas of

conflict transformation beyond the simple recommendation 'the more the better'. It is therefore our interest to contribute particularly to strengthening the link between practice, systematic reflection, research and theory.

Several terms are used to describe the field as well as activities within this field, such as conflict management, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, conflict prevention, peace building etc. We regard the term *conflict transformation* as the most comprehensive to cover all activities which influence inter-group conflicts with the aim of promoting sustainable peace and social justice. This understanding comprises structure- and process-oriented endeavours of crisis prevention, strategies for empowering groups and building communities, conflict management and resolution activities, as well as rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in post-war situations.

During the last decade, the concept of conflict prevention became very fashionable in the discourses of peace research and international relations as well as within international organisations. Approaches and instruments for preventing violent conflicts have been discussed in many books and articles. Based on an ideal type notion of the dynamics of violent conflict a dynamic concept of prevention emerged according to three stages, which demand different efforts and approaches:

1. *Early prevention* in order to prevent evolving situations of violent conflict;
2. *"Last-Minute"* prevention in order to impede horizontal or vertical escalation of already existing violent conflict;
3. *Post-conflict activities* to prevent the outbreak of further violence after cease-fires and peace agreements.

The concept of conflict transformation did not gain the same attention. Nevertheless we are convinced that effective efforts for conflict prevention must include conflict transformation as a precondition: that means that individuals or groups who are involved in conflict should be enabled to deal constructively with the causes of conflict and to develop strategies in order to eliminate or overcome these causes. In our understanding, conflict transformation is a generic, comprehensive concept referring to actions that seek to alter the various characteristics and manifestations of conflict by addressing the root causes of a particular conflict over the long-term with the aim to transform negative ways of dealing with conflict into positive constructive ways. The concept of conflict transformation stresses structural, behavioural and attitudinal aspects of conflict. It refers to both the process and the structure of moving towards 'just peace'.

The concept of conflict transformation was elaborated particularly in response to one prototype of intra-state conflicts: the 'protracted social conflict'. This term was first coined by Edward Azar in the late 1970s. It is now widely used to describe long enduring ethnopolitical conflicts that share common features. According to him they have four key characteristics:

- they are conflicts between identity groups, of which at least one feels that their basic needs for equality, security and political participation are not respected;
- they are essentially about access to state related power, often in the form of an asymmetric conflict between a government and an insurgent party;
- they cannot be understood without various types of international linkages affecting the course of events (kinstates, diasporas, international interference);
- they are often based on deeply rooted antagonistic group histories.

Stressing the need for transformation with respect to protracted social conflicts means that all four constituent aspects of this understanding have to be addressed: The legitimacy of ethnic demands in multi-ethnic political systems has to be acknowledged. Comprehensive concepts of power sharing and state reform are necessary. The roles of international actors and the international community have to be assessed properly and some kind of integration of the violent and painful past will be necessary. The need for transformation is furthermore based on the experience that long enduring bloody conflicts not only take lives, destroy livelihoods and deteriorate infrastructures, but they also undermine the overall social capital of the society. Therefore, transformation comprises relief, rehabilitation, resettlement and reconstruction, as well as regaining humanity and working on reconciliation.

Because of this comprehensive understanding we choose conflict transformation as the leading concept for the *Berghof Handbook*.

The topic structure is organised according to the various dimensions of conflict transformation. The *first section* is devoted to the concept of conflict transformation in the context of other basic concepts such as conflict management and conflict resolution. Moreover this section focuses on cross cutting challenges and gives an overview of the core dimensions for intervention in conflict.

Dieter Senghaas opens this section by discussing theoretical questions concerning the civilisation of conflict. He regards 'causal' or 'constructive' pacifism as a guiding notion for conflict transformation. If civil or international war is a result of anarchy, this can only be eroded by a social order that can contribute to enduring peace. This has to be built at national, regional and international levels. The author develops a model of a complex peace architecture ('civilisational hexagon'). The six components (1. monopoly of force by the state; 2. rule of law; 3. democratic participation; 4. constructive conflict management; 5. social justice and equity; 6. interdependencies and affect control) are the very basis for civilising conflicts in a potentially violence-prone political, socio-economic and socio-cultural environment. The author argues that causal pacifism established the right framework for 'thinking about peace' and 'making peace' and should be a source of inspiration for current endeavours. A guiding principle could be the notion that the measure of peace is peace itself. This is a legacy of an idea which originated in the early years of the twentieth century and which should now be revived.

Cordula Reimann offers a general overview and a tentative interpretation of the state of the art in the field of conflict management. This includes a review of the field's research agenda and research questions on the one hand and an analysis of the role of theory and research methods on the other. The author introduces three distinct approaches: conflict settlement, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. One of the most important conclusions is that the concepts of conflict resolution and conflict settlement do not address the complexity of most protracted, intractable inter-state conflicts. Therefore it is necessary to synthesise and integrate different theoretical frameworks with actors and strategies. The author's discussion of the role of theory and research methods in the overall field makes clear why, and to what extent, theoretical complementarity must be given in ontological (the study of what is being analysed) and epistemological (the study of how it is being analysed) terms.

Hugh Miall identifies the key theorists and modes of practice of conflict transformation, and attempts to distinguish these from the theories and practices of conflict

resolution and conflict management, while at the same time arguing that conflict transformation draws heavily on these earlier traditions. The author comes to the conclusion that further developments in theory and practice are underway as the nature of contemporary conflict continues to change. Local armed conflicts may have increasingly global causes and consequences and there is globalisation both of conflict and of interventions in conflict. The author argues that the subject of analysis has to shift from conflict to conflict-in-context, from the society in conflict to the global and regional environment. This creates cultural challenges for those theories and practices that are still dominated by western perspectives, but also ethical questions for practitioners who seek to uphold non-violent methods in contexts where coercion and the use of force are widely accepted.

Diana Francis highlights that conflict transformation approaches necessarily have to deal with power asymmetries, gender inequalities and cultural differences. These categories are closely linked and have to be taken carefully into account, especially by external actors who intervene in conflict. The author argues that the overarching, global culture of domination provides the framework for oppression and exploitation, including that of women by men and of Southern Hemisphere countries by the West. The asymmetry of power resulting from colonialism has injected into cultural difference an explosive charge, which makes its handling extremely difficult. Gender is a cultural construct, and the oppression of women is frequently justified by reference to culture and the positioning of women's emancipation as a Western project. Nevertheless oppressive gender relations and constructions have to be addressed and specific gender roles and images that contribute to conflict have to be analysed. The author argues that the emancipation of women, and marginalised groups in general, both stimulates and results from the fundamental culture shift which conflict transformation implies. Those who intervene in conflict with this purpose have to be transparent in relation to their values and goals, implementing them within their own organisations.

The *second section* reviews the tools for analysing and predicting conflicts and highlights the current debate on how to assess the impact of interventions in conflict.

Dan Smith gives an overview of the current findings on the causes of armed conflict at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. Emphasis is placed upon where to look for signs of potential escalation when analysing conflicts, as well as where to seek opportunities for preventing violent escalation. The author then discusses the state of theoretical knowledge in this area, before proceeding to outline methodology, moving away from a theoretical and towards an applied approach for the study and analysis of armed conflict. Emphasis is placed upon the interplay between background and foreground causes. Injustice and mobilisation turn out to be key concepts for interpreting the causes of armed conflicts. To illustrate this the author gives an example: the significance of perceived injustice and identity as objects for political mobilisation towards conflict during the decay of the former Yugoslavia.

Alex Austin gives an introduction to early warning activities. The author critically discusses whether early warning systems can a) identify the causes of conflict, b) predict the outbreak of conflict and c) mitigate conflict. He argues that unless the early warning system has a mechanism to mitigate the conflict, there is little utility to be gained in refining the accuracy of current models. The article outlines the state of the art in the field of early warning and

identifies the different areas of focus, methodologies and mechanisms employed. It ends by summarising these mechanisms into a model for early warning and outlines the major challenges facing the transition from early warning to early response.

Thania Paffenholz outlines concepts and experiences for designing and assessing intervention strategies. The article discusses the problems which result from the question of which actor can intervene with which strategies and instruments, and at what time in any particular situation of conflict. Drawing upon her field experience, the author formulates ten issues that need to be addressed in intervention design: 1. the need for vision, goals and commitment; 2. methods of analysing conflicts and actors; 3. strategies and roles of intervening actors; 4. the ongoing search for adequate partners and entry points; 5. timing and exit options of interventions; 6. thinking in processes and building structures; 7. criteria for the recruitment of field staff; 8. co-ordination and co-operation; 9. the inclusion of the goals of sustainability and 10. building learning into the process of interventions. These aspects are examined from the perspective of NGOs' reality in conflict and finally the author raises the difficulties of creating knowledge management mechanisms within organisations and programmes.

Mark Hoffman reviews the state of the art in evaluation by focusing on peace and conflict impact assessment (PCIA) methodology from three perspectives: traditional donor evaluations, methodologies of assessment in development work and evaluations that focus on conflict resolution and peacebuilding NGOs. After outlining the practical implications of PCIA, the article concludes by identifying open questions, problems and ways forward. These revolve around the use of general or specific indicators, inter-linkage between different types of evaluation, contextualisation and finally the inter-relatedness of different sectors.

Mary B. Anderson considers how international agencies that undertake programmes to provide humanitarian assistance, development aid and/or support peace processes can determine what their impacts are. The chapter deals with collaborative efforts undertaken by external agencies to learn more about their impacts on conflict within the societies where they work. Part of the chapter is dedicated to the Local Capacities for Peace Project (LCPP), while another part discusses recent findings from the Reflecting on Peace Practice Project (RPP) which had been co-ordinated by her organisation, Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) and the Swedish Life & Peace Institute. According to the author, tracing and assessing interventions to lessen conflict has to face two major challenges: first to identify criteria or indicators for assessing progress (this relates to the question of the appropriate forms and means of measurement in relation to conflict transformation), and second, to determine attribution. When so many things are happening in a complex environment, how can one know which actions bring about which outcomes? The author ends with a clear message: it is not sufficient for aid workers and peace practitioners to 'do no harm' in their programmes and they must push impact assessment as integral to their work. Using the knowledge gained over many years of work, they can increase their effectiveness and contribute to the achievement of just societies that solve differences without resort of violence.

The *third section* of the Handbook deals with activities for enhancing the capacity for handling and intervening in conflicts on the interpersonal level and inter-group level. This section is dedicated to the psychosocial dimension of conflict transformation and to individual and collective learning processes.

Ron Kraybill describes the most important skills and tools which facilitators need in order to enhance capacities at the individual and interpersonal level for transformation of inter-group-conflicts. The author explores the question of what makes these communication skills and tools transformative. Three categories of facilitation tools are then reviewed: skills used in moment-by-moment interaction with parties; techniques for facilitating sustained dialogue and principles of process design for addressing the larger institutional and structural realities of conflicts. The author concludes that the dual focus of transformation on 'empowerment of self' and 'relationship-building with others' lie at the heart of skills and techniques in all three categories.

Friedrich Glasl and Rudi Ballreich deal with conflict transformation approaches within groups and organisations. The authors identify five levels of co-operation within teams: the individual members, the content level, the interaction level, the procedural level and the level that governs external relations of the group to its environment. The authors offer approaches for addressing conflict within teams at all these levels, especially they propose the rethinking of individual roles and methods of team decision making and correct diagnosis of the team's level of development. According to the authors, teams will be able to quickly recognise conflicts at their inception and constructively approach them, if they are enabled to understand both conflict potentials and opportunities for conflict management.

Norbert Ropers is convinced that dialogues can be viewed as the classical means of dealing constructively with conflicts, following the popular formula "As long as you are talking, you can't be shooting". In the sphere of classical diplomacy, skills in negotiation and dialogue have long formed part of the basic repertoire of any prudent management of international relations, but dialoguing skills of official track diplomacy have too often been driven into the background by the constraints of power politics. Representatives of non-official, track II diplomacy, by contrast, have instead chosen to place communication, direct encounters and mutual understanding centre-stage. There are a huge number of dialogue projects underway which are designed to influence or contribute to the settlement or resolution of armed or potentially violent conflicts that take place in ethnopolitical settings, mostly within societies. Many of these projects, as third party interventions, are driven by external actors. The author gives an overview of the ideal types of dialogues and identifies the basic elements of most dialogue processes. He discusses dialogue in the context of various approaches to handling conflict in order to establish criteria for measuring success. He concludes that the most important conceptual contribution that a dialogue project can make to the creation of peace constituencies is to promote a dialogue-based dispute culture, which becomes a basic paradigm of political culture.

In the *fourth section*, the contributors focus on the necessity of structural reforms, institution-building and violence control as preconditions for conflict transformation and peace-building. The authors give an overview of the main approaches of state and civil society actors.

Günther Bächler explores the significance of state reform for transformation of war-torn areas. He points out that, especially for fragile states, state reform is a prerequisite for peaceful conflict resolution and democratic development and he argues that there is a need to involve the population in efforts to establish at least some 'islands' of security. The author presents three strategic approaches to state reform and conflict transformation. The first one consists of participatory strategies that might enhance social and political stability (democratisation, strengthening of civil society, dialogue-oriented approaches). The second

encompasses all forms of institution-building and institutional reform, contributing to a stronger societal fabric (federalisation, decentralisation, the constitution and justice system). The third addresses security needs and demands (human rights, human security and absence of military threats). As the author concludes, there is widespread agreement among scholars that democracy is a necessary condition for stable peace. The debate revolves around whether it is a sufficient condition and which factors must be combined in order to prepare the ground for a constitution that will insulate society against violence. A number of open theoretical questions remain: Is there such a thing as 'democratic peace'? If so, which factors are important to it? How can a 'culture of dispute' be established or preserved in times of radical transition or rapid change in a society?

Wibke Hanson, Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse highlight the importance of peacekeeping both for violence control and for enhancing capacities for peacebuilding. The authors argue that peacekeeping can serve as an important instrument as long as its practice is sufficiently reformed. New thinking about peacekeeping has evolved in response to changing environments of conflict, and places emphasis primarily on the strengthening of enforcement powers while at the same time reinforcing peacebuilding capacities. The new doctrine sets for itself the dual goal of controlling violence while simultaneously maintaining consent and rebuilding co-operative relationships. According to the authors this dual goal can only be achieved if current approaches developed in the academic field are thoroughly integrated with the practice of peacekeeping. Moreover the article points out where knowledge developed in conflict resolution theory can be of relevance for peacekeepers, as well as commenting on perspectives for application and addressing the question of the future needs for peacekeeping.

Dusan Reljic analyses the role of news media in the transformation of ethnopolitical conflicts. News media often contribute to the constitution of national identities. In ethnically divided societies, exposure to the media can reinforce feelings of exclusion and thereby strengthen negative spirals of communication between ethnic groups that eventually lead to violence. The author presents proposals advanced by peace researchers and journalists on options for reporting on ethnopolitical conflicts in a manner which fosters peace. He argues that in practice journalists have little chance to influence the outcome of conflicts in a positive way, primarily as the news media often serves as an instrument of the authorities. Nevertheless he offers a basic model designed to explain the impact of media. It is grounded in the assumption that the effects of mass media on political communication in a society are largely determined by the political and economic situation, as well as by the skills and training of journalists and the prevailing political attitudes of the public. The article ends with a brief discussion of NGO-activities in this field and a proposal for efforts on the European level for the reform of news media both in established democracies and transition countries.

Christine Bigdon and Benedikt Korf highlight the role of development assistance in relation to structural aspects of peacebuilding. The article explores both the theoretical assumptions, as well as the practical experiences with empowerment approaches, in the field of development aid, paying particular attention to their potential for conflict transformation. The authors build upon the recent discourse in development policy and they review empowerment approaches within the field of community development. As they further explore the nexus between participation, empowerment and conflict transformation, the authors critically discuss the potential of common participatory approaches at the community level and their impact for

conflict transformation on the local level. One of the findings is that development agencies operate within a very narrow space of action and have to face various dilemmas and ambiguities, which might impede their success. Nevertheless empowerment processes can support conflict transformation if they contribute to developing local community and to promoting inclusive citizenship.

In the *fifth section* of the Handbook, the emphasis is on conflict transformation as a challenge for reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation in post-war situations and war torn societies.

Martina Fischer's article gives an overview of the problems of reconstruction, rehabilitation and (re)integration in war torn societies. In the context of post-war situations reconstruction turns out to be an ambiguous or even contradictory concept: it is considered as useful by some actors and others refuse the notion that society can and should be reconstructed. The author argues that (re)integration of refugees and displaced persons is one of the main challenges and precondition for conflict transformation. Support and intervention from external actors are all too often reduced to material reconstruction of houses and infrastructure whereas the need for rebuilding communities is forgotten. In order to move from reconstruction to constructive conflict transformation and peacebuilding, joint efforts are needed which combine development approaches, economic perspectives and empowerment of local actors for civil society issues, peace-education and social work. In order to make third party intervention effective, co-ordination of activities is needed. Positive and negative lessons can be drawn from the Balkans.

David Becker illustrates, through practical experience in Latin America and the Balkans, problems that have to be addressed in the psychological dimension in order to deal with the consequences of violence. The chapter discusses theories of trauma and argues that trauma concepts need to be continually reinvented, always relating them specifically to the political and cultural context in which traumatising occurs. With reference to the intrapsychic dynamics of trauma, it is argued that fragmentation is a central characteristic and can only be overcome within a close relationship that recognises and accepts the destruction that has occurred and helps construct a space in which symbolisation can take place. The author suggests that trauma work should be part of an integrated approach in crisis regions and should cover the psychological, pedagogical and economic dimensions.

Gunnar Theissen's article explores the different approaches to investigating and regulating injustices in the aftermath of armed conflict. It reviews the potentials and risks of tribunals, community courts and truth commissions. Moreover the author discusses how amnesty, reparation and grassroots initiatives for reconciliation can contribute to conflict transformation. He points out that practitioners in the field must be aware of the changing power relations and limited options for action in war-torn societies. Third party intervention should encourage local actors to develop their own approaches for dealing with the past. Thus, the current enthusiasm for the emerging international criminal law system should not divert attention from local initiatives and institutions. Dealing with past injustices turns out to be a long-term process. The degree of understanding that can be reached within a single generation is thus very limited. Reconciliation might be a legitimate vision for post-conflict rehabilitation, but cannot be forced on former enemies. Victims often have good reasons for refusing to reconcile, if past atrocities are not investigated and injustices not abated.

Kevin Clements deals in greater detail with the challenges of linking theory, research and practice, and offers strategies to implement these approaches in all relevant areas of social change. The chapter illustrates some lessons learned from interventions in Africa, the Caucasus and Asia. The author argues that the structural sources of conflict – political and economic in particular – have been relatively underdeveloped in conflict analysis and in the design of intervention processes. This has meant that many track II interventions in conflict have been oriented towards attitudinal and behavioural change rather than situational or structural change. Until this situation is reversed and more attention is paid to the transformation of institutions and processes, it will be difficult to generate stable peaceful relationships.

The contributions in the *first edition* of the *Berghof Handbook* address the initial themes that the editorial team had in mind. Still this volume represents a selection of issues and topics. Many important questions must be left for further debate and more detailed exploration. Several challenges remain.

- One of the first challenges raised in the conflict related discourse was how far *Western-based approaches* of conflict transformation can be applied to *non-Western contexts*? The debate on this question is still going on, but in a much more differentiated way than initially. It became clear that the emergence of protracted social conflicts was largely linked to the globalisation of a Western concept of statehood and that its reform had to take into account its cultural genesis. But it also transpired that many traditional forms of conflict handling can enrich and enhance substantially the chances for effective transformation. The question remains, though, how to balance the respect for cultural diversity in peacebuilding efforts with other values like social and gender equality.
- More thorough analysis and reflection is needed to explore the *significance of gender roles* in conflict transformation and to achieve *gender equity*. As Diana Francis has pointed out in her chapter, the gender dimension is closely linked to cultural diversity and power imbalances. Important questions in this context include, for example, how to move towards practical steps of 'gender mainstreaming' in deeply divided and polarised societies where men have more or less a monopoly of decision making. Also how to safeguard the potential new and active roles that women often acquire during war times, when they had to guarantee the survival of families of which they became tragically the single heads? With regard to development and human rights, it is important to focus on women's legal and social equality, their participation in the political process and their self-confident involvement in civil society. But the task of enhancing gender sensitivity in peacebuilding must go beyond this aim and cannot focus exclusively on the specific situation and role of women, either as the victims of violence (and war) or as actors. It must also focus on questions of the identity of women and men, the extent to which social constructs of masculinity and femininity contribute to violence in conflicts and also what can be done in order to change these constructs and their symbolic significance so that cultures of violence can be dismantled. A real challenge for the organisations involved in post-conflict peacebuilding is to improve the range of instruments for gender impact assessment and to elaborate criteria in relation to the strengthening of identity patterns of militarised masculinity. Identifying methods to develop projects that overcome these patterns is a key issue in this context.

- The traditional concept of 'protracted social conflicts' was challenged, when Paul Collier, David Malone and others started the 'greed and grievance' debate and emphasised the economic motivations behind political violence. They argued that in many conflicts it was not more or less legitimised political grievances of marginalised groups that led to the outbreak of violence, but rather economic strategies and calculations of fragmented elites. This debate has triggered a new focus on the *political economy of civil wars* and led to many thought-provoking questions on the linkages between economic factors and the escalation and de-escalation of internal conflicts.
- Another more recent development is the revitalised interest in the *security dimension* of intra-state conflicts. For some time the analysis of arms transfers, of military aid and cooperation as well as of military and police regimes was somewhat marginalised from issues of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. That has changed substantially. Now there is an emerging consensus that confidence and security building measures (CSBMs), security sector reforms (SSR) and similar measures can be essential ingredients of supporting processes of conflict transformation.
- One of the areas where the need for conflict resolution and transformation was expressed quite early and explicitly, is in the realm of *human rights work*, based on the experience that gross human rights violations are most likely to happen in areas of violent conflict. Nevertheless, there are some clear distinctions between human rights and conflict transformation work and the promotion of either of them might not automatically lead to the promotion of the other, at least not in the short term. This dichotomy is related in some conflict regions to two different approaches dealing with asymmetric conflict transformation: the "conditionality approach", which stresses that the less legitimised party has to 'earn' its participation as an equal actor in any negotiation process and the "transformative approach", which emphasises the need for parity of status, for recognition and constructive engagement to enhance the co-ownership for the process and its impact for social change.
- A common area of research and practice within conflict transformation as well as within international relations has been the topic of the architecture and dynamic of *peace processes*. This topic becomes more interesting the longer the processes takes from a first truce initiative to the implementation of a lasting peace agreement. Most peace processes to overcome protracted social conflicts cover many years and are characterised by many hurdles and critical stages of re-escalation. This has encouraged practitioners to contribute to 'road maps' and other modelling processes according to 'multi-step', 'multi-issue' and 'multi-track' approaches.
- Finally, conflict transformation cannot be seen as independent from the trends and disputes concerning the global order. The most important caesura is obviously the 11th of September 2001, which has led the Government of the United States of America under President George Bush Jnr. to strive for a new hegemonic world order and to question the fundamental basics of multilateralism and the peaceful settlement of disputes. What does this mean for the future of conflict transformation? Will these approaches, concepts, methods and practices be integrated into the emerging hegemonic revolution or are there possibilities that they might contribute to upholding the achievements after the end of World War II in establishing ways to civilise conflicts?

These issues – among others – will be the focus of future editions of the *Berghof Handbook*. Further editions will be developed, as before, in a double track procedure: Articles will be launched *first* on the web, and *second*, be published in the *Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series*. We hope that the interest and feedback will continue and we invite our colleagues and readers to give feedback and/or join the future discussions.