

# Reconciliation and Peace Processes

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*A Belfast Mural from after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.*

A new issue of [Conciliation Resource](#)'s Accord Insight Series, titled '[Reconciliation and Peace Processes](#)', is just out. Now the personal interest confession: I am the Guest Editor of this excellent new publication.

If you've an interest in the role of reconciliation in efforts to resolve the conflicts in Colombia, the Philippines/Mindanao, Northern Ireland or Georgia/Abkhazia—the four case studies covered in the report – or broader issues regarding the relationship between reconciliation and peace processes, then this spanking new publication is the one for you!

Below is a section taken from the Report's Introduction

# Making peace with the past: transforming broken relationships

Policymakers and practitioners increasingly acknowledge the importance of reconciliation to sustainable peace. Yet it is often viewed belatedly, as a purely post-conflict concern. There is uncertainty about what type of reconciliation activity is possible at different phases of a peace process, and how to connect initiatives at different levels – from grassroots to elite.

This third Accord Insight reflects on practical approaches and challenges to address the legacies of violent conflict. Case studies from the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, Colombia, Mindanao (Philippines) and Northern Ireland offer important insights into a diversity of approaches (successes and failures) in societies with different histories of violence and at very different stages on the conflict spectrum.

*“The past is a central dimension of reconciliation. But reconciliation is essentially about the future: moving from a divided past towards a shared future. And so it means, at its core, building relations for the future”* Dr David Bloomfield, Accord Insight expert contributor

*“Reconciliation means much more than forgiving the perpetrator and understanding what happened; it implies ensuring that the conditions that gave rise to the conflict change deeply, and trusting that the state will never again cause or allow that situation to occur”* Rosa Emilia Salamanca, Strategic Director, Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica (CIASE), Colombia

They illustrate the importance of a diverse range of efforts to support peace processes and the reconstruction of post-conflict societies, and stress the need to ‘transform relationships’ away from past antagonisms in order to secure a

more peaceful future.

*“Healing starts when those who acknowledge their violent acts propose how to ‘mend’ such wrongs. Accounting for past actions is an important element of healing and reconciliation; it is also among the first steps toward transforming relationships at different levels”* Rufa Cagoco-Guiam, Director of the Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao, Mindanao State University

\*\*\* A joint analysis workshop held in November 2015, which brought together 35 experts, policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders, greatly informed the analysis and conclusions of this *Accord Insight* publication. Read Accord Insight 3 issue editor Mark Salter’s workshop report [here](#)

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