

Workshop
1–2 October 2018 in Bogotá

What can we learn from peace-building in Latin America?

GIGA | Universidad de los Andes
Calle 21 No. 1- 20 (Facultad de Administración), Room SD 1003

Latin American governments declared the region a “zone of peace” at the CELAC summit in Havana on January 29, 2014. In May 2017 the Uruguayan ambassador to the United Nations Security Council even stated that Latin America was “free of active conflicts” after the Colombian government and Latin America’s oldest guerrilla group FARC signed a peace agreement in 2016. While there is no war, the region is still the most violent worldwide. The question thus is – what type of peace are we talking about?

The United Nations Department of Peace Keeping (DPKO) currently revises its peace-building strategies and architecture under the label of “sustaining peace”. From a comparative perspective, Latin America can provide important experiences to this debate for various reasons:

First, Latin American countries (with the exception of Cuba) look back at two hundred years of independent statehood. As most international peace-building strategies emphasize the importance of the state and its institutions for peace, Latin America provides interesting and valuable evidence of their role beyond the North-Western industrialized countries.

Second, during the last three decades, the political systems of Latin American countries (again, except for Cuba) selected governments by holding regular free and fair elections, improved checks and balances between the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary, and guaranteed – at least on paper – fundamental civil and political rights. Although there is an increasing debate on possible reversals regarding democracy compared to other regions of the Global South, Latin America is still perceived as a rather successful region of democratization.

Third, Latin America has experienced notorious economic growth. While inequality still figures prominently among socio-economic indicators, the region has made steady strides in the fight against poverty, and has witnessed significant improvements in health and education. State income has risen and state bureaucracies—despite frequent corruption scandals—are becoming increasingly professional and more accountable. As a result, this should be a region where “liberal” peace-building is viable.

However, while the number of wars and other forms of political armed conflict declined, other manifestations of violence(s) are widespread and make Latin America the region with the highest levels of non-war related violence. Homicides and other forms of crime are rampant,

especially in urban areas, often linked to illicit economies. Environmental conflicts frequently become violent, as well as migratory conflicts between neighbouring countries.

The two-day workshop wants to discuss these developments from different perspectives under a comparative lens with other regions such as the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. It will pose questions such as: In what way and what kind of Latin American institutions are more clearly linked to sustaining—and impeding—peace? How have they evolved over time and what is their role now? What is the relationship between political regimes and the spur in violence? To what extent can economic variables—in addition to the existence of illicit markets—explain particular aspects of Latin American violence—and peacefulness—today?

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Program

Monday, 1 October 2018 | 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Introductory Remarks. Angelika Rettberg / Sabine Kurtenbach

10:30 a.m. | Session 1: Concepts – Peace, Violence(s), Security

Sabine Kurtenbach (GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies)
Latin America a Zone of Peace?

Jenny Pearce (London School of Economics)
Violence(s): Resignifying Violence in order to Resignify Peace

Keith Krause (Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Graduate Institute Geneva)
Between Violence and (In)security: Public Institutions and Sustainable Human Security Challenges

12:30 p.m. | Lunch

2:00 p.m. | Session 2: A Role for Institutions?

Fabrice Lehoucq (University of North Carolina, Greensboro)
Political Instability and its Legacies in Latin America

Philippe Kitzberger (Universidad Torcuato di Tella)
Media Institutions and the Building of Peaceful Democratic Polities. Insights from Latin America

5:00 p.m. | Session 3: Related Conflict Agendas

Christoph Heuser (GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies)
"The coca has saved us" – Drug Economies in times of Conflict and Peace in Peru

Carlos Mario Perea (Universidad Nacional de Colombia)
Peace in Colombia: Repetition without way out?

Cecilia Roa (Universidad de los Andes)
How is territorial peace conceptualized from mining territories?

Tuesday, 2 October 2018

9:30 a.m. | Session 4: Colombia in Latin American perspective

Angelika Rettberg (Universidad de los Andes & Anika Oettler, Philips Universität Marburg)
Varieties of Reconciliation in Violent Contexts: Lessons from Colombia

Víctor M. Mijares (Universidad de los Andes & Nastassja Rojas Silva, Universidad Santo Tomás)
Venezuelan Migration Crisis Challenges Latin American Democratic Governability

11:00 a.m. | Session 5: A Role for External Actors?

Kai Michael Kenkel (Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUC) de Río de Janeiro)
UN Peacekeeping: recent developments and their impacts on Latin America

Kai Enno Lehmann (Universidade de São Paulo (USP))
The EU as a Peace-builder in Central America - Agent for Change or Protecting the Status Quo?

12:30 p.m. | Lunch

2:00 p.m. | Session 6: Beyond Latin America

André Bank (GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies)
In Lieu of 'Peace:' Imagining Conflict Transformation in the Middle East

Giulia Piccolino (Loughborough University)
Between Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding: The African Experience

Wrap up and the way further