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KOFF – swisspeace

Links

- [KOFF Annual Report](#)

KOFF Annual Report 2008 Online

Each year KOFF publishes a full report on its activities for member organizations. The report for 2008 (in German and French) is now available online. 16.04.2009

Links

- [KOFF Member Organizations](#)

Further information:
KOFF [Anita Müller](#)

IICP New KOFF Member

The KOFF Steering Committee accepted the [Institute for Integrative Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding](#) (IICP) as a new member at its meeting in March. This brings the total membership of non-governmental organizations to 48. To learn more about the new member organization, see under „News from Swiss NGOs“ in this issue of the Newsletter. 24.03.2009

Links

- [KOFF Websites on Gender and Peacebuilding](#)
- [KOFF Websites on Sudan](#)

Further information:
KOFF [Cordula Reimann](#)
swisspeace [David Lanz](#)

Role of Women in Southern Sudan

A joint Roundtable on Gender and Sudan provided an opportunity to combine in a single event topics and regions that are of special interest to KOFF. NCCR/swisspeace Sudan expert Martina Santschi talked about her experiences during a seven-month research visit to Northern Bahr el-Ghazal. She discussed the ways in which the conflict that lasted for more than twenty years left its mark on gender roles at various levels. During the war, many women were forced to take charge as head of the family and to shoulder the burden of feeding its members. The political context also underwent a fundamental change. Ever since the peace agreement of 2005, there has been a 25% quota for women in the government in Southern Sudan. However, the fact that today there are more women in official positions than ever before does not necessarily mean that women in general have a greater say.

In the second part of the Roundtable, Aurélie Lamazière and Pascal Bongard of Geneva Call presented the results of a study on the reintegration of female combatants. Women involved with armed groups played a number of roles during the war, ranging from feeding the troops to active participation in the armed struggle. Today many of them live at the margin of society in precarious economic circumstances, and the demobilization programs intended to assist their reintegration into society are subject to constant delay. At the time of the armed conflict, sexual violence against women took place on a massive scale. This is a taboo subject however and the state has so far been unable to provide effective protection against such gender-specific assaults. 16.04.2009

Links

- [CDA: Do No Harm Project](#)
- [KOFF Conflict Sensitivity Websites](#)

Further information:

KOFF [Roland Dittli](#)

International Do No Harm Consultation

KOFF participated in a consultation on Do No Harm (DNH) in Boston at the beginning of April. The purpose of the workshop organized by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects was to pool and evaluate experiences with the application of DNH. A total of 35 persons including both academics and practitioners on the ground discussed the evidence coming out of several case studies, in an effort to find out which aspects of DNH are really being put to use, as well as to identify barriers and supports regarding the successful application of the instrument. Suggestions for a revised „DNH framework“ were discussed so as to integrate these lessons learned and to improve the instrument’s dissemination and application.

07.04.2009

Links

- [KOFF Websites on Gender and Peace-building](#)

Further information:

KOFF [Cordula Reimann](#)

Gender Training at the Academy for Conflict Transformation

At the beginning of April, Cordula Reimann of KOFF conducted a two-day training course on „Gender, Conflict and Conflict Transformation“ at the Academy for Conflict Transformation, Königswinter, Germany. The emphasis of the course was on the most important gender-specific dimensions and fields of tension in violent conflicts and conflict transformation, as well as the Dos and Don’ts of gender-sensitive peace efforts. The participants were graduates of the Academy’s qualifying course „Peace Expert/Conflict Consultant“ and staff of German and international non-governmental organizations.

03.04.2009

Links

- [KOFF Sri Lanka Websites](#)

Roundtable on the Current Situation in Sri Lanka

After an interruption of around 18 months, the Sri Lanka Roundtable has resumed, for the first time with Christine Schenk of swisspeace in the role of facilitator. The participating organizations were concerned about the extremely difficult humanitarian situation, which also has a negative impact on their own efforts on the ground. The Roundtable began with the official view of the latest developments, followed in the second half by reports from the participants on their projects and the restrictions they face in their work.

Official Swiss involvement is based on the comprehensive Swiss Medium Term Plan for human security in Sri Lanka of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Political Affairs Division IV (PA IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. This is to be renewed at the end of the year, signaling Switzerland’s continuous commitment in Sri Lanka. However, as some of the organizations present mentioned in their reports, the tsunami aid projects are about to come to an end, a fact which many regret. In their management of the projects, NGOs increasingly find themselves being obstructed, and some of

Further information:
swisspeace
[Christine Schenk](#)

those present complained about trends towards bureaucratization, as well as restrictions on freedom of speech and of movement.

In the view of the roundtable participants, the fundamental disagreement between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE will not be resolved with the end of the armed struggle. Indeed the situation of the refugees and in particular of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) is expected to worsen. One of the main challenges in this context will be to find accommodation and sustenance for IDPs in the north of Sri Lanka.

21.04.2009

Links

- [swisspeace: Business & Peace](#)

Further information:
swisspeace [Ulrike Joras](#)

swisspeace establishes Business Advisory Board

End of March, swisspeace established a Business Advisory Board. The purpose of the Board is to improve the channels of communication between the private business sector and swisspeace; to advise swisspeace in its strategic development in questions related to economy, business, peace and violent conflicts; and to provide input to the development and realization of projects and programs of mutual interest.

The current members of the Board are Daniel Bloch (CEO, Camille Bloch), André Lüthi (CEO, Globetrotter), Hanz-Balz Peter (swisspeace Foundation Board President and Professor of Social Ethics), and David Wartenweiler (Director, Head of Investment Office, Horizon21). Rolf Tanner (Director, Political & Sustainability Risk Management, SwissRe) has the presidency of the Board. It is intended to slightly increase the number of Board members within the coming months.

26.03.2009

Links

- [Position of swisspeace with Regard to SIPOL](#)
- [Transcription of Hearings with swisspeace](#)

swisspeace on the 2009 Security Policy Report

swisspeace presented its views on security policy at a recent Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) hearing. CEO Heinz Krummenacher began by noting that the DDPS sees security policy in the classical military sense as the state's answer to threats at the level of international power politics. Security Policy Reports however increasingly put the emphasis on a number of other threats – in relation to energy shortage, the pressure of migration and climate change for example – which neither the Army nor the civil protection system are in a position to combat. These new threats therefore need to be addressed in all areas of policy, not just military. If it is to be left to the DDPS to take the lead in seeking the solutions, then, according to Krummenacher, the risk is one of militarization of policy, at the same time making excessive demands on both the Army and the system of civil protection.

swisspeace has therefore advised Federal Councilor Ueli Maurer against any attempt to prepare Security Policy Reports on the basis of the outmoded conventional logic. The DDPS report should above all focus on demonstrating why Switzerland needs an Army, how it should be structured and what resources should

Further information:
[swisspeace](#)
[Heinz Kruppenacher](#)

be placed at its disposal. Summing up, swisspeace Director Laurent Goetschel presented key points that swisspeace would like to see addressed in such an „Army Report“: 1. A Swiss contribution in the context of collective European defense; 2. collective military deployments for peacebuilding under the auspices of the United Nations or regional collective security organizations; 3. preventive military peacebuilding in the context of Swiss peace policy; 4. clear rules for domestic deployment of the Army in the event of a disaster in support of the police, fire-fighters and civil protection services.

According to Goetschel swisspeace sees the Army’s main role as one of civil-military peacebuilding to prevent escalation in situations of conflict. 03.04.2009

Focus

Links

- [Global Centre for R2P](#)
- [Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty](#)
- [Conflict Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, IPI Blue Papers, No. 7, 2009](#)
- [Report of the UN Secretary General](#)

Responsibility to Protect: The State of Discussion within the United Nations

The report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the „Responsibility to Protect“ (R2P) made public in January – which could be discussed by the General Assembly as early as this summer – offers a balanced foundation for operationalization of R2P in the UN System. The author of this article, who is responsible for R2P at Switzerland’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, looks at some of the open questions, the challenges as well as the current R2P debate. The views expressed in the article are strictly her own.

The trauma caused by the failure of the international community to act, either when faced with the genocide in Rwanda or with the massacre in Srebrenica, and then the shock of the NATO bombing of Serbia and the US invasion of Iraq without a UN Mandate: These are some of the scars that mark the tense political landscape in which the community of nations is now preparing to discuss „Responsibility to Protect“.

An approach that polarizes

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) found its way into official United Nations thinking and terminology with the adoption of the UN World Summit Outcome Document in 2005, in which however it was only possible to sketch the main outlines after difficult negotiations.

Even so the member states remain divided. R2P is often met either with scepticism or with outright rejection, particularly within the Non-Aligned Movement as well as by certain permanent members of the Security Council. It is a concept over which the suspicion of interventionism continues to hang. The extraordinary ability of R2P to polarize opinions was illustrated last year when France suggested that the situation in Myanmar following the cyclone Nargis should be considered a case for the application of R2P, leading to angry debates in the UN, and confrontational negotiations on the occasion of the annual humanitarian resolution in ECOSOC. For many states, this was a confirmation of their assessment that R2P is another way of bringing about regime change under the cover of

humanitarian action. The confusion reached its climax in August 2008 when Russia, a country that is fundamentally sceptical on the question of R2P, nonetheless invoked its own responsibility to protect with regard to Russian citizens outside its borders at the time of the military campaign in Georgia.

Operationalization of the Responsibility to Protect

Apart from the official UN System there are a number of think tanks and NGOs that concern themselves with R2P. A „Global Centre for R2P“ was founded in New York in February 2008. The driving force behind the Centre and Co-chair of its International Advisory Board is Gareth Evans, who has wasted no time in promoting his ideas on the subject since R2P was first mooted in 2001 in the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented his report on R2P in January this year. The basis for operationalization of the Responsibility to Protect in the UN System is given in two paragraphs of the Outcome Document of 2005. The proposed conceptual framework is based on a 4+3 formula. The scope of R2P would be restricted to four instances: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. It rests on three pillars: the responsibility of each state to protect its citizens, the international community's obligation to assist individual states in fulfilling this responsibility, and finally the collective responsibility of all UN member states to protect populations in accordance with the UN Charter. Even states that are not enthusiastic about R2P admit that the report has dealt with a difficult subject in a balanced manner.

Questions that remain open

A careful reading of the report makes it clear however that even for states like Switzerland that are supportive of the basic objectives of R2P, there are questions that still need an answer. Each attempt to apply R2P to a specific context gives rise to a series of fundamental questions and leads to further polarization in the international community. For example, who is to decide when a situation qualifies as a case of R2P? What happens if the use of coercive measures including military force is vetoed in the Security Council? Does the application of such measures in cases of R2P mean extending the mandate of the Security Council to cover situations of purely domestic conflict? Can a regional organization be justified in resorting to a military solution in the absence of a mandate from the Security Council? What criteria apply for the use of force?

The Secretary-General's report places much emphasis on preventive measures. Still in need of clarification are matters such as the distinction between R2P prevention and conventional conflict prevention, and the question as to what the specific elements are in a conflict situation that can trigger genocide or any of the other R2P crimes. Without more clarity on such aspects, targeted and effective prevention of genocide is to remain a difficult task.

Although a wide range of existing UN activities and instruments are considered in the report „through the R2P lens“, it is still not clear what specific resources and instruments are needed to achieve the desired operationalization of R2P.

What consequences will the narrowing of the debate on protection to R2P have on the existing obligations of states in the context of International Humanitarian

Further information:
FDFA [Heidi Grau](#)

Law as well as the UN human rights conventions, the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute? Above all, serious thought must be given to the call to focus more on ensuring that existing norms are respected and implemented, and wherever necessary can be developed further rather than trying to establish a concept of protection fraught with legal uncertainty, highly controversial at the political level, and which moreover in its present form offers no tangible value added to the existing obligations.

Substantive UN resolution unlikely

In order to resolve such questions and clarify the existing conceptual vagueness, an open and critical debate on the report in the General Assembly is needed. It is to be feared however, given the extent of polarization that already exists, that the member states will split into „for“ and „against“ camps, leaving little room for nuanced, critical and constructive debate. It is not yet clear if such a discussion can take place or when, although the most likely time is this summer. Such a debate should make it clear whether or not the next step devoutly wished for by the proponents of R2P is achievable: The adoption of the most substantive possible resolution. At this moment in time the chances of success look rather slim.

22.04.2009

News from Swiss NGOs

Links

- [New cfd Projects in Southern Europe](#)

cfd Reinforces Commitments in Southern Europe

Thanks to an extended credit from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the feminist peace organization cfd is able to support new projects on the prevention of violence and psychosocial work in Southern Europe with „Medica Zenica“ and „Cure in Bosnia“, and the „Women’s Wellness Center“ in Kosovo.

Although it is 14 years since the war in Bosnia ended, Medica Zenica is still offering medical and psychosocial assistance to women who have been victims of violence and trauma, for violence and trauma are not a thing of the past, as founder Monika Hauser has pointed out. She says that the war continues within women’s own four walls. Indeed some forms of violence are on the increase. Medica Zenica combines psychosocial treatment with training for tailors in an effort to combat this violence. The inclusion of vocational training helps the women to overcome their reluctance about the trauma therapy and at the same time gives them socioeconomic reasons for attending the sessions.

The second Bosnian project, Cure, organizes workshops for young women from the rural areas of Bosnia. Essentially the approach is one of empowerment, building on the existing potential of the young women and informing them about women’s rights. The aim is to support the women in pursuing the path of life they have chosen and to motivate them to continue developing into self-confident actors in a patriarchal society.

Further information:
cfd [Annette Dietschy](#)

In Kosovo, prostitution and human trafficking have increased significantly in recent years. Young women in particular, but also young men from rural areas try to migrate to escape from the problem of youth unemployment, which is now running at a rate of nearly 75%. The „Women’s Wellness Center“ offers schools informational and educational training. Putting its experience in heightening awareness about violence against women to good use, the Center is now preparing course units for schools and training teaching staff in the prevention of prostitution and human trafficking. This subject matter has also been integrated in extracurricular work with young people, in cooperation with youth centers.

10.04.2009

Links

■ [IICP](#)

Further information:
IICP [Pascal Gemperli](#)

An Introduction to the IICP

The field of conflict transformation has developed considerably over the past few years, becoming more professional. There are various approaches and methods from which to choose. As its name suggests, the Institute for Integrative Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (IICP) has adopted an integrative approach with the intention of promoting it in the IICP’s three main areas of activity: „Training and Education“, „Conflict Transformation and Consulting“ and „Research and Teaching“. The Institute is thus able to make a contribution to peaceful conflict transformation and the promotion of peace at the individual as well as the social level both in Switzerland and abroad. The adjective „integrative“ has multiple meanings in this context: the integration of different methods, approaches and schools of thought; the integration of all key players into the process; integration at all levels (intra, micro, meso, mega, meta) as well as the integration of structural, cultural, psychological and other dimensions.

The IICP offers advanced training in „Integrative Conflict Transformation“, certified by the University of Basel and the Swiss Federation of Mediation Associations, as well as „Dialogue Process Support“. Each year the IICP organizes a Summer Academy devoted to „The Art of Conflict Transformation“. The Institute facilitates dialogue processes and conflict mediation at home and abroad and conducts research in areas including identity conflicts and ethno-political conflicts. The graduates from IICP courses and other interested parties join together in an expert network to the benefit of all involved and can take advantage of the services provided by the Institute.

24.03.2009

Links

- [PWS](#)

Further information:

PWS

[Marianne Widmer Eppel](#)

PWS Launches Protective Accompaniment Project in Colombia

Many years of experience of Peace Watch Switzerland (PWS) in southern Mexico, Guatemala and Palestine/Israel have shown that the presence of human rights observers in conflict regions is an important part of multi-faceted international and local efforts to bring peaceful solutions to conflicts, making it possible to prevent human rights violations against civilians and increasing the room for maneuver for grass roots movements.

Over the years, PWS has been solicited from all sides to send voluntary human rights observers to Colombia. The planning for the third stage of the peace program SUIPPCOL (Programa Suizo para la Promoción de la Paz en Colombia), whose members include Caritas, the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund (Fastenopfer), Swiss Interchurch Aid (HEKS), Swissaid, Amnesty International Switzerland, the Switzerland-Colombia Working Group, the Institute of Ethnology of the University of Bern and the Political Affairs Division IV of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, has enabled PWS to integrate the protective accompaniment project in these existing structures. The first two human rights observation volunteers left Switzerland for Colombia at the beginning of March 2009. They have taken up residence in La India, north of the city of Barrancabermeja in the Department of Santander and are providing protective accompaniment to peace activists of the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos Carare (ATCC) – an association of peasants from local villages and hamlets which since the 1990s has been dedicated to peaceful conflict resolution. ATCC belongs to the network of peace communities, promoted by the Colombian NGO Pensamiento y Acción Social (PAS) with the support of SUIPPCOL. PAS is also the PWS partner organization in Colombia. PWS and PAS will conduct a joint assessment of the pilot project at the beginning of 2010 and decide whether or not the project is to be continued.

20.04.2009

Links

- [GfbV](#)
- [Toxic Waste in Kosovo](#)

Evacuation of Roma Refugee Camps in Northern Kosovo

The Society for Threatened Peoples (GfbV) is working with the Kosovo Medical Emergency Group (KMEG) in a joint campaign for the immediate evacuation of all persons in three refugee camps in North Mitrovica, Kosovo. In 1999 the United Nations set up refugee camps for Roma displaced by the war on sites contaminated with toxic heavy metals in the abandoned Treпча lead mines. This solution, said at the time to be temporary, has now lasted 10 years. The approximately 500 people in these camps for internally displaced persons increasingly show the symptoms of severe heavy metal poisoning and are likely to suffer irreversible damage to their health. It is to be feared that a great many of the 81 deaths that have occurred in the camps so far are directly linked to the length of stay in such contaminated sites. As well as for evacuation of the camps, the GfbV is campaigning for immediate and thorough medical treatment of Roma who have been poisoned in this way. The internationally coordinated GfbV campaign is

Further information:
GfbV [Nadia Imgrüth](#)

above all aimed at forcing the decision-makers who are responsible to do something about this situation. These decision-makers include the government of Kosovo, which although it is now officially responsible for the camps in fact has no influence on the ground; the international community, which continues to be present in Kosovo and is expected to play a decisive role in the development of this now independent country; and Switzerland, which, as one of the most important donor countries in the region, is implementing a program designed specifically to strengthen a multiethnic society.

20.04.2009

News from Swiss Government Agencies

Links

- [PA IV: Human Rights Dialogue](#)

Further information:
PA IV [Anna Mattei](#)

Human Rights Dialogue Between Switzerland and Vietnam

Switzerland has been engaged in a dialogue on human rights and international organizations with Vietnam since 1997. A Swiss delegation visited Vietnam from 13–18 March 2009 for the seventh round of dialogue.

Official talks were held with various ministries in an open and conducive atmosphere and covered a number of topics: the UN Human Rights Council, the International Court of Justice, the death penalty, freedom of opinion and religious freedom. The Swiss delegation advocated the idea of a Vietnamese moratorium on executions and asked their interlocutors to publish statistics on the use of the death penalty. The Vietnamese representatives provided information on the current state of affairs concerning possible accession to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The two delegations exchanged views on the attitudes of their respective governments with regard to the protection of freedom of opinion in the context of maintaining national security as well as in the context of the controversial field of defamation of religions.

Also discussed during this round was the continuation of various projects which involve the collaboration of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), complementary to the political talks. These concern ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Torture, the protection of prisoners, women's rights and guaranteeing the rights of minorities.

In addition to talks at the ministries there were meetings with representatives of Vietnam's Communist Party and of civil society. The seventh round of dialogue in Vietnam provided a good opportunity for a first-hand assessment of the current human rights situation. The warm welcome on the Vietnamese side was a fair indication of the high regard in which the human rights dialogue with Switzerland and the related projects are held.

20.04.2009

Links

- [PA IV: Protection in the Region](#)

Further information:
PA IV [Pietro Mona](#)

Protection in the Region

Three quarters of the more than 11 million refugees in the world live in emerging economies or developing countries which often do not have sufficient capacity to offer the protection they need. Many therefore find themselves in precarious situations and large numbers of refugees have little choice but to continue migrating and to embark on often dangerous routes to other countries. In launching the „Protection in the Region“ project, Switzerland’s intention is to help refugees and others in need of protection to obtain as quickly as possible effective protection and to move towards a viable lasting solution. Examples of „Protection in the Region“ programs include the facilitation of voluntary repatriation and reintegration in the country of origin, sustainable local integration or resettlement as part of a quota of refugees in a third country.

One of the first „Protection in the Region“ programs is now in its start-up phase in Yemen, an important host and transit country for refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa region. A Swiss delegation recently visited Yemen to explore the possibility of cooperation. This visit helped to identify four areas for special action: training projects at various levels in Yemen, as a contribution to the formulation of a coherent and effective policy on refugees and migration; reinforcement of international standards with regard to asylum procedures, with the creation of a Yemeni „Bureau for Refugee Affairs“; improvement of the living conditions in refugee camps and urban centers, by means of various humanitarian aid projects; projects to reduce gender specific violence, e.g. in the area of female genital mutilation.

The various authorities concerned – the Federal Office for Migration, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Political Affairs Division IV (PA IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs – are expected to make final decisions on these and other projects in the next few weeks. Implementation will then take place, primarily in collaboration with international organizations including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and others. 21.04.2009

International Partner Organizations

Info

News from ten international KOFF partner organizations.

- [Akademie für Konflikttransformation](#)
- [Berghof-Center](#)
- [CDA Collaborative Learning Projects](#)
- [Conciliation Resources](#)
- [European Centre for Conflict Prevention](#)
- [European Peacebuilding Liaison Office \(EPLO\)](#)
- [Gruppe Friedensentwicklung \(FriEnt\)](#)
- [GTZ](#)
- [International Alert](#)
- [Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung](#)

Berghof

- Currently practiced state-building strategies are increasingly appearing to be part of the problem rather than part of a solution. „Building Peace in the Absence of States: Challenging the Discourse on State Failure“ titles the new [Berghof Handbook No. 8](#) which addresses this challenge.
- Berghof Peace Support released two new publications. „[Insider Mediators: Exploring Their Key Role in Informal Peace Processes](#)“ and „[Reflecting on Risk and Security Management](#)“ which focuses on important risk and security aspects that most conflict transformation organizations face in their daily work.

FriEnt

- The recently published [report](#) „Entwicklung für Frieden. Berichte 2007-2008“ presents the many and varied activities of the Working Group on Development and Peace (FriEnt) and its members between September 2007 and December 2008 in three areas: Transitional Justice and Development, Crisis Prevention and International Processes.

EPLO

- The European Council of December 2008 agreed to integrate EU civilian and military crisis management at the strategic planning level. EPLO released a [Statement](#) on Civilian-Military Integration in European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The peacebuilding platform welcomes proposals to improve the planning of ESDP missions and believes that this is an opportunity to introduce measures that will improve the effectiveness and accountability of civilian ESDP missions. However, EPLO does fear there is also a risk that the proposed integration of civilian and military dimensions of EU crisis management strategic planning could lead in effect to the absorption of the civilian dimension into the military dimension.

Academy for Conflict Transformation

- The next 9-week [course](#) of the Academy for Conflict Transformation of the Forum Civil Peace Service begins on 20 July (this time in German). It comprises 14 peace training sessions with Friedrich Glasl, Norbert Ropers and other trainers.
- A „Training for Peace“ (in German) devoted to conflict-sensitive [media work](#) is scheduled for 13–17 July, in cooperation with the German Development Service (DED). [All Qualification Courses and Trainings](#).

Events

Info

This section gives pointers to selected events in Switzerland pertaining to civil peace building.

- KOFF has organized five [training courses](#) on specific aspects of civil peace-building for 2009: Reflecting on Peace Practice, Dealing with the Past in Post-Conflict Societies, Do no Harm, Evaluating Peacebuilding Projects (part 1 and 2).
- Showing in Bern's Kellerkino on 16 May is the [documentary](#) film „Témoignage Indésirable“ by Colombian-Swiss director Juan José Lozano. It is a portrait of Colombian journalist Hollmann Morris, who tries to depict the daily horrors of the conflict in Colombia in his TV channel „Contravía“, a conflict that is otherwise virtually absent from the Colombian media. The event has been organized by Peace Watch Switzerland.
- The University of Fribourg is offering a new [post-graduate course](#) entitled „Current conflicts and risks in Switzerland and at the interstate level: interdisciplinary analyses and innovative conflict resolution strategies“. Duration: September 2009–March 2011. Deadline for registration: end of May 2009.
- SWISSAID has organized a [symposium](#) on the development of mineral resources, at the World Trade Center, Zurich, on 9 June. Discussion will focus on the new global „Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)“ which aims at creating greater transparency and opens up a way for populations and corporations to escape the resources trap. [Registration and information](#).

Publications

Info

[Assessing the Impact of Transitional Justice, Challenges for Empirical Research \(2009\)](#)

Assessing the Impact of Transitional Justice

„For too long, the ‚transitional justice‘ field has been dominated by lawyers, who may master the mechanics of courts and truth commissions but who don't always know whether these really work to heal divided societies.“ This quote by William Schabas of the Irish Centre for Human Rights introduces the new publication „Assessing the Impact of Transitional Justice, Challenges for Empirical Research“. The book is a comprehensive survey of the dilemmas with which researchers in the field of transitional justice today must wrestle. In view of the growing international support for truth commissions, trials, reparations and other forms of transitional justice, researchers have the difficult task of coming to terms with a variety of expectations as to the impact and effectiveness of these mechanisms. There is an ever more urgent need to be able to measure performance in this field. The current debate on Sudan for example illustrates how there is a perceived trade-off between justice and peace – as if these two aspects could be separated from one another.

The 13 contributions that make up this book look at the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the various concepts and methodologies applicable for an empirical examination of transitional justice mechanisms. Although comprehensive, the book is by no means the last word on how to measure the effectiveness of transitional justice. It is intended for both academics and experts in the field, as well as interested members of the public.

27.04.2009

Web Tip

Info

- [African Transitional Justice Research Network](#)

African Transitional Justice Research Network

The African Transitional Justice Research Network (ATJRN) provides the support needed by researchers and civil society organizations active in this field in Africa. The ATJRN website offers an extensive review of literature on transitional justice in Africa. As well as texts in English, it provides an increasing number of French language documents to meet the needs of French-speaking countries such as Burundi. The website contains information on lectures by academics, conferences and also financial opportunities. There is a detailed list of local organizations active in the areas of transitional justice, human rights and peacebuilding. Other features include links to international organizations, discussion forums and scientific resources. In addition to its clearly arranged website, the ATJRN provides an email list to encourage the exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of transitional justice, plus information on important debates and the latest developments in a quarterly newsletter. It also organizes capacity building workshops for local researchers in a wide range of African regions. The ATJRN offers African organizations and researchers who are isolated due to weak infrastructure an important platform for networking and the acquisition of information. Moreover it affords Western researchers a rare insight into local African points of view with regard to transitional justice.

01.04.2009

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