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CHALLENGES OF PEACE RESEARCH

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Abstract

The Secretary General of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) responds to one of the most frequently asked questions in the field of peace studies: "What are the challenges facing peace researchers in the 21 century?" In the first section he notes that, in some ways, the world is more peaceful now than at in any time in the past century, but then adds three sobering observations about the very high levels of manifest and potential violence, the predominantly reactive nature of most conflict prevention efforts, and the strong feelings of relative deprivation in the era of globalization. In the second section he states that if peace researchers want to make a greater difference, then they must challenge the ways and means of the current practice of peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building. The first challenge is not to lose sight of the big picture. The macro-perspective gives an overview of the necessary peace building efforts and allows the peace builders to oversee and coordinate what they are doing. The second challenge is to get a better understanding of the sustainable peace building architecture. Winning a war can sometimes be relatively easy – or at least rapid –, but winning the peace can be a far more complex and time consuming enterprise. The third challenge concerns the slow learning process. There is a need to build structures that support a better exchange of knowledge between the decision-makers, the practitioners in the field, and the research community. The fourth challenge is to deal more effectively with the peace building context, which is characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, competing values and interests, and the struggle for power. The article ends with a plea for reflecting on the meaning of professionalism in peace building.

Waging peace is the greatest issue facing the international community – a question of life and death, of survival or extinction. Such an issue demands thorough reflection and analysis (Sawyer, 1994). Today, peace building is spurred by the awareness that there are limits to violence. We can forget sustainable development if no serious efforts are undertaken for preventing violence and building sustainable peace.

Since the end of the Second World War, many scholars have been engaged in the study of war and peace. In the post-Cold War era there has been an increasing demand for peace research, and its findings are now being used by decision-makers and practitioners. The European Union (EU), one of the leading international bodies to affirm the importance of peace building and conflict prevention, is building up its capacity for these activities (Moyroud, Lund and Mehler, 1999). The same is true for the United

Nations (UN). The Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change offers new ideas for improving the UN's performance, including the creation of a new inter-governmental body, the 'Peacebuilding Commission', whose task would be to assist states that are under stress or recovering from conflict in the development of their capacity to perform their sovereign functions effectively and responsibly (United Nations, 2004). Various ministries or departments in many countries have established conflict prevention units. Intervention projects, programs and policies are subjected to proactive peace and conflict impact assessments (PCIAS). PCIAS is a process of determining the relevance of ongoing or proposed interventions and predicting their future effects on the conflict dynamics and peace building process. This assessment is system-oriented and proactive. It is intended to increase both the conflict sensitivity and the peace benefits of the intervention. Governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with a broad range of peace building activities are mushrooming.

In their global survey of armed conflicts, Robert Gurr et al. (2001) depict the world as more peaceful than at any time in the past century. The number and magnitude of armed conflicts within and among states have lessened since the 1990s by nearly half. Conflicts over self-determination are being settled with ever greater frequency, usually when ethnic groups gain greater autonomy and power-sharing within existing states (Gurr, Marshall and Khosla, 2003). The progress is attributed to the increase of conflict prevention efforts and the greater number of democratic efforts. This is the good news. But now let us take a look at three other, more sobering observations.

Three Sobering Observations

1. High Levels of Manifest and Potential Violence

In contrast to these statistics, the overall level of manifest and latent violence is still high. Most databanks on conflicts monitor the most visible types of violence. A different picture appears when a broader definition of violence is used, namely: (a) when violence is defined as a situation in which the *quantitative and qualitative life expectancies* (measured, for instance, through the Human Security Index) of a particular group or groups within a community, a state, a region or the world are significantly lower than other groups, and (b) when this can be attributed to one or more sources of violence: physical violence, structural violence, psychological violence, cultural violence, bad governance, organized crime or extra-legal activities (Reychler and Jacobs, 2004). The difference between armed violence and the other types of violence is that armed violence is direct and visible, and it kills faster. The other types of violence are indirect and less visible, and they affect more people. Gandhi (n.d.) called poverty the worst form of violence: "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed". It affects a billion people who live on $1 a day, and 2.8 billion who live on less

than $2 a day. In the West poverty means living a bad life; in the Third World it means surviving in a state close to death (Zakaria, 2005).

Mapping the whole *fabric of violence*, including its less visible forms, gives a more realistic picture of violence in the contemporary world. Paradoxically, the media and researchers continue to focus on the sensational violence (terrorism, irregular and conventional warfare), which kills less than the other forms of violence. Terrorism causes approximately 5,000 deaths a year, and anti-terrorism and conventional warfare cause a hundred times this number (500,000); but structural violence shortens the life span of hundreds of millions of people, and bad governance reduces the life expectations of approximately 1.5 billion people. Calling terrorism the greatest threat in the world masks most of the violence in today's world. Bad governance has many faces. It can express itself as: (a) greed and corruption: infant mortality increases by 75% when the level of corruption increases from medium to high level; (b) indifference and neglect: think of the ongoing genocidal conflicts in Chechnya and Sudan; (c) ignorance and stupidity: remember Mao's Great Leap Forward in China, which caused the death of millions of Chinese, or the retreat of the Blue Helmets from Rwanda in 1994 when the genocidal violence started; or (d) the harmful and negative side-effects of well-intentioned policies (Reychler and Jacobs, 2004). Bad governance kills. Another source of violence is the activities of transnational organized crime. It is estimated that criminal organizations earn $300 to $500 billion annually from narcotics trafficking, their single largest source of income.

The last strand in the fabric of violence is the "shadows of war". Carolyn Nordstrom (2004) describes this as the complex sets of cross-state economic and political linkages that move outside recognized state-based channels and in many cases have greater power than some of the world's states. This set of economic and personnel flows ranges from the mundane (the trade in cigarettes and pirated software), through the elicit (gems and timber), to the dangerous (weapons and illegal narcotics). Initial inquiries estimate the amount of money generated per year through extra-state activities to be in the trillions of euros (Nordstrom, 2004). These amounts dwarf the budgets of international organizations such as the EU and the UN. The EU's budget in 2004 was €99.52 billion; the budget of the UN for 2002-2003 was $2.6 billion. Part of this money could be used to support the Millennium Development goals (MDGs), which require $135 million in 2006 and $195 million in 2015. These are huge opportunity losses for conflict prevention and peace building.

To prevent violence more effectively, one has to look at the whole fabric of violence. Armed violence is intertwined with the other strands of the fabric. Before the genocide erupted in Rwanda with volcanic force, the country was considered a relatively secure place. A broader analysis of the violence would have warned us better about the growing tensions in the country (Uvin, 1998). The price of a narrow analysis of violence is a surprise.

Physical means of violence: terrorism, guerilla and conventional warfare. Visible direct–intentional	Psychological means of violence	Cultural means of violence / epistemic violence
Structural means of violence: political, economic and cultural exclusion. Less visible indirect-intentional	Violence is about shortening life or significantly lowering the quantitative and qualitative life expectancies of particular group(s)	Bad governance -Maladministration -Corruption -Indifference and neglect -Greed and self-interest -Religious and ideologically inspired misgovernance -Unintended negative impacts of well-intentioned interventions.
Organized crime	Extra-legal economic activities	Environmental violence

Exhibit 1: The Fabric of Violence

2. The Reactive Nature of Most Conflict Prevention Efforts

The efforts for preventing violence have increased. In the 1980s, for example, there were five peacekeeping operations in the world, whereas in the 1990s there were 35. But the sobering observation is that most of the conflict prevention has been reactive in nature, being initiated only after the conflict has crossed the threshold of violence. Its aim is to limit further escalation (intensity, geographic and duration). Here, too, the price is high. Once a conflict turns violent it becomes not only more difficult, but also more expensive to de-escalate it and to build peace (Brown and Rosecrance, 1999).

3. The Growing Gap Between the Perceived and the Preferred World Order

The third sobering observation relates to the impact of globalization on the perception of violence. The worldwide capacity to compare one's political, economic and cultural position with others is increasing the global sense of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation occurs where individuals or groups subjectively perceive themselves as unfairly disadvantaged over others perceived as having similar attributes and deserving similar rewards. This has lowered the legitimacy status of the international system and

has increased the pressures towards international democratization. Spokespersons from Third World countries decry the structural violence and unfair intervention in the international environment (Reychler, 1979).

The resilience of this gap causes discomfort, dissatisfaction and frustration among peace researchers. Some researchers have become cynical: they find it difficult to live with the wide gap and assert that all the research is a waste of time; it produces theories, but no results. Some are burned out and have stopped contributing to the field. Others continue to look at the bright side of life and stick to the 'law of the hammer' (If my only tool is a hammer, everything becomes a nail.) They are convinced that more of the same will lead to peace. Most peace researchers, however, have turned the tension into a creative re-search for more cost-effective ways to build sustainable peace. Peace research requires strongly motivated people because: (1) It is a demanding field of study. (2) Peace still has image problems; it can evoke either hope and strength or despair and weakness. (3) Compared to the traditional fields of study, peace research is academically less embedded; it transcends the barriers of faculties and departments. (4) It deals with 'senti-mental' walls. Senti-mental walls are the theories, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, feelings, taboos, beliefs, norms and principles that stand in the way of conflict prevention and peace building. It is important to identify and dismantle them. Frequently, this goes hand in hand with emotional and other kinds of resistance. Cynicism or defeatism can inhibit the peace building process seriously. (5) Transforming violent conflicts can be exhausting. Four challenges can be distinguished.

Challenges of Peace Research

If peace researchers want to make a greater difference, they have to challenge the ways and means of the current practice of peace making, peace-keeping and peace-building.

Challenge 1: Seeing the Big Picture

The first challenge is not to lose sight of the big picture. Peace building is the result of the activities of many people in different sectors and at different levels. These skills are acquired through education and practice. Effective peace building also implies that the peace builders see where and how their efforts fit into the peace building process. Seeing the big picture is vital for coherent peace building efforts. The big picture or macro-perspective gives an overview of the necessary peace building blocks. It enables the peace builders to oversee and coordinate what they are doing.

The essential requirements or preconditions for creating sustainable peace – which have been derived from the peace research – can be clustered into five peace building blocks: (1) an effective system of communication, consultation and negotiation; (2)

peace-enhancing structures and institutions; (3) an integrative political-psychological climate; (4) a critical mass of peace building leadership; and (5) a supportive international environment. These peace building blocks are all necessary and mutually reinforcing. The deficiency or absence of one of these building blocks can seriously undermine the stability or effectiveness of the entire peace building process. In addition to these five clusters, there are the necessary support systems (legal, educational, health, humanitarian aid, information and environmental systems) that play an important role in the peace building process. The first building block focuses on the establishment of *an effective communication, consultation and negotiation system at different levels* between the conflicting parties or members. In contrast to the negotiation styles used in most international organizations, the negotiation style in the European Union is predominantly integrative. Ample time and creativity is invested in generating mutually benefiting agreements. Without win-win agreements, the Union would disintegrate.

The second building block consists of *peace-enhancing structures*. In order to achieve a sustainable peace, (conflict) countries have to install political, economic and security structures and institutions that sustain peace. The political reform process aims at the establishment of political structures with a high level of legitimacy. The legitimacy status is influenced by two factors: (a) the ability of a regime to deliver vital basic needs, such as security, health services, jobs, and so forth; and (b) the democratic procedure. Initially, an authoritarian regime with high quality leaders and technocrats can get a high legitimacy score, but in the end, consolidated democracies provide the best support for sustainable peace building. It is crucial to note that the transition from one state (e.g. non-democratic structures) to another (e.g. consolidated democratic environment) is not without difficulties: the devil is in the transition (Reychler, 1999). The economic reform process envisions the establishment of an economic environment which stimulates sustainable development and the reduction of gross vertical and horizontal inequalities. The security structures safeguard and/or increase the population's objective and subjective security by effectively dealing with both internal and external threats. This implies a cooperative security system producing a high level of human security, collective defense and security, and proactive conflict prevention efforts. In addition to these 'three core peace building structures', there is also a need to build effective judicial, educational, health and environmental systems to sustain the peace building process. As long as these structures are not in place, humanitarian aid will be needed.

The third necessary building block for establishing a sustainable peace process is an *integrative climate* (Reychler and Langer, 2003). This is the software of peace building. This building block stresses the importance of a favorable social-psychological environment. Although the climate is less tangible and observable than the other building blocks, it can be assessed by looking at the consequences. An integrative or disintegrative climate can express itself in the form of attitudes, behavior and institutions. The characteristics of an integrative climate include: expectations of an attractive future as a

consequence of cooperation; the development of a sense of 'we-ness', multiple loyalties, reconciliation, trust and social capital; and the dismantlement of senti-mental walls.

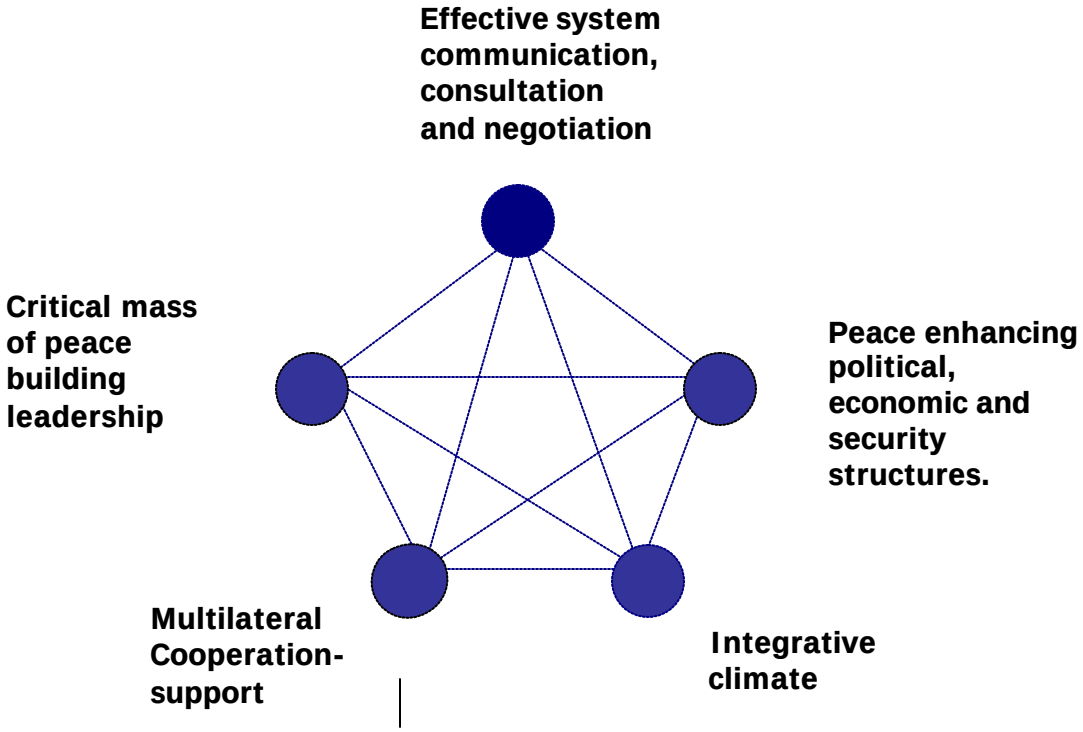

Exhibit 2: Sustainable Peace Building Pentagon

The fourth building block is *a supportive regional and international environment.* The stability of a peace process is often dependent on the behavior and interests of neighboring countries or regional powers. These actors can have a positive influence on the peace process by providing political legitimacy or support, by assisting with the demobilization and demilitarization process, and by facilitating and stimulating regional trade and economic integration. However, these same actors can also inhibit the progress towards stability, for example, by supporting certain groups that do not subscribe to the peace process. Likewise, the larger international community plays a crucial role in most post-conflict countries. Via UN agencies or other international (non-)governmental organizations, the international community can provide crucial resources and funding or even take direct responsibility for a wide variety of tasks, such as the (physical) rebuilding process, political transformation, humanitarian aid, development cooperation, third-party security guarantor, and so forth.

The fifth building block is the presence of *a critical mass of peace building leadership* (Reychler and Stellamans, 2005). There are leaders in different domains (politics, diplomacy, defense, economics, education, media, religion, health, and so forth) and at different levels: the elite, middle and grassroots levels (Lederach, 1997). High on the agenda of architectural research should be research to identify the characteristics of successful peace building leaders, such as Nelson Mandela, F. W. De Klerk, Mohandas Gandhi, Mikhail Gorbachev, Vaclav Havel, Jean Monnet, Helmut Kohl, George Marshal, Martin Luther King, Jacques Delors, and many others. This research involves differentiating successful and unsuccessful peace builders and identifying the similarities and differences between successful and unsuccessful peace builders, and between peace builders and peace destroyers (Reychler and Stellamans, 2002). Peace building leaders distinguish themselves by the way they lead the conflict transformation process. They envision a shared, clear and mutually attractive peaceful future for all who want to cooperate; they do everything possible to identify and get a full understanding of the challenge with which they are confronted; they frame the conflict in a reflexive way (Rothman, 1997); their change behavior is adaptive, integrative and flexible; they are well acquainted with non-violent methods; they use a mix of intentional and consequential ethics and objectives; and they are courageous men and women with a high level of integrity.

Challenge 2: Mastering Sustainable Peace Building Architecture

The second challenge is to get a better understanding of the sustainable peace building architecture. Despite a more supportive international environment, the costs and risks associated with peace building remain high. The experiences from Germany to Iraq have shown successes and failures. Winning the war can sometimes be relatively easy – or at least rapid – but, as RAND (2003; 2005) studies underscore, winning the peace that prevents a return to war can be a far more complex and time-consuming enterprise. The price of the regime change in Iraq is turning out to be higher than expected. The costs can be apprehended in terms of human losses (on the allied side approximately 2,000 have died and 20,000 have been wounded; the number of Iraqis killed is estimated at 100,000), financial expenses (the Bush administration has spent $200 billion; this is more than the budget of the World Bank or the EU), material destruction and diplomatic damage. Iraq and other cases make it very clear that we need to learn to build sustainable peace in a more effective, cost-efficient and satisfactory way. This demands a better understanding of the architecture of peace building. The term ‘peace building architecture’ refers to the art and science of successful peace building (Reychler, 2002). Peace architecture studies show how conflicts can be transformed in a more effective, efficient and satisfactory way. This requires coherent planning and a good understanding of the cross-impact of different peace building efforts (diplomatic, political, economic, security, psychological, and others). The aim is to synergize these efforts and reduce possible negative side-

effects. The key variables in architectural research are timing (simultaneous or sequential) and priority setting (Reychler and Langer, 2004). Time makes the difference between life and death. Comparative studies of successful peace building efforts can further our insight into the peace architecture. One of the tools which need further development is the peace and conflict impact assessment methodology (Reychler and Paffenholz, 2004). The aim is to identify the relevance and future consequences of an ongoing or proposed intervention on the conflict dynamics and peace building process. The assessment is system-oriented and proactive. It is meant to increase the conflict-sensitivity and the peace 'added value' of intervention. The peace and conflict impact assessment system could play a useful role at the different levels of intervention (project, program, sector and broad policy levels) by increasing the awareness of the potential or actual impact on the conflict dynamics and peace building process, and by helping to design more coherent interventions which do no harm and have a higher peace added value. This methodology can be used for improving the design and implementation of interventions ranging from development or humanitarian work to peace and reconciliation or democratization efforts taking place in situations of latent or manifest violent conflict - or in the aftermath of a violent conflict or war. The method consists of (1) preparatory steps to inform and commit the organization to the assessment process, (2) a conflict analysis and prognosis, (3) a peace building deficiency assessment, (4) an assessment of the peace relevance, (5) a conflict risks analysis, (6) an assessment of the impact of the intervention on the peace and conflict, and (7) concrete recommendations and follow-up.

Challenge 3: Synergizing the Know-how and Learning

The third challenge concerns the slow learning process. The learning of violence prevention and peace building can be improved by (a) making use of different forms of scientific inquiry, (b) providing space for trans-disciplinary research, (c) creating structures which support a better exchange of knowledge between the decision-makers, the practitioners in the field and the research community, (d) inviting the actors involved in peace building to reflect critically on their personal or organizational theories of violence prevention and peace building, and (e) making more effective use of local expertise.

(a) Making use of different types of inquiry. Peace research should involve not only classical *empirical-analytical* research (searching for the causal explanations) and *interpretative research* (investigating how people perceive their experiences), but also participatory *peace action research*. The latter type of research is based on the principle that people - ordinary men and women - have a universal right to participate in the production of knowledge that affects their life. Susan Smith (Smith, Willms and Johnson, 1997) calls this "liberatory inquiry". People are not the passive subjects of research, but rather active subjects. Their needs should be the point of departure for knowledge

production and justification of the research (Smith et al., 1997). The initiative of the mothers of soldiers from St. Petersburg to meet the Chechen rebels is a very good example of participatory peace action inquiry. They transcended their passive role as victims and assumed responsibility to transform the conflict and make an end to that ugly war.

(b) Provide trans-disciplinary research capacity. If the universities want to play a peace building role, they will have to overcome their preference for uni-disciplinary studies or faculties. Peace building involves changes in complex dynamic systems which can only be understood in a trans-disciplinary way. Progress in peace research means crossing boundaries. In each faculty you have scholars who want to change the world. For the economists, development tends to be seen as the most important factor in the peace building process; for lawyers, it's the rule of law; political scientists point out the importance of democracy; for strategists, security must come first; for psychologists and educators, peace is all about building peace in the minds and hearts of people; theologians stress the importance of mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation; medical doctors stress that a healthy mind resides in a healthy body; and artists believe in the aesthetics of peace building. Most researchers are somewhat narcissistic. Narcissists work with a fervent passion. Their work is their life and their sense of destiny fuels their motivation. They have the ability to work through some of the toughest obstacles (Maccoby and Gschwandtner, 2005). The challenge therefore is not to change, but rather to transform this narrow narcissism into productive narcissism by inviting all to play in the orchestra of peace building.

(c) Build structures that support a better exchange of knowledge between the decision-makers, the practitioners in the field and the research community. One of the greatest causes of knowledge waste is the lack of dialogue and the weak connections between the decision-makers and the practitioners in the field (the *operari*) and the researchers (the *speculari*). To improve peace building architecture, the development of dialogue and connections between these three sources of knowledge and know-how must be encouraged and rewarded. It is natural that theory and action should be complementary, that they should constitute harmonic aspects of one whole. In reality, however, there exists what has been called a "theory-practice gap" (Lepgold and Nincic, 2002). This gap is caused by the incentive systems of the politicians, of the practitioners in the field and of the researchers (academics). The academic incentive system is characterized by a publish or perish mentality, by the recognition of originality, by the tendency for research methods to triumph over substance, by the preference for fundamental over applied research, by papers filled with jargon, and by the reinforcement of all of this by academic faddishness. The incentive system of the policy makers consists in their need to find timely solutions for concrete problems. Officials have less time to read and reflect. Joseph Nye (Lepgold and Nincic, 2002), one of the few people who have acted both as scholar and as policymaker, was surprised at the "oral" nature of the communication and decision-making culture at the top levels of government service. One

of the major challenges of peace research is to facilitate dialogue and connections between the decision-makers, the practitioners and the research community. Peace researchers have a bridging role: they should not only provide policy-relevant knowledge, but also effectively dialogue with practitioners, especially in instances where the people on each side have interests in common. Peace research can provide instrumental knowledge (e.g. how to prevent groupthink in crisis situations), contextual knowledge (e.g. specifying the necessary conditions for sustainable peace building) and consequential knowledge (e.g. anticipating the costs and consequences of policy options). The most productive exchanges might take place between researchers who have spent some time in government and in the field, and practitioners who have had some academic training in violence prevention and peace building research. All of the above does not imply that the Ivory Tower should be dismantled. It exists for good reasons. It provides the academic freedom without which scientific research is impossible. It also allows the intellectuals to reflect on the world from a certain distance, and not simply to do the work of policy commentators or journalists at a slower pace (Lepgold and Nincic, 2002).

(d) Stimulate conscious and competent learning. The learning curve can be raised by stimulating *reflective peace research*. Policy-makers, practitioners in the field, researchers and educators involved in peace building should reflect on the underlying normative, theoretical and epistemological assumptions of the personal and collective theories or mental models of peace. These mental models, frequently referred to as "common sense", influence the decision-making. Because mental models are usually tacit, existing below the level of awareness, they are often untested and unexamined. They are generally invisible for us, unless we look for them (Senge, 1994). A valuable contribution to reflective peace research has come from Jayne Docherty, who has been developing an interesting and creative approach to reflective peace research. She (Docherty, 2005) distinguishes three types of personal theories: "Baby theories", "Teenage theories", and "Big Grown-up theories". The first are our gut level theories that guide behavior, the second are theories based on practice, and the third are well grounded theories based on systematic research.

(e) Make effective use of local expertise. Despite the existence of the 'participatory action research 'rituals, the donors and external interveners in conflicts rely predominantly on the advice of external consultants. The architecture of peace could significantly improve by eliciting local intelligence.

Challenge 4: Dealing with the Reality of the Peace Building Context

The fourth challenge is to deal effectively with the peace building context, which is characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, competing values and interests, and the struggle for power. Building peace requires not only analytic skills, but also imagination, creativity, reconciliation of competing values and interests, the implementation of arms and power control, the use of non-violent action, "in extremis" the use of arms, and a

great deal of courage. Hope is not a strategy. Peace researchers can influence the context more favorably by: (a) developing a more accurate accounting system for the violence; (b) better assessing the costs of reactive and proactive violence prevention efforts (or of neglect); (c) generating concrete suggestions to increase the accountability of people who benefit directly or indirectly from the violence; (d) highlighting the negative role of epistemic violence and senti-mental walls; (e) improving the banding of peace and peace research; and (f) guaranteeing the academic freedom and the quality of peace research and education.

Let us now deal with each of these points in more detail:

(a) Developing a more accurate and comprehensive system for violence monitoring and accounting: Today's databanks have three needs: (1) They need more reliable information about the numbers of people killed. For some conflicts and groups of victims, the data on people killed are rough and unreliable. There are first, second and third class victims. (2) They need information about the whole fabric of violence, including so-called sensitive or forbidden statistics, for example, about horizontal inequality in multi-ethnic countries. (3) They need data on the costs and benefits of violence.

(b) Anticipating and comparing the costs and benefits of neglect and/or reactive or proactive violence prevention: This is a complex methodological problem of counterfactuals. Michael Brown and Richard Rosecrance (1999) made an important contribution toward what will be a continuing critical debate in the years to come.

(c) Increasing the accountability of people who commit and/or profit from violence: If violence grieved everybody, it would have disappeared from the earth long ago. The problem is that for some people violence still pays off. Therefore it is of crucial importance to identify and name greedy people who profit from conflicts and make them more accountable for their deeds.

(d) Exposing the epistemic violence and the senti-mental walls which inhibit the peace building process: This is very important because peace building takes place within an environment of power and competing interests and values. In such a context, knowledge is a strategic asset. People in power try to manipulate this knowledge by controlling the media, research funding, school curricula and the public opinion.

(e) Improving the branding of peace and peace research (Reychler, 2000): One of the problems confronting the peace research community is the image of peace that they project. People choose for peace on the basis of their mental image of a possible and desirable future state of their living environment. This image can be as vague as a dream or as precise as a goal or mission statement. If peace advocates articulate a view of a realistic, credible and attractive future for people, a condition that is better in some ways than what now exists, then this image will be a goal that beckons and motivates people to pursue it. Not all people are enticed by the idea of peace. For some, the term peace has more negative than positive connotations. There are people in the European Community who take peace for granted. For them it is not a very important issue. Peace is banal and

boring. It is not considered cool. Others do not like it because during the Cold War peace movements were misled and used by the Communist regimes. Peace can also be distrusted when promoted by conservative regimes to prevent structural changes. Throughout history, people have fought to get rid of Pax Romana, Pax Germanica, Pax Sovietica, Pax Niponica and other imposed peaces. The negative image of peace can also be derived from the fact that some so-called peace gurus or experts are peace quacks (in Dutch the word is *paxzalver*.) The association of peace with absolute pacifism tends to convey an image of passivity. For so-called 'realists' or 'cynics', peace is seen as an unrealistic and/or dangerous pursuit. Finally, people can become apprehensive when the 'peace' that someone is promoting is not defined clearly. Something certainly must be done to make the concept of peace more attractive. This could be accomplished by formulating clear and compelling definitions of peace; by differentiating different types of peace; by convincing people that one can forget sustainable development when no efforts are made to create a sustainable peace; by making people aware that there are 'limits to violence'; and by convincing them that peace building is a serious enterprise that requires courage, professionalism and creativity. How can the idea or ideal of sustainable peace building be disseminated more effectively? One could ask marketing specialists how to promote 'peace' as a product – how to give it 'sex appeal'. Perhaps *they* could give peace a chance. Even more important is the role of peace building leadership. The leaders must capture the attention of the people through a clear and compelling vision of peace. Such a vision is necessary to bridge the present and the future. A third group that can promote peace more effectively is the journalists. A distinction made by Johan Galtung (n.d.) between 'peace and conflict' journalism and 'war and violence ' journalism seems appropriate here. 'Peace and conflict' journalism could help to enhance the image of peace and peace-building significantly. Peace researchers must give serious consideration to the issue of the branding of peace and peace research.

(f) Protecting the academic freedom and the quality of peace research and peace education: Academic freedom is of vital importance for peace researchers. Researching "truth" in conflict zones is a risky business. In a climate of political correctness, academic taboos, spin doctors, groupthink, embedded journalism and epistemic violence, the pressure to conform can be very high. An essential ingredient of sustainable peace building is professionalism and a critical mass of leaders who can raise hopes, generate ways and means to build peace, and commit people to the peace-building process. This necessitates not only peace building skills, but also the will to take some risks in order to achieve one's ends. Peace building is one of the fields of expertise in which there is no systematic control of the training and selection of people for conflict prevention and peace building functions. As a consequence, one finds peace quacks in the peace building sector. It's high time to have a discussion about the meaning of professionalism in peace building. The plea for more professionalism does not imply that professionals should be in charge of the peace building process. This would be unacceptable in a democratic

peace building process. Professionals, however, should help the people and the decision makers to make better informed decisions; they should make initial conflict impact assessments of the policies under consideration; and they should help generate more effective peace building alternatives. This has become the normal procedure in other fields, where health, employment, gender and environmental impact studies have become normal practice.

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