

Swedish network of peace, conflict and development research
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2006 Annual Review

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ABOUT THE NETWORK

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this network is to strengthen Swedish research on peace and conflict studies in the developing world, and to provide assistance to policy makers and practitioners to develop tools to cope with the most salient situations of violent conflict in the South.

WHAT CAUSES MAJOR VIOLENT CONFLICTS?

Violent conflicts occur in a series of stages at which international intervention may occur. In an increasingly interdependent world, what concrete measures exist that are likely to be effective in addressing violent conflict? The causes of violent conflict need to be assessed and monitored, particularly in developing countries. The significant issues for a particular developing country, region, continent, or generally in the developing world need to be identified, and strategies for approaching them should be worked out in cooperation with policy makers and practitioners involved in peacebuilding and development cooperation.



SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

The need for a combined approach towards security and development has already become a priority for many involved in peacebuilding and development cooperation. In order to assist conflict prevention policymaking vis-à-vis developing countries the Network will pursue three aims.

AIMS OF THE NETWORK

1. *Support, promote and link* Swedish researchers from different universities and university colleges to conduct research on the peace and conflict dimensions of development studies, and development dimensions of peace and conflict research
2. *Assist Swedish researchers* to establish and develop linkages and collaboration with researchers in the developing world
3. *Facilitate the dissemination of research* findings among the interested public, academics, and practitioners interested in peacebuilding and development cooperation

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Introduction

The aim of this report is to review the activities of the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research during the year 2006 and to relate these to the overall purpose and primary goals of the Network. First, the main purpose and goals of the Network are briefly stated. This is followed by a review of the main activities of the Network during the course of the year 2006. To conclude, the activities are assessed according to the main purpose and stated goals of the Network.

Purpose of the Network

The objective of this network is to strengthen Swedish research on peace and conflict studies in the developing world, and to provide assistance to policy makers and practitioners to develop tools to cope with the most salient situations of violent conflict in the South. The need for a combined approach towards security and development is a priority for those involved in peacebuilding and development cooperation. In order to assist conflict prevention policymaking vis-à-vis developing countries, the Network pursues three aims:

- *Support, promote and link Swedish researchers* from different universities and university colleges to conduct research on the peace and conflict dimensions of development studies, and development dimensions of peace and conflict research
- *Assist Swedish researchers to establish and develop linkages* and collaboration with researchers in the developing world
- *Facilitate the dissemination of research findings* among the interested public, academics, and practitioners interested in peacebuilding and development cooperation

Network activities in 2006

In 2006 the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research has experienced a tremendous expansion of its role as a national research network for the Swedish peace, conflict and development research community with international partners drawn from every continent of

the world. The success of its efforts is made possible by careful planning and coordination among the members of the steering committee together with the members of its international advisory board many of whom are directing leading research Networks in their respective corners of the world. The efforts of the Coordinator and Research Assistant, supported by the above mentioned national and international collaboration at the heart of the Network, has successfully established a truly vibrant environment for Swedish researchers, practitioners and members of the policy-making community to establish new relationships and partnerships amongst themselves and with international collaborators.

Peace Network Newsletter

Since September 2006, the Network has circulated a monthly newsletter with a readership currently just over 200 individuals worldwide. The materials disseminated by the Network are professional and designed to be informative not only of the work of the Network itself, but also of the activities of the Swedish research community in general, including upcoming events such as conferences and seminars, employment opportunities and educational activities around the country. Through the *Peace Network Newsletter*, we successfully bridge hitherto largely unaddressed geographical and disciplinary divides among and have been very pleased with the positive responses and engagement we have received from around the country with regards to it. Researchers are now circulating their activities using the Newsletter which has served to bring together smaller inter-personal research communication into a larger national network of information. Every month the letter is growing and we look forward to its continued publication and circulation.

Annual conference

The crowning achievement of the Network this year was of course the major international conference *Globalization and Peacebuilding*, held between 6-8 November 2006 at the Radisson SAS in Uppsala. The conference brought together over 80 participants, 51 papers were presented, and 30 universities, 18 countries and 16 independent organizations & institutes were represented. The meeting was hailed by many as a hugely successful event that truly brought together the various elements of the research community in an extended forum for dialogue and collaboration. At the conference there were nine panels addressing a myriad of topics and their titles are indicative of the diversity they represent:

- Pandemics and security

- Environmental and natural resource management and conflict prevention
- Eurasia, narcotics and the global illicit economy
- Building peace through human rights and the rule of law: in search of common ground
- International legal norms and the global war on terror
- Globalization and challenges to development
- Political institutions and peacebuilding
- The state of conflict resolution in Nepal: reviewing the past for the future
- Third party conflict prevention

Panel coordinators were recruited from across the country and were given the resources to invite participants from the developing world. The resulting interpersonal networks were developed throughout the course of the year leading up to the conference, where researchers were able to meet during the course of a three day period to share ideas and build lasting collaborations. Many of the panels have continued on in the form of ongoing collaboration on the various panel themes, and there are reports from Network members that publications from these smaller groupings have even been planned and initiated.

Policy seminar at Sida headquarters

In addition to the international conference Globalization and Peacebuilding, the Network co-organized together with Sida/SAREC a policy-oriented meeting *Challenges to Peacebuilding in the Developing World*, held at Sida headquarters on 9 November 2006. The collaboration between the Network and Sida proved fruitful, bringing together over 55 participants in Stockholm for a discussion of the current challenges to peacebuilding faced by the developing world. The participants represented 11 countries, 19 universities and 18 independent organizations and institutes. During two sessions, six speakers drawn from Malaysia, the UK, Brazil, Ethiopia, the Philippines, and Columbia presented their ideas on external actors and internal armed conflicts, democracy and peacebuilding. Four discussants were asked to reflect upon their presentations, drawing upon their experiences in Egypt, Argentina, the UK and India. Together, the discussion covered a broad range of topics and reflected trends in current thinking around the world in these research areas, particularly from Asia, Africa and Latin America.¹

¹ For more information, see Hall, J. *Challenges to Peacebuilding in the Developing World*. 2006 Conference Report. (Uppsala: Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research, 2007).

Through the discussion, the participants – a broad range of Swedish researchers, policy-makers and practitioners – exchanged ideas and experiences drawn from around the world. The aim of the meeting was to deepen and render more complex the perspective of each participant, and to develop interpersonal networks to facilitate research in the area of peacebuilding and to provide future resources to those policy makers and practitioners involved. In light of these goals, the meeting was successful. A contact list and conference reported have been circulated and a network of relationships is developing from the meeting among the participants. The Network looks forward to organizing more of these policy-oriented meetings in 2007.

Public seminar

Peacebuilding and Environmental Challenges in War-Torn Societies, an open seminar with Dr. Ken Conca, was also organized and took place on 7 December 2006. Dr. Conca is an Associate Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland and Director of the Harrison Program on the Future Global Agenda. In addition, he is also a member of the scientific steering committee on Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS) of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP). The seminar was organized together with the Gamla Torget Cooperation, an inter-departmental collaboration among the departments of Government, Peace and Conflict Research, Law and Eurasian Studies at Uppsala University, and was held at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research. The meeting attracted academics and students from the four participating departments and focused upon Dr. Conca's ongoing research on the relationship between the environment, which sustains human life, and the challenge of building peace in countries ravaged by armed conflict. His presentation helped to shed light on the relationships and interactions among the formal and informal economy, international development aid and assistance, and the environment.

Working paper Series

With over 50 papers presented at Globalization and Peacebuilding, the Network has ample resources with which to pursue a series of publishing initiatives in 2007. Together with the international advisory board, the Network has chosen to introduce a working paper series, *Working Papers in Peace, Conflict and Development Research*, which will publish selected papers presented at Network events. The working paper series will allow the quick dissemination of papers presented at conferences and seminars and stimulate the circulation of the knowledge provided by Swedish and international researchers during such initiatives, ensuring the continued benefit of this knowledge for audiences in academia as well as in policy circles and among

practitioners. The working paper series will be available freely from the website and will be advertised through the *Peace Network Newsletter*, the website and at Network events.

Book project

An edited volume tentatively titled *Globalization and the Challenge of Building Peace*, planned during 2006 and edited by the steering committee of the Network, is scheduled to be published in September 2007. The book is based upon a selection of the papers presented at *Globalization and Peacebuilding*, the 2006 annual conference of the Swedish Network. The publisher with whom we are working to produce the volume is Anthem Press, which has ongoing collaborations with academic institutions and publishers such as UNU, University of Columbia Press and UNU/WIDER. We feel the relationship between the Network and Anthem Press is possibly a very fruitful one and are therefore cultivating it by pursuing this book project with them.

Conclusion

In Sum, 2006 has been a truly exciting and productive year for the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research. Driven by our objective to strengthen Swedish research on peace and conflict studies in the developing world and to provide assistance to policy makers and practitioners to develop tools to cope with the most salient situations of violent conflict in the South, our activities have aimed to fulfil our stated aims: 1) *Support, promote and link Swedish researchers* from different universities and university colleges to conduct research on the peace and conflict dimensions of development studies, and development dimensions of peace and conflict research; 2) *Assist Swedish researchers to establish and develop linkages* and collaboration with researchers in the developing world; and 3) *Facilitate the dissemination of research findings* among the interested public, academics, and practitioners interested in peacebuilding and development cooperation. In retrospect, the Network has clearly achieved all three of the goals, and has in the process developed a strong name for itself within Sweden and internationally.

The events convened during 2006 have been in a very real sense successful in supporting, promoting and linking Swedish researchers involved in peace, conflict and development studies, bringing hitherto disparate inter-personal research networks together within one milieu. This work begins and finds continuity in the *Peace Network Newsletter*, disseminated monthly to over 200 recipients. Through conferences and seminars, the Network provides the chance for people to meet, discuss and debate, and develop lasting relationships. At *Globalization and Peacebuilding*

alone, the Network brought together over 80 participants, including over 50 researchers from peace and conflict studies, development studies, agricultural science, law, government and the Swedish military. In addition, several independent organizations, institutes, consultants, foundations, agencies and ministries were also represented. Researchers from 18 nations, predominantly representing the Global South, participated and were integrated into new interpersonal and interdisciplinary networks stabled through the conference. *Challenges to Peacebuilding in the Developing World* reinforced this pattern, drawing together 55 participants while still including 11 researchers based outside Sweden predominantly in the Global South, and attracting a 18 governmental agencies and ministries, independent organizations and institutes. By connecting such a diverse range of individuals from around Sweden and, indeed, the entire world, and by covering such a diverse range of topics within peace, conflict and development studies, the Network has demonstrably achieved the first two of the three goals stated above.

The annual book project, beginning with *Globalization and the Challenge of Building Peace* and the *Working Papers in Peace, Conflict and Development Research* series, advertised through the newly designed Network website and *Peace Network Newsletter*, aim to do more than accomplish the third goal of facilitating the dissemination of research findings. Indeed, we aim not only to market the knowledge of Swedish researchers and their international collaborations but also to attract the attention of international research community to Swedish research and policy initiatives in the area of peace, conflict and development studies.

In conclusion, the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research begins 2007 with energy and inertia created through careful planning and implementation of actions aimed at strengthening Swedish research on peace and conflict studies in the developing world, and to provide the necessary knowledge to policy makers engaged in development cooperation and peacebuilding. We look forward to fulfilling our purpose of serving the Swedish academic community in this manor for years to come.

Network organization

National coordination

The responsibility of the national coordination remains with the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University:

- Ashok Swain, Professor, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. Box 514, SE-751 20 Uppsala, Sweden.
- Jonathan Hall, PhD Candidate, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden.

Other members of the steering committee

- Ramses Amer, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden.
- Joakim Öjendal, Associate Professor, Department of Peace and Development Studies, Göteborg University, Göteborg, Sweden.

Advisory board

National

- Dr. Karin Aggestam, Director of Peace and Conflict Research, Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden
- Professor Gudmundur Alfredsson, Director Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Lund, Sweden
- Dr. Maj Lis Foller, Director, Iberoamerican institute, Göteborg University, Sweden

- Dr. Anders Nilsson, Director of Studies, Peace and Development, School of Social Sciences, Växjö University, Sweden

International

- Professor Gladys Lechini, Coordinator, South-South Program, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO) Latin American Council of Social Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Professor Hamdy Abdel Rahman Hassan, Professor of Political Science, Faculty of Economics & Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt
- Professor Alfred G. Nhema, Executive Secretary, Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Professor Hari Singh, Executive Secretary, APISA Secretariat, Strategic Studies and International Relations Program, School of History, Politics and Strategic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia

For more information on the activities of the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research, including our annual conferences, seminars, books, and working paper series, please visit our website:

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