

# SPECIAL REPORT

NO. 475 | AUGUST 2020

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)

## Disengagement and Reconciliation in Conflict-Affected Settings

By Leanne Erdberg Steadman



Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, on March 13, 2020, where more than two decades of fighting have created widespread trauma. (Photo by Jim Huylebroek/New York Times)

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Conflict and Terrorism .....	6
Disorder and Structure .....	9
Communities and Groups .....	13
Individual Well-Being .....	18
From Risks to Strengths .....	20

## Summary

- Peacebuilding tools and approaches can help transform the societal structures, group relationships, and individual attitudes needed to effectively disengage and reconcile those who engaged in violent extremism, even in conflict-affected contexts.
- In conflicts characterized by the involvement of terror organizations, enabling people to disengage from violent extremism and fostering community reconciliation will be a necessary component of stabilization.
- Policymakers should consider investments that serve multiple purposes and consider how, in challenging conflict and postconflict settings, disengaged persons might participate in stabilization activities.
- Because violent extremism is deeply social, efforts that promote meaningful disengagement and reconciliation would benefit from being communal in nature, accruing benefits to both formerly violent individuals and to society at large.
- In conflict settings where victims, bystanders, and adherents have experienced destruction and trauma, the keys to enabling a future not solely defined by their past requires focusing on their capacity for change and their well-being.
- Counterterrorism policies should therefore begin to embrace the possibility that looking for resiliencies might be more important than addressing all potential risk factors.



UNITED STATES  
INSTITUTE OF PEACE  
Making Peace Possible

# SPECIAL REPORT

NO. 475 | AUGUST 2020

---



## ABOUT THE REPORT

This report explores how people disengage from violent extremism and reconcile with communities in conflict settings. A companion to Peaceworks no. 163, "Violent Extremist Disengagement and Reconciliation," it further builds the conceptual framework for how peacebuilding tools and approaches can enable disengagement from violent extremism and foster reconciliation with communities with a focus on the dynamics and complexities in conflict-affected environments.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leanne Erdberg Steadman is director of Countering Violent Extremism at the United States Institute of Peace and interim director of the RESOLVE Network. Previously, she served for nearly a decade in the US government at the National Security Council, the Department of State, and the Department of Homeland Security.

---

The views expressed in this report are those of the author(s) alone. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace. An online edition of this and related reports can be found on our website ([www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)), together with additional information on the subject.

© 2020 by the United States Institute of Peace

### United States Institute of Peace

2301 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

Phone: 202.457.1700

Fax: 202.429.6063

E-mail: [usip\\_requests@usip.org](mailto:usip_requests@usip.org)

Web: [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)

Special Report No. 475. First published 2020.

ISBN: 978-1-60127-817-3



UNITED STATES  
INSTITUTE OF PEACE  
Making Peace Possible



A group of FARC rebels arrive at a new camp hidden in mountains north of Medellín, Colombia, on August 31, 2018. Some former FARC fighters have joined dissident groups, endangering Colombia's 2016 peace accord. (Photo by Federico Rios Escobar/New York Times)

## Introduction

It is possible, even in the most brutal and desperate conflict settings, for people to abandon violence and leave violent groups. Peacebuilders know this well. Terrorism and counterterrorism policies and practices, however, have both too often neglected the practical ways to address participants in violent extremism and failed to provide them opportunities to reject violence. In the aftermath of terrorist movements or violent extremist conflicts, governments and communities worldwide struggle with what to do about the participants. Peacebuilding helps make this challenge addressable. The peacebuilding contribution to disengagement and reconciliation makes a future possible in which people are not solely defined by their past.

Disengagement refers not only to the disaffiliation from a violent extremist organization but also to the rejection of violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflict, express grievances, or pursue a goal. Reconciliation refers to a process by which communities and those disengaging from violent extremism rehumanize each other and foster healing to reduce stigma, open spaces for prosocial engagement, address needs for justice and accountability, restore relationships, and move from exclusion and fear to inclusion and productive participation in the community and society.

Exiting a violent extremist group in a conflict setting has something in common with exiting in civil settings; other aspects will be unique. In contexts mired by numerous conflict dynamics, exiting will encompass more than deradicalization. Put simply, persuading an individual to renounce radical ideological beliefs will at best have mixed and inconclusive results. On the one hand, we





Men play pool in the streets of Maiduguri, Nigeria, on August 23, 2019. The city was the site of many bombings and attacks carried by Boko Haram extremists over the last decade. (Photo by Laura Boushnak/New York Times)

may never know what is really inside someone's mind. On the other, beliefs change frequently. We do not know what effectively changes a person's mind because many factors contribute to the formation of beliefs, just as many contribute to their abdication. Violent beliefs are also only sometimes predictors of violent behaviors. Especially in conflict settings, the idea of choice when joining a terrorist group is murky. People turn to violent extremism for other than ideological reasons—for safety, security, duress, sense of belonging—which often make participation in the group appear as the only viable option. Most pragmatically, people can have hateful, violent beliefs yet never act on them. Disengagement is thus possible even when someone continues to believe hateful things if they renounce violence and violent groups as a way of expressing that hate.

Peacebuilding helps bridge these realities by focusing on ending conflict and discouraging violence. Thus, peacebuilders can help the dissatisfied find a way out of violent extremist groups that does not hinge solely on ideological commitment. Peacebuilding can effectively focus on nonideological factors and provide opportunities for new forms of safety, belonging, and security, which can in turn alter underlying realities that make violent extremism so viable in conflict settings. Backed by practical knowledge and skills honed by working with former members of cults, gangs, and criminal organizations, peacebuilding brings lessons from scholarship and practice on why individuals leave

violence, abusive relationships, or lifelong careers. Over the last two decades, peacebuilders have studied and worked with a cadre of people who have left terrorist groups and beliefs behind.

Peacebuilders have learned that for many during a conflict, participation in a violent extremist group was not simply a matter of ideological support. Instead, a group functioned as a social fabric, “a shared identity and commitment to a cause,” that made people feel deeply part of something.<sup>1</sup> For many of these organizations, group identity is even more salient than individual identity. In conflict settings, “you’re with us or you’re against us” is a matter of life or death. In postconflict settings, asking victimized communities to share and help construct new social groups and roles for former violent extremists is as essential as it is difficult. Peacebuilding, however, witnessed incredible postconflict transformations in Burundi, Rwanda, and Peru, which it can help translate to today’s urgent violent extremist conflicts. Further, many of those disengaging from ISIS in the Middle East, Boko Haram in Africa, the FARC in Colombia, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and other extremist groups are highly traumatized. This exposure does not absolve them of responsibility for having engaged with a genocidal or violent group, or of having engaged in violent and criminal behavior themselves. However, like so many facets of conflict, trauma affects victims and perpetrators without regard to justice.

In some settings, violent extremists and community members share grievances, even as they differ in seeing violent, absolutist groups as the appropriate way to address those deficiencies. In others, many victim communities will never want to reconcile with former violent extremists.<sup>2</sup> Many will wonder, “Why should these people get special treatment, they were the violent ones after all?” In conflict settings, disengagement is not charity; it is instead a practical necessity to prevent further resurgence of violence. Pulling people away from violence is a prerequisite to resolving conflict, and communities must be included and consulted and made an integral part of helping do so. Individuals will need to believe that they have an opportunity to leave violent groups and to become members of society. Communities in turn will need to be that new group, that community, that place for people to redefine their future.

Peacebuilding can provide insight on how to achieve that level of acceptance, which will require justice and the rule of law, accountability and governance, and reconciliation and restoration. But social cohesion and transition have proven possible in many challenging circumstances, and disengagement from violent extremism can stand on the shoulders of giants of conflict resolution. From the Shining Path to the Khmer Rouge to the Revolutionary United Front, numerous violent groups have faded out of existence. Liberia, Nepal, Kosovo, and Timor Leste offer examples of how international efforts to demobilize and reintegrate combatants effectively accelerated postconflict stabilization. Still, finding common ground and reaching reconciliation in the aftermath of violent conflict will take a village. It means asking communities to help create an entirely new chapter for those who, in some cases, were their direct aggressors.

In the most dire conflicts, some will return to lives worse than when they first aligned with violent groups. Others, especially adolescents, have few memories of life without violent conflict. Recidivism—if that is even the most accurate description—will be a persistent concern, with few successful examples for reintegration that have led the way to transformative peace. For these cases especially, disengagement and reconciliation will be essential to preventing future violence and future grievances. Focusing on conflict settings, this report unpacks how

peacebuilding tools and approaches can help transform the individual attitudes, group relationships, and social ecosystems and structures needed to facilitate the effective disengagement and reconciliation of former members of violent extremist groups.

## Conflict and Terrorism

Ninety-five percent of the deaths attributed to terrorism occur in countries already in conflict.<sup>3</sup> The people of Afghanistan have experienced violent conflict for generations. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Syrians have lost their lives in the last decade, and millions remain displaced. In Yemen, the humanitarian catastrophe continues, entire towns have been reduced to rubble, and an estimated 80 percent of the population (about 24.1 million citizens) require some form of humanitarian assistance.<sup>4</sup> In Libya and Somalia, conflicts that include violent extremists rage for years on end. In parts of Mali, Niger, and Nigeria, despite general peace, violent extremism continues. The prevalence of participation in extremist groups in these contexts cannot be appreciated without understanding deeper conflict dynamics.

The Syrian people have endured almost a decade of conflict, hundreds of thousands have been killed, many times more have been injured, and essential infrastructure has been destroyed—hospitals, schools, roads, businesses all under rubble. More than half of the Syrian population is displaced, 6.6 million internally and another 5.6 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries.<sup>5</sup> The country's economy as well as its social structures are in desperate need of repair. For the nearly eight million people who lived under the brutal rule of ISIS, traumatic stress is pervasive.<sup>6</sup> Now, in the aftermath, so is the lack of access to food, clean water, and education. The multiplicity of conflict actors, including state powers unlikely to cease engaging in state-sponsored violence, leaves few opportunities for compromise. The onus to disengage relative to limited pressure for state-sponsored actors to stop fighting will likely mean continued fighting. Moreover, the need to reweave a Syrian social fabric destroyed by years of violent conflict will compound this challenge for years to come.

In such contexts, the disengagement and reconciliation of those who joined violent extremist groups will be one of dozens of urgent postconflict needs. It is nonetheless an important one. Enabling ways for adherents of violent groups to leave is crucial for postconflict stabilization and for any sustainable peace. Efforts to demobilize and reintegrate armed actors and violent political groups during and after conflict are not new to the peacebuilding community. In fact, several scholars and practitioners have started to adapt the lessons and strategies from the extensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) experience to the context of violent extremism.<sup>7</sup> Although cease-fires, peace deals, and reconciliation efforts have their own well-documented challenges—from Congo to Burma, from Burundi to Colombia—international peacebuilding efforts have lessons to lend to conflicts that currently involve violent extremist groups.<sup>8</sup> It will not be straightforward. Some groups will persist despite a peace deal or cease-fire. Some individuals will join other violent groups as adherents or mercenaries if their group signs up for peace. Given conflict dynamics and international norms, most of today's conflicts that involve violent extremism are unlikely to end with traditional peace deals and conflict resolution. Nonetheless, peacebuilding tools can help reduce the ubiquity of deadly conflicts, as in Afghanistan with the Taliban.<sup>9</sup>





Women who formerly lived under ISIS at a rehabilitation center in Aktau, Kazakhstan, in July 2019. Kazakhstan has repatriated hundreds of citizens from northeast Syria, both detained fighters and displaced family members. (Photo by Tara Todras-Whitehill/New York Times)

However, when one of the parties to the conflict is an internationally recognized terrorist group or organization, peace accords are both politically toxic and more difficult to achieve, and have fewer historic success stories to draw lessons from.<sup>10</sup> Recent historical examples such as Colombia's peace process have as many pitfalls to avoid as they do examples to emulate.<sup>11</sup> Even if they are achievable, the legacy of international policies of designation, sanctions, and stigma make many of the tools of peace transformation (aid, training, services) nearly impossible. Changing the public discourse around conflicts with those who were deemed terrorists for decades and changing the nature of sanctions and punitive tools to make them reversible or malleable to peace processes are deserving of focus and adaptation to violent extremism-driven conflicts.

Today, across the spectrum of the most visible terrorist groups, most are unlikely to be embraced for peace deals, let alone amnesties or disarmament buy-back programs, the types of international efforts that often characterize international peacemaking and armed conflict resolution.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, many terrorist group leaders are unlikely to seek such remedies and may even try to prevent members from participating.<sup>13</sup> Several international actors will run into legal and operational barriers, mostly related to the inability to work with members of a designated terrorist organization lest they be swept up in charges of providing material support.<sup>14</sup>

For contexts that have hundreds or thousands of violent extremist participants, introducing traditional peacemaking tools may also be an opportunity to catalyze disengagement and reconciliation—to encourage defections, enable the disillusioned to leave, and provide the dissatisfied with an alternative option. Injecting aspects of violent extremism disengagement and reconciliation into more robust and well-defined postconflict stabilization needs can buoy both stabilization goals and peacebuilding goals. What happens to the cohort of those who were part of a violent extremist group is often overlooked when peace deals are implemented, and yet is intertwined with preventing the resurgence of violence and enabling lasting peace.

## **DISENGAGEMENT AND RECONCILIATION IN AL HOL**

Displacement camps throughout Syria have struggled with overcrowding and limited capacity to provide essential services, as well as repatriating citizens back to their home communities. The sprawling displacement camp of al Hol in northeast Syria, for example, is host to sixty-five thousand people, the vast majority of them women and children, 70 percent whom are younger than eighteen.<sup>15</sup> To date, those displaced in the camp have little chance of returning to their home communities, whether in Iraq, Syria, or any of dozens of other places. Repatriation efforts to date of the estimated two thousand foreigners have been ad hoc, inconsistent, and subject to vacillations in political will.<sup>16</sup> The displacement camps as well as the detention centers housing known or suspected ISIS combatants are all under the supervision of the nonstate Syrian Defense Forces (SDF), which receives (paradoxically) both international support and castigation (strong support from the United States and European countries, characterization as a terror group by Turkey, Russia, Syria, and others).

The security environment inside al Hol is characterized by adult residents who have a kaleidoscope of experiences living with ISIS. These include undeniable perpetrators of violence who continue to attempt to enforce the caliphate's austere version of violent laws and norms upon others, vociferous adherents, bystanders, the repentant, and victims of ISIS atrocities. These varying roles in and levels of devotion to ISIS are neither well understood nor static.

The SDF also maintains twenty ISIS detention centers across northeast Syria. Recent riots and breakouts highlight the strained capacity the SDF and international partners face.<sup>17</sup> These challenges have only been further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has introduced new health considerations as well as burdens that the SDF and national governments are ill-prepared to address.

Repatriating and returning camp residents to home communities would enable some of those currently living in a squalid, unsanitary confinement camp to forge a life not mired in despair. The thousands of children who have gone without formal education are in particular at greater risk for adverse outcomes, including a future of involvement in violent extremism. Many nations are reluctant to repatriate their citizens.<sup>18</sup> The efforts taken so far provide a framework for scaling up such efforts globally, however.<sup>19</sup> Kazakhstan, for example, has repatriated hundreds of citizens from northeast Syria, both detained fighters and displaced family members. It provides services to address the unique “physical, psychological, emotional, and material needs” that help stabilize returnees before reentering communities and prevent risks of “re-radicalization or transition to other forms of criminal and violent behavior.”<sup>20</sup>



The type of resources, will, and know-how to address the human legacies of ISIS, Boko Haram, al Shabaab, and other violent extremist groups . . . are relatively minimal.

Violent extremists thus remain in prisons or displacement camps, or are shuttled back to communities uncertain about what to do with them, what rights they are due, and how to improve the situation.

Although efforts to do the important work of disengagement and reconciliation may be impossible in the camp, the international community could invest in important precursors to this work to provide the runway for eventual efforts afterward. For many victims of violence in the camps, addressing trauma and behavioral health could be a first step to changing their outward demeanor (unresponsive, apathetic, angry, removed) that continues to mark them as a risk to governments and communities. Addressing these needs could help substantiate why they should be allowed the opportunity to return to their communities. A public health

approach that addresses trauma and provides behavioral and psychosocial support can provide a pathway to allow residents to find their humanity and dignity again outside the frame of ISIS.<sup>21</sup>

## Disorder and Structure

In a postconflict setting, the roles and responsibilities typically needed to achieve disengagement from violent extremism vary widely. Teachers, health-care workers, psychologists, clergy, and local politicians may be absent, or overtaxed and otherwise occupied, or traumatized and unable to fill such roles. Community members may have become dependent on international humanitarian aid, or accustomed to having their safety secured by nonstate security forces, or adjusted to a lack of freedom within IDP (internally displaced person) camps or living without a job or the ability to provide for their families.<sup>22</sup> When societal structures are damaged, applying best practices for disengagement and reconciliation necessarily differ from when those structures are intact.

In a conflict setting, international policies and resources known as stabilization activities are often suited to address the familiar set of problems—removing debris; providing food, water, and sanitation; rebuilding security forces; helping restart elections; supporting various state-building activities. The international community usually surges to implement them during and after violent conflict.<sup>23</sup> Political leaders meet in capitals to allocate resources to urgent and immediate humanitarian needs, and donor countries tap into an array of organizations that have worked across dozens of contexts and can effectively discharge the work. Peeling people away from violent extremism is still a challenge in a postconflict stabilization context, but one of several urgent needs, and one without a clear how-to guide.

The type of resources, will, and know-how to address the human legacies of ISIS, Boko Haram, al Shabaab, and other violent extremist groups and to promote disengagement and reconciliation are relatively minimal. Conventional stabilization practices typically focus on other sectors. Violent extremists thus remain in prisons or displacement camps, or are shuttled back to communities uncertain about what to do with them, what rights they are due, and how to improve the situation, let alone square communal desires for retribution against perceived perpetrators of violence.<sup>24</sup> Ignoring the needs for disengagement and reconciliation is the policy equivalent of an ostrich sticking its head in the sand. Refugee camps cannot deliver justice, disengage the



Suspected members of ISIS participate in a volleyball game in the yard of a prison run by Kurdish-led forces in Syria on October 21, 2019. (Photo by Ivor Prickett/New York Times)

violent, monitor for threats, or prevent further recruitment or resurgence.<sup>25</sup> Capacity gaps in pre-trial detention, corrections, and prisons have proven to increase the likelihood of further radicalization.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the longer that people are denied a way out, the greater their potential to engage in violent extremism and cause future harm. Conflicts characterized by violent extremist group participation will not truly end until better ways are available to enable the prosocial disengagement and reconciliation of violent extremist participants.

## MYOPIC DIAGNOSIS

In conflict settings, the structural order is already deeply broken, often having played an important role in the rise of violent extremist groups in the first place. Many of the structural-level challenges that enable groups—rampant corruption, historical marginalization, unjust distribution of scarce resources—take immense political will, time, and resources to address. In conflict-affected communities such as Yemen, Afghanistan, and Syria, after years of conflict, structural dynamics may be worse off than when the conflict began.

Traditionally, when a conflict ends, the international community surges to provide stabilization and reconstruction. Despite limitations and shaky achievements, the will to act remains.<sup>27</sup> But for

international peacebuilding efforts to be effective, they must be more locally accountable and more attuned to what it takes to build a local future.<sup>28</sup> As international governments and organizations invest in ending conflicts, efforts that adapt postconflict approaches can sometimes buoy the goal of ending violent extremist participation, even while providing needed stabilization objectives.

Violent extremist groups tap into deep dissatisfaction with societal grievances to recruit followers; addressing some of those dynamics will be a component of how people exit violent extremism in conflict settings. For instance, activities that attempt to repair the social compact (build trust between government actors and communities) or repair the social fabric (empower different components of communities to build a shared future together) will be especially important to denying violent extremist groups the ability to hold onto followers with a promise that their status quo provides better governance than the alternative. In Somalia, for example, the absence of legitimacy hampered reconstruction efforts for decades. Studies find that the state must be perceived as legitimate by individuals and communities that have previously held grievances against it, and that, to achieve the requisite level of trust, a social compact must go beyond mere delivery of services.<sup>29</sup>

Efforts designed to yield stabilization goals can be adapted and mobilized to build community resilience. For instance, working at the structural level on needed reforms—such as increasing accountability of local governance practices—can also be done in a way that emphasizes transparency and inclusive decision making of local stakeholders, so that it meets a stabilization objective and has a peacebuilding dividend of improving trust between community members and providing an opening for the disengaged to believe that their status quo can be improved without violence. Similarly, new decisions about infrastructure investments could be publicly broadcast, breaking down the “behind closed doors” practice of elite decision making and showcasing how it is possible to pursue practices that curb corruption and graft. These examples do not imply that it is easy to get members who were part of violent groups to buy into the structures they deeply fought to overthrow, especially given that they represent the powers of a state they still deem illegitimate. Even as individuals disengage, the previous status quo will remain unacceptable. That said, confronting a broken status quo and repairing it inclusively (to include the viewpoints of various stakeholders) can build trust and provide governance dividends as communities stabilize postconflict.

Policies on violent extremism have been moving toward a more systemic understanding that involves broadening the focus beyond specific drivers to include their interconnected dynamics.<sup>30</sup> By looking at an entire system, policymakers can find room to invest in sectors and activities that are measured not only by their immediate objectives but also by the potential for investments to affect several dynamics at once.<sup>31</sup> In a conflict setting, this can be even more important because time is of the essence to achieve quick wins and demonstrate to a weary populous that incremental progress is possible.<sup>32</sup>

## STABILIZATION

The participation of those who have disengaged in reconstruction and stabilization can help meet multiple urgent needs at once—giving them purpose as part of their new group and demonstrating to communities that they can be productive in society. Especially for conflicts where violent extremist groups also functioned as the governing authority, such as ISIS or al



Shabaab, those who disengage can use some of their practical skills to help rebuild a new form of local governance not characterized by violence. For example, when community-based armed groups (CBAG) in Kenya were formalized into a state-sanctioned security provider, it “removed the incentive to join a CBAG, provided employment, and enforced regulation” that incentivized disengagement.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, in Northern Ireland, researchers noticed that when “the community [saw] former combatants actively working to contain violence” the community’s perception of the group shifted from the former role of inflicting violence to one of enabling community engagement.<sup>34</sup> It is not unreasonable to imagine that individuals within today’s terror groups could channel their ambitions toward a more peaceful future.<sup>35</sup>

Nonetheless, to create a home for those looking to disengage, and to do so by mobilizing them to rebuild, is not an easy task or prescription. After all, “ultimately, it is local communities which will allow or prevent the reintegration of an ex-combatant,” an incentive to make sure that efforts are good for the community, not just for the disengaged person. Within DDR, for example, scholars draw a distinction between reinsertion and reintegration of ex-combatants for exactly this reason—namely, reinsertion happens to the ex-combatant, whereas reintegration is inclusive, and the community has the ultimate vote.<sup>36</sup> So, despite programs that may provide skills-building and entrepreneurship or employment capabilities, additional efforts are needed to channel vocational-style training toward activities that would start to rebuild trust within communities.

Focusing on activities that directly affect people’s perception of security as stabilization efforts and combining them with de-othering is a good start.<sup>37</sup> The concepts of *othering* and *de-othering* come from a combination of sociology and philosophy; othering refers to treating a group or culture as categorically distinct from one’s self or identified group. De-othering, which refers to undoing the types of treatment that would be characteristic of othering, is an important component for sustainable disengagement and reconciliation from violent extremism. Some activities explicitly seek to build trust by providing a sense of security in a transparent or rights-respecting way. Finding opportunities for disengaged individuals to contribute to society may provide the type of bridge building necessary to prevent future violence and mitigate grievances.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Evidentiary reviews of conflict transformation give considerable prominence to mechanisms for state reformation—power-sharing deals, rebuilding of governance councils, and establishing credible service delivery.<sup>38</sup> Yet this is only part of the story. How individuals transform, and the power of people to be resilient in the face of dreadful circumstances, is a legacy that transcends all conflicts.<sup>39</sup>

In postconflict reconstruction, often the technocrat gets in first: how do we train people for new vocations or enable them to build new skills. But rebuilding spirits is another worthy endeavor in conflict settings, and getting to “moral renewal” and “social repair” will take more than employment programs and court proceedings.<sup>40</sup> As documented in postwar Bosnia, “societies are marked by the effects of massive, large group traumatization, and if not properly dealt with, long-term rehabilitation and social recovery cannot be expected.”<sup>41</sup> That said, the ability of people to take on new roles after conflict is endless.<sup>42</sup>

To invest in human resources at scale in postconflict settings will require a shift away from technical benchmarks such as the number of teachers trained and roads repaired, and instead

toward redefining success with programs that focus on building on qualities such as determination, fortitude, and ambition. Technical benchmarks can measure whether goods are getting where they need to go in a postconflict setting, but they are ill-suited to measure progress toward sustainable peace because they rarely consider who the beneficiaries are or the impact of service delivery on perceptions.<sup>43</sup> Revamping benchmarks to reflect localized perceptions in postconflict environments can provide true indicators of community and individual perceptions and enable a different type of progress. This would include whether people believe their future holds promise, whether they have the ability to start their own enterprise, or what their everyday peace indicators are.<sup>44</sup> Embracing the bottom-up, organic ways that people draw strength from histories, cultural practices, and ingenuity to build resilience can more sustainably and authentically enable the necessary structural-level restoration.<sup>45</sup>

## Communities and Groups

Incremental improvements at the structural level may provide open space to focus on the more sociological and psychological contributions to how people disengage from violent extremist groups. However, building that bridge via social groups in a conflict setting is not straightforward. The violent extremist groups that people were part of provided them with so much. They were not just networks and hierarchies, they were families, brotherhoods, livelihoods, and entire identities.<sup>46</sup> Often, they also provided purpose, significance, and belonging.<sup>47</sup> In conflict settings, violent extremist groups provided safety and security from threats—both identity threats and physical threats.<sup>48</sup> In a postconflict society, enabling disengaged people to achieve these aspects personally and within a group structure will be extremely pertinent to getting disengagement and reconciliation right.

In nonconflict settings, it is good practice to enable people disengaging from violent extremism to find an alternative group to meet many of those existential needs. In conflict settings, finding a new group presents additional hurdles: opening spaces will require reevaluating accountability, especially when the communities include victims of violent extremism; communities may see initiatives to facilitate disengagement as special treatment for former violent offenders; and alternative groups may not be the answer. Policies thus should seriously consider group-level transformation from violence to nonviolent action.<sup>49</sup>

Reconciliation with those exiting violent extremism entails asking communities to overcome deeply held emotions and perceptions, and during postconflict stabilization and reconstruction it will have unique facets that those dealing with disengagement and reconciliation in a peaceful setting will not face. The request is substantial, and, given the variety of postconflict needs, opening community spaces to the formerly violent is not every community member's top priority. As with DDR, however, reconciling with armed actors, their adherents, facilitators, and followers is essential to ending ongoing violence, preventing more people from joining violent groups, and building community-level acceptance of the idea that violent groups are not an effective way to address grievances.



A nineteen-year-old former member of ISIS in Syria sits opposite a panel of judges in the courtroom of a Kurdish-run terrorism court, in Qamishli, in northern Syria, on April 3, 2018. (Hussein Malla/AP Photo)

## TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

The notion of transitional justice comprises the “judicial and non-judicial, formal and informal, retributive and restorative [measures] employed by countries transitioning out of armed conflict or repressive regimes to redress legacies of atrocities and to promote long-term, sustainable peace.”<sup>50</sup> As Jamie Wise and Alice Friend note, “After a period of intense violence, societies face a window of opportunity in which former grievances can and should be addressed. This might include holding trials, implementing a truth commission, offering amnesties, issuing reparations, and undergoing legal and institutional reforms—a collection of mechanisms under the umbrella of transitional justice.”<sup>51</sup> Transitional justice populates processes that structure the real human emotions that justice attempts to deliver for. They also can honor and temper those sentiments simultaneously. Thus, although people may innately gravitate toward retribution or vengeance, transitional justice can honor those aspects while tempering pure vengeance with a way toward restoration and redistribution of power.

The grievances created by today’s conflicts involving violent extremism, however, differ from notions of grievances that transitional justice typically seeks to address. Specifically, the transitional justice paradigm is usually conceived as involving situations in which the state (or a



nonstate actor that controlled the state apparatus) committed atrocities against civilians, and thus the grievances redressed through transitional justice are usually intended to provide restitution to the victims. This is complicated in cases of violent extremism, in which the notion of grievances is more often defined by those who participate in violent extremism (as a justification for participation) than by victims of violence. The irony is that legitimate community deficits (grievances against a corrupt state, or marginalized minorities, or abused citizens) were twisted by terror groups to then justify the use of totalitarian violence against civilians. In these cases, the need for societal redress remains regardless of whose grievances are being addressed.

Thus, even as transitional justice as a concept “serves the ultimate goal of reconciliation within communities affected by long-term conflicts,” and “evidence suggests it is equipped to deal with the responses of society at large in the aftermath of terrorism,” applying it to today’s violent extremist conflicts is not a cut-and-paste matter.<sup>52</sup> Components are worth borrowing, however. Although it will take more than documentation of violent extremist crimes and criminal prosecutions, elements of transitional justice can help create the space to elevate aspects such as truth-telling and reconciliation rituals. Adapting transitional justice tools and approaches—such as perpetrators admitting to crime or guilt in a public forum to victims affected by what was done—to include concepts of violent extremist reconciliation in postconflict settings can help build bridges between the community and former combatants who have disengaged.

Those disengaging need an opportunity to leave the group and to become members of a new one or to find a new place in society. For many, the violent extremist group from which they are disengaging had become an essential part of their identity, and in some cases their only source of regular social interaction. Although social bonds are widely cited as an explanation for entry into and exit from a violent extremist group, a social network may play an even greater role. The attitude of the community toward the former violent extremist therefore matters.<sup>53</sup> If the community welcomes the individual and “helps him or her find work and develop new associations, the former extremist is less likely to regret the decision to disengage,” but “if a community ostracizes a former radical, that individual is likely to find it difficult to begin a career or find an alternative support network and, as a result, may gravitate back to the extremist group.”<sup>54</sup> That said, communities should not be expected to take on this role without some sort of accountability and reckoning mechanism, which is where transitional justice mechanisms can come into play. After all, the violence perpetrated by those who were once members of an extremist group cannot be undone and should not be ignored.

Transitional justice approaches acknowledge “that conflicts have their roots between victim, offender and the broader community.”<sup>55</sup> (See box 1.) They are also explicitly designed to handle situations involving atrocities and to provide ways to move forward on the path to reconciliation. Social cohesion and transition have been possible in extremely violent and complicated conflict contexts.<sup>56</sup> In Burundi, for example, the nongovernmental organization Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Services (THARS) has combined “locally-developed trauma healing and reconciliation methods with principles of capacity-building and self-help” to “assist in building social trust and community resilience.” Applying lessons of transitional justice, such as “re-opening communication channels after terrorist violence” to “build trust and change former conflict party’s mindsets” is one lesson that can be applied for how the crimes of violent extremist groups

## Box 1.

# Victims and Restoration

For those who have encountered terrorism over the last two decades, it is widely accepted that countries must have mechanisms and procedures that support the rights and needs of victims of terrorism.<sup>a</sup> Governments have set up trust funds for victims of terrorist attacks.<sup>b</sup> Victims have come together as networks to speak collectively.<sup>c</sup> Across contexts, national level counterterrorism legislation and policy generally have components that honor listening and providing assistance to victims. What is less clear is what to do when

perpetrators—or those associated with perpetrators—attempt to live again side-by-side with their victims inside of a community.

Victims of violence may prefer to never reconcile with former violent extremist members. However, transitional justice approaches such as truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) have the potential to enable group mourning and to heal the traumas of each group by allowing “the stories of both victims and perpetrators to be heard and acknowledged,

recognizing that both groups have suffered loss and trauma.” Such was the approach taken in South Africa, where the TRC allowed both black victims and white perpetrators of apartheid violence to tell their stories, forgive, and reconcile at an interpersonal level.<sup>d</sup> By providing “a safe and respectful space for victims and witnesses to tell their stories and express their feelings,” where “previously denied events and responsibility are acknowledged, the process of recovery and healing may thus be supported.”<sup>e</sup>

## Notes

- a. US Department of Justice, “United States Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund,” March 3, 2020.
- b. United Nations, “International Network Supporting Victims of Terrorism and Mass Violence,” 2020.
- c. Wendy Lambourne and David Niyonzima, “Breaking Cycles of Trauma and Violence: Psychosocial Approaches to Healing and Reconciliation in Burundi,” in *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory*, edited by Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016).
- d. Lambourne and Niyonzima, “Breaking Cycles,” 297, 298.
- e. Lotta Hagman and Zoë Nielsen, “A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations,” International Peace Academy, December 12–13, 2002.

can be addressed and overcome by a community. Further, THARS has developed a training program on transitional justice that emphasizes healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Its model translates the UN’s four pillars of transitional justice (prosecutions, truth recovery, reparations, and institutional reform) into “culturally and contextually sensitive processes.” It also highlights “the need for healing and other psychosocial processes such as community dialogue and reconciliation” in an effort to improve social cohesion and thereby prevent the recurrence of similar atrocities. Given examples such as these, it seems possible that local accountability measures can serve as alternatives to incarceration and provide opportunities for people to reckon with their actions and the legacy of victims.

## SPECIAL TREATMENT

After conflict, people may be understandably resentful when they perceive special treatment to those who were a part of a group that, at its core, sought to violently destroy communities that did not join them or abide by their rules. Moreover, “there is some risk that if ex-combatants are treated as a distinct group, separate from the rest of society, they will continue to identify themselves as such, demanding special benefits and targeted economic opportunities over the long-term.”<sup>57</sup> We are witnessing this in real-time in Burma, where armed groups have more voice with the government than unarmed political parties, and in Afghanistan, where the Taliban’s direct engagement with the United States differentiates their power from ordinary Afghans who never took up arms. Paradoxically, in some designated terrorist groups, given international sanctions, special treatment also cuts the other way and precludes governments or others from offering incentives for disengaged people.

This special treatment challenge is present in many peacebuilding and postconflict contexts. Violent armed groups get a seat at the table. They have access to DDR-related employment opportunities and economic development. They get a vote and sometimes outsized political power. In fact, “it can even move the social aspect of reintegration backward when perceptions of inequality surface, with ex-combatants usually at the better side of the equation, since DDR has generally been better funded than overall early recovery.”<sup>58</sup> It is not surprising that communities would find this difficult to accept. Although violent extremist groups may not garner the same power that other armed groups do, they may still encounter this special treatment stigma if the community does not view disengaged people as deserving of any place in the future of that community.

This situation comes into sharp focus when international tools and policies are involved. Although reasons for the international community to devote specialized resources to addressing violent extremism (and in postconflict contexts, to find ways to shrink numbers of violent extremist offenders and adherents) may be valid, it is not lost on communities that had the same structural grievances and never chose violence that the international community is not investing in them. Nevertheless, and obvious as it may seem, efforts to change the trajectory of violent extremists to become nonviolent is a worthwhile imperative and contribution to stopping conflict and war that continues to claim lives, produce scores of refugees, and leave communities vulnerable to further attacks.<sup>59</sup>

In conflict contexts, therefore, efforts that strive toward meaningful disengagement and reconciliation would benefit from being communal—accruing benefits not only to formerly violent individuals but also to society. For example, in a study based on experiences in Colombia, Oliver Kaplan and Enzo Nussio suggest that social reintegration is worthy of study distinct from reintegration or social participation. This notion has merit, especially given that “community-level reintegration efforts can help balance the rights and interests of the community with the assistance provided to ex-combatants.”<sup>60</sup> Further, peacebuilding efforts that meaningfully involve the community in a postconflict setting can provide tangible goods to community members who were not participants in violent extremist groups. Approaches to reconciliation with people who have disengaged can dignify communities and incentivize them to more transformative actions that collectively improve the circumstances both for those who engaged in violent extremism and for the broader community.



## MEDIATION AND NEGOTIATION

We know that it is not enough for a person to decide that they no longer want to be violent or part of a violent group.<sup>61</sup> If they do not have a future in a group or community, they have a much harder time abandoning their current group and their past selves. But in parts of a conflict landscape where participation in armed groups is relatively ubiquitous, mediation and negotiation—core peacebuilding tools—offer opportunities for group-level transformation beyond the individual. Given centuries of use attempting to transform the stakes for parties to a conflict, mediation and negotiation might be appropriate, especially at the community level, for those who have participated in violent extremism but who might not qualify as leadership. Can they keep their brotherhood but abandon their violence? What incentives can help tip the scales for group-level decisions that violence is no longer useful, advisable, or feasible? Further, what would communities require to build that bridge and new mechanisms of trust?<sup>62</sup>

High-level strategic negotiations with terrorist leaders are rare.<sup>63</sup> They also tend to invite scrutiny and skepticism, but enabling them at the local and community level in a conflict setting may be feasible.<sup>64</sup> In fact, “individual and collective deradicalization are interdependent processes that are more likely to succeed in tandem.” Moreover, options for group transformation may encourage collective disengagement, given that group solidarity and emotional ties prompt behavioral moderation. If, as a result of negotiations, “respected militant leaders are able to persuade the majority of their followers to support the reforms, peer pressure and the fear of alienating one’s colleagues may push doubting militants to disengage.” By contrast, individuals seeking to disengage on their own must be willing to not only defy the group but also to estrange their social network.<sup>65</sup> In sum, peacemaking tenets in a conflict setting could provide possibilities for a group to disengage from and renounce violence yet maintain group identity.

## Individual Well-Being

In conflict-affected contexts, it is not just the violent extremist participants but also the victims and broader war-torn communities who are subject to a host of post-traumatic stress and related impacts.<sup>66</sup> They may have witnessed violence, committed violence, been subjected to violence, exposed to weapons of war, involved in combat, experienced loss of children or spouses, been separated from family, displaced, and more. Although the necessity of trauma-informed behavioral health and psychosocial support is crucial to enabling adequate disengagement and reconciliation, the challenge is compounded in conflict settings because “psychosocial programming is [needed] to understand exactly how a community and its members have been affected by events, and thus how they may be best supported.”<sup>67</sup> Also, in large swaths of postconflict landscapes, trauma-informed care is likely to have positive impacts on victims, perpetrators, and bystanders.

The pervasiveness of trauma in conflict settings means that it is usually not the exception but instead the rule. Thus, human-centric approaches, such as behavioral health, that focus on well-being and human capacity are a more appropriate frame than mental health, which often connotes individual deficiencies.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, as seen in Colombia, a “recovery model that



Volunteers take calls at a suicide prevention and counseling hotline in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on March 4, 2018. Many Sri Lankans were left grief-stricken and traumatized by the country's long civil war. (Photo by Adam Dean/New York Times)

stretches beyond individual experiences of mental ill-health to promote ideas of collective social change” may be better suited for addressing needs.<sup>69</sup> In Sri Lanka, scholars found that “the widespread problem of collective traumatization may be best approached through community-level interventions. It may be more beneficial to consider strengthening and rebuilding the family and village structures, as well as finding a common meaning for the immense suffering, than to treat individual traumatised per se.”<sup>70</sup>

## ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF POWER

In conflict-affected contexts, even as large-scale fighting ends, ceasing participation in violent extremist groups is not automatic. Individuals who will need to disengage remain. Practically, their ability to leave violent extremism behind will likely hinge closely on the ordinary ways in which people spend their time—their ability to get a job, their acceptance back into religious life, and their freedom to participate in communal life. They will be doing this against the backdrop of changing ecosystems, especially from the wartime economy to an economy of peace (which may include fewer resources and fewer spoils). Prioritizing ways to allow them back into ordinary life is also a critical lesson learned from DDR cases, where excluded and

“idle” former combatants often posed a threat to ongoing security.<sup>71</sup> Further, in a postconflict setting, future potential and opportunities are also suddenly changed because peace can lead to new development. Enabling individuals to pair disengagement with new livelihood opportunities, such as developing a new social network that encourages temperate behavior, securing steady employment, and being accepted by the community, decreases the probability that they will reengage in violent behavior. Conversely, the likelihood of recidivism will correspondingly increase with the inability to establish a supportive social network, find employment, or be embraced by the community.<sup>72</sup>

Although the observation might seem to be an oversimplification, it is true that, as intractable conflicts continue, some individuals may just be tired of fighting.<sup>73</sup> That may not mean that they have abandoned their quest for justice against an unjust status quo, or no longer enjoy the agency that militancy provided them, or cease desiring the comradery of being on a shared moral mission. But for some, violent extremism is just a job. Especially in instances where individuals in violent extremist groups “took up the ‘job’ of fighting a military occupation, typically targeting soldiers rather than civilians, at least some of them could conceivably be rehabilitated once foreign troops leave.”<sup>74</sup> When armed struggle has lost its luster, feasibility, or practicality, the imperative to disengage may be well served by trying to refill these aspects in nonviolent ways—namely, by mobilizing alternative forms of power that may be good for society overall, and by getting formerly violent extremist adherents to participate in governance activities, in unarmed struggle, and in peaceful movements.<sup>75</sup>

## From Risks to Strengths

In conflict settings where terror groups have found the fertile grounds of discontent, further study is warranted on why some people never turn to violent extremism in the face of shared circumstances. The exceptionalizing of violent extremism has led to a diagnostic lens that dominates counterterrorism policies. In conflict settings, however, where the goal is ending the bloodshed, it is appropriate to understand what about terrorism is different than other types of conflict.

We are so fascinated by the low-incidence phenomena that, of those who experience a similar set of circumstances, only a few will ever join terrorist groups that we fixate on what is wrong with that person or that person’s life that made them part of a violent extremism movement.<sup>76</sup> Research on terrorism “tends to focus on them—the terrorists—rather than on the situation they are in—or, more precisely, the situation they believe they are in.”<sup>77</sup> We try to understand why someone joined and think it might help prevent others from joining. However, we rarely ask why others did not join and seek to build those assets to shape more nonjoiners. The diagnosis mindset seeds further challenges because we assume that the reasons someone was initially aggrieved are the same that need to be addressed for them to leave. The process of disengagement, though, is “more than merely radicalization in reverse.” In fact, “the reasons that an individual leaves a radical group are not necessarily tied to the reasons for joining the group.”<sup>78</sup> Throughout their career in extremism, individuals tend to change values, motivations, positions, and roles, meaning what initially attracted them to the group may or may not continue to sustain

Risk calculations for those associated with violent extremism are almost entirely a function of past behavior and past actions. However, past actions are not the best indicators of future risk—because not only do people change, but also their ability to change depends on what options are available in the future.

their involvement.<sup>79</sup> “Just as the passion for justice and law that drives a lawyer at first may not be what keeps him working at a law firm, a terrorist’s motivations for remaining in, or leaving, his ‘job’ change over time.”<sup>80</sup> This is especially worth noting in conflict settings, where the war economy had ties to violent extremist groups—weapons vendors, smugglers, surveillance operators, and so on—all had economic livelihoods tied to violent extremist groups. As an economy transitions from conflict to peacetime, those business-oriented supporters may have additional

varied paths out of their material support for violent groups. All this is to say that what causes someone to leave or withdraw support can be multifaceted and certainly not limited to proving that the reason for initial joining or adherence didn’t quite play out.<sup>81</sup> We therefore ought to “take account—and advantage—of variations and shifts in motivations” as they occur throughout an individual’s extremist tenure.<sup>82</sup> In a conflict setting, these tweaks to our understanding could make all the difference in approaching postconflict stabilization.

Most counterterrorism policies have yet to embrace the possibility that looking for resiliencies might be more important than a risk calculus. Existing approaches have attempted “to target individuals at risk of committing terrorist acts and have focused on those who are in contact with the criminal justice system, neglecting to a large extent the study of risk and protective factors in the general population.” Currently, risk calculations for those associated with violent extremism are almost entirely a function of past behavior and past actions. However, past actions are not the best indicators of future risk—because not only do people change, but also their ability to change depends on what options are available in the future.<sup>83</sup> In a conflict setting, when few hands are clean, having an approach that puts primacy on the future may be not only practical, but also the only real option.

The existing approach looks at all of the potential violent extremist adherents and tries to assess, based on their observable past behavior, how much risk they might pose if they were to reenter the community. Too often in practice the focus is “mostly put on secondary prevention (trying to detect and treat at-risk individuals) while primary prevention remains very poorly defined in terms of objectives and associated outcomes.”<sup>84</sup> We attempt to answer the question of how observably radical they are and then diagnosis turns to assessment, based on predetermined programmatic interventions, to ascertain deficiencies at the individual, communal, and societal or institutional level that need to be addressed to mitigate risk. An example might look like a prescription or menu set of things—from mental health and trauma counseling to vocational opportunities to prosocial group opportunities.

But what if we flipped it—if we asked that community what makes them strong?<sup>85</sup> Perhaps the answer is strong family networks, or religious clergy that provide for pastoral care, or burgeoning industries that are understaffed. “While most studies focus on social marginalization as a risk factor, an inverse frame points to the possibility of strong bridging and social capital as a means of protection.”<sup>86</sup> With that in mind, we then look at those potential adherents and try to think of the ways to build on the right mixture of safety measures for their reinsertion. Do they have a



family member who will vouch for them? An opportunity for a job based on specialized skills? Do they have a relationship with sports, hobbies, or other organizations? Are there other “formers” in their community that they can connect with? Is counseling available in the place where they are headed? Will they have a place of worship to belong to? If there are no mental health practitioners but strong community groups, could those groups fill the role by fusing trauma care with their existing work?

Asking these types of questions can start to shift the burden from trying to address every deficit and potential risk factor toward identifying resiliencies to bolster. It allows for policies to amplify what is working and to build from existing structures rather than always seeking to reify a person or a community as deeply deficient and in need of new capacities.

Something is deeply empowering about asking an individual or asking a community what makes them strong. Rather than diagnosing from the outside risks and unmet needs, we can instead highlight from the outset that some things are right with the community or individual and build from there. Doing so is more participatory and more dignified. It implicitly recognizes that “each community boasts a unique combination of assets upon which to build its future.”<sup>87</sup> Psychologically speaking, you promote hope and encourage the possibility of different outcomes by asking “What makes you strong?” and seeking to build rather than asking “What is wrong?” and seeking to cure.<sup>88</sup>

In postconflict settings, what makes someone or a community strong might just include how they reconcile with former violent members and form a new community. In the aftermath of months, years, or even decades of bombs and sirens, explosions, and funerals, what makes people resilient in the face of the unimaginable circumstances might just defy reason. And it may be invisible to outsiders at first. But it likely will include some combination of local, authentic, human-centric peacebuilding practices adapted to the urgent realities of violent extremism.

# Notes

The author wishes to thank Setareh Motamedi and Mike Darden for their exhaustive support with research, examples, citations, and so much more; Dr. John Horgan, Kateira Aryaeinejad, Bethany McGann, and Desmond Jordan, along with three anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful and constructive comments; and USIP's publication team for making this report tangibly stronger. Finally, the author expresses her deep appreciation to Chris Bosley and Dr. David Yang for being allies and partners throughout the research and drafting of this report.

1. Jeffrey Ross, "Beyond the Conceptualization of Terrorism: A Psychological-Structural Model of the Causes of this Activity," in *Collective Violence: Harmful Behavior in Groups and Government*, ed. Craig Summers and Eric Markusen (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 169–92.
2. Georgia Holmer and Adrian Shtuni, "Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative," Special Report no. 402, United States Institute of Peace (USIP), March 2017, [www.usip.org/publications/2017/03/returning-foreign-fighters-and-reintegration-imperative](http://www.usip.org/publications/2017/03/returning-foreign-fighters-and-reintegration-imperative).
3. UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Yemen Humanitarian Crisis," May 2020, [www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen](http://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen).
4. UNHCR, "3RP Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan: COVID-19 Response," April 2020, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/76015>.
5. UNHCR, "Syrian Refugee Crisis," May 2020, [www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria](http://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria).
6. BBC News, "IS 'Caliphate' Defeated but Jihadist Group Remains a Threat," March 23, 2019, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-45547595](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-45547595).
7. Chris Bosley, "Injecting Humanity: Community-Focused Responses for People Exiting Violent Extremist Conflict," Special Report no. 452, USIP, August 2019, [www.usip.org/publications/2019/08/injecting-humanity-community-focused-responses-people-exiting-violent](http://www.usip.org/publications/2019/08/injecting-humanity-community-focused-responses-people-exiting-violent).
8. Sadiki Koko, "From Rebels to Politicians: Explaining the Transformation of the RCD-Goma and the MLC in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *South African Journal of International Affairs* 23, no. 4 (2016): 521–40; Catherine C. LeGrand, Luis van Isschot and Pilar Riaño-Alcalá, "Land, Justice, and Memory: Challenges for Peace in Colombia," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 42, no. 3 (2017): 259–76; Nehginpao Kpigen, "Ethnic Nationalities and the Peace Process in Myanmar," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (2015): 399–425; and Stef Vandeginste, "Burundi's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: How to Shed Light on the Past While Standing in the Dark Shadow of Politics," *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 6, no. 2 (2012): 355–65.
9. USIP, "Afghan Negotiators to Taliban: Let's Start the Peace Talks," April 23, 2020, [www.usip.org/publications/2020/04/afghan-negotiators-taliban-lets-start-peace-talks](http://www.usip.org/publications/2020/04/afghan-negotiators-taliban-lets-start-peace-talks).
10. Claudia Hofmann, "Linking Official and Unofficial Approaches of Engaging Armed Actors," Policy Note, RESOLVE Network, June 2020, [www.resolvenet.org/research/linking-official-and-unofficial-approaches-engaging-armed-actors](http://www.resolvenet.org/research/linking-official-and-unofficial-approaches-engaging-armed-actors).
11. Juan Arredondo, "The Slow Death of Colombia's Peace Movement," *The Atlantic*, December 30, 2019, [www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/12/colombia-peace-farc/604078](http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/12/colombia-peace-farc/604078).
12. James Verini, "Should the United Nations Wage War to Keep Peace?" *National Geographic*, March 27, 2014, [www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/03/140327-congo-genocide-united-nations-peacekeepers-m23-kobler-int](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/03/140327-congo-genocide-united-nations-peacekeepers-m23-kobler-int).
13. Vanda Felbab-Brown, "DDR—A Bridge Not Too Far: A Field Report From Somalia," in *UN DDR in an Era of Violent Extremism: Is It Fit for Purpose*, ed. James Cockayne and Siobhan O'Neil (New York: United Nations University, 2015), 104–37.
14. Brian A. Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention: Reexamining US National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideological Motivated Violence* (Washington, DC: Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center/RAND, 2019), 177–78, [www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2647.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2647.html).
15. Orlaith Minogue and Amjad Yamin, "A Children's Crisis: An Update on Al Hol Camp and COVID-19 Concerns," Save the Children, May 6, 2020, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/childrens-crisis-update-al-hol-camp-and-covid-19-concerns>.
16. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, "Islamic State Prisoners Agree to End Riot in Syria Jail," May 20, 2020, [www.syriahr.com/en/?p=163109](http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=163109).
17. Associated Press, "7 Islamic State Militants Escape Jail in NE Syria; 4 Caught," May 17, 2020. <https://apnews.com/63b9e6da8ae06e5ca96f68ddfec3336c>.
18. H. J. Mai, "Why European Countries are Reluctant to Repatriate Citizens Who Are ISIS Fighters," NPR, December 10, 2019, [www.npr.org/2019/12/10/783369673/europe-remains-reluctant-to-repatriate-its-isis-fighters-here-s-why](http://www.npr.org/2019/12/10/783369673/europe-remains-reluctant-to-repatriate-its-isis-fighters-here-s-why).
19. Stevan Weine, "Rehabilitating the Islamic State's Women and Children Returnees in Kazakhstan," Just Security, December 12, 2019, [www.justsecurity.org/67694/rehabilitating-the-islamic-states-women-and-children-returnees-in-kazakhstan](http://www.justsecurity.org/67694/rehabilitating-the-islamic-states-women-and-children-returnees-in-kazakhstan).
20. Gavin Helf, "Central Asia Leads the Way on Islamic State Returnees," USIP, September 13, 2019, [www.usip.org/blog/2019/09/central-asia-leads-way-islamic-state-returnees](http://www.usip.org/blog/2019/09/central-asia-leads-way-islamic-state-returnees).

21. Steven Weine, "Addressing Violent Extremism as Public Health Policy and Practice," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 9, no. 3 (2017): 208–21.
22. International Committee of the Red Cross, "Protracted Conflict and Humanitarian Action: Some Recent ICRC Experiences," August 2016. [www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file\\_list/protracted\\_conflict\\_and\\_humanitarian\\_action\\_icrc\\_report\\_lr\\_29.08.16.pdf](http://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file_list/protracted_conflict_and_humanitarian_action_icrc_report_lr_29.08.16.pdf).
23. James Dobbins et al., *The UN's Role in Nation Building: From the Congo to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), [www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG304.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG304.html).
24. Kathy Gulsinan, "There is No Plan B for ISIS Prisoners," *The Atlantic*, October 17, 2019, [www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/10/there-is-no-plan-b-for-isis-prisoners/600187](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/10/there-is-no-plan-b-for-isis-prisoners/600187); Belkis Wille, "ISIS Suspect Transfers to Iraq Replete with Risks," Human Rights Watch, November 1, 2019, [www.hrw.org/news/2019/11/01/isis-suspect-transfers-iraq-replete-risks](http://www.hrw.org/news/2019/11/01/isis-suspect-transfers-iraq-replete-risks); Simona Foltyn, "Inside the Iraqi Courts Sentencing Foreign ISIS Fighters to Death," *The Guardian*, June 2, 2019, [www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/02/inside-the-iraqi-courts-sentencing-foreign-isis-fighters-to-death](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/02/inside-the-iraqi-courts-sentencing-foreign-isis-fighters-to-death); and Umar Farooq, "Nobody Has a Plan for Thousands of ISIS Fighters Detained by Kurds in Syria," *The Intercept*, October 17, 2019, [www.theintercept.com/2019/10/17/syria-turkey-kurds-isis](http://www.theintercept.com/2019/10/17/syria-turkey-kurds-isis).
25. Chris Bosley and Leanne Erdberg Steadman, "Bring Hoda Muthana and Other ISIS Members Home—But for Trial," *The Hill*, February 27, 2019, [www.thehill.com/opinion/national-security/431479-bring-hoda-muthana-and-other-isis-members-home-but-for-trial](http://www.thehill.com/opinion/national-security/431479-bring-hoda-muthana-and-other-isis-members-home-but-for-trial).
26. Colin P. Clarke, "The Terrorist Threat Posed by Neglect and Indifference," RAND Corporation, September 23, 2019, [www.rand.org/blog/2019/09/the-terrorist-threat-posed-by-neglect-and-indifference.html](http://www.rand.org/blog/2019/09/the-terrorist-threat-posed-by-neglect-and-indifference.html); and Soufan Center, "Open Letter from National Security Professionals to Western Governments: Unless We Act Now, the Islamic State Will Rise Again," September 11, 2019, <https://thesoufancenter.org/open-letter-from-national-security-professionals-to-western-governments>.
27. Robert Muggah, "Chapter Two: Stabilizing Fragile States and the Humanitarian Space," *Adelphi Series* 50, no. 412–413 (2010): 33–52; Patrice C. McMahon, "Rebuilding Bosnia: A Model to Emulate or to Avoid?" *Political Science Quarterly* 199, no. 4 (2004/2005): 569–93; and Steven A. Zyck, "Former Combatant Reintegration and Fragmentation in Contemporary Afghanistan," *Conflict, Security & Development* 9, no. 1 (2009): 111–31.
28. Susanna Campbell and George Ingram, "Foreign Assistance Accountability in Fragile Environments," Brookings Institution, January 29, 2020, [www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/01/29/foreign-assistance-accountability-in-fragile-environments](http://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/01/29/foreign-assistance-accountability-in-fragile-environments); Dan Honig, *Navigation by Judgment: Why and When Top Down Management of Foreign Aid Doesn't Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018); and Séverine Autesserre, "There's Another Way to Build Peace. And it Doesn't Come From the Top Down," *Washington Post*, October 23, 2018, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/23/theres-another-way-to-build-peace-and-it-doesnt-come-from-the-top-down](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/23/theres-another-way-to-build-peace-and-it-doesnt-come-from-the-top-down).
29. Israel Nyaburi Nyadera, Mohamed Salah Ahmed, and Billy Agwanda, "Transformation of the Somali Civil-War and Reflections for a Social Contract Peacebuilding Process," *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences* 18, no. 4 (2019): 1346–66.
30. Lisa Schirch, *The Ecology of Violent Extremism: Perspectives on Peacebuilding and Human Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018); US Agency for International Development (USAID), "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," September 2011, [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pdacs400.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdacs400.pdf); and Chris Bosley, "Violent Extremist Disengagement and Reconciliation: A Peacebuilding Approach," Peaceworks Report no. 163, USIP, August 2020, [www.usip.org/index.php/publications/2020/07/violent-extremist-disengagement-and-reconciliation-peacebuilding-approach](http://www.usip.org/index.php/publications/2020/07/violent-extremist-disengagement-and-reconciliation-peacebuilding-approach).
31. Philippe Leroux-Martin and Vivienne O'Connor, "Systems Thinking for Peacebuilding and Rule of Law: Supporting Complex Reforms in Conflict-Affected Environments," Peaceworks Report no. 133, USIP, October 2017, [www.usip.org/publications/2017/10/systems-thinking-peacebuilding-and-rule-law](http://www.usip.org/publications/2017/10/systems-thinking-peacebuilding-and-rule-law).
32. Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States, "Preventing Extremism in Fragile States: A New Approach," USIP, February 26, 2019, 26, [www.usip.org/publications/2019/02/preventing-extremism-fragile-states-new-approach](http://www.usip.org/publications/2019/02/preventing-extremism-fragile-states-new-approach).
33. Mortiz Schuberth, "Transforming Community-Based Armed Groups Into Community Security Providers," Policy Note, RESOLVE Network, May 11, 2020, 3, [www.resolve.net.org/research/transforming-community-based-armed-groups-community-security-providers](http://www.resolve.net.org/research/transforming-community-based-armed-groups-community-security-providers).
34. Gordon Clubb, "'From Terrorist to Peacekeepers': The IRA's Disengagement and the Role of Community Networks," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37, no. 10 (2014): 842–61.
35. United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>.
36. International Labour Office, *Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants* (Geneva: ILO Crisis Response and Reconstruction Programme, 2010), [www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms\\_141276.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_141276.pdf).
37. Cedric de Coning, Mateja Peter, and John Karlsrud, "United Nations Peace Operations: Aligning Principles and Practice," *Norwegian Institute for International Affairs* no. 2 (2015): 17–22.

38. Veronique Dudouet and Stina Lundstrom, "Post-War Political Settlement: From Participatory Transition Processes to Inclusive State-Building and Governance," Berghof Foundation, 2016, 45–47, [www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/IPS\\_Synthesis\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/IPS_Synthesis_Report_web.pdf).
39. Madeleine K. Albright, "The Best Response to Disaster Is Resilience," *New York Times*, April 12, 2020, [www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/opinion/madeleine-albright-coronavirus.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/opinion/madeleine-albright-coronavirus.html).
40. Erin Baines, "Spirits and Social Reconstruction after Mass Violence: Rethinking Transitional Justice," *African Affairs* 109, no. 436 (2010): 409–30.
41. Amra Deli et al., "Academic Model of Trauma Healing in Post-War Societies," *Acta Medica Academica* 43, no. 1 (2014): 76–80.
42. Christina Nemr et al., "It Takes a Village: An Action Agenda on the Role of Civil Society in the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Those Associated with and Affected by Violent Extremism," Global Center on Cooperative Security, August 2018, [www.icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GC\\_It-Takes-a-Village\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GC_It-Takes-a-Village_WEB.pdf).
43. Aoife McCullough and Jonathan Papoulidis, "Why We Need to Rethink Our Understanding of State Legitimacy to Address Fragility," World Bank, January 29, 2020, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/why-we-need-rethink-our-understanding-state-legitimacy-address-fragility>.
44. Everyday Peace Indicators, "The EPI Approach," May 11, 2020, [www.everydaypeaceindicators.org/about](http://www.everydaypeaceindicators.org/about).
45. John Daniel Gibling, "Post-Conflict Heritage: Symbolic Healing and Cultural Renewal," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20, no. 5 (2014): 508–9; Lynn Meskell and Colette Scheermeyer, "Heritage as Therapy: Set Pieces from the New South Africa," *Journal of Material Culture* 13, no. 2 (2008): 153–73; Malkanthi Hettiarachchi, "Sri Lanka's Rehabilitation Program: A New Frontier in Counter Terrorism and Counter Insurgency," *Prism* 4, no. 2 (2013): 105–22; and Ross, "Beyond the Conceptualization of Terrorism."
46. John Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 618, no. 1 (2008): 80–94; Arie W. Kruglanski et al., "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology* 35, no. 1 (2014): 69–93; Nele Scihls and Antoinette Verhage, "Understanding How and Why Young People Enter Radical or Violent Extremist Groups," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 11, no. 1 (2017): 1–18; Sarah Lyons-Padilla et al., "Belonging Nowhere: Marginalization and Radicalization Risk Among Muslim Immigrants," *Behavioral Science & Policy* 1, no. 2 (2015): 1–12; and Andrew Silke, "Holy Warriors: Exploring the Psychological Processes of Jihadi Radicalization," *European Journal of Criminology* 5, no. 1 (2008): 99–123.
47. Arie Kruglanski, Arie, Katarzyna Jasko, and Gary LaFree, "Quest for Significance and Violent Extremism: The Case of Domestic Terrorism," *Political Psychology* 38, no. 5 (2017): 815–31; and Mike Niconchuk, "Two Sides of the Same Coin: An Examination of the Cognitive and Psychosocial Pathways Leading to Empowerment and Radicalization and a Model for Reorienting Violent Radicalization," USAID, May 17, 2018, 208.
48. Leanne Erdberg and Maria Stephan, "Brain Scans, Boycotts, and Counter-Terrorism?" *Small Wars Journal*, December 11, 2018, [www.smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/brain-scans-boycotts-and-counter-terrorism](http://www.smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/brain-scans-boycotts-and-counter-terrorism). "If group identity and the perception of power are part of what makes terrorist groups attractive, alternatives should give young people vehicles to fill those needs positively. . . . Nonviolent action [mass marches, sit-ins, boycotts, and protests] and participation in nonviolent movements with change-oriented goals, is one powerful potential response. It can give people an opportunity to be part of a larger cause, create meaningful social bonds in service of a mission, and the give dignity of ownership of their own future."
49. US Department of State, "Transitional Justice Overview," May 16, 2016, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/gcj/transitional/257566.htm>.
50. Elena Sciandra, "Facing States of Fear: The Emerging Issues of Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Transitional Justice," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*, ed. Scott Romaniuk, Francis Grice, and Daniela Irrera (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 135–59.
51. Jamie D. Wise and Alice Hunt Friend, "How Transitional Justice Can Help the U.S. Defeat Terrorism," Just Security, August 6, 2018, [www.justsecurity.org/60027/transitional-justice-defeat-terrorism](http://www.justsecurity.org/60027/transitional-justice-defeat-terrorism).
52. Jessica Stern, "Mind Over Martyr: How to Deradicalize Islamist Extremists," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2010, 100, [www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/saudi-arabia/2009-12-21/mind-over-martyr](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/saudi-arabia/2009-12-21/mind-over-martyr).
53. Angela Rabasa et al., "Disengagement and Deradicalization," in *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 1–32, 22.
54. Anna Mühlhausen, "Conflict Management, Transitional Justice and De-radicalization: Different, but Common Goals," *Journal for Deradicalization* 9 (2017): 260–91.
55. Wendy Lambourne and David Niyonzima, "Breaking Cycles of Trauma and Violence: Psychosocial Approaches to Healing and Reconciliation in Burundi," in *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory*, ed. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016): 291–307.
56. UNHRC, "Framework Principles for Securing the Human Rights of Victims of Terrorism," June 4, 2012, [www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/20/14](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/20/14).



57. ILO, "Crisis Response and Reconstruction Programme," [www.ilo.org/asia/projects/WCMS\\_099610/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/asia/projects/WCMS_099610/lang--en/index.htm).
58. Holmer and Shtuni, "Returning Foreign Fighters."
59. Oliver Kaplan and Enzo Nussio, "Community Counts: The Social Reintegration of ex-Combatants in Colombia," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35, no. 2 (2015): 1–22.
60. Mary Beth Altier, Christian Thoroughgood, and John Horgan, "Turning Away from Terrorism: Lessons from Psychology, Sociology, and Criminology," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 5 (2014): 647–61.
61. Marie Olsen Lounsbury and Alethia Cook, "Rebellion, Mediation, and Group Change: an Empirical Investigation of Competing Hypotheses," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 1 (2011): 73–84.
62. Rabasa et al., "Collective Deradicalization," 177, 164.
63. Audrey Kurth Cronin, "When Should We Talk to Terrorists?" Special Report no. 240, USIP, May 2010, [www.usip.org/publications/2010/05/when-should-we-talk-terrorists](http://www.usip.org/publications/2010/05/when-should-we-talk-terrorists).
64. Municipality of San Francisco and Republic of Colombia, *Peer Support: Transformation from Victims and Ex-Combatants to Survivors and Citizens: A Training Program for Peer Support Group Leaders* (San Francisco: Survivor Corps, Fundación Para la Reconciliación, Conciudadanía, 2011).
65. Rabasa et al., "Collective Deradicalization," 177, 169.
66. Alex Schmid, "Strengthening the Role of Victims and Incorporating Victims in Efforts to Counter Violent Extremism and Terrorism," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, August 2012, [www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Strengthening-the-Role-of-Victims-August-2012.pdf](http://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Strengthening-the-Role-of-Victims-August-2012.pdf).
67. Alison Strang and Alistair Ager, "Psychosocial Interventions: Some Key Issues Facing Practitioners," *Intervention* 1, no. 3 (2003): 2–12.
68. Strang and Ager, "Psychosocial Interventions."
69. Rochelle Ann Burgess and Laura Fonseca, "Re-Thinking Recovery in Post-Conflict Settings: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of Communities in Colombia," *Global Public Health* 15, no. 2 (2020): 200–19.
70. Daya Somasundaram, "Collective Trauma in Northern Sri Lanka: A Qualitative Psychosocial-Ecological Study," *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 1, no. 5 (2007).
71. Lotta Hagman and Zoë Nielsen, "A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations" (report presented at the International Peace Academy and United Nations Development Programme workshop on December 12–13, 2002, New York), [www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/framework\\_for\\_ddr.pdf](http://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/framework_for_ddr.pdf).
72. Rabasa et al., "Collective Deradicalization," 20.
73. This is not to give short shrift to the reality of an intergenerational occurrence, that as some age out of conflict participation, younger generations might be finding new reasons to participate. Nonetheless, the more people who can actively disengage at precipitous times in a conflict will have impacts on new resurgence.
74. Stern, "Mind Over Martyr," 100–1.
75. Maria Stephan and Leanne Erdberg Steadman, "To Defeat Terrorism, Use 'People Power': Nonviolent citizens' Movements Are the Missing Piece of a Global Strategy Against Extremism," USIP, March 27, 2018, [www.usip.org/publications/2018/03/defeat-terrorism-use-people-power](http://www.usip.org/publications/2018/03/defeat-terrorism-use-people-power).
76. Heidi Ellis and Saida Abdi, "Building Community Resilience to Violent Extremism Through Genuine Partnerships," *American Psychologist* 72, no. 3 (2017): 289–300.
77. Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskaleiko, "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3 (2008): 415–33.
78. Rabasa et al., "Collective Deradicalization," 23.
79. Tore Bjørgo, "Dreams and Disillusionment: Engagement In and Disengagement From Militant Extremist Groups," *Crime, Law, and Social Change* 55 (2011): 277–85.
80. Stern, "Mind Over Martyr," 98.
81. Altier, Thoroughgood, and Horgan, "Turning Away from Terrorism."
82. Stern, "Mind Over Martyr," 98.
83. Cécile Rousseau, Ghayda Hassan, and Youssef Oulhote, "And If There Were Another Way Out? Questioning the Prevalent Radicalization Models," *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 5–6 (2017): 633–35.
84. Rousseau, Hassan, and Oulhote, "And If There Were," 633.
85. John Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993).
86. Ellis and Abdi, "Building Community Resilience," 294.
87. Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities*.
88. Lambourne and Niyonzima, "Breaking Cycles."

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

---



The United States Institute of Peace is a national, nonpartisan, independent institute, founded by Congress and dedicated to the proposition that a world without violent conflict is possible, practical, and essential for US and global security. In conflict zones abroad, the Institute works with local partners to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict. To reduce future crises and the need for costly interventions, USIP works with governments and civil societies to help their countries solve their own problems peacefully. The Institute provides expertise, training, analysis, and support to those who are working to build a more peaceful, inclusive world.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

---

Stephen J. Hadley (Chair), Principal, Rice, Hadley, Gates & Manuel LLC, Washington, DC • George E. Moose (Vice Chair), Adjunct Professor of Practice, The George Washington University, Washington, DC • Judy Ansley, Former Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor under George W. Bush, Washington, DC • Eric Edelman, Roger Hertog Practitioner in Residence, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC • Joseph Eldridge, Distinguished Practitioner, School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC • Kerry Kennedy, President, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Washington, DC • Ikram U. Khan, President, Quality Care Consultants, LLC, Las Vegas, NV • Stephen D. Krasner, Graham H. Stuart Professor of International Relations, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA • John A. Lancaster, Former Executive Director, National Council on Independent Living, Potsdam, NY • Jeremy A. Rabkin, Professor of Law, Antonin Scalia Law School, George Mason University, Arlington, VA • J. Robinson West, Former Chairman, PFC Energy, Washington, DC • Nancy Zirkin, Executive Vice President, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Washington, DC

### Members Ex Officio

Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State • Mark T. Esper, Secretary of Defense • Frederick J. Roegge, Vice Admiral, US Navy; President, National Defense University • Nancy Lindborg, President & CEO, United States Institute of Peace (nonvoting)

## THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE PRESS

---

Since its inception in 1991, the United States Institute of Peace Press has published hundreds of influential books, reports, and briefs on the prevention, management, and peaceful resolution of international conflicts. All our books and reports arise from research and fieldwork sponsored by the Institute's many programs, and the Press is committed to expanding the reach of the Institute's work by continuing to publish significant and sustainable publications for practitioners, scholars, diplomats, and students. Each work undergoes thorough peer review by external subject experts to ensure that the research and conclusions are balanced, relevant, and sound.

## OTHER USIP PUBLICATIONS

---

- *Toward a Kashmir Endgame? How India and Pakistan Could Negotiate a Lasting Solution* by Happymon Jacob (Special Report, August 2020)
- *India's Kashmir Conundrum: Before and After the Abrogation of Article 370* by Sameer P. Lalwani and Gillian Gayner (Special Report, August 2020)
- *Measuring Collective Impact: Creating a Framework for Assessing Multiple Peacebuilding Projects in Colombia* by Diego Benitez (Special Report, July 2020)
- *Violent Extremist Disengagement and Reconciliation: A Peacebuilding Approach* by Chris Bosley (Peaceworks, July 2020)
- *Myanmar's Casino Cities: The Role of China and Transnational Criminal Networks* by Jason Tower and Priscilla Clapp (Special Report, July 2020)



UNITED STATES  
INSTITUTE OF PEACE  
**Making Peace Possible**

2301 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
(202) 457-1700  
[www.USIP.org](http://www.USIP.org)