

PSC 2240 - Civil War and Peace Processes in Comparative Perspectives

Introduction

This course is designed to introduce students to comparative experiences of civil war and peace processes with the following key questions in mind: why do civil wars breakout in some countries in different social and ethnic contexts? Are civil wars different from other types of war? Why do some civil wars have ended in negotiated peace while others have not? What is the role of negotiation, mediation, post-conflict development in peace-building in civil war contexts? By exploring these questions, students will gain insights into understanding Sri Lanka's own experiences in civil war and peace building. The course is organized around some key themes in the recent scholarly literature.

Course Objectives

This course has the following objectives:

- i. To enable students to familiarize themselves with different experiences in civil war and peace processes in some selected countries,
- ii. To introduce students to the key literature, thinkers and concepts in the field of civil war and peace studies.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will have learned

- i. That civil war and peace processes in different contexts have different trajectories conditioned by global, country and issue-specific dynamics of the conflict.
- ii. That there is a rich body of scholarly literature with theoretical approaches that provide conceptual tools to understand civil war and peace processes, and
- iii. How to apply theoretical ideas learned in the class in analyzing concrete situations of civil and peace building.

Themes

1. Nature of civil war as a specific form of social and political conflict.
2. The nature of civil war in the post-Cold War world.
3. Why do civil war conflicts occur? Theoretical approaches – deep-rooted social conflict, identity conflicts, grief and grievance theory, ethnicity and state-formation conflicts, Complex Political Emergency.
4. Conditions under which negotiation in civil war becomes possible – the Hurting Stalemate and Ripe Conditions approach.
5. Challenges in civil war management and peace settlements: Security and Political Dilemmas; interim vs. final solutions.
6. Role of mediation and negotiation in managing armed conflicts.

7. International dimension of civil war and peace processes.
8. Role of economic development and reconciliation in civil war transition.

Assessment

Mid-term Test	15%
Assignments	15%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Final Examination	60%

Recommended Reading

Hampson, Fen Osler, 1996, *Nurturing Peace, Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail*, Washington DC: USIP.

Harris, Peter and Ben Reily (Eds.), 1998, *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiations*, Stockholm: IDEA.

Miall, Hugh, Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse (Eds.), 2004, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, London: Polity Press.

Uyangoda, Jayadeva, (ed.), 2005, *Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: An Introduction to Theories and Practices*, Colombo: IMCAP, University of Colombo

Zartman, William I, (ed.). 1996, *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution.