



Grounded — Peace —

The Newsletter of the ISA Thematic Group on
Sociology of Conflict Transformations and Peacebuilding



Conflict Transformations
and Peacebuilding

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First message from the President

Dear colleagues,

2025 was a challenging year for many of us, but also a year of resurgence and connection with one another. Our first gathering took place during our time at the ISA Forum in Rabat. Every single one of us who attended this event took it upon ourselves to highlight and disseminate our latest research, as well as share and exchange opinions on topics that can sometimes spark fractures in many dimensions. It was also an enriching time where we were able not only to learn about a new culture – for those of us who did not grow up on that side of the world – but to explore valuable perspectives from new colleagues. The Thematic Group on Sociology of Conflict Transformations and Peacebuilding emerged among colleagues and friends who, eager to find a more specific platform for these issues within the ISA, decided to submit a proposal to create the group. The proposal was successful, and after receiving support from some colleagues, many others have given us a warm welcome.

We had our first meeting as a group in Rabat. It was an exciting day for several reasons. The first was that we had finally seen a project we had been thinking about for months come to fruition. The second reason was getting to know each other in person. This was especially rewarding, as we were able to share a few drinks while introducing ourselves and encouraging each other to establish the group. In addition, one of the things that motivated us the most was that colleagues we did not yet know from other regions attended, making TG02 a diverse, inclusive and spontaneous group. Last, but not least, we elected the board members and decided on some guidelines for getting started as a collective. One of the first things we agreed on was to have our own newsletter and to create a pleasant atmosphere where we can propose activities, meetings, seminars, and whatever else comes to mind, all in line with the themes addressed by TG02.

Below is the official photo of our first meeting in Rabat.



TG02 first meeting in Rabat, July 2025.

With this first welcome message, I am also delighted to share with you the launch of our *Grounded Peace* newsletter. This publication will be biannual and will be open to sharing key information from TG02 members. Initially, you will find more information about TG02, including the board members for the period 2025–2027. It also includes the fresh launch of our interview session called *Talking Points*. The series is set to feature interviews on current topics related to the thematic group's objectives. These dialogues can be conducted by TG02 members with scholars from anywhere in the world, activists, peacemakers, among others. There is no limit to the length of the text, as long as it remains coherent. At the bottom, you will also find information about past events, upcoming events, and recent publications. If you would like to stay up to date with our activities, you can also follow us on LinkedIn and Facebook. We will soon be opening new social media channels.

In closing, on behalf of the TG02 board members, I would like to thank you for joining this network. We look forward to hearing from each of our new members very soon!

Kind regards,

Marian Orjuela
President of TG02

About TG02

This new thematic group is created in response to the need for a space at ISA to examine global challenges related to socio-political conflicts, including transitions from authoritarianism, internal and international conflicts, local environmental conflicts, and other forms of collective violence and massive human rights violations, through a sociological lens. Its central analytical domain is the study of peace processes and social responses to conflict, including the examination of norms, institutions, discourses, symbols, and practices through empirically grounded research. It complements and advances previous TGs and RCs that study violence and conflict, but unlike them, this group emphasises the study of peace processes, reconciliation, memory, and various forms of peacebuilding.

The group is open to a diverse array of theoretical and methodological approaches and seeks to facilitate theoretical discussion of categories that can sometimes appear vague, such as justice, dignity, and reconciliation. It encourages deep ethical reflection on positionality and on participatory methods that include working with vulnerable populations victimised by conflict, including the problems of representation, the risk of revictimisation, and the challenges of knowledge production. Additionally, the group aims to draw attention to and generate dialogue on gender and intersectional perspectives in the study of peace and conflict transformation. In addition to some of the most well-known cases in the field, this group seeks to promote research conducted in the Global South and on conflicts that have historically received limited academic and policy attention due to geopolitical hierarchies that deem what is considered visible or strategic.

The TG02 promotes academic meetings, events, and collaborative publications. It seeks to bring together early-career researchers and more senior scholars, and to facilitate dialogue with practitioners. We aim to create an active and dynamic environment through panels at the next ISA conference, webinars, and other international events.

TG02 Board Members 2025-2027

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TG02 Interview Series

—• TALKING POINTS



Nanneke Winters

Marian Orjuela (MO): It is my pleasure to introduce our first guest to the TG02 interview series. First of all, thank you, Nanneke, for being part of this initiative! She is an assistant professor in Migration and Development at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University Rotterdam. Building on anthropology, feminist geography and critical development studies, her research interests include im/mobility, migrant trajectories, and translocal livelihoods in Central America and beyond. Today we have set out to link Nanneke's recent research on migration with studies on peace and conflict.

Nanneke Winters (NW): Thank you very much, dear Marian, for your kind invitation! I would like to take this opportunity to briefly discuss this topic, which is currently in the spotlight of scholars from different regions.

MO: Let me start with a general and seemingly obvious question. As we know, you are interested in the entanglements of differentiated migrant journeys with other im/mobilities and place-making in border communities, so how do you think peacebuilding and migration intersect?

NW: This is a tricky question to start with, as peacebuilding and migration are both such complex, multi-faceted phenomena. They come in many different forms and are perceived, experienced and managed differently around the world. Their intersections would also differ

substantially from place to place. But in rather general terms, based on my research experience in Central America, I think peacebuilding and migration intersect in at least three ways. First, much of the migration we witness today can be attributed to a lack of peace and failed peacebuilding. People's reasons to migrate are always multiple, but conflict, violence and violent inequalities play a large role in the decision to move elsewhere. Second, peacebuilding and migration intersect along-the-way. In the current global context, migrant journeys are often illegalized, with people directed into risky, dangerous and unpredictable terrain. Their journeys can take months or even years, and once destinations are reached, experiences of fear, marginalization and even deportation are part of their everyday lives. This is far from the peaceful existence migrants are generally seeking. It reminds me of the words of one of my research participants, a Congolese woman whom I met in Panama a few years ago. Referring to the imposed illegality of her journey and the suffering she experienced along the way, she said: "no one walks from peace to peace. You take the road from trouble to peace, because your life is in danger, because you're not safe."

Third and finally, peacebuilding and migration intersect in the places where people (still) on the move interact with local residents. In my work in Central America, I witnessed many potential sources of disruption and clashing interests, and a real possibility for violence, especially in marginalized border communities. When these communities do not feel supported by the state or humanitarian organizations in attending to the migrants that cross their territory, their reaction may change from initial solidarity to violent xenophobia. On the other hand, we have also seen migrants who have been detained, delayed, deceived, or otherwise left in dead-end situations resorting to destructive and potentially dangerous tactics to resolve their situation.

MO: Central America, or rather Latin America, a region permeated by multiple forms of violence and conflicts, is also the source of large diasporas, meaning that many already marginalised communities have, one might say, a 'seed of conflict'. What kind of new and frequent conflicts in the migration process might we find under the complex social dynamics that exacerbate those already existing in these places? And how local and migrant communities are coping with these constant challenges?

NW: One of the commonalities I found in research participants' stories throughout Central America, from Belize to Honduras and from Nicaragua and Costa Rica to Panama, is their understanding of the need to migrate. The region is characterized by different histories of migration, including those spurred by war, persecution and socioeconomic differences, and these histories generally foster an understanding and supportive attitude towards migrants, both from within and outside the region. However, conflict arises when communities that receive migrants, either temporally or more permanently, do not feel supported in their efforts. Many of these communities, especially along borders, have for decades felt

neglected by their respective states, and this feeling intensifies when they are left to deal with incoming migrants with none or only very few resources at their disposal. This is exacerbated when they see support for migrants coming in through humanitarian organizations, which can fuel resentment towards people on the move.

We see people claiming the same kind of attention and demanding very specific solutions, such as access to clean drinking water that benefits both local residents and migrants passing through. Depending on the duration of their stay, we see migrants also trying to integrate into local economies by offering their labour and collaborating in migrant reception. This very much depends, however, on available infrastructures, histories of local marginalization, and the cultural distance between residents and people on the move. It also depends on the level of securitization of migration and illegalization of support. As local residents engage in solidarity work and/or migration economies by, for example, guiding migrants through difficult terrain, offering a place to sleep or selling them food, these activities may be considered unlawful based on the policies in place. The levels of policing and punishment are highly volatile and residents can choose to react by not engaging with migrants at all.

MO: In the context of migration, building social cohesion is crucial for establishing bonds of solidarity and empathy with host communities. Peacebuilding strategies become crucial to mitigating exclusion and tensions in the migration process. Beyond the new possibilities for conflict that are emerging, in your case studies, there have surely been circumstances in which people have managed to coordinate and create bonds, supporting each other. Could you tell us more about this?

NW: Sometimes I think it's a small miracle that in the often very marginalized circumstances that local residents and people on the move meet, human connection and care is still possible. Migrants' testimonies show how next to the abuse and deceit they experience along the way, they also come across acts of kindness. Perhaps they were offered water, or a meal when they most needed it. Guides may have let them join a boat ride for free when they were injured. A nurse may have taken them to the hospital, and local employees of humanitarian organizations may have worked around the clock to see children's needs are met. Next to these very practical examples, we also see bonds that are forged beyond migrants' immediate needs and beyond a general sense of victimhood and helplessness. We see a lively exchange of food, jokes, music and stories. These moments, when interaction takes place on a more equal footing, help people recognize each other as fully fledged, multi-dimensional human beings. Given people's traumas and ongoing marginalizations, I consider this a small miracle and a hopeful sign for the future and for peacebuilding.

MO: To conclude this brief but fruitful conversation with you, where do you think migration studies are headed in the current context, threatened by multiple scenarios of armed, social,

and environmental conflict? What kind of gaps do you think still need to be filled by research on this topic?

NW: That's a good question! I think migration researchers become increasingly aware of the risk of singling out migrants and essentializing migrant communities as if their migration is the problem at stake. Without disregarding the very real plight that many different types of migrants battle with, it is misleading to isolate their migration experience from other defining aspects of their life, their (translocal) environments, and the histories of inequality that condition their migration. For the sake of offering both a nuanced interpretation of migrants' daily struggles and hopes, and a way out of current polarization, I think it's important to investigate and highlight commonalities between people on the move and the communities that receive, host and interact with them. People – also those who stay – can experience displacement in different ways, but these displacements are often based on structural inequalities that should be addressed and resisted collectively, not by pitting people against each other.

I hope migration studies will move into this direction to be able to support a global project of mobility justice, as Mimi Sheller calls it. For me, mobility justice also means that we are careful with identifying research gaps and studying different migration scenarios. We currently see multiple insecurities, claims and fears intersecting. Migration research can very well be misused to exploit, violently disclose and persecute people on the move, or people trying to settle and live peaceful lives. As we try to fill research gaps, we should be mindful of the systems, discourses and practices we contribute to, especially with topics as politicized and weaponized as migration.

MO: Thank you again for this insightful conversation! I am sure it will spark the interest of many readers. I believe that this topic paves the way for further research on the intersection between emerging peacebuilding efforts amid migration processes and how this affects transit and destination regions.

If you would like to learn more about Nanneke's research, I encourage you to check out her recent co-edited book [\(Un\)Settling Place](#) and visit her [website](#).

Past Events

Feeling Meeting

During November, TG02, together with WG08 (Society and Emotions), coordinated the 5th Feeling Meeting to discuss recent studies on emotions, activism, and social movements. Drawing on qualitative research, the panelists presented perspectives on emotions from a subjective viewpoint, highlighting how activist experiences influence individuals' reflections on their own emotions and how these experiences can transform personal identities. Case studies from Serbia, Chile, France, and Argentina were shared and compared.

Watch the full discussion at [Estudios Sociológicos - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

A poster for the 'Feeling Meeting' event. The background is a black and white photograph of a large crowd of people holding up protest signs. The text is overlaid on this image. At the top left, the title 'Feeling Meeting' is written in large white and purple letters. To the right of the title is a white arrow pointing down and to the left. Below the title, the subtitle 'Activism, Collective Action and Emotions' is written in white. The date and time 'Monday 17 November Online / 15:00 (UTC, London time)' are listed in white. Below that, the live broadcast URL 'https://youtube.com/@estudiossociologicos4627' is provided. The 'SPEAKERS:' section lists four names with purple circular icons: Daniela Jara (University of Valparaíso), Adrián Scribano (CONICET), Igor Cvejić (University of Belgrade), and Jean Le-Goff (ESTA Centre). The 'CHAIR: Karla Henríquez (UCLouvain)' is listed at the bottom. At the very bottom, there are four logos for the organizing groups: Conflict Transformations and Peacebuilding, Society and Emotions, Social Classes and Social Movements, and CRISts.

Public Lecture in collaboration with TG02

PEACE WORK AMID THE POLYCRISIS

Interdisciplinarity and the Challenge of Future Peace

International Public Lecture

Prof. Gearóid Millar

*Professor of Peace and Conflict
Studies*

University of Aberdeen



Date: 30 March 2026

Time: 16:00–18:00



Venue: Kousteensedijk 7, 4331 JE Middelburg, The Netherlands

Organised by | **UCR** University College Roosevelt

In collaboration with TG02 Conflict Transformations
and Peacebuilding

Registration: Dr. Sandra M. Rios Oyola
s.riosoyola@ucr.nl



International
Sociological
Association

Peace Work amid the Polycrisis: Interdisciplinarity and the Challenge of Future Peace

by Gearoid Millar, Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Aberdeen

Place: Bibliotheek van Zeeland, Middelburg, The Netherlands.

Date: 30 March 2026 **Time:** 16:00 - 18:00

Registration: s.riosoyola@ucr.nl

<https://dezb.op-shop.nl/10821/peace-work-amid-the-polycrisis-interdisciplinarity-and-the-challenge-of-future-peace/30-03-2026>

Those who work for peace often frame their work in normative terms, as either resolving conflict or building peace. Yet the nature of peace work itself has constantly evolved. As the field expanded, understandings of the challenges to peace have changed, and so too have the paradigms, approaches, and practices deployed within it. The challenges of the post-9/11 period called forth theories and practices that differed markedly from those of post-Cold War conflicts, for example. More recently, however, the pace of change and the interconnected, complex challenges of the polycrisis have caught the field off guard. Drawing on interviews with 156 peace workers over the last 8 years, this lecture argues that what we require now are much more interdisciplinary forms of peace work that can address climate change, mass mobilisation, global and domestic inequality, algorithm- and AI-driven polarisation, the threat of future pandemics, and the increasingly fragile state of global order. The data presented will clearly demonstrate how the challenges to peace have become ever more complex and resistant to disciplinary solutions and disciplined practices. A shift towards more radical interdisciplinarity is required to build future peace.

Gearoid Millar is a Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies in the Department of Sociology at the University of Aberdeen, in the UK, where he also Coordinates both the MSc in Peace and Conflict Studies and the MSc in Policy Evaluation. His West Africa research focuses on examining the local experiences of international interventions for peace, justice, and development – primarily in Sierra Leone – and he has published widely on the complex and unpredictable interactions (characterised by Hybridity and Friction) between international peacebuilding interventions and the local communities and individuals who experience them. He has contributed widely to the field of Peace and Conflict studies over the past 15 years, with four books and more than two dozen contributions to key journals, such as the *Journal of Peace Research*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, *International Peacekeeping*, the *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Peacebuilding*, and many others.

Calls and Opportunities

Call for Contributions - Disappearance Studies Conference

Deadline for proposals: 20 March 2026

Date: August 30 - September 1, 2026

Place: INCORE, Ulster University, Derry-Londonderry Campus, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom

Organizers: INCORE (International Conflict Research Institute, Ulster University), in collaboration with the Journal of Disappearance Studies.

The conference will convene scholars, practitioners, policymakers, artists, families of the disappeared, and advocacy organisations to explore the socio-political, cultural, and economic dimensions of disappearance.

Please submit a proposal of up to 300 words with a working title of up to 25 words to incore@ulster.ac.uk

Selected articles will be considered for publication in a special issue of the [Journal of Disappearance Studies](#).

This event will be in-person. A limited number of scholarships (£800 each) will be offered to early-career scholars from the Global South to cover part of the attendance costs.

Full call here:

https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com/view/journals/jds/jds-overview.xml?tab_body=call-for-papers#conference



Call for Papers - Special Issue of Peace Review

Between Co-existence and Reconciliation: Islands of Peace in Ongoing Violent Conflicts



Deadline for submissions: 31 April 2026

Rosario Figari Layus, Conrad Schetter and Esther Gardei are preparing a special issue of Peace Review. Researchers are welcome to submit contributions for a special issue that investigates local experiences of peaceful coexistence and collaborative relations emerging within contexts of ongoing violence– so-called “islands of peace”.

The issue aims to address questions such as: What factors enable the creation and endurance of these initiatives and spaces? Who are the principal actors involved, and how do they navigate the complexities of protracted conflict? What challenges do they face in sustaining and safeguarding these fragile environments of peaceful interaction? Submissions from scholars in the social sciences and humanities are welcome.

See the full Call for Papers and the submission guidelines [here](#).

Call for Contributions - Peasantries in Movement: Interdisciplinary Debates on Territorialities, Memories, and Resistance in Latin America (Doctoral Workshop)

Application Deadline: 28 February 2026

Date: 04 and 05 June 2026

Place: Campus Condorcet, Aubervilliers, France

Organizers: ECHELLES (UMR 8264); Institut des Amériques (IDA); German-Colombian Institute for Peace (CAPAZ); Mondes Américains (UMR 8168), PALOC (UMR 208)

The study of peasant societies has been the object of academic interest within the social sciences. Multiple perspectives have influenced its conceptualization process, ranging from functionalist analyses that reinforce its negative connotation to debates focused on socio-cultural elements as crucial components of its definition, and those that highlight territorial disputes for the permanence of peasant sociability and identity in the face of extractive activities and agribusiness.

The multiplicity of dimensions from which peasant societies can be analyzed has allowed an academic and activist convergence, in which the starting point for understanding the notion is the relationship with the land, relative autonomy in relation to the capitalist system, and the survival of identity and identification.

To enhance the redistributive role of extractive income, Latin America continues to reproduce an extractive and exporting role for agricultural raw materials. Hence, it is possible to affirm that the Latin American peasantry persists because of (and despite) its role in the international division of labor as a supplier of low-cost raw materials.

The doctoral workshop ***Peasantries in the Movement: Interdisciplinary Debates on Territorialities, Memories, and Resistance in Latin America*** aims to address the inherent tensions in the material demands of rural life, as well as the conceptual discussions that have accompanied the idea of peasantry in Latin America. Taking into account the plurality of processes, trajectories, and contexts surrounding the positioning of peasants in this region, this space invites us to reflect on how peasant communities construct their territorialities, mobilize their collective memories, and develop forms of resistance in the face of socio-environmental conflicts and contemporary sociopolitical transformations.

Contributions in Spanish, English, and French are welcome.

Consult the full call. : <https://bit.ly/3Zasr2i>

Please submit your application through: <https://bit.ly/4rkJI4U>

Publications

Figari Layús, R. (2025). Never Again? The Institutionalization of Far-Right Negationism and Shrinking Space in Argentina: Impacts on Transitional Justice Trials and Memory Politics. International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 14(02), 68-82.

<https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.3934>

Henríquez, K. (2025). Movimientos sociales que irrumpen. Ego-sintonías y socializaciones aceleradas en jóvenes chilenos. *Revista de Análisis Cultural Kamchatka, (24), 275-290*

<https://doi.org/10.7203/KAM.24.27798>

Henríquez, K., Pinochet Mendoza, N. A., Pleyers, G. & Cuestas, F. S. (2025). Social Movements as Triggers of Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma and Memory in Chile. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 14(2), 56-67.*

<https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.3904>

Pinochet, N., Henríquez, K., & Cuestas, F. (2025). Protesta pesarosa: resistencia transgeneracional frente a la violencia política sexual en Chile. In E. Pérez (comp.) *Voces del trauma. Cruces transdisciplinarios desde el psicoanálisis (pp. 267-294)*. Universidad Academia Humanismo Cristiano.

Rios Oyola, S. (2025). Restoring Sexual Dignity: Sexual Violence, Human Dignity, and Transitional Justice in Colombia. *International Journal for Crime, Justice, and Social Democracy, 14(2), 129 – 142.*

Rios Oyola, S. (2025). Restoring Dignity: Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Societies. In E. Daly (Ed.) *A Research Agenda for Human Dignity and Law (pp. 237-254)*. Edward Elgar Publishing.