



Coexistence International at Brandeis University

Complementary Approaches to Coexistence Work

Focus on Coexistence and Human Rights

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As diversity within societies has grown over the past century, so too has intercommunal conflict over power, identity, and scarce resources. Combatants in recent civil wars have committed many of the gravest human rights abuses: systematic rape, massacre, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, among others. These abuses and the inter-group tensions accompanying them often spill over into neighboring countries, embroiling more and more civilians in the conflict through the flow of refugees, cross-border fighting, and support by one country for kin groups fighting in another. In order to tackle these difficult and complicated situations, it is necessary to address conflict in a comprehensive way.

Coexistence work, which focuses on improving intercommunal dynamics, is inextricably linked with work on human rights because repression and gross violations of rights are both a cause and a symptom of inter-group conflict. On the other hand, positive relations between groups are catalyzed when the rights of those groups and the individuals within them are institutionalized and respected. Disregarding human rights concerns “only serves to build up resentment, fear, and hatred and thereby fuels cycles of violence.”¹ Whether it is denial of economic rights in the Niger Delta, repression of religious and ethnic identity in China, or socio-political exclusion of minority groups in the United States, the causes of inter-group tension are complex, but are more often than not related to human rights concerns.

Although personnel in the fields of coexistence and human rights sometimes perceive themselves as working at odds, there is great potential for cooperating and sharing tools and strategies in order to mitigate both inter-



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group violence and human rights violations. Neither a human rights nor a coexistence approach can work alone; rather, they must act in a multifaceted and mutually aware way, or risk creating an incomplete or unsustainable peace.

Methodology

This focus paper draws on the wealth of existing resources that have examined the relationship between coexistence or conflict work and human rights work, as well as the efforts of Coexistence International (CI) to explore the possibilities and challenges of a complementary approach to peacebuilding. Since 2005, CI has brought together practitioners, scholars, policymakers, and funders from a variety of fields (such as human rights, development, democracy-building, security, and the arts) with those working on coexistence, in order to discuss the importance of integrated efforts for building peace. CI defines coexistence as the range of initiatives necessary to ensure that communities and societies can live more equitably and peacefully together. Other terms for coexistence include conflict management or transformation, peacebuilding, diversity work, or social cohesion/inclusion.

Within the context of this paper, human rights will refer to the full range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights guaranteed to all human beings by international law.² Human rights abuses include not just violations perpetrated by the state upon its citizens, but also horizontal abuses committed by civilians upon other civilians. This paper will only minimally address the issue of transitional justice in post-conflict situations, as this is the focus of a separate area of CI's work.³

In this focus paper, we will consider the word "conflict" to refer to a broad range of situations – from a state of "negative coexistence" in which inter-group tensions exist but are not violent, to states of extreme conflict in which protracted armed violence is occurring. Therefore, the examples and recommendations in this paper are just as relevant to work in North America as they are to work in Sudan.⁴

Shared goals of the human rights and coexistence fields

In early 2006, Coexistence International conducted an exercise called the *Human Barometer* to assess the commonalities and differences between coexistence and related fields.⁵ Practitioners from a variety of disciplines, including human rights, were instructed to place themselves along a spectrum of polarized value positions, and then collectively discuss points of agreement and contention. While the exercise conducted by CI engaged a limited number and diversity of participants, some critical points emerged. The Barometer exercise exposed certain tensions between workers in the field of coexistence and those in human rights: for instance, the tension between prioritizing restorative justice and reconciliation over accountability and the rule of law. However, when participants discussed their choices, many were basically in agreement about ultimate goals with their colleagues on the opposite end of the values spectrum. Most of the practitioners would not indiscriminately advocate for a single approach; rather, they discussed the importance of sequencing and coordination of activities in the peacebuilding process as well as consideration of local dynamics. The differences between the fields were much more nuanced than participants previously thought.

What the Barometer exercise revealed, and what this paper seeks to illustrate, is that the fields of coexistence and human rights are not as disparate as many of their practitioners and scholars believe. When responding to tensions between different ethnic, religious, or social groups, both fields "seek to end violence, limit loss of life, and minimize other suffering as quickly as possible...to assist societies in taking steps to ensure that violence does not recur and that the rights of every human being are respected."⁶ Practitioners in both fields also generally agree that deprivation of rights is a major source of conflict, and that violent conflict often leads to increased human rights abuses and a lack of coexistence.⁷ The differences (or perception of differences) lie in the methodologies employed by practitioners, the skills utilized by them, and the underlying assumptions they may hold about each other.

Endeavoring to resolve intercommunal conflicts and to prevent human rights abuses is not value-free work. At times, the values of these fields can be at odds. However, mutual awareness and recognition of the end vision that they both share can help practitioners to employ complementary efforts wherever it is appropriate and useful.

Tensions between human rights and coexistence work

Though practitioners in the human rights and coexistence fields often operate in the same environments and towards similar goals, they have traditionally worked separately. Unfortunately, mutual stereotyping is not uncommon and workers may perceive themselves as “in contradiction or competition”⁸ with their counterparts in the other field. The most common perceived dichotomies include the following:

Principle versus Pragmatism

Human rights workers are generally driven by the application of universal norms and principles, which are entrenched in established international law and are presented as non-negotiable. Human rights norms provide standards for determining legitimate claims and demands as well as illegitimate abusive actions. These norms are used in human rights reporting to objectively establish whether parties upheld the standards of international law. They are not subject to interpretation or political selectivity, even in the name of ending immediate violence. Coexistence workers, on the other hand, tend to be more concerned with the pragmatic goal of ending conflict and reducing casualties as swiftly as possible. Coexistence work tries to reconcile diverse interests and concerns without determining who is right and who is wrong. In general, the coexistence field is more open to compromise in order to reach this goal, including engaging with “spoilers” or alleged human rights abusers. To those in the human rights field such pragmatism is ill-conceived and seen as supporting a “culture of impunity.” This apparent difference in values often leads to accusations of undermining conflict transformation efforts (levied against human rights workers) or pushing a process that is morally corrupt (levied against coexistence workers). In the former Yugoslavia during the 1991-1995 war, for instance, the human rights community was accused of prolonging the war through its insistence on justice and accountability for grave violators of human rights and its refusal to accept a peace agreement that did not meet these normative standards.⁹ On the other hand, in Afghanistan the process leading to the Bonn Agreement of 2001 was seen as detrimental to long-term stability in the country because it undervalued transitional justice and protection of human rights, and relied heavily on the input of local warlords.¹⁰

Justice versus Peace

This dichotomy is particularly relevant to the stage of reconciliation where mechanisms for transitional justice and rebuilding relationships are being formulated. Human rights advocates are more likely to encourage prosecutions and accountability for violators of international law, mainly through judicial courts or tribunals, while coexistence workers generally prioritize peace and reconciliation between groups. This can mean negotiating a compromise that may include amnesty or impunity, in order to avoid the further taking of life. Many coexistence workers believe that incriminating a popular leader who has violated international law can lead to a relapse into conflict. For example, this was the fear in Liberia after the arrest of popular former president Charles Taylor, who was extradited to the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2006 to face trial for his involvement in the civil war in that country. Indicting a current party to conflict also has the potential to entrench that party in fighting, leading to a prolongation of violence. This has been the case with the Lord’s Resistance Army, who claim they will keep fighting until leaders indicted by the International Criminal Court are granted immunity from prosecution for human rights abuses committed during the twenty-plus years of conflict in Northern Uganda. However, human rights workers argue that involving certain parties in reconciliation processes and refusing to prosecute them for violations of international law may grant undue legitimacy and political influence to them, and to their policies of discrimination or abuse.

Coercion versus Persuasion

The methods utilized by human rights and coexistence workers may also differ. Human rights work typically involves, among other things, monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses, or what many coexistence workers label an adversarial approach of “blaming and shaming.” Coexistence work, on the other hand, utilizes a cooperative approach involving dialogue and mediation with all parties. Neutrality is typically more important to coexistence workers as it enables them to maintain the trust of participants. Even those who integrate human rights into their coexistence work try to maintain a level of neutrality. Dan Smith, Secretary General of International Alert, stipulates that his organization “works to support and promote respect for human rights but does not focus on monitoring compliance and exposing abuses,”¹¹ as this would compromise its ability to bring certain parties to the table. Human rights reports exposing grave abuses, especially when they focus on only one party to the conflict, can be perceived as counterproductive to coexistence efforts. Reporting on abuses can inflame emotions in the communities in conflict, leading to a cycle of retributions that damages efforts to end violence and establish positive relations between groups. Human rights workers sometimes try to minimize this impact by coordinating the timing of a report’s release with coexistence workers. Practitioners in

the human rights field see monitoring and reporting as a key strategy to exert pressure on parties to be in compliance with international law. This pressure can influence the parties to the conflict to change their behavior in positive ways or risk facing international sanction.

Outcome versus Process

Coexistence workers are concerned with the process of bringing parties into dialogue with each other. This facilitative approach is meant to help groups air their grievances and cooperate in addressing them in a constructive way by recognizing their interdependence. By focusing on the *process* of dialogue and cooperation, coexistence workers aim to reach an end to violence and tensions in an organic way that may be different in each local context. Human rights workers, however, are mainly concerned with the end goal or *outcome* of accountability and a universally institutionalized respect for human rights. The methods they use to get there may differ, but are based on the norms of international human rights law. Coexistence workers tend to argue that each party involved in the conflict will have differing views about the causes of and solutions to the conflict, as well as their own ideas about accountability. In other words, that “conflicts are waged not simply between forces promoting rights and forces denying rights, but between differing notions of right and of rights.”¹² Realistically, these differing notions, as well as the balance of power, all play a part in determining the process by which peace will be achieved. Human rights workers, on the other hand, generally believe that the adoption of universal human rights norms and the rule of law present the best way to end violence and ensure long-term stability.

Case for complementarity

Despite the perception of differences between the two fields, human rights and coexistence work do indeed impact each other in positive ways. It is important to recognize the ways in which the fields currently intersect, in order to maximize the potential of this intersection and open new doors for further cooperation and awareness.

How human rights work promotes coexistence

Former UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Danilo Türk asserts that “The link between human rights and prevention of armed conflict is indirect. Human rights norms and actions were devised not to prevent armed conflicts but because of their inherent value.”¹³ But human rights institutions can play an important role in coexistence and conflict management—as early warning indicators, monitors of peace agreements, promoters of reconciliation, and sometimes as mediators between groups. The effect on transforming conflict is an added bonus to the work they are already doing to promote and protect human rights.

The following are ways that human rights work can promote coexistence:

1. Many of the **root causes of conflict** are addressed through promotion of human rights, especially in relation to respect for minority rights. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan listed the following root causes in his June 2001 *Prevention of Armed Conflict* report: inequity, inequality, injustice, lack of representative government, and insecurity.¹⁴ Institutionalizing civil and political rights such as transparency and accountability in government, political pluralism, and free association, as well as economic and social rights such as equal access to employment, education, and healthcare, fosters an environment in which these root causes are addressed and respect for diversity can flourish.
2. Human rights can offer a **source of common values for social cohesion**,¹⁵ especially when they are institutionalized into governance structures in the form of a bill of rights or similar mechanism. Institutionalizing human rights through a comprehensive dialogue process can serve to unite the population around a common set of principles and commitments. These shared values can remind groups of their interdependence and ensure respect and mutual trust.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was incorporated into the Canadian Constitution in 1982 after a transparent process of debate and amendment within the legislative and judicial branches of the government. In addition to fundamental freedoms enshrined in previous documents, the Charter institutionalized new mobility, language, and education rights, and formally enshrined the country’s commitment to multiculturalism. Two decades after the Charter was entrenched in the Constitution, studies have found that it still enjoys massive popular support as a symbol of national identity, with nine out of ten Canadians rating it as more important than the national anthem or the flag.¹⁶ Surveys have also confirmed the Charter’s positive effect on respect for diversity, with 86% of respondents agreeing that “it is important for children to maintain and value some aspect of their parents’ cultural heritage.”¹⁷

3. Human rights issues can create “important ‘cross-community’ fora”¹⁸ in which the protection of particular groups of individuals (e.g., children, missing persons) is a shared goal. Depending on their level of legitimacy, human rights institutions may offer a **safe space for dialogue**¹⁹ to occur on these issues, across group divisions.
4. Human rights can offer an **objective framework for handling conflict**. As human rights principles are

entrenched in international and customary law, they offer a standard of legitimacy. Many human rights norms have been universally agreed upon and therefore offer a “democratic” means of managing ethnic conflict,²⁰ by offering clear standards and rules by which to determine legitimate needs and demands.

5. Institutionalized human rights mechanisms can act as a **safeguard against abuses of power** as well as build confidence in the rule of law. Disaffection of minority or vulnerable groups can be prevented through mechanisms such as the European or Inter-American Courts of Human Rights, which assure equality and fairness and which empower a conflict’s weaker or minority party by providing formal channels to air grievances. In this way, “(I)nstitutionalized respect for rights and structural accommodation of diversity is a primary form of conflict prevention.”²¹
6. Human rights reporting can provide **early warning indicators** of potential inter-group tension. Human rights violations often occur prior to the outbreak of violent conflict between communities. “Arbitrary arrests and detentions, oppression of political opposition groups and individuals, difficulties in socio-economic conditions, and additional border controls often increase during such times.”²² Human rights groups that monitor and report on these violations bring them to the attention of the international community, often making the case for intervention, whether diplomatic or military, before the situation spirals out of control.

Since 2006 the international NGO Minority Rights Group International has compiled and published the annual *State of the World’s Minorities*, which includes a statistical analysis and ranking of “Peoples Under Threat.” This analysis “seeks to identify which of the world’s peoples are currently under most threat of genocide, mass killing/atrocities or other systematic violent repression.”²³ It is utilized by the group to mobilize general support for its larger campaigns to secure the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples, as well as to contribute to early warning for civilian protection in drawing the attention of the media and decision makers to certain emergency situations before they disintegrate into deadly armed conflict.

How coexistence work promotes human rights

In processes of dialogue, mediation, and negotiation between different groups, human rights concerns are one of many issues that are addressed by coexistence practitioners. Whether conflicts stem from access to resources, identity issues, or another perceived “need” of a group, coexistence processes invariably tackle questions of rights.

The following are ways that coexistence work can promote human rights:

1. Coexistence work strives to bring together different groups in dialogue with each other. This **facilitated channel of communication** allows groups to informally air grievances concerning inequity and injustice. The forum of coexistence work can make it easier to hear the “truth” (or multiple truths) about rights violations in a non-prosecutorial environment, and ideally enable a balance to be found between the needs and concerns of different groups.
2. The safe space created by neutral coexistence workers can also function as a **medium to educate groups** about human rights principles. When human rights workers themselves may not have access to certain parties, coexistence processes offer a channel to disseminate information on rights to those who may be most resistant, and to ensure that all parties realize that respecting the rights of other groups is in their best interest.
3. Coexistence work models **constructive ways of dealing with conflict**, through non-violent dialogue and cooperation. For instance, mediation can function as an alternative to violence in dealing with rights-related conflicts. Coexistence processes also provide opportunities to recognize the nuances and gray areas in inter-group tensions, as well as the means to address them constructively without casting blame.

In April 2006, as the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding was conducting a conflict transformation seminar for local human rights activists in Nepal, massive public demonstrations broke out calling for democracy and fundamental rights and freedoms in the country. The seminar instantly became a “living laboratory”²⁴ for the human rights workers to learn non-violent conflict transformation, including taking steps towards social healing and reconciliation between groups in order to interrupt cycles of violence and human rights abuses by both sides. After 19 days of non-violent demonstrations, authoritarian rule collapsed and a tentative peace process with Maoist insurgents led to the establishment of an interim constitutional government.²⁵

4. In post-conflict negotiations and settlements, coexistence workers are highly involved with **rebuilding institutions** that help to re-establish the rule of law and respect for human rights norms. In societies emerging from violent conflict, a functioning and fair infrastructure is crucial to establishing stability and preventing a relapse into violence. Legitimacy of the post-conflict government and judicial system is established through coexistence work involving

confidence- and capacity-building measures.

5. Coexistence workers also often find themselves working to **support and enhance civil society** in fragile states and engaging civil society organizations across divides. Through facilitated workshops, trainings, and capacity-building for local civil society, they are often implicitly promoting rights of association and civic engagement, as well as freedom of speech, in states which can greatly benefit from the exercise of these rights.²⁶
6. While human rights work is often perceived as an external force or intervention, coexistence work is usually **attuned to local traditions and customs**. Coexistence work offers an avenue for people to engage with rights violations and inter-group tensions on their own terms and in a way that emphasizes hybridity between formal and customary traditions and institutions.

CDR Associates, a U.S.-based organization of professionals providing conflict and dispute resolution services, worked with the Land and Property Directorate of the Ministry of Justice in East Timor to develop a new system to resolve land and property disputes resulting from inter-group violence. "One significant tension was the right for women to inherit land...which is contrary to customary law [i.e., local practice]. This is problematic because so many war widows would be left in poverty if they could not inherit their husband's land."²⁷ The CDR consultation therefore had to develop a way to manage the differences between international and local customary law in setting up the new system.

Ways Forward

Although human rights and coexistence work often share common objectives, there is a lack of purposeful coordination and cross-training in the skills of each field. In order to address inter-group tensions effectively, workers in both fields must look for new opportunities to learn from and engage with each other, through training workshops, informal conversations, skills-sharing, and coordination networks. More awareness of the language, methods, and basic frameworks of each field will enable practitioners to communicate across barriers and to educate parties effectively. Practitioners should be particularly attentive to possibilities for collaboration in both local and international policy campaigns, as well as in their dealings with the media. In addition, intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations should work harder to fully mainstream human rights into their conflict prevention operations (and

vice versa), emphasizing the link between the two. Donors and governments should also make funding less dichotomized, thereby increasing the flexibility of practitioners on the ground to work across fields. Finally, open and constructive discussions need to be held regarding the tension between universal norms and cultural practices—for example, protecting the rights and concerns of women and children on the one hand and preserving cultural traditions on the other—as this tension causes problems both between the fields and within them.²⁸

A complementary approach to coexistence and human rights has already been utilized in some important institutions. For example, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is working to build the capacity of its member organizations to understand and apply a rights-based approach to peacebuilding. WANEP is also engaging with decision-makers and civil society organizations to promote the mainstreaming of a human rights approach into the West Africa regional early warning and conflict prevention mechanism, which it is developing with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, under the direction of the first High Commissioner Max van der Stoel, used human rights indicators to predict tensions between a state and a minority group within the state. Van der Stoel then utilized coexistence skills such as preventive diplomacy to quietly leverage governments and minority groups to change their behavior before escalation into gross human rights abuses or deadly conflict occurred. This office continues to combine the utility of human rights reporting with the cooperative/persuasive approach of coexistence in order to prevent inter-group tensions from deteriorating into violence, with many successful interventions to their credit.²⁹

The following are specific recommendations for skills-sharing across fields:

Human rights skills for coexistence workers

- Coexistence intervention strategies should be designed to ultimately promote human rights standards. Therefore, in-depth cross-training for coexistence workers in the norms, principles, language, and laws of human rights is essential.
- Coexistence workers engaged with aggrieved groups should utilize the advocacy skills of human rights workers to help elevate disadvantaged groups to a level playing field at the negotiation table.
- Coexistence workers must educate parties in mediation proceedings about human rights and assure them that compliance with international standards is in their best interest.
- While coexistence workers can strive to maintain a

certain level of neutrality, they must not hesitate to condemn gross violations of human rights such as genocide, as well as those who perpetrate it, even at the risk of alienating a party to the conflict. Supporting accountability for heinous crimes can help to avoid collective punishment or reprisals by minimizing the extent to which an entire group (versus the guilty individuals) is identified with the abuse.³⁰

- Coexistence workers would benefit from a greater awareness and understanding of the minority rights approach to conflict and development. This includes more awareness of the patterns of violations leading to conflict and inter-group tension, as well as acknowledgement of minority rights as a flexible framework for addressing these tensions, with room for adaptation in different contexts.³¹
- The design of coexistence interventions should make greater use of human rights indicators, especially as mechanisms for conflict early warning and prevention. For this to be successful, coexistence workers need a better understanding of the normative indicators used by major human rights organizations.
- In order to engage with decision makers, governments, and donors, coexistence workers could benefit from adopting the lobbying and mobilization techniques used in human rights campaigns in order to promote the use of coexistence work. This would help put coexistence and inter-group relations more at the forefront of funding and advocacy for international issues.

Coexistence skills for human rights workers

- Human rights workers should learn conflict management skills, such as facilitation and mediation, in order to “address community demands and communicate effectively about the relevance of human rights to the parties in conflict.”³² Dialogue and listening skills can also help human rights workers to build effective relationships and communicate their cause in diplomatic ways.
- In some cases, human rights workers must be willing to engage with “spoilers,” recognizing that acknowledgement of grievances is sometimes a better approach to behavior change than shaming.
- Human rights strategies must be designed to be long-term rather than reactionary, and to take into account local preferences and contexts within the limits of international law.
- Human rights workers must be able to contextualize and localize the language of rights to avoid misunderstanding or distrust, and to minimize being seen as part of a forced external intervention.
- Since human rights reporting can sometimes have the opposite of the intended effect—angering parties and causing them to increase repression—practitioners should be cautious to avoid “shaming”; wherever

possible, they should offer technical assistance and advice rather than monitoring and critique.

- Education of local groups on human rights norms, without the practical education about skills to obtain and defend rights in a non-violent way, can exacerbate tensions. Human rights education should therefore include skills in dialogue and non-violent mobilization so that the beneficiaries will have the tools to promote and negotiate for their rights in constructive ways.
- Human rights organizations should publish reports on positive progress by countries or groups, not just negative aspects. This can encourage funding and support for those complying with norms, and enable them to be rewarded for improving respect for human rights.
- Human rights workers would benefit from greater conflict analysis skills, which would allow them to understand the intricacies of the local context when designing interventions. These skills would also translate to better lobbying success, as human rights organizations would be versed in proper terminology and better able to present a persuasive “imminent conflict” argument for intervention.³³

Conclusion

The coexistence and human rights fields need not fully converge, particularly not in ways that affect their credibility or contradict their roles. In fact, their “greatest strength lies in the fact that they are separate, that they address the problems of violent conflict from different perspectives.”³⁴ While the fields should not merge, pursuing certain synergies could enhance the effectiveness of both. It is imperative that both fields realize the importance of learning and incorporating some of the effective skills of the other, sequencing their respective efforts in the peacebuilding process, recognizing current limitations, and planning for the long-term. At the very least, they must remain attentive to each other’s work and must engage across fields to overcome the biases and hostilities that interfere with reaching their mutual goals. In many states sinking into or emerging from conflict, the resources and infrastructure are insufficient to allow stakeholders to gain control of deadly cycles of tension, instability, and violence. By utilizing a complementary approach, practitioners working in human rights and coexistence can approach inter-group tensions and violence from multiple perspectives, enabling groups to create the space from which sustainable peace can emerge. When peace is approached in a multi-faceted way, practitioners are more likely to succeed in ending or preventing violence.

Additional Resources on this Topic

Coexistence International Reports and Publications

Documents available at www.coexistence.net

- Exploring the Possibilities and Limits of Collaboration: Commonalities and Differences in Coexistence and Related Fields
- Pieces of the Coexistence Puzzle: Democracy, Human Rights, Gender and Development - Conference Report
- What is Coexistence and Why a Complementary Approach?

Other Papers and Publications

- Babbitt, Eileen. "Conflict Resolution and Human Rights: Pushing the Boundaries." *Handbook of Conflict Resolution*. Ed. Bercovitch, Kremenyuk, and Zartman. (forthcoming)
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Organizations & Web sites

- Alliance for Peacebuilding: www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org
- CDR Associates: www.mediate.org
- Centre for Conflict Resolution: ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za
- CDA Reflecting on Peace Practice: www.cdainc.com
- Global Rights: www.globalrights.org
- Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org

- International Alert: www.international-alert.org
- International Council on Human Rights Policy: www.ichrp.org
- Karuna Center for Peacebuilding: www.karunacenter.org
- Minority Rights Group International: www.minorityrights.org
- Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities at OSCE: www.osce.org/hcnm
- Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: www.ohchr.org
- West Africa Network for Peacebuilding: www.wanep.org

Endnotes

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- 2 The major documents in international human rights law include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966); the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979); the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953); the American Convention on Human Rights (1978); and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1986). In addition, there are several treaties that pertain to the humanitarian laws of war (i.e., the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Protocols that expanded their reach), and various conventions adopted under the auspices of the International Labor Organization. See Richard B. Lillich and Hurst Hannum, *International Human Rights: Documentary Supplement* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995).
- 3 See www.coexistence.net for resources related to this topic.
- 4 Some examples have also been drawn from interviews

- and surveys conducted with select individuals working in the human rights and coexistence fields, mainly in non-governmental organizations. These interviews were conducted by the authors in May 2008.
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 - 16 Centre for Research and Information on Canada, *The Charter: dividing or uniting Canadians?* (April 2002).
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About Coexistence International

Based at Brandeis University since 2005, Coexistence International (CI) is an initiative committed to strengthening the resources available to policymakers, practitioners, researchers, advocates, organizations, and networks promoting coexistence at local, national, and international levels. CI advocates a complementary approach to coexistence work through facilitating connections, learning, reflection, and strategic thinking between those in the coexistence field and those in related areas.

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Coexistence describes societies in which diversity is embraced for its positive potential, equality is actively pursued, interdependence between different groups is recognized, and the use of weapons to address conflicts is increasingly obsolete. Coexistence work covers the range of initiatives necessary to ensure that communities and societies can live more equitably and peacefully together.

About the Series

Fragmentation within the coexistence field, as well as divisions between coexistence and related areas, impede the achievement of effective, sustainable peace. Without cooperation and a recognition of complementarity, key players often work in isolation from one another—a situation that leads to missed opportunities or incomplete responses to conflicts.

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