



## Reconciliation in British Foreign, Defence and International Development Policy Debate on 14 December 2018

### Summary

This House of Lords Library Briefing has been prepared in advance of the debate due to take place on 14 December 2018 in the House of Lords on the motion moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury that “this House takes note of the role of reconciliation in British foreign, defence and international development policy”.

The Archbishop has made reconciliation one of his personal priorities, saying that it is the “greatest need in the world today”. However, definitions of the term vary: a narrow version might be the restoration of order after a conflict, while a wider definition might include a process requiring truth, mercy, justice and peace. Reconciliation can take place either before a conflict or during and after. Commentators have also put forward the concepts of “soft power” and “fragile state interventions” as means of advancing reconciliations.

In UK policy delivery, the three departments most actively involved are the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development (DFID). However, the Government also has two cross-departmental bodies (the conflict, stability and security fund and the stabilisation unit) which coordinate reconciliation, mediation, and disaster response. Underlying these, two policy documents set out how interventions might work in practice. The national security strategy included a commitment to spend at least 50 percent of DFID’s budget in “fragile states and regions”, while the building stability framework set out how DFID should re-orientate its activities to put peace building and stability at their core.

Faith-based organisations are among the other bodies which can be involved in mediation and reconciliation, sometimes working together across faiths. It has also been suggested that the involvement of women makes reconciliations more likely and more sustainable. Other commentators have advanced theoretical frameworks for reconciliation: one includes appropriate leadership, institutions and timing, alongside suitable external support and mediation.

The briefing concludes with summaries of eight countries illustrating a variety of results for reconciliation in practice. These range from apparent successes (eg South Africa and Indonesia) to those described by external observers as failures (Sudan and Yemen), and with examples of more nuanced outcomes (Sierra Leone and Rwanda). There are also two examples where faith-based organisations are said to have a role to play (South Sudan and Nigeria).

### Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Forms of Reconciliation
3. UK Government Delivery Bodies and Policy Development
4. Roles of Faith-based Organisations and Women
5. Factors Affecting the Success of Reconciliations
6. Reconciliation and Fragile State Interventions in Practice

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the Debate .....	1
1.2 Definition of Reconciliation .....	1
<b>2. Forms of Reconciliation</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Soft Power .....	2
2.2 Fragile States .....	4
2.3 Post-conflict Interventions.....	4
<b>3. UK Government Delivery Bodies and Policy Development</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Conflict, Stability and Security Fund.....	6
3.2 Stabilisation Unit.....	6
3.3 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review.....	7
3.4 Building Stability Framework.....	8
<b>4. Roles of Faith-based Organisations and Women</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1 Faith-based Organisations .....	9
4.2 Role of Women in Reconciliation.....	10
<b>5. Factors Affecting the Success of Reconciliations</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 Leadership.....	11
5.2 Institutions .....	11
5.3 Timing .....	11
5.4 External Agencies and Mediators.....	12
<b>6. Reconciliation and Fragile State Interventions in Practice</b>	<b>12</b>
6.1 South Africa.....	12
6.2 Indonesia (Aceh Province) .....	13
6.3 Sierra Leone .....	13
6.4 Rwanda .....	14
6.5 Sudan.....	14
6.6 Yemen.....	15
6.7 South Sudan.....	15
6.8 Nigeria .....	15

---

A full list of Lords Library briefings is available on the [research briefings page](#) on the internet. The Library publishes briefings for all major items of business debated in the House of Lords. The Library also publishes briefings on the House of Lords itself and other subjects that may be of interest to Members.

House of Lords Library briefings are compiled for the benefit of Members of the House of Lords and their personal staff, to provide impartial, authoritative, politically balanced briefing on subjects likely to be of interest to Members of the Lords. Authors are available to discuss the contents of the briefings with the Members and their staff but cannot advise members of the general public.

**Any comments on Library briefings should be sent to the Head of Research Services, House of Lords Library, London SW1A 0PW or emailed to [purvism@parliament.uk](mailto:purvism@parliament.uk).**

## I. Introduction

### I.1 Background to the Debate

On 14 December 2018, the House of Lords is due to debate a motion moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury that “this House takes note of the role of reconciliation in British foreign, defence and international development policy”.

The Archbishop, Justin Welby, has stated that “reconciliation is at the heart of the Christian message; in fact, it has been said that it is the Christian message”.<sup>1</sup> He has argued that “reconciliation is the greatest need in our world today”, and has made it one of his personal priorities.<sup>2</sup> Expanding on this, he has spoken of the importance of reconciliation in a number of contexts, including specific overseas conflicts and as a general aim of domestic policy.<sup>3</sup> However, he has also described reconciliation as one of our “toughest challenges as human beings”.<sup>4</sup>

The Archbishop has established a ‘reconciliation ministry’ to promote peace making around the world.<sup>5</sup> He has been specific that in his view reconciliation does not mean intervention in disputes, but instead urging the parties to deal better with their disagreements.<sup>6</sup> He said of reconciliation that “you can’t impose it on people, but you can encourage, enable and take away obstacles to it”.<sup>7</sup>

### I.2 Definition of Reconciliation

In their book *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, two academics, Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey, argued that there is no single definition of reconciliation. They stated:

Despite increasing usage of the term, reconciliation is a concept with a quite nebulous definition and there is little consensus about the necessary conditions for it. For some, reconciliation requires above all the establishment of order based on a negotiated settlement or a cease-fire [...]. Others emphasize the ‘transcendent’ nature of a far

---

<sup>1</sup> [HL Hansard, 14 October 2014, col 167](#).

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘[The Archbishop’s Reconciliation Ministry](#)’, accessed 26 November 2018.

<sup>3</sup> For example, [HL Hansard, 17 July 2018, col 1130](#); and [HL Hansard, 22 June 2017, col 40](#).

<sup>4</sup> Justin Welby, ‘[A Message of Reconciliation from Archbishop Justin Welby](#)’, Archbishop of Canterbury, accessed 21 November 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘[The Archbishop’s Reconciliation Ministry](#)’, accessed 26 November 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Anglican Communion News Service, ‘[Archbishop Justin Welby Preaches Reconciliation to Kenya’s Political Leaders](#)’, 6 November 2017.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

more demanding process requiring truth, mercy, justice and peace. Between these two formulations, most scholars underline different and sometimes competing definitions of the concept.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, academic Bill Kissane distinguished between “thick” reconciliation, in which there is a “total restoration of friendships, mutual forgiveness and notions of a shared future”, and “thin” reconciliation, “involving a more open-ended and fragmented process in which the divisions of the past may survive without leading to renewed violence”.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Forms of Reconciliation

The Archbishop of Canterbury has discussed the value of reconciliation both before a conflict breaks out, and during and after a conflict. Talking about early interventions to avoid conflicts, he said:

A British football coach—a manager of Liverpool Football Club—once famously told his team to “get their retaliation in first”. If we are to transform conflict, we need instead to “get our reconciliation in first”.<sup>10</sup>

However, in the same speech the Archbishop also considered the value of post-conflict interventions, stating that “reconciliation is the process of transforming violent conflict into non-violent co-existence”.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the division between pre- and post-conflict, two concepts which have been used in the debate are “soft power” and “fragile states”. This section explores them further, as well as looking in more depth at “post-conflict transformation”. All three terms will be further referred to in the context of the UK Government’s approach to overseas interventions in section 3 below.

### 2.1 Soft Power

In 2015, a House of Lords Soft Power and the UK’s Influence Committee considered the UK’s use of “soft power”. It defined this as influencing without the use of military force, stating that it involved:

Generating international power through influencing other countries to want the same things as the UK, by building positive international

---

<sup>8</sup> Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, p 7.

<sup>9</sup> Bill Kissane (ed), *After Civil War: Division, Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Contemporary Europe*, 2015, pp 281–2.

<sup>10</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘[Archbishop of Canterbury Addresses UN Security Council](#)’, 29 August 2018.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

relationships and coalitions which defend our interests and security, uphold our national reputation and promote our trade and prosperity. This has been described as the exercise of ‘soft power’, as distinct from the use of force and coercion for a nation to assert itself, labelled as ‘hard power’.<sup>12</sup>

The committee stressed that soft and hard power were not alternative strategies, but “mutually reinforcing”.<sup>13</sup>

In his debate in December 2014, the Archbishop of Canterbury chose to discuss soft power and linked it to reconciliation and mediation.<sup>14</sup> He stated that, together, they were a crucial element of power, “including in its economic and investment aspects”. He continued that this was “both economically more effective than hard power by several orders of magnitude and, in humanitarian terms, transformative”.

Other contributors to the debate stressed the potential usefulness of soft power alongside military intervention and/or economic sanctions. For example, Lord Anderson of Swansea (Labour) stated that “soft power is a useful instrument for analysis, but there is no simple gradation towards sanctions and military intervention. In short, there is a power spectrum”.<sup>15</sup> Baroness Williams of Crosby (Liberal Democrat) agreed, saying that “the relationship should be between the military and soft power, because it is crucial that they work together and are not in conflict with one another”.<sup>16</sup>

The House of Lords committee supported increased use of soft power, concluding that there was a need for greater efforts to communicate the “attributes, values and outputs that gain for the UK both attractiveness and respect in the eyes of people abroad”.<sup>17</sup> This, it suggested, would involve supporting institutions in the areas of politics, economics, science and culture. It would also involve supporting, and strengthening the resourcing of, the UK’s embassies, which it described as “dynamic centres of commercial, diplomatic and cultural activities”.<sup>18</sup> Finally, it called for a “long-term strategic narrative about the international role of the UK, promulgated from the centre of government”.<sup>19</sup>

In the 2014 debate, the Archbishop of Canterbury also called for greater use of soft power in practice. He commented that while its effectiveness was

---

<sup>12</sup> House of Lords Soft Power and the UK’s Influence Committee, [Persuasion and Power in the Modern World](#), 28 March 2014, HL 150 of session 2013–14, p 5.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> [HL Hansard, 5 December 2014, cols 1516.](#)

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, col 1521.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, col 1523.

<sup>17</sup> House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s Influence, [Persuasion and Power in the Modern World](#), 28 March 2014, HL 150 of session 2013–14, p 5.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, p 7.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

“acknowledged” by the Government, he believed that “the application of this strategy in terms of developing the tools for intervention through reconciliation and mediation is still absent”.<sup>20</sup>

## 2.2 Fragile States

The United Nations (UN) has defined a fragile state as one in which “the government either cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people”.<sup>21</sup> The UN went on to note that “this is very often the case in countries that have fallen victim to conflict”. It argued that such states are vulnerable to shocks such as epidemics, climate change and natural disasters, as well as to criminal and terrorist activity.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the instability of fragile states can, the UN stated, affect regional and global security via “the expansion of criminal networks, illicit trafficking, refugee flows, arms smuggling, piracy, the breakdown of trade, and the spread of HIV/AIDS”.<sup>23</sup>

The UN then set out how promoting and guaranteeing security and the rule of law in such countries could “dramatically” improve their overall development, and could be particularly beneficial in post-conflict states.<sup>24</sup> However, one commentator has argued that it is crucial to link support for security with “domestic political processes of local reconciliation, inclusion and reconstruction”.<sup>25</sup> Another suggested that reconciliation can promote a fragile state’s resilience at a time when “institutions are weak and resources scarce”.<sup>26</sup>

Fragile states became an increased focus of UK overseas development policy following the publication of a national security strategy in 2015, as discussed further in section 3.3 of this briefing.

## 2.3 Post-conflict Interventions

International interventions following the end of a conflict are often driven by the historical fact that a high proportion of such situations have returned to

---

<sup>20</sup> [HL Hansard, 5 December 2014, cols 1516.](#)

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, [Strategy Note: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Engagement in Post-conflict and Fragile States](#), 16 March 2009, pp 4–5.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p 5.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Kasper Hoffmann et al, [‘Security in Fragile States Requires Processes of Reconciliation and Reconstruction’](#), Danish Institute for International Studies, 27 March 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Seils, [‘The Place of Reconciliation in Transitional Justice’](#), International Center for Transitional Justice, 28 June 2017.

another period of conflict.<sup>27</sup> Reconciliation has emerged as a method to attempt to prevent such relapses.<sup>28</sup>

The Minister for International Development, Alistair Burt, discussed post-conflict transformation in a speech in June 2018.<sup>29</sup> A key theme of the speech was the need to recognise and work with political realities in the areas in which intervention was being considered. He stated, for example, that the UK's intervention in Libya in 2012 was incorrectly sequenced. He said:

We rushed to build capacity to enable the new government to govern. But it was all done in the absence of a political settlement which reflected both the interests of the warring elites, and the aspirations of the Libyan population. We should have prioritised the politics over technocratic state-building.<sup>30</sup>

As with the discussion of soft power in section 2.1 of this briefing, Mr Burt suggested that the UK efforts to promote peace could be coupled with economic measures and, if necessary, force. He said that the UK should attempt to:

[A]dd momentum to highly political deal making between warring parties. We have the diplomatic assets, expertise and influence to build trust. We have political and economic levers to help bring parties to the table and make deals stick. We have military and peacekeeping assets at our disposal to provide security guarantees.<sup>31</sup>

### 3. UK Government Delivery Bodies and Policy Development

As the title of this debate implies, the three departments most actively involved in overseas interventions are the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development (DFID).<sup>32</sup> However, there are two organisations (the conflict, stability and security fund and the stabilisation unit) which operate on a

---

<sup>27</sup> Precise statistics differ: for example, Mark Anstey and Valerie Rosoux suggested that “up to forty percent of peace agreements slip back into violent conflict within a decade” (Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, p 1), while the Minister for International Development, Alistair Burt, stated that “getting on for two-thirds of all armed conflicts that ended in the early 2000s had relapsed within five years” (Stabilisation Unit, ‘[Minister Alistair Burt’s Address to Chatham House on Deal Making and Peace Building: A New Approach to Reducing Conflict](#)’, 18 June 2018).

<sup>28</sup> Karen Brounéus, *Reconciliation—Theory and Practice for Development Cooperation*, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, September 2003, p 3.

<sup>29</sup> Stabilisation Unit, ‘[Minister Alistair Burt’s Address to Chatham House on Deal Making and Peace Building: A New Approach to Reducing Conflict](#)’, 18 June 2018.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> House of Commons Defence Committee, *The Comprehensive Approach: The Point of War is Not Just to Win But to Make a Better Peace: Government Response to the Committee’s Seventh Report of Session 2009–10*, 1 September 2010, HC 347 of session 2010–11, p 2.

cross-departmental basis to coordinate reconciliation, mediation, peacekeeping and disaster response. This section summarises the roles of these two bodies, together with two policy documents which affect UK involvement overseas: the national security strategy and the building stability framework.

### 3.1 Conflict, Stability and Security Fund

In April 2015, the Coalition Government established the conflict, stability and security fund (CSSF). Its goal was “to tackle fragility in conflict affected countries and promote stability”.<sup>33</sup> The CSSF is directed by the National Security Council (NSC), which is chaired by the Prime Minister. It is cross-departmental, drawing on “the most effective combination of defence, diplomacy and development assistance at the government’s disposal”.<sup>34</sup>

One of the CSSF’s general remits is to promote “sustainable peace/conflict transformation”.<sup>35</sup> In some of its programmes, for example in Iraq and the Sahel, reconciliation is a specific objective provided by the NSC.<sup>36</sup>

In March 2018, the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), which scrutinises UK aid spending, produced a report on aid programmes delivered as part of the CSSF.<sup>37</sup> It concluded that the CSSF was “flexible and responsive”, but “variable programme quality, weak results management and insufficient learning undermine its contribution”. Considering its efforts in Colombia aimed specifically at reconciliation, the ICAI criticised the CSSF’s activities as being “not much more than opportunities for elites to give speeches, departing significantly from the good practice principles of inclusivity, participation and transparency”.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.2 Stabilisation Unit

The stabilisation unit was formed in 2007 (although it originated in the post-conflict reconstruction unit, established in 2004).<sup>39</sup> In the national security strategy, the unit was described as an “innovative, expanded civil-military” group which “will continue to support more effective cross-government

---

<sup>33</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office et al, [‘Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Annual Reviews 2016 to 2017: Overview’](#), 14 December 2017.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Independent Commission for Aid Impact, [‘The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund’s Aid Spending: A Performance Review’](#), March 2018, p 15.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p 24.

<sup>39</sup> Jude Howell, [‘National Security Concerns Continue to Dictate Britain’s Government Aid and Development Agendas’](#), London School of Economics and Political Science, 4 October 2010.



crisis response, stabilisation and conflict prevention in fragile states”.<sup>40</sup> The strategy described stabilisation as:

[P]atient, long-term work. Success depends on strong local, national and regional partnerships, and on a rules-based international order which provides the framework in which a society can develop the strong and legitimate institutions it needs to manage tensions peacefully.<sup>41</sup>

Since 2015 the stabilisation unit has reported to the NSC.<sup>42</sup> In October 2017, its director, Mark Bryson-Richardson, described how it was made up of around 100 staff seconded from twelve government departments, and was funded by the CSSF.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.3 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review

In November 2015 the Government published the *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015*.<sup>44</sup> Again, this was a cross-departmental initiative. The review included commitments in hard power and military strength, but also discussed soft power and the UK’s approach to fragile states (as summarised in sections 2.1 and 2.2 above). A new commitment in the report was to spend at least 50 percent of DFID’s budget in “fragile states and regions”.<sup>45</sup> This was described as “a major investment in global stability”.

The review contained a section on “strengthening the rules-based international order and its institutions”.<sup>46</sup> This described the UK’s continuing support of multilateral institutions, and in particular the United Nations. One commitment in this area was to “strengthen UN conflict prevention and mediation [and] peacebuilding capacity”, including a doubling of the number of UK military personnel for UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>47</sup>

The review also stated that conflict and instability could be addressed by other measures such as “tackling corruption, promoting good governance, developing security and justice and creating jobs and economic

---

<sup>40</sup> Prime Minister’s Office et al, [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), 23 November 2015, Cm 9161, p 64.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Suzannah Brecknell, ‘[Greater Than the Sum of its Parts: How the Stabilisation Unit Joins Up Whitehall’s Response to Global Crises](#)’, Civil Service World, 23 October 2017.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Prime Minister’s Office et al, [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), 23 November 2015, Cm 9161.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p 64.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, pp 60–3.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p 60.

opportunity”.<sup>48</sup> It therefore offered fragile countries access to “the best of British legal, policing and security expertise”.

### 3.4 Building Stability Framework

In 2016 DFID published a “building stability framework”.<sup>49</sup> This was intended to provide a “new framework” for DFID decision making. It indicated a shift in emphasis of DFID activity away from shorter-term “development gains” (such as poverty reduction) which, it stated, were “critically vulnerable to being destroyed in conflict”.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, such gains were by themselves “insufficient to reduce instability and violence in fragile countries and regions”.<sup>51</sup>

Instead, the report argued that “the highest development returns may lie in the long-term foundations for a future free of violence”.<sup>52</sup> It therefore went on to suggest that all of DFID’s projects should have a “real impact on building stability”, including programmes dedicated to “peacebuilding, state-building and conflict reduction”.<sup>53</sup>

Discussing post-conflict situations, the review set out the benefits of reconciliation. It stated:

In the aftermath of violent conflict, reconciliation initiatives can help societies avoid falling back into violence. They can help address historical grievances, change attitudes that led to conflict, help people coping with the effects of conflict and rebuild foundations for peaceful relationships between groups.<sup>54</sup>

The report identified the following five factors which support stability in fragile states:

- Fair power structures;
- Inclusive economic development;
- Mechanisms for ongoing conflict resolution;
- Effective and legitimate institutions; and
- Supportive regional environments.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Prime Minister’s Office et al, [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), 23 November 2015, Cm 9161, p 60.

<sup>49</sup> Marcus Lenzen, [Building Stability Framework 2016](#), Department for International Development, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*, p 3.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid*, p 10.

<sup>55</sup> Stabilisation Unit, [‘Minister Alistair Burt’s Address to Chatham House on Deal Making and Peace Building: A New Approach to Reducing Conflict’](#), 18 June 2018.

## 4. Roles of Faith-based Organisations and Women

In addition to the part played by governments, other bodies can also have roles in reconciliation and overseas interventions. This section considers the examples of faith-based organisations and of women.

### 4.1 Faith-based Organisations

Commentators have described how churches and faith-based organisations can play an important role in reconciliation during and after conflicts. In his address to the UN security council in August 2018, the Archbishop of Canterbury said:

Religious institutions are often the only functioning institution in a fragile or pre-conflict situation. They are present before, during and after conflict. They provide early warning for signs of conflict in communities. Working with and through religious and other institutions to provide ‘pre-emptive’ reconciliation frameworks can stop conflict becoming violent or returning to violence—it can set it on a different path.<sup>56</sup>

Similarly, the report of the House of Lords Soft Power and the UK’s Influence Committee identified religious communities as one of the types of non-governmental organisations which are a “crucial source of soft power”.<sup>57</sup> In a debate in July 2018, Baroness Stroud (Conservative) put forward other advantages of faith-based organisations, including that they “often exist in the most remote parts of countries and can reach communities the state finds hard to”, and that they can allow the delivery of services to be “more culturally sensitive and aligned with that community”.<sup>58</sup>

Lord Anderson of Swansea (Labour) has also noted that different churches can work together, giving an example of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in the Philippines which he said, had combined to make a “remarkable contribution”.<sup>59</sup> Likewise, a paper for the UK Government’s stabilisation unit on the conflict in Sierra Leone credited the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone, formed of Christian and Muslim leaders, with facilitating negotiations which led to the Lomé Peace Accord of July 1999.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘[Archbishop of Canterbury Addresses UN Security Council](#)’, 29 August 2018.

<sup>57</sup> House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s Influence, [Persuasion and Power in the Modern World](#), 28 March 2014, HL 150 of session 2013–14, p 76.

<sup>58</sup> [HL Hansard, 12 July 2018, cols 1028–9](#).

<sup>59</sup> [HL Hansard, 5 December 2014, col 1520](#).

<sup>60</sup> Kieran Mitton, [Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Sierra Leone Case Study](#), Stabilisation Unit, February 2018, pp 9 and 10–11.

## 4.2 Role of Women in Reconciliation

The Minister for International Development, Alistair Burt, has described the importance of engaging women in peace building. He said that:

The evidence is clear that when women are able to participate in a peace process, there is a greater chance of reaching agreement, and crucially, of that agreement being sustained.<sup>61</sup>

The Government has been explicit in its support for the involvement of women in peace processes in, for example, Burundi. In answer to a written question in April 2016, the then Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Baroness Anelay of St Johns, said “the UK will continue to look for opportunities to promote the active participation of women in peace-building and reconciliation discussions through political and/or financial support”.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, the Archbishop of Canterbury has described how women are “catalysts for bringing about peace and reconciliation in areas of conflict and war-torn countries”.<sup>63</sup> He has made women on the frontline a priority programme for his reconciliation team.<sup>64</sup>

Two academics have also concluded that “feminisation of societies reduces propensities for war”, that violence is less evident in societies where there is a “demonstrable respect for women’s rights”, and that “reconciliation agendas then might be guided by such insights”.<sup>65</sup>

## 5. Factors Affecting the Success of Reconciliations

This briefing has so far discussed the concepts, policies and bodies involved in UK reconciliation and overseas intervention efforts. Considering the question from a different angle, academics Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey have taken past examples of reconciliation and constructed a theoretical framework of the conditions necessary for a successful reconciliation. They identified three variables: leadership; institutions; and timing, and also considered the role of external agencies and mediators.<sup>66</sup> Their discussions in each area are summarised in turn below.

<sup>61</sup> Stabilisation Unit, ‘[Minister Alistair Burt’s Address to Chatham House on Deal Making and Peace Building: A New Approach to Reducing Conflict](#)’, 18 June 2018.

<sup>62</sup> House of Lords, ‘[Written Question: Burundi: Conflict Resolution](#)’, 20 April 2016, HL7407.

<sup>63</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘[Women on the Frontline—Reflections from Burundi](#)’, accessed 26 November 2018.

<sup>64</sup> [HL Hansard, 22 February 2018, col 316](#).

<sup>65</sup> Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, p 116.

<sup>66</sup> Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, pp 335–7.

Alternative taxonomies of reconciliation have also been advanced; for example, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency have suggested six “essential” factors: religious; socio-cultural; economic; political; psychological; and juridical.<sup>67</sup>

## 5.1 Leadership

Rosoux and Anstey stated that “many cases reflect the importance of a consensus figure in bridging divisions between adversaries”.<sup>68</sup> They suggested that the personal past of the leaders can be key, with a greater chance of success if a leader has “accomplished heroic actions against the enemy with whom reconciliation is being sought”, and who then “asks the population to undergo a transformation that he has undergone himself—ie overcoming resentment towards the former enemy”. The authors cited Charles de Gaulle, Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu as examples of such successful leaders in this respect.

## 5.2 Institutions

The same authors described “robust and credible institutions” as key to the reconciliation process.<sup>69</sup> These are the means whereby reconciliation “can progressively filter down to all levels of society”, rather focusing exclusively on national political leaders. This, they argued, is “fundamental”, because “the outcome of the process depends above all on popular support”. In addition, Rosoux and Anstey suggested that former enemies will only commit themselves to reconciliation if this takes place via “joint projects” and “common platforms”.

## 5.3 Timing

Rosoux and Anstey identified timing as the third key variable in the success of a reconciliation process.<sup>70</sup> They stated that if a population is still deeply traumatised by a recent event, it will offer greater resistance to the reconciliation process. This, they argued, should not reduce efforts towards a rapprochement, but participants should be aware of the possible scope of limits of such action. They concluded that this initial negotiation process, as well as having value in its own right, also allows time to pass so that people may better be able to approach a more complete reconciliation.

---

<sup>67</sup> Karen Brounéus, [Reconciliation—Theory and Practice for Development Cooperation](#), September 2003, pp 21–31.

<sup>68</sup> Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, pp 335.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*, p 336.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid*.

## 5.4 External Agencies and Mediators

Rosoux and Anstey also considered the role of “mediators and external agencies” in the reconciliation process.<sup>71</sup> They suggested that the “most obvious recommendation [...] is that the term reconciliation should no longer be used unquestioningly in government and non-governmental organisation programs without being clearly defined”. Because of the risks of “unmet expectations”, the authors argued that external groups should understand the “expectations of the parties themselves, their own commitment to the process and whether reconciling the parties is even feasible”.

Also speaking in theoretical terms, the Archbishop of Canterbury has argued that while the substance of a post-conflict reconciliation can be complex, the process should remain simple. He said:

During many years in which I have worked in countries in the midst of deep division—sometimes armed, sometimes merely civil—I have seen two cardinal errors made in seeking to bring reconciliation and building common vision. The first is to complicate the process; the second is artificially to simplify complicated substance.<sup>72</sup>

## 6. Reconciliation and Fragile State Interventions in Practice

This section contains brief summaries of eight conflicts where reconciliation and/or fragile state interventions have played a part. It is not an exhaustive list, but selected to illustrate varying levels of perceived success for reconciliation and fragile state policies in practice.

### 6.1 South Africa

South Africa after apartheid is widely cited as a successful example of post-conflict reconciliation.<sup>73</sup> Academic James Gibson wrote that many regard the “difficult transition from apartheid to democracy” as having been achieved with “minimal bloodshed and political instability”, something which “many regard as nothing short of miraculous”.<sup>74</sup> He continued that “most observers are willing to attribute at least some responsibility to the country’s truth and reconciliation process”.

---

<sup>71</sup> Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, pp 336–7.

<sup>72</sup> [HL Hansard, 7 March 2017, col 1213](#).

<sup>73</sup> For example, James Gibson, ‘[The Truth About Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa](#)’, *International Political Science Review*, October 2005, vol 26 no 4, pp 341–61.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid*, p 341.

The *Guardian* reported that the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, had thanked the truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) for doing a “magnificent job”.<sup>75</sup> However, the same article quoted the first chair of the TRC, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as stating that its business had been left “scandalously unfinished”, with its recommendations not being followed through by successor governments.

More recently, three academics have suggested that there are elements of the post-apartheid settlement, such as land, which remain resistant to resolution, and therefore also to “successful inter-group reconciliation”.<sup>76</sup>

## 6.2 Indonesia (Aceh Province)

Although less widely attributed to reconciliation directly, the experience of the Aceh province of Indonesia from 2005 onwards is cited as “one of the most successful attempts to achieve lasting resolution to an internal conflict in recent decades” according to an independent report for the stabilisation unit from 2018.<sup>77</sup> The peace deal followed the Indian Ocean tsunami on Boxing Day 2004 and, the report suggested, has “largely held” since then, albeit that it has not “completely resolved all aspects of the conflict”.

The report also credited external actors with a “significant” role in many different forms, including the post-tsunami humanitarian relief, rebuilding assistance, mediation, monitoring, support for parts of the deal and related development assistance.

## 6.3 Sierra Leone

The report for the stabilisation unit described the period since the end of the Sierra Leone civil war in 2002 as a “post-conflict ‘success story’”.<sup>78</sup> The report suggested that peace was initially achieved by a combination of military force (with assistance from the UK, which became the “lead actor” in the country), diplomatic outreach and economic and political sanctions.<sup>79</sup>

Although there were procedures in place for reconciliation, including a formal truth and reconciliation commission, the report said of the “remarkable” peace that “even the most optimistic of assessments cannot

---

<sup>75</sup> David Smith et al, [‘Special Report: Truth, Justice and Reconciliation’](#), *Guardian*, 24 June 2014.

<sup>76</sup> Gavin Bradshaw et al, ‘Reconciliation and the Land Question in South Africa: A Case for Negotiation?’, in Valerie Rosoux and Mark Anstey (eds), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking*, 2017, p 231.

<sup>77</sup> Edward Aspinall, [Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Indonesia \(Aceh\) Case Study](#), February 2018, p 4.

<sup>78</sup> Kieran Mitton, [Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Sierra Leone Case Study](#), Stabilisation Unit, February 2018, p 15.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid*, pp 3–4.

attribute this to the success of formal reconciliation and transition justice mechanisms”.<sup>80</sup> Instead, the report credited factors specific to the country, including “community-centred rituals”, a “tradition of ‘social forgetting’” and, overall, “the determination of ordinary Sierra Leoneans to reconcile—even if only equating to mutual tolerance, rather than forgiveness”.<sup>81</sup>

The report for the stabilisation also noted that “women’s and youth groups have become a central feature of Sierra Leone’s post-war landscape and continue to act as a check on patrimonial elites”.<sup>82</sup>

## 6.4 Rwanda

A *Guardian* article described how trials following the Rwandan genocide took the form of village courts, known as *gacaca*, and were held in public.<sup>83</sup> The article quoted Phil Clark, author of a book on the trials, as saying that these were a response to the “feeling that everyday Rwandans needed to feel involved in the process”. Mr Clark was also quoted as saying that:

It was incredibly successful at coming to terms with the very specific crimes committed in communities [...]. The process of reconciliation continues today but informally. Nearly all the perpetrators convicted through the *gacaca* now live alongside survivors.<sup>84</sup>

However, the article also noted that the courts have been criticised, including by Human Rights Watch, for falling short of international legal standards.

## 6.5 Sudan

The report for the stabilisation unit labelled the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement in Sudan as a failure. While it was described as “on paper, a comprehensive deal”, including provisions for reconciliation, in practice the external negotiators had failed to secure “real commitment to its terms and implementation”.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> Kieran Mitton, [Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Sierra Leone Case Study](#), Stabilisation Unit, February 2018, pp 17–18.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid*, p 18.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid*, p 17.

<sup>83</sup> David Smith et al, [‘Special Report: Truth, Justice and Reconciliation’](#), *Guardian*, 24 June 2014.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> Christine Cheng et al, [Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project Synthesis Paper: Securing and Sustaining Elite Bargains that Reduce Violent Conflict](#), Stabilisation Unit, April 2018, p 53.



## 6.6 Yemen

In a separate study for DFID, Yemen was quoted as another example of where a power transition and reconciliation process collapsed because of a lack of an “enabling context”.<sup>86</sup> DFID stated that this would have needed to include internal agreement on national aims and international support for long-term reform.

## 6.7 South Sudan

The conflict in South Sudan is ongoing. However, in July 2017, the Minister for International Development, Lord Bates, cited the country as one where faith-based organisations could have a part to play. He stated that “there are 100,000 churches in South Sudan. What an incredible network that we could be using for peace and reconciliation”.<sup>87</sup> The Anglican Archbishop of South Sudan has already played a leading role in peace, reconciliation and mediation efforts in the region.<sup>88</sup>

## 6.8 Nigeria

A 2016 report by the House of Commons International Development Committee praised DFID’s work with the Nigeria stability and reconciliation programme.<sup>89</sup> It called for “reconciliation and community cohesion” to be a priority in the department’s work in the country.

The report also noted that “faith-based organisations undoubtedly have a key role to play in integrating the displaced and working towards reconciliation and community cohesion”.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> Marcus Lenzen, [Building Stability Framework 2016](#), Department for International Development, 2016, p 7.

<sup>87</sup> [HL Hansard, 3 July 2017, col 716](#).

<sup>88</sup> Anglican Communion News Service, ‘[Archbishop Welcomes Ceasefire Agreement as South Sudan Peace Talks Continue](#)’, 23 May 2018; and [HL Hansard, 13 July 2016, col 219](#).

<sup>89</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, [DFID’s Programme in Nigeria](#), 27 July 2016, HC 110 of session 2016–17, p 54.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid*, p 55.