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# Report on the experts meeting: “Searching for Common Approaches to Deal with Unconventional Conflicts and Violence in the Americas”

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Organization of American States  
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In today’s global context we are increasingly encountering changing forms of armed violence, outside the context of war or civil war; hence there is a need for an innovative approach and strategy designed for these new forms of conflict. One of the most visible contributors to these new landscapes of violence and conflict in the Americas are non-state actors engaged in criminal activities and interested in social recognition, profit, the control of territory and transactions to allow for the maximum freedom of movement, and better conditions for their imprisoned peers. Impunity provides some of these criminal groups the opportunity to continue to engage in and expand their illicit activities including drug smuggling, trafficking in persons and arms, illegal mining, murder, kidnapping, extortion, and robbery. These lucrative and illicit activities destabilize societies and states, and ruin lives.

As a result, more has been invested in private security than ever before in Latin America and the Caribbean but the region is still more insecure than ever. Past government policies, such as *mano dura*, have attempted to forcefully combat these security threats, however, these policies have generally focused on a criminal and law enforcement approach dominated by strict laws, high incarceration rates, and police brutality. Prevention strategies have therefore been widely ignored. There is a strong evidence base that hard-handed, *mano dura* approaches to the issues do not work and peace building for unconventional conflicts needs more than simply a law enforcement approach. It therefore follows that a moratorium on past strong handed approaches could be feasible.

Recently, prevention strategies that incorporate human rights have developed and matured and have become a more achievable alternative. Mediation and facilitation between the non-state and often criminal actors involved in such conflicts, and in some cases between these groups and the state, have taken place in many countries of the Americas in an attempt to reduce and/or interrupt their violent acts. Despite these experiences there is a lack of documented knowledge, processes, and practices pertaining to contemporary unconventional conflicts and the mediation or peace-building processes that could be developed in response. Specifically, Regional Organizations and the UN need to work together to adjust and adapt the traditional toolkit designed for conventional state conflict to one that can deal with the new reality of non-state actors and unconventional conflicts, often supported by the illicit economy.

With this in mind, we have to begin to ask the fundamental “What, Who, Why, and most importantly How?” questions, and seek to understand the “adversary” and the type of conflicts and threats some of the hemisphere’s states are facing. This is fundamental if we want to offer viable alternatives to the conventional repressive military and law enforcement strategies that have failed to address the violence perpetrated by actors in unconventional conflicts.

## The Geographic and Demographic Dimensions of Unconventional Conflicts and Violence<sup>12</sup>

- From the perspective of homicide rates, the Americas is the world's most violent region with 36 percent of the globe's intentional homicides and the highest male homicide rate (UNODC, 2013, p. 11/28)
- Southern Africa and Central America are the most violent sub-regions, experiencing homicide rates of over 25 victims per 100,000 population, four times higher than the global average of 6.2 per 100,000. (UNODC, 2013, p. 21-22)
- The sub-regions of South America, Middle Africa and the Caribbean follow with between 16 and 23 homicides per 100,000. (UNODC, 2013, p. 22)
- El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Belize, and Venezuela report among the highest recorded rates of homicide in the world (UNODC, 2013, p. 122-133)
- 43 percent of global homicide victims are aged 15-29 and more than one in seven of all homicide victims is a male aged 15-29 living in the Americas (UNODC, 2013, p. 13/14)
- The homicide rate for male victims aged 15-29 in South America and Central America is more than four times the global average; an age group the majority of the perpetrators of these killings also falls into. (UNODC, 2013, p. 14)
- Organized crime/gang-related homicides are highest in the Americas, accounting for 30 percent of all homicides compared to less than 1 per cent in Asia, Europe and Oceania. (UNODC, 2013, p. 40)
- In some countries in Central America and the Caribbean organized crime/gang-related homicides drive overall national homicide rates (UNODC, 2013, p. 40)
- Within Latin America young males and women are particularly vulnerable and at risk to being victims of crime and violence (UNDP, 2013, p. 7)
- While statistics highlight males as the primary victims and perpetrators of organized crime and gang related homicides, it is important to note the direct and indirect involvement of women and their position as one of the groups most vulnerable to crime and violence.

### A Multi-Stakeholder Meeting

To address this topic of unconventional conflicts and violence, the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security of the Organization of American States (OAS), with key partners such as The United Nations, Interpeace, The International Development Research Centre, and the European Union, hosted and organized a multi-stakeholder experts meeting held from February 12-13, 2015 at the OAS Headquarters in Washington D.C.

The structure of the meeting began with a discussion surrounding the definition of conventional and unconventional conflict and the actors involved, followed by the main expressions of unconventional conflicts in the Americas, with a particular focus on youth gangs, and concluding with the presentation and analysis of specific case studies from the Americas.

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<sup>1</sup> UNODC. (2013). *Global Study on Homicide 2013: Trends, Contexts, Data*. Retrieved from [http://www.unodc.org/documents/gsh/pdfs/2014\\_GLOBAL\\_HOMICIDE\\_BOOK\\_web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/gsh/pdfs/2014_GLOBAL_HOMICIDE_BOOK_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> UNDP. (2013). *Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014, Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America*. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rblac/docs/Research%20and%20Publications/IDH/IDH-AL-ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

The purpose of the meeting was to: A) generate knowledge, content and experiences through a collaborative discussion; B) create a network of practitioners and build an inventory of related material; and C) create a toolkit or road map of principles for moving forward. This report accomplishes this through the following sections:

- I. Introduction to Unconventional Conflicts and Violence
- II. Selected Cases Studies of Unconventional Conflicts and Violence in the Americas
- III. Toolkit of Principles for Dealing with Unconventional Conflicts and Violence
- IV. Network of Researchers and Practitioners
- V. Inventory of Related Material

## **I. Introduction to Unconventional Conflicts and Violence**

### **What are Conventional Conflicts?**

By some definitions conventional conflicts are primarily driven by and made up of identified and organized military actors waging war on a battlefield. *The Correlates of War Project* and *Uppsala Conflict Data Program* are a key reference for the definition of conventional conflicts and define it as those between governments and another actor causing more than 25 battle related deaths. Following this definition, conventional conflicts have been on the decline since the end of the Cold War with 15 major conventional conflicts in the early 1990s and only 7 in 2015. Conventional conflicts are also characterized by the high media attention they receive and the presence of outside political agencies and actors involved in the conflict through diplomacy and negotiations.

### **What are Unconventional Conflicts?**

Different conceptual assumptions view unconventional conflicts by focusing on where and how people die violently as opposed to where traditional 'conflict' is actually occurring. By following this approach and using the definition from the *Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development*, approximately 600,000 people die violently each year, more than two thirds of which do not occur in conventional conflicts. The WHO also uses a violence focused definition, labeling areas with homicide rates exceeding 10 murders per 100,000 inhabitants as violence epidemics, putting the Americas as the most violent region in the world (UNDP, 2013, p. 1).

While quantified data on homicides is often the main indicator used, it is important that it does not become the only indicator in defining unconventional conflicts and determining where they occur. The reason for this being that homicides are not the only problem associated with unconventional conflicts and violence. There exist, for example, areas with low homicide rates yet subject to unconventional conflict and violence through high rates of other criminal activity, such as kidnapping, armed robbery and assault. In addition, as will be outlined in some of the following case studies, a significant decrease in homicides does not always represent an end to a conflict. Whereas conventional conflicts are defined by two actors opposing each other, unconventional conflicts bring into question both who these actors can be and who they are opposing. For example, in the case of gangs in El Salvador, the conflict may be viewed as between the gangs themselves, the gangs and the state or the gangs and society.

Criminal violence is often tied to unconventional conflict and whereas in principle conventional conflicts are subject to laws and rules, unconventional conflicts break and ignore such regulations. An

example of this is the recruiting of minors into conflict. While conventional conflicts hold political objectives with eventual goals of negotiation and peace, unconventional conflicts are composed of actors often with no political agendas or end goals. Another differentiating factor between the two types of conflict relates to the ability of mediating actors to intervene. While this is accepted and encouraged in relation to conventional conflicts it is often difficult or discouraged in unconventional conflicts. Due to their non-traditional nature such conflicts walk the line between the need for a traditional conflict-based response and a crime-based response, thereby breaking down and rejecting established and internationally accepted conflict response patterns.

### **The Question of Defining Unconventional Conflicts**

Defining unconventional conflicts in relation to conventional conflicts is not a clear cut task free of problems. Controversy and debate surround many of the factors potentially differentiating the two. For instance, distinguishing between criminal violence and noncriminal violence, the difference between a conflict and mere violence, and when violence reaches a level to label something as a conflict. The question of 'unconventional to whom' can also be raised, as different actors will hold different opinions depending on their own biases or involvement. There is also a wide spectrum covered by conventional and unconventional conflicts and actors that complicate definitions and impede the ability to define. For example, unconventional actors can often be involved in conventional conflicts and conventional actors can be involved in unconventional conflicts.

Concerning the difficulty and controversy surrounding defining such complex terms there may be some merit in not needing a clear and concise definition. First and foremost, coming up with a fixed definition for such a complicated, broad and constantly developing and altering concept may be, in of itself, impossible. As previously stated, definitions for such concepts also depend on individual actor's own perspectives and so may in fact not be useful. Things are defined for a number of reasons; in academia, to determine fields of inquiry, in international organizations and for NGOs things are defined to raise money or in the case of the UN, to institutionalize. Along such lines definitions then allow for the easier implementation of programs across fields, countries or cases, providing a blueprint for responses. The difficulty surrounding defining unconventional conflicts contradicts such approaches. As they are so varying, and difficult to define, due to their broadness and complexity, it may not be beneficial to define them in order to implement a one size fits all approach, as this may serve to exclude certain cases. Rather, each case of unconventional conflict is drastically different and so requires a case-by-case approach, meaning specific blueprints and a one-size-fits-all approach need to be rejected.

### **The Actors Involved in Unconventional Conflicts and Violence**

The actors involved in unconventional conflicts often emerge and operate in pockets of state fragility. This fragility and void in state services and control provides for two opportunities that define such non-state actors. It allows their criminal actions to thrive and prosper and it allows for them to replace the law of the state by filling the void left by it. Non-state actors in unconventional conflicts prosper through a variety of criminal activities, from drug and human trafficking, extortion and robbery to illegal mining. While not driven by a political agenda, by replacing the state and providing services and security they often gain the support and backing of communities. They also encompass numerous categories and labels, such as criminal, rebel, paramilitary, armed, and non-state actors. They can be extremely unstable, often fragmenting and morphing into other groups and even merging back into the general population, further complicating the identification and branding process.

Territories controlled, alliances, and links made with the state and other groups change rapidly highlighting the fluid context of such groups. Frequently there is no formal chain of command or the control of leaders over members is questionable or constantly shifting. The leadership itself can also be unknown or difficult to pinpoint as some groups have loose hierarchies or none at all. In line with taking advantage of state fragilities, these unconventional actors often emerge and operate in areas where borders are weak, highlighting their often transnational character. All of these characteristics together make non-state or unconventional actors extremely resilient and therefore difficult to quell through traditional military and law enforcement approaches.

### **The Difficulty in Defining Non-State Actors**

Allotting to their fluid and often unclear nature, such actors, much like the conflicts they represent, are difficult to identify and define. Labeling groups as criminal, rebel, paramilitary or non-state armed actors can be difficult as they are rarely isolated in one category. Again, like the conflicts they are involved in, there are dangers in creating specific definitions as definitions create limits. By limiting who these actors are we limit our response. The other difficulty faced in defining actors in unconventional conflicts relates to the history of illegitimate actors becoming legitimate. Ex-guerrilla fighters have become national leaders and the often uttered phrase, “your freedom fighter is my terrorist,” highlights the debate that can surround the correct labeling of certain groups as illegitimate or unconventional.

### **Examples of Non-State Actors**

Gangs, particularly in Central America, are but one example of actors involved in unconventional conflicts, although they were the primary focus of discussion during this meeting. Not seen as political actors, they have their own unique cultures and histories and often involve whole communities, from young to old and encompassing both male and female members and dependants. While frequently a transnational issue, gangs do not necessarily operate criminally on a transnational scale. They primarily act at the local level even though they may have some transnational relationships. However, the evolution of some gangs and their increasing closeness to other criminal operators and markets indicate that if unchecked they may evolve into fully-fledged transnational criminal groups.

Involved in a variety of criminal enterprises they acquire much of their profits through extortion of local community members and businesses. These funds support gang members and their families but seldom go much further, meaning that poverty levels surrounding gangs are often very high and exacerbated by social exclusion. This leads to the debate surrounding the lens which gangs are viewed. Are they a criminal organization or a development step for youth? Should they be viewed through a criminal lens or rather one of social development? Historically the former has been chosen as a predominant strategy and often with dire consequence, leading to conflicts with law enforcement and escalated violence.

Such territorial groups, like gangs, differ from other criminal organizations that are business driven and hold varying structures. These groups, rather, are involved in transnational criminal networks and are solely profit oriented. They invest, bribe and launder while forwarding corruption to gain control. Often paralleling governments and tied to such transnational criminal networks as the drug trade they are extremely powerful international entities. Examples include drug cartels and mafias which have the ability to diversify revenues, take advantage of state institutions, and have clear hierarchical structures and leadership, gaining control through intimidation and violence.

## **The Causes of Unconventional Conflict and Violence**

In order to effectively address issues of unconventional conflict and violence it is first important to understand the root causes. Many of these stem from fragility within the state, where different areas, cities or neighborhoods receive varying and insufficient levels of institutional presence and support. This absence of the state and the often subsequent presence of marginalized groups allows for the emergence of other unconventional actors. The origins of gangs are one example that reiterates this point, highlighting the varying issues that lead to and exacerbate unconventional conflicts.

When analyzing factors leading to the development of gangs it is essential to understand that while all gangs have a unique history they often share a common background: the fact that most are born out of self-protection. The majority of gangs in Los Angeles for example were not formed out of criminal intent. Rather they, like most other gangs, emerged out of necessity for protection and security in an environment where such aspects were not instilled and ensured by the state. Barrio 18 grew out of a need for protection from harsh immigration policies while many gangs in Rio de Janeiro emerged from dangerous prison environments.

This need for protection correlates directly with unfavorable social conditions and a lack of state presence and institutions. Gangs can arise out of poverty in neighborhoods where groups of youth are excluded and marginalized. They are the victims of deficit systems of political representation and social welfare, shunned from general society. These patterns of exclusion and marginalization are not only dominated by social-economic status but other factors as well, such as race and gender. Gang violence is therefore better understood as an expression of socioeconomic problems rather than simply criminality.

Most gangs emerge because their members have no better alternatives or opportunities, not because they wish to join a criminal group. Often gangs provide the only escape from exclusion, offering a group identity, a sense of worth and belonging, and fraternity. Studies have even shown that early teenage years are when individuals look for a source of identity outside the family. Environments where safe alternatives within schools, sports or community groups are absent leave a void, often filled by gangs. Supporting this point is the fact that most gang members admit that they were not recruited, but sought out gangs on their own initiative. Other factors, such as police brutality, the availability of arms and a history of structural violence serve to exacerbate the cause and emergence of gangs, as well as other unconventional actors, and perpetuate their ensuing conflict and violence.

## **II. Selected Cases Studies of Unconventional Conflicts and Violence in the Americas**

### **The Case of El Salvador**

The gangs of El Salvador, primarily Barrio 18 and MS-13, are highly organized and coordinated groups structured nation-wide both in and out of prisons. They are engaged in violent and criminal activities and have a history of being demonized by the state and media. While they have some links to regional criminal activity they generally do not operate on a transnational level.

The so called “gang truce” of March 2012 was rather more of a ceasefire in a territorial war between gangs, involving the older incarcerated gang leadership in the process. The older leadership, as opposed to the young members on the street, showed more maturity and understood the need for transformation as most members faced two possibilities; death or imprisonment. As the government

was not open to negotiation with criminals an interlocutor was needed; the OAS was thus invited to participate as a guarantor of the truce.

Criticisms of the truce highlight that negotiations imply giving something and getting something, but that minimizes what took place in El Salvador. Mediation, which included the government, resulted in the state offering nothing illegal but rather providing improved prison conditions, the transfer of individuals to lower security prisons and even allowing family visits. So while some negotiation occurred without a legal framework it was all within the permits of the law. The results of the truce were pivotal, a reduction in homicides. That being said, other illegal activities like extortion continued, representing the need for a more comprehensive approach to address the root causes. This reinforced the notion that a truce in of itself was and is not enough, but rather one step in a process.

While today in El Salvador the truce is a forbidden word, due to previous bad press and society's negative reaction to it, the situation is changing due in part to the work of the media and public sector. The truce therefore succeeded in opening up spaces, both political space and debate space. It also brought into focus victims and the dire prison situations, issues that before were invisible and taboo. One of the most recent examples of the dialogue process in El Salvador was also a direct consequence and result of the truce. In September 2014 the EU, OAS, UNDP and others established the *National Council on Citizen Security and Coexistence*:

- Consisting of government, church leaders, private sector, civil society, media, and the international community
- Technical round-tables that have produced approved proposals, forming the basis of the new plan for El Salvador
- An international strategy focusing on prevention of violence, public order, rehabilitation of victims and action of institutions
- Invests in women's prisons and in victims
- Establishes work for ex-gang members
- Dialogue is not limited to security and coexistence, but also productivity, education and more

### **The Case of Panama**

Gang membership, recruitment, and viciousness in Panama are rapidly increasing and high levels of distrust between the government and gangs command the environment. The government's response to the gang problem has been dominated by repressive and heavy handed approaches which exacerbate distrust; approaches that have already proved ineffective in other countries. For these reasons Panama is in a unique situation in that its current reality is one other countries faced in the past, thereby providing the opportunity to learn from past experiences.

Currently, the *Fundacion Jesus Luz de Oportunidades* is providing alternative approaches focused on gang prevention and gang member rehabilitation. Through civil society and private sector partnership they have begun interventions on a local level through community work and religion. Gang member's respect for the clergy has allowed for increased and safer access into gang environments. The creation of integral community centers and community based programs has therefore been successful, focusing on the prevention and reintegration of gangs by:

- Involving young individuals in community work
- Providing incentives through community projects
- Rebuilding trust and reintegration as communities began to recognize efforts

- Bringing individuals who dropped out of school back into the education system
- Graduating students from the center through vocational training programs
- Providing spiritual support across denominations
- Providing the space for social workers and psychologists to interact with individuals

The impressive results have allowed for the model to be replicated in five centers throughout Panama. It has also been strengthened by a humane correctional facility, managed by the government but with reintegration programs managed by the Foundation and in partnership with the private sector.

- Inmates get education, spiritual support from the clergy, and vocational training
- Numerous workshops teach young people about various small industries
- Private sector has provided support and job opportunities
  - some graduates begin work immediately after release while others are later hired by companies partnered with the program

### The Case of Jamaica

Gang violence in Jamaica flourishes in communities, known as garrisons, where the state presence is essentially non-existent and almost every household is linked to gang violence or has been a victim of it. These hotbeds of violent crime exclude police and security forces.

The *Violence Prevention Alliance* has forwarded a public health and community-based approach to preventing violence, using data to drive the process and understand the situation. Focusing on the forces behind the violence, entire communities have been included with healing, reconciliation, counseling and therapy playing important roles. While results have been positive, with a decrease in homicides in communities throughout Jamaica, more still needs to be done on a wider and greater scale, with lessons taken from other examples throughout the Americas.

### The Case of Los Angeles, California, USA

The majority of gangs in Los Angeles did not emerge out of criminal intent but rather protection and security. Persistent social exclusion however played a large role in altering gang outlooks from self protection to using violent means for protection, leading to neighborhoods falling under the violent control of gangs. Repression and aggressive police policies then served to worsen the situation, leading to the growth of gangs and their increased reliance on violence. While Los Angeles has a small advantage in that it has a long but less intense history regarding gangs, truce attempts between the Bloods and Crips, while achieving some success, ultimately failed.

- A clear strategy was established: reduce violence levels and reduce the risk factors shown to lead teenagers to joining gangs
- Dialogue was initiated and began a process
- Resources were centralized and concentrated
- Working groups of gang members who were paid and trained were set up
- The media turned it into almost a Hollywood movie
- The truce was not an end in of itself
- Limited focus on where the problems were and who was involved

Later approaches to gang violence mediation and intervention saw the Mayor's office establish working groups that were hired and trained to deal directly with the gangs, establishing dialogue where it did not exist. These working groups, which allowed for no direct dialogue between City Hall and the gangs, were successful in alleviating gang violence and disrupting the city's gang conflict.

- Changed the lens and saw gang members as a part of the community
- Decreased the homicide rate and violence between gangs
- Achieved success through social programs
- Resulted in a shift of focus from public security to economic development in the city

### **The Case of Honduras**

Honduras is a country terrorized by the transnational drug trade. Approximately 70 percent of homicides are related to drug cartels and these killings represent not only members of cartels but also gang members, civilians, attorneys, journalists, police and judges. The fight between cartels themselves, and cartels and the state, often see young people and gang members used as hit men or to secure drug corridors. Outside of their violent exploitation by cartels, gangs in Honduras are involved primarily in extortion and retail drug trafficking. However, greater links with organized crime and the international drug trade are appearing.

Easy access to arms has made for increased violence in criminal activity and the resulting conflict and violence has resulted in public opinion, motivated by the media, demonizing gangs in Honduras. They are seen as scapegoats and blamed for a variety of issues in the country, such as the violence propagated by the cartels. The government engaged in dialogue in 2009 but it broke down after a gang mediator was killed by police. Other interaction resulted when the government was brought to trial for a prison fire and had to pay families of dead gang members, build new prisons and improve prison conditions. Outside of these examples, the government maintains a firm stance that they do not establish dialogue with illegal groups and instead only pursues heavy handed law enforcement policies. In contrast Monseñor Romulo Emiliani, who facilitated numerous gang truces and truce attempts, has been working at the community level on prevention and rehabilitation through a number of initiatives:

- Removing tattoos to prepare ex-gang members for the work force
- Providing classes and educating former members and youth
  - Graduated 1,500 young men
- Actively involving youth and providing work in micro-businesses thereby preventing boys from entering gangs and girls from entering prostitution
- Working within prisons with gang members and offering workshops in prisons
- Mediating between gang members and police
- Ensuring the safety of gang members once they surrender to police, as many are at risk of being killed once in police custody

### **The Case of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

The origin of the main criminal gangs in Rio de Janeiro goes back to the 1980s and is intrinsically linked to violent and inefficient penal and judicial systems. Gangs began as forms of protection within prisons, offering support, safety, and even money for legal assistance to incarcerated individuals. Low conviction rates and police corruption and brutality contributed to the expansion of these criminal groups control throughout the city and their increased violence, largely related to the drug trafficking dynamics of the city and the repressive government response. Rio de Janeiro has also witnessed extremely high levels of police lethality as some policies aimed at rewarding police “acts of bravery” (so called “Wild West gratification”) encouraged a culture of lethal violence among public security forces.

When analyzing the dynamics of violence in the city, besides gangs related to drug trafficking and the police themselves, militias or vigilante-style security groups, composed of current and former police officers, firemen and even members of the army, are another important actor. These groups

follow the logic of “cleaning out the area” and “keeping the peace” by preventing gangs from taking control over certain regions of the city. However, in return they require inhabitants to pay taxes for services, including access to the internet, informal transportation and even cooking gas canisters. Moreover, militias’ control over electoral zones has been used to ensure the election of their members to legislative posts.

It is in this highly challenging context that the first UPP (*Pacifying Police Units*), inspired by former experiences of community policing in the city, was introduced in the *Santa Marta favela* in December 2008. The UPP program goes beyond the traditional security approach of ‘search and removal’ and promotes a more holistic approach to security. Permanent police headquarters are established in specific communities and implemented and managed under principles of community policing.

- The goal was to decrease criminal gangs control, violence and legitimacy in communities by reestablishing state control
- As of February 2015, 38 UPP are operating in Rio and the metropolitan area
- Effectively rebuilding communities trust in police institutions
- Not only address crime and violence but also re-frame the past police approach largely influenced by the warlike logic of the war on drugs
- An impact study in 2012 (*Os donos do morro*, Ignacio Cano) showed a decrease in homicides, and most notably a decrease in police lethality to almost zero
  - Increases in domestic violence, rape and drug trafficking rates in the areas benefited by the UPP program is highly discussed with one of the strongest arguments being they are likely linked to an increase in reported crimes, which could be seen as an indicator of renewed trust in police

In spite of its achievements, the UPP program cannot be seen as a *panacea*, neither for a city in which an important part of the population is excluded from public services and is highly stigmatized, nor for the problems that are not restricted to the city itself (the penal system, drug policy and arms control regime, etc.). The gap between citizen’s expectations related to public services and policies and what can be achieved through the presence of UPP in areas can contribute to a misunderstanding of the goals the program can achieve: UPPs are a window of opportunity going beyond the traditional public security field but not a complete solution on their own.

Most recently a promulgated decree establishing the *Pacification Policy* aims to re-frame the public policies for pacified areas by integrating different public departments, such as health, education, culture, etc. It also adopts a more holistic approach to security aligned with the UNDP concept of citizen security and the creation of a safer and peaceful environment.

### **The Case of Baltimore, Maryland, USA**

In Baltimore, gang violence is less characterized by inter-gang conflict and more by shootings and violence surrounding personal altercations. Cultures of violence and established norms of using violence to solve personal disputes dominates the gang landscape, requiring an active approach that targets changing such cultures and norms.

*Cure Violence* has therefore introduced various initiatives, such as *Safe Street Baltimore*, in an attempt to reduce violence and change established norms through a health perspective approach:

- Introducing an adaptable model brought in by the health department

- Treating violence as a contagious disease
- Treating those who are at highest risk
- Direct correlation between programs introduction and lowered violence rates
  - Absence of programs or funding gaps result in violence increases
  - Once the mediation disappear the violence reappears
- Intervening in hospitals, preventing retaliation by dealing with gun shot victims
- Success in mediating agreements between gangs
  - Agreement made between gangs in Chicago to not target women and children and not commit violence in the presence of them

### The Case of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

As with many border towns, Ciudad Juárez has always been exposed to the violence of criminal operators engaged in trafficking and smuggling ventures, in particular violent disputes between two drug trafficking organizations, known as cartels. This violence and conflict has been fueled by the development of transactional and territorial enclaves, as well as the introduction of other groups such as gangs and paramilitary groups with complex organizational structures, resulting in an exponential increase in violent killings. However, almost at the same rate that they increased, homicides dropped dramatically in recent years. That being said, one of the main lessons learned in Ciudad Juárez is that a decrease in homicides does not necessarily mean the problem is solved. The reasons Juárez has been the site of such conflict and violence are numerous:

- Economy based on *maquiladora* exports creating significant deficits in the development of urban infrastructure
- City of international drug transit and local consumption due to its close proximity to the US border
- Social accumulation of different types of violence
- The presence of state and criminal extortion
- The lack of government action at different levels of public administration

The results of the military and police response have been, at best, ambiguous:

- Army deployment in 2008 saw homicides partially contained, only to rise again
  - Resulted in an increase in forced disappearances
- The deployment and redesign of the Federal Police in 2010 resulted in:
  - A rise in homicidal violence to peak levels,
  - increased reports of extortion, and eventually
  - the beginnings of a decrease in homicides
- Lack of inter-agency coordination between law enforcement and a conflicted relationship between law enforcement and the people of Juárez

Other responses have been mixed with government programs working to various degrees of success.

- *Todos Somos Juarez*
  - Little focus on the real and existing needs of the communities of Juárez
- Reconstruction of the local space
- Programs have been slow to respond and adapt to the situation

## The Case of Colombia

Like other examples throughout the hemisphere, the violence in Colombia involving the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) is an unconventional conflict. The peace process therefore involved making peace with a non-state group who had committed crimes. Whereas transitional justice was necessary, general amnesty, while encouraged early on, could not work as perpetrators of war crimes and abuses needed to be held accountable. The peace process in Colombia was therefore complex and focused on multiple issues:

- Negotiations between self-defense militias and the government
  - A flexible mandate to work various types of groups into negotiations
- Setting the stage for disarmament
- Demobilization and integration
- Realization of justice for victims of the violence

“The road to peace is a road that must be built by the country” and current work through the *OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP)* is attempting this:

- Preventing the reestablishment of criminal structures in the region
- 15 offices and 80 field officers are monitoring the situation and are involved in land redistribution processes
  - Land restitution brings those involved in the peace process closer to the victims
- Not all command structures are being demobilized
  - President Santos began exploring options with the FARC
- Talks are to take place in Havana
- Periodic reports are compiled on the current status of the situation in Colombia
- Projects and initiatives are adapted to what the populations within communities want

What the case of Colombia and *MAPP/OAS* needs now is a huge push in the international community to support the peace process as well as continued respect for the ceasefire, de-mining, which still a big issue, and a solution for the difference in perception of the peace process between the cities and the countryside. On top of this, the demobilization conversation is also stuck.

### III. Toolkit of Principles for Dealing with Unconventional Conflicts and Violence

#### A. Challenges in Dealing with Unconventional Conflicts and Violence

When searching for successful approaches to deal with unconventional conflicts numerous obstacles are encountered. First, as already outlined, these contemporary conflicts are unique and made up of actors that are fluid and difficult to identify. This means that no previous models exist nor will past techniques, such as negotiation, used in conventional conflicts necessarily prove successful in these alternative circumstances. Having no guide book, approaches to unconventional conflicts run the risk of exacerbating the issue as the ‘medication’ applied could become worse than the initial ‘disease.’ This was the case in Los Angeles where the city’s attempt to combat gangs instead radicalized them, aggravating the situation. Many groups involved also prosper from perpetuating the conflicts and from the continuation of a weak state system. Therefore international and national actors are working against opposing forces as the groups they are dealing with are themselves often perpetuating fragility and conflict for their own economic advantage.

The areas where such conflicts emerge are usually already plagued by state fragility, ineffectiveness and absence so the resources and knowledge needed for effective interventions or peace initiatives is absent or the policies in place are detrimental to the solution. Specifically, the current orientation towards pure punishment by the majority of judicial systems in the region and the shameless situation of prison systems constitute additional and often aggravating elements of the problems associated with unconventional conflicts and violence. Despite the overall constitutional acknowledgements of the re-educational purpose of justice and punitive sentences, cultural, historical, political and economic reasons have joined in making justice systems “unjust.” Prisons structures have also become universities of crime and campuses for the recruitment of the brightest operators for structured criminal organizations. Prisons are often the places where states consciously hand over lawfulness to criminals and where the most basic individual human rights are violated by the very states. Unfortunately institutional weaknesses in this area are often the direct reflection of citizen’s beliefs about justice, and prisons are considered by and large as the place for the legitimate retribution of violence rather than re-education of offenders.

The unique context of unconventional violence also affects the approaches that can be taken by mediators. International mediators increasingly have to rely on informal or local mediators to bridge the gap in knowledge of what is happening in specific neighborhoods while political limitations hinder the work mediators can do. Often times they cannot even talk to the actors involved or do not have the appropriate legal status to enter into dialogue, due to the criminal element of these actors. This leads to another challenge in dealing with criminal actors; finding a balance between forgiveness and justice, while also maintaining the rule of law. Many of the actors can be viewed as both criminals but also themselves victims. As such, it is important to determine how such actors are approached to benefit the peace process but also to not show favoritism over other groups that face the same social circumstances, such as poverty and exclusion, but do not break the law.

Another obstacle lies in providing a multidimensional approach to the issue and engaging other actors in the process at a community and national level. Governments, media, the private sector and the general public still often harbor distrust for the groups involved in such conflicts. This distrust and stigmatization is a large barrier and therefore creates a large challenge as effective peace processes rely on a multidimensional approach that incorporates all aspects of society. For example, successful reintegration programs rely on the help of the private sector in offering job opportunities and training. Plans can be developed but they will fall short if they are not supported by the broad swath of the community or if they are not implemented with good leadership in civil society, the government and the private sector.

On an international level, humanitarian and international organizations also face difficulties, such as fully understanding what is happening on the ground in countries on a local and community level and effectively responding to those issues. International programs and initiatives are also much more expensive than local ones and while an integrated approach is needed targeting numerous issues, funding for specific initiatives is much easier. The international community also favours approaches and models that can be standardized and implemented far and wide, whereas these unique conflicts require specific case-by-case approaches. For these reasons it is difficult for large international organizations to have a consolidated response to unconventional conflicts. This in turn brings into question whether resources should be mobilized and networks strengthened at the sub-national or local level instead of through the international system.

## **B. Findings/Lessons Learned**

One of the main goals of this meeting was to formulate a road map of key principles and features for effective approaches to unconventional conflict and violence. While prevention plays a vital role there still remains a lack of a comprehensive strategy and framework for dealing with unconventional conflicts and their ensuing violence as current peace plans cater to conventional conflicts. In distancing from reactionary and aggressive law enforcement approaches one viable alternative lies in the public health approach to preventing violence. This adaptable model approaches violence from the health perspective, treating it as a contagious disease. Therefore individuals at highest risk and areas most vulnerable are treated and targeted. The meeting specifically concluded that in order to effectively deal with unconventional conflicts and violence peace needs to be built from the bottom up through the establishment and introduction of approaches that focus on the following principles:

- Targeting the root causes
- Involving the private sector
- Eliminating established norms and cultures of violence
- Promoting mediation and dialogue
- Bringing everyone to the table in an inclusive approach
- Developing case-by-case responses
- Forwarding a comprehensive approach
- Highlighting the necessary role of justice systems
- Recognizing victims of conflict and violence and women's role
- Acknowledging the important role of the media

### **Targeting the Root Causes**

It is essential to focus on the root causes of conflict and violence within an area when attempting to prevent and reduce said conflict and violence. In the specific case of unconventional conflicts and violence in the Americas this means focusing primarily on socioeconomic development, through private sector involvement and partnership, and eliminating instilled norms and cultures of violence within communities. As previously noted, some of the leading causes of crime, violence, and insecurity linked to unconventional conflicts are socioeconomic issues concerning exclusion and poverty. Most of these issues arise out of state absence or inability and so other non-traditional and criminal actors emerge to fill that void.

Understanding and recognizing the root causes means that they can then be targeted and prevented. In the specific case of gangs, youth need to be educated not only so that they are made aware of other opportunities outside of gang membership but so that they are able to pursue such opportunities. Alternatives for youth involved in gangs therefore need to be present, whether in the form of schooling, employment or even productive community involvement. The presence of alternatives and opportunities through an inclusive economy involving youth not only prevents gang membership but also serves to reintegrate ex-gang members, turning them into positive leaders who contribute to rather than threaten the communities they live in. Most gang members want to leave their gangs but do not have the means or capabilities to do so. They therefore need to be helped and educated, to raise their self-esteem and include them in the community. The idea of alternatives offering greater life expectancy and quality of life is a great sell to many gang members. Great potential lies in the fact that gangs are represented by young people who given a small salary will stop engaging in

violence and crime. This can be achieved through education, training and employment opportunities, highlighting the need for private sector involvement.

### **Private Sector Involvement**

The private sector is an essential component to an effective strategy targeting unconventional conflicts and violence in the Americas. While the state holds much responsibility the private sector has to be a part of the solution as well through the creation of employment opportunities, training young people in needed skills, and mentoring potential micro-entrepreneurs. Governments, NGOs and multilateral organizations thus need to work with business communities and leaders to promote their involvement and partnership in initiatives such as community development, training initiatives in correctional facilities, and micro-enterprise for ex-gang members, combatants and criminals, or individuals recently released from prison. There are already successful examples in El Salvador and Panama of the private sector proactively working in prisons and with gang members by providing job opportunities and offering vocational training. Such models, which support feasible and viable alternatives that put youth directly into the work force following their release, need to be replicated, shared, and broadened.

While such initiatives show the success and necessity of private sector involvement it is not without challenges. One challenge is ensuring an established connection within communities between the market and vocational training programs, so that individuals are trained in services or jobs that hold opportunity and demand. A larger challenge relates to the level of distrust between the private sector and the stigmatized groups involved in unconventional conflict and violence. This distrust undermines integration initiatives and stalls private sector involvement. It must therefore be directly dealt with through confidence building and established cooperation. Another possible alternative would be the provision of job opportunities within government administration or through government sponsored projects. This in turn would serve to reestablish trust and provide possible future connections with the private sector. One final barrier inhibiting trust relates to the issue of established norms of violence within these groups, an issue that itself has to be directly addressed.

### **Eliminating Established Norms and Cultures of Violence**

In order to secure private sector involvement the message that peace is possible and that violent norms can be changed needs to reach the wider community. Many actors involved in the conflicts discussed grew up in violent environments, establishing entrenched cultures and norms of violence from an early age. Therefore, even when personally involved in peace building they often resort back to or employ violent mechanisms when facing difficulty, confrontation or resistance, as it is the only response they know. For that reason, it is vital that these violent patterns and norms are changed so that individuals and groups can transform and successfully seek new opportunities. This is something that they themselves recognize but are often unable to change on their own, as it is part of their intrinsic nature. They therefore need to be taught alternatives to dealing with challenges and difficulties and given help in altering these established norms. Counseling and therapy are crucial steps for many who seek to shed these violent cultures and in doing so realize new opportunities. This also highlights the need not only for demilitarization in some cases but programs of reintegration and education. Reconciliation is also an important step that has to go beyond words, towards action.

### **Promoting Mediation and Dialogue**

While targeting the root causes is essential, other important steps in the overall peace process and abating unconventional conflicts and violence are mediation and dialogue. Terms such as mediation,

dialogue and negotiation are surrounded by controversy so it must be made clear that each are different and while negotiation implies doing something or yielding something in return for results, mediation is not negotiation. Much can be achieved through mediation and dialogue, which neither denotes the legality, legitimacy nor politicizing of specific groups or actors.

Mediation and dialogue are important and necessary steps in mitigating many of these conflicts but simple acts of speaking are being made more and more difficult for peace building practitioners, as witnessed in El Salvador and Honduras. One way to solve this is to establish legal frameworks for such dialogue and create open and safe spaces for conversation on controversial issues or involving controversial actors. In other cases protection and amnesty for interventionists and negotiators needs to be ensured, highlighting the necessity of closed door mediation in some circumstances. That being said, issues of transparency and accountability within such dialogues need to remain at the forefront as the mediation profession needs to demystify what the dialogue approach is about. This calls for a delicate, albeit difficult to achieve, balance between transparency, legitimacy and accountability, and security and amnesty. Seeing as civil war and other conventional conflict mediation infrastructure and frameworks have evolved and developed over the last 20 years there is no reason to think that in the near future a similar framework cannot be created and implemented specifically for unconventional conflicts and violence and the groups involved in them.

### **Inclusive Approaches: Bringing Everyone to the Table**

The importance of mediation and dialogue also highlights the need for inclusive approaches that bring everyone to the table, including criminal actors and those behind the violence. In order to find real solutions all relevant and involved actors need to be incorporated into the process and the excluded need to be included. The problems will never be solved if the actors behind them are not a part of the solution. For this reason it is essential that governments open channels of communication with any and all actors, criminal and legal. One way this can be achieved is through investment in communication infrastructure to establish open communication networks. That being said, communication is not always difficult to establish as criminal and non-state actors often can be reached through relatively straightforward channels, particularly in contexts of high levels of incarceration.

Another obstacle to open dialogue between state and criminal or illegitimate actors is fear. States are fearful of the public reaction to being seen as 'negotiating' or even recognizing criminal actors. In reality, most justice systems allow for "negotiation" with criminal actors; for fiscal crimes but also organized crime given the culprit confesses to the crime and actively collaborates with law enforcement. Hence, this fear must be overcome and as stated previously, dialogue and mediation can not be misinterpreted as negotiation. Rather, dialogue allows for non-traditional actors to express their own perspectives and opinions. If they are part of the problem then they can be part of the solution and the first step in that direction is them being heard. This means they have to be included in dialogue, where they are listened to and their insights are respected and utilized. The small act of bringing such actors to the table is an important step in itself when it comes to dealing with unconventional conflicts.

### **A Case-by-Case Response**

Another issue that must be considered and addressed throughout the process of peace building is that each case of unconventional conflict and violence is unique and so it is dangerous to explain it as a single phenomenon that requires a single response by the state or international community. Rather, the context of each conflict is distinct and requires different solutions in specifically tailored case-by-case approaches. In regards to conventional conflicts, at the international level there are blueprints and

established definitions for mediation and peace building, allowing for broad programs to be operationalized and initiated across multiple countries or regions. This approach will not work with new forms of unconventional conflict and so a case-by-case approach needs to be embraced, where precise goals are determined albeit often through limited strategies.

One example that highlights the importance of a case specific approach can be seen in the mediation attempts for the escalating conflict between different gangs in El Salvador. The traditional approach to gang conflict has been heavy handed law enforcement and focusing on the individual level. The errors accompanying a law enforcement approach have already been discussed and presented, with preventative approaches focusing on socioeconomic issues more effective, but the specific case in El Salvador also calls into question an approach focused at the individual level. It has been determined that gang violence in El Salvador is a group phenomenon occurring at a social level. Gang members state that individual rehabilitation approaches are not helpful because gang members conceptualize themselves as a group rather than individual. A case specific approach is thereby necessary in El Salvador as it is important to differentiate between group and individual approaches. Rehabilitation and reintegration programs targeting individuals will not prove successful as groups ties are deeply entrenched within gang members. Therefore, to be effective approaches need to target the entire gang as a whole.

### **A Comprehensive Approach**

Just as the private sector and criminal actors need to be included in peace processes so do other actors within the state, international community, and civil society, stressing the need for a completely comprehensive and holistic approach to the issue. Effective responses require the cooperation and participation of varying arms of government all behind a unified strategy. Different sectors, such as education, health and justice each play a significant role. Various examples of civil society, from community-based organizations to institutions such as the church, also need to play an active role alongside international and multilateral organizations.

Entire community approaches based at the local level and involving all of these actors and sectors of government are essential for effective strategies, and for developing the means for the broader citizen-centered community to support initiatives aimed at involving criminal actors in dialogue. The justice system and the police are also key participants in peace building processes and particular attention must also be paid to victims, the media, and women.

### **The Role of Justice Systems**

Justice systems, incorporating law makers, police, prisons and courts, are a vital component in effective peace building strategies focusing on reducing and preventing unconventional conflicts and violence. In the Americas, past as well as current policies and justice systems have served to exacerbate the problem rather than alleviate it. The various branches of the justice system are failing to effectively deal with the issue at hand and so need to be further included and involved in more integrated approaches and expanded solutions, accentuated by prevention. Their involvement and participation needs to be pushed to the point where security chiefs and police commissioners are the biggest advocates for prevention policies, open dialogue, and mediation. Such a shift in policy means reform is necessary throughout the entire justice system, from law enforcement, judicial, and penal systems to the legislative branch.

Too much money is being devoted towards secluding and incarcerating youth in prison systems that have become 'universities of crime.' Populist legislative approaches aimed at increasing sentencing

should be replaced with a focus towards justice administration reforms. These can include holistic community-based violence and crime preventive programs aimed at using prison sentences only for the most violent and heinous crimes while addressing the root causes of violence through social, economic and educational interventions. Similarly, courts should critically review their decision making approach to individual cases through a more balanced use of the principle of proportionality between misbehavior and sentencing. In this respect and with due attention to the right of victims, alternatives to prison, including compulsory social services, ought to be forwarded over incarceration. Finally prisons should be refocused back to their education and rehabilitation function by sweeping out the underworld of privileges, illicit markets and tolerated violence. They need to become the most transparent face of the state in addressing and solving the security and violence problems.

Police also need to be reformed and healed as their inclusion and active participation is essential from the early stages of a peace process. This can be difficult in areas where there are high rates of extrajudicial police killings and brutality. To avoid the withdrawal or exclusion of such a key actor police forces must be reformed but also held accountable for their actions, as often it is their aggression and inhumanity and not only that of criminal actors that perpetuates and exacerbates conflicts. It is therefore essential to build trust in communities through and with the authorities, as seen in the case of Rio de Janeiro's UPP program. When trust is established and the state becomes stronger then democracy and justice will also become stronger.

### **Victims of Violence and Conflict and Women's Role**

Victims are another often forgotten group that need to be incorporated into the conversation. That being said, difficulties in establishing who constitutes a victim often arise. Police, on the front line risking their lives daily to protect society can be seen as the victim but so too can gang members, as victims of poverty and exclusion. In addition to the obvious and not yet mentioned everyday citizens who are victims to crime, violence, and conflict, from both criminal and state actors. A truly inclusive and comprehensive approach incorporates all of these interpretations of victims, talking with them, listening to them, and involving them in the process. Due to the importance of citizen victims and the fact that they are often ignored or unheard one important initiative is the creation of formal victims associations for those caught in the middle of conflict. Such organizations would be able to help the innocent civilian victims of unconventional conflicts, understand the issues they face, and ultimately bring their voice to the table.

Women are one group that is particularly victimized, ignored, and unheard. For this reason, specific focus must be put on violence as it pertains to women to see the impact it is having on them and how it can be relieved and prevented. Women involved in unconventional conflicts are essential for progress and peace as, while victims in some cases, they are also enablers (both positively and negatively), revealing their potential and importance in the role as inside mediators. Overall the issue of gender within these unconventional conflicts is something that needs to be brought to the forefront as a new angle to engage communities and approach the issues at hand.

### **The Role of the Media**

Lastly, the media is vital when it comes to dealing with criminal and illegitimate actors such as gangs. The media is one of the driving forces behind demonizing gangs, therein influencing society and the general public and pitting them against meditation and inclusive policies, and often even encouraging heavy handed law enforcement driven approaches. Consequently, it is necessary for the media to be informed of and involved in new approaches, which recognize the causes behind conflict

and violence and forward preventative initiatives. The media's support is vital as they then have the power to influence public opinion and educate the public. The media also tends to reinforce current public policy which is driven by homicide rates. For prevention approaches, relying solely on homicide rates is not an effective measurement as there are other indicators related to unconventional conflicts and violence and a significant reduction in homicide rates does not always denote an end to a conflict.

### **C. Conclusion**

Violence and conflict are not chronic conditions so there is hope and progress can be achieved through intervention at different levels. While interventions may be limited there is still a direct need for clear frameworks of action that forward comprehensive and inclusive approaches that focus on prevention and the root causes while simultaneously incorporating mediation and dialogue fitted to each unique situation and case. Starting small and from the bottom allows for successful initiatives and approaches to expand and move up. For example, successful city and community prevention approaches can later impact state security programs and lead to federal alignment. The complex and unique nature of unconventional conflicts and violence means that network building through shared practices is essential and truly beneficial on local, national and international scales. This also in turn forwards the need for better monitoring and evaluation frameworks. When discussing common approaches to deal with unconventional conflicts and violence in the Americas there is a dire need to break out of old molds and advance new agendas based on prevention, inclusion, and comprehensive strategies involving all actors, both within the legal and illegal spectrum.

#### IV. Network of Researchers and Practitioners

Given the importance of a comprehensive and inclusive approach involving actors across sectors and at international, national and local levels, the building of a network of practitioners is a powerful and essential step in dealing with unconventional conflicts and violence across the globe. The network formed through this meeting consists of the following individuals and organizations:

<b>Company/Organization/Position</b>	<b>Name</b>
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)	César Alarcón
Interpeace Latin American Office	Otto Argueta
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Jeremy Biddle
Organization of American States (OAS) Secretary for Multidimensional Security (SMS)	Adam Blackwell
United Nations Secretariat Department of Political Affairs, Policy Planning Unit	Lydia Kemunto Bosire
Organization of American States (OAS) Advisor to the Secretary General	Alvaro Briones
Montgomery County Gang Prevention Initiative Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator	Luis Cardona
Creative Associates International Crime Prevention Advisor	Guillermo Cespedes
United Nations Secretariat Department of Political Affairs Director, Americas Division	Martha Doggett
Berghof Foundation Agents of Change for Inclusive Conflict Transformation, Programme Director	Véronique Dudouet
Obispado-San Pedro Sula, Honduras	Monseñor Rómulo Emiliani
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) Senior Program Officer	Kimana Zulueta-Fulscher
Dialogue Advisory Group (DAG) Special Advisor	Juan Garrigues
International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Senior Program Officer; Governance, Security and Justice	Markus Gottsbacher
Open Society Foundations Latin America Program, Senior Regional Advocacy Officer	David Holiday
Interpeace Coordinator of the Central American Security and Justice Programme	Francisco Jiménez

Institute for State Effectiveness (ISE) Center Co-Founder	Clare Lockhart
Proyectos Estratégicos Consultoría (PEC) Research and Development Coordinator	Verónica Martínez
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Representative in Mexico, UNODC	Antonio Mazzitelli
Fundación Paz Ciudadana Executive Director	Catalina Mertz
European Union (EU) The EU Delegation to El Salvador Advisor and Head of Cooperation	Tomás Pallás
United Nations Development Programme Deputy Resident Representative for Belize and El Salvador	Stefano Pettinato
Igarapé Institute Research Associate	Michele dos Ramos
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Coordinator for Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)	Enrique Roig
United Nations Secretariat United Nations Development Program Peace and Development Advisor	Elizabeth Solomon
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Principal Advisor for Inter-American Affairs	Margarita Studemeister
Cure Violence	Sherry Sykes
The Institute for Statecraft Director, Latin America Program	Celia Szusterman
Interpeace Regional Director for Latin America	Ana Glenda Tager
University of The West Indies (UWI), Jamaica Violence Prevention Alliance- Jamaica Chairman of the Board	Elizabeth Ward
The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva; Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) Researcher The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform Executive Coordinator	Achim Wennmann
Fundacion Jesus Luz de Oportunidades Executive Director	Rafael Zevallos
Organization of American States (OAS) Chief Special Missions	Rodrigo Zubieta

## V. Inventory of Related Material

What follows is a list of publications which relate to unconventional conflicts and violence and are relevant to any discussion on approaching such conflicts and the actors involved in them.

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