PACS 6911
KEY ISSUES IN PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

Core Unit, Postgraduate Program in Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney

Coordinators:  
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Lecturers:  
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Time:  
Mondays 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Dates:  
13 weeks, 4 March – 3 June (no class mid-semester break 1 April)

Location:  
CPACS, Room 107, Mackie Building K01, Arundel St, University of Sydney

AIMS & OUTCOMES

This unit aims to introduce students from a variety of backgrounds to the analysis of conflict, violence and peace. The unit will demonstrate the interdisciplinary character of peace and conflict studies and the application of theories and methods across the spectrum of conflict types, from interpersonal, to community, to international. Students will gain an historical understanding of the nature of social conflict and will examine theories of the origins of conflict and violence drawing on insights from biologists, psychologists, anthropologists, historians, sociologists, political scientists and others.

The course is normative in its articulation of social and political theory. It proposes that the most desirable approach to harmful conflicts is one of peace with justice. With concepts and methods derived from peace and conflict theorists and practitioners, poets and ecologists, psychoanalysts and human rights advocates, students will explore what peace with justice means in various settings. Diverse notions of peace and security will be examined including cultural, religious and feminist perspectives. The unit will cover Johan Galtung’s theories of peace and violence, the pioneering work of John Burton in the field of conflict resolution, and John Paul Lederach’s conflict transformation approach to peacebuilding.

It is expected that students will:

• understand the nature and source of different types of conflict: at the interpersonal level, in groups and societies, and between countries and other global groupings;
• develop a theoretical perspective on notions of peace, conflict and violence, and what “peace with justice” and “resolution of conflict” mean in various situations;
• develop skills in conflict analysis and resolution;
• understand how to apply theory to practice in terms of identifying strategies for achieving conflict transformation and peace with justice in various situations.

CLASS AND ASSESSMENT TIMELINE

A. UNDERSTANDING PEACE, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE
Week 1  4 March  Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies
Week 2  11 March  Defining Peace, Conflict and Violence
Week 3  18 March  History and Politics of War and Peace
Week 4  25 March  Theories of Violence and Conflict

EASTER MID-SEMESTER BREAK

B. CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION
Week 5  8 April  Human Needs Theory and Conflict Resolution
Week 6  15 April  Conflict Analysis and Resolution Principles and Methods

JOURNAL OF PERSONAL LEARNING DUE WEEK 7
Week 7  22 April  Conflict Resolution Skills and Techniques

C. ACHIEVING PEACE WITH JUSTICE
Week 8  29 April  Conflict Transformation, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding
Week 9  6 May  Human Rights and Peace with Justice
Week 10  13 May  International Peace and Security
Week 11  20 May  Nonviolence and Social Movements
Week 12  27 May  Gender Issues in Conflict and Post-Conflict
Week 13  3 June  Final Reflections, Integration and Evaluations

ASSIGNMENT 2 – FINAL ESSAY – DUE MONDAY 17 JUNE
ASSESSMENT

A. Reading and Class Participation (10%)

Ongoing reading is essential, not only for the assignments described below, but for weekly class participation. Participation in class discussions and evidence of reading will comprise 10% of the assessment for the unit. Recommended key readings are marked for each session. Copies of these key readings will be provided in a course reader. Students are expected to complete these readings prior to class each week in order to prepare for and contribute meaningfully to class discussions. Students are not expected to read all of the additional references listed in the course outline: they are provided as a guide to what is available for further reading for assignments, and to give students a choice and variety of resources to follow up areas of personal interest. Missing classes without good reason will result in a lower mark for this section of the assessment.

B. Assignment 1: Journal of Personal Learning (30%) 2500 words Due Date: April 22\textsuperscript{nd}

For this assignment, students are required to keep a weekly journal in which they reflect upon conflict, violence and peace. It would be useful to keep this journal going throughout the course – as a means of integrating your notes on the readings and classes each week with more general personal reflections on your ideas and learning. The journal might include observations drawn from your experience of conflict, either directly – in family, or workplace, for example – or indirectly through watching or reading the news. In reflecting upon these themes, you should draw on classroom discussions and readings for each week, as well as your own evolving ideas and values.

The purpose of the learning journal assignment is to raise awareness of the issues of peace and conflict as they bear upon your life and society as a whole: to make the link between personal learning and lived experience. Each journal entry should include a specific example of your own lived experience outside the classroom relating to the class theme for that week. The emphasis should be on reflections and analysis rather than a detailed description of a particular conflict or experience.

For assessment purposes you are required to submit a selection of your personal journal entries – specifically, five entries relating to the themes of any five of the first six weeks of classes. The maximum total length of the journal is 2,500 words. As a guide, journal entries thus need to average about 500 words each, but this is not a strict requirement and journal entries may vary in length. Students may wish to write more in some weeks in order to fully explore their ideas and reflections. Even though students must draw on class readings in their weekly journal reflections, full referencing and a bibliography are not required.

Criteria for assessment of the learning journal are:

(a) evidence of ability to analyse the links between personal learning and lived experience outside the classroom (personally or as reflected in current events);

(b) consideration of aspects of conflict and peace with examples drawn from a diversity of sources (e.g. workplace conflict; news about wars);

(c) evidence of reflective and critical reading (but full citations and reference list are not required) and reference to class discussions;
(d) inclusion of your own thoughts and ideas relating to course themes, indicating how these are evolving as the course progresses;

(e) clarity of expression, coherent integration of ideas and evidence of intelligent and original reflections and analysis.

C. Assignment 2: Final Essay (60%) 3500 words Due Date: June 17th

Select a conflict/issue of your choice for analysis:

1. Using theories from this unit that help to explain and analyse violence and conflict, explore the nature and context of the conflict/issue chosen for your research essay.

2. Building on the theories used to explain and analyse conflict, identify some possible strategies for change which promote “peace with justice”, linking your ideas to theories and practices of peacemaking, peacebuilding, conflict resolution and/or conflict transformation. (For example, such strategies for change could include dialogue, mediation, nonviolence, truth commissions, problem-solving workshops or any type of multi-track diplomacy etc).

The major purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to link explanations of conflict and violence with theories and strategies for transformation aimed at achieving peace with justice. The focus is on analysis and application of theory to practice, rather than on detailed description of the conflict or its “solution”. In other words, students are not required to promote a particular resolution or terms of a peace settlement or mediation agreement. The purpose is to identify peace with justice processes.

This assignment is to be written in a formal essay style, with an introduction and conclusion, complete in text referencing and a full bibliography at the end of the essay. The maximum word limit is 3500 words; footnotes and appendices are not normally included in the word count. Some research and reading beyond the course reader is required for this assignment, but the main conceptual underpinnings for your essay must be the theories and concepts explored in this unit.

Criteria for assessment:

- Evidence of research and understanding of the nature and context of the conflict chosen for analysis;
- Ability to identify and critically apply theories and concepts relating to peace, conflict and violence to explain and analyse the conflict;
- Evidence of creative and intelligent application of theory to practice by exploring one or more strategies for change that promote “peace with justice”;
- Clarity of expression and ability to develop and present a coherent argument within the required word limit (papers exceeding the word limit may be penalised);
- Evidence of reflective and critical reading of appropriate academic sources;
- Correct and consistent referencing and full bibliography.

Students must complete all three sections of the assessment (reading/participation, journal, and essay) for successful completion of the course. Failure to attend at least 80% of classes without reasonable cause is grounds for failure.
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS

Week 1 (4 March)  Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies
Jake Lynch, Wendy Lambourne and Lucy Fiske

This session will focus on an introduction to the field of peace and conflict studies. The interdisciplinary, cosmopolitan and normative character of peace and conflict studies will be discussed in the context of the field’s expansion to incorporate conflict at all levels from the interpersonal to the international. Ideas about peace will be explored from a personal, cultural, religious and historical perspective.

Discussion Questions:
- What does peace mean to you? Why are you studying peace and conflict studies?
- How is peace conceived differently in different cultural and religious traditions?
- How do you define peace and conflict studies?
- How have ideas about peace conflict studies changed over the years?
- What are the current issues that are dominating Peace and Conflict Studies in the 21st century?

Required Readings:

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Additional Readings:


**Week 2 (11 March) Defining Peace, Conflict and Violence**

Jake Lynch

This session will focus on understanding how we define and approach conflict with reference to sociological theories that define conflict as either destructive (leading to violence and war) or constructive (leading to positive social change and peace with justice). We will explore Galtung’s theory and definitions of direct and indirect violence (structural and cultural) and negative and positive peace, and apply them to thinking about examples of conflict and security in the world today. As part of this discussion we will start to explore the meaning of peace with justice.

- What are the principles that define a constructive approach to conflict?
- How do the concepts of structural violence and positive peace add to your understanding of peace and conflict studies?
- What are some examples of cultural violence and its impact on achieving peace with justice?
- How can you apply these insights to international conflicts as well as conflicts in your own life?

**Required readings:**

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Additional readings:


**Week 3 (18 March)  History and Politics of War and Peace**

Ken Macnab

This session will provide a survey of the history of war and peace in the modern world, including significant milestones in the organisation of international affairs, such as the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, the Congress of Vienna (1814-5), the League of Nations (1919) and the establishment of the United Nations in 1945. The causes of wars and attempts to prevent them from recurring will be examined from a historical and political perspective, with a particular emphasis on the interrelationships between warmaking and peacemaking.

**Discussion Questions:**

• How have attitudes towards war and peace changed throughout history?
• What impact have major phases of change, such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the rise of modern ideologies such as capitalism and nationalism, had on the politics of war and peace?
• How have women and feminism influenced the development of the agenda for peace?
• Is war inevitable? What is ‘national security’? Do you agree that a state without an army would be like an orchestra without instruments?

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Location/Press</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macnab, K.</td>
<td>European History Framework, from the Crusades to the War on Terror</td>
<td>Oxford University Press</td>
<td></td>
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Additional Readings:

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**Week 4 (25 March)  Theories of Violence and Conflict**

Dr Wendy Lambourne

In this session we will examine theories from biology, psychology, anthropology and other disciplines that attempt to explain the existence of human violence and aggression. A focus of discussion will be psychological explanations of identity-based conflict, mass violence and genocide. Theories covered will include social identity theory, obedience to authority, moral disengagement and dehumanisation.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Are human beings naturally aggressive, or do we learn to be violent?
- Are men more violent than women? Are women better peacemakers?
- How do psychological factors contribute to conflict and its violent escalation?
- Why do people commit genocide?

**Required Readings:**

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**Additional Readings:**


Week 5 (8 April)  **Human Needs Theory and Conflict Resolution**  
Wendy Lambourne

In this session we will examine John Burton’s human needs theory and how it influenced the development of the field of conflict resolution. The distinctions made by Burton between needs, values and interests, and between problem management, dispute settlement and conflict resolution, will be explained and their implications discussed for the attainment of peace with justice. Students
will be introduced to the concept of track two diplomacy and the analytical problem-solving approach to conflict resolution.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the significance of the paradigm shift suggested by human needs theory?
- How do you distinguish between needs, values and interests and what is the significance of making these distinctions for conflict analysis and resolution?
- Do you agree with Burton that there are universal ontological human needs?
- How do conflict management, settlement and resolution differ in theory and practice?
- How does Burton’s approach to conflict resolution promote peace with justice?

Required Readings:


Additional Readings:


**Week 6 (15 April)  
Conflict Analysis and Resolution Principles and Methods**

Wendy Lambourne

In this session we will focus on the importance of conflict analysis as part of conflict resolution processes, and we will apply conflict resolution theory to practice using examples from the interpersonal to the international. Power-based and rights-based methods will be contrasted with interest-based approaches to conflict resolution. This will be illustrated with a discussion of the differences between arbitration, mediation, negotiation, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. We will examine some of the principles associated with conflict analysis and resolution, and consider how culture affects our attitudes towards conflict and its resolution.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What are some examples of the use of power-based, rights-based and interest-based approaches to conflict resolution at the interpersonal, community and international levels? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these different approaches?
- What is the significance of different approaches to the participation of conflict parties in the process and outcome of conflict resolution processes?
- How can conflict mapping assist with resolving conflict?
- What differences in approaches to conflict can you attribute to gender, culture or religion?

**Required Readings:**

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Additional Readings:


**Week 7 (22 April)  Conflict Resolution Skills and Techniques**  
Steve Lancken, Negocio Resolutions

Fisher and Ury, Burton and other theorist practitioners identify the tendency to get stuck on “positions” as one of the barriers to resolving conflict. In this session students will have a chance to explore and practice some skills in transforming conflict by seeking to understand and uncover the underlying needs and interests that are driving conflict.

**Discussion Questions:**
- How can you help parties in a conflict to differentiate a position from a need or interest?
- What are some of the communication skills required of a mediator or conflict resolution practitioner?

**Required readings:**


**Additional readings:**


**Week 8 (29 April)  Conflict Transformation, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding**  
Dr Wendy Lambourne

This session will focus on the evolution in thinking from conflict resolution to conflict transformation advocated by theorist-practitioner John Paul Lederach. We will explore further the meaning of peace with justice with reference to Lederach’s definition of ‘justpeace’ and his theories of conflict transformation, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

**Discussion Questions:**
- In what ways has culture been taken into account (or not taken into account) in the theory and practice of conflict resolution and conflict transformation?
• What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the terminology and methods of conflict resolution versus conflict transformation?
• How can attention to the gaps in peacebuilding identified by Lederach help to promote conflict transformation and peace with justice?
• What different types of justice are there and how do they contribute to reconciliation and peacebuilding?

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Additional Readings:


**Week 9 (6 May) Human Rights and Peace with Justice**

Lucy Fiske

This class will give a brief overview of human rights both as a legal framework for protection and promotion of rights, and as a language or discourse for building a culture which supports peace with justice. We will look at the links between human rights and justpeace as well as some of the tensions and limitations of human rights.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What are human rights and where do they come from?
- What is the contribution of human rights to ‘justpeace’-building?
- What are the limitations of human rights and what else can assist in building peace and justice?

**Required Readings:**

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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parekh, S.</td>
<td>‘Resisting “Dull and Torpid” Assent: Returning to the debate over the foundations of human rights’ <em>Human Rights Quarterly</em> 29(3), 754 – 778</td>
<td></td>
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**Additional Readings:**


**Week 10 (13 May) International Peace and Security**

Jake Lynch

In this class we will consider the implications, for conflict, peace and violence, of the modern system of nation states, and its origins. We will examine the emerging norm of the ‘responsibility to protect’ and how this has changed ideas about international peace and security. And we will consider holistic approaches to conceiving and defining security, and whether and how they ‘fit’ in the international system.

**Discussion Questions:**
- How has the international community’s approach to maintaining international peace and security evolved since the establishment of the United Nations?
- Can you think of some contemporary examples to illustrate the challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the ‘responsibility to protect’?

**Required Readings:**


Additional Readings:


**Week 11 (20 May) Nonviolence and Social Movements**

Lucy Fiske

We will explore the important role of nonviolence as a philosophical perspective and practice, and its relationship to social movements seeking justice and peace. In particular we will look at the ethics of social action and the relationship between means and ends. We will explore the philosophy of nonviolence, the significance of power and the skills involved in designing and implementing nonviolent social change through a range of sources most notably Gandhi, the US civil rights campaign (Martin Luther King Jnr) and Anti-Apartheid campaigns in South Africa. Time permitting, we will also look at the activism and writings of Saul Alinsky’s as a contrast to Gandhi’s insistence on the inseparability of means and ends.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What is nonviolence? What makes nonviolence powerful? When and why is nonviolence an appropriate strategy?
- What are the links between means and ends? Can the end justify the means?
- What are the skills required by nonviolence practitioners and what are some of the challenges they face?
- How could nonviolence principles and strategies be applied to contemporary conflicts?
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<tr>
<td>Ackerman, P. &amp; DuVall, J.</td>
<td><em>A Force More Powerful. A Century of Nonviolent Conflict</em></td>
<td>Palgrave, New York</td>
<td>(Ch 9 ‘South Africa: Campaign against Apartheid’)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parekh, B.</td>
<td><em>Gandhi’s Political Philosophy. A critical examination.</em></td>
<td>Palgrave Macmillan, London</td>
<td>(Ch 6 ‘Satyagraha and a non-rationalist theory of rationality’)</td>
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<td>Palgrave. CPACS LIBRARY 303.61 ACK &amp; FISHER SPECIAL RESERVE 303.61 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alinsky, S.</td>
<td><em>Rules for Radicals. A practical primer for realistic radicals.</em></td>
<td>Random House, New York</td>
<td>(Ch 7 ‘Tactics’)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brock, P.</td>
<td><em>Varieties of Pacifism: A Survey from Antiquity to the Outset of the Twentieth Century.</em></td>
<td>Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press</td>
<td>FISHER SPECIAL RESERVE 303.66 40</td>
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Week 12 (27 May)  Gender Issues in Conflict and Postconflict  
Lucy Fiske and Punam Yadav

This week will briefly outline some dominant theories of gender, and examine the links between gender and social relations of power. We will then explore ways in which hegemonic masculinities and femininities contribute to militarization and war, the different (and often under-attended to) ways in which war affects women, and the ways in which gender-based inequalities can be exacerbated in postconflict peace and development efforts.

Discussion Questions:

• What is ‘gender’? What’s power got to do with it?
• What roles do women play in war? What are some of the ways in which war affects gender roles?
• What are some of the impacts of war and conflict on women?
• What are some of the ways post-conflict peacebuilding and development efforts affect women?
• What happens to women’s experiences when a gender lens is not explicitly applied in analysis?

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Additional Readings:


**Week 13 (3 June) Final Reflections, Integration and Evaluations**

Jake Lynch, Wendy Lambourne and Lucy Fiske

In the final session students will have an opportunity to reflect on the course, and to integrate the various themes and issues raised. This could be achieved through the examination of a case study to be chosen by the class. Course evaluations will be completed at this session.

**RESOURCES**

Most of the references listed are available for loan or on reserve in Fisher Library. Required readings are provided in a course reader available for purchase from the University Copy Centre. Copies of chapters from books, journal articles and other short readings and a number of the texts listed as are also available to read in the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Resource Centre. These additional readings have been placed in class resource boxes in the CPACS Resource Centre.
INTRODUCTORY READINGS AND KEY TEXTS


**JOURNALS & PERIODICALS**

The following journals and periodicals are available in Fisher Library unless otherwise indicated, and most are also available electronically. The CPACS Resource Centre also contains a collection of newsletters and journals that could provide useful sources of articles and information for the course.

- Australian Journal of International Affairs
- Community Development Journal
- Current Research on Peace and Violence
- International Journal of Peace Studies
- Journal of Conflict Resolution
- Journal of Peacebuilding and Development.
- Journal of Peace Research
- New Internationalist
- Global Change, Peace & Security (formerly Pacifica Review)
- Peace and Change: A Journal of Peace Research
- Peace and Disarmament News
- Peace News: International Year of Peace
- Peace Research
- Peace Research Abstracts Journal
- Peacewatch (US Institute of Peace)
• Security Dialogue
• Social Alternatives

MASS MEDIA RESOURCES

Current events are rich source materials for the course (e.g. Israeli/Palestinian conflict; poverty and violence in local communities; United Nations peacekeeping; humanitarian crisis and intervention in Libya; refugee and asylum seeker issues; the US and intervention in Iraq; North Korea, Iran and nuclear weapons; and so on). Students should be alerted to examples of conflict and peace that are reported in the media on a daily basis. A file of relevant newspaper cuttings and radio or television transcripts (available online – see below) on local and international events, and in the student’s area of interest, will provide vital material for class discussion and for the assignments.

To search for newspaper articles, as well as the newspapers’ own sites, the University subscribes to the Factiva service, which is available via the Library section of the university website, using your UniKey login.

WEBSITES

Students are encouraged to make use of the vast resources of the internet to explore current issues and debates in peace and conflict studies. The University of Sydney Library has produced a useful guide to internet resources on its peace and conflict studies homepage: http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/subjects/peaceandconflict/peace.html

The Search Engine YAHOO has a subcategory under the heading Social Sciences for Peace and Conflict Studies at: http://www.yahoo.com.au/Social_Science/Peace_and_Conflict_Studies/

It is important, however, that students show awareness of the appropriateness and reliability of different types of websites for sourcing information. For example, Wikipedia is not considered an authoritative source for definitions of terms, and the website of a partisan group should be treated with caution as a source for understanding the history of a particular conflict.

Electronic Journals


Track Two: archived editions of the quarterly publication of the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Media Peace Centre in South Africa, aiming to promote innovative and constructive approaches to community and political conflict as an alternative to traditional adversarial tactics. http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/
Organisation Websites

Many of the following websites contain the full text of reports on various conflicts and projects, as well as links to other institutes and organisations.

Conflict Resolution Consortium (University of Colorado): Transformative Approaches to Conflict website, including summaries of the work of John Burton and John Paul Lederach.
http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/transform


ICG: International Crisis Group, a private, multinational organisation committed to strengthening the capacity of the international community to anticipate, understand and act to prevent and contain conflict. http://www.crisisweb.org

INCORE: Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity, a joint initiative between the University of Ulster and the United Nations University, based in Northern Ireland. http://www.incore.ulst.uk

TFF: The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, based in Sweden, provides a critical and constructive gateway to world affairs. http://www.transnational.org

Toda Institute: an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organisation committed to the pursuit of peace through peaceful means and a complete abolition of war, and working towards “global citizenship”. http://www.toda.org

TRANSCEnd: International network of invited scholars and practitioners for peace and development, associated with the work of Johan Galtung. www.transcend.org

United States Institute of Peace: created and funded by the United States Congress to strengthen the nation’s capabilities to promote the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. http://www.usip.org