

**LESSONS LEARNED ON REGIONAL PEACE-BUILDING:
THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PROCESS**

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At the beginning of the 21st Century there are numerous large and small conflicts brewing around the world. Leaders in many conflict areas are currently attempting to end the cycle of violence through delicate negotiation processes. The challenge these leaders face is to find the right political balance to convince key stakeholders to stick to negotiations in order to achieve and maintain peace. Twenty years ago Central America faced a similar trial. And while there still is unrest in the region and many challenges remain, the civil wars in the region effectively ended in a peaceful manner and most would agree that conditions are now present for Central Americans to pursue social, economic and political development in a framework of democratic governance, political peace, and economic opportunities.

The end of the civil wars in Central America was a significant achievement, one that Central Americans initiated and shaped primarily by themselves. The regional approach chosen by Central American leaders to end the region's wars remains unique and it deserves attention as leaders in Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere struggle to find sustainable ways to establish peace in their societies. There is also much to be learned from the setbacks and pressing problems faced by the region since the peace process. For example, the continued rule of law challenges faced by Central America underline the need for negotiators to take a longer-term view as they establish peace and to consider what kind of political culture and what sorts of institutional arrangements are needed to go beyond a ceasefire to promote genuine and lasting peace.

On March 1-4, 2006 the Project on Justice in Times of Transition in partnership with the Toledo International Center for Peace and Tufts University gathered over forty Central American and international leaders and practitioners who played a key role in shaping the region's peace process for a

meeting in Toledo, Spain. The goal of the gathering was for participants to look back critically on their experiences in negotiating and implementing peace in Central America in order to formulate recommendations that can be used by other individuals who are currently attempting to negotiate and build peace in conflict areas throughout the world. An additional goal of the event was to ask participants to consider the growing social, economic, political, and rule of law challenges in Central America and engage these leaders in a new initiative designed to jumpstart a regional effort to address these challenges in an innovative and creative manner.

The discussion at Toledo was structured around five panels which were designed to initiate conversations about *how* regional peace was achieved and to stimulate consideration of the remaining challenges in Central America. In the course of discussions everyone was asked to formulate recommendations for other conflicts by identifying such universal truths from their experience in Central America. Each panel included a moderator, several speakers, a respondent, and a rapporteur who provided a summary of the conversation at the end of the session with the help of a student rapporteur from Tufts University. This format allowed for open discussion among the group and immediate formulation of recommendations. The panel topics were:

- A Regional Solution in a Global Context
- The Role of International Organizations and Countries Outside the Region
- Achieving and Maintaining a Consensus for Peace
- The Challenges of Institutional Reform and Transitional Justice
- Applying the Lessons Learnt: a Global Perspective

Before summarizing the panel discussions, it should be noted that the meeting in Toledo was an overwhelming success. Many of those who attended the event had not seen each other for a number of years and the event presented them with the opportunity to celebrate the numerous achievements of their peacebuilding efforts and also to critically analyze the different aspects in which some of their goals or efforts might have failed. The passage of time as well as the relaxed yet intellectually rigorous environment fostered at the conference allowed practitioners to talk more freely and openly about the events that shaped the regional peace process and to identify with more clarity both the achievements and the setbacks of this relatively successful peacebuilding effort.

Throughout the conference, participants **formulated over forty recommendations** (included below under each panel) for other regions and countries, for the international community, and for international organizations based on the Central American experience in peacemaking and peacebuilding. It should be noted that most of these recommendations were arrived at by group consensus, which is a remarkable achievement considering that these individuals came from such diverse backgrounds, political sympathies, and ideological persuasions. However, they all shared a willingness to share their experiences for the benefit of other individuals and organizations attempting to establish peace in other regions, as well as by a genuine concern and desire to do something about the serious problems that still threaten the fragile peace in Central America.

A final important point to consider is that these recommendations reflect the emerging international consensus that peace processes cannot end once the ink is dry on peace accords, but rather that an agreement signifies the beginning of a critical process of *peacebuilding* that will ultimately determine whether true and lasting peace is consolidated. Organizations, governments and individuals who work on peace efforts are undergoing a process of modifying their strategies to place a greater emphasis on this process of peacebuilding, most importantly through the creation of the new UN Peacebuilding Commission. The fact that so many conversations in Toledo

focused on the remaining problematic issues in Central America demonstrated recognition by the participants that the peacebuilding stage of the peace processes in the region has been neglected in many respects. At the same time, it was clear from the discussions that Central Americans have a wealth of experience that practitioners around the world can and should study, appreciate and internalize, particularly considering the international community's current shift in its peacemaking paradigms to better accommodate the challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding and peace consolidation.



Opening speeches from the conference organizers: (from left to right) Emilio Cassinello, Schlomo Ben-Ami, Fernando Lamata, Tim Phillips, Mauricio Artinano

Next Steps and Follow-Up

The Project on Justice in Times of Transition is planning a series of programs to follow-up on the ideas, recommendations and proposals that were formulated by the group in Toledo. The Project has hired recent Tufts University graduate **Mauricio Artinano**, who worked closely on the organization of the Toledo conference, as a Program Officer to work on coordinating several of these projects from Costa Rica. Additionally, the Project is now formally affiliated with the **Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University**, and plans on using this partnership to engage Tufts students and faculty in the various future initiatives related to Central America. Some of the programs that the Project is currently working on include the following:

- **Central American Youth Leadership Initiative:** Several speakers in Toledo mentioned the need to implement programs that promote positive leadership and civic values in Central America, particularly through programs aimed at reaching the young population of the region. The Project

is thus planning a series of conferences that will bring together young leaders from all over Central America to discuss common problems and issues, build citizenship and leadership skills, and commit themselves to joint plans of action. The conferences would also include the participation of established youth leaders from other countries who can share successful personal stories of youth mobilization, as well as more senior leaders and policymakers from Central America who can interact closely with the young participants in order to share their experiences and provide important support to their ideas and projects. The ultimate goal is to form a network of young Central American leaders that can work together on regional efforts to mobilize young people to take action on some of the problems common to all the countries in the region.

- **Preventive Diplomacy Initiative:** At Toledo, former Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto proposed the idea of creating a regional mechanism of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, arguing that Central America countries should have a regional recourse to address and attempt to resolve their differences peacefully. Before he sadly passed away last October, Mr. Madrigal worked with Mauricio Artigiano to concretize and develop this idea further, and the Project plans to carry forth with Mr. Madrigal's legacy and initiate discussions to create a non-governmental preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution mechanism in Central America. Inspired by the gathering in Toledo, this mechanism would likely consist of a network of prominent Central American leaders and opinionmakers who can come together in times of crisis and conflict to propose solutions and recommendations and then use their collective influence and weight to lobby governments and civil society in favor of the peaceful alternatives that they propose.

Summary of Panel Discussions and Recommendations

A Regional Solution in a Global Context

The first panel asked panelists and participants to think about the reasons why Central Americans chose a regional approach to address their conflicts

and to consider the costs and the benefits of this approach, as well as discuss the successes and failures of the Esquipulas regional peace process. The panelists offered their different perspectives on what factors made Esquipulas possible and on some of the major shortcomings of this regional process. The subsequent plenary discussion involved both a historical analysis of the Esquipulas process as well as a conversation regarding the present state and future prospects for the region. Participants disagreed and debated over the question of to what extent the end of the Cold War played a role in the Central American peace process. However, there was an evident consensus around the table that there is a need for renewed efforts in the region to address the enduring systemic and structural problems that continue to threaten peace and stability in Central America: the fragility of the rule of law, the persistence of socioeconomic inequalities, the inefficiency and corruption of state institutions, and the lack of a genuine political or civic culture that can sustain democracy.

The panel was moderated by **Arturo Cruz**, Professor at the INCAE Business School in Managua, and the panelists were **Vinicio Cerezo**, former President of Guatemala and currently a member of Congress for the Christian Democratic Party; **Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto**, Foreign Minister under former President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica; and **General Joaquín Cuadra Lacayo**, former General Chief of Staff of the Popular Sandinista Army and former Commander-in-Chief of the Nicaraguan Army. **Richard McCall**, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, was the respondent, and **José María Figueres**, former President of Costa Rica, served as rapporteur.

Arturo Cruz introduced the panel by challenging the panelists to respond to a common interpretation of the Esquipulas II Agreements. "Some might say that Esquipulas was merely a diplomatic formality," Prof. Cruz said. "The peace was a result of a correlation of various forces which included the end of the Cold War, the military stalemate in El Salvador, an emotionally and economically exhausted Nicaragua, and others."

Following this provocative introduction, President **Vinicio Cerezo** conceded that Central America was affected by the Cold War but he

stressed that the main causes of the conflicts were local and that the leaders knew that a local initiative was thus necessary to resolve them. The Esquipulas II agreement was based on one basic premise: “that there could not be economic development without stability, that there could not be stability without rule of law and therefore without democracy, and that there would not be stability or democracy in a region at war.” President Cerezo then outlined the factors that were important to the success of Esquipulas II. First, the statesmen who negotiated Esquipulas II were able to separate themselves and the region from the East-West conflict. Second, these presidents had a vision of a historic character and they had a dream but also a project for how to fulfill that dream. They realized that they were embarking on a medium- and long-range project and were willing to pay immediate political costs for their actions. Lastly, the leaders who signed Esquipulas II assumed the role of statesmen who could look beyond party interests or ideological commitments, and he observed that the five presidents, as well as the ones who followed them, belonged to different parties and ideologies but all of them stuck to the agreement. According to President Cerezo, this unpoliticized approach has some important lessons that should be applied to some of the current challenges the region faces today. He then proposed the idea of launching an Esquipulas III initiative to address the persistent structural problems that were the source of the conflicts and the wars and still remain unresolved today, particularly the problem of economic and social disparities.



(from left to right) Sebastian Chaskel, Arturo Cruz, President Jose Maria Figueres, General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo

Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto stated that it is time to examine the ruins of the Esquipulas process to find and strengthen a new vision for Central America today. He observed that the crafters of Esquipulas had high hopes and ideals, but since the main goal was to put an end to the wars, they could not focus enough on how to build democratic and civic attitudes among Central Americans. Today, the ideals and the hope of Esquipulas have been lost. In part, this is because Esquipulas II created institutions, but it did not create the political culture to sustain those institutions. Moreover, the corruption and inefficiency of governments as well as persistent inequality have caused citizens to feel frustrated with democracy. He warned that “disillusionment with democracy can be dangerous in poor countries like ours.” Mr. Madrigal also talked about the conflicts that remain among the Central American states, despite their shared history and culture. He criticized the lack of willingness from governments to strengthen the instruments of regional integration. He also argued that governments in the region should not continue to pursue rivalries and cultivate differences or waste money sending their problems to international courts or organizations. Rather, he proposed the creation of a regional system of *preventive diplomacy* to give the Central American nations a regional recourse to resolve their differences, and he later added that this preventive diplomacy mechanism should incorporate civil society. He also talked about the important role that foreign countries played in supporting Esquipulas and he proposed the creation of an *alliance of democracies* to support Central Americans’ efforts to strengthen their institutions and promote development, going as far as suggesting the need for some kind of Marshall Plan for Central America. He said that renewed initiatives for promoting peace, whether they are called Esquipulas III or something else, should attempt to promote more civic participation and democratic values and thus create a genuine democratic political culture in Central America.

General Joaquín Cuadra addressed Prof. Cruz’s question and he argued that the Central American peace negotiations had already started before the Cold War had begun to end, and therefore it does not make much sense to say that the end of the Cold War created peace in Central America, although he admitted that the collapse of

the Soviet Union did help to move the process along in its latter stages. General Cuadra listed some of the factors, which he felt were important to create the conditions for the peace process. First of all, the governments at the time were all civilian and democratically-elected governments. Second, the word “negotiation” and its implications were not seen in a negative light; quite the opposite, the different sides saw the possibility of reaching a victory through negotiation. This meant that there was political willingness and interest in peace. Third, although violence was always used for political ends according to each party’s interests in the negotiations, eventually the negotiations took precedence and the war was made secondary. An important implication of this is that it needs to be recognized that peace processes are not just about dialogue and discussion; the unspoken truth is that violence and the threat of violence often plays a crucial role in reaching an agreement as well.

Richard McCall offered a response to the panel by summarizing the events in the United States at the time of the Esquipulas process. He said that during the 1980s Central America was probably the most volatile issue in U.S. politics and that the U.S. put a lot of pressure on the region, among other things threatening to curtail aid and assistance. The regional Esquipulas II process had a great effect in Central America, but it also affected U.S. policy. He recalled how at the time positions in the U.S. tended to be extreme, particularly among some members of the Reagan administration. McCall argues that Esquipulas gave cover to the moderates by introducing a more centrist and moderate proposal that also had an added legitimacy because it came from Central Americans themselves and from moderate forces within the region. Thus, it became politically impossible for the Reagan administration to oppose the process and led to changes in U.S. policy. According to Mr. McCall, a major lesson to take from the Central American peace process is that regional or domestic efforts where local actors take things into their own hands can change the attitudes and behaviors of international actors.

Once the floor was opened up for discussion, most of the debate consisted of discussions over the origins and causes of the peace in Central America and whether international or domestic factors made the key difference. In terms of recommendations

and lessons, various participants had important contributions. According to former FMLN leader **Joaquín Villalobos**, two things were done incorrectly in the Central American peace process that have important implications today. First, there was a lot of talk about reforming states and institutions, but the agreements did not seek to create a political culture to support or sustain these reforms, and second, the accords did not address notions of citizenship and co-existence. Mr. Villalobos believes that the neglecting of these factors has contributed to the current resurgence of violence in the region. **Oscar Santamaría**, former head negotiator for the El Salvadoran government, reminded the participants of the importance of strengthening and following the agenda for regional integration, a task which he says requires the same kind of long-term vision that the leaders of Esquipulas had. **José María Argueta**, former Guatemalan National Security Advisor, repeated the call for an Esquipulas III, and said that such an agreement or process must include a program for integrated judicial reform that can help strengthen the rule of law. Human rights activist **Bruce Cameron** observed that almost as soon as the Central American countries became “democracies,” they also became “cleptocracies,” and he argued that the region needs to address the issue of corruption. Many of the participants agreed that there is an urgent need to engage civil society, especially young citizens, in a process that gives them ownership of the region’s future. Former Costa Rican President **José María Figueres** underlined this need in his closing summary of the panel, emphasizing especially the need to reinvigorate democracy by promoting more public and civic participation and by making political parties more inclusive so that they address the concerns and needs of citizens.

Panelists and participants thus **identified the following concrete lessons:**

- Peace agreements should mainly focus on addressing the local (in this case regional) issues that are driving the conflicts and consider international interests second-tier. Only so will negotiations address the real root causes of a conflict.
- When reaching a deal after negotiating a peace process, the main stakeholders need to

understand that the agreement is a process itself and that this process needs to be nurtured and kept alive, sometimes at the cost of other political compromises.

- Peace processes often involve the introduction and creation of new institutions. In order to ensure the sustainability of these institutions, leaders need to consider ways to involve the public in this process, so that there is a political culture that supports and embodies the new peace and so that the citizenry feels ownership of the peace process.
- Leaders involved in peace processes need to prioritize medium to long-term interests and not just immediate concerns. They need to act as leaders and statesmen, presenting a vision for the future and not simply act as managers with short-term interests and solutions. Moreover, leaders must put party and ideological interests aside and commit themselves to seek consensus and compromise.
- In order for a negotiated peace to stick, there needs to be a political consensus within the region and within each country that can support the agreements as well as committed leaders who are willing to carry them out.
- The media, the general public, and leaders themselves need to recognize that peace processes are not just about dialogue and discussion. Downturns and cycles of violence sometimes are a part of the process. An important role for the public is to continue to put pressure in support of the peace process and the need for a negotiated solution.
- The creation of a political culture that can support peace and democracy depends to a large extent on citizens perceiving immediate and tangible benefits in the post-conflict; otherwise, there is a risk that public disenchantment will endanger the peace. Thus, a peace process must be accompanied and sustained by an agenda of socioeconomic development, the promotion of the rule of law, and the creation of secure living conditions.
- The emergence of a regional alternative for peace can help change entrenched and extremist positions from international actors by giving power and support to moderate forces within those countries.
- Peace agreements generally focus on putting an end to the violence and in the effort to do so, the

root causes of the conflict are often not adequately addressed. To the extent possible, peace agreements should seek to address the root causes of the conflicts or at least provide an agenda or a mechanism for these issues to be addressed in the future.

- International actors can play a more constructive role when they support regional peace initiatives than when they attempt to impose their own solutions.

The Role of International Organizations and Countries outside the Region

The second panel of the conference asked participants to draw upon their experiences in the Central American peace process to identify lessons regarding how international organizations and foreign countries can play the most effective role in regional and domestic peace processes. Panelists and participants noted that the UN and the Organization of American States learned a lot from their experiences in Central America; in particular the UN's approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding changed dramatically following its experience with ONUCA (UN Observer Group in Central American), ONUSAL (UN Observer Mission in El Salvador) and MINUGUA (UN Verification Mission in Guatemala). Several participants also cautioned, however, that international organizations can bring problems of jurisdiction and conflicts of interests. Participants also praised the constructive role played by the countries of the Contadora process and the various "Groups of Friends," and agreed that in order for foreign countries to play an effective role in peace processes they must have high credibility and legitimacy, preserve genuine neutrality and act as honest brokers and mediators. Additionally, they can also contribute by supporting centrists and moderate forces, offering and offer economic and political incentives at key moments, and giving warring factions the confidence and security to commit to negotiations.

The panel was moderated by **Blanca Antonini**, the Director of Latin American Programs at the Toledo International Center for Peace. The panelists were **Augusto Ramírez Ocampo**, former Foreign Minister of Colombia and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to El

Salvador; **Sir Marrack Goulding**, former UN Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping and Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs; **Beatrice Rangel**, adviser to former President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela and his representative to the Central American peace process; and **Victor Valle**, founding member of the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace in El Salvador.

Augusto Ramírez Ocampo began the panel discussion by recalling the role of the Contadora process. In particular he described the importance of the fact that the Contadora process was the first attempt made by a group of Latin American countries to assist other Latin American countries in resolving their own problems. It was also the first attempt to put an end to the low-intensity warfare of the Cold War in Central America. This effort changed the image of Central America as it was no longer viewed as simply the backyard of the US. This forced the OAS to be responsive and not simply a tool of US policy. The rest of the world reacted differently to Central America during and after Contadora process as well: European nations no longer opted to stay out of the Western Hemisphere and Canada became more involved in the region, bringing balance and related benefits to a delicate situation. Finally, and most importantly, the Contadora process helped change public opinion of Central America within the US as well. As Mr. Ramirez went on to explain, the Esquipulas peace process was informed by the mistakes of the Contadora process. It benefited from the already changed perceptions and utilized the OAS, UNDP and other international instruments in its favor. Regarding the UN, Mr. Ramirez noted that its experience in Central America marked an important shift in the attitude towards internal conflicts.

Sir Marrack Goulding discussed the peace process from the perspective of the United Nations and argued that the UN made a valuable and positive contribution to Central America, and similarly the UN's experience in Central America changed the way the UN approached peace processes. He described Central America as a laboratory for reforming the UN's way of thinking about peace and the peace processes. It was also the first time that Central American states accepted assistance from the UN and other international bodies without worrying excessively about sovereignty

issues. The presence of Javier Pérez de Cuellar as a Latin American Secretary-General of the UN helped facilitate this tremendously because his interest in the region was seen as natural rather than interfering. As a result, the Security Council approved the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General to implement the Esquipulas peace agreement. These activities of the UN further weakened the Monroe Doctrine and significantly changed relations between Latin America and the US. According to Sir Marrack, the presence of the UN in the region also complicated the role of the OAS in the region. In order to ease tensions between the organizations and also to help moderate relations between the states the Secretary-General created a Group of Friends – ambassadors from five states – Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, Spain and the US. The role of these ambassadors was to act in the interest of the UN, and not their respective states, and to help broker discussions. The Group of Friends disappeared at the time of negotiations because the ambassadors felt they were assigned to play a very specific role in bringing peace and did not want to overstep their bounds by getting involved in the reconstruction. Later on in the discussion, Sir Marrack mentioned that the UN and the international community learned quite a bit about demobilization from the Central American conflicts, particularly the importance of proper funding for demobilization, disarmament, and rehabilitation (DDR). He noted that the UN experienced an important learning curve on that issue: in Nicaragua, demobilization was not coupled with reintegration, which led to the rearming of some groups, but in El Salvador the UN invested heavily in reintegrating former combatants. Finally, Sir Marrack observed that Central America, and especially El Salvador, shows that negotiations can and must take place even before a ceasefire has been established. He argued that requiring or demanding a cessation of violence before negotiations take place puts the fate of the process in the hands of spoilers and “crazy fringe elements” that can single-handedly derail an entire peace process.

Beatrice Rangel recalled the role of Venezuela in Central America as a member of the Group of Friends. She emphasized the importance of Venezuela, as well as Spain, Mexico and Colombia, who acted as neutral and honest brokers with no interest in the region beyond stability and peace. She said that every peace process needs an

honest broker. Mrs. Rangel explained that there are a handful of preconditions that are necessary for a project like the Group of Friends to succeed: first, everyone should be ready to talk and negotiate; second, all actors should agree that the goal is state-building; third, everyone involved must have a genuine desire to end the conflict; fourth, international actors should support and give power to centrist forces; and finally, everyone should be willing to stand tall against further abuses. Mrs. Rangel also emphasized the importance of international actors such as the OAS and the UN, which can give international legitimacy and credibility, and work with different countries and organizations on granting foreign aid and arranging debt restructuring schemes, thereby helping to rebuild institutions in order to prevent future dictatorships or violence. Mrs. Rangel later added that Latin America developed the ability to think and act for itself while the US was distracted by other things going on in the world and it is only tragic that it took so long for Latin America to wake up and do something.

In his response **Victor Valle** stressed the importance of outside actors having neutral and clear objectives as they engage in a peace process. He also emphasized the need for peace processes and agreements to address the root causes of the conflict and not to just concentrate on ending the violence. He warned that when the root causes of a conflict are not addressed, new forms of violence will result, as the current situation in Central America clearly demonstrates.

In the discussion that followed, participants recalled the role played by various international actors in making peace possible. **Joaquín Villalobos** talked about the important role Mexico played in helping the FMLN prepare for negotiations and hosting the meetings between the FMLN and government negotiators. **Oscar Santamaría** concurred and he also explained that one of the most important contributions of the UN in El Salvador was opening a space for political negotiations, observing that international participation gave the Cristiani government international legitimacy and it gave the FMLN confidence to participate since their presence and security could be thus guaranteed. **Manuel Conde-Orellana**, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace, suggested the possibility of organizing a sort of Contadora II for Colombia,

saying that Central America could reciprocate for the constructive role that Colombia played in bringing peace to the region.

The **following lessons were thus identified by the group** as key for future international engagements around the world.

- Regional approaches can be effective in changing the mindset and attitudes of international actors toward a conflict zone.
- A common history, culture and language tend to make it easier to shape regional solutions to conflict.
- In order to be effective and constructive participants in a regional or domestic peace process, international actors need to be neutral players with clear and transparent goals, and their main role should be one of mediation between the various warring factions.
- The establishment of “groups of friends” to peace processes is a valuable tool that can help provide a peace initiative with international credibility, legitimacy, and economic and political support while also balancing out the interests of the various countries.
- International organizations and foreign countries can help move processes forward by offering aid, debt restructuring packages, and other economic and diplomatic incentives at key moments of the negotiation process.
- International actors should be very careful not to overstep their role and cross sovereignty boundaries.
- International actors should not assume or require that violence need to be over before negotiations can begin. When outbreaks of violence threaten to disrupt the peace process, international actors should stand tall against the use of violence and support the centrists and moderates within each faction.
- International actors need to be familiar with the root causes of the conflict and at the right moment facilitate appropriate attention to these when domestic actors are unable to do so.
- International assistance should not end when peace agreements are signed or elections helped; the international community can play an important role in providing much-needed economic assistance, and also help the processes of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration/rehabilitation (DDR).

Achieving and Maintaining a Consensus for Peace

In the third panel participants reflected on the different paths followed within in each country to build trust and forge consensus among warring parties, and to try and sustain that trust and consensus throughout the course of a peace process and the critical post-conflict period. By studying the different approaches and comparing their consequences, the panelists were challenged to identify the most effective ways to encourage antagonists to begin negotiating and, once engaged, to be able to compromise in order to reach agreements. **Jose María Argueta**, former National Security Advisor in Guatemala, served as the moderator for this panel and **Manuel Conde-Orellana**, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace served as the rapporteur. The panelists were **General Julio Balconi**, retired General in the Guatemalan Army and former Guatemalan Minister of Defense; **Oscar Santamaría**, former El Salvadoran government negotiator and former Secretary-General of the Central American Integration System (SICA); former FMLN *comandante* **Joaquín Villalobos**; and **Antonio Lacayo**, Minister of the Presidency under former Nicaraguan President Chamorro.



(from right to left): Joaquín Villalobos, Oscar Santamaría, Jose María Argueta, Antonio Lacayo, General Julio Balconi, Manuel Conde-Orellana, Cynthia Medina

General Julio Balconi introduced the case of Guatemala and described the unique and important process of trust- and confidence-building that occurred between military and guerrilla commanders in Guatemala. In recalling this experience he emphasized the need to establish trust

between groups and how this can be a lengthy process. The experience also demonstrates that military leaders from different sides can often find more in common with each other than the political leaders, and that contacts between military commanders from both sides can produce an important dynamic that strengthens peace processes. As he described in the case of Guatemala, consensus was easily reached on issues relating to democratization, but human rights issues took two and a half years to achieve an agreement on, which shows the importance of timing in peace processes and suggests that less controversial matters should be settled first in order to build trust among parties and a momentum for peace in the country so that more controversial issues are more easily dealt with at a later point. General Balconi also talked about the importance of strengthening institutions and the quality and attitudes of the people that will be serving in these institutions. A major problem in Guatemala was convincing difficult constituencies to agree to stick to agreements hammered out by the leaders. Finally, General Balconi also emphasized the need to pay attention to what happens to the military and security forces. In the case of Guatemala, this remains an ongoing issue and the police was reformed again only last year. Moreover, the deteriorating security situation in the country means that the military has had to continue working with police to patrol the internal situation, which is keeping the military from modernizing.

Oscar Santamaría presented the case of El Salvador. As he described, negotiations began even though the violence had not halted and there were no preconditions set for coming to the negotiating table. All key actors involved in the conflict were invited to the table in order to ensure that all constituencies were represented and decisions reached in the group would have real clout. He feels that the UN was a key actor that made negotiations possible, and that the Secretary-General played a crucial role. He noted the importance of the creation of a multi-party National Peace Commission (COPAZ) which played a significant role in facilitating trust between the various stakeholders and giving follow-up to the peace agreements. Finally Mr. Santamaría mentioned how the Salvadoran government and the UN made an important effort to bring the peace process into the public sphere and incorporate civil

society in order to get a sense of ownership and participation in the peace process. He argues that the success of the Salvadoran peace process is due to the fact that the Salvadoran people took ownership of the peace process.

As **Antonio Lacayo** explained, peace in Nicaragua was achieved through a cease-fire and elections and not through a negotiated agreement; peace was a result of democracy, rather than the other way around. Mr. Lacayo said that peace came about in Nicaragua as a result of the introduction of a new force, the UNO coalition, which was not a party to the war between the Contras and the Sandinistas; the task of building the peace was thus entrusted to an actor that was not a party to the conflict. According to Lacayo, this factor was key in Nicaragua, as was the leadership of Violeta Chamorro as a motherly figure and the embodiment of reconciliation and peace. Mr. Lacayo also mentioned the importance of forming a post-conflict coalition transitional government that is broad in membership and centrist in ideology. He said that President Chamorro governed “above the political,” meaning that her government’s concerns were mainly with implementing reforms and rebuilding the country than with political or party concerns. An important issue faced in Nicaragua was the demobilization of both the Sandinistas and the Contras and Mr. Lacayo says it is important to mention that the government and the military worked together in the transition and only a few fringe elements took up arms after the elections (*recompas*, *recontras* and *revueltos*). It is also important to note that the military was never used against them but instead the government used a policy of dialogue and incentives. He later observed that despite some outbreaks of violence immediately after the elections, Nicaragua has some of the lowest levels of violence in the region. It is also important to note the importance of the decision to keep the leaders of the Sandinista army as the leaders of the new national military, as a way of easing the transition for the military and maintaining security in the country. He compared this decision to the current situation in Iraq, where he feels the US made a mistake by disbanding the army and leaving weapons in the hands of the Shiite majority. Mr. Lacayo added that rather than ostracize either the Contras or Sandinistas, the Chamorro administration pursued a policy of

inclusion, which he believes is vital to the construction of peace.

Joaquín Villalobos again mentioned the importance of recognizing that violence plays a role in peace processes. As he pointed out, under the surface in negotiating processes violence is sometimes key in achieving peace, but it is rarely mentioned. He said violence is a “language” and it works as a communication tool when there are no rules or forums for communication. It is a mistake, he argues, to view violence as irrational, when in fact most of the time it is being used with rational purposes. However, trust cannot be built when parties are killing each other, and Mr. Villalobos mentioned the different instances of how parties come to trust each other. Each side comes to the negotiating table with their own strategy, and it is not until a certain level of understanding and working together that parties really begin to trust each other. Mr. Villalobos believes that the introduction of a third-party mediator and guarantor is crucial to establishing and building trust. Finally, Mr. Villalobos also mentioned something he observed in El Salvador and also in Northern Ireland and between the Israelis and Palestinians, which is that throughout the process of negotiation, the negotiators tend to develop an identity as moderates and begin to distance themselves from the most extreme factions of their parties in the interest of bringing about peace, sometimes at the expense of legitimacy within their own party. He mentioned for example, how his negotiations with President Cristiani to stabilize the country ended up costing him credibility and the possibility of a political future within the FMLN.

In addition the group discussed whether the three different approaches taken by each country in Central America to achieve and maintain peace illustrate that peace negotiations should only focus on ending violence or whether they should address the deeper issues that originated the conflicts in the first place. In particular the group discussed the overemphasis on elections as a mechanism for ending violence and agreed that the Central American experience demonstrates that attention needs to be paid to rule of law processes and introducing and embedding a political culture that supports these institutions. For example, **Richard McCall** expressed how democracy is too often seen

as being all about elections; however, democracy is really about civil society and the rule of law. He mentioned how in the Balkans there was a rush to hold elections, which ended up giving power to extremist elements.

Another important point brought up in the discussion was the importance of involving the military in the peace negotiations. **Manuel Conde** mentioned how the decision to include high-ranking military officers in the negotiating team in Guatemala made an important difference. **Augusto Ramirez Ocampo** also brought up this point, and he used the example of Guatemala (which General Balconi mentioned) to argue that negotiations cannot just be between political leaders but also between those who are fighting each other in the battlefield.

Manuel Conde-Orellana also mentioned the importance of involving civil society in the peace process, and mentioned the example of the Civil Society Assembly headed by Monsignor Quesada Toruño. He also mentioned that international actors not only have an important role to play in terms of mediation but also in terms of verification. Finally, he said that in Guatemala, the parties first established an agenda, and mechanisms and institutions regarding how the negotiations would take place, and these efforts to agree upon the *process* of negotiation helped build trust and confidence before the actual negotiations took place.

Several participants observed that it is difficult to decide or judge which approach to peace was better, and also to prescribe alternatives or mechanisms to other conflicts that have their own dynamics. **Rodrigo Madrigal** said that rather than argue over which practices or processes work best, a good idea would be to simply have a catalog of different mechanisms, lessons and experiences so that peacemakers and peacebuilders in other regions can pick and choose according to the complexities of their particular conflicts.

Besides reinforcing many of the lessons ascertained in the last two panels, **the following lessons were identified in the course of this panel:**

- All the affected constituencies and warring factions should be invited to the negotiating table in order to give the agreements real

weight. Moreover, all of them should also be included in the process of transition and the subsequent efforts of reconstruction and peacebuilding.

- Often trust is only initiated in a violent situation with the help of a mediator. International organizations or actors can and should play this facilitative role.
- Central American conflicts were very violent and yet peace was achieved, this despite the fact that it was the harder goal to attain. One important lesson from Central America is therefore that peace is possible to create, no matter how violent a conflict is.
- It should not be assumed that peace negotiations are an easy or short process. Most often they are very difficult and take years and several cycles of violence to attain.
- Demobilization processes and attention to military and police institutions are an important factor for maintaining and achieving peace.
- Elections are not enough for the creation and institutionalization for peace, and in fact at times they can be detrimental to keeping the process alive as they sometimes empower the spoilers.
- Attention needs to be paid to all institutional processes that help to establish rule of law. Particularly important is to invest in good people and to staff newly-developed or reformed institutions with individuals that understand the challenges the country faces and how to manage these institutions in a manner that they support the peace.
- Agreements must be fostered and further strengthened through public involvement and citizen participation in peace processes. Developing public trust in the new reality is key to maintaining peace.
- Public and leadership knowledge of the other party and understanding their needs is key to achieving peace and maintaining consensus.
- Visible results should be demonstrated soon after peace accords are signed in order to ensure continued public support of the process. These include the establishment of security and the cessation of violence, economic progress, improvement of the human rights situation, instances of democratic governance, and others.
- The military leadership of the various armed factions should be included in the peace and

transitional processes, as they are the ones who are actually doing the fighting, and also oftentimes military commanders can understand each other better than political leaders.

- Actors in the negotiations process and the subsequent transitional process should strive to work with the existing state military or security apparatuses rather than against them in order to maintain security and stability.
- When parties first sit down in the negotiating table, discussions over the dynamics, rules, timelines, and processes of negotiation can go a long way in cementing trust and building positive relationships between the different actors before the actual negotiations take place. Moreover, only through an agreement on the process and rules of the negotiations will the negotiations have legitimacy and weight.
- Also regarding the timing of negotiations: parties should strive to address the less controversial issues first, in order to build momentum for peace and promote confidence between the different actors.

The Challenges of Institutional Reform and Transitional Justice

The fourth panel was moderated by **Beatrice Rangel**, adviser to former President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela and his representative to the Central American peace process. The panelists were **Antonio Lacayo**, Nicaraguan Minister of the Presidency under former President Chamorro; **Oscar Santamaría**, former El Salvadoran government negotiator and former Secretary-General of the Central American Integration System (SICA); **Hector Rosada**, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace; and **Yago Pico de Coaña**, former General Director of Iberoamerican Political Affairs at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Relations. **Leonel Gomez**, El Salvadoran human rights activist and author, acted as the respondent and **Pedro Nikken**, Legal Adviser to the UN Secretary-General in the El Salvador peace process, was the rapporteur.

The aim of this panel was to discuss how the peace accords changed the political, social, and institutional situation of each country, and also to address the issue of whether peace and justice are

compatible goals in post-conflict situations in light of each country's experience with truth commissions, amnesty, and transitional justice. Most panelists focused their discussion on the question of amnesty and most agreed that the judicial systems of all the countries were not prepared to handle the execution of any form of justice at the time that the accords were signed and furthermore, that any sort of punitive transitional justice would have jeopardized the peace process. There was also a consensus among the panelists and participants that the corruption, inefficiency and politicization of the judicial systems in Central America constitutes one of the most pressing problems for the region today, and agreed that any follow-up to the conference should incorporate the idea of judicial reform.

Antonio Lacayo began by saying that in contrast to Guatemala and El Salvador lasting peace was a by-product of democracy, rather than a product of peace accords. It was only after the free elections held in 1990, that the Contras completed their demobilization and for the first time, the armed forces were subordinate to a popularly elected President, just as the Constitution mandated. Regarding amnesty, Mr. Lacayo mentioned that UNO was very clear during the campaign regarding their promise to seek general amnesty, and in fact, this was one of the first acts of the new Legislative Assembly following UNO's election. Mr. Lacayo felt that a complete amnesty was essential in the Nicaraguan case for two reasons: the difficulty of finding an independent judge that would guarantee the required impartiality to try a human rights abuse case; and the fact that any sort of investigation would have upset and unnerved leaders of both sides and likely delay the necessary reconciliation efforts. Instead, amnesty enabled the initiation of national reconciliation. Mr. Lacayo also felt strongly that peace accords should go beyond ending violence and address root causes. As he stated, "One has to assume that the violence had an initial cause and this cause has to be addressed." In the case of Nicaragua, this was the lack of democratic values in the Sandinista government, which is why peace was best achieved through democratic elections. Finally Mr. Lacayo spoke of the state of the judicial systems, saying that the region is lacking in this area. According to him the Nicaraguan judicial system is incapable of offering

the necessary rule of law to achieve desired levels of development. He ended by stating his hope that any follow-up initiative to this conference would include steps to address the problems of the judicial systems in Central America.

Oscar Santamaría spoke primarily about the continued need for judicial reform in El Salvador. He said that institutional reform was the process that El Salvador set out to accomplish through the peace accords, adding that “one of the fundamental pillars of democracy is justice and that if the government did not make the effort to reform the judicial system, then they would only be making superficial changes and not lasting ones.” In his opinion, El Salvador is still a country in transition and the accords were the starting point of a project that has yet to be completed. As far as bringing those responsible for war crimes to justice, he explained that the issue was taken into consideration at the time of the accords but that it was decided not to prosecute because the judicial system was not equipped to take on this task. The role of the Truth Commission that was to give society a report of what happened, but the Commission never had any judicial functions because it was a mandate that would not have been possible to carry out at the time.



(from left to right) Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, Beatrice Rangel, Antonio Lacayo

Hector Rosada, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace, spoke candidly about his experience in negotiating truth and reconciliation issues in Guatemala. He said that when the issue of human rights was discussed, one of the main areas of disagreement was the issue of a truth commission. In order to come to an agreement,

this issue was taken out of the accords and negotiated separately. Nonetheless this separate negotiation almost put an end to the process. He mentioned the important role played by the *Recordatorio de Memoria Historica* (REMHI), a project initiated by Archbishop Juan Gerardi which sought to go beyond the official *Comisión de Esclarecimiento Histórico* to report on all the human rights abuses committed during the war. The Archbishop felt the negotiated agreement did not create a good enough process of truth and verification, so he initiated this project, which Mr. Rosada believes was actually more important than the official Truth Commission. Mr. Rosada observed that it is probably not a coincidence that Archbishop Gerardi was assassinated eight days after the REHMI report came out. Mr. Rosada went on to explain that he does not like to use the word reconciliation “because to reconcile you had to be on good terms at one point, but, in Guatemala, it was the foundation for a new relationship which had to be set,” not a rebuilding of an old one. Overall, Dr. Rosada supports the claim that the subject of justice is an almost impossible one to negotiate as concessions have to be made in the name of negotiating. In his opinion little has been done in Guatemala in terms of reconstructing the judicial system and therefore it is still not capable of dealing with these issues. He ended his presentation by saying that the most important thing is for a country’s people to learn from their past and to be reminded of what happened, so that it will never happen again.

Yago Pico de Coaña, former General Director of Iberoamerican Political Affairs for the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Relations, began by emphasizing that the root causes of armed conflicts, such as hunger, poor living conditions, and desperation need to be dealt with during and after the war in order to “build a future once there is peace from arms.” A political will has to exist to remove the barriers that create injustice in order to create authentic peace and development. Furthermore, he placed an emphasis on obtaining truth and then justice, saying that both are absolutely necessary for reconciliation. Lastly, he ended by talking about the problems the region is currently facing: a lack of justice and corruption. These need to be addressed regionally, and he

suggested that given the history of regional solutions there is a precedent on which to build on.

Leonel Gómez, human rights activist and author, spoke about the present state of the region, the danger posed by narcotrafficking, corruption and money laundering, and the continuing need to strengthen judicial systems in all five countries of the region. According to Mr. Gomez, if something is not done, the Central American countries will be facing a situation that will be “a worse hell than the war.”

Once the debate was opened up to the plenary, participants focused on plans for the future and ideas for how to work together after the conference. Almost all the participants that spoke in the plenary discussion agreed on the need to carry out programs and initiatives that address the faltering justice systems and the lack of a genuine rule of law in the region. President **Vinicio Cerezo** said that the Esquipulas III initiative that he is proposing would incorporate this issue. When asked about why the justice system in Costa Rica is often seen as a notable exception in the region, former Foreign Minister **Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto** said he believes the Costa Rican justice system also suffers from several flaws and problems. However, he did mention that one important aspect of the Costa Rican judicial system that makes a difference in terms of its independence is the fact that magistrates are named by the Legislative Assembly and not by the President, and that candidates must go through a Commission of Appointments, which has a set of requirements and criteria for evaluation.

Joaquín Villalobos said that the question of whether and how justice would be implemented following a negotiated solution to a conflict ultimately depends on the correlation of forces at the time of the end of the conflict, and to a lesser extent on international pressure. He observed that corruption in government and political parties mirrors the corruption of citizens and society itself, so he mentioned the importance of imagining and implementing creative programs that promote more civic values, positive and centrist leadership, and that ultimately aim to create better citizens. Mr. Villalobos said that “our countries have moved from following the law because of fear, to disobeying the law because it is partial, to not

believing in the law because it is inefficient.” He observed that rather than the wars having caused a lack of civic and moral values, the wars were actually a result of a lack of these values in the first place, and thus mentioned the need for Central America to create a culture of peace, legality and respect for the rule of law.

Pedro Nikken, Legal Adviser to the UN Secretary-General in the El Salvador peace process and former President of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, summarized the discussions by addressing the three key issues that were addressed: justice, truth, and forgiveness. Regarding justice he concluded in all three countries there remains a lack of professionalism, credibility, and independence. The implication is that the peace processes and their aftermath have not corrected this problem and said that “even when governments are legitimately elected, democracy is not complete because there is still a lack of balance between the powers of government and there is a lack of rule of law to achieve justice.” According to Mr. Nikken, the Central American example demonstrates how this can be a source of violence as society may look to other means to resolve conflict. Regarding truth, Mr. Nikken surmised that it is “a necessary antecedent to forgiveness, as you cannot forgive what you do not know.” Victims have a right to the truth and it should always be provided to them. Lastly, Mr. Nikken summarized discussions relating to forgiveness, saying that it is part of the process of reconciliation. A nation has to digest what has happened to truly be able to forgive; otherwise they will carry the burden of the past with them. It is necessary to work to deepen what has been done and to correct the deficiencies of past efforts.

Mr. Nikken ended the fourth panel by expanding upon earlier ideas for follow-up by proposing that the group create a task force to present the ideas of the conference to international organizations and governments that can support a follow-up initiative. The group would have to be independent of any government, politically pluralistic, and composed of individuals with both practical and academic experience, with a capacity to look to the future, and who have the influence and weight to help put these recommendations into action. The task of the group would be to identify situations that are potentially conflictive and apply

preventive diplomacy, maintain communication with international organizations and governments that can provide aid and diplomatic support, and offer as group support and assistance to peace processes around the world.

A number of important lessons learned in Central America were identified in the course of the discussion. Among them:

- Amnesty is sometimes a necessary step to achieving peace and reconciliation after a conflict situation.
- Judicial systems need to have capacity to address issues of truth and justice before they do so properly.
- Signing an agreement initiates a longer-term process of social change that takes years to carry out. Reform and improvement of judicial and security institutions is an important element of this process that should be prioritized.
- Leaving judicial reform undone can lead to a different cycle of violence involving crime and corruption that undermines earlier efforts to establish peace between warring factions. Judicial corruption and inefficiency also hinders social and economic development.
- Understanding what happened during the war is important to facilitating reconciliation.
- Civil society groups and other organizations like the Church can play an important role by taking on efforts to promote truth and reconciliation; however, oftentimes a society cannot move on unless there is an official process of truth and justice.

Applying the Lessons Learnt: a Global Perspective

The final panel, moderated by **Wendy Luers**, Co-Chair of the Project in Time of Transition, focused mainly on what lessons can be drawn from the Central American peace process for peace processes that are currently underway around the world. Five speakers from Israel, Colombia, Sri Lanka, the Iberoamerican Secretariat and the United Nations were invited to comment on what they had gained from the discussions throughout the conference. Panelists included **Shlomo Ben Ami**, Vice-President of the Toledo Center for International

Peace and former Foreign Affairs Minister of Israel; **Ram Manikkalingam**, former Senior Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka on the Sri Lankan peace process; **Augusto Ramírez Ocampo**, former Foreign Minister of Colombia and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to El Salvador; **Edmundo Jarquín**, Chief of Staff at the Iberoamerican Secretariat and **Magdy Martínez-Soliman**, Head of the UN Democracy Fund.



(from left to right) Manuel Conde-Orellana, Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, Andrea Petersen, President Vinicio Cerezo, Wendy Luers, Oscar Santamaria, Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto, Ina Breuer

Former Israeli Foreign Minister **Shlomo Ben-Ami** started his presentation by stating that although the Israeli-Arab peace process is fundamentally different from the one carried out in Central America, there is a certain resemblance between them. Mr. Ben-Ami noted that as in the Central American case, the solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict has to come from a regional effort, such as through the intervention of the Arab League (which was originally a Saudi proposal). In the case of the Arab-Israeli peace process, Mr. Ben-Ami argued, peace is not viable if it does not go through regional channels because only regional approaches would allow Palestinians to concede anything in the arena of refugees or land with the approval of the Arab community. Mr. Ben-Ami also observed that some of the major breakthroughs in the Arab-Israeli conflict have happened as a result of secret negotiations and outside the American sphere of influence (the Oslo Accords). He said that ultimately conflicts like the ones in Central America and in the Middle East are resolved only when there is a process of maturity or exhaustion, and he said that peace in the Middle East will probably not be a “peace of the brave but a peace of the exhausted.”

Finally, he observed that the easiest part of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict is the territorial part, while the hardest is going to be dealing with issues of historical memory, mythology, etc. He emphasized that a voluntary agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians is almost impossible, which is why regional engagement is so vital and necessary.

Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, former Colombian Foreign Minister and former SRSG for El Salvador, focused his comments on the Colombian peace process, and on several steps that must be taken to achieve peace there. First, he stated that Colombia's internal conflict has been going on for more than forty years and Colombians are tired of war. He then argued that Colombia has "more territory than state," and it is therefore hard to reach control of the totality of the country. Mr. Ramirez also argued that in order to achieve peace, Colombia has to have a more continuous peace policy, for in the last forty years, Colombia has had around ten presidents, most of them with a different view on how to achieve peace. He pointed out that the international community is much more complex now, especially because of the creation of the International Criminal Court and other international judicial organizations, and he said he is not sure how the Central Americans peace accords would have been carried out within this type of international context. According to him, the international community has to understand that peace in modern Colombia is not feasible if justice is prioritized over peace, for how can you convince the leaders of the FARC, ELN, AUC and other factions to make peace if they know they will end up in jail or in The Hague? Mr. Ramirez Ocampo ended by supporting earlier assertions regarding the need to build a culture for peace in transitional countries because, as he said, war is not in our genes, and we are all as much capable of making peace as we are at waging war.

Ram Manikkalingam, former advisor to the President of Sri Lanka, focused on general lessons he has learned in modern conflict resolution through his experience in Sri Lanka. He reaffirmed what others have said about how the experience of Central America has provided so many positive contributions to the process of peacebuilding around the world over the last twenty years. He explained

that although the UN's policy on conflict resolution is "nice," it does not adapt properly to the modern world. He insisted that a simple three-step plan—prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction—is not good enough. In his opinion, the path to resolve a conflict requires action on four different levels, and all four have to be attempted simultaneously. First, a reduction in violence is crucial; second, an improvement in all areas of human rights; third, the country needs to be rebuilt to create socio-economic opportunities for everybody; and fourth, a final negotiated solution needs to be attained. He said that these processes should be simultaneous because they are all necessary to build peace and because they can all be complementary, although we have to be realistic that sometimes they can clash. Mr. Manikkalingam also observed that today's world is faced with "new wars," or wars of identity, which are fundamentally different from those fought in the past for land reform, poverty and social equality (like the wars in Central America). He also reaffirmed the importance of Central America's example of regional peacebuilding efforts and said other regions should emulate that.

Edmundo Jarquín, a long-time official in the Inter-American Development Bank and current Chief of Staff of the Iberoamerican Secretariat, focused on the different socioeconomic factors in Latin America that bring instability to the region. He pointed out that in the last 24 years, Latin America has only seen an increase of 11% in its GDP, meaning that the third wave of democratization and the end of the different civil conflicts did not bring prosperity for its people. He argued that there is a great opportunity for the current generation to finally launch a strong initiative to improve this, and that without initiative, more conflicts would arise, and that others like Colombia, will be harder to solve. Mr. Jarquín also drew a parallel between democracy and peace processes, saying that both require legitimacy of origin and legitimacy of exercise, meaning that parties must first agree on a framework, a set of institutions, and method of negotiation and discussion that is satisfactory to all parties in order for the rest of the process to be successful.

The last panelist, **Magdy Martinez Soliman**, head of the UN Democracy Fund, spoke

about current efforts for reform inside the UN and about current UN peacebuilding efforts around the world. First, he talked about how an expansion of the Security Council would bring to the UN the diversity of power that already exists in the real world, placing countries like Brazil, India, Germany, Japan and South Africa in the positions of power that they deserve. He also acknowledged that although the UN has been often successful in mediating peace, it has a less successful record in consolidating peace, as World Bank studies demonstrate that nearly half of all conflicts that the UN has mediated have relapsed less than five years afterwards. He mentioned how the international community has come to the realization that it must continue to pay attention to transitional and post-conflict societies after agreements have been signed, and thus help with providing security, economic aid, diplomatic support, funds for DDR, etc. He then talked about the new UN Peacebuilding Commission, which will include countries that contribute the most money and personnel (police and military) to peace operations, the permanent members of the Security Council, and Tanzania and Denmark who have been negotiating the structure of the Commission in representation of the General Assembly. Mr. Martinez suggested that some of the discussions at this meeting relating to rule of law and the need to focus on judicial reform are very relevant and invited the Central Americans to help with the UN's efforts (through the Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Democracy Fund) to improve peacebuilding practices.

Although there was no debate after the presentations, **Sir Marrack Goulding** asked to give some final words. Peacebuilding, he said, has to be fundamentally directed towards addressing the causes for the breakdown of peace in the first place. In Central America, these factors consisted of broken or corrupt judicial systems, unequal distribution of wealth, ethnic discrimination, and corruption. All factors are undeniably domestic and therefore under the jurisdiction of each country, so the international community cannot get involved without the consent of the governments concerned,

which is a problem for international organizations. However, the international community also has a great responsibility in this arena and can do a lot to help. He concluded by saying that finding that balance between sovereignty and international assistance, and improving peacebuilding strategies around the world, are two of the great challenges we face today.

Conclusion

Spending four days in the beautiful setting of Toledo afforded this unique group of individuals, most of which played a significant role in bringing peace to the Central American region, an opportunity to reconsider what lessons were learned in Central American and which of these have relevance for today's world. Besides formulating the recommendations for the international community and leaders in other conflict zones contained in this report, the group recognized the urgent need to refocus attention in Central America on the remaining rule of law challenges. The Project and its partners are committed to helping realize this task and will be supporting the various initiatives and projects that came out of this conference and which will hopefully strengthen and support the efforts to consolidate peace and justice in Central America.



Group photo during tour of Toledo

APPENDIX A

Toledo Conference Participant List

From Central America:

- **Bernardo Arévalo de León**, Director, UNDP-WSP International Joint Programme Unit, UNOPS Geneva; former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala
- **José María Argueta**, former National Security Advisor Guatemala; Board member, Project on Justice in Times of Transition
- **General Julio Balconi**, retired General in the Guatemalan Army, former Guatemalan Minister of Defense.
- **Vinicio Cerezo**, former President of Guatemala; currently a member of Congress for the Christian Democratic Party.
- **Manuel Conde-Orellana**, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace, founder and President of the Central American Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
- **Arturo Cruz**, Professor, INCAE Business School, Managua
- **General Joaquín Cuadra Lacayo**, former General Chief of Staff of the Popular Sandinista Army and former Commander-in-Chief of the Nicaraguan Army
- **José María Figueres**, former President of Costa Rica
- **Leonel Gómez**, human rights activist and author; involved with the investigation of the murder of the Jesuits with Senator Joseph Moakley and with the investigation of the murder of Bishop Gerardi from Guatemala.
- **Edmundo Jarquín**, Chief of Staff, Iberoamerican Secretariat (SEGIB)
- **Antonio Lacayo**, Nicaraguan Minister of the Presidency under former President Chamorro
- **Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto**¹, former Foreign Minister of Costa Rica; founder and President of the Foundation for Peace and Democracy (FUNPADEM)
- **Pedro Nikken**, Legal Adviser to the UN Secretary-General in the El Salvador peace process, and former President of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights
- **Hector Rosada**, former President of the Guatemalan Commission for Peace
- **Oscar Santamaría**, former El Salvadoran government negotiator and former Secretary-General of the Central American Integration System (SICA)
- **Victor Valle**, founding member of the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace in El Salvador, and current Dean for Academic Administration and Professor of Human Security, University for Peace
- **Joaquín Villalobos**, former El Salvadoran FMLN *comandante*

International participants directly involved in the Central American peace process:

- **Blanca Antonini**, Director, Latin American Program, Toledo International Center for Peace
- **Bruce Cameron**, human rights activist
- **Felipe González**, former Prime Minister of Spain
- **Sir Marrack Goulding**, former UN Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping and Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs.
- **Enrique Iglesias**, Secretary-General of the Iberoamerican Secretariat (SEGIB)
- **Richard McCall**, former United States Assistant Secretary of State; currently Senior Vice-President for Programs, Creative Associates International
- **Ram Manikkalingam**, former Senior Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka on the Sri Lankan peace process
- **Magdy Martinez-Soliman**, Head, United Nations Democracy Fund

- **Yago Pico de Coaña**, former General Director of Iberoamerican Political Affairs, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Relations
- **Augusto Ramírez Ocampo**, former Foreign Minister of Colombia and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to El Salvador
- **Beatrice Rangel**, former adviser to former President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela and representative to the Central American peace process

Others in Attendance

- **Luis Alejandro Sintes**, General in the Spanish Army
- **Queenie Altamirano**, Panamanian Embassy in Spain
- **Mauricio Artiñano**, Tufts University student
- **José María Barreda**, President, Regional Government of Castilla-La Mancha
- **Shlomo Ben Ami**, Vice-President of CITpax and former Foreign Affairs Minister of Israel
- **Ina Breuer**, Executive Director, Project on Justice in Times of Transition
- **Sean Carroll**, Club of Madrid
- **Emilio Cassinello**, General Director, Toledo International Center for Peace
- **Sebastian Chaskel**, Tufts University student
- **Pedro Echavarría**, Tufts University student
- **Juan Garrigues**, Toledo International Centre for Peace
- **Manuel Montobbio**, Embajador de España en Misión Especial
- **Suzanne Gratius**, FRIDE
- **Manuel Herera**, Manager, Fundacion Carolina
- **Sanna Johnson**, Olof Palme International Center
- **Fernando Lamata**, Vice-President, Regional Government of Castilla-La Mancha
- **Wendy Luers**, Co-Chair and Co-Founder, Project of Justice in Times of Transition
- **Henrik Lundt**, Club of Madrid
- **Carlos Malamud**, Senior Latin American investigator, Real Instituto Elcano
- **Alfredo Moreno Cebrián**, Academic Director, Fundacion Carolina
- **Cynthia Medina**, Tufts University student
- **Ify Mora**, University College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University
- **Luis Peral**, FRIDE
- **Andrea Petersen**, Tufts University student
- **Timothy Phillips**, Co-Chair and Co-Founder, Project on Justice in Times of Transition
- **Maria Elena Pozuelo Pagés**, Costa Rican Ambassador to Spain
- **Gabriel Reyes**, Toledo International Centre for Peace
- **Natalia Royo**, Panamanian Embassy in Spain
- **Molly Runyon**, Tufts University student
- **Rosario Seoanne**, Panamanian Embassy in Spain
- **Sherman Teichman**, Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University
- **Nancy Wilson**, University College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University

APPENDIX B

About the Organizers

The Project on Justice in Times of Transition has been actively engaged in tackling the complex challenges of societal transformation for over a decade and has an established track record of over 46 initiatives that served as a stimulus to problem-solving and sustained cooperative work in communities riven by conflict. In recent years the Project has conducted programs that have helped practitioners and political leaders strategize solutions in a variety of countries and regions, including Afghanistan, East Timor, Guatemala, Kosovo, Northern Ireland, Palestine and Peru. Project initiatives have addressed a broad array of issues related to peace-building and democratization in post-conflict settings, including consensus-building in preparation for negotiations, improving United Nations peace-building practices in the rule of law area, strengthening the capacity of political and community leaders to work together on reconstruction issues and reforming intelligence organizations.

The Toledo International Center for Peace seeks to contribute to the prevention and resolution of violent or potentially violent international or intranational conflicts and to the consolidation of peace, within a framework of respect and promotion of Human Rights and democratic values. The Toledo Center's current activities and projects are enclosed within three programmes: two geographical programmes (Africa and the Middle East, and Latin America), and the Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Crisis Management Programme, which is a transversal programme sometimes developing its own activities and other times complementing and supporting the regional programmes. The Programmes seek to achieve their specific objectives through projects of diverse duration and nature that combine negotiation, facilitation, field projects, research, training, diffusion and public information, and are designed according to the specific features of each conflict, and the Centre's comparative advantages in each particular context and the resources available.

The Tufts University Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, formerly known as the University College of Citizenship and Public Service, was established in 2000 to support the core Tufts mission of promoting civic engagement. The Tisch College fulfills this goal in four ways, by: facilitating and supporting a wide range of student programs that enable them to develop their potential to contribute meaningfully to the greater world, working directly with the communities in which Tufts has a presence, engaging and supporting faculty in research and teaching, and engaging Tufts alumni interested in building stronger communities and societies.

The mission of the **Tufts University Institute for Global Leadership** is to prepare new generations of critical thinkers for effective and ethical leadership, ready to act as global citizens in addressing international and national issues across cultures. In 2005, the Institute was named a distinctive, cross-school program of the University, with the objective of enhancing the interdisciplinary quality and engaged nature of a Tufts education. The Institute emphasizes rigorous academic preparation and experiential learning, as students learn through intensive engagement in classes, global research, internships, workshops, and international symposia - all involving national and international leaders from the public and private sectors. The Institute encourages "thinking beyond boundaries and acting across borders."

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Timothy Phillips, Co-Chair

**Project on Justice in Times
of Transition**

419 East 57th Street, 14 A

New York, NY 10022

Tel: 646 257-4901

Fax: 212 758-4142

E-mail: pjtt@fcsny.org

