

THE PEOPLE'S PEACE

Third AI and UN Edition

COLIN IRWIN

The People's Peace
Third AI and UN Edition

Also by Colin Irwin

The People's Peace Process in Northern Ireland

The People's Peace 'Pax Populi, Pax Dei' –
How Peace Polls are Democratizing the Peace Making Process

20 Peace Lessons from Northern Ireland to Israel and Palestine

The People's Peace Second Edition –
Public Opinion, Public Diplomacy and World Peace

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Third AI and UN Edition

Public Opinion, Public Diplomacy and World Peace

Colin Irwin

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Pax populi, pax dei, pax mundi

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Glossary and Abbreviations

Abuja Agreement – Darfur Peace Agreement signed in May 2006
AED – Academy for Educational Development
AGI – Artificial General Intelligence
AHRC – UK Arts and Humanities Research Council
AI – Artificial Intelligence
ANA – Albanian National Army
ANC – African National Congress
Anglo-Irish Agreement – Signed by the British and Irish governments in November 1985
APRC – All Party Representative Committee
ASRSG – Acting Special Representative of the Secretary General
AU – African Union
AUDP – African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur
Belfast Agreement – Signed by the British and Irish governments in April 1998 and otherwise known as the Good Friday Agreement (GFA)
BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation
CATI – Computer-assisted telephone interviewing
CAPMAS – Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CBMs – Confidence Building Measures
CDRSEE – Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South-East Europe
CFR – Council on Foreign Relations
Clinton Parameters – Guidelines for Israel-Palestine permanent status agreement in December 2000
CPA – Centre for Policy Alternatives (Sri Lanka)
CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Sudan)
Dayton Agreement – For peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina signed in Paris December 1995
DDDC – Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Communication
Direct Rule – From Westminster over Northern Ireland and introduced in 1972 following the suspension of Stormont
Downing Street Declaration – Proposals for a Northern Ireland settlement published by the British and Irish governments in December 1993
DUP – Democratic Unionist Party
EC/EU - European Community/European Union
ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights
EEC – European Economic Community
EIU – Economist Intelligence Unit

ESRC – UK Economic and Social Research Council
FAIR – Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism
FOSIM – Foundation for Open Society Institute in Macedonia
FA – Ohrid Framework Agreement for peace in Macedonia signed in Ohrid August 2001
Framework Document – Proposals for a Northern Ireland settlement published by the British and Irish governments in February 1995
FCDO – Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FSA – Free Syrian Army
fYROM – former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GAO – [US] General Accounting Office
GC – Greek Cypriot
Geneva Accord/Initiative – Draft permanent status agreement to end Israel-Palestine conflict in 2003
Geneva II Conference on Syria – Geneva II Middle East peace conference January 2014
Geneva III – Geneva peace talks on Syria February 2016
GMI – Global Market Insite
GNU – Government of National Unity
GPI – Global Peace Index
HAC – Home Affairs Committee
HD – Humanitarian Dialogue
HO – Home Office
IaK – Indian administered Kashmir
ICG – International Crisis Group
IDF – Israel Defence Force
IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons
IEP – Institute for Economics and Peace
IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development (East Africa)
IGO – Intergovernmental Organisation
IIASR – Israel Institute of Applied Social Research
IICD – Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
IOCRI – Israel and Palestine Centre for Research and Information
IPI – International Peace Institute
IRA – Irish Republican Army also referred to as the Provisional IRA formed after a split with the Official IRA in 1969
IRI – International Republican Institute
ISF – Iraqi Security Forces
JHU – Buddhist Jathika Hela Urumaya
ISIS – Islamic State of Iraq and Syria [ISIL – Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant]

JMCC – Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre
JRCT – Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
JVP – Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
LACU – Local Administration Councils Unit (Syria)
LAS - League of Arab States
LoC – Line of Control
LLMs – AI Large Language Models
LLRC – Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission
LPDF – Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
LTTE – Liberation Tamil Tigers of Elam
LVF – Loyalist Volunteer Force
MAD – Mutual Assured Destruction
MENA – Middle East and North Africa
Mitchell Principles – Six conditions for inclusive political discussions contained in the Mitchell Report of February 1996
MORI - Market and Opinion Research International, (later ipsos MORI)
MRNI – Market Research Northern Ireland
MVUK – Muslim Voice UK
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI – National Democratic Institute
NeurIPS – Neural Information Processing Systems
NGO – Nongovernmental Organisation
NIO – Northern Ireland Office
NISS – National Intelligence and Security Service of Sudan
NIWC – Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
NMF – [Royal] Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NLA - National Liberation Army
NPWJ – No Peace Without Justice
NUPI – Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
ODIHR – OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSESGY – Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
Oslo Accords – Israeli and Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements signed in Washington September 1993
OTRs – On the runs
Patten Report – Commission report on reform of the RUC published in 1999
PaK – Pakistan administered Kashmir
PA – Palestinian Authority
PASSIA – Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

PCPSR [PSR] – Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research
PPI – Peoples Peace Index
PR – Proportional representation
PRIO – Peace Research Institute Oslo
PSC – Parliamentary Select Committee
PUP – Progressive Unionist Party
QIPs – Quick Impact Projects
RIIA – Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House)
RUC – Royal Ulster Constabulary
RUSI – Royal United Services Institute
SDGs – UN Sustainable Development Goals
SDLP – Social Democratic and Labour Party
SeeD – Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development
SF - Sinn Féin
SFRY – Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SLFP – Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLMC – Sri Lanka Muslim Congress
SOC – Syrian Opposition Council [SNC – Syrian National Council]
St. Andrews Agreement – Made by the British and Irish Governments on 13 October 2006
STC – Southern Transitional Council
Taba Proposals - for an Israel-Palestine permanent status agreement in January 2001
TC – Turkish Cypriot
TDA – The Day After
TSCPR – Tami Steinmetz Centre for Peace Research
TSS – Two State Solution
UDA – Ulster Defence Association
UDP – Ulster Democratic Party
UNP – United National Party
UFF – Ulster Freedom Fighters
UKUP – United Kingdom Unionist Party
UN – United Nations
UNAMID – African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur
UNDPA – UN Department of Political Affairs
UNDPPA – UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
UNDPI – UN Department of Public Information
UNDPKO – UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNSMIL – UN Support Mission in Libya
USIP – US Institute of Peace
USAID – United States Aid
UUP – Ulster Unionist Party

UVF – Ulster Volunteer Force
WAPOR – World Association of Public Opinion Research
WPI – Personal Wellbeing Index
WPO – World Public Opinion
WIN Gallup – World Independent Network/Gallup International Association

Preface to the:

First Edition 2012

The people made peace in Northern Ireland. After 30 years of failure the peace process there has been a great success. My contribution to that achievement was to work with the parties on a program of independent public opinion research and public diplomacy that allowed the people to be consulted and brought into the process at each critical stage of the negotiations. This work is described in my first peace polls book, *The People's Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, written so that the central lessons of that achievement could be extended to the resolution of other violent conflicts.

To this end I have spent the past ten years applying those lessons first in the Balkans, then Kashmir, Sri Lanka, the West and Muslim World and 'War on Terror', Israel and Palestine, Darfur Sudan and the Arab Spring. Regrettably, the results have been mixed. In all the cases where peace polling has been used it has made a positive contribution to peace building and peace making but the ultimate goal of peace, all too frequently, has not been achieved. This book explains why and how such failures might now be turned into success.

I was very lucky as the first peace process I got involved in was Northern Ireland where a series of fortuitous events made peace possible. Critically, those events included elections to negotiations that brought all the parties to the conflict into the talks under a strong independent Chair who both respected their democratic mandate and the value of the peace polls method. Subsequently, when the governments responsible for the negotiations wanted to bring the program of independent polling to an end, to advance their own agendas, the parties rebelled, the peace polls continued, peace was made, and my work was extended around the world.

Of course I thought, in my limited experience at the time, that all peace processes were like Northern Ireland. But this was not the case. The interests of governments and political elites, both domestic and international, all too frequently pervert the will of the people to deny them the peace that they seek. In hindsight, we were very fortunate in Northern Ireland. With elections to negotiations, independent research and an independent Chair the people were able to make *their peace* through the democratization of *their peace process*. This was the key to our success. We owned the peace process, not them, not the governments or some other political elites with self-serving agendas. The people's peace prevailed.

This book is written to explain how this can be done elsewhere. If this were easy it would have been done. But it is not. For comparative purposes I could have treated each case study in the same way but historical and political contexts were always different and in every conflict I have visited I have learnt something new. Also the processes of peace making are complex. So I have used each case study in each conflict setting to make different points about the peace making process except for the final comparative chapter and my recommendations. So each chapter tells its own story as follows:

With a focus on theory Chapter 1, *Conflict resolution and peace research theory*, notes that in the modern world of mass media, mass communications and globalization peace processes require the effective use of public diplomacy to achieve political legitimacy, and that open, transparent, objective, public opinion research can unlock the full peace making potential of such diplomacy. But this requires truly independent peace research not bound to the interests of any of the conflict parties - a difficult but not impossible task.

With a focus on methods Chapter 2, *Northern Ireland and the development of the peace polls method*, reviews the evolution of the techniques and practices used to achieve independent polling in Northern Ireland. They were fundamentally different to popular, partisan, media polls and public opinion surveys commissioned by governments and states.

With a focus on negotiations Chapter 3, *The Northern Ireland peace polls and negotiation of the Belfast Agreement*, details the political impact of each of the nine polls undertaken in support of this peace process, to confront and resolve problems of procedure, substance and implementation. Having dealt with questions of theory and method the emphasis here is on how the peace polls achieved real political advances.

With a focus on problem solving Chapter 4, *The Balkans*, reviews the first efforts to apply the Northern Ireland methods elsewhere. Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo and Serbia were all at different stages in their conflicts with different problems to be solved. These were identified and when dealt with the peace polls helped to stabilize the situation but when the results were ignored on-going instability required further international intervention.

With a focus on effective research Chapter 5, *Kashmir*, describes the first use of peace polls in a developing country. A program of three polls clearly identified the issues that needed to be addressed if peace was to be achieved. The people wanted peace and would be willing to make compromises to achieve it but their political leaderships and ultimately India and Pakistan stood in their way. Regrettably other researchers emphasized the difficulties while ignoring much of the common ground so

little progress has been made.

With a focus on reporting and dissemination Chapter 6, *Sri Lanka*, provided the first opportunity, after Northern Ireland, to work with negotiators to reach a peace agreement. This project should have been a great success. The people wanted a settlement of the 'National Question', which was well researched, reported and the findings widely disseminated. But having defeated the rebel Tamil Tigers in war the President 'said no'.

With a focus on what happens when peace polls are not done Chapter 7, *Cyprus*, reviews ten wasted years of lost opportunities and failed peace making. Eventually others did complete a program of peace polls on Cyprus but it may all have been a case of 'too little, too late' as a new generation of Greek and Turkish Cypriots grew up in separate worlds.

With a focus on the misuse and abuse of polls Chapter 8, *The West and the Muslim World*, details the failings of government and media polling in before, between, and after the 9/11 US and 7/7 UK suicide attacks. For the most part these polls failed to address the questions that could have helped to resolve this global conflict and/or ran partisan polls designed to support the respective governments' foreign and domestic security policies.

With a focus on the most researched conflict in the world Chapter 9 critically examines the political and academic failures of polling, public diplomacy and peace-making in *Israel and Palestine*. Everything that could be made to go wrong has been made to go wrong to maintain the status quo. Although everyone knows what needs to be done to 'get to peace' US/Israeli relations and electoral politics have placed the people's peace beyond reach.

With a focus on state interference Chapter 10, *Darfur – Sudan and the Arab Spring*, illustrates the misguided attempts of security services in Sudan and Egypt to manipulate and manage peace research to protect their own agendas and narrow self-interests. The result has been war and revolution.

The review of all the polls in Chapter 11, *Pax populi, pax dei: Peace polls in comparative perspective and how to make them work*, illustrates their value as a problem solving tool for conflict analysis and as a public diplomacy tool for negotiations and conflict resolution. When used they help people achieve peace. The only impediments to their success are the spoilers who place their own interests above those of the people. Through monitoring and standard setting international institutions can confront the spoilers and give the pollster/peacemakers the support they need. Or so I hoped when I published the first edition of this book. Unfortunately the standard setting proposed for the World Association of Public Opinion Research in Appendix 1, and for the UN in Appendix 2, have, for the most part, been ignored. And so that brings us to the second edition:

Second Edition 2020

With a focus on 'frozen conflicts' Chapter 12, *Cypris 2016/17, How to melt a frozen conflict*, examines the Cyprus case in comparison with the frozen conflicts of Northern Ireland, which was resolved, and Israel and Palestine, which remained unresolved. Critically the use of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), and advances in peace polling in Israel and Palestine, that add incentives to negotiating packages, combine to offer a solution to the resolution of frozen conflicts. It should work providing the relevant political leaderships genuinely desire peace.

With a focus on geopolitical regional and global supper power politics Chapter 13, *Syria,* details the failure of peace polling and the abuse of captive populations by third parties to create the worst humanitarian crisis, brought about by human hand, since the Second World War. The tragedy of this example is that at both the domestic level of the Syrian regime and at the level of the UN Permanent Five (P5) Security Council no consensus or compromise was allowed that would relieve the suffering of the Syrian people. The will of the Syrian people was ignored.

With a focus on global peace polls Chapter 14, *Pax Populi, Pax Dei, Pax Mundi*, *and a World Peace Poll,* reviews new methodologies for running world peace polls to monitor, track and identify potential conflicts in the making, in addition to testing global solutions for global problems. With an emphasis on reducing costs and maintaining academic independence proposals are made for running these polls using innovative global samples, as well as selectively identifying the most critical issues for achieving world peace and testing them using conventional peace poll methods.

At the end of what was the Second Edition, in Chapter 15, *World peace and truth telling*, I returned to the theme of the 'politics of peace research' addressed by my mentor and PhD advisor, Professor Donald Campbell in Chapter 1. Quite simply our world is in great danger and without truth telling we may not survive the combined threats of violent conflict, pandemics and climate change on a planet with limited and increasingly contested natural resources.

Third Edition 2025

Having completed the Second Edition of this 'People's Peace' book I had every hope that my colleagues at the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), and/or with the United Nations, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would receive the global monitoring attention

they needed. But, as always, I was a little too optimistic. The end of the COVID pandemic in 2021 did not herald in a new period of peace born of the global cooperation during the pandemic but simply more of the same or worse.

On February 20th, 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine in violation of international law under the UN Charter. And again on October 7th, 2023 another Gaza war bore witness to the worst slaughter of Israelis and Palestinians since the Second World War and the formation of the state of Israel. *War Without End* (Chapter 16), or forever war, seemed to be the order of the day. But then a new technology offered a prospect of hope, Artificial Intelligence. "Could AI save humanity before it destroyed humanity?" was the question being asked by the inventors and practitioners of AI Large Language Models (LLMs) and their AI assistants.

In 2020 I was given an opportunity to be part of an 'AI can save humanity' team of pioneers working with the UN to apply AI, in war zones, for conflict resolution. These efforts are reviewed in Chapter 18, *The Promise of AI*. Perhaps it is too early to make a determination about the efficacy of AI for good in the world. It did not help to stop the war in Ukraine or the war in Gaza. It could have helped, but the politics of war and peace research are presently balanced in the wrong direction, reviewed in Chapter 17, *The End of War?* War is very profitable for those engaged in servicing the industry of war. Presently the only financial reward of peace is peace itself and the security that comes with it, and that, for a small minority of political elites is not enough.

The UN and WAPOR were established after the Second World War with a view to preventing war by monitoring and reporting state compliance with the UN Charter and international law. Potentially Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) will be able to do this globally in 'real time'. But we do not have to wait, monitoring the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals is a good place to start with the technologies at hand - by 'pencil and paper', AI, hybrid or otherwise.

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1

Conflict resolution and peace research theory

Introduction

Social and political conflicts are a major source of instability in the post-Cold War world. They affect not just the countries in which they occur, but very often engulf their neighbours and have a potential to throw entire regions into turmoil. Even if settlements are reached they often remain unstable resulting in a return to violence or necessitating on-going intervention by the international community. But the potential for the success of peace processes can be greatly increased when all sections of society are provided with opportunities to become active partners in their own peace process. Imposed solutions and deals done 'behind closed doors' and backed up with international pressure and force may bring temporary relief to apparently intractable problems. But 'home grown' solutions that have the widest possible support amongst the various elements that make up a society are essential for progress towards long-term stability and peace.

In the modern political world of international norms, globalization, mass media and an increasingly well-informed electorate, solutions to political, economic and social problems require a discourse and decision-making process that engages with the leadership, civil society and population at large. Achieving such a process in divided societies is problematic and requires every possible assistance and support. However, by taking advantage of some features that characterize and shape contemporary societies, it is possible to initiate a process of 'top-down/bottom-up' communication and 'political centre-out/polarities-in' decision-making that can bring divided communities closer to a consensus as to how they can best manage their affairs. By pro-actively testing public opinion as part of the search for compromise and common ground, it is

possible for negotiators to build consensus and strengthen the potential for political stability, economic prosperity and the degree of social cohesion necessary to sustain them.

To this end, I conducted nine surveys of public opinion in support of the Northern Ireland peace process between April 1996 and February 2003. Critically the questions for eight of these polls were drafted and agreed with the co-operation of party negotiators to enhance the peace process by increasing party inclusiveness, developing issues and language, testing party policies, helping to set deadlines and increase the overall transparency of negotiations through the publication of technical analysis and media reports.

In so far as it was possible the parties were given 'ownership' of the research so that they would take the results seriously. Each party to the negotiations nominated a member of their team to work with me on the polls. Questions were designed to test party policies as a series of options or preferences from across the social and political spectrum. The moderating voice of 'the silent majority' was thus given expression while extremist positions were demonstrated to be marginal with little cross community support. All questions, options and preferences had to be agreed as not being partisan or misleading. From the drafting of these questions to sample design, ethics, timing and publication, the program of research was decided by all the parties and they were encouraged to take the work in any direction that they believed would be helpful to the peace process.

The focus of the research was on problems, solutions and policies for conflict resolution as opposed to inter-community attitudes and values. Political personality/popularity questions were avoided unless it was clear that running such a question would help to solve a problem. Questions were 'pitched' at what most people could understand most of the time not at the lowest common denominator. All relevant issues were covered and no irrelevant or trivial issues. All the results were also made publicly available effectively giving the wider community a 'seat at the negotiating table' and exposing the research to the highest standards of peer review and public scrutiny. There was no 'cherry picking' of the results. Everyone had to deal with all the issues that were raised as part of what became a 'pre-negotiation problem solving exercise'.

This inter-track activity, that extended across the political spectrum to all the major parties, civil society and the public at large helped to build a consensus for the Belfast Agreement that lead to a successful referendum and subsequent period of increasing stability and peace. In an effort to internationalize this work President Clinton's Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, Senator George Mitchell, helped to secure a fellowship for me

from Atlantic Philanthropies to detail this work in my book *The People's Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, write papers and reports that were posted on the project website www.peacepolls.org and undertake polls in support of peace processes around the world, starting, it was hoped, in Israel and Palestine.

Unfortunately, just as this work got started, George Bush was elected to the US Presidency, the Republican's took over the White House and George Mitchell did not get fully engaged in the Middle East again until the Democrats regained the White House eight years later. Fortunately for me however, my fellowship had some time to run and one grant and project lead to another. A guest lecture at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) and Nobel Institute, which had recently awarded their Peace Prize to John Hume and David Trimble for the Belfast Agreement, got me invitations to meetings in Istanbul and Cyprus which in turn took me to Thesaloniki in Greece and the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe (CDRSEE). They commissioned me to undertake peace polls in Macedonia as a prelude to free and fair elections in 2002; in Bosnia and Herzegovina to analyse the state of their peace process in 2004; and in Kosovo and Serbia as a prelude to the negotiation of a 'final status' agreement for Kosovo in 2005. This was followed up with a poll of British Muslims in the context of what George Bush was calling the 'War on Terror' in 2006. A grant from the British Council (Irwin, 2009f) then took me to the United Nations in New York, Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) in Geneva and from there I was invited back to Norway for the Oslo Forum in 2007 (Irwin, 2007b). The Cvoter Foundation in Delhi then asked me to complete a peace poll in Kashmir in 2008 with follow ups in Pakistan, and that same year I started a three year programme of peace polling in Sri Lanka supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, after Barack Obama was elected President and George Mitchell was appointed his Special Envoy to the Middle East I was asked to complete a peace poll in Israel and Palestine for OneVoice in 2009 and this was followed by a project in Darfur, Sudan funded by the US State Department.

This programme of research that took me to most of the major conflicts around the world clearly demonstrated that the Northern Ireland methods could be applied elsewhere. The US probably commissions more international political polling than almost all other countries combined. The US Department of State presently undertakes an average of two polls a year in most countries where they have a mission (GAO, 2003). Additionally the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI) and USAID sponsor work in support of programs for democracy and good governance that include public opinion polls. Finally other US institutes, such as the Council on Foreign Relations,

the Carnegie and Ford foundations, the US Institute of Peace, World Public Opinion and numerous university institutions with US grants all undertake polls on an ad hoc basis.

Unfortunately none of these polling activities presently support peace processes in a sustained way as had been done in Northern Ireland. Either because they simply focus on the immediate task of gathering information or, as independent enterprises, they fail to connect to local and international political events in a way that can effectively advance the peace process they are studying. Having successfully replicated the Northern Ireland methods in a variety of other states it is now possible to say what the most important characteristics of a 'peace poll' are:

- **All the parties to a conflict should draft and agree to all the questions.**
- **All the communities and peoples to the conflict should be asked all the questions.**
- **All the results should be made public.**

And if such polls are to be undertaken in support of negotiations, as was done in Northern Ireland, then the timing and publication of the polls should be managed to coincide with the critical decision making events in the negotiations. The public opinion research, public diplomacy and negotiations should seamlessly 'dovetail' together. These principles of polling and public diplomacy in conflict settings may appear to be very simple. Perhaps they are. But regrettably this is rarely done.

When wars were fought between states 'statesmen' made peace aided and supported by professional diplomats. But wars are now more commonly fought in and between peoples (Smith, 2005) so 'people' must make peace aided and supported by pro-active public diplomacy. Governments and institutions polling in conflict settings can and must do more. With all the modern techniques of public opinion research at their disposal, combined with political and news media expertise, they can become effective mediators for peace. But after a decade of proving the value of these methods around the world they have not done so and unlike Northern Ireland most of these conflicts remain unresolved. Why, and if we know why, can this problem be solved?

The politics of peace research

I believe the answer is a qualified 'Yes' but it will not be easy given the interests of the parties to any given conflict and what we can call the politics of peace research. When these political forces are misdirected they can pervert the cause of peace and take us into war, as this most striking and costly example from the Bush years clearly demonstrates. 'Dead wrong in almost all of its pre-war judgements' was the damming conclusion of the nine member bipartisan commission set up by the US President to critically examine the failure of the US intelligence community to accurately assess Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons capabilities (The Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2005). Lord Butler's report reached similar conclusions with regards to the failings of the British intelligence community although the language used was far more circumspect (Butler, 2004). Should anyone be surprised? Donald Campbell, perhaps one of the most prominent and respected social science methodologists of the past half-century would not have been. Indeed he might have been more surprised if the US and UK intelligence communities had got things right and supported the findings of the UN inspectors in opposition to the political agendas of their respective governments.

Donald Campbell believed political power within the scientific community and social-ideological commitments (national, political, religious, economic self-interest, etc.) to be major obstacles to the achievement of an objective social science (Campbell, 1986). And he believed applied social science to be even more problematic, almost to the point of being impossible where matters of policy are concerned (Campbell, 1984, also see Campbell, 1991, 1982 and 1979). Amongst a list of such difficulties he noted:

> 'A second difference between applied social science and laboratory research is that the still greater likelihood of *extraneous, non-descriptive interests and biases* entering through the inevitable discriminatory judgemental components that exist in all science at the levels of data collection, instrument design and selection, data interpretation, and choice of theory. As we move into the policy arena there is much less social-system-of-science control over such discretionary judgement favouring descriptive validity, and there are much much stronger non-descriptive motives to consciously and unconsciously use that discretionary judgement, to, so to speak, break the glass of the galvanometer and

> get in there and push the needle one way or the other so that it provides the meter-reading wanted for non-descriptive reasons.' (Campbell, 1984)

Campbell (1986) goes on to note that: 'Since scientists have to live in the larger society and are supported by it in their scientific activity, it becomes probable that science works best on beliefs about which powerful economic, political, and religious authorities are indifferent' (also see Ravetz, 1971). Clearly quite the opposite is the case when dealing with matters of state, waging war and making peace. In these circumstances, all too frequently, both domestic electoral imperatives and powerful international economic, political and religious interests are at work. Perhaps, at this point, we should give up and not undertake peace research at all but simply resign ourselves to critically examining and reviewing the small percentage of such work that is made available to us through publication. Fortunately, however, Campbell provides us with some solutions to these difficult problems of political interests and questions of methodology. In addition to all the usual recommendations for open, transparent, multi-method, multi-team research he suggests that:

> 'There should be *adversarial stakeholder* participation in the design of each pilot experiment or program evaluation, and again in the interpretation of results. We should be consulting with the legislative and administrative opponents of the program as well as the advocates, generating measures of feared undesirable outcomes as well as promised benefits.' (Campbell, 1984, also Krause and Howard, 1976 and Bryk, 1983)

This, with some modifications appropriate to the needs of negotiations and public opinion polling, is essentially what was done as part of the Northern Ireland peace process and it proved to be a great success. In this book I will first briefly review the development of these methods that have been more extensively described and analysed elsewhere (Irwin, 2006a, 2004a, 2002a, 2001a and 1999a). However, with the focus now on the politics of peace research I shall say more than I have before about some of the 'intrigue' that surrounded this program of applied investigation and what other states/parties were trying to do. I shall then go on to review and examine these same issues with regards to public opinion and peace research in Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, relations between the West and the Muslim World, Israel and Palestine and Darfur-Sudan. The results in these cases have been mixed. Regrettably the research methods recommended by Campbell and

applied in Northern Ireland have not been systematically adopted elsewhere. Finally then I will explore some measures that could be taken in an effort to overcome the difficulties inherent in applied public opinion polling and the politics of peace research. If adopted these measures should give social scientists both the tools and opportunities to help people make peace and better enjoy the social and economic benefits that flow from peace.

2

Northern Ireland and the development of the peace polls method

I arrived in Northern Ireland in the late 1980s having been awarded a Canada Council research fellowship to make a comparative study of the education systems in Northern Ireland and Israel. At that time, under 'Direct Rule' from Westminster, local politicians had very little say in the running of Northern Ireland affairs. Unfortunately, the civil service who now assumed most of their former masters' responsibilities were not always doing a much better job. Government departments were not known for their imagination, vision and political courage when it came to implementing innovative programs that might help to build peace. A significant section of the Northern Ireland population, sometimes referred to as the 'silent majority', were very often ahead of both the politicians and the civil service in matters of reform, such as the introduction of integrated education (Staff, 1968). In this case the problem was not the people, parents or even the children who supported mixed schools and the right of choice (Irwin, 1997a). The problem was the vested interests of religious and political elites and those groups who benefited from maintaining social divisions and the status quo associated with the separation of Protestant and Catholic institutions (Akenson, 1973 and 1970) through the lack of real choice.

In this circumstance public opinion research could clearly play an important role in advancing peace in Northern Ireland and with this point in mind I teamed up with Professors Tom Hadden and Fred Boal in 1996 to complete a poll on public policy and peace-building. A few points of methodological and political significance are worth noting here. Firstly the various options for the questionnaire were written with input from both my colleagues and staff in the relevant government departments and agencies with a view to covering the full range of potential preferences from across the policy spectrum. Secondly the research was funded by the very

independent Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) who ran a special program for Northern Ireland and who were not afraid to challenge government policy in almost any area of activity including sensitive issues like policing and justice. Thirdly the results were published as a free supplement in the local current affairs magazine *Fortnight* (Hadden, Irwin, and Boal, 1996) and in the most widely read local newspaper the *Belfast Telegraph* (Irwin, 1996a, b, c, d, e, f and g).

Table 2.1. Eight options for the political future of Northern Ireland

Rank Order from 1 to 8	1 to 8
Separate Northern Irish State - The complete separation of Northern Ireland from both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and the establishment of a separate state within the European Union.	
Full incorporation into the British State - Direct rule from Westminster and local government similar to the rest of the United Kingdom with no Northern Ireland Assembly or separate laws for Northern Ireland and no Anglo-Irish Agreement.	
Continued direct rule (No change) - The continuation of direct rule from London in consultation with the Irish government under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.	
Power sharing and the Anglo-Irish Agreement - Government by a Northern Ireland Assembly and power sharing Executive under the authority of the British government but in consultation with the Irish government under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.	
Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority - Government by a Northern Ireland Assembly, power sharing Executive and a number of joint institutions established with the Republic of Ireland to deal with matters of mutual interest. (But these arrangements will not include joint authority between the British and Irish governments).	
Joint authority and power sharing - Government by joint authority between the British and Irish governments in association with an elected power sharing Executive and Assembly.	
Separate institutions for the two main communities - Creation of separate structures for the government of each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland, subject to joint authority by the British and Irish governments.	
Full incorporation into the Irish State - Full incorporation of Northern Ireland into the Republic of Ireland to create a single state within the European Union.	

The Northern Ireland peace polls were undertaken with the expressed intention of mapping out the details of a settlement or implementation arrangements that the politicians and their supporters could accept. Different types of questions can be drafted to achieve different positive

outcomes. They can be used to build confidence in the peace process, prioritize problems and solutions, and eliminate extreme positions, map-out common ground and areas of compromise and test comprehensive agreements as packages. Some of these questions were quite complex because they contained many parts or began with an extensive preamble that was provided to allow the person being interviewed an opportunity to give an informed response. To illustrate how the instrument was designed to overcome problems of bias and because I want to draw comparisons with other states on this point later I will give the results of the constitutional question here.

Table 2.1 lists eight options for the political future of Northern Ireland. The options were both accurate and understandable to the Northern Ireland electorate. Tom Hadden was a constitutional lawyer and all of the questions were pre-tested for comprehension in both communities. Interviewees were asked to rank order the options from one to eight. This produced the results in Table 2.2.

Two observations should be noted here. Firstly the preferred Protestant and Catholic options of 'British State' and 'Irish State' while being most popular in their 'own' communities (49% and 32% first choice respectively) were least popular in the 'other' community (57% and 33% last choice respectively). Secondly the 'Power Sharing' option that ended up as the 'central plank' of the Belfast Agreement, was, over all, the least unpopular option in both communities (only 4% last choice). This style of question and its associated analysis could clearly help to eliminate the negotiating positions that were simply not going to end up as part of a settlement and those positions that were.

This point was not lost on the politicians who had recently been elected to negotiate a peace agreement. They were sent free copies of the report detailing the findings of the poll and invited to nominate a member of their negotiating team to work with me to write questions and run polls on any matters of concern to them. Thus, in accordance with Campbell's exacting standards for applied social science research, parties from across the political spectrum representing loyalist and republican paramilitary groups, mainstream democratic parties and centre cross community parties all agreed the questions to be asked, the research methods to be used, the timing and mode of publication. The first two polls dealt with procedural or 'shape of the table' issues, the third poll explored all the major elements of a comprehensive settlement, the fourth poll tested that settlement against public opinion and the last four polls dealt with problems of implementation - nine polls altogether including the peace-building poll.

Table 2.2. Percentage preference for the future of Northern Ireland options in 1996

All of Northern Ireland	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
1st Pref.	10	28	10	10	10	14	2	15
2nd Pref.	11	12	22	14	15	15	6	4
3rd Pref.	12	6	18	24	16	15	6	3
4th Pref.	7	7	14	24	24	10	8	5
5th Pref.	11	8	11	15	21	15	11	6
6th Pref.	13	7	11	7	9	22	23	7
7th Pref.	13	15	10	4	2	9	36	10
8th Pref.	19	14	5	4	4	5	10	39

Catholics	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
1st Pref.	8	3	6	14	11	24	2	32
2nd Pref.	9	5	9	17	16	26	9	9
3rd Pref.	2	4	10	21	22	23	11	6
4th Pref.	4	4	18	21	23	11	12	6
5th Pref.	8	9	17	18	14	10	15	9
6th Pref.	14	10	19	8	10	5	21	12
7th Pref.	15	29	18	2	3	1	19	12
8th Pref.	34	33	5	1	3	1	11	12

Protestants	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
1st Pref.	10	49	14	7	10	6	2	2
2nd Pref.	14	19	34	13	13	3	2	1
3rd Pref.	19	8	26	25	11	7	2	1
4th Pref.	10	9	11	28	26	9	4	2
5th Pref.	13	8	6	14	28	19	9	3
6th Pref.	13	5	4	6	7	40	24	2
7th Pref.	11	3	3	6	3	15	51	8
8th Pref.	10	2	5	6	5	7	9	57

Perhaps the single most important feature of the Northern Ireland peace polls was the participation of the parties to the Stormont Talks in their design and, in particular, their collective agreement to the questions being asked. But this consensus was not arrived at easily. It required the development of both new styles of questions and methods of working with party negotiators through successive drafts that facilitated the anonymous exploration of all possible solutions to problems. The success of the polls was totally dependent on the success of this qualitative dimension of the

research. The computer operator's dictum *'garbage in - garbage out'* applies equally to the work undertaken here and its corollary *'carefully phrased and thoughtful question in - relevant and useful solution to problem out'* was the objective that had to be achieved. The value of the public opinion surveys was a direct function of the care and attention given to asking the right questions and it was to this end that the greatest resources were applied. Running a poll would normally take several weeks while the design of the questionnaire would often take as many months. In practice the work undertaken to produce an acceptable draft questionnaire went through the following stages:

1. A letter was sent out to all the parties inviting them to participate in the design and running of a public opinion poll in support of the peace process.
2. At an initial meeting with party officers a party negotiator would be assigned to the task and issues relating to methods, topics, timing and publication would be discussed.
3. An outline or ‘first draft’ questionnaire would be sent out to the party contacts for discussion purposes with a covering letter that summarised the views of parties with regards to methods, topics, timing and publication. This letter would also contain a list of the party contacts so that they would be free to discuss any matters arising with each other.
4. The second and subsequent meetings with party representatives would review the draft questionnaire to register party requests for changes and additions.
5. The third and subsequent letter and draft questionnaire noted all requests for changes and additions. For the sake of clarity footnotes would be removed relating to previous drafts so that all notes referred only to current alterations.
6. When the questionnaire started to ‘stabilise’ it would be sent out for pre-testing to identify fieldwork difficulties relating to problems of comprehension and length. The parties were notified that this stage in the work had been reached and that they should identify any final changes they might like as well as indicating which questions could possibly be left out to be dealt with in a later poll if so required.
7. Final changes were made by those running the poll on the evidence of objective fieldwork tests. These changes were noted in the final draft, which was sent to all the parties with a covering letter detailing the survey research schedule and publication date.
8. From this point onwards parties were not permitted to interfere in any way with the programme of research, analysis of data and publication.

However, they did receive full statistical reports and were free to make criticisms of the findings if they so wished.

Frequently the work of drafting questions went down 'blind allies', became pedantic or even party personal, occasionally leading to frustrations and recriminations. At such times the drafting became more than just an intellectual exercise designed to find solutions to social and political problems, it was also a medium through which all manner of concerns could be raised and commented on. If the matter could not be resolved privately then the issue could still be tested before the arbiter of public opinion. But when it was done and everyone had had their say the results were taken seriously and did affect the decision making process, because the questions asked were the ones the parties wanted answers to.

I should point out that the design of the questions evolved quite a bit with input from the parties. Rank ordering three, four or perhaps five items was not very difficult. Eight was perhaps a workable maximum. More than eight proved to be very slow and mostly unworkable. Informants got questionnaire fatigue and wanted to give up. But we had literally hundreds of options we needed to measure against each other so we switched to a five-point scale in which the interviewee just had to put a tick in one of five boxes against each option. Thus, in the third poll done with the parties, the constitutional question illustrated in Table 1 now read:

A comprehensive Northern Ireland settlement will probably have to deal with all of the issues covered in this questionnaire. Such a 'package' will be placed before the people of Northern Ireland in a referendum. Please indicate which of the following settlement 'packages' you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable' and for the purposes of this poll 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' and 'Unacceptable' mean:

- *'Essential' - You believe this option is a necessary part of a lasting settlement and should be implemented under any circumstances.*
- *'Desirable' - This option is not what you would consider to be 'Essential', but you think this option, or something very similar to it, is a good idea and should be put into practice.*
- *'Acceptable' - This option is not what you would consider to be 'Desirable', if you were given a choice, but you could certainly 'live with it'.*
- *'Tolerable' - This option is not what you want. But, as part of a lasting settlement for Northern Ireland, you would be willing to put up with it.*
- *'Unacceptable' - This option is completely unacceptable under any*

circumstances. You would not accept it, even as part of a lasting settlement.

Table 2.3. Percentage acceptability for the future of Northern Ireland options in 1997

All of Northern Ireland	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
Essential	3	13	2	3	3	4	3	14
Desirable	8	14	8	8	11	13	5	12
Acceptable	17	18	21	24	23	20	17	9
Tolerable	15	16	25	23	23	14	20	9
Unacceptable	57	39	44	42	40	49	55	56

Catholics	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
Essential	3	1	1	5	3	10	6	34
Desirable	7	3	4	13	13	27	7	24
Acceptable	13	9	12	33	31	31	25	18
Tolerable	12	12	32	30	26	13	26	14
Unacceptable	65	75	51	19	27	19	36	10

Protestants	Independent State	British State	Direct Rule	Anglo-Irish Agreement	Power Sharing	Joint Authority	Separate Institutions	Irish State
Essential	3	23	3	0	4	0	0	1
Desirable	8	21	12	3	8	2	2	1
Acceptable	20	23	27	17	17	13	12	2
Tolerable	17	18	20	20	19	13	16	6
Unacceptable	52	15	38	60	52	72	70	90

The results for this question are given in Table 2.3 and lead to the same set of conclusions as its equivalent rank order question. Firstly the preferred Protestant and Catholic options of ‘British State’ and ‘Irish State’, while being most popular in their ‘own’ communities (44% and 58% ‘essential’ or ‘desirable’ respectively), were least popular in the ‘other’ community (90% and 75% ‘unacceptable’ respectively). Secondly the ‘Power Sharing’ option that ended up as the ‘central plank’ of the Belfast Agreement, was, over all, the least unpopular option in both communities (only 40% ‘unacceptable’). This style of question was much easier for the informant to work through and the results gave the parties a far more nuanced qualitative response as to what was really important and

what was not. For example 4% and 8th preference (Table 2.2) gives no sense of the real extent of opposition to the 'Power Sharing' option while 40% 'unacceptable' did.

Given the explanatory power of this scale the parties decided to use it for all their negotiations and I continued to use it around the world for the same reasons with the added benefit of being able to make comparisons between the various conflicts I studied. To illustrate this point further and explain how the analysis was used to resolve issues in the negotiations here is an example of a question taken from a poll that included a section on human rights written as follows:

Protecting the Rights of the People of Northern Ireland
The European Convention on Human Rights protects individuals by guaranteeing each person the right…

- *To life.*
- *Not to be tortured or subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment.*
- *To protection from slavery or forced work.*
- *Not to be unlawfully arrested or detained.*
- *To a fair trial.*
- *To freedom of belief and expression.*
- *To free association.*
- *To privacy and family life.*
- *Not to be discriminated against.*
- *To a remedy for breaches of human rights.*

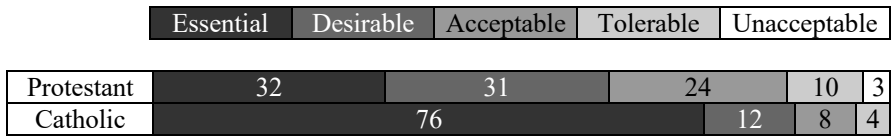
The new Labour government plan to introduce this Convention into the domestic law of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This will allow any complaints regarding failures to meet these minimum standards to be heard by courts in the UK and Northern Ireland. Do you think this is 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'?

	Essential	*Desirable*	*Acceptable*	*Tolerable*	*Unacceptable*
The European Convention on Human Rights should be part of the domestic law of Northern Ireland.					

The analysis was undertaken using a variant of the voting system used in the talks themselves. 'Sufficient Consensus' required that a majority from each community agree the final settlement (50% + one of Nationalists and

50% + one of Unionists). In the poll if more than 50% from each community considered an option ‘essential’, ‘desirable’, ‘acceptable’, or ‘tolerable’ then it was a potential ‘winner’ but if more than 50% considered an option ‘unacceptable’ then that option was considered problematic. It might have to be discarded or ‘horse traded’ for another ‘Unacceptable’ option. Thus the results for the above question on human rights can be presented as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Protestant and Catholic support for the Option ‘The European Convention on Human Rights should be a part of the domestic law of Northern Ireland’



Clearly a majority of both Catholics and Protestants find this option ‘essential’ or ‘desirable’. However, in Figure 2.2, a range of options for the various powers that North/South bodies could be given produced a far more mixed result. A majority of Protestants would not accept option 4, ‘powers to develop and execute forward planning for the island of Ireland as a whole’, while a majority of Catholics would not accept option 6 - 'there should not be any North/South bodies with any powers or functions' at all. Option 3, ‘Have powers to administer laws made by the separate governments in the North and the South of Ireland’, was about as far as the Protestant community was willing to go on this issue and this option was the one that became part of the Belfast Agreement.

In addition to hundreds of questions and options drafted in this way some very simple ‘Yes/No’ questions were also used with the expressed intention of producing a headline in the local press. For example, ‘Do you want the Belfast Agreement to work? – 93% said ‘Yes’. This question was asked in the last four polls and got a headline and front-page story in the *Belfast Telegraph* on 3 March 1999. However, this simple question was preceded by a more complex one that asked the person being interviewed which elements of the Belfast Agreement they considered to be ‘very important’, ‘important’, ‘of some importance’, ‘of little importance’ or ‘of no importance’ at all. In previous polls people had similarly been asked how ‘significant’ they considered various causes of ‘The Troubles’ to be and how ‘important’ they thought various steps were for resolving these problems. Then, by simply taking the percentage response to the first option ‘very significant’ and ranking the results in order of the perceived

causes of 'The Troubles', for Protestants and Catholics respectively, Table 2.4 was produced. This methodology objectively presented the major concerns of the two communities that needed to be dealt with if the Belfast Agreement was to translate into a successful peace process. There can be no doubt that a very great deal had been accomplished but, clearly, the Northern Ireland peace process still had quite a long way to go when this question was asked.

Figure 2.2. Protestant and Catholic support for the six options 'On matters of mutual interest North/South bodies should':

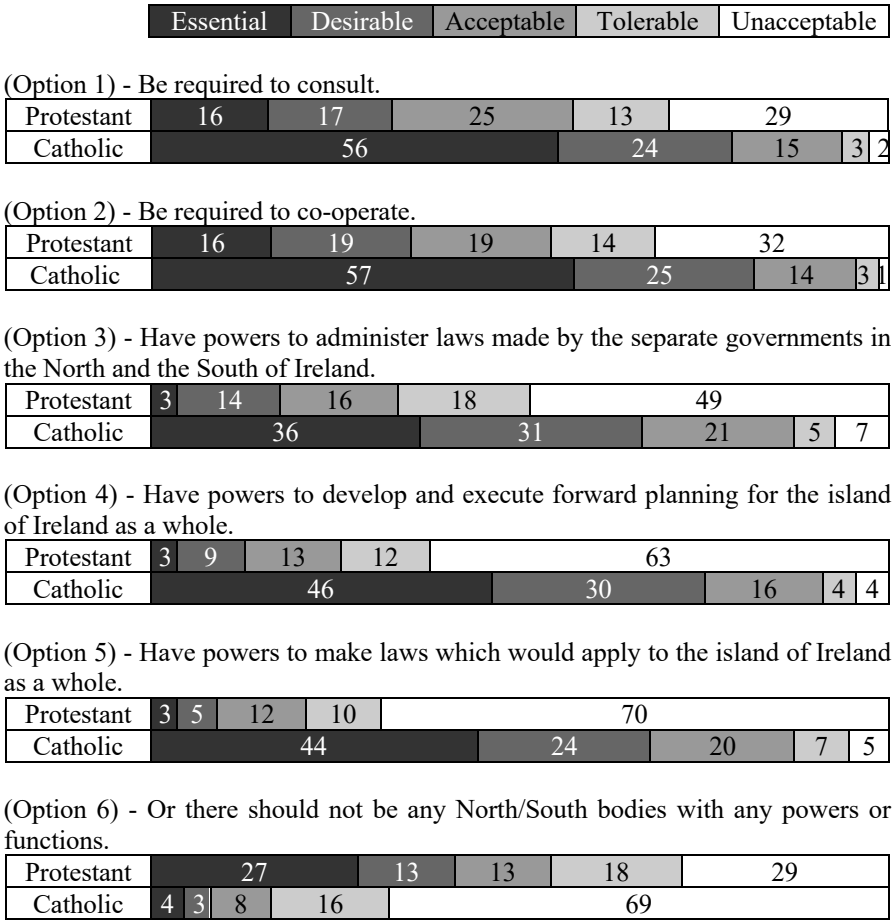


Table 2.4. Protestant and Catholic perceptions of the causes of 'The Troubles'

	Protestant per cent	Very Significant	Catholic per cent	Very Significant
1st	The Irish Republican Army and their use of violence.	87	The Lack of equality and continued discrimination.	71
2nd	All paramilitary groups and their use of violence.	67	The sectarian division of Northern Ireland politics.	66
3rd	The failure of government and the security forces to deal with terrorism.	56	The failure to provide a police service acceptable to all.	62
4th	The Republic's territorial claim on Northern Ireland.	53	The failures of Northern Ireland politicians.	59
5th	The Loyalist paramilitaries and their use of violence.	53	A lack of respect for the people of the 'other' tradition.	57
6th	The Republic of Ireland's involvement in Northern Ireland.	42	The Loyalist paramilitaries and their use of violence.	57
7th	The failures of Northern Ireland politicians.	31	All paramilitary groups and their use of violence.	56
8th	Unaccountable and secretive government.	31	Unaccountable and secretive government.	52
9th	A lack of respect for the people of the 'other' tradition.	30	The continued British presence on the island of Ireland.	51
10th	The sectarian division of Northern Ireland politics.	30	The British Army and their use of violence.	48
11th	The prominent role of the Roman Catholic Church.	29	The Irish Republican Army and their use of violence.	45
12th	Segregated education.	25	The failure of government and the security forces to deal with terrorism.	34
13th	Segregated public housing.	22	Segregated public housing.	33
14th	The Lack of equality and continued discrimination.	21	Segregated education.	31
15th	The British Government's pursuit of a political settlement.	20	The British Government's pursuit of a political settlement.	23
16th	The continued British presence on the island of Ireland.	17	The Republic's territorial claim on Northern Ireland.	21
17th	The 'Established Church' in Britain and the Orange Order.	14	The 'Established Church' in Britain and the Orange Order.	21
18th	The failure to provide a police service acceptable to all.	9	The Republic of Ireland's involvement in Northern Ireland.	16
19th	The British Army and their use of violence.	6	The prominent role of the Roman Catholic Church.	10

It should be pointed out that the British and Irish governments were opposed to this independent program of research. They did not wish to participate in the collective writing of the questions, designing the research or acting as funders. They even raised objections to my presence in the building where the parties were provided with office space but were overruled by the parties at a meeting of their business committee. The two governments had their own plans for a settlement and did not want those plans disturbed too much by either the will of the parties or the people of Northern Ireland. Fortunately Senator Mitchell, the negotiations chairman appointed by President Clinton, and his US State Department staff understood the benefits of the independent research and supported it. So the program of public opinion polling went ahead, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust paid most of the bills, the Belfast Agreement was concluded and the parties knew they could win a referendum before the referendum was run. Seventy-seven per cent of the Northern Ireland electorate said 'yes' to the Agreement when it was tested against public opinion (Irwin, 1998l) and that support only dropped to 71% in the referendum proper. Our program of applied social research was both successful and, as these things go, quite accurate.

With all the benefits of hindsight it is now possible to say that the negotiation of the Belfast Agreement was a very unique and special process indeed. For example, the formal negotiations were preceded by two major preparatory events, the Opsahl Commission (Pollak, 1992) and Dublin Forum for Peace and Reconciliation (Forum for Peace and Reconciliation, 1995, 1995-6), to which all manner of submissions could be made and discussions take place. Both would have been suitable vehicles for public opinion research but this aspect of the negotiations did not get underway until parties were elected to the Northern Ireland Forum for Peace and Reconciliation (HMSO, 1996). The British Government designed the elections to this forum so that all groups, including those with Loyalist and Republican paramilitary associations, would get a place at the negotiating table so that the Stormont Talks, along with the research reviewed here, would be fully inclusive across the whole of the political spectrum. Subsequently the two governments, if they had chaired the talks, might not have maintained this degree of inclusivity but the talks chairman, George Mitchell was independent and favoured an approach that did not leave any party, however small, outside the process. Although the smaller parties had relatively little political influence in terms of voting power they were a constant source of creative ideas as they could take more risks having less to lose.

This negotiations structure and culture helped to facilitate the application of Campbell's standards for applied social research so that the

development of questions and the running and publishing of polls could be undertaken to deal with problems as they arose. The British and Irish governments started to see the benefits of the work. The Irish Government signalled their approval by inviting me to some of their social functions and when Peter Mandelson was made Secretary of State for Northern Ireland he had me over for a chat.

Other organisations were also running polls on the peace process: the BBC, various newspapers, the Northern Ireland Office and the US State Department. As the State Department also runs polls on peace processes around the world I shall take a look at their work for comparative purposes. The emphasis of most media, political party and government polling is electoral politics. What leaders, parties and policies are most likely to represent a winning formula or team next time the electorate are asked to cast their vote? But the polling done in support of the talks was undertaken in an effort to solve problems in the negotiations so what we began to call 'beauty contest' questions were, for the most part, avoided. For example questions that tested the popularity of various political personalities against each other such as 'How satisfied are you with the performance of etc. etc…?' could be unhelpful in a conflict resolution and negotiation setting as politicians who were perceived of as being 'the enemy' or who were taking political risks by entering into agreements with 'the enemy' could get poor ratings that might work against the objectives of the peace process. Additionally the policy questions run by the governments tended to emphasise attitudes towards policies for monitoring purposes rather than problem solving. For example the State Department constitutional question for the future of Northern Ireland run in 1995 only asked for the informants' first preference and as such provided only limited information on the strength of support or opposition for the various options on offer (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5. Results of the 1995 US Consulate (2003) constitutional question

Which of the following political developments would you most like to see in Northern Ireland?	Protestants	Catholics
Northern Ireland becoming more fully part of the UK	48	6
A return to majority rule and a parliament at Stormont	8	2
A local parliament for Northern Ireland within the UK, with power sharing between local parties	33	23
Northern Ireland under the authority of both Britain and the Irish Republic	2	26
Northern Ireland as part of a united Ireland	2	33
Northern Ireland as an independent state	7	6

However, following the publication of the work done with the parties in the talks, the State Department changed their constitutional question to more closely resemble our instrument in terms of both the language used to describe each option and by introducing a 'preferred, acceptable, unacceptable' scale (Table 2.6) and an 'acceptable, unacceptable' scale (Table 2.7).

Table 2.6. Results of the 1998 US Consulate (2003) constitutional question

I would like to ask your opinion of a number of political arrangements which might be considered for Northern Ireland. For each one, please tell me whether you consider that option to be preferred, acceptable or unacceptable.	Protestant Per cent preferred	Catholic Per cent preferred
Northern Ireland within the UK, with direct rule from London	40	4
A local assembly for Northern Ireland within the UK, based on majority rule	26	4
A local assembly for Northern Ireland within the UK with power-sharing between local parties	21	20
Northern Ireland under the authority of both the UK and the Republic of Ireland	1	16
Northern Ireland as part of a united Republic of Ireland	1	38
Northern Ireland as an independent state, not part of either the UK or the Republic of Ireland	8	7

Table 2.7. Results of the 2003 US Consulate (2003) constitutional question

Catholics	Direct rule	Local assembly - majority rule	Local assembly - power sharing	Joint UK-ROI authority	United Republic of Ireland	Independent state
Acceptable	23	42	79	63	58	30
Unacceptable	77	58	21	37	42	70

Protestants	Direct rule	Local assembly - majority rule	Local assembly - power sharing	Joint UK-ROI authority	United Republic of Ireland	Independent state
Acceptable	71	79	75	14	6	17
Unacceptable	29	21	25	86	94	83

Unfortunately the State Department option that ended up with the greatest cross community support 'A local assembly for Northern Ireland within the UK with power-sharing between local parties' critically did not include 'North-South institutions' (Table 2.1) and therefore did not accurately reflect the major elements of the Belfast Agreement. Consequently the Protestant support for this option was stronger than it would have been if it had been correctly described (52% 'unacceptable' in Table 2.3 and only 25% 'unacceptable' in Table 2.6).

For the most part State Department polls are kept confidential. The results reproduced here in Tables 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 are taken from a US Consulate (2003) press release put out in 2003 to demonstrate continuing support for devolved government in Northern Ireland. The results were 'cherry picked' for political effect. As a consequence journalists and politicians in Northern Ireland did not take them as seriously as they might if they came with full disclosure. The media and the US Consulate (in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Northern Ireland) did sometimes consult with parties on questions to be asked but they did not go as far as asking parties to 'sign off' on a given questionnaire. Inaccuracies and biases crept in, there was little transparency and the standards for applied social science set by Campbell were far from being met.

I would be the first to admit that working with up to ten political parties and getting them all to agree a common program of research is not easy. It requires considerable patience but the benefits of building a political consensus supported by a majority of the electorate is well worth the effort. It brings stability through agreements that are clearly seen to have the support of the people. Working with just two political parties, behind closed doors, is much simpler. This is how governments usually handle their negotiations and when the British government reverted to this style of closed, exclusive dialogue in an effort to resolve outstanding differences between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin in 2004 the negotiations failed in December of that year (Northern Ireland Office, 2004). In the absence of an agreement the Northern Ireland Office published their, Proposals by the British and Irish Governments for a Comprehensive Agreement on 8 December 2004 in the hope that public support could now help to resolve the problem. But publication was followed by a murder and bank robbery attributed to the IRA and the opportunity for positive public diplomacy was lost. Subsequently Millward Brown Ulster published a poll in the Belfast Telegraph on Thursday 10 March 2005 demonstrating support for IRA decommissioning and disbanding amongst Sinn Féin supporters at 59% and 44% respectively (Thornton, 2005). At the request of the Sinn Féin leadership the IRA then

agreed to reconsider their position but this was all far too late for the 2004 negotiations. The poll also failed to adequately address the problem of 'transparency'. The DUP had wanted photographs of decommissioning but Sinn Féin and the IRA rejected this proposal as 'humiliation'. So when the IRA announced an end to their 'armed campaign' on 28 July 2005 and asked their volunteers to 'dump arms' no acceptable alternative to photography was proposed. A list of such proposals, tested against public opinion and published in the Northern Ireland press may have helped to resolve this issue.

But using public opinion and public diplomacy in such a pro-active way runs against the natural desire of governments and interested parties to control negotiations to their particular advantage. The Clinton lead negotiations between Israel and Palestine and the UN lead negotiations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots arguably failed in 2000 and 2004 for such reasons (Klein, 2002 and Wilton Park Conference, 2005) and there was still a very great deal to be done to bring stability to the Balkans more than a decade after the end of their war. Hopefully exploring some comparisons between these and other examples of failed or inconclusive negotiations will help to shed a little more light on what kind of public opinion polling can best help to build peace in the modern world of 24/7 media coverage and well informed electorates who want and should be active partners in their own peace process.

3

The Northern Ireland peace polls and negotiation of the Belfast Agreement

Although I have spent the past ten years applying lessons learnt from the Northern Ireland peace process and negotiations to other conflicts around the world the work in Northern Ireland remains the greatest success. As a 'bench mark' then I will briefly review these polls in their political context now saying more than could be said at the time about the various parties, their conflicting interests and how public opinion was used to resolve them.

But firstly, it would be as well, to briefly place the work on the Northern Ireland peace polls in the broader context of the larger conflict and the local political parties. Northern Ireland is a deeply divided society in which the major political cleavage falls along sectarian lines. Catholics, for the most part, identify themselves with the Republic of Ireland and would wish to see Northern Ireland united with the Republic to the South while most Protestants consider themselves to be British and wish to maintain the Union with Great Britain.

Discrimination and the conflicting political aspirations of the two communities precipitated periods of violence in the North that culminated in the recent 'Troubles'.[1] After nearly 30 years of terrorist actions, the transfer of regional power to Direct Rule from London and numerous failed political initiatives to find a solution to the 'Irish question' the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland was established in 1996. Critically a system of proportional representation was used to elect representatives to the Forum, which ensured participation from all sections of the Northern Ireland community. Ten parties thus gained the right to nominate representatives to the Stormont Talks, the negotiations on the

[1] For a comprehensive history of this period in the Northern Ireland conflict see Bell (1993).

future of Northern Ireland, along with the British and Irish Governments all under the Chairmanship of Senator George Mitchell of the USA.[2] The ten parties, who also appointed negotiators to work on these public opinion polls, were as follows:

Five mainly Protestant and Unionist parties, two with Loyalist paramilitary connections:

- The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), with 30 seats in the Forum was the largest Unionist party and was led by David Trimble.
- The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), with 24 seats in the Forum, was led by the Reverend Ian Paisley.
- The United Kingdom Unionist Party (UKUP), with 3 seats in the Forum, was led by Robert McCartney.
- The Progressive Unionist Party (PUP), led by David Ervine, had 2 seats in the Forum and were the political representatives of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Red Hand Commando (RHC).
- The Ulster Democratic Party (UDP), led by Gary McMichael, also had 2 seats in the Forum and were the political representatives of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF).

Two mainly Catholic and Nationalist parties, one with Republican paramilitary connections:

- The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), with 21 seats in the Forum, was the largest Nationalist party and was led by John Hume.
- Sinn Féin (SF), led by Gerry Adams, had 17 seats in the Forum and was the political wing of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Three cross community centre parties:

- The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, with 7 seats in the Forum, was the largest centre party and was led by John, later Lord Alderdice.
- The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition had 2 seats in the Forum and was led by Monica MacWilliams.
- The Labour Party of Northern Ireland also had 2 seats in the Forum and was led by Malachi Curran.

[2] For a review of this period of the Northern Ireland peace process see Cox, Guelke and Stephen (2000).

Poll 1 - Peace Building and Public Policy[3]

This poll, discussed in the previous chapter, was an academic exercise undertaken to explore and demonstrate the value of public opinion as a tool for peace building. After the publication of our reports in *Fortnight* (Hadden, Irwin, and Boal, 1996) and the *Belfast Telegraph* (Irwin, 1996a, b, c, d, e, f and g) I wrote to and met with all the political parties elected to the Forum as well as the British and Irish governments and office of the talks chairman George Mitchell. The reaction was mixed. The British government wanted nothing to do with the project and even asked me to tell the parties that this was their position. The Irish government had strong reservations but started to make some suggestions for future questions, which were eventually addressed. However, without the participation of the British government the prospect of working with one government and not the other was politically untenable. The US State Department representative took me out to dinner and was very positive about the work as George Mitchell considered such polling to be most useful. As for the parties, they all came 'on board'. However some were keener than others. The three small centre parties – Alliance, NI Women's Coalition and Labour Party of Northern Ireland – all promptly appointed members of their negotiating team to work with me on the polls. They knew their policies had the support of the 'silent majority' and understood the value of the polls to get their message out.

I had already established contacts with the Loyalist and Republican parties with paramilitary connections in order to run the first poll in this series. Without their cooperation it would not have been possible to do fieldwork in the areas that they controlled. They were happy to continue working on the project so long as they had an opportunity to ask the questions important to them in the knowledge that they would be honestly tested amongst their people and the results made public. Similarly I have never had any problem with such groups around the world as the political elites and governments who they are opposed to nearly always misrepresent them. Having said that they were concerned that the 'organisations' of the 'other side' might try to manipulate the answers given in the areas under their influence to bias the results in their favour. Accordingly both the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defence Association (UDA) did interfere with the polling company's interviewers

[3] This survey was carried out on a randomly selected sample taken from the voters register in Northern Ireland. Questionnaires were distributed and collected by Market Research Northern Ireland (MRNI) during April and May 1996. A total of 715 questionnaires were completed to give a satisfactory distribution in terms of sex, age, social class, urban/rural location and communal affiliation.

undertaking the fieldwork (Market Research Northern Ireland – MRNI) to see what we would do about it. I had been given mobile telephone numbers for the leadership of these organisations, they were contacted, a complaint made and the matter resolved. In the knowledge that we would not tolerate such interference the work then proceeded without any further incidents.

With the three centre parties and parties representing the paramilitary groups, including the IRA, committed to the polls the major Nationalist party, the SDLP, who had been encouraging the IRA to give up violence for politics, appointed their chief negotiator, Mark Durken, to work with me. His input was invaluable as he was one of the few seasoned politicians I had an opportunity to work with who had first hand experience of previous negotiations. The Reverend Dr. Paisley and his son then interviewed me. Dr. Paisley expressed the view that he thought my work had a bias towards the Catholic community. I explained that most Unionists shared that view but that most Nationalist also thought my work had a Protestant bias. He accepted this explanation and appointed his son, Ian Paisley Junior as the DUP's interlocutor. Finally, not to be left out, the then largest political party in Northern Ireland, the UUP appointed a very able lawyer as their representative. The team was now complete and we started to draft a questionnaire to help 'kick start' negotiations.

Poll 2 - After the Elections...?[4]

The first in the series of polls undertaken with the co-operation of the political parties elected to take part in the Stormont Talks was conducted in March and published in April 1997 to help set a context for an invigorated talks process after the May elections. Some general problems were dealt with as well as procedural questions about decommissioning and the participation of parties with paramilitary associations. In general the electorate wanted 'all party talks' with a minimum of preconditions (Irwin, 1997b, c, d, e, f, g and h). Some observations on some specific questions may be helpful here.

The first question was a very general one designed to put the interviewee at ease. "Do you support the principle of a negotiated settlement for the political future of Northern Ireland?" 94% said "Yes" ranging from a high of 99% for Alliance voters to a low of 90% for DUP

[4] As it had taken two months to collect the random sample for Poll 1 this, and the other polls in this series, now used a 1000 face-to face interview method based on a quota sample collected by MRNI at 48 different points across the Province to produce a representative sample in terms of age, gender, social class, religious affiliation and geographical area.

supporters. The idea for this question had been borrowed from President De Klerk who, in 1994, had asked the white population of South Africa - "Do you support the continuation of the reform process which the State President began on 2 February 1990 and which is aimed at a new constitution through negotiation?" 69% said "Yes" and with this mandate he was able to complete his historic agreement with Nelson Mandela and the ANC. We hoped for a similar outcome in Northern Ireland. It was a confidence-building question.

A series of questions then dealt with procedural or 'shape of the table' questions that focused on who should be allowed into the talks and when the decommissioning of illegally held weapons should be undertaken.

The people of Northern Ireland wanted peace but not peace at any price. They supported all party talks providing cease-fires were called but were willing to have decommissioning dealt with as a separate issue. Additionally, with regard to procedural matters, people were asked for their opinions on various uses for referendums to replace, advance, advise or endorse a talks settlement. All these options were acceptable. The only one that wasn't was 'no referendum'. People wanted to have their say.

With regards to substantive issues some first steps were taken in this poll to try and eliminate the extreme political positions of 'die hard' Republicans and Unionists that would never be acceptable to both communities. As well as finding out what people could agree to, it was also important to underline what was genuinely unacceptable. On the status of Northern Ireland, independence, which was never realistically on offer, was generally unpopular. Protestants solidly wanted to stay in the Union but Catholics were more flexible, except for Sinn Féin supporters who wanted a united Ireland. Not much common ground there, except for the elimination of the separate state option, which was progress of sorts. Catholics also wanted stronger relations with the Republic through the establishment of North-South institutions. Protestants were not overly enthusiastic about this option but considered the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which had been signed without their consent, even more unacceptable. The North-South bodies, agreed to as part of a negotiated settlement, was the lesser of these two evils as far as the Protestants were concerned and in these terms a potential settlement winner. With regards to the shape of government within Northern Ireland, Protestants wanted a devolved assembly subject to majority rule; Catholics wanted the same but with responsibility or power sharing. No devolution at all or separate institutions for each community were generally unpopular. People were tired of the Northern Ireland Office running their affairs with little public accountability and they didn't want a political divorce in spite of 'The Troubles'. Some form of devolved government was definitely going to be

part of the solution.

Poll 3 - The Future of the Stormont Talks

The DUP and UKUP said they would not stay in the talks with Sinn Féin present and the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) said they would consult with their 'grass roots' before deciding if they would stay in or not. If they walked away from the talks, the negotiations would have collapsed with no significant Unionist participation. This poll, conducted in September 1997, demonstrated public support for the peace process and for continued Unionist participation (Irwin, 1997i and j).

The critical question at this time was 'In today's circumstances do you want the political party you support to stay in the talks?' 92% of the people of Northern Ireland said 'Yes' ranging from a high of 100% for Sinn Féin voters to a low of 76% for DUP supporters. These results warranted a front page headline in the *Belfast Telegraph*. Other questions elaborated this simple 'yes/no' option with various Unionist preconditions on: decommissioning before talks; dealing with the Republics claim on the territory of Northern Ireland before talks; rejecting the two governments 'Framework Document' as a basis for talks; and finally, rejecting talks altogether. None of these options were acceptable. The people wanted talks. But a BBC poll run at the same time also asked if the parties they supported should negotiate with Sinn Féin. For most Protestants this was a step too far so, although the Ulster Unionists stayed in the talks, they never spoke directly to Sinn Féin and only addressed them through the talks Chairman Senator George Mitchell.

A second set of questions dealt with what to do if various parties walked out of the talks or if the talks collapsed. In practice, under the rules of the negotiations, if the largest Unionist party, the UUP, or largest Nationalist party, the SDLP, left the talks then the talks would collapse. The electorate understood and accepted this reality but also accepted the proposition that if Sinn Féin 'walked' then the talks should continue. However, in the event of a collapse, the people of Northern Ireland also wanted the two governments to put a proposed settlement before them in a referendum. Most people, it would seem, welcome opportunities to exercise their democratic franchise, particularly if the politicians they elect to do a certain job fail to undertake or complete that responsibility.

Poll 4 – In Search of a Settlement

While all these political negotiations were going on and the official talks were stuck on procedural issues all the parties continued to negotiate substantive issues through the public opinion poll process. Thus, in December 1997, a third poll was conducted on all the substantive issues and was published in January 1998 in an effort to move the talks process forward. After increased violence over the Christmas period this effort proved to be successful and most of the parties started to negotiate in earnest with the exception of Sinn Féin who held firm to a 'non-partitionist' settlement that excluded the possibility of a regional assembly for Northern Ireland (Irwin, 1998a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h and i).

This questionnaire was the most complex one of them all. It had to deal with all the elements of an agreement for which options had been in the drafting process with the parties for nearly a year. In this case the informant had to provide 273 responses on a wide variety of matters. The other polls were conducted as 'face to face' interviews but this one was a 24 page take home booklet (almost an exam!) that had to be filled out. The first important question in this survey asked the interviewee to rate the significance of 19 causes of the Northern Ireland conflict and the second question did the same for 17 steps that could be taken towards a lasting peace. These questions proved to be very useful and informative when analysed for the two main communities to produce separate rankings of their respective concerns and aspirations. Through this objective measure everyone could see what their opponents constituencies considered to be most important and the two lists were substantially different. For Protestants the number one issue was paramilitary violence and how to deal with it. For Catholics it was questions of equality and police reform (Table 2.4). Reform of the institutions of government, the primary focus of the peace process, was much lower on everyone's list. Unfortunately this failure to get the priorities right weakened the effectiveness of the Belfast Agreement and arguably put the peace process at risk in 1999. The second section of the questionnaire contained 29 questions on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the third section had 25 questions on police reform. All these questions were drafted by all the parties but, for the most part, were left out of the Agreement to be dealt with at a later date by Commissions.

The questionnaire then went on to deal with the major political/institutional elements of the Belfast Agreement with 39 questions on Strand One, which covered relationships in Northern Ireland relating to regional government. Fifty-six questions on Strand Two which covered relationships within the island of Ireland notably North/South bodies.

Twenty questions on Strand Three which covered relationships between the British and Irish governments and dealt with a replacement for the Anglo-Irish Agreement as well as an additional 16 questions on constitutional issues.

By employing a method of analysis based on the voting system used in the talks – a simple majority from both communities - a summary of what an acceptable agreement would look like was produced as follows:

A Comprehensive Settlement

- A Regional Assembly made up from elected members who share responsibilities in proportion to their representation and employing a voting system with other checks and balances to ensure the fair participation of both communities in government and the prevention of abuse of power.
- North/South bodies strictly controlled by the elected politicians who establish them to deal with a wide range of issues using various functions and powers appropriate to the areas of government policy being managed.
- Replace the Anglo-Irish Agreement with a Council of the Islands to establish a new relationship between London, Dublin, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast appropriate to the needs of the region as a part of Europe.
- Constitutional reform that embraces the principle of consent and other balanced changes required to implement the various agreements made at the Stormont talks.
- A Bill of Rights that deals specifically with the political, social and cultural problems that have aggravated the conflict and a Human Rights Commission with responsibilities and powers to educate, monitor standards and bring cases to court.
- A reformed two-tier police service restructured with a view to recruiting more Catholics and improving community relations under the authority of a new Department of Justice in a Regional Assembly.

This solution proved to be very close to the deal struck on Good Friday and was used as a basis for testing a ‘Comprehensive Settlement’ package in poll number five.

Poll 5 - A Comprehensive Settlement

With the DUP and UKUP outside the talks and Sinn Féin not willing to actively negotiate, a test 'package' – very similar to the one outlined above - was agreed by the remaining seven parties and a survey conducted in March 1998. The poll also included alternatives put forward by the DUP, UKUP and Sinn Féin. This survey of public opinion proved to be critical as it demonstrated the lack of cross party support for the extreme Unionist and Republican proposals but showed that the centre ground settlement agreed to by the seven remaining parties could win support if put to the people of Northern Ireland in a referendum (Irwin, 1998j, k, l and m).

In this survey two simple questions were asked about the 'package'. Firstly, 'If a majority of the political parties elected to take part in the Stormont talks agreed to this settlement would you vote to accept it in a referendum?' Seventy seven per cent said 'Yes'. But secondly, when asked 'If you said 'Yes' would you still accept these terms for a settlement even if the political party you supported was opposed to them?' the 'Yes' vote dropped to 50%. These results were taken very seriously by both the parties and two governments. If the parties could agree on a deal they could 'carry the day'. But if they could not agree then it was very unlikely that the two governments would be able to push a deal through against the opposition of a majority of the parties. Everyone needed everyone else. It was a 'united we stand divided we fall' situation.

After the 'package' as a whole was 'voted on' by the person being interviewed they were asked how they felt about each part of the 'package' separately. It is interesting to note that the respective Protestant and Catholic communities remained strongly opposed to some of the individual reforms but were willing to accept them as part of an overall agreed settlement. The whole, it would seem, was greater than the sum of its' individual parts. Another important section of this poll included the repetition of Unionist and Republican alternatives to the comprehensive settlement. These proposals, although strongly supported in the separate communities, continued to receive little or no cross party support. Visiting these issues again, at this critical point in the negotiations, helped to underline the fact that there was no alternative to the carefully worked out compromise.

Poll 6 - Implementation of the Belfast Agreement[5]

It was intended that the referendum of May 22nd should have marked the end of this series of public opinion polls. However, in September of 1998 a few parties indicated their desire to continue the work. Decommissioning was still at the top of the Unionist agenda - but not Sinn Féin's. Some of the parties wanted to tackle this issue again, perhaps in the hope of renegotiating it. By the end of the year it had become apparent that the failure to set up the Executive with the inclusion of Sinn Féin could bring the agreement down. With this very real concern in mind the PUP and Sinn Féin decided to undertake a poll that would explore all the possibilities for resolving this problem but strictly within the terms of the Belfast Agreement as they understood it. It was now January 1999 and the issue had been festering since the elections the previous summer with Sinn Féin and the Ulster Unionists painting themselves ever more tightly into their respective corners. If funds had been made available in September the problem might have been more easily dealt with then. But some of the parties did not consider it to be a serious problem at that time and would not support a poll. Everyone had a veto. It was not until the problem became almost intractable that the veto was lifted and the poll was funded. But this is all said with the wisdom of 20/20 hindsight. If the problem had been fixed everyone would have said, "It was best left to the politicians to resolve". But they didn't and it hadn't.

The poll turned out to be both effective and interesting. Effective because it demonstrated that the people of Northern Ireland were willing to be pragmatic and wanted their politicians to do what had to be done to make the Belfast Agreement work. The governments and parties got into a new set of talks after the poll was published almost competing with each other in a rush to issue the first invitation. The poll was interesting as responses to some of the questions clearly demonstrated that the reason why progress with implementation was so slow was because Unionists did not trust Republicans and Republicans did not trust Unionists. An agreement, it would seem, is not enough. Trust and confidence is also required and all the important issues that had been left unresolved in the Belfast Agreement still remained at the top of the Protestant and Catholic 'to do' lists – decommissioning and police reform respectively (Irwin, 1999b, c, d, e, f and g).

[5] As this poll was undertaken by Sinn Féin and the PUP it included a booster sample of 50 PUP/UVF supporters to ensure a statistically significant representation of these Loyalists in the usual 1000 Northern Ireland sample.

Poll 7 - The Mitchell Review

Decommissioning and setting up the Executive still proved to be 'a bridge too far'. The negotiations of that summer failed with the Unionists refusing to take up their Ministerial posts in the absence of a hand over of weapons. Their slogan was 'No guns, no government'. Faced with a political 'stand off' Seamus Mallon, the Nationalist Deputy First Minister, resigned thereby throwing the peace process into a review. Senator George Mitchell was persuaded to return to take on this unwelcome task and another poll was conducted in support of these negotiations. But on this occasion all the Pro-Agreement Parties were involved, not just the PUP and Sinn Féin. It did not produce any remarkably new results. The people of Northern Ireland still wanted their politicians to 'cut a deal'. Critically the Ulster Unionists now took the results of the poll seriously and a 'step by step' program for implementation was agreed (Irwin, 1999h and i).

This was the most difficult poll of them all. Not because the issues were particularly complex but because, from the outset, neither Sinn Féin nor the Ulster Unionists really wanted to negotiate. When the questions for this poll started to be drafted neither of these two parties had actually agreed to participate in the Mitchell Review and their first contributions were no more preconditions to setting up the Executive from Sinn Féin and 'No Executive' without decommissioning and an end to all violence from the Ulster Unionists. Fortunately all the centre parties to this disagreement, the PUP, UDP, SDLP, Alliance and Women's Coalition, played an invaluable constructive role by introducing options for compromises and pointing out the dangers to the peace process of running some of the unhelpful questions suggested by other parties.

As was often done in previous polls some confidence building questions were asked. Eighty-five per cent of the people of Northern Ireland wanted the Mitchell Review to be a success and this was probably the last best opportunity to get the Belfast Agreement implemented. It could not be lost so a series of questions were included to highlight people's fears on this point. Only 44% of people asked thought the Review would succeed and support for the Belfast Agreement had dropped from 71% in the referendum to 65% with Protestants now split 50/50. If a way forward could not be found now it was not going to be found. Only 10% of Sinn Féin supporters trusted the Ulster Unionists 'a lot' or 'a little' while only 5% of them trusted Sinn Féin 'a lot' or 'a little'. In-spite of this lack of trust David Trimble led his party into the Executive, Gerry Adams persuaded the IRA to appoint a 'go between' to work with the Independent International Decommissioning Commission and the British Government published the Patton report on the reform of the RUC. Important steps had

been taken but the peace process was far from done.

Poll 8 - The Future of the Peace Process

Unfortunately, when the Ulster Unionist Council formally accepted the terms of the Mitchell Review for going into Government with Sinn Féin, they had also added a condition that IRA decommissioning should begin within a set period of time. From a Republican point of view their 'voluntary act' had now become an 'act of surrender'. Consequently, beyond appointing an IRA representative to work with General de Chastelain and his Commission, little happened on the decommissioning front, the Unionists withdrew their support for the Executive and in February 2000 the new British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Mandelson, suspended the institutions of government set up under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. It was 'back to the drawing board' and the two governments undertook what amounted to an informal review in an effort to solve the decommissioning problem yet again. They were successful. The concepts of decommissioning as a 'voluntary act' undertaken, initially, as a 'confidence building measure' were now accepted by Unionists and, critically, the idea of decommissioning by 'placing arms beyond use' in secure, inspected dumps was accepted by the IRA. These proposals were tested in the eighth poll 'The Future of the Peace Process' published in the *Belfast Telegraph* on May 25, 2000 (Irwin, 2000a). Seventy two per cent of Ulster Unionist supporters wanted their party to go back into government with Sinn Féin and the Ulster Unionist Council agreed to do so at their meeting of May 27, 2000 by a narrow majority of 459 votes to 403.

Unfortunately it was not until after the General and local government Council Elections in the Spring of 2001 had passed that sensitive political issues, such as police reform, could be properly dealt with. Offers were made to the parties to run more public opinion surveys on their behalf but the media were now regularly commissioning their own polls to help David Trimble and his Ulster Unionists through their various political difficulties. This included a BBC (2001) poll in support of SDLP and UUP membership of the new Policing Board in September 2001 and, following a start to IRA decommissioning in October, a *Belfast Telegraph* (Thornton, 2001) poll in support of the re-election of David Trimble as First Minister in November 2001. Surveys of public opinion, it would seem, were now an almost 'every day' part of the Northern Ireland peace process.

Poll 9 – Devolution and the State of the Peace Process

However, in late 2002 continued IRA activity lead to a crisis of confidence in the Belfast Agreement itself forcing yet another suspension. So a new 'peace poll' was commissioned to explore all the issues that still had to be dealt with or what were then being called 'acts of completion'. The poll demonstrated the frustration of the general public with the failures of their political representatives, their desire for genuine political stability and for the two governments and pro-Agreement parties 'to do what had to be done' to achieve that end (Irwin, 2003a, b, c and d).

The results of this poll were published over a two-day period on Wednesday, February 19 and Thursday, February 20, 2003. The first day was a 'bad news' or 'cold shower' day. Support for the more extreme Nationalist and Unionist parties (Sinn Féin and the DUP) was strengthening at the expense of the more moderate SDLP, UUP and smaller centre parties, Alliance and the Women's Coalition. Support for the Belfast Agreement fell to an all time low from 71% in the referendum to 62% which broke down to 90% for Catholics and only 36% for Protestants. But 60% of Protestants still wanted the Agreement to work down from 74% in May 2000, 72% in October 1999 and 89% in February 1999. Decommissioning, which had been moving down everyone's 'to do list' was now number one again for both Catholics and Protestants and remarkably 61% of the people of Northern Ireland believed the Agreement would collapse because Unionists were not working it in good faith and equally 61% also believed the fault lay with Republicans. The 'blame game' was a clear draw and trust was also in free fall because the 'government and guns' problem had not been resolved with Protestants placing 'the failure of Republicans to abandon violence' at the top of their 'causes of political failure' list while Catholics put 'the peace process is threatened by suspension' at the top of theirs'.

On the second day public opinion on all the possibilities for political progress were published and it was very clear that the people of Northern Ireland wanted no more 'blame game' from their politicians but down to earth practical solutions to outstanding problems. Although political support for the UUP and SDLP was 'haemorrhaging', 43% of the population still believed they could deliver the most stable government compared to only 2% for a DUP–Sinn Féin ticket. Almost everyone supported the idea of an independent monitor to report on all aspects of violence (only 2% found this 'unacceptable'). This was later done. But Protestant resistance to allowing 'on the runs' (OTRs) back into Northern Ireland was as strong as it ever was for early prisoner releases so this was not tackled until after IRA decommissioning in 2005. At the time of this

poll only between 2% and 3% of Sinn Féin supporters were opposed to ending all organised crime, targeting and punishment beatings although 21% still considered decommissioning 'unacceptable'.

But electoral politics now made political progress very difficult indeed. The imperatives of electioneering, negotiation, compromise and accommodation simply do not mix so little was done in terms of further 'acts of completion' over the coming year and the DUP and Sinn Féin were able to strengthen their mandates in the Assembly elections of November 2003 and General Election of May 2005 to become the largest Unionist and Nationalist parties. Having gained majorities through the ballot box and with it the right to replace the UUP and SDLP as First and Deputy First Ministers in the Northern Ireland Assembly the DUP and Sinn Féin chose to take power when it was offered to them by the British and Irish governments under the 'fig leaf' of renegotiating the Belfast Agreement as the St. Andrews Agreement.

Poll 10 – The Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly (uncompleted)

I was now faced with a choice of either staying in Northern Ireland, and getting more involved with the peace process there, or taking the lessons leant from Northern Ireland and applying them elsewhere. By this time George Mitchell had helped to secure a research fellowship for me and I had started to work in the Balkans. But, of course I always kept an eye on what was happening in Northern Ireland and in November 2008 it looked as though this experiment in power sharing was about to fail. Under pressure from spoilers the DUP and Sinn Féin had suspended the meetings of the Executive until responsibility for Policing and Justice had been devolved to Northern Ireland. So I returned to Belfast and started to draft a questionnaire with the parties to deal with this issue and other contentious problems relating to education, language rights and the future of Long Kesh, the prison famously used to house Loyalist and Republican convicted felons.

The Unionist, Loyalist and centre parties; the DUP, UUP, PUP and Alliance (by this time the NI Women's Coalition had lost their seat in the Assembly) were all for a continuation of the work. The Irish Nationalists and Republicans, the SDLP and Sinn Féin, were more non-committal indicating their reticence through a lack of active engagement (they never said 'no'). The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust was also less willing to become involved. They possibly took the view that the war was over and normal politics should now be allowed to run its course. So in the end the

poll was never run although numerous suggestions that were drafted, and would most likely have found much popular support, were adopted and eventually found their way into law. Perhaps someone had run the questions privately.

Critically, following an embarrassing episode for the DUP leader, Peter Robinson, that threatened his position if the Executive collapsed and an election was called (his MP wife had had an affair), Policing and Justice were devolved to an Alliance Minister on the 9th of March 2010. But most interestingly, just in time for the vote in the Northern Ireland Assembly, no less than five separate public opinion polls were published saying the people of Northern Ireland overwhelmingly supported this transfer of responsibilities (The First Minister, 2010). The governments in Westminster (Northern Ireland Office, 2010) and Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Executive, 2010) had clearly leant the value of public opinion and public diplomacy but these polls had not been used in quite the same way as we had used them during the negotiations. We had run the peace polls to solve problems prior to decisions being made in the negotiations while these five polls had been published at the time of the event to endorse a decision already made. The political elites were back in control.

The people of Northern Ireland, through their peace polls, had done their job and were now passed over except when it suited those in power to do otherwise. But when it had really mattered, in the years leading up to that day, the people of Northern Ireland had got their chance to make the peace process their own. With all the benefit of hindsight I can now say they were very lucky. The rest of the world, as we will see, has been less fortunate. The parties and George Mitchell had supported the peace polls in Northern Ireland against the wishes of the British state. George Mitchell wanted me to continue my work in Israel and Palestine when he became the President's Envoy to the Middle East in 2009. But the US State Department put a stop to the work after the first poll. The negotiations failed and George Mitchell resigned.

4

The Balkans

Following the death of Tito in 1980 the collection of Balkan states that he had forged into the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) became unstable. The ethnic, religious and linguistic mix of the region always made the Balkans difficult to govern and only a strong leader like Tito could hold them together. By exploiting ethnic and religious differences the local political elites with self-serving agendas ('ethnic entrepreneurs') plunged their country and peoples into the bloodiest decade of European conflict (1991/9) since the end of the Second World War. Macedonia stayed out of the war, but only just. Bosnia and Herzegovina were devastated and Kosovo fell victim to the full force of Serbian might. UN and NATO interventions brought an end to these conflicts and the international community (EU, US, OSCE), assisted by numerous NGOs, stabilised the peace.

Macedonia[6]

Prominent amongst these NGOs was The Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe (CDRSEE). They had taken a keen interest in my Northern Ireland work since I met one of their directors at a conference on the future of Cyprus in Istanbul in December 1998.[7] Subsequently, in April 2000 they invited me to Thessaloniki in Greece to address a group of young parliamentarians from the Balkans (Irwin, 2000b) and in 2002, when there appeared to be a real possibility of war

[6] The public opinion survey work was conducted by the Centre for the Study of Ethnic Relations, Scopje, Macedonia, between 14-25 March 2002 to produce 1600 face-to-face interviews that represented a cross section of the adult population of Macedonia in terms of age, gender, social class, political and ethnic affiliation and geographical area.

[7] Meeting of the *Greek-Turkish Forum* on the future of Cyprus. Istanbul, December 12-15, 1998.

breaking out between Macedonians[8] and Albanian[9] insurgents, they asked me to run a poll in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[10] (fYROM) to analyse the problem from the local point of view and hopefully identify some solutions. The project was co-funded by the Greek Ministry for Macedonia and Thrace, CDRSEE and the Foundation for Open Society Institute in Macedonia (FOSIM) who also helped to organise local support in terms of arranging interviews, interpreters, publication and press conferences, etc. Meetings were held in Skopje and Tetrovo with representatives from a broad cross section of society and the major ethnic groups.

Building on the Northern Ireland experience informants were asked what they thought the major problems were and what could be done to resolve them. It may be helpful to point out here that I would only allow a 'problem' to be listed providing the informant who introduced the 'problem' would also offer a 'solution'.

Interestingly the results for the 'problems' question (Table 4.1) were very similar to results gained for the equivalent questions run in Northern Ireland (Table 2.4). There Protestants typically listed the activities of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the decommissioning of illegally held weapons as their top priorities while Catholics listed discrimination and the failures of the state police service as their number one concerns. Conversely both Protestants and Macedonians saw their police as their guardians and consequently placed them at the bottom of their 'problems' lists. Perhaps that is why, when I showed the Northern Ireland work to Macedonians and Albanians they were most enthusiastic about doing a similar piece of research for themselves. Co-operation with the local people was never a problem once they knew the issues that they raised would be properly addressed and that all the results would be put into the public domain.

[8] Ethnic Serb Macedonians refer to themselves as Macedonians so that term is used here.

[9] Ethnic Albanian Macedonians refer to themselves as Albanians so that term is used here.

[10] fYROM was the correct term for Macedonia in international law at the time. But most ethnic Albanian and Serb Macedonians refer to their country as Macedonia and this term has been gaining wider acceptance with the US recognising it in 2004.

Table 4.1. Macedonian and Albanian causes of conflict in order of significance

	Macedonian per cent	Very Significant	Albanian per cent	Very Significant
1st	Activities of Albanian paramilitary groups still operating in Macedonia (ANA).	85	Discrimination against minority ethnic groups in employment, education and language rights	80
2nd	Incomplete disarmament of NLA by NATO	78	Activities of Macedonian party police and paramilitary groups operating in Macedonia (Lions, Poskoks).	67
3rd	Many illegally held weapons in the region	74	Bribery and party political corruption that undermines the democratic foundations of the state	66
4th	Serious organised crime including businessmen, paramilitaries and politicians	70	Poor economic opportunities for all sections of the society	61
5th	Bribery and party political corruption that undermines the democratic foundations of the state	65	The failure of the Macedonian economy	58
6th	Amnesty that includes ALL serious crimes against humanity	62	Serious organised crime including businessmen, paramilitaries and politicians	56
7th	The failure of the Macedonian economy	53	Biased media and abuse of information due to gross political interference	55
8th	Poor economic opportunities for all sections of the society	52	Bad interethnic relations between the people of Macedonia	53
9th	Bad interethnic relations between the people of Macedonia	48	Lack of understanding of democracy by the people's elected politicians	46
10th	Lack of action by the International Community to create peace and stability in Macedonia	46	Bad interethnic relations between the politicians of Macedonia	40
11th	The FA goes too far regarding the requests for reforms	43	Lack of transparency in government at all levels	36
12th	Displaced people within Macedonia	42	Many illegally held weapons in the region	27
13th	The dispute about the border with Kosovo	42	The dispute about the border with Kosovo	27
14th	Lack of transparency in government at all levels	38	Interference of the religious communities in politics	25
15th	Bad interethnic relations between the politicians of Macedonia	36	The FA does not adequately deal with the requests for reforms	25
16th	Lack of understanding of democracy by the people's elected politicians	35	Unequal treatment of different ethnic groups by international institutions and NGOs	23

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17th	Unequal treatment of different ethnic groups by international institutions and NGOs	32	Displaced people within Macedonia	19
18th	The FA does not adequately deal with the requests for reforms	32	Lack of understanding of democracy by the people of Macedonia	17
19th	Macedonia has not resolved its name dispute	30	Amnesty that includes ALL serious crimes against humanity	15
20th	Biased media and abuse of information due to gross political interference	26	Macedonia has not resolved its name dispute	15
21st	Interference of the religious communities in politics	22	Lack of action by the International Community to create peace and stability in Macedonia	12
22nd	Lack of understanding of democracy by the people of Macedonia	16	Activities of Albanian paramilitary groups still operating in Macedonia (ANA).	10
23rd	Discrimination against minority ethnic groups in employment, education and language rights	13	Incomplete disarmament of NLA by NATO	9
24th	Activities of Macedonian party police and paramilitary groups operating in Macedonia (Lions, Poskoks).	13	The FA goes too far regarding the requests for reforms	6

Inevitably, in the 'solutions' question each community placed items at the top of their 'wish lists' that dealt with their particular communities 'problems' (Table 4.2). Remarkably a 'State funded University in Albanian' came in at the very top of the Albanian list at 85% 'essential' and at the very bottom of the Macedonian list at only 1% 'essential'. Such polarisation was indicative of deep social divisions that needed to be addressed. But both Albanians and Macedonians also put 'Free and fair elections' near the top of both of their lists at 80% and 72% 'essential' respectively. On this point they shared a common concern so when this issue was explored in much more detail with a range of measures that could be taken to ensure free and fair elections a series of policies were identified that would gain the support of all sections of society (Table 4.3).

Table 4.2. Macedonian and Albanian priorities for peace and stability

	Macedonian per cent	Very Significant	Albanian per cent	Very Significant
1st	Effective measures against paramilitaries and organised crime	85	State funded University in Albanian	80
2nd	Strengthening the rule of law	78	Full implementation of the FA	67
3rd	True court independence	74	Strong measures to prevent ethnic discrimination	66
4th	Free and fair elections	70	Free and fair elections	61
5th	Rebuild the houses of displaced people and secure their safety	65	Local government development	58
6th	The International Community should make greater efforts to remove all illegally held arms from the region	62	Proportional representation for all ethnic groups in the public administration, police and army in Macedonia	56
7th	Strategic plan to eliminate social decline and poverty	53	Strengthening the rule of law	55
8th	The state keeps control of strategic industries and resources	52	Strategic plan to eliminate social decline and poverty	53
9th	Resolving the question of the name of Macedonia	48	Rebuild the houses of displaced people and secure their safety	46
10th	EU membership	46	True court independence	40
11th	Strong measures to prevent ethnic discrimination	43	Strategic plan to build confidence between different ethnic groups	36
12th	Religious communities should not interfere with politics	42	EU membership	27
13th	Local government development	42	Integration of ex-paramilitaries into civil society	27
14th	Transparency in the grant giving of international institutions and NGOs	38	The state keeps control of strategic industries and resources	25
15th	International help to build new and strengthen existing institutions of government	36	International help to build new and strengthen existing institutions of government	25
16th	Strong measures to prevent gender discrimination	35	Effective measures against paramilitaries and organised crime	23
17th	Strategic plan to build confidence between different ethnic groups	32	The International Community should make greater efforts to remove all illegally held arms from the region	19
18th	International monitoring of the activities of key Ministries	32	Strong measures to prevent gender discrimination	17
19th	Full implementation of the FA	30	Religious communities should not interfere with politics	15
20th	Build new communities for displaced peoples in Macedonia	26	Transparency in the grant giving of international institutions and NGOs	15
21st	Proportional representation for all ethnic groups in the public administration, police and army in Macedonia	22	International monitoring of the activities of key Ministries	12

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22nd	Integration of ex-paramilitaries into civil society	16	Resolving the question of the name of Macedonia	10
23rd	State funding for an Faculty for Turkish Studies within an existing University	13	State funding for an Faculty for Turkish Studies within an existing University	9
24th	State funded University in Albanian	13	Build new communities for displaced peoples in Macedonia	6

Table 4.3. Requirements for fair and free elections

Per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable'	All	Macedonian	Albanian
Parties should cease all violence and intimidation during elections	93	94	97
The politicians should avoid using language and speeches that incite ethnic hatred	88	85	98
All the political parties should sign a pledge for fair and free elections	88	87	92
International monitors should be pro-active in the maintenance of international standards for fair and free elections	81	78	89
The news media should avoid publishing and broadcasting stories that incite ethnic hatred	80	75	95
The police, army and paramilitary groups should stay out of the electoral process	79	77	87
International monitoring teams should be deployed in Macedonia at the earliest opportunity	76	74	88
There should be a campaign to educate and encourage citizens to vote	76	78	73
International monitors should be present in each polling station	60	60	60
International forces should be used to monitor and close the border to paramilitary groups intent on disrupting elections	58	69	21
International forces should be used to monitor the voting process throughout Macedonia during the elections	50	51	51
A policeman should be present in each polling station	42	51	13

The results were published widely in the local newspapers in April of that year, in press conferences, seminars, television interviews and in detailed reports to all the political parties elected to the Parliament of Macedonia, relevant interested governments, NGOs and IGOs. This coordinated public diplomacy programme had the desired effect. With the demonstration of wide popular support for all that needed to be done to ensure free and fare elections all those in a position to take action did so as follows:

1. Many politicians thought the questions asked were the right questions (quite a few had helped to draft them) and consequently the results of the poll were taken seriously leading to the reform and strengthening

of domestic electoral law with the passage of the Law on Election of Members of Parliament in June of that year.
2. The Greek Minister for the Province of Macedonia and Thrace, who financially supported the research, went to Skopje to offer the former Yugoslav Republic the support of his government in Athens.
3. The Foundation for Open Society Institute in Macedonia (FOSIM), who had also backed the polling research, along with other NGOs, set up programmes to motivate and educate the electorate as well as monitor voter registration and the elections on the appointed day through the Citizens Association MOST and Citizens for Citizens.
4. The US (through the National Democratic Institute – NDI) and UN (through former United Nations Assistant Secretary General Cedric Thornberry) facilitated the negotiation and adoption of the proposed Code of Conduct for Free and Fare Elections. Twenty nine parties signed the code in July.
5. A new State Election Commission (SEC) was established on July 12 and issued guidelines to supplement the election law, establish an information and press centre, create a website, initiate voter election programmes, train election officials, produce election materials and arrange logistics.
6. A high-level international assessment mission (including Lord Alderdice, Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Assistant Secretary General Thornberry) went to Macedonia to report on the state of the electoral process in August (Statement of the International Pre-Election Delegation to Macedonia, Skopje, August 29, 2002).
7. In September, the OSCE/ODIHR and European Commission deployed 800 observers in Macedonia, the largest election observation effort undertaken since the Albanian elections of 1997.

On September 15th, Macedonian moderates swept into power. With a strong voter turn out of 74 per cent Prime Minister Georgievski conceded defeat and called the vote the most democratic in the history of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Prime Minister elect Crvenkovski said 'We showed that Macedonia is going to survive for eternity. I want to thank everyone who went out and voted. Together we are going to show that we are people who know when and what to do… and how to do it'. George Robertson, NATO Secretary General, praised voters for their 'political maturity' and said the elections were 'a decisive step in the right direction'.

The elections did not pass without incident but in the absence of a clear demonstration of strong cross community support for free and fare elections, and all the domestic and international efforts that flowed from

that fact, Macedonia may not have avoided being drawn into a war that had been so disastrous for her neighbours (Irwin, 2002c). However, only the free and fair election issues were elaborated from Table 4.2 in the final part of this poll. Clearly all the proposed solutions to Macedonia's problems could be explored in the same way, the results made known, public support engaged, civil society activated and the international community brought on board to provide political and material support. Peace processes require continual commitment and effort but, as in Northern Ireland, a very great deal can be accomplished when the people, politicians, civil society and international community can be persuaded to work together.

Given the degree of ethnic tensions present in Macedonian society the First President, Kiro Gligorov, must take much credit for keeping his people out of the Balkans war. I had an opportunity to spend an hour with him going through the draft questionnaire before it was run. He took a very keen interest in it and remarked how thorough and relevant he thought the questions were when compared to the surveys he had been used to seeing prepared by the contractors for the US State Department. Later that year, when I had an opportunity to raise this point with EU staff in Brussels one senior diplomat remarked that he had once sat on the lawn of the US Ambassador's residence in Skopje drinking cocktails while composing such questions for inclusion in such polls. This methodology clearly does not meet the standards for engagement by interested parties recommended by Campbell, refined for public opinion purposes in Northern Ireland and now replicated in Macedonia. Additionally, unlike the State Department polls, all the results were published in the local press to stimulate critical discussion and maximise their public diplomacy impact. Finally the results were also published as a review 'Forum' article (Irwin, 2002b and c; Troebst, 2002; Engstrom, 2002) in *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* so that Campbell's standards for 'adversarial…interpretation of results' could also be met (Campbell, 1984, also see Krause and Howard, 1976 and Bryk, 1983). Public opinion polls, in particular, seem to lend themselves to this most creative of academic formats (Irwin, 2003d and e; Hancock, 2003; Noel, 2003 and Knnedy-Pipe, 2003).

Bosnia and Herzegovina[11]

Following the success of the Macedonian poll CDRSEE teamed up with the BBC World Service Trust to undertake a programme of public diplomacy and good governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[12] This project, funded by the European Commission and Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, included a poll to explore public opinion and the state of the Bosnian peace process. Using the same 'problems' and 'solutions' methodology employed in Northern Ireland and Macedonia detailed results were obtained for literally hundreds of policies that could be implemented to strengthen and consolidate their peace and move the country forward along the path to EU membership. Subjects covered included the causes and consequences of the war, problems with the Dayton Agreement, political culture and elections, inter-ethnic relations, public corruption and the criminal justice system, the economy, education, the role of women in society, the media, domestic governance and the role of the international community (Table 4.4). With only a few exceptions there was a great deal of agreement about what the major problems were and what needed to be done by government and the international community to remedy the situation (Table 4.5). A notable exception was who was to blame for the war, and, to a lesser extent, the shape of a final agreed constitutional settlement for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Irwin, 2005a).[13]

Table 4.4 rank orders the top two problems from each of the 12 subject areas covered in the poll explored in much more detail in the report which included 194 problems all together. Table 4.5 rank orders the top 50 solutions (every problem had a solution) for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole. Critically there was no need to break down this analysis by ethnic group, as the levels of 'unacceptable' were so very low. The economy and corruption came in as the top concerns and much more could be said about all of this but for comparative purposes I shall only focus on the constitutional issues here in some detail.

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[11] The public opinion survey work was conducted by Prism Research, BiH, between 9-23 July 2004 to produce 1200 face-to-face interviews of citizens and 300 interviews of municipal employees that represented a cross section of the adult population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of age, gender, social background, political views, nationality and geographical area.

[12] Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, *Our Town, Our Future*. Retrieved April, 2012 from http://www.cdsee.org/publications.html

[13] A full report with all the major results is available from both CDRSEE and www.Peacepolls. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.cdsee.org and from http://www.peacepolls.org

Table 4.4. Most significant problems for Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina

	Bosniak per cent	Very Significant	Serb per cent	Very Significant	Croat per cent	Very Significant
1st	100 thousand dead	82	100 thousand dead	83	100 thousand dead	92
2nd	2 million refugees and displaced persons	81	2 million refugees and displaced persons	79	2 million refugees and displaced persons	91
3rd	War destroyed the economy	79	War destroyed the economy	79	High unemployment	84
4th	High unemployment	75	Young people have few opportunities	76	Best young people leaving BiH	82
5th	Serbs role in starting the war	68	US role in the war	66	High welfare costs and low employment	76
6th	Lack of justice	64	High welfare costs and low employment	65	No one takes responsibility in government	67
7th	The continuing effects of rape during the war	61	NATO's role in the war	64	No one takes responsibility for starting the war	62
8th	Too many levels of government	61	Hardly any corruption investigations and prosecutions	64	Serbs role in starting the war	60
9th	Poor quality of political leadership	55	Corruption of politicians	62	Corruption is not considered wrong	60
10th	Political corruption of nationalists	55	Lack of justice	61	No transparent hiring	59
11th	Corruption of politicians	55	International community paid very much more than local staff	60	International community paid very much more than local staff	57
12th	International community paid very much more than local staff	54	Corruption of judges	59	The continuing effects of rape during the war	54
13th	Society does not provide for child care	53	No sanctions for mistakes made by the international community	58	International community lack of accountability	54
14th	Corruption of judges	52	International community do not pay tax	58	Society does not provide for child care	53
15th	Hardly any corruption investigations and prosecutions	52	Nepotism in political culture	56	Hardly any corruption investigations and prosecutions	50
16th	No vision for the future in education	52	Young people "turned off" by politics	56	Young people "turned off" by politics	43
17th	International community do not pay tax	50	Society does not provide for child care	53	No sanctions for mistakes made by the international community	43
18th	No common curriculum for schools	48	No vision for the future in education	49	Lack of financial support for returnees	39

19th	Slow implementation of court decisions	47	Professors have lost their moral dignity	44	Elections can not change BiH for the better	36
20th	The political impact of interference from Serbia	45	Lack of financial support for returnees	42	Low standards of education	35
21st	Lack of financial support for returnees	44	Ethnic stereotypes and prejudices are still very strong.	40	Journalists do not check their sources	30
22nd	No one takes responsibility for starting the war	42	The continuing effects of rape during the war	40	Not enough investigative journalism	30
23rd	Lack of professional standards in the media	41	Too much gossip and unchecked stories in the media	40	No vision for the future in education	29
24th	Media segregated on ethnic lines	39	Media segregated on ethnic lines	39	Ethnic stereotypes and prejudices are still very strong.	28

Table 4.5. Bosnia and Herzegovina top fifty priorities to help secure a stable and better future

All of Bosnia and Herzegovina Per cent 'essential', 'desirable', 'acceptable', 'tolerable', 'unacceptable'	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Develop the economy	67	22	8	2	1
Develop agriculture	64	25	8	2	1
Invest in education	64	26	8	1	1
Become equal citizens of Bosnia	62	28	7	1	1
Prosecute and jail corrupt politicians	62	25	10	2	1
Religious leaders should work for peace	61	26	10	1	1
Prosecution of all corruption	61	26	10	2	0
Develop small businesses	60	28	9	2	1
Public officials who take bribes should be prosecuted	59	28	10	1	1
People who pay bribes should be prosecuted	59	29	8	2	1
Develop heavy industry	59	25	11	3	2
Give hope to the people	59	32	6	2	1
Establish confidence in the rule of law	58	32	8	1	1
Full state support for maternity leave	58	25	13	2	1
Remove wealth of war criminals	57	27	11	2	2
Build an efficient state to end corruption	57	29	11	2	1
Involve everyone in their future	56	29	12	2	1
Universities responsible for honest degrees	56	28	14	2	0
EU standards for pollution controls	56	27	13	2	1
Become citizens of Europe	55	29	12	3	1
All social care responsibility of the state	55	27	13	3	2
Arrest those accused of war crimes	54	26	13	4	3

End corruption of donor states	54	28	13	3	2
Retire police who have abused human rights	54	31	12	2	1
Regular access to gynaecologist	53	28	15	3	1
Spend money on projects not levels of government	53	30	12	3	2
International Community should not take any side at all	52	28	14	4	2
Some politicians should recognize B&H as their state	52	31	13	2	1
Hire top professionals for projects	52	32	12	2	1
Restrict activities to key issues	52	32	12	2	1
Cut funding from corrupt faculties	51	31	14	2	1
Give money to good projects	51	30	15	3	1
Maximum per cent to solving problems	51	34	11	3	1
Do not live in the past and move forward	50	30	14	3	2
Separate politics and religion	50	29	14	4	3
All groups should acknowledge the wrongs they have done	50	34	12	2	1
Simplify administration for businesses	50	32	14	3	1
Banks have to adjust to new situation	50	33	13	3	1
Give resources for economic and not ethnic reasons	50	31	14	3	1
Political leadership based on successful government	49	31	16	3	1
Courts need reform from the State level down	49	37	12	2	0
Civil service responsible to public	49	34	13	3	1
Clear lines of responsibility	49	34	13	3	1
Smaller and effective system of government	49	32	14	2	1
Full state support for day care	48	29	18	4	2
Teach respect for own and other community	46	33	17	4	1
Degree in journalism and qualifications	46	32	18	3	1
Politicians should stay out of religious affairs	43	34	17	4	2
Religious leaders should stay out of politics	41	36	17	3	2
Reform state regulation of TV and radio	36	34	22	6	2

The peace agreement 'hammered out' in Dayton in November 1995 was designed to bring an end to the war by rewarding the military and political leaderships of the Bosniak, Serb and Croat factions with a share in federal power and administrative control over their respective enclaves. The result was an unstable peace with ultimate authority rested in the hands of the Office of the High Representative,[14] a constitution that few understood and a system of government that, for the most part, simply did not work. Although the Dayton Agreement stopped the violence it could not also be the legal foundation upon which to build an efficient, modern and economically sound state ready to take its place as a new member of the European Union. The people of Bosnia-Herzegovina understood this very well and knew what had to be done to put matters right. Their priorities for constitutional reform are listed in Table 4.6. There is no need to give an ethnic break down, as the highest level of 'unacceptable' recorded was only 4%.

[14] The High Representative is also the EU Special Representative.

Table 4.6. Options for constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina

All of Bosnia and Herzegovina Per cent 'essential', 'desirable', 'acceptable', 'tolerable', 'unacceptable'	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Fewer levels of government	47	31	17	3	2
Establish a Constitutional Commission to advise on reform	45	32	16	4	2
Simplify government services to municipal level	44	39	13	3	1
Do not duplicate services in Entities, Cantons and Municipalities	44	34	15	4	2
Reform the Constitution through Parliament	41	32	17	6	3
Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo should cooperate to join the EU together	51	27	15	4	4

A first attempt was also made to take a look at some constitutional packages as had been done in Northern Ireland. The question and results are given in Table 4.7. The least popular option was the break up of the state at 59% 'unacceptable' (71% for Bosniaks, 36% for Serbs and 72% for Croats) while the most popular option was regionalisation in accordance with European standards at 24% 'unacceptable' (17% for Bosniaks, 28% for Serbs and 39% for Croats). This option was more acceptable than the status quo of the Dayton Agreement at 32% 'unacceptable' and compares favourably with 40% 'unacceptable' for what was essentially the Belfast Agreement (27% for Catholics and 52% for Protestants, Table 2.3).

These changes to the constitution are clearly 'doable' and when asked 'Do you want the people of Bosnia and the international community to negotiate, agree and implement a programme of political, social and economic reform from all the options reviewed here?' 94 per cent said 'yes'.

Table 4.7. Question: *There has recently been quite a lot of discussion about possible changes to the Dayton Agreement and the need to reform the Constitution. With regards to possible future political and regional changes to the system of government for Bosnia and Herzegovina please indicate which ones you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.*

Per cent 'Unacceptable'	All	Bosniak	Serb	Croat
Bosnia and Herzegovina as it was before the war during the existence of the SFRJ	26	11	32	60
Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	24	17	28	39
Bosnia and Herzegovina as a decentralised state with powers going to the Municipalities instead of the entities and cantons which will go	37	17	52	66
Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is now with two entities and the District of Brcko	32	40	10	60
Bosnia and Herzegovina with three entities - each for 3 constitual people	39	55	22	22
The abolition of cantons and a federation between Bosnia Herzegovina and Republica Srpska as two entities	41	40	31	69
Bosnia and Herzegovina made up of just cantons without entities or a District	38	22	53	51
Bosnia and Herzegovina made up of a large number of federal units with equal powers	39	25	47	58
Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is now with two entities and the District of Brcko but with the higher levels of responsibilities given to the state	35	34	25	62
Separation and union of some parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina with neighbouring states	59	71	36	72

In Northern Ireland *The Downing Street Declaration* (1993) and *The Framework Documents* (1995) outlined many of the central features later found in the Belfast Agreement, completed in 1996. People knew what was coming. Similarly, numerous reports heralded the need for reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina[15] and the opinion poll briefly reviewed here suggested the people were ready to make the necessary changes. However, following the publication of the poll the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, while echoing some of the main conclusions of the survey also squarely placed the responsibility for such reform with the people and their politicians:

> The Dayton Agreement was not designed for state building but to end a war. It ought to be changed, perhaps, but that is not the business of the international community. This issue will be decided

[15] For example see: European Stability Initiative, 2004.

> by the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina because it is their country. (Ashdown, Paddy, 2005)

Their country 'yes' but not altogether their constitution and like the people of Northern Ireland they may well need some help. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Democratization Department ran an extensive program of public opinion polling in Bosnia-Herzegovina[16] in support of reform and although I was given access to much of their recent work when I was there a senior manager pointed out that a great deal of it was not published and they did not undertake research projects in partnership with local politicians. However, the manager thought that this might now be a good idea. I could only hope that this was done as the results of our poll suggested that, as in Northern Ireland and now also Macedonia, such engagement can be used to explore and define the steps that need to be taken to achieve reform with, critically, strong support from the general public.

It took the best part of 10 years for the Northern Ireland peace process to 'bed in' and that was with an agreement that their politicians had carefully negotiated over many months and that had also been approved by their people in a referendum. So perhaps it would be wrong to expect too much too soon from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, after 15 years the peace process there continued to be in crisis because those responsible for reform would not maintain a proactive approach to the implementation of change. In 2011 the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, now an Austrian Valentin Inzenko, admitted that, "There has been stagnation the last few years because we thought the Bosnians could do the job themselves. So we, the international community, had this hands-off approach" (Brunwasser, 2011). Fortunately, for the people of Northern Ireland, 'hands-off' was not an option for the British government and the implementation of the peace agreements there. They had tried a 'hands-off' policy after partition in 1921 with disastrous results and they were not about to make the same mistake again. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the International Community 'dropped the ball'. The 2005 peace poll clearly demonstrated the people's desire for reform so any blame for failure should not rest with them. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina were let down.

[16] OSCE programmes in Bosnia Herzegovina are available on their web site. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.oscebih.org/democratization

Kosovo and Serbia[17]

I was first asked if I would be undertaking a poll in Kosovo when I was in Macedonia in 2002. The Albanians living there thought it would be a good idea but the opportunity did not arise until CDRSEE were able to secure funding for such a project in 2005 as a prelude to the negotiations for the 'final status' of Kosovo. [18] This project was technically more difficult than the previous projects as it entailed running two simultaneous polls: one in Kosovo for Kosovo Albanians, with a booster sample for the remaining Serbs and one in Serbia for Serbs, with a booster sample for Serb IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) from Kosovo. It was also more politically difficult given the strength of mistrust and ill feeling between the two communities who had to be separated and/or protected by NATO forces. This reality was reflected in the poll under the now familiar headings of 'problems' and 'solutions', which dealt with topics relating to: Serb and Albanian relations, security, how negotiations should proceed, what might happen if negotiations failed and Kosovo's 'final status' (Irwin, 2005d).

Table 4.8 rank orders the top five problems from each of the four main subject areas covered in the poll explored in much more detail in the report which included 148 problems in total. Table 4.9 lists the top five solutions from each of the four subject areas, which included 156 solutions in the report. When rank ordered together the priorities for the Kosovo Albanians were independence and for the Serbs it was security. But, for comparative purposes, I will focus again on the constitutional or, in this case, 'final status' questions here.

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[17] The public opinion survey work was conducted between 26 August and 2 September 2005. It produced 1200 face-to-face interviews in Serbia and 1200 in Kosovo to complete a representative sample in terms of age, gender, social class, political and ethnic affiliation and geographical area for a total of 2400 interviews. To make sure all groups were brought into this program of research these interviews included 'booster' samples of Serbs in Kosovo enclaves and Serb IDPs in Serbia. The fieldwork was carried out by Strategic Marketing Research of Belgrade in Serbia and by Strategic Puls Research of Tirana, Albania for Kosovo.

[18] The *Albanian Serb Information Exchange Forum* project (2005) was commissioned by the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe, KosovaLive in Pristina and Beta Media Center in Belgrade (Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.kosovakosovo.com) with funding from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the German Government via the Stability Pact, the Institut für Auslands-beziehungen e.V. (IFA), the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UNESCO, and the Kosovo Mission of the US Agency for International Development (under the terms of award No. 167-A-00-01-00107-00).

Table 4.8. Most significant problems for Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs

	Kosovo Albanian per cent	Very Significant	Kosovo Serb per cent	Very Significant
1st	Kosovo's final status	87	Serbs are afraid to talk Serbian in Pristina	89
2nd	Unemployment in Kosovo	85	People do not have full freedom of movement in Kosovo	84
3rd	The weak economy of Kosovo	75	An independent Kosovo will be less secure for everyone	80
4th	Not knowing the fate of lost persons	73	If final status of Kosovo is made without agreement Kosovo Serbs will not feel safe	79
5th	Corruption in Kosovo	70	An independent Kosovo will become a mafia state	79
6th	Kosovo education standards	70	An independent Kosovo will be unsafe for Serbs	79
7th	Discrimination against Albanians in the 90s	58	Kosovo power supply	78
8th	Weak justice system	49	Kosovo independence will lead to an exodus of Serbs	78
9th	Organised political crime	48	Albanians want a greater Albania	75
10th	The economy in Kosovo will not develop until final status is agreed	46	Kosovo Albanians are getting closer to Tirana while expecting Kosovo Serbs to stop talking to Belgrade	75
11th	Albanians are afraid to talk Albanian in North Mitrovica	46	Public and personal security in Kosovo	74
12th	Lack of trust in the justice system	46	KLA officers in the police	74
13th	Keeping Kosovo in Serbia will lead to a new war	43	Return process of IDPs/refugees	72
14th	Slow working of the justice system	43	Isolated Serbs are prisoners in their own homes	72
15th	If things stay the same in Kosovo it will become unstable	42	KLA officers in government	71
16th	Failure to prosecute war criminals	41	Kosovo Albanians not prepared to unequivocally condemn Albanian ethnic violence	67
17th	The legacy of so many killings	38	No unconditional support from Albanian political leadership to improve security	66
18th	KLA officers in the police	37	Kosovo's final status	65
19th	Only the international community can settle the Kosovo issue	32	Kosovo Serbs do not trust the Kosovo Police Service (KPS)	65
20th	Belgrade are using Kosovo Serbs to make political points	30	Missing persons	62

Table 4.9. Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb priorities for stability and peace

	Kosovo Albanian Per cent	Essential	Kosovo Serb per cent	Essential
1st	Mitrovica should become a unified city	83	The people of Kosovo should actively make Kosovo Serbs welcome	77
2nd	Full independence	81	The city of Pristina should do more to make Serbs welcome	70
3rd	Kosovo should be allowed to have its own army	73	Special status for Serb religious sites	70
4th	Cooperation with the Hague Tribunal	67	International community should involve Belgrade more	70
5th	Kosovo should be a member of the UN	67	Kosovo can not leave Serbia	69
6th	Establish a Kosovo Ministry of the Interior	63	Serb police to guard monasteries in Kosovo	67
7th	Kosovo should be allowed to make its own foreign policy	60	Pristina should stop dreaming about an independent Kosovo	66
8th	Better training for the police	59	Security forces made accountable to the people of all ethnic groups	66
9th	One legal government	59	Kosovo government and politicians should actively make Kosovo Serbs welcome	61
10th	Belgrade will have to agree final status	59	Belgrade negotiators must have the support of Kosovo Serbs	61
11th	The US should be more pro-active	57	Open talks	60
12th	NATO should stay as long as is needed	57	Meet the Standards set by the international community for social and political reform in Kosovo before negotiations	58
13th	The International Community - Security Council and EU - will have to agree final status	56	The international community must deal equally with all elected representatives whatever their political background	58
14th	There should be a referendum in Kosovo on final status	53	Meet Standards before agreeing final status	58
15th	Talks in the US and EU	49	Kosovo Serbs can always keep their Serb citizenship	56
16th	Belgrade should stop dreaming of the return of Kosovo	46	Cooperation between countries in the region to fight organised crime	51
17th	Serbs should acknowledge Albanians as equals	28	North and South Mitrovica should be separate municipalities	50
18th	Kosovo Serbs should be more independent from Belgrade	28	Special property court to deal with property disputes	47
19th	Public apologies from Serbs for past wrongs	25	Solution inside present borders of Kosovo and Serbia	47
20th	Student cultural exchange programmes in the region, EU and US	21	Solution that respects the present borders of Serbia Montenegro in international law	47

Eighty one per cent of Kosovo Albanians considered full independence from Serbia 'essential' while 69% of Kosovo Serbs, 65% of Serbia Serbs and 73% of Serb IDPs considered Kosovo remaining part of Serbia to be 'essential' (Table 4.10). However, beyond these initial negotiating positions there was scope for some flexibility in the context of a continued NATO presence, EU membership, economic development, meeting 'standards' for social and political reform, and Serbs being able to retain their citizenship. When looked at jointly, from the perspective of both communities, the least 'unacceptable' option for a constitutional package seemed to be Kosovo as a protectorate of the EU at only 20% 'unacceptable' for Kosovo Albanians, 58% for Kosovo Serbs, 60% for Serbia Serbs and 58% for Serb IDPs (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10. With regards to a constitutional package for the final status of Kosovo please indicate which of the following options you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

Per cent 'Unacceptable'	Kosovo Albanian	Kosovo Serb	Serbia Serb	Serbia Serb IDPs
Union of all Serbian lands	96	13	13	13
Full integration of Kosovo into Serbia	98	3	4	1
A republic in Serbia Montenegro with control of all aspects of government locally (1974 Constitution)	96	66	40	35
A republic in Serbia Montenegro with control of all aspects of government locally and regional status in the EU	92	63	43	46
A protectorate of the EU	20	58	60	58
An Economic Union of independent states of Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia	34	88	68	66
A state as part of the EU but North Kosovo joins Serbia	96	57	55	60
A state as part of the EU with choice of citizenship for Serbs who will share their canton in the North of Kosovo with Serbia under joint authority	87	59	62	61
A state as part of the EU with choice of citizenship for Serbs who will have their own canton in Kosovo	63	48	65	62
A state as part of the EU with choice of citizenship for Serbs	52	64	67	65
Full independence and no choice of citizenship for Serbs in Kosovo	13	94	93	88
Union of Kosovo with Albania	10	98	96	97
Union of all Albanian lands	8	98	95	97

Similarly more Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs and Serb IDPs would elect to stay in or return to Kosovo as an EU protectorate at 83%, 45% and 27% respectively. Under the ideal conditions of complete safety, choice of citizenship and full equality these figures rose to 83% for Kosovo Albanians, 71% for Kosovo Serbs and 61% for Serb IDPs (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. Ideal conditions to stay in/return to Kosovo

Per cent 'Yes'	Kosovo Albanian	Kosovo Serb	Serbia Serb IDPs
It does not matter so much about the constitution, I would (stay in) or (return to) Kosovo providing I felt completely safe there, could choose my citizenship and was free to work and practice my culture, language and religion without any fear of discrimination.	83%	71%	61%

However, all the questions on matters of security and relations between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs indicated that the ideal solution of complete safety, choice of citizenship and full equality was at best an aspiration that could be strived for. It was a goal that would take at least a lifetime to achieve if ever. But what could be achieved was real progress towards this ideal in terms of social and political reform in combination with suitable constitutional arrangements that would go as far as such arrangements could to ensure security for all. By bringing together the most workable elements of all the questions reviewed in the solutions half of the report this could be done and should have been the objective of negotiations. Implementation, however, would take time. Fortunately both Kosovo Albanians and Serbs welcomed the involvement of the international community, particularly the EU, whose influence in the region was on the rise.

This programme of research had been undertaken with input from politicians, academics, journalists, and from staffers in the Presidents offices on down, in both Pristina and Belgrade. They all got the reports including the UN negotiating team and I was delighted to see all the relevant parties at the press conferences held in Pristina and Belgrade in October 2005. Of course I thought this programme of research should be taken forward as part of the negotiations process and when I was in Washington later that year the Academy for Educational Development (AED) informed me that they had been asked to do this (AED, 2005-6). Unfortunately they also informed me that they had been told by the US Mission in Pristina that this work was to be based on recent work AED had completed in Sri Lanka and that they were not allowed to include track one politicians in their project. I explained to AED that if such interference in

the independence of their work was imposed upon them then their project would most likely fail just as surely as the recent Cyprus negotiations and I recommended they bring this fact to the attention of the US Mission in Pristina. At the time I did not know, but could only hope that AED were subsequently given a free hand to undertake their programme of research with input from the local politicians who must make the peace and ultimately take responsibility for it.

Unfortunately this did not happen. The AED staff working on the project were instructed not to speak directly with members of the local negotiating teams. They knew who the negotiators were, and sometimes passed them on the street in Pristina, but they were not allowed to talk to them (Author's meeting at AED Washington: 30 March 2007). Inevitably the AED research left out many of the issues raised by these politicians that, according to our peace poll, were often as important as the final status of Kosovo itself. After negotiations failed in 2007 Kosovo declared independence unilaterally in 2008. The situation there remained unstable (ICG, 2011a and 2009) and like Northern Ireland real peace will only come when the items at the top of the different communities 'to do' lists are adequately addressed and dealt with.

5

Kashmir

One should never directly equate the intellectual and social worth of a research grant to its monetary value. This is particularly true in the humanities and social sciences where groundbreaking research can often be carried out with little more than a library card and perhaps some funds for travel. Research, particularly in the natural sciences, can be very expensive but one of the most valuable grants I ever received was for £7,071 from the British Academy to attend conferences of the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) in Jerusalem and Berlin in 2007 and visit colleagues in different countries where there were conflicts to see if the methods developed in Northern Ireland and the Balkans could be extended beyond Europe to other parts of the world.

One such colleague was Yashwant Deshmukh from the Team CVoter Foundation in Delhi. They undertake most of the political polling in India, which, being the largest democracy in the world is a full time job. Following discussions in Berlin at the WAPOR Annual Conference he invited me to Delhi with a view to undertaking a peace poll on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC) in Indian administered Kashmir (IaK) better known as Jammu and Kashmir (J & K). My grant from the British Academy got me a ticket to Delhi and from there on Yashwant took care of the expenses. Normally getting permission to undertake independent research in Kashmir is very difficult but with the same small grant I had gone to Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva and they in turn had invited me to the Oslo Forum at which I met the Indian Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Shyam Saran, who provided me with all the necessary introductions to facilitate the work.

This conflict began when the British withdrew from the Indian subcontinent in 1947 dividing it into present day India and Pakistan. Kashmir, which straddled the border, then became the unhappy victim of a war between these two new powers in a struggle for territory and dominance. In 1948 and 49 the UN brokered a ceasefire (which divided Kashmir along the LoC) and passed UN Resolution 47 that required India and Pakistan to withdraw their forces and hold a plebiscite to determine if

the people of Kashmir wanted to join India or Pakistan. No other option was put on offer and there was no withdrawal or plebiscite. Hostilities continued through a series of wars and the activities of freedom fighters or terrorists depending on the political perspective of the commentator and those involved.

The situation became increasingly dangerous when both India and Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons and in 2002 MORI conducted a poll on the Indian side of the LoC to explore options for resolving the conflict (MORI, 2002). The people wanted direct negotiations between India and Pakistan, economic development and a majority of 61% expressed a preference for Indian citizenship. But other options of independence and various regional solutions were not tested (Raman, 2002) and the poll was dismissed by its critics in Pakistan as propaganda (Raina, 2002).

So starting then with a blank notebook in October 2007 I began collecting the now familiar 'problems' and 'solutions' across Kashmir, from its border with India in the South to the Himalayas in the North and to the LoC with Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK) in the East. Government administrators, religious and community leaders, politicians, refugees, IDPs and what we decided to call 'rebel fighters' (to be neutral from the terms Mujahideen/freedom fighters and terrorists) were all included through the very able co-ordination of the staff at Team CVoter in Delhi and Kashmir. The results of the poll clearly demonstrated that the people there were little more than pawns in a game played out between India and Pakistan and that peace could be achieved if only there was the political will to work towards a 'win-win' regional solution. This first poll developed into a series of three, which are summarised below starting with some introductory comments I felt important to make at the time.

Poll 1. Myth and reality[19]

Politicians spin realities to create myths about their people and their country in order to take them forward to a better life. This is called leadership and when done with compassion and wisdom peoples and nations can achieve great advances. But when such myths are spun out of self-interest then, tragically, the result can be misery and death. Kashmir, it would seem, falls into this second category. The reality, according to the

[19] Using face-to-face interviews the public opinion survey work was undertaken by the CVoter Foundation, Delhi, between March and May 2008 and included a random sample of two thousand people from all parts of Jammu and Kashmir with additional booster samples for the Buddhist, Sikh, Gujjar and other minorities.

people of Kashmir, is that they want an end to the corruption that has blighted their society, they want to live in harmony with their fellow countrymen and women, they want a secular state without borders, they want their children from different communities and faiths to go to school together, they want an end to all forms of discrimination, they want an end to the abuse of human rights and killings, they want India and Pakistan to stop using them for their own selfish reasons, they want to be masters of their own destinies and to this end they want negotiations in good faith. These are the major findings of the most extensive poll ever done in J & K to find out what solutions the people vision as the way forward for Kashmir and it stands in sharp contrast to the myths spun by those political leaders who's rhetoric is born of the 'blame game'. Critically the questions for this 'peace poll' were written by the people of Kashmir through a programme of extensive interviews in Ladakh, Jammu Province and the Kashmir Valley and so it is their reality and perceptions of their 'problems' and 'solutions' that are tested here. We will start with the 'problems'. (Irwin, 2008a and b)

The Problems

For all the people of J & K the top 5 problems out of a list of 37 (Table 5.1) were 'Corrupt administration' 1st at 59% 'very significant' followed by 'High levels of unemployment' 2nd at 56% then 'India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result' at 54%; 'Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests' at 45% and 'The vested interests of all the groups involved in keeping the conflict going' also at 45% 'very significant'. Violence and the 'blame game' did not come into this list until the 12th problem was reached at 40% 'very significant' for 'Violence instigated by Pakistan' followed by 'Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin' 15th at 36%; then the Indian Army 26th at 31% and finally 'international Jihadists' 36th at only 26% 'very significant'.

Table 5.1. The 'problems' faced by the people of J & K in order of significance

	All of J & K per cent	Very Significant
1st	Corrupt administration	59
2nd	High levels of unemployment	56
3rd	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	54
4th	Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests	45
5th	The vested interests of all the groups involved in keeping the conflict going	45
6th	Poor quality of infrastructure and services	45
7th	Non-cooperation and separation leads to the deepening of the conflict	44
8th	Economic development has been politicised	44
9th	The political leadership of Kashmir is divided	43
10th	No consensus for a solution in India	42
11th	Ineffective State Human Rights Commission	42
12th	Violence instigated by Pakistan	40
13th	The PM does not include people from both sides of Kashmir in the Round Table Talks	39
14th	If Government do not take advantage of the current desire for peace then the opportunity for peace may be lost	37
15th	Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin	36
16th	Failure to settle the Kashmir issue prevents large inward investment such as Hydro-electric	36
17th	The rebel fighters who give up the armed struggle are harassed by the security forces	35
18th	Denial of democratic rights	35
19th	Poor quality of education	35
20th	The PM's Round Table is compromised by previous commitments not being fulfilled	34
21th	India is not showing any flexibility on demilitarization	34
22nd	Pandit refugees unable to return home in fear of life, property and honour of women	34
23rd	Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu	34
24th	Our culture, language and religion is threatened by modern development	32
25th	Independence will not bring safe borders with Kashmir's neighbours	32
26th	Violence instigated by the Indian Army	31
27th	The rebel fighters disregard for Human Rights	31
28th	Kashmir Separatist leadership will not negotiate	29
29th	The people of J and K are separated by language, religion, culture and geography	29
30th	Politicians discriminate against minorities	29
31st	Our children are confused by so much change coming from outside	29
32nd	The Government's rejection of the United Jihad Council's offer for a ceasefire	28
33rd	Religious identity politics in J and K will have a negative impact on the rest of India	28
34th	The government claims to speak on behalf of the Pandits	27
35th	20,000 applications pending for bus to Azad Kashmir	27
36th	Violence instigated by international Jihadists	26
37th	The problem is only in the Valley	25

Table 5.2. The top 3 problems for Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and those living in the Kashmir Valley, Jammu Province and Ladakh

	Muslim per cent	Very Significant	Hindu per cent	Very Significant	Buddhist per cent	Very Significant
1st	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	64	Violence instigated by Pakistan	58	High levels of unemployment	71
2nd	Corrupt administration	62	Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu	53	Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu	66
3rd	High levels of unemployment	60	Corrupt administration	52	Corrupt administration	66
4th	Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests	55	High levels of unemployment	48	The rebel fighters disregard for Human Rights	63
5th	No consensus for a solution in India	49	Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin	46	Pandit refugees unable to return home in fear of life, property and honour of women	63
37th	The government claims to speak on behalf of the Pandits	22	India is not showing any flexibility on demilitarization	13	20,000 applications pending for bus to Azad Kashmir	5

	Kashmir Valley per cent	Very Significant	Jammu per cent	Very Significant	Ladekh per cent	Very Significant
1st	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	65	Violence instigated by Pakistan	56	High levels of unemployment	66
2nd	Corrupt administration	62	Corrupt administration	56	Pandit refugees unable to return home in fear of life, property and honour of women	64
3rd	Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests	61	High levels of unemployment	52	Corrupt administration	60
4th	High levels of unemployment	61	Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu	49	Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin	56
5th	India is not showing any flexibility on demilitarization	55	Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin	48	The political leadership of Kashmir is divided	56
37th	Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu	16	India is not showing any flexibility on demilitarization	18	Violence instigated by the Indian Army	8

So corruption, maladministration and poor political leadership were considered the main problems faced by the people of J & K as a whole but would this analysis stand up to closer scrutiny when looked at from the different perspectives of the 3 provinces and 3 major religious groups in

the state (Table 5.2). The answer was, for the most part, 'yes' but there were some notable exceptions. 'Corrupt administration' was 2nd or 3rd in nearly all these analysis but 'India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result' was 1st for Muslims, the Kashmir Valley and Muslims living in the Kashmir Valley and Jammu Province while 'Violence instigated by Pakistan' was 1st for Hindus and Jammu Province. For Buddihsts 'High levels of unemployment' come first. This was also true for Ladakh and Muslims living in Ladakh.

So both the region a person came from and their religion influenced their views of the conflict in J & K. Similarly Hindus from the Valley had a different perspective on these issues to Hindus in Jammu Province. For them the number one problem was not 'Violence instigated by Pakistan' but 'Failure to settle the Kashmir issue prevents large inward investment such as Hydro-electric' and 'Economic development has been politicised' both at 82% 'very significant' followed by 'Non-cooperation and separation leads to the deepening of the conflict' at 73%.

One more point worth making, because it had far reaching implications for finding a constitutional solution to the problem of Kashmir was the fact that 'Kashmir politicians discriminate against Ladakh and Jammu' was 2nd on both the Hindu and Buddhist lists at 53% and 66% 'very significant' respectively while it was at the very bottom of the list (37th) at only 16% 'very significant' for the people of the Kashmir Valley (Table 5.2). This lack of understanding was clearly very serious. Fortunately however, when it came to the 'solutions' for peace-building and peace making, the people of J & K spoke again with one voice so that, with a minimum of good leadership, a very great deal could be achieved.

The Solutions

Economic solutions

Using the now familiar 'Essential', 'Desirable', Acceptable', 'Tolerable' and 'Unacceptable', question structure the 11 economic solutions went from a high of 89% 'essential or desirable' for an, 'Effective independent Commission to deal with corruption' to a low of 59% 'essential or desirable' for 'Joint strategies for economic development between the 2 Kashmirs' (Table 5.3). Critically it was important to note the extent to which any community in J & K opposed these policies as 'unacceptable'. There was strong support from everyone for economic 'solutions' to the problems of J & K that were 'home grown' however, when the 'solutions' involve cooperation with Pakistan then there was some resistance from Hindus and Buddhists. For example 'Start trade across the LoC' was

'unacceptable' to 19% of Hindus and 32% of Buddhists while 'Joint strategies for economic development between the 2 Kashmirs' was 'unacceptable' to 55% of Buddhists.

Table 5.3. Economic solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
Effective independent Commission to deal with corruption	89	1	3	3
Build infrastructure and communications	84	3	4	5
Develop hydro electric power to reduce dependency	83	5	2	0
Develop herbal medicines, horticulture and forestry	76	4	2	0
Safeguards against external economic invasion	68	7	10	0
Open trade between India and Pakistan	66	5	9	21
Telephone links between the 2 Kashmirs	63	9	11	39
Restrict external investment in property to leases of no more than 99 years	62	12	8	11
Open roads of ancient silk route between Leh, Tibet and Pakistan	62	6	16	13
Start trade across the LoC	61	5	19	32
Joint strategies for economic development between the 2 Kashmirs	59	7	14	55

Education solutions

As with the economy, anything that can be done to improve the quality of education in J & K was welcomed with 'Improve the education for all disadvantaged people in J & K' at 83% 'essential or desirable' (Table 5.4). However, the people of J & K also wanted 'Student exchange programmes between ethnic groups' at 79% and 'Education should be secular' at 81% 'essential or desirable'. There was no significant opposition to these policies from any group. Resistance only came when education polices singled out particular groups. For example 21% of Muslims and 20% of Hindus (perhaps for different reasons) found it 'unacceptable' that 'Madrasas should be licensed by government' and 32% of Muslims found it 'unacceptable' that 'Pandits[20] should be given intellectual space in existing institutions of higher education'. There was no serious resistance to 'Preserve and teach the Bhoti (Ladakh) language…' but including the language in Schedule 8 of the Indian Constitution was met with 13% 'unacceptable' from Muslims perhaps because of its associated constitutional implications.

[20] In Kashmir the term Pandits is used to refer to the local Hindu population.

Table 5.4. Education solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
Improve the education for all disadvantaged people in J and K	83	2	2	0
Education should be secular	81	5	2	3
Student exchange programmes between ethnic groups	79	1	3	0
New textbooks on good governance and human rights	79	2	2	0
Inspectorate of schools to monitor standards	78	2	6	3
All students in J and K should be educated together	68	4	3	3
Madrasas should be licensed by Government	50	21	20	3
Pandits should be given intellectual space in existing institutions of higher education	43	32	14	3
Preserve and teach the Bhoti (Ladakh) language for both Shias and Budists	42	9	5	0
The Bhoti (Ladakh) language should be included in Schedule 8 of the Indian Constitution	39	13	7	3

Security solutions

At the very top of the list of 24 policies for dealing with the security situation in J & K came 'The violence should stop from all sides' at 87% 'essential or desirable' and at the very bottom of the same list came 'Resolve the conflict through armed struggle' at only 18% 'essential or desirable' (Table 5.5). Seventy per cent of Muslims considered this option to be 'unacceptable'. 'Serious abuses of Human Rights by the security services should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law' was 2nd on the security list with 'Investigate all killings of who killed whom' both at 82% 'essential or desirable' followed by 'Pakistan and India should work together for a ceasefire' at 79%. There were no significant dissenting voices to the call for peace and justice. Only 6% of Muslims considered it 'unacceptable' that 'Pakistan should stop supporting rebel fighters in Jammu and Kashmir and close all training camps'. Similarly only 7% of Hindus opposed the idea that the 'Government should open up channels of communication with rebel fighters to establish a ceasefire'. Serious points of resistance were met however for Hindus with the suggestion that 'The Indian forces should completely withdraw from J & K' at 51% 'unacceptable' and 'All Detainees should be released' at 50% 'unacceptable'. But given an extended period of peace the long-term prospects are good. Only 13% of Hindus considered it 'unacceptable' that 'Those who give up the gun should be allowed to pursue a free life without harassment from the security services'.

Table 5.5. Security solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
The violence should stop from all sides	87	2	7	0
Serious abuses of Human Rights by the security services should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law	82	1	4	0
Investigate all killings of who killed whom	82	2	6	0
Pakistan and India should work together for a ceasefire	79	2	2	5
All reports concerning missing persons should be made public within 30 days	79	3	7	3
All cases of murder, loot and rape should be prosecuted	79	4	7	8
Pakistan should stop supporting *rebel fighters* in Jammu and Kashmir and close all training camps	78	6	4	0
Peace Building and Human Rights training for all security services working in civil areas	75	6	3	5
Rebel fighters and the Indian Army should cease all hostilities	74	3	9	0
Demilitarise places of higher education	73	2	6	29
Government should open up channels of communication with *rebel fighters* to establish a ceasefire	72	3	7	0
Pressure from the International Community to get camps closed	71	8	3	3
Those who give up the gun should be allowed to pursue a free life without harassment from the security services	70	4	13	18
Army should provide a peace-building service as they have in Tangdhar	69	9	3	0
Demilitarise civilian areas	68	5	10	16
Detainees should be kept in jails where their families can visit them	67	6	9	26
Discussions of security at the central, state, regional and sub-regional levels	65	3	5	0
Reduce the Indian Army presence in J and K	56	7	43	29
Pandits need their own homeland for security	56	15	9	53
Forces of both India and Pakistan should withdraw from both sides of Kashmir	51	11	29	21
The Indian forces should completely withdraw from J and K	45	16	51	39
All Detainees should be released	44	16	50	47
Negotiate and agree all aspects of Indian Army activity in J and K	35	39	15	11
Resolve the conflict through armed struggle	18	70	42	47

Human Rights solutions and the law

Everyone in J & K seemed to understand how important it was to protect the rights of minorities. The top 3 items in the Human Rights and the law section of the poll were 'Majorities and minorities should be treated the same' at 85% 'essential or desirable' then 'Effective laws to protect all minorities in J & K' at 80% followed by 'More powers for the State Human Rights Commission' at 78% 'essential or desirable' (Table 5.6). There was no significant dissent on these points. However when it came to the suggestion that 'Minority rights in an independent Kashmir will be guaranteed by Islamic law' then 42% of Hindus and 79% of Buddhists found this proposal 'unacceptable'. International Human Rights law and domestic law based on those standards were clearly the preferred options.

Table 5.6. Human Rights solutions and the law

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
Majorities and minorities should be treated the same	85	3	7	8
Effective laws to protect all minorities in J and K	80	4	3	0
More powers for the State Human Rights Commission	78	3	2	3
The Human Rights Commission should teach people their rights	75	3	6	3
The RTI (Right to Information Act) for J and K should be more effective	73	3	5	5
International Human Rights organisations should be allowed to operate in J and K	65	5	6	26
The Special Powers, Disturbed Areas and Public Safety Acts should be repealed	64	6	9	37
Pass a law requiring everyone to vote	53	23	7	5
Minority rights in an independent Kashmir will be guaranteed by Islamic law	47	11	42	79

Refugee solutions

Although 68% of the people of J & K considered it 'essential or desirable' that 'The Central Government should work with Pandits to develop a policy for return' with only 4% of Muslims, 2% of Hindus and no Buddhists opposed to this policy as 'unacceptable' 19% of Hindus and 24% of Buddhists were opposed to the idea that 'Refugees in Azad Kashmir should be allowed to return home just like Pandit refugees' (Table 5.7). Was this a double standard or were Hindus and Buddhists simply not sure about the real status of those returning from Pakistan? Like so many issues raised in the poll some results invited more questions rather than

providing clear answers. But everyone seemed to want the Pandits back. That much was clear.

Table 5.7. Refugee solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
All Kashmiries should be allowed to live together again as they did in the past	83	1	5	24
All funds and jobs should be distributed fairly according to the ration cards	70	10	7	37
The Central Government should work with Pandits to develop a policy for return	68	4	2	0
Establish a Commission to settle refugee Pandits property matters	68	4	7	0
Establish a Parliamentary Commission of enquiry into the mass exodus of Pandits	66	4	3	3
Government should resettle existing Pandit refugees in the Valley so that others will follow from outside the Valley	64	5	7	3
1947 PaK refuges should have the right to vote, hold property and government jobs	63	11	9	11
Facilitate the return of youths who have crossed the LoC	62	9	25	24
Refugees in Azad Kashmir should be allowed to return home just like Pandit refugees	61	5	19	24
Freeze the 1989 electoral list	49	13	8	3%

Peace-building solutions

With regards to other more general peace-building solutions or what are sometimes called Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) again there was much agreement (Table 5.8). For example 75% of the people of J & K considered it 'essential or desirable' to 'Restore, protect and open all Temples and Shrines' with virtually no opposition to such a policy (Muslim 3%, Hindu 6%, Buddhist 0% 'unacceptable'). People wanted an independent media, for NGOs to bring people together and to build a secular pluralist society. But most of all, at 84% 'essential or desirable' the people of J & K believed that 'We must learn from the past'. These idealistic sentiments are welcome and are the stuff that real peace is made of. But this picture was not quite perfect - there were also some fears and concerns. Buddhists feared closer ties with Pakistan, 37% of them found it 'unacceptable' to 'Make travel across the LoC easier'. And perhaps for different reasons 21% of Muslims, 19% of Hindus and 50% of Buddhists considered it 'unacceptable' that 'Separatists should participate in elections'. Picking the right CBMs to move a peace process forward

needed to be done with some care but when coupled with a range of the most appropriate economic, educational, security and human rights policies suggested here there was plenty of scope for action. So we now knew what 'problems' had to be addressed and we also knew what could reasonably be done to resolve them. The next question was how and who would decide?

Table 5.8. General peace-building solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
We must learn from the past	84	2	2	0
Give Kashmir real hope that a solution is coming	82	4	3	0
Politics in Kashmir should focus on education and development	78	4	4	0
All NGOs and Civil Society should co-operate to bring the common people together	77	2	6	3
The media should be objective and not take sides in the conflict	77	4	5	0
Live by culture, language and history in addition to religion	76	4	3	0
Restore, protect and open all Temples and Shrines	75	3	6	0
Cooperation and friendship leads to conflict resolution	75	3	4	3
Build a secular pluralist society	73	5	4	0
Delhi should work constructively with the J and K government without manipulating their affairs	70	7	4	0
Pakistan should be our friend but not our master	70	5	5	3
Take Kashmir ethnic politics out of election campaigns	66	5	8	29
Everyone who wants to cross the LoC for religious festivals should be allowed to do so	66	4	8	
Open borders for social, cultural and economic exchange	62	4	8	5
Make the bus service across the LoC available to the whole of the population on both sides	62	3	13	21
Women from all regions of Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-administered Kashmir should be included in all aspects of the peace process	62	11	5	5
Make travel across the LoC easier	57	5	14	37
Build identity based on common Kashmir symbols such as Nund Rishi and Lal Ded	55	4	14	3
Separatists should participate in elections	45	21	19	50

Negotiations

Twenty options for negotiations were tested against public opinion (Table 5.9). Critically the top priority here was 'Resolve the conflict through negotiation' at 81% 'essential or desirable' followed by, for example, the 'Kashmir people must be part of any talks and settlement of the Kashmir issue' at 76% 'essential or desirable'; 'Pakistan and India should talk directly to each other' 69%; 'Negotiation of the peace process must include all 5 regions…' 68% and 'Don't stop talking because of political radical groups' also at 68% 'essential or desirable'. The message was clear. The people of J & K wanted inclusive talks and they wanted all the relevant parties to the conflict involved - particularly themselves. The suggestion that 'India and Pakistan should reach a compromise without input from Kashmir was 'unacceptable' to 47% of Muslims, 23% of Hindus and 18% of Buddhists. Getting America and Europe involved as an 'honest broker' was not particularly popular either (only 45% 'essential or desirable' and 24% 'unacceptable' overall). The people of J & K wanted their own solution to the problem of Kashmir and they clearly should have been given every opportunity to find one. The results of this poll suggested that getting agreement to a 'shopping list' of CBMs and other measures required to ensure good governance may not be particularly difficult but finding a solution to the more fundamental question of the constitution may be quite another matter. What can be agreed and how difficult is that task?

Table 5.9. Negotiation solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
Resolve the conflict through negotiation	81	2	9	3
Kashmiri people must be part of any talks and settlement of the Kashmir issue	76	3	4	8
All parties should enter into discussions without delay and express their true opinion	72	6	5	0
India should have a debate on solution	70	4	11	13
Pakistan and India should talk directly to each other	69	13	4	0
Negotiation of the peace process must include all 5 regions of Kashmir: Northern Areas, Azad Kasmir, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh	68	5	5	0
Don't stop talking because of political radical groups	68	6	9	0
Establish an independent commission and forum for peace and reconciliation in Kashmir	68	5	6	3
India and Pakistan should facilitate intra Kashmir dialogue	67	4	4	0

India, Pakistan, Shrinagar and Muzzafarabad must all be part of any solution of the Kashmir issue	61	5	7	3
Establish inclusive working groups to undertake the groundwork and set the agenda for India, Pakistan and leaders of Kashmir	60	6	6	29
Give refugees representation in negotiations	57	13	6	3
Take Kashmir issue out of daily politics and hand it to an all party committee	56	12	7	0
Religious extremists should not be allowed to negotiate the future of J and K	53	26	11	13
Under the authority of a joint Indian and Pakistan commission monitored by SARC hold elections to negotiations for the final settlement of J and K	53	9	15	50
Institutionalise the Kashmir Round Table with a permanent secretariat	50	9	18	0
America or Europe should be an honest broker between India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir dispute	45	26	23	29
India and Pakistan should reach a compromise without input from Kashmir	36	47	23	18
Involve all minorities in writing the Constitution for a Ladakh Union Territory	34	31	23	3
Ladakh should start talks with the Government for a Union Territory	32	31	22	0

Constitutional reform

The constitutional question was approached in two ways. Firstly all the major elements of constitutional reform were tested in a list of 29 options (Table 5.10) and then again as a series of 7 'packages' (Table 5.11). There were significant levels of resistance from the different communities to nearly all of these proposals. The top priorities however were 'J & K should be a secular state' 1st at 68% 'essential or desirable' followed by 'The people of J & K should exercise their rights to a plebiscite in accordance with UN resolutions' at 60% rising to 73% for Muslims. This is their number one priority followed by 'Kashmir should be an independent country' at 65% 'essential or desirable'. For both Hindus and Buddhists, however, the top priority was that 'Kashmir should stay with India' at 74% and 100% 'essential or desirable' respectively. The second priority for Hindus was a secular state at 75% 'essential or desirable' and for Buddhists it was 'Ladakh should keep control of its land and culture' at 92%. How could these different priorities be reconciled? What compromise package of constitutional reform offered the best hope of success at the negotiating table? (Table 5.11)

Table 5.10. Constitutional solutions

All off J & K per cent	All Essential or Desirable	Muslim Unacceptable	Hindu Unacceptable	Buddhist Unacceptable
J and K should be a secular state	68	11	4	26
The people of J and K should exercise their rights to a plebiscite in accordance with UN resolutions	60	9	18	66
Consultation between all Districts	59	11	10	0
Union of South Asian Countries to cooperate on economic and terrorism issues	56	9	7	66
No political borders in Kashmir	50	14	27	37
Kashmir should be an independent country	48	15	51	58
Full implementation of Article 370 with Kashmir administered as it was before 1953	48	15	24	34
Kashmir should be with India	46	47	6	0
Each region should have autonomy within the larger unity of the J and K State	44	26	19	0
Ladakh should remain with India	44	41	7	0
Ladakh should keep control of its land and culture	44	21	18	5
Decentralise to all levels of government down to the village	42	20	11	8
Create 6 Regional Councils in Kashmir: Lai, Kargil, the Valley, Doda, Poonch and Jammu	40	22	14	32
All the Districts of J and K should be allowed to decide their own future	37	34	44	5
Create a Greater Kashmir including the Valley, Doda, Poonch, Rajauri and Kargil	36	21	35	58
Share power (CM, Deputy etc) between Budisit and Shias in Ladakh	34	27	17	3
Present status should continue	32	54	13	8
Defence and Foreign policy should stay with India and everything else should stay with J and K	32	37	16	50
Create a Greater Ladakh including Lah, Kargil, Northern Areas and Aksai Chin	32	26	19	53
Call the Occupied Territories Eastern and Western Kashmir	32	25	20	47
Make LoC the permanent boundary	31	37	33	16
Make Line of Control irrelevant	31	31	47	34
Establish Union Territory of Ladakh	30	35	20	5
Direct Rule from Delhi in J and K	28	54	18	18
Decentralise to 3 regions and Kashmir and Northern Territories in Pakistan	28	30	31	63
Make 3 separate states under India – Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh	26	53	34	18
Establish a Union Territory of Panun Kashmir based on Indian Constitution	24	50	30	37
Joint management by Pakistan and India	24	49	51	58
Kashmir should be with Pakistan	14	62	66	90

Table 5.11. A constitutional package for Kashmir

All J & K per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Join Pakistan - All of J and K should become a part of Pakistan like any other Pakistan Province	8	4	5	8	74
Full Independence – All 5 Districts should join to become the independent state of Kashmir with responsibility for both their domestic and foreign policy and protecting their borders with Pakistan, India and China	33	12	12	10	32
Disintegration – Each of the 5 Districts should be allowed to choose their own future with Pakistan or India	12	11	14	13	49
Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks	14	15	19	17	32
No change – The status quo should stay the same with present Central, State and Regional arrangements for governance	22	16	15	11	34
Autonomy – Full implementation of Article 370 and return to the status existing in J and K before 1953 with a Parliament and Prime Minister leaving only defence, foreign policy and communications to India	21	22	18	14	23
Join India – All of J and K should become a part of India like any other Indian State	33	13	10	9	34

A process of elimination would help here starting with the least preferred options. No one wanted to 'Join Pakistan' (Table 5.11 and 5.12). Even 71% of Muslims considered this option 'unacceptable' (69% in the Kashmir Valley). They could have chosen 'tolerable' but they didn't. Although Hindus and Buddhists wanted to 'Join India' 49% of Muslims (63% in the Kashmir Valley) did not so this option did not seem to work either. But the UN resolutions for a plebiscite were limited to these two options – India or Pakistan. Clearly the Muslims of J & K did not understand this issue or had been misled. What they wanted was 'Full Independence' and that was not on offer. But suppose it were. What would happen then? For 58% of Hindus and 74% of Buddhists this option was 'unacceptable' (50% for Jammu Province and 62% for Ladakh). So a plebiscite, even if Pakistan, India and the UN agreed to it, would leave Kashmir divided and no one wanted that. 'Disintegration', at 49% 'unacceptable' was the least popular option after 'Join Pakistan'. This left 'Regional integration and devolution' which was 'unacceptable' to 55% of Buddhists; 'No change' which was 'unacceptable' to 47% of Muslims (58% in the Kashmir Valley) and 'Autonomy' which was 'unacceptable' to

61% of Buddhists. But this option 'Full implementation of Article 370 and return to the status existing in J and K before 1953 with a Parliament and Prime Minister leaving only defence, foreign policy and communications to India' was by far the 'lesser of all the evils' at only 23% 'unacceptable' over all. Providing the Buddhists could be persuaded that their minority rights and culture could be protected in an autonomous state then this option just might have worked and perhaps this could have been done by leaving the responsibility for the rights of minorities with India and by implementing far reaching devolution to all levels of government. Coupled with all the other measures for reform dealt with in this poll peace just might be possible at the negotiating table.

But this poll had not included the other half of Kashmir so everyone interviewed was also asked 'Do you want all the questions in this poll to be asked in Pakistan-administered Kashmir?' and the result was 74% 'Yes' ranging from a high of 85% for Muslims in Ladakh to a low of 64% for Hindus in the Kashmir Valley. It seemed to be the case that if the governments of India and Pakistan could act in good faith to help the people of Kashmir find peace the people just might succeed where successive governments had failed.

Table 5.12 A constitutional package for Kashmir

Per cent 'Unacceptable' in 2008 [And All PaK in 2009 see Poll 2 below]	**All IaK**	Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	**Valley**[21]	Muslim	Hindu	**Jamu**	Muslim	Hindu	**Ladahk**	Muslim	Buddhist	**All PaK**
Join Pakistan	**74**	**71**	**78**	**84**	**69**	**69**	**64**	**77**	**73**	**79**	**87**	**88**	**84**	3
Full Independence	32	16	**58**	**74**	7	7	0	**50**	31	**59**	**62**	**55**	**74**	6
Disintegration	49	49	50	**63**	**53**	**53**	27	47	40	50	48	38	**63**	8
Regional integration and devolution	32	27	40	**55**	22	22	36	39	35	40	49	45	**55**	9
No change	34	47	12	3	**58**	**58**	**73**	17	30	11	3	3	3	7
Autonomy	23	27	15	**61**	34	34	27	14	13	15	33	15	**61**	21
Join India	34	49	10	13	**63**	**63**	46	13	20	10	13	13	13	25

[21] The results for the 'Valley' and 'Muslims' in the Valley are the same because the Hindu population in the Valley is so small it has no significant impact on these percentages.

Poll 2. Pak v Iak: Getting beyond a referendum[22]

In the summer of 2008 Kashmir witnessed the worst outbreak of communal riots and killings in over a decade and it seemed as if Kashmir might once again become the crucible of regional violence. Benazir Bhutto had been brutally assassinated only 6 months earlier in Rawalpindi in December 2007 and in November 2008, six months after the Kashmir riots, international terrorists with Pakistani connections were held responsible for a massacre in Mumbai. Following an attempt to abduct the Sri Lanka cricket team in Lahore and increased activity of militants throughout the country commentators were suggesting Pakistan might soon become the next failed state. The Pakistan army entered the Swat valley in force to confront the Taliban but force alone would not solve all these problems. In this context a subset of the questions asked in Indian administered Kashmir (IaK) in the spring of 2008 were repeated in Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK) in February 2009 in the hope of discovering any possibilities at all for a diplomatic intervention that just might help to contribute to a resolution of the crisis and that might also enjoy wide popular support (Irwin, 2009b).

The Constitutional Question

The overwhelming preference of the Muslims in IaK, particularly for those in the Valley, had been an independent Kashmir (63% 'essential', 15% 'desirable', 10% 'acceptable', 4% 'tolerable' and 7% 'unacceptable'). But the Hindus of Jammu and the Buddhists of Ladakh wanted to stay with India and rejected the independence option at 59% and 74% 'unacceptable' respectively (Table 5.12). Critically, however, the Muslims of IaK, at 71% 'unacceptable' over all, along with the Hindus at 78% and Buddhists at 84% 'unacceptable' also firmly rejected joining with Pakistan. Clearly if the Muslim population of PaK followed this same pattern with a call for independence and a rejection of the state of Pakistan then a new fault line might emerge in the region between the Muslims of PaK and the Valley on the one hand and the Hindus and Buddhists on the other. This, however, did not happened.

[22] The data for the Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK) part of this poll were collected in February 2009 by D3 Systems, Inc. of Virginia to produce 1200 interviews as a representative sample of PaK in terms of age, gender, social background and geographical area.

The first preference for the people of PaK was to stay with Pakistan at 43% 'essential', 15% 'desirable', 30% 'acceptable', 8% 'tolerable' and 3% 'unacceptable' (Table 5.13). In time they might be persuaded to join an independent Kashmir, as they did not rigorously reject this prospect either at only 6% 'unacceptable'. But then they did not rigorously reject any of the options on offer except perhaps for joining with India (25% 'unacceptable') unlike their brothers and sisters in IaK who so strongly reject joining with Pakistan (71% 'unacceptable'). Even on this option, however, the people of PaK seem to be split with a significant minority (20% 'essential' and 18% 'desirable') open to the prospect of a future with India.

Table 5.13. A constitutional package for Kashmir – results for PaK

PaK per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Join Pakistan - All of J and K should become a part of Pakistan like any other Pakistan Province	43	15	30	8	3
Full Independence – All 5 Districts should join to become the independent state of Kashmir with responsibility for both their domestic and foreign policy and protecting their borders with Pakistan, India and China	19	38	27	8	6
Disintegration – Each of the 5 Districts should be allowed to choose their own future with Pakistan or India	35	26	19	10	8
Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks	29	31	19	9	9
No change – The status quo should stay the same with present Central, State and Regional arrangements for governance	33	26	24	8	7
Autonomy – Full implementation of Article 370 and return to the status existing in J and K before 1953 with a Parliament and Prime Minister leaving only defence, foreign policy and communications to India	24	25	18	8	21
Join India – All of J and K should become a part of India like any other Indian State	20	18	24	8	25

The Government in Pakistan, who feared the break up of their state, may have gained some reassurance from this result. However, the political leadership of the various militant groups who wanted a referendum on the future of Kashmir were most likely disappointed by this lack of consensus. The two polls seemed to indicate that a referendum would not help to resolve the question of Kashmir but might only serve to confuse the issue

with PaK wishing to stay with Pakistan, the Valley seeking independence and Jammu and Ladakh voting to remain with India. Why was this and what was the way forward?

The Problems

For the PaK survey 18 problems that seemed to be relevant for all Kashmiri's were selected from an original list of 37 problems previously run in the IaK poll (Table 5.14). 'Poor quality of education', 'Independence will not bring safe borders with Kashmir's neighbours' and 'India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result' come in together at the top of the PaK list at 42% and 41% 'very significant'. The people of IaK put 'Corrupt administration' at the top of their list at 59% 'very significant' followed by 'High levels of unemployment' at 56% (it is fourth on the PaK list) and 'India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result' 3rd at 54% (Table 5.1).

Table 5.14. The 'problems' faced by the people of PaK in order of significance

	PaK per cent	Very Significant
1st	Poor quality of education	42
2nd	Independence will not bring safe borders with Kashmir's neighbours	41
3rd	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	41
4th	High levels of unemployment	38
5th	The political leadership of Kashmir is divided	32
6th	Denial of democratic rights	32
7th	Non-cooperation and separation leads to the deepening of the conflict	30
8th	The vested interests of all the groups involved in keeping the conflict going	29
9th	Poor quality of infrastructure and services	29
10th	Corrupt administration	29
11th	Failure to settle the Kashmir issue prevents large inward investment such as Hydro-electric	27
12th	20,000 applications pending for bus to Azad Kashmir	27
13th	Violence instigated by the Indian Army	25
14th	The *rebel fighters* disregard for Human Rights	24
15th	Violence instigated by domestic Mujahidin	20
16th	Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests	20
17th	Violence instigated by Pakistan	19
18th	Violence instigated by international Jihadists	19

Significantly 'Independence will not bring safe borders with Kashmir's neighbours' was joint 2nd on the PaK list at 41% 'very significant' but it was down at 14th on the IaK list with a variety of other problems preceding it (Table 5.1). This result may have provided an insight into the reasoning

here. Perhaps the people of PaK harboured reservations about independence for security reasons while the people of IaK were more self-assured. However, that self-confidence may have been misplaced. When I had an opportunity to raise this point in IaK some of the people I spoke to responded that they thought India might guarantee the borders of an independent Kashmir. Perhaps the people of PaK did not share this perspective and/or did not think Pakistan would or could guarantee the borders of an independent Kashmir. But these were speculations on my part. More research was required here with questions formulated by and for the people of PaK.

It was interesting to note that in addition to 'High levels of unemployment' (4th on the PaK list and 2nd on the IaK list) 'Poor quality of education' was 1st on the PaK list and only 13th on the IaK list while 'Denial of democratic rights' was 5th on the PaK list and only 12th on the IaK list. There were clearly some significant differences in the social and political lives of these two communities and perhaps that is why the Muslims of IaK were so reluctant to become a part of Pakistan? Again more probing questions might help.

The Solutions

For what appear to be security, social and political reasons we can now see that the possibility of a referendum on joining Pakistan, joining India or independence is unlikely to resolve the problem of Kashmir. Perhaps knowing what not to do is some sort of progress in diplomatic terms but what then to do? Problems of unemployment were a top priority for all the people of Kashmir in both PaK and IaK. Consequently any proposals to stimulate the economies of both PaK and IaK were well received. 'Open trade between India and Pakistan' was the top priority for those interviewed in PaK at 56% 'essential', 15% 'desirable', 13% 'acceptable', 8% 'tolerable' and only 7% 'unacceptable' followed by telephone links, open the ancient silk route, trade across the LoC and economic strategies for the two Kashmirs. The only difficulty here was the Buddhists of Ledakh who were very nervous about closer relations with the Muslim communities and states to their West. They were very conscious of what happened to their people and their shrines in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and consequently they considered 'joint strategies for economic development between the 2 Kashmirs' to be 55% 'unacceptable' (Table 5.3). If such policies were to be pursued then India and Pakistan as well as the Muslims of Kashmir would have to make a very special effort to reassure the Buddhists of Ladakh of their good intentions in this regard.

Given their reservations about the state of their democracy and education it was not surprising that the top priority for education reform for the people of PaK was 'New textbooks on good governance and human rights' at 56% 'essential' followed by inspectorate of schools at 47% and licensing Madrassas at 46% 'essential'. With regards to security almost everyone required that 'The violence should stop from all sides' at 58% 'essential', 18% 'desirable', 15% 'acceptable', 7% 'tolerable' and only 2% 'unacceptable' in PaK. Results for IaK were understandably very similar. But unlike IaK the option to 'Resolve the conflict through armed struggle' did not receive an unequivocal rejection. In IaK this proposal was 'unacceptable' to 70% of Muslims, 42% of Hindus and 47% of Buddhists (Table 5.5) but in PaK it was only 8% 'unacceptable'. There was similar equivocation by those interviewed in PaK with regards to the suggestion that 'Pakistan should stop supporting *rebel fighters* in Jammu and Kashmir and close all training camps' at only 20% 'essential'. These preliminary results, on these sensitive issues should have been a matter for some concern.

With regards to Human Rights there was wide support for the idea that 'Majorities and minorities should be treated the same' at 55% 'essential', 14% 'desirable' 19% 'acceptable', 8% 'tolerable' and only 3% 'unacceptable' in PaK. But the idea that 'Minority rights in an independent Kashmir will be guaranteed by Islamic law' was 'unacceptable' to only 9% of those interviewed in PaK while 42% of Hindus in IaK and 79% of Buddhists found this proposal 'unacceptable' (Table 5.6).

With regards to negotiations the suggestion that 'Pakistan and India should talk directly to each other' came out on top of the PaK negotiation list at 53% 'essential', 16% 'desirable' 17% 'acceptable', 10% 'tolerable' and only 4% 'unacceptable'. But after that the results were mixed. They lacked the kind of variation found in the results from IaK which may or may not be something to do with the way the interviews were done, the translations used or differences in the culture of these separated peoples living in clearly very different social, political and security environments. Although the poll undertaken in IaK was more comprehensive than anything that had been done there before, the results were consistent with previous polls. In PaK there was a lack of similar research and more polling needed to be done to explore the subtleties of these issues in greater depth and place them in a broader context.

What then could be said and what was the way forward for this region of the subcontinent? Each part of Indian and Pakistan administered Kashmir seemed to be working to a different constitutional agenda (stay with Pakistan, independence or stay with India) so going down that particular diplomatic road would not seem to provide for any kind of

workable solution in the short to medium term. But everyone wanted to stimulate their economy; strengthen democracy; improve education and providing the concerns of the vulnerable minorities, the Hindus and Buddhists, can be properly addressed with effective guarantees then a regional solution may be the answer. There was little objection to this particular proposal in PaK (Table 5.13). In IaK (Table 5.11) the resistance was stronger as it clearly was not the first choice of many (particularly the Buddhists). But it would appear to be the best second choice for a significant majority when coupled with an increasing degree of autonomy. Working toward such a diplomatic objective would not be easy but that task would be made very much easier if those advocating the simplistic solution of a referendum would face up to the reality described here. They should help the process to move forward if they can, or keep their council if they can't.

Poll 3. People want to move on[23]

With Yashwant Deshmukh, I presented the results of the first poll in this series at the WAPOR annual conference in New Orleans in May, 2008 (Brian Gosschalk of Ipsos MORI chaired the session) and the results of the second poll were presented at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington in June, 2009. Subsequently Ipsos MORI (2010) undertook a similar poll in September and October 2009 in collaboration with Dr. Robert Bradnock of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London (RIIA – Chatham House) and they came to essentially the same set of conclusions as our own, namely that:

> 'These results support the already widespread view that the plebiscite options are likely to offer no solution to the dispute. Nor is there evidence that an independence option could offer a straightforward alternative. Any solution will depend on the Indian and Pakistani governments' commitment to achieving a permanent settlement. The poll suggests that such a settlement will depend critically on engaging fully with all shades of Kashmiri political opinion.' (Bradnock, 2010)

Unfortunately this Ipsos MORI poll commissioned by Dr Saif al Islam al Qadahfi did not build on our work in the way the Northern Ireland peace

[23] This second IaK sample collected by the CVoter Foundation, Delhi in August 2010 produced a total of 1200 interviews.

polls had. Firstly a lot of the issues we had started to explore were left out, secondly the parties to the conflict should have had an opportunity to discuss, critique and come up with their own suggestions for a second round of polling as an advance on the first round and thirdly the style of the questions used by Ipsos MORI did not adequately facilitate the analysis of compromise positions. For example in the constitutional question (Table 5.15) respondents were simply asked if they were given the choice in a vote tomorrow, which ONE option would they vote for? (Bradnock, 2010)

Table 5.15. Options and results for Ipsos MORI – RIIA poll (Bradnock, 2010)

Per cent for each single option chosen	Total	AJK	J&K
Kashmir on both sides of the LoC to become independent?	43	44	43
To join India?	21	1	28
To join Pakistan?	15	50	2
The LoC to be made an international border	14	1	19
India and Pakistan to have joint sovereignty for foreign affairs and whole of Kashmir to have autonomy over internal affairs?	1	2	1
India and Pakistan to have joint sovereignty for foreign affairs with local control (at State level) over internal affairs?	1	0	1
DK/Refused	5	1	6

Negotiators need to know what is 'essential', what is 'unacceptable', and critically, what is 'tolerable'. This is particularly important for power sharing options such as the two 'joint sovereignty' proposals tested here, which only received 1% support as a first choice over all. Regrettably, although their poll correctly identified the central constitutional problem it could not and did not move the research any closer to a constitutional solution. On the contrary it made such a solution look far more difficult to achieve. A valuable opportunity had been missed and the conflict in Kashmir turned from bad to worse in the summer of 2010. So, two years on, following months of renewed violence and bloodshed, we wanted to know if the views of the people had changed, were they more or less radicalised, and did their leaders speak for them? To this end the most critical constitutional questions asked in the first poll were repeated again in the third poll in the volatile Kashmir Valley in August 2010.

No one wanted to 'Join Pakistan' in May 2008. Even 69% of those living in the Kashmir Valley considered this option 'unacceptable' then (the result was the same for Muslims) and there was no significant change on this point in August 2010 at 71% 'unacceptable' (Table 5.16). Although Hindus and Buddhists, (predominantly in Jammu and Ladakh) wanted to 'Join India', 63% of those living in the Kashmir Valley in 2008 and 58% in 2010 did not so this option still didn't work as a solution to the Kashmir

problem. What they wanted was 'Full Independence' at 63% 'essential' in 2008 and 65% in 2010. But for 58% of Hindus and 74% of Buddhists this option was 'unacceptable' in 2008 and undoubtedly remained so.

A plebiscite, even if Pakistan, India and the UN agreed to it, would leave Kashmir divided and the people of the Kashmir Valley did not want that at 53% 'unacceptable' for the 'Disintegration' option in 2008. However, on this point there was a significant change. Only 34% rejected 'Disintegration' in 2010 as 'unacceptable'. Similarly, 'Regional integration and devolution' was far more popular than it was at 44% 'essential' in 2010 (12% 'unacceptable') up 26 points from only 18% 'essential' in 2008 (then 22% 'unacceptable').

The 'No change' option was still strongly rejected in the Kashmir Valley at 58% 'unacceptable' in 2008 and 50% 'unacceptable' in 2010. 'Autonomy' was 'unacceptable' to 61% of Buddhists in 2008 and no doubt this was still the case. But this option 'Full implementation of Article 370 and return to the status existing in J and K before 1953 with a Parliament and Prime Minister leaving only defence, foreign policy and communications to India' was by far the 'lesser of all the evils' at only 23% 'unacceptable' over all in 2008. Resistance to this option had also dropped significantly in the Kashmir Valley down from 34% 'unacceptable' in 2008 (18% 'essential') to only 24% 'unacceptable' in 2010 (now 39% 'essential'). Critically all the compromise options were far more acceptable to the people of the Kashmir Valley in 2010 than they were in 2008. The people of the Kashmir Valley wanted to move on.

The results of this poll were published in the most widely read weekly magazine in India, *The Sunday Indian*, on 12 September (Deshmukh and Irwin, 2010a and b; Irwin, 2010d), and Yashwant gave the full report to the Minister of Minority Affairs, Salman Khursheed, who presented it to Prime Minister Singh. On September 20 an all-party delegation of parliamentarians met with separatists in Kashmir to offer discussions on any issues of importance to them with the exception of secession (BBC, 2010). Clearly a properly managed program of peace polls in Kashmir could make a positive contribution to the resolution of the conflict there but those responsible for such work had failed in this task. As independent researchers we had done all that we could with our limited resources.

Table 5.16. A Constitutional Package for Kashmir – Results for the Valley

Join Pakistan - All of J and K should become a part of Pakistan like any other Pakistan Province		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	5	7	-2
	Desirable	11	5	6
	Acceptable	9	8	1
	Tolerable	3	9	-6
	Unacceptable	71	69	2
Full Independence - All 5 Districts should join to become the independent state of Kashmir with responsibility for both their domestic and foreign policy and protecting their borders with Pakistan, India and China		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	65	63	2
	Desirable	15	15	0
	Acceptable	6	10	-4
	Tolerable	2	4	-2
	Unacceptable	12	7	5
Disintegration - Each of the 5 Districts should be allowed to choose their own future with Pakistan or India		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	32	12	20
	Desirable	8	10	-2
	Acceptable	19	11	8
	Tolerable	6	11	-5
	Unacceptable	34	53	-19
Regional Integration and Devolution - Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	44	18	26
	Desirable	10	20	-10
	Acceptable	25	24	1
	Tolerable	9	12	-3
	Unacceptable	12	22	-10
No Change - The status quo should stay the same with present Central, State and Regional arrangements for governance		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	18	11	7
	Desirable	8	7	1
	Acceptable	6	10	-4
	Tolerable	18	12	6
	Unacceptable	50	58	-8
Autonomy - Full implementation of Article 370 and return to the status existing in J and K before 1953 with a Parliament and Prime Minister leaving only defence, foreign policy and communications to India		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	39	18	21
	Desirable	15	14	1
	Acceptable	11	15	-4
	Tolerable	12	16	-4
	Unacceptable	24	34	-10
Join India - All of J and K should become a part of India like any other Indian State		2010	2008	Change
	Essential	7	9	-2
	Desirable	2	8	-6
	Acceptable	19	9	10
	Tolerable	14	9	5
	Unacceptable	58	63	-5

6

Sri Lanka

When the British left India in 1947 (the 'jewel in the crown' of British colonialism) they divided it in two along ethnic and religious lines to create the new nation states of Pakistan and India. When they left Ceylon (the 'pearl in the crown') a year later they left it intact although a natural fault line existed between the Sinhala, Buddhist majority in the South and West and the Tamil, Hindu minority in the North and East. In 1956, with no colonial masters to oppose in common cause, ethnic politics took root, the constitution that protected minority rights was abandoned and the seeds of revolt were sown with the passing of the Sinhala Only [language] Act. Like the Muslims in colonial India the Tamils now sought a separate state of Tamil Eelam in the North and East of their country. This was opposed by the government of what was now called Sri Lanka and a 25-year war ensued (1983 to 2009) between the government forces and the insurgent Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

With funds from my British Academy grant I arrived in Sri Lanka from India and gave a talk on the Northern Ireland peace polls in Colombo on 16 October 2007. The following year, with additional funds from the international community, I began what became a three-year program of peace polling that transcended the end of their war. Critically a number of individuals and institutions were able to provide support. These were the head of one of the most prominent NGOs on the island Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu (Sara) Director of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) and Pradeep Peiris the Director of their sister organisation Social Indicator that did all the polling on the island. In the international community I knew the Norwegian Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Tore Hattram, having met him at the Oslo Forum in June. Finally, and most importantly, I was introduced to Professor Tissa Vitharana MP, the Minister of Science and Technology, and Chair of the President's All Party Representative Committee (APRC) tasked with finding a constitutional solution to what was called the 'National Question'. Trained as an epidemiologist before entering politics he quickly saw the value of applying the Northern Ireland public opinion and diplomacy methods to his own country's problems. I could not have

had a better set of colleagues to work with. They were able to give me the best possible technical and political advice both domestically and internationally. After Northern Ireland it was the most well managed project I have had the good fortune to be involved in. The polling work went very well in sometimes very difficult circumstances but the domestic politics proved to be more challenging.

Poll 1. Peace in Sri Lanka: From symbols to substance

Pradeep Peiris at Social Indicator had been running polls in Sri Lanka for many years and he had already generated an extensive body of high quality academic research on their civil war (Social Indicator, 2004 and 2003/8). But it lacked commitment and input from the parliamentarians who must make the peace. Fortunately for me the President's All Party Representative Committee provided the perfect opportunity and vehicle to correct this problem. Following a presentation of my work at one of their regular meetings I was invited to complete a round of interviews with the APRC's members to draft a questionnaire in the style of those run in other conflicts but with a Sri Lankan focus. This was done in February and March 2008. Following a pre-test of this questionnaire a random sample of the adult population of Sri Lanka was collected between March and May for a total of 1,700 face-to-face interviews. Regrettably, for security reasons, due to the on-going war, the Northern province was excluded at this time (Irwin, 2008c and d). However, with the help of academic staff at the University of Jaffna, we were able to get a sample there a month later (Irwin, 2008e).[24]

At this stage in the research it was important to test every suggestion I was given in terms of 'problems' and 'solutions'. The survey would not have served a useful purpose if, at a meeting of the APRC one politician or another had said 'But my problem or solution was not tested' and had then dismissed the whole exercise as irrelevant. So we ended up with a total of 51 different problems and 88 solutions. The problems were tested together in one long list and the solutions were grouped under the headings of security, human rights, discrimination, good governance, and constitutional reform.

[24] This poll was run in June and repeated all the questions asked in the wider Sri Lanka poll with 200 interviews completed in 5 Divisional Secretariats (DS).

Problems

From the 51 different problems, Table 6.1 lists the top five for the Sinhala community, Tamils (excluding the Northern sample in the war zone), Up-Country Tamils who were not indigenous to Sri Lanka but had been brought there by the British to work the tea plantations, Muslims who were indigenous and who also spoke the Tamil language and Tamils from Jaffna, the capital of the Northern Province still in revolt. 'The on-going war' came in first at 73% 'very significant' on the Tamil problem list followed by 'escalating violence in the last 2 years' second at 72% and 'violence over the past 30 years' third at 59% 'very significant'. This item was fourth on the Sinhala list at 41% 'very significant', fifth on the Up-Country Tamil list at 74%, first on the Muslim list at 69% and second for the Northern Tamils at 72% 'very significant'.

So everyone could agree that the top problem for Sri Lanka, in one form or another, was the violence of war. But when it came to causes and blame there was much disagreement. First and second for the Sinhala was 'the continued violence of the LTTE' at 60% 'very significant' and 'abuse of human rights by the LTTE' at 59% (down at 29th and 24th on the Tamil list) while the Tamil placed 'discrimination after independence' fourth on their list at 56% 'very significant' and 'the failure of successive governments to find a political solution' fifth at 53% (down at 34th and 16th on the Sinhala list). So there was not much agreement there and this created yet another problem. Without recognition of the harm one community was doing to the other the prospects for reconciliation remained a distant hope. Problems at the very top of each community's list had to be addressed by the 'other' community if peace was to be achieved. How could this be done, what were the 'solutions' and what were the political risks for those wishing to move forward on a peace-building agenda?

Table 6.1. Top five 'problems' faced by the peoples of Sri Lanka in 2008

	Sinhala per cent	Very Significant
1st	The continued violence of the LTTE	60
2nd	Abuse of Human Rights by the LTTE	59
3rd	Fragmentation of the island into 'cleared' and 'un-cleared' areas	43
4th	Violence over the past 30 years	41
5th	Corrupt politicians	40
	Tamil per cent	Very Significant
1st	The on-going war	73
2nd	Escalating violence in the last 2 years	72
3rd	Violence over the past 30 years	59
4th	Discrimination after independence	56
5th	The failure of successive governments to find a political solution	53
	Up-Country Tamil per cent	Very Significant
1st	Escalating violence in the last 2 years	79
2nd	Failure to implement language rights	78
3rd	Abuse of Human Rights by the Police	75
4th	Abuse of Human Rights by the Armed forces	74
5th	Violence over the past 30 years	74
	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Violence over the past 30 years	69
2nd	Escalating violence in the last 2 years	66
3rd	The on-going war	64
4th	The continued violence of the LTTE	54
5th	Failure to implement language rights	51
	Jaffna Tamil sample per cent	Very Significant
1st	Escalating violence in the last 2 years	72
2nd	Violence over the past 30 years	72
3rd	The on-going war	71
4th	Failure to implement language rights	63
5th	Failure to bring perpetrators of human rights violations to justice	59

Solutions

Fortunately when it came to peace making there was a great deal of agreement between the different communities (Table 6.2). For example, with regards to security everyone agreed that 'The political leadership representing all stakeholders must come together to solve the problem' at 85% 'essential or desirable'. There was little significant resistance to all efforts in this regard from any community although a proposal to 'Stop the war' was 'unacceptable' to 45% of the Sinhala. However, they also wanted this done in parallel with a 'More inclusive and effective Peace Secretariat' at only 22% 'unacceptable'. To this end all the options to deal with problems of discrimination in education and employment and to promote good governance through an independent media, effective criminal justice system and to end corruption were welcomed in all communities.

Table 6.2. Selected solutions

National (Excl. N. Province)	Essential or Desirable	Sinhala Unacceptable	Tamil Unacceptable	Up-Country Tamil Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
The political leadership representing all stakeholders must come together to solve the problem	85	3	0	0	3
Effective institutions to combat corruption	78	1	6	1	5
Effective steps to ensure balanced access to university education	77	5	8	3	6
Independent media	76	3	6	1	4
Effective steps to ensure balanced recruitment in the civil service at all levels	75	12	2	1	2
Reform of the criminal justice system		4	5	1	0
More inclusive and effective Peace Secretariat	65	2	2	0	3
Devolution with the same powers for all Provinces	58	16	2	5	4
Stop the war	55	45	0	0	1
A federation without the right to leave	18	75	32	24	53

On the other hand, in the Northern sample a small but statistically significant minority of the Tamils did not consider the abuse of human rights as a means to achieving their political ends to be wrong (Table 6.3). For example, while 93% of Tamils from Jaffna considered extra-judicial killings to be ‘unacceptable’, 5% thought they were ‘acceptable’ and 2% ‘tolerable’ while 100% of the Tamils in the rest of Sri Lanka were totally opposed to such killings, as were 99% of the Sinhala (1% ‘tolerable’). Such percentages, although low, can and probably did translate into human rights abuses on both sides.

Table 6.3. Sinhala and Northern Tamil views of human rights abuses

Question: *To achieve its objectives the LTTE should be allowed to:*

Jaffna Sample per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Attack civilians	0	1	0	7	92
Use torture	0	5	1	0	94
Undertake extra-judicial killings	0	0	5	2	93
Launch suicide attacks	1	0	1	9	88
Recruit Child Soldiers	2	0	5	1	92
Arbitrarily arrest and detention	2	2	1	2	93
Deny rights to a fair public trial	2	5	1	2	90
Deny freedom of speech, press, assembly	4	0	1	4	91
Deny freedom of movement	1	2	2	6	89

Question: *To achieve its objectives the government's forces, police and associated paramilitaries should be allowed to:*

Sinhala per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Attack civilians	0	0	0	2	98
Use torture	0	0	0	1	99
Undertake extra-judicial killings	0	0	0	1	99
Abuse emergency powers	0	0	2	3	95
Recruit Child Soldiers	0	0	0	0	100
Arbitrarily arrest and detention	0	0	1	6	93
Deny rights to a fair public trial	0	0	0	2	97
Deny freedom of speech, press, assembly	0	0	0	4	95
Deny freedom of movement	0	0	7	7	86

This first attempt to explore some constitutional solutions to Sri Lanka's 'National Question' produced some unexpected results. The Tamils were split on their professed solution of 'Two States' at only 27% 'essential' and 40% 'unacceptable'. Even the Tamils from Jaffna were split on this issue at 37% 'essential' and 27% 'unacceptable' while their preferred option appeared to be 'Enhanced Devolution' at 30% 'essential' and only 7% 'unacceptable' (Table 6.4). As this option was 8% 'essential', 12% 'desirable' and 46% 'acceptable' to the Sinhala then there was clearly some room for negotiation on this point (Table 6.5).

Table 6.4. Northern Tamil views of various constitutional packages for Sri Lanka

Jaffna Tamil Sample per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Two States – Two completely separate independent states of Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka.	37	10	16	11	27
Confederal State – Two autonomous units comprising the North-East and the rest of Sri Lanka with a minimum of functions for the joint central government.	18	23	15	7	38
Federal State – A number of autonomous units comprising the North-East and existing provinces in the rest of Sri Lanka with a joint central government sharing power with the autonomous units.	13	30	16	17	25
Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference.	30	23	22	19	7
13th Amendment Devolution – Present Constitution with full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments.	19	20	27	22	12
Unitary State – Pre 87 Constitution.	1	5	3	8	83

Other constitutional questions suggested the Sinhala were generally in favour of devolution to the provinces (16% 'unacceptable') although they were very much opposed to federalism even when provinces were not allowed to leave the unitary state of Sri Lanka (75% 'unacceptable'). The reality or substance of devolution was not the problem here (Table 6.2). It was just the idea or symbol of federalism, which had been politicised through the rhetoric of electoral politics and war. Providing the APRC stuck to the substance of their peace proposals and avoided what we started to call the 'F' word then their proposals just might be very acceptable indeed. With this point in mind I was given confidential access to the APRC proposals so that they could be anonymously tested against public opinion before they became the targets of political campaigns from spoilers. This was done in the second and third Sri Lanka peace polls prior

to and again after the end of the war.

Table 6.5. Sinhala views of various constitutional packages for Sri Lanka

Sinhala per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Two States – Two completely separate independent states of Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka.	0	1	1	3	95
Confederal State – Two autonomous units comprising the North-East and the rest of Sri Lanka with a minimum of functions for the joint central government.	3	1	3	4	91
Federal State – A number of autonomous units comprising the North-East and existing provinces in the rest of Sri Lanka with a joint central government sharing power with the autonomous units.	2	3	7	20	68
Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference.	8	12	46	3	31
13th Amendment Devolution – Present Constitution with full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments.	37	21	14	4	24
Unitary State – Pre 87 Constitution.	54	18	9	4	16

Polls 2 and 3. The APRC proposals

As chair of the APRC Professor Vithararan agreed that we should write a set of questions that honestly reflected the major elements of the APRC proposals. And as a Minister in the President's government he was able to arrange for me to travel to Trincomalee, just south of the intense fighting in the North East of Sri Lanka, to meet with one of his trusted advisors who had responsibility for drafting the APRC constitutional reforms. Having

taken the night train from Colombo I spent several days with him in February 2009 refining the questions before they were tested across Sri Lanka in March (Irwin, 2009c, d and e). But again, given the intense fighting at the end of the war, the Northern Province could not be sampled at that time. [25]

Following the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009 Professor Vitharana gave the President the final report of the APRC and a copy of my report on its acceptability to the people of Sri Lanka in July 2009. This was done in the hope that he would adopt the APRC proposals as a basis for constitutional reform and by promptly dealing with the 'National Question' in an act of magnanimity he might heal the nation and close the rift that had opened up between the Tamil and Sinhala people. Bearing in mind that the only government that could put any political pressure on Sri Lanka, to 'do the right thing' for the Tamil people was India, a copy of the report was made available to them at the same time that we provided it to the President, just before his meeting with the Indian Prime Minister in Delhi on July 17th 2009.

I do not know what transpired at that meeting but President Rajapaksa did not come under any significant pressure to make the reforms he had so often promised to make in the past. He said he would attend to such matters after the Presidential elections in February and General Elections to the Sri Lankan Parliament in April 2010. We could do no more but take him at his word and run our poll again to underscore the point that the people wanted reform. This was done one year later in March 2010, after the war and between the Presidential and General elections, but this time we were able to include the Northern Province to produce a 'war and peace' time line study.[26] It was our intention to publish our report directly after the elections to give a new government all the public diplomacy arguments that they needed to implement the APRC proposals by addressing all possible objections in this regard. Here is the short version of that report which was written for a Sri Lankan audience with translations into Tamil and Sinhala. However I have added a footnote on the political parties of Sri Lanka for those not familiar with them and changed the table numbers to make them consistent with this book.

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[25] For the second poll in this series Social Indicator used the same methodology as their first poll in this series with 1,700 face-to-face interviews collected in a random sample of Sri Lanka, in March 2009, excluding the Northern Province.

[26] For this poll, that included the Northern Province, the size of the random sample of Sri Lanka was increased to 2,400 in March 2010.

‘War and Peace’ and the APRC Proposals

Key findings:

The preliminary APRC proposals have gained more Sinhala support after the war so that they are now equally acceptable to the Sinhala, Tamils, Up-Country Tamils and Muslims.

- Although the majority of Tamils and Muslims across Sri Lanka want a unitary state a significant minority of Tamils from the Northern Province still want to keep the ‘right to secession’. However most of them will give this up for the complete ‘package’ of APRC reforms.
- The President, political and religious leaders can all influence support for these preliminary APRC proposals but although Eastern Tamils will follow their politicians on this issue Northern Tamils ‘Don’t Know’ how to respond to theirs.
- Although all communities strongly support language and fundamental rights Tamil concerns about the special status of Buddhism has increased after the war as a political issue.

Introduction

The President of Sri Lanka established the All Party Representative Committee (APRC) to draft a set of constitutional reforms that, following the war, would provide the country and all its citizens with a real opportunity for enduring political stability, increased economic growth and improvements in the quality of life. Critically, when tested against public opinion a year ago these proposals, with some minor reservations were acceptable to a significant majority of both Sinhalese and Tamils. But due to the on-going conflict the Tamils in the North could not be sampled then. With the end of the war and the defeat of their leadership would they accept the APRC proposals? Additionally 21% of Sinhalese did not know or were unwilling to give an opinion on such important issues at that time. With the end of the war would their views change and if so would this be for or against the APRC proposals?

The poll run in March 2009 also indicated that the President then enjoyed unprecedented popularity (93% ‘trust very much or trust quite a bit’ amongst the Sinhala) so it also seemed important to test the effects his support and the support of religious and political leaders could have on the acceptability of the APRC proposals. This was done by framing the

questions in these terms and also by asking if such support would change the views of the person being interviewed in a neutral version of the questionnaire.

A summary of the APRC proposals as they existed in February 2009 is listed in Table 6.6 as a series of 14 'show cards'. Those being interviewed were asked what they thought of each item on a given card. Was it 'essential', 'desirable', 'acceptable', 'tolerable' or 'unacceptable'? Then they were asked what they thought of the 'package' as a whole, if they would support such a 'package' and under what circumstances. The full report and results for all the different communities and political parties are available on the project website at http://www.peacepolls.org.

Table 6.6. The APRC proposals in summary form, as they existed in February 2009

1. *The Structure of the State* – Powers will be divided between the centre and the provinces under a unitary state.
2. *The Powers of the Centre and Provinces* – These powers will be clearly defined in two separate lists. One for the Centre and one for the Provinces.
3. *The Parliament* – Will consist of two houses. The House of Representatives directly elected by the people and the Senate elected by the Provincial Legislators with each Province having the same number of Senators.
4. *Amending the Constitution* – Amendments affecting the powers of the Provinces can only be made if a majority of Senators from each of the Provinces votes in favour together with not less than two thirds of a joint session of both houses. Amending certain specific articles will also require approval by the people at a referendum.
5. *The Powers of the President* – The Executive Presidency will cease to exist at the end of the incumbent's term and be replaced by the Westminster system with a Prime Minister enjoying majority support in the House of Representatives.
6. *The Powers of Local Authorities* – The Local Authorities will have powers to make by-laws in respect of subjects listed separately in the Constitution.
7. *Language Rights* – The Tamil and Sinhala languages will have parity of status as national and official languages and as languages of the courts. English can also be used for official purposes where it is expedient to do so. Sinhala and Tamil shall be the medium of instruction at the school level as well as English if facilities are available. Sinhala, Tamil and English shall be used at institutes of

higher education.
8. *Religious Rights* – Buddhism shall have 'pride of place' with religious freedom for all citizens being guaranteed.
9. *Fundamental Rights* – Individual and Group Rights will be recognized including the equality of all citizens and the protection of all persons before the law.
10. *Electoral System* – The House of Representatives and Provincial Legislators will be elected on a mixed system of first past the post and proportional representation.
11. *The Judiciary* – Will be independent of the Executive. The Court of Appeal will function with Divisions in the Provinces along with the Provincial High Courts.
12. *Public Service* – There will be separate services for the Centre and the Provinces with certain categories of officers classified as all island services. The Village, Divisional and District levels of administration will all come under the Provinces. As far as is practical the Public Service will reflect the composition of the population and it will be independent.
13. *Safeguards against secession* – The Constitution will provide for adequate safeguards against attempts by any Province to secede from the State.
14. *Law and Order* – There will be a Sri Lanka police officers service consisting of senior officers from all ethnic groups. Policing will be devolved to the Provinces with certain powers retained by the centre. National security will be the responsibility of the centre.

Sinhala response

The key percentages to consider are the levels of 'unacceptable'. First of all it should be pointed out that these results are very good when compared to places like Northern Ireland and the Middle East where levels of 'unacceptable' of 50 per cent plus had to or have yet to be negotiated. Having said that of course, Sri Lanka is not Northern Ireland or Israel and Palestine. The political context in Sri Lanka is very different.

The most important finding to note for the Sinhala is that the level of 'unacceptable' has fallen significantly across most of the APRC proposals from a high of 23% 'unacceptable' for the 'The Powers of the President' in 2009 to only 15% in 2010 (Table 6.7). Most significantly the levels of acceptability have risen, while, at the same time the 'Don't Knows' in 2010 are half of what they were in 2009. Perhaps the Sinhala who were reluctant to express their views before the end of the war had, for the most

part, positive views of the APRC proposals but were only willing to express those views now that the war is over or, perhaps, post war they have decided to be magnanimous towards their Tamil countrymen and women when they have been faced with military defeat, especially in the context of growing confidence that their country will not be divided. Whatever the reason the trend is clear and can be seen across all the results for the Sinhala community.

Table 6.7. Sinhala response to the APRC proposals (March 2010)

Sinhala per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	DK
1. The Structure of the State	25	42	14	3	8	8
2. The Powers of the Centre and Provinces	19	40	16	3	11	11
3. The Parliament	19	33	18	4	12	15
4. Amending the Constitution	22	40	14	5	6	13
5. The Powers of the President	23	37	13	5	15	8
6. The Powers of Local Authorities	13	36	18	9	15	10
7. Language Rights	47	35	8	3	5	2
8. Religious Rights	64	25	5	2	2	1
9. Fundamental Rights	60	31	7	1	0	2
10. Electoral System	21	34	15	7	8	15
11. The Judiciary	37	39	14	2	3	6
12. Public Service	24	36	21	4	5	11
13. Safeguards against secession	43	33	10	3	4	7
14. Law and Order	39	32	10	2	9	7
15. All of the reform proposals taken together as a ‘package’	20	38	22	7	4	10

As to the benefits, the top three items in order of priority in 2009 were Religious, Fundamental and Language Rights at 76%, 71% and 68% ‘essential or desirable’. In 2010 the order has changed a little with Fundamental Rights first at 91% (20% up on last year) followed by Religious and Language Rights at 89% and 82% (up 13% and 14% respectively). As one of the top priorities for the Tamil community remains ‘Language Rights’ this result continues to be most encouraging for the prospects of long term peace.

Tamil response

Again the key percentages to consider are the levels of 'unacceptable' and again the results are very good. However, unlike the results for the Sinhala there is little change between 2009 and 2010 with one notable exception. The one serious potential difficulty here is 'Religious Rights' at 28% 'unacceptable' in 2009 rising to 50% 'unacceptable' in 2010 (Table 6.8). But on the same issue 44% of Tamils consider this feature of the APRC proposals to be 'essential' in 2009 falling to 22% in 2010. They are clearly 'split' on this item. Why? And why is opposition to this constitutional provision so unusually strong?

Table 6.8. Tamil response to the APRC proposals (March 2010)

Tamil per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	DK
1. The Structure of the State	37	29	17	5	7	5
2. The Powers of the Centre and Provinces	44	29	13	4	4	5
3. The Parliament	46	27	14	2	4	8
4. Amending the Constitution	41	25	19	2	5	8
5. The Powers of the President	51	19	14	3	5	8
6. The Powers of Local Authorities	37	34	17	4	2	6
7. Language Rights	75	11	11	2	1	1
8. Religious Rights	22	11	7	8	50	2
9. Fundamental Rights	66	21	10	1	1	2
10. Electoral System	34	22	26	5	3	10
11. The Judiciary	57	27	7	2	0	7
12. Public Service	38	39	17	1	1	6
13. Safeguards against secession	28	24	18	7	15	9
14. Law and Order	41	32	14	5	5	4
15. All of the reform proposals taken together as a 'package'	42	24	17	5	3	8

Perhaps the answer is to be found in the way the question was asked? In the summary proposals 'Religious Rights' was drafted as, 'Buddhism shall have 'pride of place' with religious freedom for all citizens being guaranteed.' It seems very likely that those Tamils who considered this proposal to be 'unacceptable' were focusing on the suggestion that 'Buddhism shall have 'pride of place'' while those who considered this proposal to be 'essential' were focused on 'with religious freedom for all

citizens being guaranteed.' The problem here seems to be a matter of education, understanding and/or some sort of good or bad previous experience in this regard. Clearly this item requires some explanation or clarification to make sure there are no misunderstandings in the Tamil community and that their religious freedom will be effectively guaranteed by a new Sri Lanka constitution. Unfortunately, with the end of the war and the defeat of the Tamil insurgency in the North of the country, more Tamils are now concerned about the implications of this provision than they were before the end of the war. Perhaps a certain amount of 'triumphalism' on the part of the Sinhala community or some sense of not knowing their own position in a newly united Sri Lanka has aggravated this problem. The Government may wish to consider what steps it can take to address this issue before it becomes a cause for disaffection. Fortunately the end of a season of electoral politics and the formation of a new Parliament will provide the people of Sri Lanka with a new opportunity for reconciliation.

With regards to the benefits of the APRC proposals, the top items for the Tamils are 'Language Rights' at 85% 'essential or desirable', 'Fundamental Rights' at 76% and 'The Judiciary' at 73% in 2009 and 'Fundamental Rights' at 87%, 'Language Rights' at 86% and 'The Judiciary' at 84% in 2010. Fortunately the Sinhala also welcome these reforms so there should be no political difficulty with each community's top priorities. In other conflicts around the world such a result is most unusual. Top priorities generally require a degree of 'horse trading'. It is perhaps a mark of the understanding of each community's needs by the other community that has produced this unusual but most welcome result and/or the careful drafting of the All Party Representative Committee.

In 2009 it was not possible to undertake this research in the Northern Province. However in 2010 this was now possible so that the results for the APRC proposals could be broken down for the Tamil response in the Eastern Province and Northern Province separately and also for the rest of Sri Lanka without these Provinces included - 'Other Sri Lanka'. There is little difference between these three samples with one exception. Again all three groups of Tamils reject the 'Religious Rights' proposal at 52%, 49% and 49% 'unacceptable' in the Eastern, Northern and 'Other' Provinces respectively. But Northern Tamils also reject the proposal for 'Safeguards against secession' at 28% 'unacceptable' although 38% believe it is 'essential or desirable', 15% 'acceptable', 5% 'tolerable' and 14% 'don't know'. So like the other Tamils in Sri Lanka this group remain a minority which is reduced further to only 7% 'unacceptable' for Northern Tamils and 3% for all Sri Lanka Tamils providing the other provisions of the APRC proposals are implemented together as a 'package'.

Up-Country Tamil response

Although the recent war has largely been viewed as a conflict arising from Tamil grievances the APRC proposals have been drafted for the benefit of all the communities in Sri Lanka. Like other Tamils the Up-Country Tamils share an increasing concern about the 'Religious Rights' provision rising to 60% 'unacceptable' in 2010 from 46% in 2009. Their top priority remains 'Language Rights' at 91% 'essential or desirable' in 2009 and 94% in 2010. So like other Tamils they will accept the reforms proposed by the APRC as a package (only 2% 'unacceptable' in 2010) providing their major concerns are dealt with.

Muslim response

Although the Muslim community were also split on 'Religious Rights' at 30% 'essential' and 17% 'unacceptable' in 2009 this concern, unlike their Tamil countrymen and women, seems to have diminished at only 10% 'unacceptable' in 2010. Perhaps then it is not the 'Religious Rights' as such that is the problem here but the special place Buddhism is given in the APRC proposals, the Tamil defeat and a degree of associated Sinhala triumphalism? But as Tamil speakers one of their top priorities is 'Language Rights' at 82% 'essential or desirable' in 2010 and 85% in 2009. Clearly this problem needs to be addressed for the benefit of all the minorities in Sri Lanka.

Support for reform

All these results are very good but if, for example, the people of Sri Lanka were asked to vote for them in a referendum would the results be different. With this point in mind each person being interviewed was asked if they would support this set of proposals as a simple 'Yes'/ 'No' or 'Don't Know' question (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9. Would you support a package of constitutional reforms for Sri Lanka as outlined here?

March 2010	Sri Lanka	Sinhala	Tamil	UC Tamil	Muslim	Eastern Tamil	Northern Tamil	Other Tamil	SLFP	UNP	JVP	TNA	SLMC
Yes	83	83	84	86	80	89	77	90	87	80	69	78	74
No	9	9	7	12	13	0	15	4	6	11	27	17	14
DK	8	9	8	2	8	11	8	6	7	9	4	5	12

March 2009	Sri Lanka	Sinhala	Tamil	UC Tamil	Muslim	Eastern Tamil	Northern Tamil	Other Tamil	SLFP	UNP	JVP	TNA	SLMC
Yes	-	67	86	92	90	-	-	-	68	85	83	90	88
No	-	12	4	0	1	-	-	-	10	3	4	2	5
DK	-	21	10	8	9	-	-	-	22	12	13	7	7

For the Sinhala the results are significantly better up from 67% 'Yes' in 2009 to 83% 'Yes' in 2010 as Sinhala 'Don't Knows' move to the 'Yes' column. For the Tamils (86% to 84% 'Yes') and Up-Country Tamils (92% to 86% 'Yes') the results are a little down in 2010 from 2009 but not significantly so. But the Muslims have dropped ten points from 90% 'Yes' in 2009 to 80% 'Yes' in 2010 which brings them more in line with other parties included in this poll. Nonetheless a stunning result over all with little or no significant difference between Sinhala, Tamil, Up-Country Tamil and Muslim support for the APRC proposals at an average of 83% 'Yes'. Subject to some reservations over a couple of items a broad consensus for constitutional reform has been achieved.

The question of leadership was also dealt with by asking, after all the other questions on the APRC proposals had been asked, if the person being interviewed would change their view and switch from 'No' or 'Don't Know' to 'Yes' if their leaders were for the proposals or if they would switch from 'Yes' to 'No' if they were against them. The results are mixed with no particular leader (President, Religious, Political) having any more significant effect on the outcome than any other leader. However all these leaders do have the ability to influence support for the proposals one way or another but as the 'No' and 'Don't Knows' were so low for all the communities at an average of only 17% the impact that they can have to raise support above the average of 83% is not a great deal. They might be able to get above 90% but not much more than that. However, if all the

leaders worked together to undermine support for the APRC proposals their efforts would be felt. Together the political elites of Sri Lanka could weaken the present consensus and reduce it to less than a simple majority providing they worked together to this end. With little or no effort political reform is there for the taking with the overwhelming support of the people or, with a concerted effort on the part of all the political elites they could deny the people of Sri Lanka the prize they presently seek. The future of Sri Lanka, as always, is in their hands.

Northern, Eastern and Tamils in the rest of Sri Lanka

Tamils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and in the rest of Sri Lanka all support the proposals ranging from 77% 'Yes' in the North to 89% in the East and 90% in the rest of Sri Lanka (Table 6.9). However when asked what impact their respective leaderships might have on their decision the Tamils in the rest of Sri Lanka and East can be significantly moved to change their opinions by as much as 67% from 'Yes' to 'No' with only 2% 'Don't Know' in the East when their politicians are involved in the decision. However the Tamils in the North are not quite so easily moved with 39% from 'Yes' to 'No' and 15% 'Don't Know' when the views of their politicians are taken into account. The lowest turn out in recent elections was in the North suggesting the Tamils in that Province have little confidence in their political parties at this time. Unlike the political elites who led the Tamils in the Eastern Province out of a disastrous war to peace and political influence the Tamils in the North lost their leadership in a bloody defeat and it may take them some years to find new leaders who they can trust. This observation is further supported by the results from another questionnaire where support for the APRC proposals is framed specifically in terms of being supported by the informant's political party. In this case Eastern Tamil support rises from 89% to 96% (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10. Question: *If the political party you are closest to supported a package of constitutional reforms for Sri Lanka as outlined here, would you support it?*

Per cent	Yes	No	DK
Eastern Tamil	96	0	5
Northern Tamil	32	14	54
Other SL Tamil	84	13	3

However, when the same question is put to the Northern Tamils support drops from 77% to 32% with a very significant 54% 'Don't Know' which is very probably due to the political parties in the North not yet being firmly established in the post war era. Critically, however, they do support the APRC proposals with only 7% rejecting the package as 'unacceptable', but any effort to manipulate their views in this regard may presently have little effect or even be counterproductive.

Political party response[27]

As the SLFP is the President's ruling party and has the largest number of seats in the Parliament it is to be expected that their response to the APRC proposals most closely mirrors the response of the Sinhala community in general. This seems to be the case with significant percentages of 'Don't Knows' in 2009 moving to the 'essential', 'desirable' and 'acceptable' columns in 2010 and the overall unacceptability of the package as a whole falling from 8% in 2009 to only 3% in 2010.

For the main opposition party, the UNP, there does not seem to be a great deal of difference between the results for this question when asked in 2009 and 2010 with overall resistance to the package at only 3% and 2% 'unacceptable' respectively. However, their enthusiasm seems to have waned a little with those who consider the package to be 'essential' falling from 39% in 2009 to 29% in 2010. They seem to have moved across to the 'desirable' column, which is now up from 29% in 2009 to 36% in 2010. Similarly the JVP support for the APRC proposals has shown a decline from only 4% 'unacceptable' in 2009 going up to 9% 'unacceptable' in 2010 and like the JVP and UNP the SLMC support for these proposals is also a little down on last year from 0% 'unacceptable' in 2009 rising to 3% 'unacceptable' in 2010 with significant shifts from the 'essential' column to the 'desirable' column for all three of these opposition parties.

Perhaps the explanation is quite simple. There has been a great deal of discussion about these proposals since the end of the war, particularly during the recent Presidential Election. Also the 2010 poll was taken in

[27] The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) is the largest political party in Sri Lanka headed by President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The largest opposition party is the United National Party (UNP) followed by the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), which was associated with the LTTE prior to the end of the war. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) represents the Muslim community while other smaller parties (too small to sample) included, for example, the Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and Buddhist Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU). Most of the smaller parties would go into coalitions with larger parties in Parliament.

March of this year between the Presidential and General Elections at a time when the party in Government and their SLFP supporters felt confident about their future, including constitutional reform, while the opposition parties, and their supporters, are not quite so willing to embrace change when they are less certain about their political influence over the coming years. These results could change again when the elections are all over but it seems very unlikely that they will change a great deal given their stability from a time of war to a time of peace.

Table 6.11. The TNA response to the APRC proposals (March 2010)

TNA per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	DK
1. The Structure of the State	45	23	14	3	13	3
2. The Powers of the Centre and Provinces	52	24	10	3	6	5
3. The Parliament	41	30	13	3	5	8
4. Amending the Constitution	39	29	13	3	8	8
5. The Powers of the President	53	24	7	4	6	6
6. The Powers of Local Authorities	49	26	9	6	4	6
7. Language Rights	77	9	13	0	2	0
8. Religious Rights	14	7	6	7	66	0
9. Fundamental Rights	63	20	12	0	2	3
10. Electoral System	32	21	24	8	3	13
11. The Judiciary	66	19	6	3	0	5
12. Public Service	50	29	13	3	1	6
13. Safeguards against secession	26	22	14	9	25	3
14. Law and Order	33	28	15	7	10	8
15. All of the reform proposals taken together as a ‘package’	40	17	16	9	11	8

However, the results have changed considerably for the TNA up from only 3% ‘unacceptable’ in March 2009 to 11% ‘unacceptable’ in March 2010 (Table 6.11). Similarly those opposed to ‘Safeguards against secession’ has risen from only 5% in 2009 to 25% in 2010, but then it is also 28% for Tamils in the Northern Province. ‘Religious Rights’ are also up for the TNA supporters from 47% ‘unacceptable’ in 2009 to 66% in 2010 and 49% for Tamils in the Northern Province. Two factors may explain these changes. Firstly that the sample now includes the Northern Province where most of the TNA supports are to be found and secondly that the ‘Religious Rights’ issue, or rather the ‘pride of place’ of Buddhism

issue has strong political connotations for TNA supporters.

When asked the constitutional package question again in a simple 'Yes/No' format the pattern of responses for the political parties remains much the same (Table 6.9). The SLFP come out with the strongest support up from 68% 'Yes' in 2009 to 87% 'Yes' in 2010 followed by the UNP at 80% 'Yes (down from 85% in 2009), then the TNA at 78% (down from 90% in 2009), then the SLMC at 74% (down from 88% in 2009) and finally the JVP at 69% 'Yes' in 2010 down from 83% in 2009. As before these results are most likely a result of on-going discourse on constitutional issues, the inclusion of the Northern Province in the sample and government verses opposition electoral politics.

One more observation that was to be expected can be taken from this political party analysis. The SLFP can be significantly moved to change their opinion in favour of the constitutional proposals by their President, religious leaders and party while the UNP are more influenced by their party and not so much by the President. The same goes for the TNA.

The politics of 'Religious Rights'

If it is the case that the problem with the 'Religious Rights' proposal is essentially political rather than religious, then it seems very likely that the reaction of Tamil speaking Christians and Sinhala speaking Christians will be different if it is a political/ethnic problem but the same if it is a religious problem. An analysis of these communities on this issue confirms support for the 'political hypothesis' with 39% of Tamil speaking Christians considering these proposals to be 'unacceptable' and only 14% of Sinhala speaking Christians sharing this view (Table 6.12). Additionally, the TNA 'top' the list of those rejecting this proposal at 66% 'unacceptable' suggesting it is a political issue for their supporters.

Table 6.12. Political, religious and ethnic response to the 'Religious Rights' provision in the APRC proposals sorted in rank order by per cent 'unacceptable'

Religious Rights per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	DK
TNA	14	7	6	7	**66**	0
Up-Country Tamil[28]	19	6	6	6	**60**	2
Tamil[29]	22	11	7	8	**50**	2
Tamil Christian	43	3	10	4	**39**	1
UNP	49	22	5	3	**18**	2
Sinhala Christian	46	25	4	11	**14**	0
Muslim	47	19	13	9	**10**	3
SLMC	56	19	8	7	**8**	2
JVP	36	48	9	0	**8**	0
SLFP	61	25	5	3	**5**	1
Sinhala	64	25	5	2	**2**	1

Problems

Before the end of the war in March 2009 all those being interviewed were asked to rate the importance of 51 different problems collected from the different communities of Sri Lanka. However, in March 2010, after the war, it was no longer possible to ask questions about 'The on-going war' or LTTE. Similarly questions about the JVP and JHU in government could not be asked as the government had been dissolved. So these items had to be cut from the questionnaire when it was repeated in March 2010.

Lists of problems like these have been produced for many different conflicts around the world. Although every list is different they all have one characteristic in common. If the items at the top of each communities list is not addressed and the causes of the conflict remain in place then the conditions required for long-term peace and stability will not be met. For example, in the Middle East the number one priority for Israelis is security

[28] As the Up-Country Tamils were not directly involved in the Sri Lankan insurgency this result of 60% 'unacceptable' seemed to be too high. However, when those doing the interviews were asked about this issue they pointed out that the survey work had been done in the largely Hindu Up-Country towns of Hatton and Kotmale in the District of Nuwara Eliya where recent incidents had led to the raising of religious tensions.

[29] The Tamils represented here are a combination of Hindu and Christian Tamils. As the Christian Tamil response to the 'Religious Rights' issue was 39% 'unacceptable' it necessarily follows that the Hindu Tamil response to this question will be higher than the 50% recorded here.

and for Palestinians it is a Palestinian state. If Israelis do not get security and if Palestinians do not get a state there will not be peace in the Middle East.

Fortunately for the Sinhala of Sri Lanka their pre-war concerns have all been met. Their top 5 items in March 2009 were 'Abuse of Human Rights by the LTTE' 1st at 63% 'very significant', followed by 'The continued violence of the LTTE' 2nd at 61%, then 'Vested interests in on-going conflict' 3rd at 45%, 'Violence over the past 30 years' 4th at 42% and 'It is not possible to kill the last Tiger' 5th at 41% 'very significant' (See Table 6.1 for 2008). None of these questions could even be asked in March 2010 as, with the end of the war and defeat of the LTTE none of them were relevant and in this context any attempt to ask these questions was met with incredulity and the interview could not be completed. After the war in March 2010 the top 5 items for the Sinhala were 'Inflation' 1st at 68% 'very significant' followed by 'Corrupt politicians' 2nd at 64% then 'Unemployment' 3rd at 62%, 'The decline of the economy' 4th at 54% and 'Politicisation of the public service' 5th at 53% 'very significant'. These are all problems of the economy and good governance. If not dealt with the government may lose its popularity and electoral mandate but not much more than that (Table 6.13).

In 2009 the top 5 problems for the Tamils were 'Discrimination after independence' 1st at 66% 'very significant' followed by 'Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems' 2nd at 63%, then 'The failure of successive governments to find a political solution' at 62%, 'All Tamils being treated like terrorists by the security forces' 4th at 60% and 'Failure to implement language rights' 5th also at 60% 'very significant'. The government can take comfort from the fact that in 2010 this list has changed a little with 'Unemployment' now first on the Tamil list at 66% 'very significant' and 'Inflation' 4th at 60%. So the government's policy to stimulate the Sri Lankan economy will go some way to resolving the problems of all Sri Lankans. However, the 'Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems' at 62% 'very significant' and 'The failure of successive governments to find a political solution' at 61% remain the 2nd and 3rd priorities for Tamils. Fortunately the government's policies for constitutional reform as set out in the APRC proposals are acceptable to the vast majority in all the communities of Sri Lanka. If the government were to bring such reforms into law by the end of the year then it seems very likely that the constitutional problem could be resolved and thus provide a political context within which the economic needs of the country can be effectively addressed.

Table 6.13. Top five 'problems' faced by the peoples of Sri Lanka in 2010

	Sinhala per cent	Very Significant
1st	Inflation	68
2nd	Corrupt politicians	64
3rd	Unemployment	62
4th	The decline of the economy	54
5th	Politicisation of the public service	53
	Tamil per cent	Very Significant
1st	Unemployment	66
2nd	Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems	62
3rd	The failure of successive governments to find a political solution	61
4th	Inflation	60
5th	Violence over the past 30 years	59
	Northern Tamil per cent	Very Significant
1st	Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems	71
2nd	The failure of successive governments to find a political solution	69
3rd	Unemployment	64
4th	Violence over the past 30 years	64
5th	Heightened ethnic polarisation in politics and life	64
	Eastern per cent	Very Significant
1st	Violence over the past 30 years	80
2nd	All Tamils being treated like terrorists by the security forces	80
3rd	Abuse of Human Rights by Paramilitary groups associated with government forces	74
4th	The Armed forces are predominately Sinhalese	70
5th	Dominance of Sinhalese in public sector employment	70
	Other Sri Lanka Tamil sample per cent	Very Significant
1st	Inflation	79
2nd	Unemployment	72
3rd	Corrupt politicians	69
4th	Lack of free and fair elections including manipulation	68
5th	The decline of the economy	68

However policy makers should also be aware that there are some regional differences in Tamil priorities and concerns. For the Tamils living in the Northern Province the top priorities remain the issues of constitutional and political reform with 'Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems' 1st at 71% 'very significant' and 'The failure of successive governments to find a political solution' 2nd at 69% and 'Unemployment' 3rd at 64%. However, in the East the passing of the war has given way to slightly different priorities. For them 'Violence over the past 30 years' came 1st at 80% 'very significant' followed by 'All Tamils being treated like terrorists by the security forces' 2nd also at 80%, then 'Abuse of Human Rights by Paramilitary groups associated with government forces' 3rd at 74%, 'The Armed forces are

predominately Sinhalese' 4th and 'Dominance of Sinhalese in public sector employment' 5th both at 70% 'very significant'. As for the Tamils in the rest of the country their priorities are not so very different to everyone else with an emphasis on issues of the economy and good governance.

Similarly the needs of the Muslim and Up-Country Tamils are a little different, as well as the priorities of those who support the major political parties (SLFP, UNP, JVP, TNA and SLMC) but as would be expected party priorities tend to follow ethnic and regional concerns.

If there is no reform

One of the most welcome results from the pre-war and post-war analysis of the APRC proposals was the fact that Sinhala support for these proposals rose from 67% 'Yes' in March 2009 to 83% 'Yes' in March 2010 (Table 6.9). This was achieved by significant numbers of 'Don't Knows' moving to the 'Yes' column in post-war Sri Lanka. Similarly when asked what they 'think will happen if there is no reform of the constitution to deal with the problems of the past' the Sinhala who said they 'Don't Know' in 2009 have now clearly expressed their view that there will be a political, economic and social cost to pay. In 2009 8% of Sinhala considered it 'very probable' that 'The LTTE or new militant groups will start terrorist actions again' rising to 15% in 2010 (18% 'probable' and 34% 'possible') with 'Don't Knows' falling from 25% in 2009 to only 6% in 2010.

Following the same pattern of support for the APRC proposals there is little difference between the 2009 and 2010 results for this question for the Tamils at 41% 'very probable' in both 2009 and 2010 but a slight drop in concern (and support for the APRC proposals – Table 6.9) for Muslims at 44% 'very probable' in 2009 and 31% in 2010 (Table 6.14). Clearly there is a relationship between a person's support for the APRC proposals and their concern for the future of Sri Lanka although this concern is felt more strongly amongst Tamils than Sinhala.

Table 6.14. Concerns if there is no reform in 2010 as per cent 'Very probable'

Per cent 'Very probable' (2010)	Sinhala	Tamil	North Tamil	East Tamil	Other Tamil	UC Tamil	Muslim
The international community will not invest in Sri Lanka	16	44	36	50	48	37	26
The Sri Lankan economy will not develop	19	51	40	67	50	49	27
India will continue to be involved in the affairs of Sri Lanka	10	39	27	38	53	24	31
The LTTE or new militant groups will start terrorist actions again	15	41	37	59	32	47	31
The present opportunity to make peace/lasting solution will be lost for a generation	16	54	53	62	48	51	30

Those for or against the APRC proposals in Sri Lanka

The results of this poll suggest that approximately 10% of the population of Sri Lanka are opposed to the APRC proposals and that this 10% are a feature of both the Sinhala and Tamil communities, but clearly not for the same reasons. So who are these 10% and what are their characteristics? In an effort to answer this question a battery of demographic questions were asked at the end of the questionnaire not only to ensure a good sample but also to explore the attitudes of those who supported or who did not support constitutional reform. Correlations indicate there is a slight but insignificant positive correlation with gender suggesting males are a little more likely to say 'No' to the APRC proposals than females (Table 6.15). This is to be expected, as males tend to be slightly more involved in conflicts and confrontation then females but not significantly so. Age does not seem to be an important factor but there is a significant negative correlation for being urban and being a Tamil who might say 'No' to the APRC proposals. So Tamils who might say 'No' tend to be rural. They also tend to be from the Northern region, are better educated and are associated with the TNA. No surprise there except perhaps for education. But the Tamils who are most likely to say 'Yes' to the APRC proposals and who are most definitely NOT in the 'No camp' are the Tamils in the East. As indicated in the 'Problems' section of this report there are significant differences between the Tamils of the North and the Tamils of the East.

Table 6.15. Correlations between demographic variables and those who said 'No' to the APRC proposals

Variable	Sinhala 'No' (N=882)[30]	Tamil 'No' (N=477)
Gender (male)	0.041	0.039
Age	0.044	0.024
Type of area (urban)	0.011	-0.094*
Income	-0.071*	0.042
Education	-0.012	0.108*
Central	0.043	-0.107*
North Central	-0.077*	-0.03
Northern	-0.029	0.252**
Eastern	0.053	-0.122**
North Western	-0.063	-0.015
Sabaragamuwa	0.002	0.029
Southern	-0.031	
Uva	0.055	-0.033
Western	0.019	-0.072
SLFP	-0.111**	-0.05
UNP	0.04	-0.078
JVP	0.116**	-0.015
TNA		0.147**
SLMC		-0.021
Importance of religion	-0.072*	-0.168**
Importance of own ethnic group	-0.111**	0.002
Importance of being Sri Lankan	-0.096**	-0.259**
Contact with other ethnic group	-0.015	-0.244**
Democratic value	-0.125**	-0.066
Victim of conflict	0.084*	0.089

From the available data the Sinhala who are most likely to say 'No' tend to be associated with the JVP while those who would be most strongly 'Yes' live in the North Central region, might be a little poorer and vote for the President's party the SLFP. Significantly the importance of religion does NOT correlate with saying 'No' for either the Sinhala or Tamils. Religious 'radicalisation' does play a role in other conflicts around the world but this does not seem to be a feature of the conflict here according to this data. However, the politics of religion may be a different matter as noted earlier. Being Sinhala correlates with saying 'Yes' to the APRC proposals as does being Sri Lankan for both Sinhala and Tamils. A lack of contact between Tamils and Sinhala may be a problem in Sri Lanka as Tamils who do not have such contact are more likely to say 'No' to the APRC proposals. For Sinhala democratic values correlates with saying

[30] Comparisons of the value of the correlation coefficients can only be made within each group (Sinhala or Tamil) but not between each group as the number in each group (N) is not the same.

'Yes' but being a victim of the conflict, for them, also correlates with saying 'No'.

Those who know and understand Sri Lanka society better than this author will no doubt be able to add more meaning and appreciation to the findings briefly reviewed here. The important point to be made, however, is that now that the whole of Sri Lanka is open to the kind of social research undertaken in this poll such research will be able to make a positive contribution to peace making, peace-building and reconciliation in the future.

Opposition to progressive reform outside Sri Lanka

The years of careful negotiation by the members of the APRC, including informal discussions with parties outside the APRC process, has led to the formulation of a set of proposals that are equally acceptable to all the communities in Sri Lanka. This program of research has now been able to explore and describe that support (or lack of support where applicable) in much detail pointing out the problems where they exist.

Throughout the years of similar negotiations in Northern Ireland there was a considerable lack of understanding of what was really going on in Northern Ireland in the USA. There many Americans of Irish decent continued to support the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and their aspiration for a united Ireland with little knowledge or appreciation of the power sharing arrangements being negotiated under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. Similarly, it seems to be the case that the Tamil diaspora are not fully aware of the efforts of the APRC to find a constitutional solution to their country's problems. In contrast to the detailed APRC proposals tried and tested here (Table 6.6) the members of the Tamil community around the world were recently provided with the following statement in what they called a Tamil Referendum:

> *'I aspire to the formation of the independent and sovereign state of Tamil Eelam in the contiguous north and east territory of the island of Sri Lanka on the basis that the Tamil speaking people in the island of Sri Lanka make a distinct nation, have a traditional homeland and have the right to self determination.'*

They were then asked to 'Mark a cross (X) in the appropriate box' which provided for only a 'Yes' or a 'No' response. These polls or referenda were held in Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland for a total turnout of 207,058

votes cast out of a possible 323,500 to produce a combined result of 99.68% for the Tamil Eelam proposition and only 0.32% against (Table 6.16).

Table 6.16. Results of the Tamil Referendum in April 2010

Country	Total Polled	'Yes' per cent	'No' per cent
Australia	8,154	99.38	0.62
Canada	48,583	99.82	0.18
Denmark	4,147	99.49	0.51
France	31,148	99.86	0.14
Germany	23,089	99.41	0.59
Italy	3,680	98.79	1.21
Netherlands	2,750	99.67	0.33
Norway	5,633	99.11	0.89
Switzerland	16,441	99.80	0.20
UK	64,692	99.71	0.29
Total	207,058	99.68	0.32

It was very important that the Belfast Agreement was put to the people of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (the South of Ireland) in a referendum to give the peace agreement political legitimacy. In that referendum held on May 22nd 1998, 71% of the people of Northern Ireland voted 'Yes' and in a public opinion poll conducted on behalf of the parties in the negotiations, just two weeks before the agreement was signed by the British and Irish governments on Good Friday 1998, 77% said they would support the agreement. The opposition of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), who were able to get their members to vote against it, can explain the drop of 6% between the results of the poll and the referendum. So the poll was very accurate.

The results for the test of the APRC proposals in Sri Lanka are certainly as good as if not better than the results for the Belfast Agreement poll, and in Northern Ireland the people there were able to make peace on the strength of those results. Hopefully, now that the elections are over in Sri Lanka the new government will take steps to bring the APRC proposals into constitutional law. With effective implementation all the people of Sri Lanka can reasonably expect to share in all the benefits that will inevitably flow from the peace and stability that these reforms can bring. Referendums that only offer the options of independence for Tamil Elam or the status quo can't achieve this. Neither of these two options is what is wanted in Sri Lanka now. The people there are prepared to move on. However, it remains an open question as to whether or not the political leadership in Sri Lanka will take this opportunity to resolve the 'National Question' once and for all. As far as the people are concerned this door is

open. Given the unprecedented electoral mandate handed to the President and his government by the people they are now in an exceptionally strong position to lead them through.

- End of report -

What happened next

Although the interviews for the second test of the APRC proposals had been collected in March 2010 the results could not be published until after the General Elections, on April 8th, for fear of being accused of interference in the domestic politics of Sri Lanka. We had planned to promptly publish our new report after these elections but clearly the President did not think well of Professor Vitharana's pro-active approach to reform and so, to everyone's surprise, Professor Vitharana was overlooked in the first set of appointments to the President's new cabinet. His post as Minister of Science and Technology, which he had carried out with exemplary dedication, was given to another. Not wishing to prejudice Professor Vitharana's position in any way we delayed publication and, after some weeks 'in the wilderness,' the President relented and made him the Senior Minister of Science with oversight responsibilities across departments but his responsibilities for constitutional reform were now passed on to the new Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The peace process then started to drift but after we finally published our report in the Colombo *Daily Mirror* on May 7th and 8th (Irwin, 2010a, b and c) Professor Vitharana was moved to table my report in Parliament on June 8th and place it on the public record just a day before the President was to meet the Indian Prime Minister again in Delhi (Vitharana, 2010). At this point I came under attack for the first time in the Sri Lanka popular press (Randeniya, 2010). Clearly we had hit a nerve. But other commentators were very positive (Hussain, 2010) and finally, on July 22nd, members of the APRC committee, who were also MPs, leaked the APRC final report, which had been given to the President a year earlier, to the press and everything was now in the public domain (Groundviews, 2011).

Regrettably all of this parliamentary and public effort and support did not have the desired effect. The President had another agenda. He was more interested in bringing more powers to his own office than giving powers to the people through a strengthened parliament and devolution. With the help of his brothers the President was able to 'buy' or persuade members of the opposition to join his alliance so that his coalition would

enjoy a two-thirds majority in Parliament, which he then used to change the constitution on 8 September 2010. This Eighteenth Amendment gave him the right to serve more than two terms and have more discretion over senior government appointments. The President had got what he wanted - more power for longer.

But this story is not finished yet. At the time of writing it was still the case that the Sinhala had got their most pressing problem dealt with, namely the defeat of the LTTE. However, the Tamils had not got what they most required for peace, a solution to the 'National Question'. In the strongest possible academic terms this point was made by the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2011b), India was possibly getting more pro-active and the Tamils in the North had once again found their political voice, after the military defeat of two years earlier, by electing 18 out of 23 TNA councils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces during the Local Government Elections held on 23 July 2011. So the President then turned to the possibility of a Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) coming up with a constitutional solution. The sceptics looked to the ill-fated efforts of the APRC and concluded that a PSC would probably not be able to do any better. Hopefully this is not the case - the people need and want reform.[31]

[31] The recommendations of the Presidents *Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission* make the same points regarding the need for constitutional reform in their report tabled in Parliament and published on 16 December 2011 (LLRC, 2011).

7

Cyprus 1998/2005

Following meetings and lectures at the Nobel Institute and Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) I was invited to attend a meeting of the Greek-Turkish Forum in Istanbul in December 1998. The meeting was organised by PRIO and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Richard Holbrooke, President Clinton's Special Envoy for Cyprus was in the Chair. His negotiating style was quite the opposite of Senator George Mitchell's. As a career diplomat with merchant banking experience Holbrooke liked to press people to make deals while Mitchell, who had been a judge before entering politics, liked to listen and develop a consensus. I made a presentation of my Northern Ireland work to the Greek and Turkish Cypriots present and explained how it was used to help build a consensus around the Belfast Agreement. They subsequently decided they would like to undertake a similar program of research in Cyprus and even settled on the subject for the first peace poll, the full range of confidence building measures being discussed at the Forum. We expected strong positive responses to all the matters being raised and from there we intended to go on in later polls to deal with the more difficult political issues that would have to be addressed to find a solution to the Cyprus problem. We had a plan of action.

Unfortunately the US State Department took control of the plan and substituted a program of confidential polls of their own design that mixed up questions about the future of Cyprus with questions that analysed political support for local politicians and US foreign policy. Fortunately, their constitutional questions (Office of Research, 1999) now followed the format of the questions the State Department had used in Northern Ireland and these produced some quite promising results (Table 7.1). Although Turkish Cypriots preferred permanent partition as their first choice at 47% and Greek Cypriots preferred a united Cyprus with proportional representation as their first choice at 53% a clear majority of Greek Cypriots (65%) and almost half of the Turkish Cypriots (47%) considered a bi-communal, bi-zonal entity with strong central government 'acceptable'. These results were as good as the results obtained in Northern

Ireland for the Belfast Agreement (Table 2.3) and clearly could form the basis for a negotiated settlement. With the added benefits of EU entry a deal should not have been too difficult to achieve.

Table 7.1. Greek and Turkish Cypriot preferences for constitutional arrangements

Greek Cypriot (GC) and Turkish Cypriot (TC) Per cent 'acceptable' Per cent 'unacceptable' Per cent 'most preferred'	GC Acceptable	GC Unacceptable	TC Acceptable	TC Unacceptable	GC Most Preferred	TC Most Preferred
Permanent partition into two independent states	6	94	72	20	2	47
Bi-communal, bi-zonal entity with weak central government	6	92	31	54	0	10
Bi-communal, bi-zonal entity with strong central government	65	31	47	38	29	18
United Cyprus with proportional representation	80	16	19	67	53	3
Union of South with Greece and North with Turkey	4	95	27	61	-	-
War to liberate occupied territories	14	85	na	na	7	na
Turkey takes control of island	na	na	27	57	na	7
No change	13	-	31	-	5	3

Regrettably these results were not developed further as part of a proactive program of public diplomacy and were therefore of little value as an aid to the Cyprus peace process. Indeed these polls may have done more harm than good. When I eventually got to Cyprus in 2002 the US Embassy staff believed they were dealing with an intractable problem that was almost impossible to solve because the type of questions that ended up in the media were frequently biased towards the 'problems' and away from the 'solutions'. Here are a couple of examples:

Example 1. In September 2000 *Kibris* published a poll that tracked Turkish Cypriot first preferences for a constitutional solution (Table 7.2). It indicated a clear move away from 'two independent states' towards a 'bizonal federation'. But the poll did not include the views of the Greek Cypriots and what might have been an 'acceptable' negotiated settlement (Kibris, 2000). Similarly a poll published by Antenna FM in 2002 asked Greek Cypriots about their predictions on the form of a solution that will eventually be found for Cyprus, 34% said two states, 16% said federation, 11% confederation and 34% did not express a view (Antenna, 2002). On this occasion the opinions of the Turkish Cypriots were not sampled so neither of these polls could be used to help build a consensus around a compromise.

Table 7.2. Turkish Cypriot preferences for constitutional arrangements

Per cent	December 1999	September 2000
Bizonal federation	28.2	31.7
Confederation based on two states	14.5	27.2
Two independent states	38.5	23.3
Integration of the TRNC with Turkey	8.2	7.7
A unitary state	6.6	5.3
Other	0.6	1.4
No idea/no reply	3.4	3.3

Example 2. *Kibris* (2000) also noted that most Turkish Cypriots were pessimistic about the prospects for a negotiated settlement (Table 7.3). Similar results to such questions were always to be found in Northern Ireland. After a generation of failed negotiations nothing else could be expected. However, in Northern Ireland, when people were asked if they wanted their politicians to negotiate and agree a settlement an overwhelming majority always responded 'yes'. People want conflicts to be resolved. But this kind of question was not asked in the Cyprus poll so that the politicians and the international community could always point out that the people did not expect success when they, themselves, failed to deliver. Similarly Antenna (2002) ran prejudicial questions on the Greek Cypriot part of the island (Table 7.4). These questions were designed to provide political 'cover'.

Table 7.3. Turkish Cypriot 'Hope placed in talks' in 2000

	Per cent
Very hopeful	4.9
Hopeful	21.6
Rather hopeful	36.2
Not at all hopeful	35.6
No idea/no reply	1.7

Table 7.4. Greek Cypriot 'outcome of talks' in 2002

	Per cent
Current Cyprus talks will lead to a deadlock	64
Current Cyprus talks will lead to a settlement	27

The public diplomacy dangers of allowing these kinds of questions to be run in separate media polls were brought to the attention of the US Embassy staff in Nicosia, US government officials in Washington and to members of the UN negotiating team in Cyprus. I also pointed out that the US program of polling was relatively undeveloped compared to the

Northern Ireland work and that a lot more could be done with it to make a positive contribution to the Cyprus peace process. But those responsible for the US polling did not seem to understand or just simply did not want to understand. The Greek-Turkish Forum invited me back to the island later that year to talk directly to members of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot negotiating teams as well as representatives of civil society. Although the Greek Cypriot negotiators wanted to go ahead with a poll the Turkish Cypriot government did not. However, the Turkish Cypriot opposition parties (who later gained power) did want to proceed, but in the end, without US support no polls were undertaken and without the benefits of an effective program of public diplomacy both the negotiations and subsequent referendum failed in April 2004, and Cyprus remained divided.

Given their special responsibilities for Cyprus the Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) of the United Kingdom House of Commons lunched an investigation into the failure of these negotiations and the referendum. Fortunately, in the mean time, Alexandros Lordos, a Cypriot psychologist, frustrated by these same failures undertook his own program of public opinion research to examine why the UN plan had been rejected by the Greek Cypriots. It should be pointed out that he did this at his own expense. His poll and analysis clearly demonstrated that an agreement could have been reached if better adjusted to the needs of both communities (Lordos, 2004). The FAC (2005) acknowledged this fact in their report. Lordos (2005) then undertook another poll, but this time in the Turkish Cypriot North. He then presented the results of both polls to the Wilton Park conference on *Cyprus: The Way Forward* in February 2005 - Wilton Park is an Executive Agency of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The Wilton Park conference report concluded:

> [paragraph] 30. The importance of regular opinion polling was underlined at the conference to indicate public opinion on a range of issues at different stages of the negotiations before the public are asked to vote on the whole package. Experience elsewhere has shown that there is often much more flexibility on the part of the public than politicians believe. (Wilton Park, 2005)

Subsequently, on 22 June 2005 the same point was made to the UN Security Council by Sir Kieran Prendergast as follows:

> Mr. President…[paragraph] 20. There are some important positives to acknowledge. All parties wish to see some sort of resumption of active UN good offices. All parties accept that the UN plan should

> serve as the document on which negotiations would resume. Political figures on both sides in Cyprus are maintaining cordial contacts with each other in an effort to promote mutual understanding. There are useful contacts at other levels too, whether among experts on particular subjects or among ordinary people now that they are able [to] cross to the other side. And I was interested to learn that an independent bicommunal survey that polled attitudes to potential changes to the UN plan found the encouraging result among grass roots opinion on both sides that it might be possible to make certain changes that would secure majority support for the plan in both communities. (Prendergast, Sir Kieran, 2005)

If the Greek and Turkish Cypriots who had wanted to undertake a program of public opinion research and public diplomacy in 1998 had been encouraged in this enterprise, rather than discouraged, it seems very likely that the Cyprus problem could have been solved in 2004. The FAC and Wilton Park reports detail very well indeed the failures of simply 'doing deals behind closed doors'. Unfortunately for the people of Cyprus, these events stand as a prime example of how NOT to undertake negotiations in the modern world of informed electorates, a free press, adherence to democratic principles and referenda.

Fortunately no one died as a result of these failures in the following years so the international community was still able to make good on their omissions. Following several more trips to Cyprus to meet with UN representatives and negotiators, Lordos and his colleagues were able to set up the 'Cyprus 2015' Interpeace project with UNDP and EU support in May 2009, a full decade after my first visit. They have since taken the work forward but this may be a case of too little too late. In the intervening years the separated communities have grown further apart making a peace agreement more difficult to achieve (Lordos, Kaymak and Tocci, 2009). In 2011 Greek Cypriots were increasingly more likely to vote 'no' ('Cyprus 2015', 2011). Perhaps everyone in Cyprus is getting too comfortable with the relative safety of the status quo. But the same cannot be said of relations between the West and the Muslim World beyond the shores of a divided Cyprus. Amongst their neighbours in the region, across the Middle East and around the world the death toll mounts in what President Bush came to call the 'War on Terror'.

8

The West and the Muslim World

In June 2003 a Pew Research Center 20-nation public opinion survey found extremely unfavourable attitudes towards the United States in the Muslim World (Pew, 2003), and U.S. government efforts at public diplomacy to turn the tide met with only mixed success (William K. Fung Multidisciplinary Workshop, 2003). In an effort to make US public diplomacy more effective in their dealings with the Muslim World the 2003 reports of both the US General Accounting Office (GAO, 2003) and the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR, 2003) advocated much greater use of public opinion polls. However the CFR also concluded that:

> This report is about strategies to address those leaders and people who are touched by anti-Americanism but who remain reachable. The United States can reach these people by listening to their needs and perspectives, by initiating a genuine dialogue, and by taking into account their cultural and political realities as Washington formulates its foreign policies. (Council on Foreign Relations, 2003)

At the time domestic researchers in the Middle East did use public opinion polls to explore relations between the different communities in their states, for example in Palestine,[32] Israel[33] and Jordan.[34] The states of Central Asia had also been the subject of a study that explores the prospects for reformers and Islamists using public opinion polls as the principal tool of enquiry and analysis (ICG, 2003). But none of these

[32] The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.jmcc.org. The Palestine Center for Policy and Survey Research. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.pcpsr.org. Near East Consulting. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.neareastconsulting.com.

[33] The Tami Steinmetz Center For Peace Research, Tel Aviv University. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace

[34] Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.css-jordan.org/polls/peace/joris94/index.html

polling activities supported public diplomacy in a sustained way as had been done in Northern Ireland. The CFR observed that:

> The imperative for effective public diplomacy now requires much wider use of newer channels of communication and more customized, two-way dialogue and debate as opposed to 'push-down', one-way mass communication…. U.S. foreign policy is too often communicated in a 'push-down' style that does not take into account the perspectives of the foreign audience or open the floor for dialogue and debate. (Council on Foreign Relations, 2003)

The research methods developed in Northern Ireland and successfully reproduced in the Balkans clearly did not make this mistake and in an effort to achieve the kind of balanced dialogue sought as an ideal by the Council on Foreign Relations I was invited to make recommendations to the US State Department in October 2003 at a seminar arranged for this purpose by the Yaffe Center for Persuasive Communication (2003) at the University of Michigan (William K. Fung Multidisciplinary Workshop, 2003). Participants included public opinion experts, social psychologists, journalists and media specialists, advertising and public relations executives, political scientists and area studies specialists with a focus on, for example, Middle East public attitudes (Tessler, 2003) as well as public diplomacy policymakers from the U.S. State Department. Remarkably all these experts told the State Department essentially the same thing, which was to listen to what the target audience had to say and to take their views 'on board' when formulating policies and communicating programmes of remedial action.

Regrettably this advice was not followed up with adequate effect. Applications made by myself (Irwin, 2004b) and with colleagues (Irwin and Guelke, 2004) to the US Institute of Peace (USIP), UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and appropriate US and UK government departments,[35] to critically examine public opinion research as it relates to Muslim communities and the Muslim World, were all turned down in 2004 and again in 2007 (Wolff, Guelke and Irwin, 2007). Disappointingly, the work that had been done fell far short of the standards for applied social research set by Campbell and as such failed to detail adequate solutions to the problems of establishing good relations with and between Muslim peoples and their states. In Northern Ireland similar omissions led to a failure to properly understand the causes of Catholic alienation in the

[35] Private communications to US State Department and UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Home Office.

1970s (Guelke 1968), resulting in two more decades of insurgency and civil war. The US and UK could not afford to repeat those mistakes again. But they did.

Gambling with the security of the state[36]

Since the tragedy of 9/11 the US and her closest allies have been waging a campaign to win the hearts and minds of their respective people's in support of their 'War on Terror'. All protracted wars, if they are to succeed, require the undying support of their citizens and the 'War on Terror' is no exception. In the United Kingdom the Great Wars of the last century presented few ambiguities in this regard. However, two very distinct and opposing theses lay at the heart of this new public relations battle. These can be characterised, on the one hand, as the 'Foreign Policy' thesis and on the other hand as the 'Radical Islamist' thesis. The 'Foreign Policy' thesis suggests that the failure to bring a just settlement to the Israel/Palestine conflict, continuing US involvement in the Middle East and, with her allies, the subsequent military adventures in Afghanistan and Iraq are the primary cause of this on-going conflict. The 'Radical Islamist' thesis explains the conflict in terms of such groups committed to wagging a war of terror against the US and her allies for largely ideological reasons associated with their belief that their vision and values are in some way superior to those of the West and that they should, at all costs, prevail to establish a new Islamic 'Golden Age' or Caliphate.

Historically those who support the 'Radical Islamist' thesis like to point to the origins of this movement with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, its development in the 1940s and 50s and the teachings of Sayyid Qutb. While those who support the 'Foreign Policy' thesis often look to the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the Balfour Declaration of 1917. These very distinct and highly selective perspectives seem to be a corollary of the 'we were here first' hypothesis so often used in rival claims for the same piece of territory, except, in the 'blame game' version the objective is to establish the priority of the proposition that 'they were there first' and it is 'they' who started the conflict.

These two competing views of the 'War on Terror' have been the subject of unprecedented levels of public enquiry and debate since the events of 9/11 because these two competing views have profoundly

[36] This analysis of public opinion polls undertaken in the UK is based on a paper given at the WAPOR Annual Conference in Berlin in 2007 (Irwin, 2007a). For an excellent analysis of similar US polls see Stroud and Sparrow (2011).

different implications for the foreign policy of the US and her allies. Are their policies in the Middle East and through the 'War on Terror' fuelling that conflict or are they defeating it? That is the critical question that was being asked and a very great deal of public opinion research was quite rightly undertaken in this context. Sometimes this was done in an effort to find an answer to this critical question, but, also, with apparent equal energy and effort this was sometimes done so as *not* to ask or answer this critical question and/or to support one thesis over the other.

This is particularly true in the UK since the events of the London bombings of 7/7. Another great tragedy that some have argued should have been foreseen and as a consequence have repeatedly asked for a full public enquiry (Editorial and Opinion, 2005). So I will critically examine the public opinion research undertaken in the UK since the events of 9/11 to establish what went wrong with the work, who was responsible for the failure and how, with the benefit of a UK peace poll, these problems can be rectified.

UK Government public opinion research after 9/11 [2001]

Of course the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypotheses are only characterised as a true dichotomy in the propaganda war of governments and their partisan media. In reality they are not totally mutually exclusive. Many complex social, cultural, political, religious and psychological elements will necessarily contribute to the disaffection, alienation and radicalisation of young British Muslims leading some, on occasions, to acts of violence. Although the problems of discrimination and social integration, as they relate to the Muslim community in Britain, have been the subject of much well funded research[37] the public opinion polls undertaken as part of these studies after 9/11 in 2001 failed to ask the critical questions central to an understanding of the problems of alienation and radicalisation of these Muslims and the society in which they grew up, were educated, lived and worked.

The primary responsibility for monitoring such attitudes, values and relevant dependent and independent variables rests with the UK Home Office. They started their Citizenship Survey in 2001 with a national sample of 10,000 and minority ethnic booster sample of 5,000. These

[37] For a review see: Open Society Institute, 2005.

surveys were subsequently carried out biannually.[38] Data from these surveys were fed into the Home Office Civil Renewal Unit, Active Community Unit, Race Equality Unit and Community Cohesion Unit. Unfortunately none of the questions in these surveys dealt directly with support and/or justification for terrorist activity. In particular there were no questions on attitudes towards the foreign policy of the UK and her allies in the Middle East (Smith and Wands, 2003) so the survey could not be used to test the relative merits of the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypotheses. Surprisingly the same omission occurs in the 2004 surveys undertaken by the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC, 2004) and the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR, 2004). FAIR reported their findings to the Home Affairs Committee's Inquiry into Terrorism and Social Cohesion and, perhaps in part due to these obvious omissions in data collection, they drew no conclusions about either the extent of radicalisation amongst the British Muslim population or the full range of grievances that might lay at the heart of their alienation. In their Sixth Report published in April 2005 the Home Affairs Committee conclude:

> [paragraph] 13. We believe that the analysis in the Cantle report remains valid. Key issues in the report, such as the importance of leadership, especially at a local level, the need to overcome segregation, the role of schools and the importance of opportunities for young people and the need for clarity over what it means to be British, are central to the problems discussed in this inquiry. The threat of international terrorism brings a new dimension to existing issues, and perhaps makes their resolution even more pressing - it does not change them. (Home Affairs Committee, 2005)

This conclusion, in part, may have been drawn from a report on 'Young Muslims and Extremism' sent to the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Andrew Turnbull, from the Home Office Secretary, John Gieve, a year earlier on May 10, 2004 (Home Office and FCO, 2004). In this report analysts from the Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) struggle to draw some meaningful conclusions from their Citizenship Surveys. They were able to point out, for example, that along with other minority faith groups (Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Buddhist) Muslims place 'religion' second to 'family' in order of importance (Christians

[38] For an overview see the Home Office web site. Retrieved April, 2012 from http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/research/citizenshipsurvey

placed 'work' second) and that Muslim males complained less (33%) than Christians (35%), Hindus (35%) and Sikhs (41%) about their employers support for their religious customs and practices. Similarly 37% of young Muslims thought the government was doing too little to protect the rights of people belonging to religions compared with 39% for Christians, 39% for Hindus and 56% for Sikhs (Table 8.1) and although Muslims engaged less in informal volunteering than these other groups this proved to be a function of education, occupational status and age and not religion. As these government surveys clearly did not provide any useful insights into the relationship between 'Young Muslims and Extremism' the joint Home Office and FCO report then turned to post 9/11 press polls for further analysis.

Table 8.1. The amount the government is doing to protect the rights of people belonging to religions for the age group 16 to 24 (Home Office Citizenship Survey 2001 in Home Office Research Study 274, 2004)

Per cent	No Religious Affiliation	All Faith Communities	Christian	Muslim	Hindu	Sikh	All
Too little	36	40	39	37	39	56	38
Right amount	50	55	55	61	57	44	53
Too much	14	6	6	3	4	-	8
Respondents	294	1,146	526	435	93	65	1,440

UK press polls after 9/11 [2001]

The strength of the Home Office Citizenship Survey is its attention to methodological excellence, which includes extensive samples that facilitate comparisons between minority groups and the wider society. Its weakness is the lack of relevance of the questions being asked. Conversely in their survey of six public opinion polls run by *Eastern Eye*/MORI (2001), *BBC*/ICM (2001 and 2002a), *Telegraph*/YouGov (2002) and *Guardian*/ICM (2002b and 2004) between 9/11 2001 and March 2004 some far more relevant results are produced but with the caveat that:

> 'Firstly, the surveys vary in quality and reliability, so results must be interpreted with great caution. Secondly, due to methods used the data should be treated as *indicative* of British Muslims opinion, not *representative* of it. Thirdly, there is no comparative context to enable us to compare Muslim responses with those of

> other groups and understand the findings in this wider context. Finally, since questions asked were different in each survey (even when covering the same topic) strict comparisons between the surveys is not possible.' (Home Office and FCO, 2004)

With these points in mind the following summary observations were made.

- Between 7-15% thought the September 11 attacks were justified and 67-85% unjustified.
- Between 7-13% thought further attacks would be justifies and 67-85% unjustified.
- Between 57-70% thought the war on terror was a war against Islam while 20-34% disagreed.
- Between 64-80% opposed the war in Afghanistan while 12-20% supported it.
- About 80% opposed the war in Iraq while 10% supported it.
- Between 15-24% thought it was OK for British Muslims to fight with the Taliban while 62% disagreed.
- Between 48-66% thought relations between Muslims and non-Muslims had got worse since 9/11; 27-36% no change and 3-10% better.
- Between 30-35% had experienced hostility based on religion as a result of 9/11 while 65-70% had not.
- Between 33-34% thought Muslims needed to do more to integrate; 28-33% thought they had got it about right and 17-26% thought Muslims had integrated too much.
- Between 67-87% feel loyal/patriotic towards Britain while 8-26% did not.

And from these observations the Home Office and FCO analysts concluded that:

> 'Polls between November 2001 and December 2002 suggested that a relatively small, but not insignificant minority of British Muslims felt some sympathy for terrorist attacks on the USA, did not feel loyal to Britain, did not condemn British Muslims who fought against allies in Afghanistan or thought Muslims have gone too far in integrating into British society. The ICM poll published in the Guardian on 15 March 2004 recorded 13% of British Muslims as thinking that further terrorist attacks on the USA would be justified. In each case, substantial majorities took the opposite

> view but the existence of minorities disposed towards extremist positions cannot be ignored and needs to be better understood.'[39] (Home Office and FCO, 2004)

Regrettably that understanding was not forthcoming or if it was it did not find its way into the Home Affairs Committee report of April 2005, which was followed, three months later by the London bombings of 7/7 - 2005.

UK press and community polls after 7/7 [2005]

The 7/7 bombings precipitated a rash of press and other media polls including a lively debate over the relative merits of the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypothesis. Political analysts started to suggest that British involvement in Iraq had increased Britain's vulnerability to terrorist attacks (Gregory, F. and Wilkinson, P., 2005) while al-Quaeda attributed the cause of the London bombings directly to the UK's actions in the Middle East.

> Hasn't Sheik Osama bin Laden told you that you will not dream of security before there is security in Palestine and before all the infidel armies withdraw from the land of Muhammed. (Ayman al Zawahiri, 2005)

Not surprisingly then, following the London bombings, independent polls undertaken by YouGov (2005) for the *Daily Telegraph* (King, 2005) and by CommunicateResearch (2005) for *Sky News* addressed these politically sensitive issues directly (also see *The Sun*/MORI (2005a) poll). In the CommunicateResearch poll 2% of 462 Muslims interviewed on July 20/21 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with what the suicide bombers did on July 7 and in the YouGov poll conducted between July 15 and 22, 6% of 526 Muslims interviewed said the bombings were justified. These polls were undoubtedly not as accurate as the Home Office surveys but these percentages are dangerously high and could translate into potentially thousands of Muslims willing to become involved in terrorist activities if radicalized. With regards to motives only 1 per cent of respondents in the

[39] It should be stressed however that the same Home Office and FCO report noted that 'Intelligence indicates that the number of British Muslims actively engaged in terrorist activity, whether at home or abroad, or supporting such activity is extremely small and estimated at less than 1%'

YouGov poll agreed with the statement that 'Western society is decadent and immoral, and Muslims should seek to bring it to an end, if necessary by violence' while in the CommunicateResearch poll 61 per cent 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the statement that 'Britain's role in the Iraq war was largely to blame for the London bombings'.

Perhaps what was being sampled here, in some *indicative* way, was a relatively large pool of disaffected, angry or alienated individual Muslims and, on the other hand, a very small percentage of that pool that might, for ideological reasons, be accessible to radicalization with a view to committing acts of violence that would include the suicide of the perpetrator/bomber. But what was the cause and effect? No clear answer to this question was forthcoming and so, in the public mind the debate still raged between the competing 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypothesis.

Influenced, perhaps, by the results of these various polls, Dominic Grieve, the opposition Conservative Party shadow Attorney General, expressed the view that the London suicide attacks were 'totally explicable' because of the deep anger felt by British Muslims over Iraq. Hazel Blears, the Home Office minister, much to the annoyance of many leaders in the Muslim community, strongly rejected this analysis (Morris and Brown, 2005) although the extensive polling research commissioned by her department could add very little to this debate on either side of the argument. Why this should be the case, when there clearly was no lack of opportunity, resources and relevant expertise, can probably best be explained and understood as an example of Campbell's 'adversarial stakeholders' not being allowed or encouraged to explore 'measures of feared undesirable outcomes' in terms of alienation and radicalisation in the context of British foreign policy in the Middle East. In other words Government officials knew such research and reports would be leaked so they did not go down that road.

Others, however, now started to explore the subtleties of these issues with a little more sophistication. For example the BBC/MORI poll of 8/9 August 2005 investigated some useful ideas around the issues of identity and multiculturalism (MORI, 2005b; BBC, 2005) while the Muslim Voice poll of 27 July /14 August 2005 examined the authority and influence of the current Muslim establishment and religious leaders (MVUK, 2005).

Table 8.2 lists 10 polls undertaken on these topics in the UK since 9/11 along with the samples, their size and collection methods. Table 8.3 covers

another 19 surveys completed post 7/7.[40] The polls are very mixed and although most of them tested the 'Foreign Policy' thesis only 5 explored the 'Radical Islamist' hypothesis and of these only 4 tested them together in the same survey instrument. These questions and results are listed in Table 8.4.

Additionally, only 12 of the 29 polls listed here tested various issues for the UK population as a whole and comparisons were only drawn against results for the Muslim sample in 10 of these. However, even when this was done the questions asked in the two samples were nearly always selective subsets of these questions and/or different questions. Generally speaking I am sure this was done with the best of intentions but the Times/Populus poll deserves special attention for 'cherry picking' the questions before they were asked by, for example, only testing the 'Foreign Policy' thesis against their Muslim sample (see Table 8.4). In this case the 'feared undesirable outcome' to be avoided would appear to be the fact that the general public, 53% in the Sun/MORI poll, also believed the principal cause of the London bomb attacks was the war in Iraq, which was not significantly different to the Times/Populus result for their Muslim sample at 50%.

Further, only 4 of these polls test other subgroups, the two Home Office Citizenship polls, the Eastern Eye/MORI poll and my own GMI/PeacePoll. The Home Office polls have been reviewed earlier and the other subgroup in the GMI/PeacePoll was limited to the Jewish community,[41] which leaves the Eastern Eye/MORI poll as worthy of special attention as the results for each of these minorities were very similar. Namely 6% of Hindus, 7% of Muslims and 9% of Sikhs felt 'the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the United States on September 11th were justified'.

[40] The list of polls reviewed here is not exhaustive. I have not included polls undertaken by Muslim organisations representing, for example, university students or prisoners, as their results are not always accessible.

[41] I am grateful to Ken Pick of GMI for suggesting that this sample should be collected.

Table 8.2. Post 9/11 UK polls with samples, methods and tests for the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypotheses

Poll	Date	General Sample	Minority Sample	Method	'Foreign Policy' Hypothesis	'Radical Islamist' Hypothesis
Citizenship Survey	2001	10,015	5,460 Booster	Face to Face	None	None
Eastern Eye MORI	Nov 2001	Two questions in other polls	116 Hindu 319 Muslim 100 Sikh	Face to Face	Yes	None
BBC ICM	Nov 2001	None	500 Muslim	Telephone 'Snowball'	Yes	None
Guardian ICM	June 2002	None	500 Muslim	Telephone 'Snowball'	Yes	None
BBC ICM	Dec 2002	None	500 Muslim	Telephone 'Snowball'	Yes	Yes
Telegraph YouGov	Dec 2002	None	310 Muslim	Online	Yes	None
Citizenship Survey	2003	9,486	4,571 Booster	Face to Face	None	None
Guardian ICM	March 2004	None	500 Muslim	Telephone 'Snowball'	Yes	None
IHRC	July 2004	None	1125 Muslim	Form	None	None
FAIR	Sept 2004	None	200 Muslim	Form	None	None

Table 8.3. Post 7/7 UK polls with samples, methods and tests for the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' hypotheses

Poll	Date	General Sample	Minority Sample	Method	'Foreign Policy' Hypothesis	'Radical Islamist' Hypothesis
Pew	2005	Approx. 1000 per State	None	Telephone & Face to Face	Yes	None
Telegraph YouGov	July 2005	1914 Weighted	None	Online	Yes	None
Telegraph YouGov	July 2005	None	526 Muslim	Online	Yes	Yes
SkyNews Communicate Research	July 2005	None	462 Muslim	Online	Yes	None
Sun MORI	July 2005	None	282 Muslim	Face to Face	Yes	Yes

BBC MORI	August 2005	1004	229 with Booster	Face to Face	None	None
Times-Jewish Groups -Populus	Dec 2005	None	500 Muslim	Online	Yes	None
Pew	2006	Approx. 1000 per State	Approx. 400 Over-sample GB, Spain France, Germany	Telephone & Face to Face	Yes	None
Times YouGov	Feb 2006	1600		Online	None	None
Channel 4 NOP	March 2006		856 Muslim	Telephone	Yes	None
Channel 4 NOP	April 2006		500 Muslim	Telephone	None	None
GMI PeacePoll[42]	April 2006	1002 Weighted	256 Muslim 100 Jewish	Online	Yes	Yes
Times Populus	June 2006	1005 Non-Muslim	1131 Muslim	Telephone & Online	Yes (Muslim)	None
Guardian ICM	June August 2006	1007 August	500 Muslim June	Telephone	Yes	None
YouGov	August 2006	1696		Online	None	None
1990 Trust	Sept 2006		1213 Muslim	Online	Yes	Yes
Populus	Oct 2006	1033			None	None
Gallup	Dec 2006	1200	500 London Muslim	Telephone & Face to Face	None	None
Policy Exchange Populus	Jan 2007	Some Omnibus 1025	1003 Muslin	Telephone & Online	Yes	None

[42] The results reviewed in here are limited to the GMI sample. However MuslimVoice UK (MVUK) also collected an additional Muslim sample which when combined with the GMI sample had little significant impact on the results. MVUK also undertook online polls in April and June 2005 and August and January 2006 with samples in the range 242 to 341.

Table 8.4. 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' questions and results

Poll	'Foreign Policy' Hypothesis	'Radical Islamist' Hypothesis
Eastern Eye MORI 554 Asians	Looking at this card, to what extent, if any, do you feel the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the United States on September 11th were justified? 'A great deal/fair amount' – All 7%; Hindu 6%; Muslim 7%; Sikh 9%	
BBC ICM 500 Muslim	Some people have said that the attacks by Al Qaeda and associated organisations are justified on the grounds that Muslims are being killed by America and its allies using American weapons. Do you agree or disagree? Agree 44%; Disagree 46%; Refused 6%; DK 8%	Some people have said that the attacks by Al Qaeda and associated organisations are "a reaction undertaken by the sons of Islam who are zealous in the defence of their religion and in response to the order of their God and Prophet", Do you agree or disagree? Agree 17%; Disagree 72%; Refused 1%; DK 11%
Telegraph YouGov 1914 UK sample	Do you think Britain's role in Iraq has made the country more vulnerable or less vulnerable to attack by Islamic terrorists? More vulnerable 75%; Less vulnerable 1%; Made no difference 22%; DK 2%	
Telegraph YouGov 526 Muslim	Do you think the bombing attacks in London on July 7 were justified or not? On balance justified 6%; On balance not justified 11%; Not justified at all 77%; DK 6%	Which of these views comes closest to your own? Western society is decadent and immoral and Muslims should seek to bring it to an end, if necessary by violence – 1%
Sun MORI 282 Muslim	On this card are some statements about the recent bombings in London. Please tell me which one comes closest to your personal view? The war in Iraq is the main reason why London was bombed – 53%	The bombings in London would have happened even if Britain was not involved in Iraq – 10%; The war in Iraq had nothing to do with why London was bombed – 14%; None of them – 3%; DK – 20%; Refused - .
Times Populus 1131 Muslim	The British invasion of Iraq was the principal reason for the London bomb attacks – Agree 50%; Disagree 28%	
Times Populus 1005 Non-Musilm	Not asked	
1990 Trust 1213 Muslim	Has the "War on Terror" increased the threat of terrorism in the West? Yes 90%; No 5%; DK 5%	Is there a contradiction in being loyal to the "Ummah" and being a good citizen who can get on with others in society? Yes there is a contradiction 7%; No contradiction 93%

A number of conclusions can be drawn from these observations:

Firstly, as noted by the Home Office analyst, it is difficult to draw conclusions from any of these results and make meaningful statements about attitudes in the Muslim community unless those same issues are tested in the wider population at large and, for comparative purposes against other minority groups as well. This, for example, would be particularly true for questions relating to matters of discrimination and treatment by the police.

Secondly, although the size and quality of the samples increased and improved over several years, this progress was of little significance when compared with the gaps in both the communities and groups to whom the questions were asked and the gaps in those questions themselves. In some cases this seemed to include the selective targeting of questions to particular groups in order to bias the results for political purposes. For example, following the publication of the *Times/Populus* poll the *Times* reported on 5 July 2006 that:

> 'Muslim leaders in Britain announced a national task force to fight extremism yesterday, and called for efforts to end false justifications for acts of violence. The move was announced after the publication of a Times/ITV News poll, which suggested that a significant minority of British Muslims believe they are at war with the rest of society, with 13 per cent saying that they regarded the July 7 bombers as martyrs. Tony Blair said yesterday that the poll showed that the overwhelming majority of Muslims were decent, law-abiding people who wanted to put an end to extremism. People within the Muslim community needed every help in mobilising to combat the extremists' ideology and methods. "That is the only way we will defeat it in the end. That means showing how these extremists' attitudes towards the West and towards our own way of life are wrong and misguided," he told *The Times*.' (Binyon and Webster, 2006)

In addition to the problems associated with selective sampling and the targeting of questions to specific groups there is also the problem of the context in which they are asked and framed. In my view one of the very best reports written on the growth of the Muslim terrorist insurgency in the UK is the 2006 Democratic Audit report 'The Rules of the Game' by Blick, Choudhury and Weir. Along with other valuable social and legal analysis of this problem they undertake an examination of many of the public opinion polls reviewed here. With regards to context their critique

of questions used to ascertain the 'loyalty' of respondents is seminal and well worth reading in full:

> 'Opinion polls constantly ask Muslims whether they consider themselves Muslims or British first. Ignoring for a moment the problematic nature of this question, the answer received can depend on the options available. For example, in the Pew 2006 poll 81 per cent of Muslims in the UK said they consider themselves as Muslim first, 7 per cent British first. By contrast, in a Sky News poll in 2005 46 per cent said British first and Muslim second, 12 per cent Muslim first and British second and 42 per cent said they did not differentiate. This latter option was not available to the respondents to the Pew Poll. In the 2006 NOP/Channel 4 Poll, 38 per cent said they felt strongly that they belonged to both Britain and to Islam. Three quarters of Muslims said that their sense of belonging to Britain has not changed as a result of 7/7; for 14 per cent that their sense of attachment has increased and for 10 per cent that it has decreased.[43]
>
> The question of whether Muslims feel loyal towards Britain is also shaped by the way in which the question is posed. Muslims asked directly about their own sense of loyalty to the UK indicated high levels of loyalty to Britain. In a YouGov poll in July 2005 and in the ICM poll in 2006, nearly half of Muslims said they felt 'very loyal' to the UK and between a third and 42 per cent 'fairly loyal' to the UK. Only 6 and 5 per cent said they 'did not feel very loyal' and those reporting 'not feeling loyal at all' numbered 10 per cent in the YouGov 2005 poll and 2 per cent in the ICM poll. However the figures for those feeling loyal are significantly lower if the question is framed so that Muslims are asked to consider how loyal they think 'Muslims' feel towards the UK. Given the diversity of the Muslim community in the UK the failure of Muslims to get this question right is hardly surprising.
>
> The extent to which framing can affect outcome is best seen in a question posed in the 2006 NOP/Channel 4 poll. The headline report was that 24 per cent of Muslims see the UK as 'their country'. However, the actual question posed, 'When you see the British flag do you feel "that's my country" or "that's their country"?' Thus the replies reflected ambivalence toward the union flag rather than the UK. By contrast, 88 per cent of Muslims agreed with the statement, 'when a British team does well in

[43] ICM Poll, June 2006.

> international competitions, such as sporting events, I feel proud'. The figure for all people in the UK was 90 per cent; and as many non-Muslims and Muslims respondents, 7 per cent of each group, disagreed.[44]' (Blick, Choudhury and Weir, 2006)

A solution to this problem is perhaps offered by the Home Office Citizenship Surveys. As much as I admire the critical analysis of Blick, Choudhury and Weir I have one small bone to pick with them. On page 19 of their otherwise excellent report they note that 'Levels of dissatisfaction were higher among young Muslims (16-24 year olds), of whom 37 per cent felt that the government was doing 'too little'.' This result has been 'cherry picked' from the Home Office Citizenship Survey which, as noted earlier, goes on to point out that this level of dissatisfaction is lower than the overall level of dissatisfaction for all respondents in this age group[45] at 38% and also lower than other faith groups at 39% for Christians and Hindus and 56% for Sikhs (Table 8.1). Clearly a workable solution to this kind of problem, in both analytical and presentational terms is to place the results for minorities, Muslim or otherwise, in both a general 'all' sample context and a comparative 'other' minority context. The Government analyst made this point in their 2004 Home Office/FCO report and they were quite right to do so and although the Eastern Eye/MORI poll is very limited in its sample it elegantly makes this same point for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

But the questions asked in the Citizenship Survey were of little practical value in analysing the critical issues under examination here. What then is the best workable solution to this problem between the 'sublime' certainties of the biannual 15,000 Citizenship Survey sample on the one hand and the sometimes 'ridiculous' headline grabbing sound bite no context questions often found in the popular press? I think the Eastern Eye/MORI poll points the way. More comparisons, more context and do not be overly concerned about producing expensive *representative* samples when small *indicative* samples can provide such comparisons and context at a fraction of the cost. And then, of course, using the peace polls methods to devise questions with input from all the interested parties to a conflict to avoid bias.

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[44] BBC Multiculturalism Poll, August 2005.

[45] To be fair Blick, Choudhury and Weir do make this point in footnote number 26 at the end of the chapter on page 26, but without giving the details of the statistics.

A conflict in search of a peace process

Following the presentation of a paper on this topic at the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) 58th annual conference, *Search for a New World Order – the Role of Public Opinion* in September 2005 (Irwin, 2005b) the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) invited me to present these same ideas in Washington later that year (Irwin, 2005c). With their encouragement as well as the offer of a free internet poll from Global Market Insite, Inc. (GMI),[46] and with the cooperation of Muslim Voice UK (MVUK) a public opinion poll was designed to fill the gaps left open by the Home Office and other research following the events of 9/11 and 7/7.

When the interviews for this poll were started it seemed quite natural to focus on 'problems' from, on the one hand, a distinctly domestic perspective and then, on the other hand, from an international perspective. But the problems put forward from the Muslim community did not neatly fit into these two apparently clear classifications. After several weeks of interviews the broad categories listed below emerged as the major issues to be dealt with:

- Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilizations'
- Discrimination and integration
- The Muslim community
- Relations between the West and Muslim states
- Extremism and the 'War on Terror'

Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilisations' is distinctly both a domestic and international problem, while, for example, discrimination and integration is more domestic and relations between the West and Muslim states, is more international. The point to be made here is that this conflict has gone global. Northern Ireland and the 'Troubles' were, by comparison, a local conflict and the wars in Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo engulfed the region known as the Balkans.

The international complexity of the conflict between the 'West and the Muslim World' makes it very difficult to solve as so many parties to the

[46] This survey was conducted online by Global Market Insite, Inc. within the United Kingdom between 13 April and 2 May 2006 among a nationwide cross section of 1,360 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and religion were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. The survey included 203 participants from the UK Muslim community and 88 from the UK Jewish community.

conflict are involved. Fortunately this clear and obvious point of difficulty is compensated for by the fact that there is a great deal of consensus about the solutions to this problem and how this conflict can be resolved, at least in the UK. Hopefully that consensus will be found to extend to other states so that an international consensus can be built around the essential elements of what must necessarily become a peace process (Irwin, 2006b).

I will not go into the details of this poll and its findings here. They can be read in the reports available on the www.peacepolls website (Irwin, 2006c). What I want to do here is compare the results from this poll with the others reviewed earlier to see what can be added to and said about these different analyses with respect to the 'Foreign Policy' and 'Radical Islamist' perspectives of the conflict.

Critically the style of questions used in a 'peace poll' facilitates comparisons across all cultural, social and political issues addressed and between all the sections of society engaged. The emphasis is on description with a view to stimulating discussion rather than discrete hypothesis testing. For example, Table 8.5 lists the top three 'problems' from this poll for the UK public in general, Jewish community, Muslim community and 'alienated' Muslims who, for the purposes of this poll, 'strongly agreed' with the statement that: 'Much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes'.

Table 8.5. Top three 'problems' from a list of ninety-nine cultural, social and political issues concerning relations between the West and the Muslim World

	All UK per cent Very Significant		Jewish per cent Very Significant		Muslim per cent Very Significant		'Alienated' Muslim per cent Very Significant	
1st	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	50	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	82	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	74	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	86
2nd	Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians	47	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	62	Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	70	Western desire to control Middle East oil	84
3rd	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	46	Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel	62	The invasion of Iraq	70	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	84

From a list of ninety-nine different issues the top three 'problems' for the British public were suicide bombers that kill Israeli civilians first at 50% 'very significant' followed by Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians 2nd at 47% 'very significant' and 3rd, misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence, at 46% 'very significant'. Understandably the Jewish community also place the killing of Israeli civilians 1st on their list but at a higher rating of 82% 'very significant' followed by the misrepresentation of Islam… to justify violence at 62% and then Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel 3rd also at 62% 'very significant'. The point to be made here is that both the general public and the Jewish community place Middle East foreign policy issues at the top of their respective 'problems' lists.

The Muslim community as a whole place the negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists at the top of their list at 74% 'very significant' and at 86% for 'alienated' Muslims. This is followed by Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name' and the war in Iraq both at 70% 'very significant' for the Muslim community as a whole and 'Western desire to control Middle East oil' and 'US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world' both at 84% 'very significant' for 'alienated' Muslims. Again foreign policy issues feature at the top of these lists but this time with a more US/Western/Middle East perspective.

So foreign policy seems to be a common denominator for almost everyone in the UK but the elements of that policy are somewhat different for different sections of British society. For example 'alienated' Muslims place 'British foreign policy' pure and simple almost half way down their full list of concerns at number 43 with a rating of only 56% 'very significant' (Table 8.6). Like the 'curate's egg' perhaps some aspects of British foreign policy are 'good in parts'. Bosnia, for example, did not even get raised as a problem in the interviews undertaken for the drafting of these questions.

The aspects of foreign policy that are a problem relate to, for example, Middle East oil and US foreign policy 2nd and 3rd at 84% 'very significant', Iraq 5th at 82%, Western threats to Muslim states 7th at 81%, Afghanistan 9th at 79%, the failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims 10th also at 79% and Israel and US policy with respect to Israel 11th and 12th at 77% 'very significant', and so on, and so on.

For 'alienated' Muslims these are the policies that seem to matter most. Unfortunately the British Government's primary focus was on those polices that are lower down or even at the very bottom of this list of priorities. Misrepresentation of Islam…to justify violence is 52nd at 49% 'very significant', Imams from overseas not understanding the social and

cultural problems of young British Muslims is 64th at 37% 'very significant' and then, at the very bottom, at 97th is Muslims not being proud to be British at 18% 'very significant', at 98th is multiculturalism is preventing integration at 16% 'very significant' and last, at 99th is Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society at only 11% 'very significant'.

Everyone agrees that these are real problems and the Muslim community is cooperating with the British Government to address them. Indeed the *Times/Populus* poll was used to help secure that cooperation. But that poll is biased, as is its related Government policy. To think, for a moment, that such 'bottom up' approaches can bring an end to young Muslims turning to violence in the absence of the British Government also taking a 'top down' approach with respect to the most critical areas of foreign policy is, at best, a dangerous self deception. It simply will not work. It is like asking the church leaders and moderate politicians in Northern Ireland to bring an end to Republican violence without addressing the major concerns of the Catholic community which, in Northern Ireland, were discrimination and police reform. Contrary to popular belief it was not a united Ireland.

I have not had an opportunity to discuss with any British Muslims, actually engaged in terrorist activity, why they have turned to violence but I have often had such discussions with members of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) and Irish Republican Army (IRA). Without exception the reasons given are the violent injustices the other community has visited on their own. The polling evidence seems to suggest that the motives that drive young Muslims born and educated in the UK are not substantially different except that they have grown up in a global village in which the violent injustices done to their community are not limited to those shores alone.

The significant success of the Northern Ireland peace process in recent years can be attributed to bringing an end to violence in the context of addressing the root causes of injustice with the full cooperation of the Republic of Ireland and support of Britain's strongest allies in Europe and America. In the broader context of the global village in which we all now live, the remedy for Muslims in Britain, and around the world, may not be so very different. The international community have readily accepted the proposition that the 'War on Terror' is a global endeavour. They have yet to come to terms with the fact that both the causes and effective solutions to this so-called war likewise require a global response based on the kinds of priorities listed for UK 'alienated' Muslims in Table 8.6.

The issues being dealt with here are among the most serious that our modern world have to address and as with 'Global Warming' there is a

fierce debate over the relative merits of the scientific evidence. Is the 'Greenhouse Effect' real or is the Earth caught up in a natural cycle of warming following a periodic Ice Age? Why are young Muslims in Britain and elsewhere turning to violence and does the 'Foreign Policy' or 'Radical Islamist' thesis provide the best explanation upon which to base our policies?

Unfortunately the public opinion research undertaken by the authorities, in this case the British Home Office was not up to the task of providing an answer to this question, although they had all the intellectual and financial resources necessary to do so. They, like the rest of us, have often relied on polling research undertaken by a partisan press and/or interest groups such that their conclusions and polices have been largely shaped by those interests. Or, more seriously, the authorities have courted and worked with such groups to produce the polling results that suited their policies and/or have discouraged research that might prove fatal to such policies. Arguably working to such a government agenda and engaging in such research is unethical and those that do so run the risk of placing their hands in that state's spilt blood (Irwin, 2008f).

Table 8.6. The 'significance' of 'problems' for 'alienated' Muslims in the UK

	'Alienated' Muslim per cent	'Very Significant'
1	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	86
2	Western desire to control Middle East oil	84
3	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	84
4	Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	82
5	The invasion of Iraq	82
6	The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	81
7	Western threats to Muslim states being felt as a threat to all Muslims	81
8	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	79
9	The invasion of Afghanistan	79
10	The failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims	79
11	Israel failing to have good relations with Muslim states	77
12	Lack of commitment by US to create independent Palestinian state	77
13	Indifference of the West to resolve the Chechnya dispute	77
14	Protests against the war in Iraq were ignored by the British government	77
15	US support for the state of Israel	75
16	Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians	75
17	The prison camp in Guantanamo Bay	75
18	Abuses at Abu Ghraib Prison	75
19	The use of evidence gained through torture	75
20	Powerful states deliberately misrepresenting terrorism, state terrorism and wars of liberation	75
21	The war on terror is a war on Islam	75
22	The war on terror is a war to control the world's oil	75

23	Failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims	74
24	Detaining Muslims without charge and trial under the Terrorism Act in Bellmarsh	74
25	Religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain	74
26	Indifference of the West to resolve the Kashmir dispute	72
27	US having military bases in the Middle East	72
28	Lack of commitment by EU to create independent Palestinian state	70
29	Lack of commitment by UK to create independent Palestinian state	70
30	Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion	70
31	Double standards in the application of UN resolutions on Muslim and non-Muslim states	68
32	Double standards in condoning free speech	67
33	Increased Islamophobia after the 7/7 London bombings	67
34	The international transport of prisoners for interrogation and torture	67
35	The events of 9/11 being used to advance Western policy in the Middle East	67
36	Failure by the British government to acknowledge their Security and Foreign Policy is alienating and radicalising young Muslims	65
37	The only nuclear power in the Middle East is Israel	63
38	Iran and other Middle Eastern Muslim states not being permitted to have nuclear weapons	63
39	Muslims not being accepted as entirely British	61
40	The West views the Muslim World as the enemy	60
41	The creation of the state of Israel	60
42	Failure of non-Muslims to appreciate the contribution Muslims have made to civilization	58
43	British foreign policy	56
44	Al Qaida learning their military training from the CIA at camps established by the US in Afghanistan	56
45	Too narrow a definition of 'Britishness'	54
46	The war on terror being created to replace the war with Communism	54
47	Absence of a public enquiry into the London Bombings is fuelling conspiracy theories	54
48	Islam is being defined by the extremists	53
49	Muslims and non-Muslims not knowing and understanding each other	51
50	Discrimination against Muslims by the police	51
51	Radical Muslims using the Danish cartoons to agitate Muslims	49
52	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	49
53	Western politicians and Muslim extremists having a common interest in polarizing their people	49
54	The rise of the extreme right in European politics	47
55	Failure of government to engage with Muslim 'grass roots' especially youth and women	44
56	Conflict and lack of unity between different Muslim sects and nationalities	44
57	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	44
58	The voice of all moderates rarely being heard	42
59	Alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK	42
60	Lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK	42
61	Discrimination against Muslims by employers	40
62	Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to see similarities in each other	39
63	Lack of courage and vision of all religious leaders to build bridges	39

64	Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims	37
65	Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel	37
66	The mistrust of the British police by Muslims	37
67	Fundamental differences in Muslim and Western culture and values	35
68	Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in meaningful discussions	35
69	Failure to educate young Muslims to be active representatives of their community in the UK	35
70	The growth of Islam being a threat to Western culture	33
71	Problems with Fundamentalist Judaism ignored by both Western and Jewish leaders	32
72	People promoting 'the clash of civilisations'	32
73	The Koran is taught in Arabic without its meaning in UK mosques	32
74	Discrimination against women in Muslim culture and society	32
75	Problems with Fundamentalist Christianity ignored by both Western and Christian leaders	30
76	Lack of democracy in Muslim countries	30
77	Lack of integration in schools	28
78	Failure of UK Mosques to allow open debate on controversial issues (drugs, politics, etc)	28
79	Failure of Muslim leadership to engage with Muslim 'grass roots' in the UK - especially youth and women	28
80	Failure of 1st generation and 2nd and 3rd generation UK Muslims to understand each other	28
81	Muslim states failing to have good relations with non-Muslim states	28
82	The rise of extremist political groups in Muslim states	28
83	Problems with Fundamentalist Islam ignored by both Western and Islamic leaders	26
84	Non-Muslims are excluding Muslims from mainstream society	26
85	Drug taking and dealing in UK Muslim communities	26
86	The 'clash of civilisations' being created to replace the war with Communism	25
87	Sharia Law	25
88	Discrimination against Muslims by the Health Service	25
89	Low school achievement of Muslim pupils due to lack of parental involvement	25
90	Discrimination against women in the Islamic faith	25
91	Islamic dress code	23
92	The growth of Islam being a threat to the peace and security of the world	21
93	Lack of self criticism by Muslims	21
94	Discrimination against homosexuals	21
95	Failure to reform Islam	19
96	The Muslim World views the West as the enemy	18
97	Muslims not being proud to be British	18
98	Multiculturalism is preventing integration	16
99	Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society	11

9

Israel and Palestine

I first went to Israel in 1968 just after the 67' War and for six months worked as a diving instructor at the Red Sea resort of Eilat. It was largely my experiences as a young man in this country that prompted me to make a career of peace studies. With a post-doctoral fellowship from the Canadian government I returned to Israel in 1987 to complete a comparative study of the processes of social integration amongst Eastern and Western Jewish children who went to school together in Jerusalem and Catholic and Protestant Christian children who went to school together in Belfast (Irwin, 1992a and b). The study was done using a Smallest Space Analysis programme developed for this purpose (Irwin and Bar, 1991) at the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research (IIASR) later know as the Louis Guttman Institute following his death in October of 1987. Given the greater cultural differences of Jewish children migrating to Israel from very different parts of the world we discovered the children in Belfast were integrating better than the children in Jerusalem.

The IIASR/Louis Guttman Institute is worthy of a special mention here as perhaps the first organisation to regularly monitor the state of a peace process using public opinion polls and most of the work still done in Israel and Palestine follows in that tradition of tracking key indicators of inter-ethnic attitudes and values. Indeed much of the peace and the conflict monitoring around the world is shaped by this experience. Significantly these questions, for the most part, were designed by social psychologists to achieve objectivity through carefully constructed neutrality while in peace polls stakeholders design the questions and neutrality is achieved by working across the breadth of the political and social spectrum with an emphasis on options for policies.

Following the conclusion of the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and the "Mitchell Review" of the Agreement in 1999, Atlantic Philanthropies awarded me a two-year fellowship in 2000 to explore the possibilities of applying the methods developed there internationally. With the assistance of this grant, which I had received with the support of George Mitchell, I made arrangements to visit Jerusalem in 2002, and it soon became clear

that a group of suitable people could be brought together to design and run polls similar to those undertaken in Northern Ireland. Naomi Chazan, who was then the Deputy Speaker of the Knesset and a past Director of the Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, as well as Ghassan Khatib, Director of the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (JMCC) and who later become a Minister in the Palestinian Authority (PA), Vice President of Birzeit University and Director of the Government Media Centre, both expressed a keen interest in such a project. At the time the Director of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), Mahdi Abdul Hadi, was particularly interested in running a poll that explored the possibilities for elections in the occupied territories. Some questions were drafted, and with the support of the French government he was to fly to Paris to examine these issues further but when his colleagues were stopped at Israeli checkpoints and prevented from joining him at the airport, the project was brought to a close and elections were not held until after Arafat's death in 2004. Freedom of association and freedom of expression are minimum requirements for this kind of peace research, and these conditions could not be adequately met to complete our project at that time.

Regrettably, the public opinion polling and peace research is not as well coordinated between the two communities in Israel and Palestine as it needs to be, or even between the academics and the politicians within each community. These omissions lead to results that fail to realise their full potential by frequently examining only one side of what may be a common problem and/or leaving out what may be the most critical or important questions that need to be addressed. Here are three such examples that deal with some of the most difficult issues in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process: the future of the city of Jerusalem, refugees and the right of return, and public support for a negotiated settlement.

The future of the city of Jerusalem

I was invited to attend The International Conference on Jerusalem organised by the Arab League at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) in December of 1999. At that conference a very moderate and clearly 'pro-peace with the Palestinians' American Jewish researcher from Maryland University, Dr. Jerome Segal, gave a very good paper on public opinion and which communities considered which districts of Jerusalem to be of particular importance to them (Segal, 1999). This programme of research was undertaken with a view to building a consensus around an eventual division of the city as part of a final

settlement. Now this may be a realistic solution to this particular problem but unfortunately, at that time, the negotiating position of the Palestinians was for an open shared city along the lines of UN resolutions 181 and 303. But Dr. Segal had neglected to test his options against this particular scenario in this study so all of his findings were dismissed as irrelevant. I suggested to Dr. Segal that he should now repeat his research but this time he should engage with both Israeli and Palestinian politicians and negotiators but, perhaps understandably, Dr. Segal was very disappointed with the reception his research received and decided to move on to other topics. His already low opinion of politicians sank to newfound depths. But politicians have to deal in the real worlds of their electorates and if events had followed similar experiences in Northern Ireland, and if Dr. Segal's proposals for the future of Jerusalem had proven the lesser of other evils then the politicians just might have reluctantly accepted his conclusions. An opportunity was lost because the policies of Campbell's (1984) adversarial stakeholders were not included in the research design.

Refugees and the right of return

All wars create refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Sometimes they get to return to their homes when hostilities are ended but all too frequently they do not. Most of the conflicts reviewed in this book have generated refugees and IDPs, sometimes generation on generation only to become pawns in the politics of peace negotiations. International law is clear on this point. In Cyprus, across the new Balkan states created from the break up of the former Yugoslavia and in Israel and Palestine all the refugees and IDPs have the right to return to their former residences but, in practice, only a minority percentage will ever get the opportunity to do so. In all these conflicts a path has to be found between the ideal of international law and the pragmatism of a negotiated settlement. Unfortunately, in Palestine, these two perspectives on the refugee problem have been researched independently of each other. For example an Israel and Palestine Centre for Research and Information (IPCRI) poll undertaken in 2001 had a strong focus on the legal right to return with a little over 90 per cent of refugees interviewed not willing to accept compensation in place of the right of return (IPCRI, 2001). On the other hand a poll undertaken by Khalil Shikaki of the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) explored various pragmatic options for negotiation and come to the conclusion that a majority of refugees, as much as 90 per cent, would accept compensation in place of the right to return (Shikaki, 2003). These very different results precipitated a fierce

debate in Palestine and the Palestinian press around the world (Sitta, 2003; Nashashibi, 2003). Shikaki's questions were condemned as misleading by the NGOs who represented Palestinian refugees. From a public diplomacy perspective the Northern Ireland experience suggests all such options need to be tested together in the same research instrument, across all populations sampled, in an effort to avoid such criticisms. Additionally, when dealing with a very difficult topic for one community (Palestinian refuges) it is essential to publish the results as part of a wider study that includes equally difficult topics for the other community (e.g. Israeli settlements).

Public support for a negotiated settlement

With the winding up of the IIASR/Louis Guttman Institute in 1996 Professor Tamar Herman and the Tami Steinmetz Centre for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University took the program of monitoring the Israel Palestine peace process forward. They do excellent work in the best traditions of the IIASR/Louis Guttman Institute and I made a point of visiting them when I was there in 2002. Herman gave me a copy of a then soon to be published paper 'Divided yet United: Israeli-Jewish Attitudes Towards the Oslo Process' which she co-authored with Yuchtman-Yaar (Hermann and Yuchtman-Yaar, 2002). It is a very good paper in terms of its analysis of the extensive time-line data collected at the Tami Steinmetz Centre and they conclude that:

> 'These shared values mark the red lines that policymakers cannot cross without risking the total loss of public support, as occurred in summer 2000 when Barak's far-reaching peace proposals were rejected by the majority including many in the pro-Oslo camp, leading to his government's collapse.' (Hermann and Yuchtman-Yaar, 2002)

They go on to say that similar properties of public opinion may be found elsewhere and in this they are also right. A few days later Ghassan Khatib at the JMCC[47] showed me very similar time-line data for the Palestinian population from which it was possible to conclude that if Arafat had gone any further at the 2000 negotiations then he would also have crossed red lines that would not have been supported by his followers. In this case there was nothing wrong with the research design or the questions asked in either Israel or Palestine. In this case, unfortunately,

[47] These data are available from the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre. Retrieved August 6, 2006 from http://www.jmcc.org/index.html

Campbell's (1983) adversarial stakeholder[s] did not co-operate to jointly participate 'in the interpretation of results.' If peace negotiations are to be successful then realism is required on both sides and all parties need to know where everyone's red lines are. Israeli and Palestinian public opinion researchers must do this if they genuinely want to make a contribution to the achievement of peace. With all these points in mind I wrote to George Mitchell to bring this problem to his attention on 27 November 2002 as follows:

"My two-year fellowship has come and gone and I was able to get most of what I wanted done. Thank you for your support in this… the problem that I face now is not methodological, intellectual or practical, these problems are for the most part solved. The problem that I now face is more institutional or something to do with what might be called the 'politics of peace research'. The fact is that in places like Cyprus, Israel and Palestine such work is dominated by the US through, for example, USAID and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and their work is not up to standard. Indeed their work may often do more harm than good. Let me briefly give a couple of examples:

In Cyprus USAID and the State Department through the US Embassy in Nicosia sponsored a series of private polls that were shared with their staff and key figures in the Greek and Turkish Cypriot negotiating teams. But the questions were all wrong. They pointed up differences and attitudes more than looking for and mapping out common ground and when some of these questions ended up in local media polls they only served to demonstrate how difficult a settlement might be. They looked more for problems than solutions and consequently the Embassy staff thought they were dealing with a particularly intractable problem. However, when I took these matters up with representatives of civil society it was clear that the problems were, as in Northern Ireland, not nearly so bad as their political leaders would have 'us' believe. The UN team in Cyprus wanted me to go ahead with a poll but the US Embassy and USAID would no longer have anything to do with it beyond persuading others to discourage me. In part, I suspect, because it may not have fitted their own political and regional agenda but in part, I also suspect, because they did not want to expose the failures of their own program of confidential research.

In Israel and Palestine the US has sponsored programs of public opinion research over many years through a variety of institutions. Again the research is superficial when looked at alongside the Northern Ireland work. And 'yes', as you pointed out in your speech last Friday, people do want an agreement around security and a two state solution, but the

research is not done as a collaborative effort with party negotiators in an effort to pin down the details of an acceptable accommodation. The 'people' are not brought along in and with negotiations in a pro-active public way so that when deals are attempted they tend to fail for lack of public preparation. Regrettably President Clinton's efforts may have failed because of this lack of pre-negotiation problem solving and 'stage setting' and it seems very likely that future efforts may similarly fail if negotiating practices are not changed (for a review see Dr. Menachem Klein, Bar-Ilan University, Israel, Failed Israeli and Palestinian Interactions, Royal Irish Academy, Friday 22 November, 2002)…."

-End of quote from letter-

I continued to make the same points over the coming years whenever I had an opportunity to do so: in print (Irwin, 2004a), at the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) annual conference (Irwin, 2005b) and at conferences held in Jerusalem (Irwin, 2006b and 2007c). Following a presentation of my paper there in 2006 I invited the major Palestinian and Israeli polling and peace research organizations if they would like to engage in a joint project to introduce best practice from Northern Ireland into their work. All the Palestinian organizations welcomed such an opportunity, some even offered funding, but all the Israeli institutions declined. Negotiations, of any kind, it would seem, were not then part of their agenda. In June of that year, Israel invaded Gaza, and in July they invaded Lebanon. These military adventures did not advance the cause of peace in the Middle East and so I repeated my offer when I was there again in 2007 with no better effect.

In 2002 Jacob Shamir and Khalil Shikaki took over the time line research started by Louis Guttman and Tamar Hermann. In 2010 they published an excellent review of their work and came to essentially the same conclusion as myself (Shamir and Shikaki, 2010). Namely that Israeli and Palestinian politicians must prepare their publics for a peace agreement if a peace agreement is to be achieved. After so many warnings and the positive experience of Northern Ireland why was this not done?

Firstly, as in Northern Ireland, there is bureaucratic resistance to any loss of control. An official from the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem once asked me what I do when I get the wrong result. He was a little surprised that I publish everything. I tried to explain that it was not possible to get a wrong result if the questionnaire covers all the issues fairly and if the sampling is accurate. He did not seem to understand. He wanted to put his finger in Campbell's (1984) galvanometer and 'cherry pick' the meter reading he desired.

Secondly, Israel's so-called security restrictions on academic freedom make cooperative projects between Israelis and Palestinians very difficult indeed (Salem and Kaufman, 2007). In these circumstances a 'go-between' such as myself can be brought in, Khalil Shikaki has chosen to make the best that he can of a very difficult situation but Ghassan Khatib had to move his offices to Ramallah when his access to Jerusalem was restricted, although he has chosen not to change the name of his organisation from the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC).

Thirdly, Jacob Shamir has repeatedly told me that Israeli politicians simply will not cooperate in such research. But this is not true. Even if mainstream politicians from the ruling parties refuse to cooperate then one can always turn to the opposition parties. Naomi Chazan of the Meretz Party in Israel and Ghassan Khatib an independent in the Palestinian Authority were always willing to arrange this for me. Additionally, following the election of Obama to the US Presidency in 2008 and George Mitchell's appointment as his Special Envoy to the Middle East in 2009, OneVoice invited me to undertake a peace poll and access to the most influential politicians in Israel was not then a problem, from the President on down.

Israel Palestine peace poll

On a recommendation from Tamar Herman OneVoice, an international grass-roots NGO focused on Middle East peace, asked me if I would help them undertake a public opinion poll in Israel and Palestine after the Democrats regained the White House in 2008. I agreed but did not make a final commitment until we were able to put a top quality research team together and I had an opportunity to run the idea past the people I had been working with in the region since 2002. Inevitably any organization that attempts to make proactive moves towards reconciliation between Israel and Palestine will invite close scrutiny. Do they seek peace with a reasonable degree of justice or normalization of the status quo? Such suspicions can not be avoided but given Obama's election the time seemed right for bold moves and all the colleagues I had got to know over the past years agreed that I should try. So with their good wishes we were able to secure the services of Mina Zemach the most well known and respected pollster in Israel and Nader Said who until recently had been working with Ghassan Khatib at Birzeit University in Palestine. Critically Mina had been the Labour party's pollster in Israel and she was able to arrange interviews for me with, amongst others, President Shimon Peres, then Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and his Deputy Prime Minister Eliyahu Yishai from the Shas

party, the Knesset representatives of the Arab Israelis, and Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesperson. This was in December 2008 just before the elections that brought Netanyahu to power. On the Palestinian side the interviews arranged by OneVoice were as rich and varied, including all the major parties in the Palestinian Authority, Fatah, Hamas, etc., and representatives of the most prominent civil society NGOs. After a month of going back and forth between Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramallah we had a draft questionnaire dealing with all manner of 'problems' and 'solutions', which fell into two distinct categories. Substantive matters for a final settlement of outstanding claims and procedural matters concerning negotiations and how they could best be brought to a successful conclusion (Irwin, 2009a and see footnote 48 on page 154 for sample details).

Because Mina used telephone polling the questionnaire had to be cut in two, one on the shape of an agreement and the other on process. By this time, as in Northern Ireland, everyone knew the basic elements of the deal that had to be made variously known as the Clinton Parameters, Taba Proposals and Geneva Accords. It was the process that had failed and it was the process that needed fixing so when OneVoice said they did not have sufficient funds to cover the cost of the process poll I had to threaten to come up with the extra funds myself at which point they relented and both polls were run. Yet again, the importance of process was being fatally underestimated.

The shape of an agreement - Problems

The first question in this poll asked informants in Israel and Palestine to say which problems they thought were most significant with a clear focus on the questions of substance that had to be dealt with as part of an agreement (Table 9.1). The topics were familiar to everyone and the top item for Palestinians was 'Establish an independent sovereign state of Palestine' at 97% 'very significant' followed by 'The rights of refugees' second at 95%, 'Agreement on the future of Jerusalem' third at 94%, 'Agreement on managing Holy sites' fourth at 91%, 'Security for Palestine' fifth at 90%, 'Settlements in the Occupied Territories/West Bank' sixth at 89% and 'Rights to natural resources' seventh at 88% 'very significant' and so on. For Israelis the top item was 'Security for Israel' at 77% 'very significant' followed by 'Agreement on the future of Jerusalem' second at 68% then 'Rights to natural resources' third at 62% 'very significant'.

A number of observations need to be made here. Firstly it was absolutely essential that the issues at the top of these two lists got dealt

with in any peace agreement or it was most unlikely that the agreement would last. This meant Palestinians needed to be aware of and address the 'Security of Israel' problem that came in 12th on the Palestinian list at only 21% 'very significant' and that Israelis needed to be aware of and address the cluster of issues at the top of the Palestinian list starting with 'Establishing an independent sovereign state of Palestine' which came in 11th on the Israeli list at 33% 'very significant'. 'Agreement on the future of Jerusalem' came in second and third on the Israeli and Palestinian lists respectively. Everyone seemed to think this was important and this was agreement of a sort but could agreement be found?

Table 9.1. Problems of 'substance' for the Israel/Palestine peace process expressed as per cent 'Very significant'

	PALESTINIAN per cent	Very Significant	ISRAELI per cent	Very Significant
1st	Establishing an independent sovereign state of Palestine	97	Security for Israel	77
2nd	The rights of refugees	95	Agreement on the future of Jerusalem	68
3rd	Agreement on the future of Jerusalem	94	Rights to natural resources	62
4th	Agreement on managing Holy sites	91	Agreement on managing Holy sites	57
5th	Security for Palestine	90	Agreeing borders for Israel and Palestine	49
6th	Settlements in the Occupied Territories/West Bank	89	Peace between Israel and Jordan	47
7th	Rights to natural resources	88	Peace between Israel and Egypt	46
8th	Agreeing borders for Israel and Palestine	77	Peace between Israel and the Arab World	37
9th	Peace between Israel and the Arab World	35	Peace between Israel and Lebanon	36
10th	Peace between Israel and Lebanon	31	Peace between Israel and Syria	36
11th	Peace between Israel and Syria	30	Establishing an independent sovereign state of Palestine	33
12th	Security for Israel	21	Settlements in the Occupied Territories/West Bank	33
13th	[Peace between Israel and Jordan][48]		Peace between Israel and Iran	29
14th	[Peace between Israel and Egypt]		The rights of refugees	25
15th	[Peace between Israel and Iran]		Security for Palestine	23

[48] This and the two options below were not asked in Palestine.

The shape of an agreement - Solutions[49]

There was no point in simply replicating Shikaki and Shamir's top quality time line studies of a final status agreement. In the expectation that my poll would be the first in a series I included all the alternative proposals being 'floated' by all groups on both sides of the conflict so that extreme positions could be eliminated as part of what I thought would become an ongoing discourse between the two societies. I also wanted to use the 'essential', 'desirable', 'acceptable', 'tolerable' and 'unacceptable' scale used in Northern Ireland firstly so comparisons could be made with regards to difficulty of negotiations and secondly because the bipolar 'definitely agree', 'agree' and 'disagree', 'definitely disagree' scale used by Shamir and Shikaki did not openly challenge the leaderships in both communities to take their publics into the 'tolerable' zone of negotiation and compromise. Finally, I also wanted to add in any new proposals being put forward, especially if they were coming from politicians and parties with influence and power.

Final status

Not all of the questions in this programme of research produced as clear and unambiguous a result as this particular set of questions (Table 9.2). The preferred option for Israelis was the 'Two state solution' at 45% 'essential or desirable' and only 21% 'unacceptable' followed by the 'Political status quo with economic development (also 45% 'essential or desirable' but 24% 'unacceptable) and 'Confederation between West Bank and Jordan and between Gaza and Egypt' at 39% 'essential or desirable' and 21% 'unacceptable'. 'One shared state' was 66% 'unacceptable' for Israelis as was a 'Greater Israel' at 47% 'unacceptable'.

[49] The fieldwork to develop the questionnaires was undertaken in Israel and Palestine in November and December 2008. The fieldwork for the public opinion polls was undertaken by AWRAD of Ramallah and Dahaf of Tel Aviv following the elections in Israel in February 2009. Five hundred interviews were completed in Israel using telephones and six hundred face-to-face interviews were completed in the West Bank and Gaza to produce representative samples of both populations in terms of age, gender, social background and geographical distribution.

Table 9.2. Final status options for Israel and Palestine (continued p. 156)

PALESTINIAN per cent[50]	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) Historic Palestine – From the Jordanian river to the sea as an Islamic Waqf	59	12	7	5	12
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) Historic Palestine – From the Jordanian river to the sea	71	11	5	3	7
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) One joint state – A state in which Israelis and Palestinians are equal citizens	18	13	10	12	43
One shared state - Bi-national federal state in which Israelis and Palestinians share power	8	7	7	12	59
Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	38	15	10	11	24
Political status quo with economic development of Palestinian/the West Bank/Gaza (territories)	32	10	8	8	40
Confederation between West Bank and Jordan and between Gaza and Egypt	12	7	7	5	65
(ISRAELIS ONLY) Greater Israel – A Jewish state from the Jordanian border to the sea					

The first choice for Palestinians was, as might be expected 'Historic Palestine' at 82% 'essential or desirable' followed by an Islamic Waqf at 71% 'essential or desirable'. 'One shared state' was rejected by Palestinians at 66% 'unacceptable' followed by 'Confederation' at 65% 'unacceptable' and the 'Political status quo with economic development' at 40% 'unacceptable'. The Palestinian results for the 'Two state solution are very similar to the Israeli results at 53% 'essential or desirable' and only 24% 'unacceptable'. So the 'Two state solution' continued to be the most widely accepted option for both Israelis and Palestinians and all other options then being considered were less likely to gain as much support in both societies as a basis for a peace agreement. This was real progress, but what about the other contentious issues on the 'problems' list that had to be dealt with?

[50] When these percentages do not add up to 100 the remainder were 'No Answer'.

Table 9.2 continued. Final status options for Israel and Palestine

ISRAELI per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) Historic Palestine – From the Jordanian river to the sea as an Islamic Waqf					
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) Historic Palestine – From the Jordanian river to the sea					
(PALESTINIANS ONLY) One joint state – A state in which Israelis and Palestinians are equal citizens					
One shared state - Bi-national federal state in which Israelis and Palestinians share power	7	6	11	8	66
Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	32	13	16	17	21
Political status quo with economic development of Palestinian/the West Bank/Gaza (territories)	27	18	12	14	24
Confederation between West Bank and Jordan and between Gaza and Egypt	19	20	15	17	21
(ISRAELIS ONLY) Greater Israel – A Jewish state from the Jordanian border to the sea	17	10	11	8	47

Refugees

The next question in the poll provided the person being interviewed with a range of options for dealing with the problem of refugees, the second most important issue for Palestinians after their desire for a sovereign state. Again, as would be expected, the first choice for Palestinians was 'Right of return AND compensation' at 92% 'essential or desirable'. But this option was rejected by 77% of Israelis as 'unacceptable'. The results for other options were mixed and incomplete but the prospect of 'An Israeli recognition of the suffering of the Palestinian refugees, while most refugees return to the West Bank or Gaza and some return to Israel (1948)' was 'essential or desirable' for a majority of Palestinians at 53% and 'unacceptable' for only 23%. Unfortunately 60% of Israelis found this option 'unacceptable' but this level of resistance was not insurmountable within the context of a comprehensive peace agreement and when coupled with some other options tested here could possibly produce a workable

solution. For example a minority of Palestinians (34%) considered the option of the UN closing the refugee camps and resettling them with compensation outside Israel 'essential or desirable' so this option would work for this minority. Also carefully crafted apologies were an important part of the Northern Ireland settlement and undoubtedly could play an important role for peace in the Middle East. This option needed to be considered and factored in.

Security

As security appeared to be the number one concern for Israelis we expected them to have strong views on this issue and they did. Sixty three per cent of Israelis were opposed to Palestinians having an army as 'unacceptable'. But only 19% were opposed to them having a strong police force. The distinction between a strong police force and an army needed to be explored in more detail as clearly it was in Israel's interest for an independent Palestinian state to be able to manage its own security effectively. Sixty two per cent of Palestinians were likewise opposed to Israel having observation posts in the Palestinian state as 'unacceptable'.

But the idea that 'On signing a peace agreement a force of international, regional and Arab states should replace the IDF in the Occupied Territories/West Bank for an agreed period' was only 32% and 39% 'unacceptable' to Israelis and Palestinians respectively. Additionally the suggestion that 'The international force will ensure security on the Jordanian border' was only 'unacceptable' to 17% of Israelis and 32% of Palestinians. Clearly there was a role for the international community to contribute to the security of Israel in a substantive way in the context of a peace agreement. Finally it was worth noting that only 35% of Israelis considered it 'essential or desirable' for the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) to remain in the Occupied Territories/West Bank while 43% of Israelis considered this option 'unacceptable'. Israelis, it would seem, had no great desire to stay there. A comprehensive peace agreement, a stable Palestine, international commitments and regional allies was the way forward.

Settlements

One hundred per cent ('essential or desirable') of Palestinians wanted all the settlers to leave the Occupied Territories/West Bank and for the settlements to be demolished. Twenty six per cent of Israelis agreed but 53% consider this option 'unacceptable'. The idea that Israeli settlers who choose to stay in Palestine/a future Palestine might like to take up Palestinian citizenship seemed to be equally 'unacceptable' to both Palestinians at 61% and Israelis at 69%. Having the option to choose citizenship was also rejected as 'unacceptable' by 66% of Palestinians and 58% of Israelis. The option that seemed to work best here, if a compromise

was being sought, was for most of the settlements to be dismantled, to move settlers to large blocks and to exchange land at 54% 'unacceptable' for Palestinians and 51% for Israelis. The most popular option for Israelis was for all the settlements on the Israeli side of the security wall to be part of Israel at 49% 'essential or desirable' but this option could not even be asked of Palestinians as it proved to be too contentious. As for all the settlements remaining as they were, like the IDF remaining in the Occupied Territories/West Bank, that option was only supported by 36% of Israelis as 'essential or desirable' while 35% considered the option 'unacceptable'.

Borders, West Bank-Gaza connector, water and natural resources

Eighty-six per cent of Palestinians ('essential or desirable') wanted Israel to withdraw to the 67 border. Sixty per cent of Israelis considered this option 'unacceptable'. Seventy-three per cent of Palestinians similarly rejected a border established by the security wall as 'unacceptable' and 35% of Israelis agreed. Only 21% of Israelis considered this option 'essential or desirable'. The potential for compromise here appeared to be for Israel to withdraw to the 67 Border with adjustments through agreement of equivalent exchange of land. This option was 'unacceptable' to 30% of Palestinians and 39% of Israelis and 'essential or desirable' for 49% of Palestinians and 20 % of Israelis with another 21% finding it 'acceptable' and 11% 'tolerable', so progress on this issue should not have been particularly difficult. Similarly, the generally accepted 'Corridor between Gaza and West Bank on land given to Palestine under land exchange' seemed preferable, at 43% 'unacceptable', in comparison to the recently proposed (and very expensive) tunnel at 57% 'unacceptable', or bridge at 47% 'unacceptable'. And with regards to water there appeared to be a consensus that a regional solution (94% and 60% 'essential or desirable' for Palestinians and Israelis respectively) was preferable to some sort of division (59% and 32% 'essential or desirable'). As for 'energy, minerals and air space' 98% of Palestinians considered control of these natural resources to be 'essential or desirable'. As only 35% of Israelis found such control 'unacceptable' this option should not have presented a major problem for negotiators.

Jerusalem and Holy Sites

As Jerusalem was second and third on the Israeli and Palestinian lists of priorities it was necessarily going to be a difficult problem to resolve. Inevitably, then, the most attractive option for Palestinians was for all of Jerusalem to remain in Palestine at 95% 'essential or desirable' and for Israelis it was for all of Jerusalem to remain in Israel at 56% 'essential or desirable'. Clearly, as these two options were mutually exclusive,

proposals to internationalise or divide the city also need to be considered.

The idea that 'Jerusalem should be an 'International City of Peace' under the authority of the UN' was 'unacceptable' to 78% of Palestinians and 69% of Israelis so if the decision is left to the Palestinians and Israelis alone (and not the UN) that proposal will not get very far. However the suggestion that 'Jerusalem should be an 'International City of Peace' under the authority of a Multi-faith Municipal Covenant' was less problematic at 50% and 61% 'unacceptable' for Palestinians and Israelis respectively. Some aspect of 'internationalism' might therefore be part of the solution to the problem of Jerusalem but it was unlikely to be the whole answer.

If the city was to be divided, then the 'least, worst' option for Palestinians was to divide Jerusalem along the pre 67 border at 50% 'unacceptable'. The 'least, worst' options for Israelis were 'Divide the city according to Palestinian and Israeli neighbourhoods' at 55% 'unacceptable' (61% for Palestinians), and 'Arab neighbourhoods should be the capital of Palestine/a future Palestine and Israeli neighbourhoods should be the capital of Israel' at 54% 'unacceptable' for Israelis.[51]

Ninety four per cent ('essential or desirable') of Palestinians seemed to require that 'Arab Jerusalem will be connected to all of the Palestinian/future Palestinian state'. As only 50% of Israelis found this option 'unacceptable' there was clearly room for negotiation here. Critically, when asked 'If everything is agreed except for Jerusalem Palestinians should proceed with the agreement' 78% of Palestinians considered this option 'unacceptable'. So pushing an agreement through without resolving the status of Jerusalem had little chance of success. Fortunately, however, only 50% of Israelis strongly objected to the proposition that 'As the last step to a final agreement give the Arab neighbourhoods of Jerusalem to Palestine' as 'unacceptable'.

Palestinian and Israeli views on the management of Holy sites were very similar to their views on Jerusalem. In this case the 'least worst' option was 'Free access for everyone to the Holy sites. No side will have sovereignty on the Holy sites. Israel will be 'guardian' of the Wailing Wall and the Palestinian State 'guardian' of the Islamic Holy sites. The status quo of Christian Holy sites will remain' at only 46% 'unacceptable' for both Israelis and Palestinians.

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[51] This option was not asked in Palestine but given the desire of Palestinians to have their capital in Jerusalem this option would probably be more attractive when 'framed' in this way. Amongst Palestinians living in Israel (Arab Israelis) the level of 'unacceptable' for these two options were 39% and 31% 'unacceptable' respectively.

The potential for agreement and implementation

Many of the critical issues reviewed in this poll were 'border line' in terms of negotiation. That is to say the levels of 'unacceptable' were close to 50% for Palestinians and/or Israelis. Sometimes they were a little more and sometimes less. But as has been repeatedly demonstrated in both Northern Ireland as a matter of practice and research and in Israel/Palestine through polling the 'whole' of any peace agreement is 'greater than the sum of its parts'. So when put together as a 'package' it should be possible to reach a comprehensive settlement on all of the issues dealt with here in a way that is acceptable to a majority of both Israelis and Palestinians. It should also be noted that the levels of 'unacceptable' for the issues that had to be negotiated and agreed in Northern Ireland were comparable to those found here.

With regards to the implementation of an agreement there was a great deal of common ground to be found between Israelis and Palestinians. Ninety six per cent ('essential or desirable') of Palestinians wanted a referendum, as did 58% of Israelis (levels of 'unacceptable' were only 1% and 11% respectively). The idea that 'Each party will mutually recognize the state of Israel and the state of Palestine' was only 'unacceptable' to 17% of Palestinians and 12% of Israelis. Almost everyone wanted an agreement to be the end of the conflict (72% 'essential or desirable' for Palestinians and 63% for Israelis, with 'unacceptable' at 10% and 13% respectively). Ninety nine per cent of Palestinians wanted all political prisoners to be released and, in contrast to the vast majority of Protestants who opposed such releases in Northern Ireland, only 45% of Israelis found this proposal 'unacceptable'.

Finally, the last option in this part of the questionnaire asked Israelis and Palestinians for their views on an international body acceptable to both parties being established to monitor and enforce the full implementation of an agreement. Only 4% of Palestinians and 12% of Israelis considered this proposal 'unacceptable' (79% 'essential or desirable' for Palestinians and 57% 'essential or desirable' for Israelis). In Northern Ireland such international involvement in all aspects of the peace process was the norm so perhaps the failure to reach an agreement in Israel and Palestine was not a problem of substance but a problem of process.

Process - Problems

The first question in this poll asked informants in Israel and Palestine to say which problems in the peace process they thought were most significant (Table 9.3). From a list of over twenty such problems, the top five for Palestinians were 'The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule' 1st at 94% 'very significant' (15th on the Israeli list); 'The settlements' 2nd at 89% (13th on the Israeli list); 'The substandard living conditions of the people in Gaza' and 'The security wall' 3rd and 4th both at 88% 'very significant' (16th and 21st on the Israeli list) and 'The Independence of the Palestinian economy' 5th at 87% (17th on the Israeli list). The top five problems for the Israelis were 'Terror has reinforced the conflict' 1st at 65% 'very significant' (15th on the Palestinian list) followed by 'Maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel' 2nd at 62% (16th on the Palestinian list) then 'Incitement to hatred' 3rd at 52% 'very significant' (20th on the Palestinian list); 'Agreements not implemented for lack of trust between Palestinians and Israelis' was 4th at 48% (12th on the Palestinian list) and 'The problem has become global' 5th at 42% 'very significant'. The most important point that needs to be made here is that the two lists are very different as the problems each society faces are in reality and/or perception very different.

The second question in this section looked at the problem of process in a slightly different way. This time those being interviewed were asked about responsibility for the lack of progress or what in Northern Ireland was called the 'Blame Game'. For Israelis the top five points of failure were 'Weak Palestinian government' and 'Islamic extremists are changing a political war into a religious war' 1st and 2nd both at 52% 'very significant' followed by 'Arming of Palestinian militants' 3rd at 49%, 'Palestinians have no accountable single partner for peace' 4th at 48% and 'Palestinians divided by Hamas and Fattah' 5th at 43% 'very significant'. The top five points of failure for Palestinians were 'Israel is not ready to make peace' 1st at 85% 'very significant' followed by 'Lack of US resolve to establishing a Palestinian state' 2nd at 82%, 'UN failure to implement resolutions' 3rd at 80%, 'Israel's refusal to accept 67 borders' 4th at 79% and then 'The lack of progress in the peace process led to Palestinian division' 5th at 73% 'very significant'.

Table 9.3. Problems in the peace process expressed as per cent 'Very significant'

	PALESTINIAN per cent	Very Significant	ISRAELI per cent	Very Significant
1st	The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule	94	Terror has reinforced the conflict	65
2nd	The settlements	89	Maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel	62
3rd	The substandard living conditions of the people in Gaza	88	Incitement to hatred	52
4th	The security wall	88	Agreements not implemented for lack of trust between Palestinians and Israelis	48
5th	The Independence of the Palestinian economy	87	Israel can not have security without peace	46
6th	Lack of employment opportunities in Palestine/the West Bank and Gaza	84	Anti-Israeli attitude amongst Palestinians	44
7th	The attitude of the Settlers towards Palestinians	76	The problem has become global	42
8th	Unbalanced conflict for Palestine with Israel having more power	74	The two sides will never reach an agreement without active intervention of other outside parties	38
9th	Discrimination against the 1948 Palestinians/Arab minority in Israel	70	Israelis believe the State of Palestine will become a terrorist state	38
10th	Lack of health care services in Israel/Palestine	67	No vision of a shared future	38
11th	The Palestinian cause became dependent on regional and international powers	67	Occupation/Israeli rule has reinforced the conflict	32
12th	Agreements not implemented for lack of trust between Palestinians and Israelis	64	Lack of employment opportunities in Palestine/the West Bank and Gaza	31
13th	Israel can not have security without peace	64	The settlements	31
14th	Occupation/Israeli rule has reinforced the conflict	64	The global financial crisis	31
15th	Terror has reinforced the conflict	61	The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule	30
16th	Maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel	59	The substandard living conditions of the people in Gaza	29
17th	Anti-Palestinian attitude amongst Israelis	58	The Independence of the Palestinian economy	28

18th	The two sides will never reach an agreement without active intervention of other outside parties	57	The attitude of the Settlers towards Palestinians	28
19th	The global financial crisis	53	Lack of health care services in Israel/Palestine	27
20th	Incitement to hatred	50	Evacuation of settlers leading to civil war	25
21st	Anti-Israeli attitude amongst Palestinians	47	The security wall	25
22nd	No vision of a shared future	46	Anti-Palestinian attitude amongst Israelis	24
23rd	Unbalanced conflict for the Arabs against Israel	45	Failure to moderate public opinion	23
24th	Israelis believe the State of Palestine will become a terrorist state	42	Unbalanced conflict for Palestine with Israel having more power	22
25th	[Unbalanced conflict for Israel with regional Arab and Islamic countries][52]		The global environmental crisis	21
26th	[Evacuation of settlers leading to civil war]		Discrimination against the 1948 Palestinians/Arab minority in Israel	19
27th	[Failure to moderate public opinion]		[Unbalanced conflict for Israel with regional Arab and Islamic countries][53]	
28th	[The problem has become global]			
29th	[The global environmental crisis]			

These two lists are, too a considerable degree, mirror images of each other. For example the item at the bottom of the Israeli list is 'Israel is not ready to make peace' at only 14% 'very significant' while it is 1st on the Palestinian list and the item at the bottom of the Palestinian list is 'Arming of Palestinian militants' at 26% 'very significant', and this item is 3rd on the Israeli list. As part of the peace process in Northern Ireland the people there came to learn the futility of playing the 'Blame Game'. So much so that at one point the BBC was able to launch a satirical TV comedy series called 'The Blame Game', but then Irish humour can be quite black. The antidote to the 'Blame Game' is 'solutions' and these were the subject of the remainder of this questionnaire.

[52] This and the four options below were not asked in Palestine.
[53] This option was not asked in Israel.

Process - Solutions

The 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable' scale was used again for the 'process' solutions. Critically, policies that one society expressly want to see implemented as highly 'essential or desirable' need to be compared with levels of 'unacceptable' in the other society. High levels of 'unacceptable' indicate political difficulties while low levels of 'unacceptable' suggest the policies in question can be taken forward.

Rebuilding confidence

From a list of twenty-four items for rebuilding confidence in the peace process, the top five for Palestinians were 'Lift the siege of Gaza' and 'Remove all check points' 1st and 2nd at 99% 'essential or desirable' followed by 'Release Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons' and 'Israel should freeze settlements as a first step to deal with the settlements' 3rd and 4th at 98% and then 'Israel should demolish the wall' 5th at 96% 'essential or desirable'. Unfortunately all these proposals were resisted by Israelis at quite high levels of 'unacceptable' ranging between 47% and 57%, except for freezing the settlements which was only opposed by 23% of Israelis as 'unacceptable'. As this option was one of the key demands for Palestinians it was a matter of considerable regret that a small but influential minority were able to do so much harm to the peace process.

Fortunately, many other suggestions were welcomed by both Israelis and Palestinians. 'The new US Administration should place a high priority on Middle East peace' was opposed by only 11% of Israelis and 3% of Palestinians and was already happening in early 2009. The EU and US were working with Egypt to end the conflict between Hamas and Fatah (only 17% and 4% 'unacceptable') and through the efforts of research like this poll civil society was getting more involved in the peace process (only 14% and 6% 'unacceptable'). Almost everyone wanted to achieve peace through negotiation (4th on the Israeli list and only opposed by 5% of Israelis and 8% of Palestinians as 'unacceptable'). Unfortunately, like the freezing of settlements, a small but significant minority of Palestinians (24% and 23% 'unacceptable' respectively) were opposed to the top two Israeli proposals to 'Stop all suicide/attacks against civilians' at 90% 'essential or desirable' and 'Stop firing rockets from Gaza' 2nd at 87% 'essential or desirable'. Minorities again seemed to be holding up peace. But such minorities exist in every conflict and the way to deal with them was to move the peace process forward in support of the will of the majority who did support most (but not quite all) of the proposals tested here.

Negotiations

As both Israelis and Palestinians wanted a negotiated peace (79% and 71% 'essential or desirable') it came as no surprise that nearly all the suggestions for strengthening the negotiations were welcomed by both Palestinians and Israelis. There was however one notable exception. Seventy three per cent of Palestinians and 52% of Israelis were opposed to the idea that 'The PLO/ Fatah and Israel should negotiate in secret' as 'unacceptable'. This was how the failed negotiations of the past many years had been conducted and both Palestinians and Israelis wanted change.

At the top of the Israeli list (3rd on the Palestinian list) was 'The people should be kept informed of progress in the negotiations' at 74% 'essential or desirable' and 2nd on the Israeli list (4th on the Palestinian list) was 'Targets, timetables and milestones should be set for negotiations' at 68% 'essential or desirable' and so on and so on. Unlike all the questions previously reviewed in this research, there was now much more agreement between Palestinians and Israelis than there was disagreement.

Economic priorities

When the fieldwork for this questionnaire was being undertaken at the end of 2008 there was much talk about what was termed 'Economic Peace', so many questions were suggested to deal with this topic. Inevitably Israeli and Palestinian priorities were different, with Palestinians putting 'Remove all check points' at the top of their list at 100% 'essential or desirable'. Unfortunately this was opposed by Israelis at 61% 'unacceptable' as was 'Provide Palestinians with access to the ports of Haifa and Ashdod' at 64% and 'Allow all Palestinians free access between Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank' at 54% 'unacceptable'.

But the slightly less radical proposals (from an Israeli perspective) to 'Ease security measures in the Occupied Territories/West Bank and Gaza so that the economy can develop' and 'Develop the economy for all Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza' were only opposed by 22% and 23% of Israelis respectively while 'Achieve a peace agreement so that the Palestinian economy can develop' was only opposed by 17% of Israelis. Economic development and peace did not seem to be an 'either/or thing' as the Israelis 3rd choice on their list was 'Work on the peace process and economy together' at 53% 'essential or desirable' ahead of 'Develop the Palestinian economy to help achieve peace' and 'Achieve a peace agreement so that the Palestinian economy can develop' 5th and 6th at 46% and 45% 'essential or desirable' (no significant difference).

Reconciliation

When it came to reconciliation, as with negotiation, again there was more

agreement between Israelis and Palestinians than there was disagreement. The top priorities for Palestinians 'Reach an understanding on all core issues and start implementation under international supervision without delay' at 92% 'essential or desirable'; 'Both sides should use all possible means to build confidence and trust between the two communities' at 80% and 'A peace agreement must lead to living side by side as good neighbours' at 78% 'essential or desirable' were only opposed at 17%, 3% and 6% of Israelis respectively as 'unacceptable' while the counter proposal to 'Establish two completely separate states without any interaction' was 'unacceptable' to 35% of Palestinians and 37% of Israelis as 'unacceptable'. A majority of Palestinians wanted Hebrew taught in Palestinian schools (78% 'essential or desirable') and Arabic taught in Israeli schools (58% 'essential or desirable'). A minority of Israelis opposed this at 6% and 18% respectively as 'unacceptable' as did a minority of Palestinians at 10% and 17%, so perhaps for them such a policy should be a matter of choice.

What happened next

The results of the second part of this poll suggested that the peace process itself was in much need of reform and on this point there appeared to be sufficient grounds upon which to establish an Israeli/Palestinian consensus for new negotiations that were not subject to the failings of the past. After 30 years of 'The Troubles' and failed negotiations in Northern Ireland, the governments of Britain, Ireland, the US and EU moved to internationalise that process and make the people and civil society active partners/stakeholders. Israel and Palestine had much to learn from that, their own people wanted a stronger and more inclusive process and George Mitchell was probably the most experienced facilitator to help them in that task. There was, however, at least one very significant difference between the case of Northern Ireland and Israel and Palestine - the regional and global contexts. In Northern Ireland: Britain, Ireland, the European Union and the United States of America were all pushing for a settlement on almost any terms acceptable to both the Catholics and Protestants of the Province. The only deal that was not acceptable to the international community was full independence, but then only a small minority in Northern Ireland wanted that anyway. Almost everyone was 'on the same page'.

In the Middle East, however, the neighbours of Israel and Palestine were not all 'on the same page'. But, if the people of Israel and Palestine could have reached an agreement, then it would have been very difficult,

most likely impossible, for such an agreement to be rejected by the UN, most Arab States and the rest of the world. So, putting to one side regional and global issues for the moment, could the people of Israel and Palestine have reached a peace agreement if their political elites and the international community were 'on the same page'? The evidence from the first of these two polls was clear. The analysis of the substantive issues suggested that the shape of an agreement for a two state solution was not very different to the various solutions proposed in the past. And, critically, from a public opinion perspective, reaching a peace agreement for Israelis and Palestinians should not have been any more difficult than the negotiated peace in Northern Ireland. Past failures, it would seem, were due to a weak process that in turn was the result of weak leadership and lack of international will.

One result from the procedural questionnaire, that particularly pleased me as encouraging, was the suggestion that 'Israel should freeze settlements as a first step to deal with the settlements' at only 23% 'unacceptable' for Israelis. Similarly only 23% of Palestinians were opposed to the proposal to 'Stop firing rockets from Gaza' as 'unacceptable'. The symmetry of this result was one of those happy coincidences that sometimes surface in this kind of research and that seem to make all the effort so worthwhile. The prospect of both Palestine and Israel seizing this public diplomacy opportunity to meet their previous commitments and international obligations on these issues seemed inevitable. This is what we would have done in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, after the publication of this poll, a proposed settlement freeze took centre stage as a precondition to be negotiated before negotiations proper. A balanced *quid pro quo* poll on these issues would have undoubtedly produced a positive result but partisan polling, from an Israeli perspective, on an Israeli agenda, was allowed to dominate the media on the question of a settlement freeze and negotiations were allowed to stall on this point. Here are a few headlines from this war of words and polls that started in early June and culminated in an apparent 'win' for Netanyahu when a *Washington Post* article of August 19th carried the headline 'Netanyahu's Defiance of U.S. Resonates at Home: Polls Show Resistance to Settlement Freeze'.

- June 4, (2009) - 'Survey: Israeli Jews oppose settlement freeze and evacuation of outposts' (*Israel News,* Lerner, A.)
- June 5, (2009) - 'Dahaf Institute Poll: Majority Of Israelis Support Obama's Settlement Policy' (*Yedioth Ahronoth,* Kadmon)
- June 12, (2009) - 'Poll: 56% of Israelis back settlement construction' (*Associated Press*)

- June 12, (2009) - 'J Street blasts 'distorted' poll that says Israelis against settlement freeze' (*Haaretz Service*)
- June 19, (2009) - '*Jerusalem Post*/Smith Poll: Only 6% of Israelis see US gov't as pro-Israel' (*The Jerusalem Post:* Hofman, G., and Smith Research/Jerusalem Post Poll)
- June 19, (2009) - 'Poll: Israelis oppose full settlement freeze 69%:27%, only 6% say Obama favours Israel' (*Independent Media Review Analysis*)
- August 19, (2009) - 'Netanyahu's Defiance of U.S. Resonates at Home: Polls Show Resistance to Settlement Freeze' (*The Washington Post:* Howard Schneider)

All of this was happening while Mina Zemach, Nader Said and myself were presenting the findings of our research in Washington at the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, Wilson Centre and New America Foundation on the 15th and 16th of June. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had supported my work in Sri Lanka, sent a representative to the event at the New America Foundation. We arranged to meet again at the Norwegian Embassy the following day after I had had a scheduled meeting with George Mitchell at the State Department. On the strength of a call from George Mitchell the Norwegians seemed to think the necessary financial support would be available to properly fund an on-going program of peace polls in Israel and Palestine. But George Mitchell was unable to make the call as he felt he could not, as a representative of the US government, solicit support from the Norwegian government. Likewise the Norwegians felt they could not phone George Mitchell and initiate an offer for funding, although George Mitchell had conveyed to me that he would like the polling to go forward and he would welcome their call. This diplomatic impasse continued through the summer. The peace polling that needed to be done on the settlement issue was not done and Israeli public diplomacy spoilers were able to derail the peace process. All of which begs the question as to why George Mitchell, the US State Department and the Israeli government had allowed this to happen when they knew very much better. In reality perhaps some of them had got the result they wanted and I began to wonder if they were all negotiating in good faith.

None the less I pressed ahead with a grant application to the Norwegians but without an intervention from George Mitchell it was not a priority for them so George Mitchell asked me to apply to the State Department for funds, which I did. I gave papers on the failures of the Middle East peace process in Jerusalem and Beirut in October and December 2009 (Irwin 2009g, h and i), but again the new applications got

nowhere. By this time I was working with Albany Associates in Sudan, an NGO with very good connections in both the State Department and British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). They had on-going projects in Jordan and Lebanon and welcomed any opportunity to extend their work across the Middle East. Their grantsmanship was excellent and we made various applications to George Mitchell's office, the European Union and a few other governments but again all the requests were rejected. George Mitchell had pointed out to me when I saw him in June that he had 'two battles to win', one in the Middle East and the other in Washington where he felt he was not always getting the support he needed for his agenda. Perhaps this was the problem I was dealing with so I returned to Israel and Palestine again in 2010 to talk this through with my colleagues there.

At a round table I attended on *Engaging the Mainstream in Peace Making and Peace Building,* held at the Ambassador Hotel on November 10th in East Jerusalem, it became very clear that almost none of the public diplomacy tools used so effectively in Northern Ireland were being deployed to advance the peace process in Israel and Palestine (CDCD, 2010). George Mitchell must have been very much aware of this. I had brought these failings to his attention in 2002 after he had secured a grant for me to go to Israel and Palestine and now, in 2010, Shamir and Shikaki published their book on this topic detailing the on-going failures since then (Shamir and Shikaki, 2010). The negotiations that George Mitchell was in charge of were not going anywhere and on the 20th of May, 2011 he resigned from his post as the Presidents Special Envoy to the Middle East. The Norwegians had told me that if he had been successful in securing a peace agreement then he would most certainly have received the Nobel Prize. So why had he quit and why hadn't the problems in the peace process been remedied when everyone responsible for them knew how? I discussed this point with my colleague and friend Professor Adrian Guelke at Queen's University Belfast. His international affairs analysis was always more reliable than mine. I tend to be a little too optimistic which is possibly not always a bad fault for a peacemaker. He took the view that Israel would simply continue to put forward proposals that were unacceptable to the Palestinians and thus maintain the status quo. Events seem to have proven him right and the publication of the *Palestinian Papers*, that exposed the inner workings of the Israeli/Palestinian negotiations to public scrutiny, suggest it was the Palestinians who lacked a partner for peace in Israel.

A review of polling in the region published in Bitterlemons-api.org (2011, Edition 12) confirms all the polling results discussed here. Namely, that about half of Israelis and Palestinians would be willing to accept the various deals on offer but that the political leadership has just not been

there to bring their respective publics to an agreement. Shamir, Shikaki (2010) and Pollock (2011) in Israel, Palestine and the US seem to be willing to place the blame on both parties to the conflict but I am not sure this is right. Israel is in a much stronger position to take steps towards peace than Palestine and the US is best placed to support such steps so responsibility for failed negotiations must rest more with Israel and the US.

So why haven't the US pushed Israel by, at the very least, using public opinion and public diplomacy to this end? Perhaps the answer to this question is answered by George Mitchell's timing. He resigned just after President Obama's chances of being re-elected to the White House appeared to be much improved having eliminated America's public enemy number one - Osama bin Laden. Any pressure on Israel would undoubtedly translate into votes for Republicans leaving the President (and George Mitchell, a loyal Democrat) with the unhappy choice of possibly loosing the White House or securing peace in the Middle East. When I had an opportunity to discuss this point with President Martti Ahtisaari (2011) of Finland and recipient of the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize, he expressed the view that President Obama should, under these circumstances, choose Middle East peace. But given the international failings of the Bush years, the invasion of Iraq and the 'War on Terror', this is a very tough choice indeed - not one I would like to have to make.

In this context the Palestinians decided to give up on negotiations and take their case to the UN. One must hope that this strategy bears fruit because no other strategy seems to be available to them this side of the 2012 US elections. But time has almost run out. The last time I was in Jerusalem Mahdi Abdul Hadi the Director of PASSIA asked me when I thought all possibility of a negotiated peace with Israel would have come to an end. I suggested to him that this would happen if and when Israel finally closed off all of East Jerusalem from the rest of Palestine through the development of their settlements. He agreed and when I discussed the same point with Ghassan Khatib in Ramallah (remembering he had been a Palestinian negotiator) he likewise agreed but also remarked "but the Americans don't get it". Everyone must hope that this does not happen because one of the very few options then left open to the Palestinians is to dismantle the Palestinian Authority and hand back responsibility for their people to Israel. In this circumstance Israel might gain Jerusalem but they would loose their cherished homeland – a viable, secure and majority Jewish state.

10

Darfur - Sudan and the Arab Spring

Following up on my successful work in Northern Ireland I met Carolyn McAskie, the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding, in New York in March 2007 to explore the prospects of using public opinion polls to help resolve conflicts in other parts of the world. That meeting led to my being invited to Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva, which in turn led to an invitation to the Oslo Forum 2007 and subsequently my program of work in support of the Sri Lanka peace process. Significantly, at the meeting in New York Carolyn McAskie said she thought it would be very difficult to apply the methods used in Northern Ireland in places like Africa, so when I got an invitation to go to Khartoum to see if I could develop a peace poll questionnaire for use in Darfur, Sudan I was very pleased to take up the offer.

By the time I got to Khartoum in July 2009 my work in Sri Lanka was well under way, I had completed a project with Yashwant Deshmuk in Kashmir and as my first 'peace poll' had been carried out in the Canadian Arctic (Irwin, 1989a and b) I was very pleased to find myself working with nomads again. Following several trips to Sudan that year, including Darfur, as well as meetings with other stakeholders in Washington, Philadelphia, New York and London (State Department, World Bank, US Institute of Peace, UN and rebel spokespersons in Europe) a questionnaire was developed for pre-testing later that year.

The project was being carried out under the direction of Professor Monroe Price of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania in partnership with colleagues of his at Albany Associates, and I was brought in as a consultant. As it turned out the development of the questionnaire went very well and with minor adjustments, following the pilot, everyone was ready to collect the full sample. Through the good offices of UNAMD (African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur) and their DDDC program (Darfur-

Darfur Dialogue and Communication) the results of their work were incorporated into the questionnaire along with all the suggestions from IDPs, nomads, tribal leaders, rebels, local and national government officials, etc.

Unfortunately, after we had piloted our questionnaire and were ready to run the full survey, the project ran afoul of the National Intelligence and Security Service of Sudan (NISS). They required changes to the questionnaire (detailed below) and withheld their permission for the collection of the full sample. Although I had had a Sudanese Ambassador assigned to work with me on the project from the President's advisor on Darfur, Ghazi Salaheddine, there was nothing that they could do to help bring the work to a successful conclusion. So in a sense Carolyn McAskie was right, I could not undertake and complete a peace poll in Africa. But this was not because the people there did not understand or could not carry out the interviews in accordance with the requirements of a representative public opinion survey. The problem (and this I should stress is not unique to Sudan) was an intractable bureaucracy.

Given all the hard work that had gone into this project I decided to go ahead and analyse the limited data that I had. All data, I was taught by my PhD supervisor, the eminent methodologist Donald Campbell, is valuable and the data collected in Darfur was no exception to this rule. Indeed, as the following analysis will show, the concerns of the NISS were often misguided and the UN, AU and people of Darfur could learn much from a completed program of research that would hopefully lead to the largest UN humanitarian program in the world (2 Billon USD per year) being turned into development. Ideally this is what everyone I spoke to wanted, from the senior USAID officials I met with in Washington to the destitute occupants of the refugee camps.

The questionnaire was piloted in El Fasher, Darfur in November 2009 to produce 53 interviews. It had been hoped to complete between 120 and 200 interviews distributed evenly between IDPs, the town of El Fasher, outlying villages and nomads, for the pilot (30 to 50 interviews for each group). But, in practice, 30 interviews were collected by the nomads amongst the nomads, while the remaining 23 interviews were completed in El Fasher. Had the larger more representative sample been collected it would have been possible to separate and say something about these various groups but given the samples at hand the best possible analysis can be achieved by comparing nomads and non-nomads. Given the size of the nomad sample it would be quite wrong to lump the interviews together. This would not matter too much, as sometimes happened, when the nomads and non-nomads shared the same view on a given issue. But they often did not, so merging these samples together could, and often did

cancel out and obscure such differences.

It is precisely these differences that were most informative, and they would have been even more informative if a larger sample had been polled. The absence of a significant sample of IDPs was particularly worrying. However, it is possible to rank order small samples and to suggest, with some certainty, that items that come at the top of a rank order are very different to those at the bottom of a rank order and given a bigger sample, although the percentages might change, the overall ranking of items might not be significantly altered.

With all these points in mind, my report was based on these rank orders as percentages of the non-nomad and nomad interviews. Normally it is quite wrong to generalize and draw conclusions from such small samples. I have never done this before and hope not to have to do it again. A larger sample needs to be collected that can provide more detail and precision. But I think this is the proverbial 'exception that proves the rule' because it points to some potential insights that can help the people of Sudan. Critically, the pilot worked and so there is no reason why this kind of research should not be used to advance the peace process in Darfur. The only impediment to such work is the political will of the parties involved; the UN, AU, government of Sudan's NISS and the donor nations responsible for operations in Darfur.

The style of the questionnaire followed the same format used in other peace polls with informants being asked to list what they considered to be the problems at the heart of their conflict and then to offer solutions to those problems. However, in this questionnaire, at the request of UNAMID/DDDC, the central recommendations of the DDDC reports (Elmekki, 2009) and African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD, 2009) were also added for testing against public opinion. Consequently the final draft of the questionnaire emphasized the solutions, which covered all the topics given to me in considerable detail, for a total of 265 different suggestions under 13 general headings as follows:

1. Negotiation of a peace agreement for Darfur – 22 solutions
2. An end to hostilities and disarmament – 24 solutions
3. Security – 38 solutions
4. Land and natural resources – 17 solutions
5. Recovery – 24 solutions
6. Compensation – 10 solutions
7. Development – 34 solutions
8. Administration and democracy – 15 solutions
9. Political reform – 20 solutions
10. Elections – 15 solutions

11. Reconciliation – 19 solutions
12. Justice – 16 solutions
13. Identity and citizenship – 11 solutions

Negotiations, Security and Justice presented the greatest difficulties for the NISS so I have reviewed the results for these sections below along with NISS requests for changes and deletions. I have also included the sections on administration, democracy and political reform as the demands from the people of Darfur are so reasonable and could so easily be met, as could all the requests for development which everybody, including the NISS, would like to see implemented.

Negotiation of a peace agreement for Darfur

Table 10.1 lists the priorities for negotiations in rank order for non-nomads and nomads. It should come as no surprise that both of these sections of Darfur society shared the same first priority to 'Pursue peace through negotiation rather than force and military struggle' at 65% essential for non-nomads and 90% essential for nomads. That 'The people of Darfur should be consulted on all aspects of negotiations and agreements' was the second priority for non-nomads at 57% essential and third for nomads also at 57%. But on this point the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) of Sudan wanted to substitute 'civil society' for 'people' (see footnotes) no doubt as a manageable way to include the views of the people in negotiations. In practice there is probably no need to make this change in the questionnaire but simply to make this point as a matter of effective necessity and to ensure that the civil society representation is democratically appointed in a culturally appropriate manner that is acceptable to the people of Darfur.

Both non-nomads and nomads believed 'The Armed Movements should agree on a common agenda and negotiate' at 48% and 53% essential respectively. However, when it came to the basis for those negotiations the non-nomads had mixed views on the best starting point at 26% essential and 30% unacceptable for a proposal to 'Write a new comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur' while the nomads supported this approach to negotiations at 60% essential and only 3% unacceptable. The NISS also found this negotiations strategy 'unacceptable' as they wanted to rewrite this option as 'Develop the Abuja agreement to be the comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur' to keep the movements who signed the Abuja agreement 'on board'. With a larger sample it would be possible to find out which constituencies amongst the non-nomads support

the NISS approach to negotiations and which were opposed to it.

Table 10.1. Priorities for negotiations

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Pursue peace through negotiation rather than force and military struggle	65	Pursue peace through negotiation rather than force and military struggle	90
2nd	The people of Darfur should be consulted on all aspects of negotiations and agreements[54]	57	Write a new comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur	60
3rd	The Armed Movements should agree on a common agenda and negotiate	48	The people of Darfur should be consulted on all aspects of negotiations and agreements	57
4th	The implementation of the peace agreement should be monitored and controlled by the international community[55]	48	The Armed Movements should agree on a common agenda and negotiate	53
5th	The international community (AU, IGAD, LAS and UN) should set a time frame and assist negotiations[56]	43	The international community (AU, IGAD, LAS and UN) should set a time frame and assist negotiations	37
6th	Accept the Abuja agreement with adjustments for non-signatories	30	Implement the recommendations from previous peace conferences	33
7th	Write a new comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur[57]	26	Accept the Abuja agreement with adjustments for non-signatories	27
8th	Return to the decisions of the Abuja Agreement and fully implement it	17	The implementation of the peace agreement should be monitored and controlled by the international community	13
9th	Implement the recommendations from previous peace conferences	17	Return to the decisions of the Abuja Agreement and fully implement it	10

[54] *The civil society of Darfur should be consulted on all aspects of negotiations and agreements*. The National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) of Sudan – Require this question to be sectors of civil society consulted about the peace agreement rather than the people of Darfur.

[55] *The implementation of the peace agreement should be monitored and controlled by the African Union*. NISS - At present the government is confident in the African Union more than the international community, especially after the ICC indictment, and they do not want the international community to be more deeply involved in Darfur issues as indicated in other questions.

[56] African Union, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, League of Arab States and United Nations.

[57] *Develop the Abuja agreement to be the comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur*. NISS - Do not want a new convention, because this would cause problems with the movements that signed the Abuja agreement, but they do not mind developing the Abuja agreement to be a comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur.

The NISS also did not want the international community to be involved in their domestic affairs but found the African Union acceptable in most cases (see footnotes). On this point the nomads share their views at only 13% essential for the proposal that 'The implementation of the peace agreement should be monitored and controlled by the international community' while the non-nomads welcomed such involvement at 48% essential. For the non-nomads the 'International Community' were the most important parties to negotiations at 61% essential, followed by 'Civil Society' at 59% and the 'Armed Movements' at 52% while the 'Non-Signatories' and 'Nomads' were the most important groups for nomads at 77% essential (Table 10.2).

Table 10.2. Participants for negotiations

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	International Community[58]	61	Non-Signatories	77
2nd	Civil Society	59	Nomads	77
3rd	Armed Movements	52	Armed Movements	62
4th	Non-Signatories	43	Civil Society	47
5th	IDPs and Refugees	43	Tribal Leaders	40
6th	Political Parties in Government	36	Women Leaders	40
7th	Tribal Leaders	36	Political Parties in Government	37
8th	Signatories	35	IDPs and Refugees	37
9th	Opposition Parties	35	Signatories	33
10th	Women Leaders	35	Neighbours of Sudan	28
11th	Nomads	26	International Community	20
12th	Neighbours of Sudan[59]	17	Opposition Parties	17

In conclusion, then, non-nomads, nomads and the NISS wanted serious negotiations, but nomads wanted a new agreement while the NISS and some non-nomads preferred to build on previous agreements. Most non-nomads wanted the international community to be involved in negotiations while the NISS and nomads did not share this view, although the African Union may be acceptable to them, so this distinction should be brought out more clearly in any future research.

[58] ~~International Community~~. NISS – Delete references to foreign parties.
[59] ~~Neighbours of Sudan~~. NISS – Delete references to foreign parties.

Security

When it came to security there was as much disagreement as there was agreement between the non-nomads and nomads. The top priority for the nomads was to 'Include Arab tribes in the security process' at 90% essential (Table 10.3) and out of a list of 38 items this option was 6th on the non-nomads list at 61% essential. But the second priority for the nomads was 'Include nomads in security under the supervision of the official security force' at 80% essential, while this provision was unacceptable to 43% of non-nomads. Interestingly the wording of this item was changed to 'The security force should be open to everyone – nomad or non-nomad' following the pilot testing of this question and then the NISS asked for a further change to 'The security force should be open to everyone in accordance with regulations' effectively removing the direct reference to nomads in security activities all together (see footnotes).

The top priority for the non-nomads was that the 'Rebels must make a commitment to their leaders to keep the peace' at 70% essential while the same item was 20th on the nomad list at only 33% essential but 0% unacceptable so implementing this policy, as far as the public was concerned, was not a problem. But the role of the international security forces was more problematic. For example those interviewed were split on the proposal to 'Change UNAMID's mandate so that they can become an effective protection force for civilians' at 39% essential and 30% unacceptable for non-nomads and 20% essential and 37% unacceptable for nomads. As for the NISS, they would have liked to have seen this item removed from the questionnaire (see footnotes) as they considered it to be a national security issue. In general non-nomads seemed to welcome more international involvement than nomads but the limitations of this sample did not permit the identification of these supporters and detractors with any precision. Clearly both the government and international community could have benefited from greater detail in this regard, to know who did and who did not support such policies, because the results of such polling would not be clear-cut one way or another. It is not simply a nomad and non-nomad issue. For example the NISS also wanted the suggestion that 'The Sudan Army should return to barracks' deleted from the questionnaire but again the non-nomads were split on this proposal at 27% essential and 27% unacceptable while the nomads were opposed at 37% unacceptable with no one interviewed considering it essential, although 27% did not know and 20% refused to answer.

It was also interesting to note that 80% of nomads and 52% of non-nomads were opposed to 'Effective international border controls' as unacceptable, although the proposal to 'Develop ties with neighbouring

countries to reduce influx of arms' was considered essential for 57% of non-nomads and 60% of nomads. Clearly it was the movement of arms that was considered to be the major problem here and not other forms of honest commerce and trade. Again a larger sample with detailed demographics could have been very helpful in the development of security policy and the lack of a significant sample of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was a serious omission in this regard.

Table 10.3. Priorities for security

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Rebels must make a commitment to their leaders to keep the peace	70	Include Arab tribes in the security process	90
2nd	UN training for official police in human rights and community–friendly policing	65	Include nomads in security under the supervision of the official security force	80
3rd	UNIMID should be neutral in its dealings with both government and armed movements	65	Develop and train nomad police (Shurta Za'ena) in security procedures according to law	77
4th	The government should provide security, disarm Janjaweed and not arm tribes against others[60]	61	All foreign combatants should return to their own country	77
5th	Official police should coordinate with other security organs	61	UNAMID should explain their mandate to the tribal leaders and native administration	67
6th	Include Arab tribes in the security process	61	Local authorities should cooperate with tribal leaders to provide security	63
7th	No role for Para-military forces (PDF, militias, etc.) regarding security in the camps	61	The government, communities, native administration and international community should jointly provide security	60
8th	UNAMID should explain their mandate to the tribal leaders and native administration	59	Provide services for nomads in their own areas away from returning IDPs	60
9th	The leaders of each rebel group should be responsible for the ceasefire	57	UNIMID should be neutral in its dealings with both government and armed movements	60
10th	Develop ties with neighbouring countries to reduce influx of arms	57	Develop ties with neighbouring countries to reduce influx of arms	60
11th	All foreign combatants should return to their own country	57	Chad, Libya, Central Africa, Eritrea and Egypt should help to stop the flow of arms	60
12th	Remove the Border Guards from around the camps	55	Encourage tribal leaders to provide security in dangerous areas	57
13th	Nomads should not carry guns when	52	Enable local authorities to provide	53

[60] *The government should provide security, disarm illegal militias*. NISS – Require a change to this wording.

	passing through farming communities along migration routs.		security	
14th	Chad, Libya, Central Africa, Eritrea and Egypt should help to stop the flow of arms	52	Make peace agreements with Chad, Libya, Central Africa, Eritrea and Egypt	53
15th	The government, communities, native administration and international community should jointly provide security	48	The government should provide security, disarm Janjaweed and not arm tribes against others	50
16th	Provide services for nomads in their own areas away from returning IDPs	48	Official police should coordinate with other security organs	50
17th	The Movements should provide security for their people during the negotiation and implementation of a peace agreement	43	Rely on community and mobile police to maintain law and order	47
18th	Secure districts neighbouring dangerous areas between the North and the South	43	Secure districts neighbouring dangerous areas between the North and the South	43
19th	Encourage tribal leaders to provide security in dangerous areas	39	The PDF should be properly managed, trained and equipped for security duties	43
20th	Enable local authorities to provide security	39	Rebels must make a commitment to their leaders to keep the peace	33
21st	Rely on community and mobile police to maintain law and order	39	UN training for official police in human rights and community–friendly policing	30
22nd	Change UNAMID's mandate so that they can become an effective protection force for civilians[61]	39	UNAMID should support the Sudan police	27
23rd	Establish a Darfur advisory council to monitor and liaise with UNAMID	39	The citizens should be consulted on all aspects of security	24
24th	Make peace agreements with Chad, Libya, Central Africa, Eritrea and Egypt	39	The leaders of each rebel group should be responsible for the ceasefire	23
25th	Local authorities should cooperate with tribal leaders to provide security	35	Establish a Darfur advisory council to monitor and liaise with UNAMID	23
26th	An international force should provide security[62]	35	Change UNAMID's mandate so that they can become an effective protection force for civilians	20
27th	Develop and train nomad police (Shurta Za'ena) in security procedures according to law	30	Include women in providing security	17

Continued next page

28th	The Sudan Army should return to	27	The Movements should provide	10

[61] ~~Change UNAMID's mandate so that they can become an effective protection force for civilians~~. NISS – Delete as this is a National Security issue.

[62] ~~An international force should provide security in Darfur during the peace process~~. NISS – Delete.

	barracks[63]		security for their people during the negotiation and implementation of a peace agreement	
29th	Include nomads in security under the supervision of the official security force[64]	26	Recruit young IDPs for security in camps	7
30th	UNAMID should support the Sudan police	26	Develop UNAMID's capacity to protect the people	7
31st	An International force should keep security in the camps[65]	26	Nomads should not carry guns when passing through farming communities along migration routs.	3
32nd	The citizens should be consulted on all aspects of security	23	An international force should provide security	3
33rd	Develop UNAMID's capacity to protect the people[66]	22	No role for Para-military forces (PDF, militias, etc.) regarding security in the camps	3
34th	Effective international border controls	17	Disarm all Government forces in the camps	
35th	Include women in providing security	13	Remove the Border Guards from around the camps	
36th	Recruit young IDPs for security in camps	9	The Sudan Army should return to barracks	
37th	The PDF should be properly managed, trained and equipped for security duties	9	An International force should keep security in the camps	
38th	Disarm all Government forces in the camps[67]	4	Effective international border controls	

[63] ~~The Sudan Army should return to barracks~~. NISS – Delete as this is a National Security issue.

[64] *The security force should be open to everyone in accordance with regulations*. NISS – Security forces are already open to all in accordance with regulations.

[65] ~~An International force should keep security in the camps~~. NISS – Delete

[66] ~~Develop UNAMID's capacity to protect the people~~. NISS – Delete as this is not necessary.

[67] Reworded as '~~Withdraw armed government forces from the camps~~.' NISS – Delete.

Justice

From a list of sixteen options that dealt with the administration of justice the top two priorities for non-nomads were 'Bring all those who have committed crimes to account' and 'Ensure the protection and dignity of all witnesses' both at 78% essential. Third on their list at 76% essential and first on the nomad list at 79% was 'Teach equality, human rights and respect for all groups for all children in school' then 4th on the non-nomad list, and 3rd on the nomad list was 'Fully implement the law and the administration of justice' (Table 10.4). Second on the nomad list was 'Respect all human rights and obligations' (6th on the non-nomad list), but 4th on the nomad list is 'Remove all immunities and other impediments to justice' at 57% essential with the same item 5th on the non-nomad list at 70% essential. Up until now this desire for justice and human rights had not presented any problems for the NISS but they did want 'Remove all immunities and other impediments to justice' deleted from the questionnaire, this being a right that they then enjoyed (see footnotes).

At the request of the DDDC a number of options were included in this section of the questionnaire that were proposed by the African Union panel chaired by Thabo Mbeki. They related to the establishment of a truth commission along South African lines and the hybrid courts that would include international judges. For the most part the NISS wanted these options deleted from the questionnaire, because the government of Sudan had not yet agreed to these proposals, or required alterations to the questions to remove any international input to the justice process (see footnotes). The nomads appeared to have some sympathy for this point of view with 28% of them considering the proposal to 'Establish special courts to deal with crimes in Darfur that include both respected Sudan and international judges' to be unacceptable while 57% of non-nomads considered this proposal to be essential.

Clearly any purely domestic Sudanese justice process established to deal with crimes committed in Darfur was going to find it very difficult to attain the confidence of the victims of those crimes. It also seemed to be the case that the involvement of the 'international community' was not always welcomed by some sections of Sudan society so perhaps a stronger emphasis on the African Union as the international partner of choice could have been helpful here.

Table 10.4. Priorities for justice

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Bring all those who have committed crimes to account	78	Teach equality, human rights and respect for all groups for all children in school	79
2nd	Ensure the protection and dignity of all witnesses	78	Respect all human rights and obligations	72
3rd	Teach equality, human rights and respect for all groups for all children in school	76	Fully implement the law and the administration of justice	69
4th	Fully implement the law and the administration of justice	70	Remove all immunities and other impediments to justice	57
5th	Remove all immunities and other impediments to justice[68]	70	Bring in special measures to deal with sexual crimes	41
6th	Respect all human rights and obligations	68	The Commission should report their findings and recommendations to the nation	41
7th	Bring in special measures to deal with sexual crimes	68	Bring all those who have committed crimes to account	34
8th	The international community should monitor the implementation of justice[69]	68	Ensure the protection and dignity of all witnesses	34
9th	The Commission should report their findings and recommendations to the nation[70]	61	The Commission should have powers to grant pardons	24
10th	Establish special courts to deal with crimes in Darfur that include both respected Sudan and international judges[71]	57	Bring Sudan's laws and justice system up to the best international standards	21
11th	Provide the special courts with all necessary resources and international expertise[72]	52	The Commission should have powers to grant compensation	21

[68] ~~Remove all immunities and other impediments to justice~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[69] ~~The international community should monitor the implementation of justice~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[70] *The ~~Commission~~ Special judges should report their findings and recommendations to the nation*. NISS – Change to Special judges.

[71] *Establish special courts to deal with crimes in Darfur that include ~~both~~ respected Sudan ~~and international~~ judges*. NISS – Change as noted as the government has not yet agreed to set up special or hybrid courts containing foreign judges.

[72] ~~Provide the special courts with all necessary resources and international expertise~~. NISS – Deletion required.

12th	Bring Sudan's laws and justice system up to the best international standards[73]	48	The international community should monitor the implementation of justice	18
13th	Establish a truth and reconciliation Commission with persons of high standing like South Africa	41	Establish a truth and reconciliation Commission with persons of high standing like South Africa	17
14th	Allow all persons to make representations to the Commission[74]	39	Allow all persons to make representations to the Commission	14
15th	The Commission should have powers to grant compensation[75]	39	Provide the special courts with all necessary resources and international expertise	7
16th	The Commission should have powers to grant pardons[76]	30	Establish special courts to deal with crimes in Darfur that include both respected Sudan and international judges	3

Administration and democracy

Fifteen options were put on offer to deal with issues relating to administration and democracy and the top concern for the non-nomads was that 'Native administrators should avoid narrow tribalism and respect all cultures' at 70% essential with the same item second on the nomad list at 72% essential. So there was considerable agreement here across all communities for the need to establish a professional and non-partisan government administration (Table 10.5). However, the first priority for the nomads at 86% essential was that these 'Native administrators should be free and fairly elected' and the NISS wanted this question to be deleted (see footnotes). But, then, the nomads were split on the corollary of this question that 'Native administrators should continue to be appointed by the government' at 41% essential and 38% unacceptable along with 57% of non-nomads who also considered these appointments to be unacceptable.

Interestingly, the non-nomads second priority was to 'Restore and expand state authority in Darfur' at 57% essential but this item was last on the nomad list at only 7% essential and 28% unacceptable. Third on the non-nomad list was that 'Camp committees should work with the UN,

[73] ~~Bring Sudan's laws and justice system up to the best international standards~~. NISS – Delete as Sudan's laws and justice system is already compatible with international standards.

[74] ~~Allow all persons to make representations to the Commission~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[75] *The ~~Commission~~ Special judges should have powers to grant compensation*. NISS – Change to Special judges.

[76] *The ~~Commission~~ Special judges should have powers to grant pardons*. NISS – Change to Special judges.

donors, government and all the parties to a peace agreement to return IDPs to their homes' at 57% essential and third on the nomad list was that 'Native administrators should represent their geographic constituency and *Hawakeer'* (tribal lands). Then fourth on both their lists was the need to 'Reform native administration to deal with new economic and social realities'. Clearly the priorities of nomads and non-nomads are a little different but these results indicate one common theme, namely that the present administration is not sufficiently responsive to the needs of the different communities of Darfur and that both nomads and non-nomads require reform to deal with this deficiency.

Table 10.5. Priorities for administration and democracy

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Native administrators should avoid narrow tribalism and respect all cultures	70	Native administrators should be free and fairly elected	86
2nd	Restore and expand state authority in Darfur	57	Native administrators should avoid narrow tribalism and respect all cultures	72
3rd	Camp committees should work with the UN, donors, government and all the parties to a peace agreement to return IDPs to their homes	57	Native administrators should represent their geographic constituency and *Hawakeer*	48
4th	Reform native administration to deal with new economic and social realities	52	Reform native administration to deal with new economic and social realities	41
5th	Native administrators, the GoS, UNAMID and NGOs should all work together	52	Native administrators should continue to be appointed by the government	41
6th	Native administrators should be free and fairly elected[77]	48	Native administrators, the GoS, UNAMID and NGOs should all work together	41
7th	*Omdas* and *sheiks* should work with youth and women's groups in camps	48	Involve Native administration in decision making and development planning	38
8th	Involve Native administration in decision making and development planning	43	Restoration of the authority of the native administration to maintain order	36
9th	Restoration of the authority of the native administration to maintain order	39	*Omdas* and *sheiks* should work with youth and women's groups in camps	31
10th	Give native administration more	35	Give native administration more	28

[77] ~~Native administrators should be free and fairly elected~~. NISS – Deletion required.

	power and authority		power and authority
11th	Native administrators should represent their geographic constituency and *Hawakeer*[78]	35	IDPs who have returned to their homes should be the responsibility of traditional native administrators 24
12th	IDPs in camps should be the joint responsibility of native administrators (*omdas and sheikhs*) and NGOs[79]	35	Government should not interfere in native administration 21
13th	Government should not interfere in native administration[80]	26	Camp committees should work with the UN, donors, government and all the parties to a peace agreement to return IDPs to their homes 17
14th	Native administrators should continue to be appointed by the government	22	IDPs in camps should be the joint responsibility of native administrators (*omdas and sheikhs*) and NGOs 14
15th	IDPs who have returned to their homes should be the responsibility of traditional native administrators	22	Restore and expand state authority in Darfur 7

Political reform

Equality and equal treatment came through as the key political demand of all the people of Darfur and it follows that a failure in this regard (like so many places around the world) is the cause of much disaffection and possibly violence. From a list of 20 items for political reform the first priority for nomads at 97% essential was 'The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin'. This item was joint-first on the non-nomad list at 83% essential along with 'Implement all existing laws that guarantee equality amongst all the people', which was third on the nomad list at 79% essential (Table 10.6). Quite understandably, second on the nomad list was 'Nomads should share in the power and wealth of Darfur' at 86% essential and it was also essential for 61% of non-nomads while only 13% of them considered this proposal to be unacceptable.

So as far as the people of Darfur are concerned equality and equal treatment were an achievable reality and it was up to the government to put the necessary political structures in place to do this. To this end both

[78] ~~Native administrators should represent their geographic constituency~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[79] ~~IDPs in camps should be the joint responsibility of native administrators (*omdas and sheikhs*) and NGOs~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[80] *Government SHOULD interfere and monitor the performance of native administration*. NISS – Require this wording because the native administration represents the state.

nomads and non-nomads could agree on a number of reforms such as 'Elections should be free and fair so that Darfurians can enable political reform' (74% essential for non-nomads and 72% for nomads) and 'Fair participation in power at all levels of local and federal government' (70% essential for non-nomads and 62% for nomads) as well as 'The new political structures should include all the people and tribes of Darfur not just those who signed the agreement' at 79% essential for nomads and 65% for non-nomads.

With regards to the political division of Darfur, everyone was agreed that 'States should not be made on a tribal bases' (68% essential for non-nomads and 76% for nomads) but more work needed to be done on how such divisions should be made. The NISS wanted the proposal that 'Darfur should be one region' deleted from the questionnaire, but most Darfurians did not want this either at second from last, 19th, on the non-nomad list and very last, 20th, on the nomad list. The nomads seemed to favour the view that 'If Darfur is divided it should not be more than 3 states' at 62% essential but the non-nomads possibly shared the NISS view that there should be more than three regions as the NISS wanted this option redrafted this way (see footnotes) and 30% of non-nomads considered the 3 state option to be unacceptable.

But equality and equal treatment was the key issue to be dealt with here, and it was perhaps both disappointing and revealing that the NISS wanted 'Affirmative action programs to rectify problems of past discrimination' deleted from the questionnaire as they claimed that there had been no discrimination in the past (see footnotes).

Table 10.6. Priorities for political reform

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Implement all existing laws that guarantee equality amongst all the people	83	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin	97
2nd	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin	83	Nomads should share in the power and wealth of Darfur	86
3rd	The practice of genuine democracy with freedom of expression	78	Implement all existing laws that guarantee equality amongst all the people	79
4th	Elections should be free and fair so that Darfurians can enable political reform	74	Pass legislation to ensure the rights of nomads and their way of life	79
5th	Fair participation in power at all levels of local and federal government	70	The new political structures should include all the people and tribes of Darfur not just those who signed the agreement.	79
6th	The powers of the central government and Darfur regional government should be clearly defined	68	States should not be made on a tribal bases	76
7th	States should not be made on a tribal bases	68	Elections should be free and fair so that Darfurians can enable political reform	72
8th	The new political structures should include all the people and tribes of Darfur not just those who signed the agreement.	65	Fair distribution of wealth between Darfur, all the states and the central government in proportion to population	69
9th	Fair distribution of wealth between Darfur, all the states and the central government in proportion to population	61	Governors should be chosen by Darfurians	69
10th	Affirmative action programs to rectify problems of past discrimination[81]	61	The practice of genuine democracy with freedom of expression	62
11th	Nomads should share in the power and wealth of Darfur	61	Fair participation in power at all levels of local and federal government	62
12th	Governors should be chosen by Darfurians	61	If Darfur is divided it should not be more than 3 states	62

Continued next page

[81] ~~Affirmative action programs to rectify problems of past discrimination~~. NISS – Delete as there was no discrimination in the past.

13th	The Darfur regional government should have executive, legislative and judicial powers	57	Make it possible for the representation of Darfur in the central government of Khartoum in proportion to population	59
14th	Train local people to manage their own administration	52	Stop the politicization of civil servants through training at work so that they will be neutral	55
15th	Stop the politicization of civil servants through training at work so that they will be neutral	48	The powers of the central government and Darfur regional government should be clearly defined	52
16th	All the parties to the agreement should share power in the same way.	48	Train local people to manage their own administration	41
17th	Make it possible for the representation of Darfur in the central government of Khartoum in proportion to population	43	All the parties to the agreement should share power in the same way.	41
18th	Pass legislation to ensure the rights of nomads and their way of life	35	Affirmative action programs to rectify problems of past discrimination	36
19th	Darfur should be one region[82]	32	The Darfur regional government should have executive, legislative and judicial powers	17
20th	If Darfur is divided it should not be more than 3 states[83]	22	Darfur should be one region	3

Development

The NISS required no deletions or changes to the development section of the questionnaire. Everyone wanted development including the government. Everyone wanted a future. The 'shopping lists' with education, health care, water and roads as top priorities of both non-nomads and nomads are given in Table 10.7. But as with all conflicts none of this will come without security, and security will not come without a peace agreement, which in turn required political reforms.

Finally, it is worth repeating here how useful a comprehensive poll from across the whole of Darfur would be so that it would be possible to detail exactly what projects are most important to which communities and constituencies.

[82] ~~Darfur should be one region~~. NISS – Deletion required.

[83] *If Darfur is divided it should ~~not~~ be more than 3 states*. NISS – Require 'not' is deleted.

Table 10.7 Priorities for development

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Provide basic and secondary education as well as Universities	78	Build hospitals with qualified medical staff	97
2nd	The State should provide all necessary services (education, health, water and roads etc.)	74	Build the Western Salvation roads together with other roads that link Darfur's major cities	97
3rd	Build hospitals with qualified medical staff	74	Provide the nomads with a source of water in the northern region so they can stay there longer	97
4th	Build the Western Salvation roads together with other roads that link Darfur's major cities	65	The State should provide all necessary services (education, health, water and roads etc.)	93
5th	Provide the nomads with a source of water in the northern region so they can stay there longer	65	Create special programs for the education of nomads	90
6th	Infrastructure including airports, bridges and electrical generation	61	Intra-state roads including *Al Ingaz Western* highway	87
7th	Encourage citizens not to depend on foreign aid through quick impact projects	61	Provide basic and secondary education as well as Universities	86
8th	Darfur Universities and community colleges should strengthen Darfurian society and culture	61	Build the continental way, which links the region with the Centre as soon as possible	83
9th	Special projects to combat poverty	57	Reform old development projects and create a new balanced plan for all Darfur	80
10th	Education and capacity building for women	57	Provide qualified people to look after the health of nomads and their animals	80
11th	Develop fair, balanced and effective rural projects	55	All the funds presently spent on humanitarian aid and UNAMID should be pledged for development	77
12th	Reform old development projects and create a new balanced plan for all Darfur	52	Build roads to link all localities to the major highways	73
13th	Build the continental way, which links the region with the Centre as soon as possible	52	Special projects to combat poverty	73
14th	Intra-state roads including *Al Ingaz Western* highway	52	Special provision for nomads at *dammars* and on migration routs	73
15th	Develop the natural resources of Darfur (Forestry, animal husbandry, agriculture, mining and oil etc.)	52	Agricultural programs for gradual settlement of nomads	70
16th	Exploration for oil and minerals	52	Construction of dams on main *wadis*	69
17th	Small scale savings and social development bank	52	Encourage citizens not to depend on foreign aid through quick impact projects	67

Continued next page

18th	Modernization of pastoralism and animal husbandry	52	Develop the natural resources of Darfur (Forestry, animal husbandry, agriculture, mining and oil etc.)	66
19th	Construction of dams on main *wadis*	48	Infrastructure including airports, bridges and electrical generation	63
20th	Build roads to link all localities to the major highways	48	Education and capacity building for women	63
21st	Rehabilitate former agricultural enterprises	48	Support projects to protect the environment	62
22nd	Provide qualified people to look after the health of nomads and their animals	48	Exploration for oil and minerals	61
23rd	Training for the youth	48	Modern communication system	60
24th	Create special programs for the education of nomads	48	Modernization of pastoralism and animal husbandry	60
25th	More UNAMID funds should go to Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)	48	More UNAMID funds should go to Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)	60
26th	Promote collective agricultural projects by raising capacities of producers and opening of local markets	43	Develop fair, balanced and effective rural projects	57
27th	Modern communication system	39	Darfur Universities and community colleges should strengthen Darfurian society and culture	57
28th	Support projects to protect the environment	39	Small scale savings and social development bank	53
29th	All the funds presently spent on humanitarian aid and UNAMID should be pledged for development	39	Promote collective agricultural projects by raising capacities of producers and opening of local markets	50
30th	Agro-processing using local products	35	Support youth centres and local theatre	50
31st	Establish medium and small industrial projects	30	Rehabilitate former agricultural enterprises	47
32nd	Support youth centres and local theatre	26	Training for the youth	47
33rd	Agricultural programs for gradual settlement of nomads	22	Establish medium and small industrial projects	43
34th	Special provision for nomads at *dammars* and on migration routs	22	Agro-processing using local products	40

The top 10 priorities

When the top items from all the different sections of the questionnaire are put together and rank ordered it is possible to get some sense of what was most important in the lives of the people of Darfur (Table 10.8). The very top priorities appeared to be the provision of the basic necessities of life, namely, the provision of drinking water, food and health care. The non-nomads also emphasized education while the nomads placed more importance on a system of roads for Sudan and the provision of water in the northern region so that they could stay there longer. Beyond these basic necessities both nomads and non-nomads wanted the laws of the land, government and international community to treat everyone the same, equally, without discrimination. They also wanted peace through a negotiated agreement, justice and security, with non-nomads emphasizing issues of justice and security and nomads emphasizing their specific needs such as programs for their settlement.

Was all of this too much to ask? One would have hoped not. But the NISS brought this program of research to a premature close. However, other senior representatives of the government of Sudan asked if it would be possible to survey the opinions of all the different tribes in Darfur so that their views could be brought to the negotiation table. The research undertaken here clearly demonstrated that this could be done and that the people's priorities for peace were not in any way unreasonable and could be met if the political will was there to do so. Those who wanted peace, and all the benefits that this would bring, should have taken this agenda forward. But they did not and the violent suppression of the modest democratic aspirations of the people of Darfur, Sudan and the whole region continued into the Arab Spring.

Table 10.8. Top ten priorities for peace in Darfur

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Provision of drinking water	83	Build hospitals with qualified medical staff	97
2nd	Provision of food, health and education services in villages	83	Build the Western Salvation roads together with other roads that link Darfur's major cities	97
3rd	Implement all existing laws that guarantee equality amongst all the people	83	Provide the nomads with a source of water in the northern region so they can stay there longer	97
4th	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin	83	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin. *Continued -*	97

5th	Provide basic and secondary education as well as Universities	78	Provision of drinking water	93
6th	The government should treat all tribes the same without favoritism	78	Darfur should remain a part of Sudan	93
7th	Bring all those who have committed crimes to account	78	Include Arab tribes in the security process	90
8th	Ensure the protection and dignity of all witnesses	78	Pursue peace through negotiation rather than force and military struggle	90
9th	Control the trade in illegal arms	76	Programs for the settlement of the nomads	90
10th	Disarm lawless individuals and groups	74	The international community and NGOs should not discriminate among the people of Darfur in recruitment, relief and distribution or services	90

Arab Spring

It should be pointed out that the NISS were not the only party who lacked the necessary motivation or experience to see this project through to its full potential. Prior to my participation as a consultant, the Annenberg research team had produced a questionnaire that was so inappropriate to the task at hand the African Union head of the DDDC would not show it to his counterpart in the government of Sudan and the nomads rejected it as biased and quite unsuitable for their needs. These problems were fixed, but half way through my involvement with the project the Annenberg School for Communications produced an interim report for the US State Department that made the error of lumping all the results in the pilot together with the inevitable consequence that they lost the opportunity to make many of the analyses explored here. I was told that the State Department was very pleased with the Annenberg report, and on the strength of this less than adequate report Annenberg received another grant.

But I should not have been surprised. These same poor standards of research were ever present in the work done on relations between the West and Muslim World, the 'War on Terror' and the Israel/Palestine peace process and, as I was about to discover, across the Arab World, with the result that no one predicted the series of revolts that came to be known as the Arab Spring. Sudan is a broken country torn apart by civil war simply because its dictatorial leadership would not implement the most modest of democratic reforms reviewed here. Likewise, across the Arab World, where these same modest reforms were not being met, why hadn't the State Department come to the conclusion that revolt would break out there as well? They should have known, especially in Egypt, the neighbour of

Sudan on the River Nile and cornerstone of US foreign policy in the region.

Following the completion of my report on Darfur, Sudan and its publication on my website, the Arab Spring reached Egypt prompting a discussion amongst WAPOR members as to how public opinion polls could best be run there at this critical time in the countries' history. Yashwant Deshmuk, who then had a TV news team in Cairo, flew me out to see if anything could be done. On February 18th 2011, I found myself in Tahrir Square with perhaps a million other Egyptians celebrating the ousting of President Mubarek on the fourth Friday of their revolution. With the able assistance of Yashwant's Senior Editor Ajit Sahi I was able to meet with other editors of the top news agencies in Egypt, academics, representatives of different political factions and most importantly the activists in Tahrir Square. Given my experiences in Sudan I arrived very sceptical of the potential outcome of this revolution but it soon became very clear that this new generation of young world citizens were not going to be deflected from their democratic task. And I knew from my work in the region, from the Upper Nile to Palestine, that such young people, their ideals and energy, extended across the Arab World. The Arab Spring was here to stay.

Contrary to the laws of Egypt that prohibited foreign social scientists from undertaking interviews or for anyone to meet in large groups (clearly such regulations were presently being ignored), I got out my notebook and started some preliminary interviews. It soon became clear that a peace poll could be done but as events, issues and hence priorities were changing so fast timing was going to be difficult. None the less, given Yashwant's experience in such environments and the fact that world polling companies like Gallop and Nielsen operated in Egypt, the work clearly could be taken forward except for one impediment – Egypt's restrictions on freedom of speech, freedom of association, academic freedom and specifically freedom to run public opinion polls. At that time permission to run a poll had to be gained from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) upon submission of the questionnaire to be used which, in turn, would very likely be passed to the Information Security Division of the Egyptian intelligence services for their approval. As the director of one of Egypt's major political think tanks advised me that they had presently been required to stop all of their polling activities, a peace poll that dealt with the most sensitive issues at the heart of the revolution was simply not going to happen any time soon. Reluctantly, therefore, I returned to the UK and decided to write this book in the hope that a solution can be found to these problems.

11

Pax Populi, Pax Dei –

Peace polls in comparative perspective and how to make them work

Peace poll descriptions – problems, solutions and analysis

All conflicts are different. Different people, different histories, different regional and international contexts, etc. etc. and for these reasons each conflict requires the people involved in those conflicts to have their problems and solutions the focus of any associated conflict resolution research. If this is not done then, firstly, important elements of the conflict can get overlooked and secondly, those involved in the conflict will be far less likely to accept the findings of the research as relevant to their situation. Critically, as peace research, the problems and solutions of all the parties to these conflicts must be given equal treatment in a common piece of work. This approach necessarily emphasizes description over hypothesis testing. However, by consistently using the same research methods it is possible to compare these descriptions across different conflicts and draw conclusions about any similarities and differences that may exist. When this is done for Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom (West and Muslim World), Israel, Palestine and Sudan (Darfur) the results very clearly explain why some conflicts have been resolved while others remain a continued source of grievance, violence and death.

Northern Ireland

Table 11.1 lists the top 5 problems for the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland run in several polls leading up to the Belfast Agreement made on Good Friday in April 1998 and Table 11.2 rank orders the importance of the various provisions of that agreement run in a poll a year later in April 1999. The critical point to make here is that the most significant problems for both the Protestants and Catholics were met through the terms and implementation of the Belfast Agreement. That implementation took several years but it has been done and the Northern Ireland peace process is a success.

Table 11.1. Top 5 of 19 problems for Protestants and Catholics

	Protestant per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Catholic per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	The Irish Republican Army and their use of violence.	87	The Lack of equality and continued discrimination.	71
2nd	All paramilitary groups and their use of violence.	67	The sectarian division of Northern Ireland politics.	66
3rd	The failure of government and the security forces to deal with terrorism.	56	The failure to provide a police service acceptable to all.	62
4th	The Republic's territorial claim on Northern Ireland.	53	The failures of Northern Ireland politicians.	59
5th	The Loyalist paramilitaries and their use of violence.	53	A lack of respect for the people of the 'other' tradition.	57
14th	The Lack of equality and continued discrimination.	21	(11th) The Irish Republican Army and their use of violence.	45

The top problem for the Catholics was discrimination by the Protestant majority (down at 14th on the Protestant list) who monopolized political power and used their police force to suppress dissent while the top problem for the Protestants was the insurgent Irish Republican Army (IRA) and their use of violence (down at 11th on the Catholic list). All these problems were eventually dealt with through decommissioning of paramilitary weapons, power sharing and reform of the police service, although it should be pointed out that the British Government had introduced very strong fair employment legislation several years before the signing of the Belfast Agreement but by that time the Catholic civil rights movement had been transformed into a political fight for a united Ireland. Too little was done far too late. The important point to make here is that if basic political and civil human rights standards had been observed in Northern Ireland then 25 years of civil war could have been avoided and that this was only put right by effectively dealing with all the major problems of both communities and this in turn was done through negotiations in which peace

polls played a supportive role.

Table 11.2. Top 5 of 15 solutions for Protestants and Catholics in the Belfast Agreement

	Protestant per cent Very Important	Per Cent	Catholic per cent Very Important	Per Cent
1st	Decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.	69	The reform of the police service.	56
2nd	The New Northern Ireland Assembly.	42	The Equality Commission.	52
3rd	The Commission for Victims.	39	The New Human Rights Commission.	52
4th	All parts of the Agreement together.	38	The New Northern Ireland Assembly.	52
5th	A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.	36	North/South bodies.	52
14th	The reform of the police service.	15	(10th) Decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.	42

Macedonia

Similarly, across the other side of Europe in Macedonia, different people with different histories in a different regional and international context seemed to face a very similar set of problems (Table 11.3). The Albanian minority were discriminated against by the Macedonian majority (1st on the Albanian list but 23rd on the Macedonian list) and the Albanians suffered at the hands of the Macedonian party police while the Macedonians were confronted by an increasingly active Albanian insurgency that had not been disarmed (1st on the Macedonian list but 22nd on the Albanian list). However both communities also had to deal with problems of corruption, criminality and a broken socialist economy.

Table 11.3. Top 5 of 24 problems for Macedonians and Albanians

	Macedonian per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Albanian per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Activities of Albanian paramilitary groups still operating in Macedonia (ANA).	85	Discrimination against minority ethnic groups in employment, education and language rights	80
2nd	Incomplete disarmament of NLA by NATO	78	Activities of Macedonian party police and paramilitary groups operating in Macedonia (Lions, Poskoks).	67
3rd	Many illegally held weapons in the region	74	Bribery and party political corruption that undermines the democratic foundations of the state	66
4th	Serious organised crime including businessmen, paramilitaries and politicians	70	Poor economic opportunities for all sections of the society	61
5th	Bribery and party political corruption that undermines the democratic foundations of the state	65	The failure of the Macedonian economy	58
23rd	Discrimination against minority ethnic groups in employment, education and language rights	13	(22nd) Activities of Albanian paramilitary groups still operating in Macedonia (ANA).	10

Given all these difficulties and with an eye to the wars that had ravaged their neighbours the political leadership of the Serb Macedonian majority accepted the help of the European Union and chose to bring in all the necessary reforms that could lead to EU membership starting with the Ohrid Framework Agreement (FA) signed in 2001 and brokered by the EU and US. Interestingly the top priority for the Albanians was a University at 85% essential while this same item came in last on the Macedonian list at only 1% essential (Table 11.4). This is a very big gap. So this University, which I visited in Tetovo, had to be funded by the EU and without the prospect of EU membership it seems unlikely that this peace process would have been a success. The UK and Ireland were already in the EU when the Belfast Agreement was signed.

Table 11.4. Top 5 of 24 solutions for Macedonians and Albanians

	Macedonian per cent Essential	Per Cent	Albanian per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Effective measures against paramilitaries and organised crime	83	State funded University in Albanian	85
2nd	Strengthening the rule of law	75	Full implementation of the FA	84
3rd	True court independence	75	Strong measures to prevent ethnic discrimination	82
4th	Free and fair elections	72	Free and fair elections	80
5th	Rebuild the houses of displaced people and secure their safety	72	Local government development	78
24th	State funded University in Albanian	1	(16th) Effective measures against paramilitaries and organised crime	45

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The devastating war in Bosnia and Herzegovina left everybody there in complete agreement as to what the top problems were following that war (Table 11.5) - 100 thousand dead, 2 million refugees and displaced persons, and a broken economy with few opportunities for the next generation. Unlike the people of Northern Ireland and Macedonia these Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats were 'on their knees'.

Table 11.5. Top 5 of 167 problems for Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats

	Bosniak per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Serb per cent Very Sigificant	Per Cent	Croat per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	100 thousand dead	82	100 thousand dead	83	100 thousand dead	92
2nd	2 million refugees and displaced persons	81	2 million refugees and displaced persons	79	2 million refugees and displaced persons	91
3rd	War destroyed the economy	79	War destroyed the economy	79	Destruction of the country	85
4th	Destruction of the country	78	High unemployment	78	High unemployment	84
5th	War crimes are not prosecuted	75	Young people have few opportunities	76	Young people have few opportunities	83

If a peace poll had been done before the war or in its early stages it might have looked more like the profile of problems in Northern Ireland and Macedonia. But this war, prosecuted with the full force of Serbian military might, had changed all that. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina were at a different point in the conflict cycle and their top

priorities were to repair their lives, country and economy and then deal with problems of corruption. In post war Bosnia and Herzegovina day-to-day survival was everyone's top concern and there was no need to differentiate ethnic priorities on this point (Table 11.6). The war had largely settled questions of security (and discrimination) through ethnic cleansing and relocation of the population into substantially homogeneous enclaves all managed under the terms of the Dayton Agreement and the ultimate authority of the European Union.

Table 11.6. Top 5 of 145 solutions for all of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Per cent	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
Develop the economy	67	22	8	2	1
Develop agriculture	64	25	8	2	1
Invest in education	64	26	8	1	1
Become equal citizens of Bosnia	62	28	7	1	1
Prosecute and jail corrupt politicians	62	25	10	2	1

Kosovo

Discrimination against the Albanian minority in Kosovo by the Serb majority from Belgrade is well documented and would almost certainly have produced peace poll results similar to Northern Ireland and Macedonia if conducted before the war. But the war changed all that so that after the war, but before an agreement had been reached on the final status of Kosovo, the Albanians now had the upper hand under the security umbrella of NATO. The Albanians wanted their own sovereign state, which had little or no independent economy to speak of, while the Serbs left behind in a number of enclaves feared for their lives (Table 11.7).

Table 11.7. Top 5 from 148 problems summarised in Table 15 for Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs

	Kosovo Albanian per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Kosovo Serb per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Kosovo's final status	87	Serbs are afraid to talk Serbian in Pristina	89
2nd	Unemployment in Kosovo	85	People do not have full freedom of movement in Kosovo	84
3rd	The weak economy of Kosovo	75	An independent Kosovo will be less secure for everyone	80
4th	Not knowing the fate of lost persons	73	If final status of Kosovo is made without agreement Kosovo Serbs will not feel safe	79
5th	Corruption in Kosovo	70	An independent Kosovo will become a mafia state	79
	Serbs are afraid to talk Serbian in Pristina	1	Kosovo's final status	65

Moral logic would seem to suggest that those who are abused should be more understanding of the harm that abuse can do, but all too frequently the reverse seems to be the case with the abused becoming abusers. The top priority for Kosovo Serbs was that 'the people of Kosovo should actively make Kosovo Serbs welcome' at 77% 'essential' (Table 11.8). Regrettably only 5% of Kosovo Albanians shared this view although they also wanted the city of Mitrovica, which had been divided into Serbian and Albanian districts, to become a unified city. This was their top priority at 83% 'essential'. Only 8% of Serbs shared this view and Mitrovica remained a focus of continued conflict and dispute long after the international community recognised Kosovo's independence (ICG, 2011a and 2009). The peace poll highlighted this difficulty before the negotiations on the final status of Kosovo and clearly those responsible for peace in the region did not pay sufficient attention to these facts. The top items on these lists have to be addressed if the peace process is to succeed - as had been done in Northern Ireland (Table 11.2).

Table 11.8. Top 5 of 156 solutions summarised in Table 16 for Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs

	Kosovo Albanian per cent Essential	Per Cent	Kosovo Serb per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Mitrovica should become a unified city	83	The people of Kosovo should actively make Kosovo Serbs welcome	77
2nd	Full independence	81	The city of Pristina should do more to make Serbs welcome	70
3rd	Kosovo should be allowed to have its own army	73	Special status for Serb religious sites	70
4th	Cooperation with the Hague Tribunal	67	International community should involve Belgrade more	70
5th	Kosovo should be a member of the UN	67	Kosovo can not leave Serbia	69
-	The people of Kosovo should actively make Kosovo Serbs welcome	5	- Mitrovica should become a unified city	8

Kashmir

In 2008 when this poll was run the top problem for those living in Indian administered Kashmir (IaK) was corruption (Table 11.9) followed by high levels of unemployment and then the Kashmir conflict. This situation may have been different in 2009 when violence escalated but may have been the situation again in 2011 when corruption became the central political issue in all of India (Economist, 2011). In Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK) education and insecure borders were the top concerns followed by the failures of India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir problem. Kashmir is a post-independence and post-war managed conflict that erupts into violence from time to time, but when the violence subsides neither India nor Pakistan seems to have the political will to resolve the dispute.

Table 11.9. Top 5 of 18 problems for Indian (IaK) and Pakistan (PaK) administered Kashmir[84]

	IaK per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	PaK per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Corrupt administration	59	Poor quality of education	42
2nd	High levels of unemployment	56	Independence will not bring safe borders with Kashmir's neighbours	41
3rd	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	54	India and Pakistan talking for 20 or 30 years with no result	41
4th	Pakistan and India are using the Kashmiri people for their own interests	45	High levels of unemployment	38
5th	The vested interests of all the groups involved in keeping the conflict going	45	The political leadership of Kashmir is divided	32
13th	Poor quality of education	35	(10th) Corrupt administration	29

In Kashmir, on both the Pakistan and Indian side, the people there want the violence to stop and have an opportunity to get on with their lives. On the Indian side an effective independent commission to deal with corruption is seen as the most important solution along with an end to violence while on the Pakistan side the people want hope and an end to violence (Table 11.10). From a peace polls perspective the on-going monitoring of these problems and solutions could be fed into a discourse on the future of Kashmir. This has been done in other conflicts (Israel, Palestine, Sri Lanka) but in the end India and Pakistan are going to have to negotiate inclusively with the people of Kashmir as was done in Northern Ireland.

[84] The 18 problems tested and reviewed here in both PaK and IaK are a subset of the 37 problems tested in IaK. A subset was used due to lack of access to PaK.

Table 11.10. Top 5 solutions for Indian (IaK) and Pakistan (PaK) administered Kashmir[85]

	IaK per cent Essential or Desirable	Per Cent	PaK per cent Essential or Desirable	Per Cent
1st	Effective independent Commission to deal with corruption	89	The violence should stop from all sides	78
2nd	The violence should stop from all sides	87	Give Kashmir real hope that a solution is coming	74
3rd	Majorities and minorities should be treated the same	85	New textbooks on good governance and human rights	72
4th	Build infrastructure and communications	84	Open trade between India and Pakistan	71
5th	We must learn from the past	84	Majorities and minorities should be treated the same	69

Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka in 2008, when the war was making heavy demands on both sides, both the Sinhala and Tamils saw this as the main problem (Table 11.11). But the Sinhala put the blame clearly on the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Elam (LTTE) by placing them at the top of their problems list, at 60% very significant, while the Tamils had them down at 29th on their list at 36%. The on-going war, escalating violence and 30 years of violence were the top three problems for the Tamils followed by discrimination after independence and the failure of successive governments to find a political solution.

[85] The PaK list of 48 solutions is taken from the IaK list of 132 solutions as a subset. A subset was used due to lack of access to PaK.

Table 11.11. Top 5 of 51 problems for Sinhala and Tamils in 2008 during the war

	Sinhala per cent (2008) Very Significant	Per Cent	Tamil per cent (2008) Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	The continued violence of the LTTE	60	The ongoing war	73
2nd	Abuse of Human Rights by the LTTE	59	Escalating violence in the last 2 years	69
3rd	Violence over the past 30 years	43	Violence over the past 30 years	58
4th	Fragmentation of the island into 'cleared' and 'un-cleared' areas	41	Discrimination after independence	55
5th	The ongoing war	40	The failure of successive governments to find a political solution	52
			(29th) The continued violence of the LTTE	36

The solution for the Tamils at this time was to stop the war and to have an inclusive peace process (Table 11.12). The Sinhale also wanted everyone to come together and solve the problem, but they also wanted a military solution and this is what they got.

Table 11.12. Top 5 of 71 solutions for Sinhala and Tamils in 2008 during the war

	Sinhala per cent (2008) Very Significant	Per Cent	Tamil per cent (2008) Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Sri Lanka should be a Unitary state	58	Stop the war	73
2nd	Depoliticise the public service	46	Restart the peace process	66
3rd	All the people of Sri Lanka must come together through their representatives to solve the problem	51	The government should also negotiate with the LTTE	63
4th	The political leadership representing all stakeholders must come together to solve the problem	51	More inclusive and effective Peace Secretariat	59
5th	Defeat the LTTE by military means alone	46	The political leadership representing all stakeholders must come together to solve the problem	58

In 2010, after the war, the top problems for the Sinhala were inflation, corrupt politicians and unemployment (Table 11.13). Unemployment was also the top problem for the Tamils at 66% very significant, but this was followed by the failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems, at 62% down at 30th on the Sinhala list at 14%. The Sinhala had got what they wanted but not the Tamils and amongst the

Tamils living in the Northern Province, where the fighting had been most intense, this failure was still first on their list at 71% very significant. For long-term stability and peace this problem had to be addressed.

Table 11.13. Top 5 of 38 problems for Sinhala and Tamils in 2010 after the war[86]

	Sinhala per cent (2010) Very Significant	Per Cent	Tamil per cent (2010) Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Inflation	68	Unemployment	66
2nd	Corrupt politicians	64	Failure to provide Sri Lankan Tamils with a constitutional solution to their problems	62
3rd	Unemployment	62	The failure of successive governments to find a political solution	61
4th	The decline of the economy	54	Inflation	60
5th	Politicisation of the public service	53	Violence over the past 30 years	59

Fortunately, for the President of Sri Lanka, when the proposals drafted by the committee he established to deal with this problem were tested against public opinion the results were exceptionally good with both the Sinhala and Tamils placing fundamental rights at the top of their list of constitutional solutions (Table 11.14). Inevitably there were other more difficult issues to resolve but when compared to all the other conflicts reviewed here they were easier to settle than anywhere else. Following the defeat of the LTTE the President had all the political capitol he needed to bring in the reforms recommended to him by his committee. But he did not seize the opportunity and without a resolution of this problem, known in Sri Lanka as the 'National Question', history may yet repeat itself in renewed violence (ICG, 2011b).

[86] Following the end of the war and defeat of the LTTE, given both the political context and culture of the people of Sri Lanka, it was not possible to ask hypothetical questions such as the significance of 'The continued violence of the LTTE'. Consequently this and similar problems had to be deleted from the post-war 2010 problems list in the questionnaire.

Table 11.14. Top 5 of 15 solutions for Sinhala and Tamils in 2010 after the war[87]

	Sinhala per cent (2010) Essential or Desirable	Per Cent	Tamil per cent (2010) Essential or Desirable	Per Cent
1st	Fundamental Rights	91	Fundamental Rights	87
2nd	Religious Rights	89	Language Rights	86
3rd	Language Rights	82	The Judiciary	84
4th	The Judiciary	76	Public Service	77
5th	Safeguards against secession	76	The Powers of the Centre and Provinces	73

The UK - West and Muslim World

Given the age of globalization (communications, travel, trade, financial markets) it was perhaps inevitable that the grievances of trans-national groups would lead to the creation of insurgencies that have also gone global. Following the attacks and bombings of 9/11 in the US and 7/7 in the UK a peace poll run in the UK identified the kinds of polarization of problems and solutions previously associated with national majorities discriminating against their minorities. The top problem for most UK citizens seems to be the conflict between Israel and Palestine, with members of the Jewish community emphasising violence against Israel, while members of the Muslim community place more emphasis on US led wars in the Middle East in general (Table 11.15).

[87] See Table 6.6 on pages 96 and 97 for the descriptions of the 15 constitutional solutions tested here.

Table 11.15. Top 5 of 99 problems for All UK, Jewish UK and Muslim UK citizens

	All UK per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Jewish per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Muslim per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	50	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	82	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	74
2nd	Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians	47	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	62	Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	70
3rd	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	46	Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel	62	The invasion of Iraq	70
4th	Religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain	43	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	61	Western desire to control Middle East oil	67
5th	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	40	Lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK	60	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	66
-	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	23	- The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	22	- Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	38

With regard to solutions, UK citizens (including the Jewish community) want to ban all groups that incite hatred and violence, and deport foreign nationals that do this, while Muslims want an end to Western threats against Muslim states, equal treatment for all religions and effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred (Table 11.16). These solutions - stopping threats and violence and treating everyone the same - are common themes to be found in all the state conflicts reviewed here. The only difference seems to be the trans-national nature of these problems and solutions. States are encouraged to work together to defeat terrorism. This is undoubtedly a very good thing, but defeating terrorists, such as the Irish Republican Army, by military means alone is not enough. It is also essential to address their grievances through an effective peace process and with regards to the trans-national Muslim community of peoples and states there is little evidence of such a process at this time.

Table 11.16. Top 5 of 89 solutions for All UK, Jewish UK and Muslim UK citizens

	All UK per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Jewish per cent Very Significant	Per Cent	Muslim per cent Very Significant	Per Cent
1st	Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	64	Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	76	Western states should stop threatening Muslim states	75
2nd	Ban Muslim groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	62	Ban Muslim groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	71	The civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them	71
3rd	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	61	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	71	All religions should be treated the same under British law	71
4th	Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence	60	Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence	69	Effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups	66
5th	Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	57	Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	66	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	65
-	Western states should stop threatening Muslim states	30	- Western states should stop threatening Muslim states	20	- Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	54

Israel and Palestine

With regard to the negotiation of a peace agreement between Israel and Palestine, Table 11.17 faithfully reproduced the top requirement of Palestinians for their own state and Israelis need for security.

Table 11.17. Top 5 of 15 problems of 'substance' for Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate

	Palestinian per cent	Very Significant	Israel per cent	Very Significant
1st	Establishing an independent sovereign state of Palestine	97	Security for Israel	77
2nd	The rights of refugees	95	Agreement on the future of Jerusalem	68
3rd	Agreement on the future of Jerusalem	94	Rights to natural resources	62
4th	Agreement on managing Holy sites	91	Agreement on managing Holy sites	57
5th	Security for Palestine	90	Agreeing borders for Israel and Palestine	49

These priorities are well known, but when these issues were rephrased as problems in the peace process a slightly more immediate set of concerns was produced that underscore the Palestinian need for a state and Israeli need for security (Table 11.18). The top priorities for the Palestinians was now freedom from occupation, the Israeli settlements, siege of Gaza and security wall, while Israelis placed terrorism and the need to maintain a Jewish majority at the top of their peace process problems list.

Table 11.18. Top 5 of 56 problems of 'process' for Israelis and Palestinians to resolve

	Palestinian per cent	Very Significant	Israeli per cent	Very Significant
1st	The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule	94	Terror has reinforced the conflict	65
2nd	The settlements	89	Maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel	62
3rd	The substandard living conditions of the people in Gaza	88	Incitement to hatred	52
4th	The security wall	88	Weak Palestinian government	52
5th	The Independence of the Palestinian economy	87	Islamic extremists are changing a political war into a religious war	52
	Terror has reinforced the conflict	61	The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule	30

Finally these same sets of issues emerge as solutions in Table 11.19. Palestinians want the check points removed followed by the lifting of the siege of Gaza and a freeze on settlement construction, while Israelis want an end to suicide attacks and rockets being fired from Gaza. These three tables map out the way forward in the Israel/Palestine peace process. All that needed to be done was to implement the top solutions in Table 11.19, which in turn would address the problems in Table 11.18, which again, in turn, would make significant progress towards the top priorities for negotiation of a peace agreement in Table 11.17.

Table 11.19. Top 5 of 70 solutions of 'process' for Israelis and Palestinians to resolve

	Palestinian per cent Essential or Desirable	Per Cent	Israeli per cent Essential or Desirable	Per Cent
1st	Remove check points	100	Stop all suicide/attacks against civilians	90
2nd	Lift the siege of Gaza	99	Stop firing rockets from Gaza	87
3rd	Israel should freeze settlements as a first step to deal with the settlements	98	Release Gilad Shalit	85
4th	Fatah and Hamas should reconcile their differences before negotiations	98	Prohibit all forms of incitement to hatred	81
5th	Release Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons	98	Achieve peace through negotiation	79

Peace poll agreements and constitutional packages

By following this kind of analysis Senator George Mitchell was able to achieve peace in Northern Ireland. Why hasn't he been able to do the same in Israel and Palestine and why have so many of the other peace processes reviewed here failed. Were the publics in these other states less willing to make peace? Many politicians would say so, it being much easier to blame the people than themselves. So what are the facts on this point? Are the people to blame, or their political leaders? It is certainly the leadership in places like Sudan, where all that most people want are the basic necessities of life provided with some degree of equality irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origins (Table 11.20).

Table 11.20. Top 5 of 265 solutions in Darfur - Sudan

	Non-Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent	Nomads per cent Essential	Per Cent
1st	Provision of drinking water	83	Build hospitals with qualified medical staff	97
2nd	Provision of food, health and education services in villages	83	Build the Western Salvation roads together with other roads that link Darfur's major cities	97
3rd	Implement all existing laws that guarantee equality amongst all the people	83	Provide the nomads with a source of water in the northern region so they can stay there longer	97
4th	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin	83	The Governor of Darfur must work for all the people of Darfur irrespective of their tribe, gender or ethnic origin	97
5th	Provide basic and secondary education as well as Universities	78	Provision of drinking water	93

Problems were not tested in Sudan because the list of solutions offered became so long that we would have needed another poll in order to explore peace agreements as a package. But in Northern Ireland (Table 2.3), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Table 4.7), Kosovo (Table 4.10), Kashmir (Tables 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13), Sri Lanka (Tables 6.4 and 6.5), Palestine and Israel (Table 9.2) all the major constitutional reforms proposed to solve their conflicts were tested against each other using the same methods and scale.

Table 11.21. Per cent 'unacceptable' for agreements made or proposed in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Palestine and Israel

Conflict and constitutional proposal for conflict resolution	Per cent Unacceptable
Northern Ireland – Protestant (1997) Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority	52
Northern Ireland – Catholic (1997) Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority	27
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Bosniak (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	17
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Serb (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	28
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Croat (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	39
Kosovo – Albanian (2005) Full independence and no choice of citizenship for Serbs in Kosovo (With choice of citizenship for Serbs – 52% 'Unacceptable')	13
Kosovo – Serb (2005) Full independence and no choice of citizenship for Serbs in Kosovo (With choice of citizenship for Serbs – 64% 'Unacceptable')	94
Indian administered Kashmir (2008) Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks (Muslim 27%, Hindu 40% and Buddhist 55% - 'Unacceptable')	32
Pakistan administered Kashmir (2009) Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks	9
Sri Lanka – Sinhala (2008) Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference	31
Sri Lanka – Tamil (2008) Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference	33
Palestine – Palestinian (2009) Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	24
Israel – Israeli (2009) Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	21

Table 11.21 lists the central principles upon which a peace agreement was made, or had been proposed, for all these states broken down by ethnic group with those opposed to such agreements noted as per cent 'unacceptable'. In Northern Ireland in 1997 the constitutional arrangement that ended up being the cornerstone upon which the Belfast Agreement was built, 'Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority', was 'unacceptable' to 52% of Protestants and 27% of Catholics while, in Israel and Palestine, the 'Two state solution – Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine' was only 'unacceptable' to 24% of Palestinians and 21% of Israelis in 2009. So when it comes to basic constitutional principles, an Israel/Palestine agreement should have been much easier to reach than the agreement in Northern Ireland. Additionally, when we compare these results with other countries and conflicts around the world the only negotiation that was significantly more difficult to resolve than Northern Ireland was Kosovo, where the international community chose, after failed negotiations, to impose a deal. In Kashmir and Sri Lanka deals should also be possible.

Of course some specific elements in these agreements will make them more difficult to reach. For example, police reform in Northern Ireland, and the status of Jerusalem in Israel and Palestine. But other elements such as economic and security benefits will make a 'package' more acceptable overall. By working with the parties elected to the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland, and with the President's All Party Representative Committee in Sri Lanka, detailed constitutional packages were agreed and tested against public opinion in these two countries. Table 11.22 gives the results for Northern Ireland in March 1998, along with the referendum results of 22 May 1998. As an additional 26 per cent of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) electorate said they would not vote for the Belfast Agreement if their party did not support it (from 50% down to 24%) the difference between the public opinion poll and referendum results could be calculated with some precision. With the DUP taking about 18% of the vote, a reduction of about 6% from 77% in the poll to 71% in the referendum was to be expected. These results were all within the margins of error.

Table 11.22. Results for the Northern Ireland settlement 'package' tested as a whole in March 1998 and the referendum result of 22 May 1998

Question: *If a majority of the political parties elected to take part in the Stormont Talks agreed to this settlement would you vote to accept it in a referendum?*

Per cent	All of NI	Protestant	Catholic	DUP	PUP+UDP	UUP	Alliance	SDLP	Sinn Fein
Yes	77	74	81	50	68	83	96	95	61
No	23	26	19	50	32	17	4	5	39

Question: *If you said 'Yes' would you still accept these terms for a settlement even if the political party you supported was opposed to them?*

Per cent	All of NI	Protestant	Catholic	DUP	PUP+UDP	UUP	Alliance	SDLP	Sinn Fein
Yes	50	46	53	24	24	50	87	70	22
No	50	54	47	76	76	50	13	30	78

Referendum result

Per cent	All of NI
Yes	71
No	29

Table 11.23 gives the results for Sri Lanka after the end of the war in 2010. The results are very good with 83% saying they would support the reforms. But, like Northern Ireland, these results become marginal if some of the political parties withdraw their support, and if all the parties did this then it seems very likely that a referendum would fail. Constitutional reform in Sri Lanka is firmly in the hands of the political elites.

Table 11.23. Results for the Sri Lankan settlement 'package' tested as a whole in March 2010.

Question: *Would you support a package of constitutional reforms for Sri Lanka as outlined here?*

March 2010	Sri Lanka	Sinhala	Tamil	UC Tamil	Muslim	Eastern Tamil	Northern Tamil	Other Tamil	SLFP	UNP	JVP	TNA	SLMC
Yes	83	83	84	86	80	89	77	90	87	80	69	78	74
No	9	9	7	12	13	0	15	4	6	11	27	17	14
DK	8	9	8	2	8	11	8	6	7	9	4	5	12

Question: If answer is 'Yes' - *Would you support a package of constitutional reforms for Sri Lanka as outlined here if the political party you are closest to was against them?*

March 2010	Sinhala	Tamil	UC Tamil	Muslim	SLFP	UNP	JVP	TNA	SLMC
Yes	46	35	53	32	49	39	6	26	25
No	33	43	31	37	36	34	63	48	43
DK	20	22	16	31	15	27	31	26	32

Peace poll politics

So political parties can make or break agreements at the polls. What then are peace polls good for? We've seen that they are excellent tools for objective conflict description and analysis. But their value goes far beyond this. Peace polls can guide those in destructive, intractable, often bloody conflicts through to mutually acceptable agreements. They can help those who want to make peace get to peace by bringing their people with them. Partisan polls, in contrast, are used by spoilers to break agreements and maintain the status quo by having their people oppose all reasonable offers made. All of which begs another question – under what circumstances can peace polls be used, and by whom, to help achieve peace? And when such efforts are opposed, what can be done to spoil the spoilers?

In general those who have power want more power, or at least to maintain the power they have. Conflict often arises out of a disparity of power. So using peace polls to help those with less power gain some degree of equality with those who have more power will generally be opposed by the powerful. In this circumstance, only the most enlightened political leaders, interested in their peoples' long-term interests, would encourage peace polls, while the weak, who seek equality should welcome them. In practice the political mix is a little more complicated than this when the interests of third parties are factored in – global and regional super powers, radical extremists and last, but by no means least, the committed peacemakers.

In Northern Ireland the committed peacemakers were the small centre parties, Alliance and Women's Coalition, along with the Nationalist, Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) who strongly opposed the violent tactics of Sinn Féin as the best way to achieve a united Ireland. But all the other parties joined in and in every party there were individuals who were equally enthusiastic about the peace polls - lawyers who took all legal standards very seriously, paramilitaries who had seen and known too much violence, political scientists with a professional interest in conflict resolution - they all made a valuable contribution to the work.

With all the benefits of hindsight, the key to the success of the peace polls in Northern Ireland was the democratization of the peace process through the very unique elections to the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation, and with it a seat at the negotiating table. Additionally, under the chairmanship of Senator George Mitchell, an inclusive process was created that did not side-line the smaller parties in favour of those with the largest electoral mandates. In every sense Senator George Mitchell was a Democrat. He, and no doubt his President, wanted to achieve a peace agreement in Northern Ireland and he was willing to help all the local

parties in this regard, even when their interests might sometimes not quite coincide with those of the British and Irish governments. In this political environment, of a genuinely independent super-power chair and a democratized, inclusive negotiating process, the peace polls thrived.

In the Balkans the key to success there was the very good network of highly motivated journalists that Nenad Sebek, the Executive Director of the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), was able to tap into. He was an ex BBC journalist himself. In Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo these journalists had all the contacts at their fingertips (or more specifically on their mobile phones) and were able to arrange interviews with all the key players – academics, politicians, party spokespersons and NGO and IGO directors/staff. But only one poll was done in each of these countries, they never evolved into a series except perhaps in Kosovo where the work was taken over by US government agencies working through a Washington based NGO the Academy for Educational Development (AED). This was done in support of President Martti Ahtisaari's negotiating team working out of Vienna under a UN mandate.

The peace polls run with CDRSEE were independent and all the results were published. Sometimes there were objections to this policy, such as from the BBC World Service Trust in Bosnia and Herzegovina who had misgivings about the critical questions concerning the international community and who was to blame for the war. But with their US connections (Richard Schifter was on the Board of Directors of CDRSEE at the time and was a US diplomat) perhaps the poll run in Kosovo and Serbia was as much an information gathering exercise as a prelude to negotiations as it was a stand-alone piece of conflict analysis. I am genuinely grateful for the opportunity CDRSEE gave me to run my polls in the Balkans but they never reached their full potential as a series of peace polls to democratize the target peace process as had been done in Northern Ireland.

Similarly in Cyprus my introductions to Greek and Turkish Cypriots facilitated through the Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President Clinton's Special Envoy Richard Holbrook and CDRSEE all ended up with the polls being done by the US Embassy in Cyprus which, in public diplomacy terms simply failed. The difficulty here is that these polls were not published and were therefore not open to scrutiny in either academic or public diplomacy terms. At the very least they should have countered the partisan polls of Greek and Turkish Cypriot spoilers by publishing balanced polls from both communities and highlighting Cypriot desires for their politicians to negotiate in good faith.

The Greek and Turkish Cypriot negotiators I met with had reservations about the peace polls. In practice those negotiators who wanted to get to peace were for them but those who wanted to hold out for the very best deal for their community, at the ultimate expense of a deal, were against them. Quite rightly they calculated that the peace polls could sometimes weaken their hand. But the opposite is also true. Sometimes their hand will be strengthened. In practice they should create a level playing field. Unlike the multi party talks in Northern Ireland the difficulty in Cyprus was that formal negotiations were restricted to the offices of the elected Presidents of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities and if they were not both committed peacemakers then the process was destined to fail. In this context the only way forward is independent peace polling that can bring in opposition parties that are committed peacemakers. Alexandros Lordos and his colleagues are now doing the best that they can to achieve this but it took ten years to persuade those responsible for the peace process in Cyprus to allow this to happen.

I got an opportunity to run a peace poll in Indian administered Kashmir (IaK) through Shyam Saran, the Indian Prime Ministers Special Envoy, who I met at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Oslo Forum and also through my World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) colleague from Delhi, Yashwant Deshmuk. Like Nedad Sebek he was a well connected journalist and if he did not know the right people himself he knew who did know the right people so that all sections of Kashmiri society could be brought into the research process. Unfortunately there was little interest in the work in India in 2008 when Kashmir was relatively quiet and it wasn't until the violence erupted in 2010 that the results were published and the Indian government took note. By which time we had also run some of the questions in Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK). This work was followed up by a Chatham House: Royal Institute of International Affairs poll but they did not know how to properly construct level playing field peace poll questions, so 'give and take' compromise solutions got lost in the analysis. Regrettably such failures give polling and public diplomacy a bad name and it is therefore not surprising that many politicians and diplomats are sceptical about their benefits.

In Sri Lanka the President's All Party Representative Committee (APRC) was not quite 'All Party'. The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) who were then the political representatives in Parliament of the rebel Liberation Tamil Tigers of Elam (LTTE) were excluded from the APRC because the government was presently at war with them. Additionally the major opposition party, the United National Party (UNP), chose to exclude themselves from the APRC as they did not believe the President had established the committee in good faith, they thought it was cosmetic. But

the Chair of the APRC, Professor Tissa Vitharana MP was able to meet with the TNA and UNP Members of Parliament through other forums. Similarly I was able to meet with representatives of these parties and did so as an independent researcher.

In Northern Ireland the chairman of the talks, Senator George Mitchell, was not allowed to meet with Sinn Féin when the Irish Republican Army (IRA) broke their cease fire and formal contact with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) was brought to a close when they walked out of the talks. But he was able to maintain contact through third parties if he needed to do so and again I continued to work with both Sinn Féin and the DUP as an independent researcher throughout the negotiation of the Belfast Agreement. Subsequently Sinn Féin and the DUP did enter into government together. Informal contact with all parties is always an option at the track two level. So the restrictions that limit formal negotiations to governments alone in places like Cyprus, Israel and Palestine, should not apply to independent researchers supporting such negotiations if they are not making any progress in that constrained format.

The major problem for me to run peace polls in the Middle East or concerning any conflict that involves what is happening in the region is that my state, the United Kingdom, and her most important ally, the United States of America, are deeply involved in conflicts there. We are told that 'the first casualty of war is the truth' or, in an effort to be a little more objective about this, when states fight wars it is essential that they are just wars against a preferably evil enemy and peace polls designed to tell the truth about relationships with that enemy would most likely be counterproductive to such imperatives of public diplomacy.

Having said that, I was once told by a general who commanded forces in the Balkans that his intelligence officers brought him my analysis of relations between Albanian and Serb Macedonians (Table 4.1) and he found it the most useful such analysis he had presented to him. The important point to make here is that professional military officers responsible for the lives of their men do want to know the truth. One would only wish that all politicians and the civil servants who work for them were equally well enlightened, but frequently they are not. Their interests are more complex, and this explains why the polling and other intelligence work associated with relations between the West and the Muslim World and the 'War on Terror' were so misdirected. Table 11.24 lists the grant applications I have made to undertake peace polls in the Middle East and with Muslim peoples there and around the world. They all failed. Given the importance of the topic the success rate should have been better. If state intelligence services were privately doing their public opinion research to peace poll standards for use by their military and diplomatic staff that

would be something, but they seek safety in narrow hypothesis testing over which they have some control instead of using rich description that leaves no social or political stone unturned.

Table 11.24. Failed Middle East and Muslim World grant applications[88]

Agencies	Partners	States	Title	Year
FCO, EU and US State Department	Albany Associates	Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt	Peace polling in the Middle East	2010
FCO, EU and US State Department	Albany Associates	Israel and Palestine	Peace polling in Israel and Palestine	2010
EU, Canada and Germany	Albany Associates	Lebanon	Palestinian refugees, the Lebanese and a poll	2010
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Dr. Mina Zemach and Dr. Nader Said	Israel and Palestine	A proposal to undertake 'peace polls' in support of renewed Israel/Palestine negotiations	2009
AHRC/ESRC	Professors Stephan Wolff and Adrian Guelke	Global	The politics of religious conflict in local, regional and global perspective	2007
The Leverhulme Trust	Dr. Ghassan Khatib JMCC	Israel and Palestine	Public opinion and the Israel/Palestine peace process	2007
JRCT	Professor Adrian Guelke	UK	Muslim alienation, radicalisation, public opinion and public diplomacy	2004
USIP		Global	Improving relations with, and within, the Muslim World: Applying lessons of public diplomacy from Northern Ireland	2004
UK Home Office	Professor Adrian Guelke	UK	British Muslims and the problems of radicalization	2004

[88] Israel and Palestine are the most well researched and funded peace process in the world. In this context the EU critically examined their policies to try and discover why they had failed. Dr. Mina Zemach and Dr. Nader Said were on the committee commissioned to make this review and it is my understanding that they expressed the opinion that the majority of projects chosen for support failed to effectively challenge the status quo. In my judgment this is funding for what can best be called the 'peace industry' not conflict resolution.

The politics of peace research in Israel and Palestine are complicated further by the fact that domestic US electoral politics are greatly influenced by relations between Israel and the political fortunes of US Senators and Members of the House of Representatives. Between the Jewish lobby and Christian right, American politicians seeking re-election have to be careful not to be seen as anti-Israel. Many take the view that peace in the Middle East is in Israel's best self interest (Urquhart, 2011), I share this view, but unless this is done with some small degree of justice for the Palestinians this is not going to happen. Regrettably talk of justice for the Palestinians can get translated into anti-Israeli political rhetoric in the United States of America and in this context peace polling could potentially do harm to the stats quo.

Given the level playing field effect of peace polls it is understandable that Israel would and do use partisan polling to advance their interests. But I was a little surprised to find some reticence on the Palestinian side to fully engage in my peace polls there. It depended on who I talked to and then the *Palestinian Papers* were published that revealed the full extent to which the Palestinians were willing to make concessions to Israel for peace. Peace polls were not only a possible threat to policies of continued Israeli expansion and the electoral prospects of US politicians they could also be a source of embarrassment for some Palestinian negotiators.

Unwelcome social research can be blocked by the gatekeepers of the granting agencies in the developed countries of the West. In Darfur, Sudan the National Intelligence and Security Service perform this task. In Egypt and other countries caught up in the Arab Spring laws on the statute books openly restrict academic freedoms and rights of association and free speech. The effect, however, is the same. Peacemakers get stopped and this, in my view, is a most serious crime. What is the remedy?

Conclusion: Making peace polls work and coming to terms with the politics of peace research

Providing the standards for applied social science set by Campbell are met then public opinion research can be used to help identify the criteria and context for a 'ripe' intervention, establish real dialogue and effective communication, solve problems and keep peace processes on track by:

1. Analysing and prioritising conflict problems and solutions in the light of prevailing public opinion.
2. Identifying appropriate local policies for both domestic and international intervention and providing expert advice on this basis to local and external actors engaged in the process of conflict resolution/prevention/management in the target state.
3. Gauging public support for those interventions across all sections of the community, including those opposed to them and their reasons.
4. Directing local and international resources at policy areas of greatest concern.
5. Engaging politicians and parties in programmes of discourse, research and pre-negotiation problem solving.
6. Testing policy options on given issues from across the political and communal spectrum to identify areas of common ground and potential compromise.
7. Engaging the public in 'their' peace process to give 'them' ownership and responsibility.
8. Stimulating public discourse through publications in the media.
9. Building broad popular consensus and support for a local peace process.
10. Continuing the engagement with conflict parties, individually and jointly, beyond polling to help them analyse, interpret and act upon polling results in the most appropriate manner in order to move forward.
11. Involving other NGOs, IGOs and appropriate states through the publication and targeted dissemination of detailed reports.
12. Maintaining the good offices of the international community to assure guarantees and post-resolution commitments.
13. Establishing a body of expert knowledge to facilitate more effective peace making, peacekeeping and peace building in general.
14. Re-engaging with the conflict parties at period intervals or as may be required after the conclusion of negotiations to identify the need for further polling in order to assist in renewed conflict resolution/prevention efforts or help with agreement implementation.

This is perhaps an ambitious list of activities for practitioners to undertake but the research reviewed here suggests pollsters can become peacemakers providing they work to the highest standards of their discipline and maintain their independence. But maintaining true independence when confronted by the interests of the various parties to a conflict, the vested interests of regional and global powers, their bureaucracies and the control that they are able to exercise over the 'purse strings' and 'gate keepers' of the granting agencies, can make such independence very difficult and sometimes impossible. What can be done to solve this problem?

Well, first of all the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) can do what they have always done and require their members to uphold codes of best practice with regards to transparency and disclosure. Additionally, in the light of the cases reviewed here, WAPOR could add Campbell's standards for applied social research to their criteria of best practice, particularly where matters of war and peace, life and death, are concerned. With this point in mind Professor Michael Traugott, when he was President of WAPOR, set up a sub-committee to establish standards for peace polls. Our draft for these standards is given in Appendix 1. Additionally the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in New York worked with me to produce an Operational Guidance Note on Public Opinion and Peace Making and this is given in Appendix 2.

If codes of professional ethics and standards of best practice like these were adhered to then possibly doing what has been suggested here would be sufficient to the task at hand. The world would be safer. But we know that this kind of standard setting is not enough. For example, in the field of human rights, simply establishing such rights in international law does not bring states to the point where they will always observe them. Monitoring is required, as well as, on occasions of real danger, pro-active engagement. Sometimes it just may be necessary to go and do a poll against the wishes of some interested parties when peace and stability are threatened. How can all of this be done?

Perhaps, by way of an analogy, the activities of human rights organisations like *Human Rights Watch* and *Amnesty International* can help provide the answer. Following their example what is needed is a pro-active monitoring NGO created to make sure public opinion research is effectively used to resolve conflicts, give advice and support to independent practitioners in the field and to undertake interventionist polls when it is considered absolutely necessary and practical to do so. The international community frequently monitors and passes judgement on elections to make sure they are free and fair and there are no reasons why peace research should not likewise be subject to international scrutiny.

The globalisation of conflict seems to require a global response and pollsters working to the standards proposed here have their part to play. It also follows that states abusing human rights (freedom of association and speech, academic freedom) to prevent peace polls from being undertaken should be exposed and sanctioned. Peacemakers deserve every possible protection that their professional associations and the international community can offer, especially when they seek peace and justice for all through the ethical application of their talents and discipline.

In 2013, a year after the first addition of this book was published, the UN made a real effort to incorporate peace polls into peace keeping best practice. This was done in an extensive manual that detailed a wide variety of activities that could be deployed to make the views of the people a central feature of all peace making activities (UN, 2013). Having contributed to this manual I expected the UN to deploy all of its recommendations, but the Cyprus negotiations continued to fail, the Syrian conflict became a regional disaster, and extremist forms of Islamist terrorism went global. In this context I returned to Cyprus in 2016/17, made three attempts to intervein in the Syrian conflict and started to develop world peace polls with WAPOR colleagues, that could be deployed to give voice to the views of the people, all of the people, on matters that concern the survival of human kind on our planet.

12

Cyprus 2016/17 – How to melt a frozen conflict

The world is plagued by a number of frozen conflicts that hold themselves, their regions and occasionally the whole world to ransom denying their people peace while stoking the fires of geopolitical conflict. Israel and Palestine is the most well-known of these frozen conflicts and Syria has the potential to become one along with the transnational Sunni/Shia split and radicalised international terrorist groups. Frozen conflicts can be ended by one side defeating the other, e.g. Sri Lanka, or by peace agreement, e.g. Northern Ireland where, significantly, the agreement reached was endorsed in a referendum supported by a programme of public diplomacy and opinion research (Irwin 2002a). Similarly it should be possible to resolve the Cyprus frozen conflict but so far all efforts have failed. What has gone wrong, can the Cyprus problem be solved, and if so, are there lessons to be learnt there that can benefit the rest of the world?

This chapter reviews three peace polls conducted in Cyprus in 2016/17 using the Northern Ireland methods that require the negotiating parties to agree all aspects of the research agenda including the questions asked. The results of these polls are reviewed and compared with results from other conflicts using the same or similar methods. In Israel, Palestine, Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka a 'peace package' would always overcome potential difficulties inherent in the various elements of an agreement not acceptable to both parties. However, this is not the case in Cyprus where the benefits of a settlement have yet to be fully demonstrated. Significantly, no one is getting killed in Cyprus rendering the status quo acceptable.

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) were an important part of the Northern Ireland peace process and although the polls indicated the people of Cyprus wanted an extensive program of CBMs to be implemented, they have been resisted by the Greek Cypriot side as 'normalization' of the status quo. But 'normalization' can be avoided if the CBMs focus on 'symbolic' issues of peace making first rather than 'substantive' elements of a final peace agreement. Experience in Northern Ireland and polling in

Cyprus, Israel and Palestine suggest that this strategy will work both there and elsewhere in the world.

Using polls to reach a peace agreement in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Israel and Palestine

The fifth peace poll completed in the Northern Ireland series focused on an agreement package (Table 12.1 and see Chapter 3 details). Critically this poll demonstrated that the package negotiated would be acceptable to the people of Northern Ireland in a referendum. Although the individual elements in the package were not acceptable to one community or the other, when put together the benefits of the package to achieve peace outweighed the costs of compromises made over items like police reform and power sharing (Irwin 2002a).

Table 12.1. Protestant and Catholic support a Northern Ireland settlement and how they would vote in a referendum with and without the support of their political party in March 1998.

Package item (Per cent Essential + Desirable + Acceptable + Tolerable)	Protestant	Catholic
A Regional Assembly	89	85
North/South bodies	60	92
Council of the Isles	83	70
Constitutional reform	93	91
A Bill of Rights	91	97
Reform of the RUC	52	91
Vote 'Yes' with political party support for the agreement	74	81
Still vote 'Yes' but without political party support for the agreement	46	53

Similarly when Shamir and Shikaki (2010) used the same approach to test and track support for a peace agreement package in Israel and Palestine between 2003 and 2006 they got similar results (Table 12.2). However support for the 'package' was asked in a neutral way while it was asked in the context of being supported or opposed by the informant's political party in Northern Ireland as the proposals there had to be taken to a referendum.

Table 12.2. Support for Clinton's Permanent Settlement Framework in December/January 2004/5 (Shamir and Shikaki 2010).

Package item (Per cent support)	Israel	Palestine
Borders and Territorial Exchange	55	63
Refugees	44	46
Jerusalem	39	44
Demilitarized Palestinian State	68	27
Security Arrangements	61	53
End of Conflict	76	69
Overall Package	64	54

Unfortunately the international community did not adopt the polling methods used so successfully in Northern Ireland in Cyprus where the peace process and negotiations lead to a failed referendum in April 2004 (see Chapter 7). Subsequently an effort was made to correct this omission with the establishment of domestic NGOs to undertake polling work in support of future peace processes and negotiations most notably the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development - SeeD. Although this polling did test the various elements of a peace agreement in Cyprus, and various peace packages, this was not done in the same questionnaires/survey instruments as was done in Northern Ireland and Israel and Palestine so it is not possible to make similar comparisons here. But the Cyprus work is extensive and provides much valuable information to help negotiators guide a Cyprus peace process to a successful conclusion (Alexandros, Kaymak and Tocci 2009).

At the meeting of the Greek Turkish Forum held in Istanbul in 1998 there was much discussion about Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and I agreed with the Greek and Turkish Cypriots at that meeting that the first peace poll to be run in Cyprus should focus on these CBMs. We all felt they would receive a very positive response from the people of Cyprus. That opportunity was missed but SeeD tested a wide range of CBMs and some of them, most notably 'The reduction of bureaucratic formalities at crossing points', were implemented (Kaymak, Lordos and Tocci 2008, 'Cyprus2015' 2011). Unfortunately most of the CBMs tested were not implemented and the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities grew further apart making a peace agreement and referendum more difficult to achieve, particularly amongst the younger generation who had grown up with the status quo of a divided island in two distinct segregated communities. Arguably, with all the benefits of hindsight, the international community and UN had gone too far in their efforts to keep the peace at any cost.

Regional imperatives and the need for renewed Cyprus negotiations

Following the discovery of gas in the Israeli section of the Eastern Mediterranean in 2009 a 2010 US Geological Survey report estimated that there were 122 trillion cubic feet of gas and 1.7 billion barrels of oil off the coasts of Israel, the Gaza Strip, Cyprus, Syria and Lebanon (USGS 2010). Additionally by taking these gas reserves to Cyprus and then to Turkey and Europe the region and Europe would benefit both economically and strategically from the cooperative development of these resources. In this context the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities and the UN formally restarted negotiations for the reunification of Cyprus on the 11th of February 2014 with the signing of a Joint Declaration. Importantly this agreement included the implementation of CBMs and establishment of good will between the two sides in clause 7 as follows:

'The sides will seek to create a positive atmosphere to ensure the talks succeed. They commit to avoiding blame games or other negative public comments on the negotiations. They also commit to efforts to implement confidence building measures that will provide a dynamic impetus to the prospect for a united Cyprus.'

UN Cyprus Talks (2014)

Clearly those responsible for the Cyprus peace process, the UN, and the two sides knew what had to be done to achieve a successful peace agreement (Lordos and Sozen 2014) but unfortunately this clause was not worth the paper it was written on. It was only an aspiration not a condition for negotiations in good faith. No systematic program of CBMs was agreed and when negotiations started to feel the strain of a final push to reach an agreement in October 2016 I was invited to work with the two sides in the hope that a settlement of the Cyprus Problem could be reached (Irwin 2017a and b). At that time all those involved in the negotiations were quite optimistic and I coordinated a poll with the two sides in December 2016 that measured support for an agreement the leaders might reach without specifying the details as had been done in Northern Ireland. At the same time we also identified those members of the public best placed to work on a referendum campaign if an agreement was achieved at negotiations held in Geneva in January 2017.

That poll indicated a leaning towards a 'yes' vote on the Greek Cypriot (GC) side at 28 per cent 'yes', 26 per cent 'no' and 46 per cent 'undecided' (Table 12.3) with similar results for the Turkish Cypriot (TC) side at 40 per cent 'yes', 36 per cent 'no' and 24 per cent 'undecided' (Table 12.4). Significantly the 'undecided' vote on Cyprus was very high when

compared with the results of similar polls in Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine. In these countries the pressures of on-going conflict incline the populations to make a decision one way or the other but when there is no on-going conflict and the potential risks of a change in the status quo could result in more difficulties not less, then the result is a very significant 'undecided' vote. They are yet to be convinced of the benefits of a settlement and this in turn rests on the public's conviction that the two leaders can make any agreement they might reach, work. So a lot is riding on the public's perception of the leadership and their ability to be seen as peacemakers.

Table 12.3. If we assume a scenario where the 2 leaders agree on a solution and a referendum is held, how would you be likely to vote, would you vote YES or would you vote NO?

GC - All	Dec 16 SEED[89]	Dec 16 Percent Pre Switzerland	Feb 17 Percent Post Switzerland[90]	Feb 17 Percent Post Switzerland[91]	March 17 Percent
Yes	15+23	28	25	28	26
No	32+12	26	29	30	29
Not decided/ it depends/DK/NA	18	46	45	42	45

Table 12.4. If we assume a scenario where the 2 leaders agree on a solution and a referendum is held, how would you be likely to vote, would you vote YES or would you vote NO?

TC - All	Dec 16 SEED[92]	Dec 16 Percent Pre Switzerland[93]	Dec 16 Percent Pre Switzerland[94]	Feb 17 Percent Post Switzerland	March 17 Percent
Yes	23+21	40	44	46	49
No	17+16	36	34	37	39
Not decided/ it depends/DK/NA	24	24	22	17	12

[89] SeeD 'Yes' as 'Yes' + 'leaning to Yes' and 'No' as 'No' + 'leaning to No'
[90] Sample collected before break down of negotiations.
[91] Includes sample collected after break down of negotiations.
[92] SeeD 'Yes' as 'Yes' + 'leaning Yes' and 'No' as 'No' + 'leaning No'
[93] Complete sample with no filter for those who said 'Yes' or 'No' they will or will not vote.
[94] Sample with filter for those who said 'Yes' they will vote.

So when the January 2017 negotiations in Geneva failed confidence in the leaders and the peace process faltered and in our next poll conducted in February 2017 the vote shifted to 28 per cent 'yes' and 30 per cent 'no' on the GC side while support for an agreement on the TC side strengthened to 46 per cent 'yes' and 37 per cent 'no'. In the failed referendum of April 2004 the TC community had voted 'yes' while the GC community had voted 'no' when the GC leadership rejected the proposals put forward by the UN. The GC community were losing confidence in the process and it started to look as if history might be repeating itself. In this second poll we also tested a number of critical issues in the negotiations but I was not able to persuade the two sides to test a 'package' as had been done in Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine as they did not want to reveal the parameters of their negotiating hand through the means of a public opinion poll.

Significantly, at this time, the GC leadership did not move to block a parliamentary vote to celebrate the 1950 Greek Cypriot referendum to unite Cyprus with Greece. It was this event that precipitated their conflict with the Turkish Cypriots and subsequent invasion by Turkey. Understandably the TC leadership were very annoyed with their GC partners in negotiations, and they in turn compounded the political error of the GCs by walking out of the negotiations until the matter was resolved to their satisfaction with a reversal of the GC position. As it happened, we were able to run a natural experiment on these unfortunate developments as half our GC sample was collected before the political 'bust up' and half of the sample after. Accordingly support for a settlement became more polarised (Table 12.3).

The Cyprus peace process was now on 'life support' and I agreed with my interlocutors with the two sides that we should try and restore confidence in the process by identifying CBMs that could be quickly and effectively deployed. Kaymak, Lordos and Tocci (2008) had noted that CBMs that required negotiation tended to get 'bogged down' and accordingly advocated the deployment of CBMs that could be initiated by each side without the necessary cooperation of the other side. The CBMs that required negotiation also had to involve the UN which tended to be very bureaucratic and although initially the UN welcomed a new initiative on CBMs they 'thought better of it' on reflection given past experience. But something had to be done so, in addition to testing CBMs that had been monitored in the past we added as many CBMs as we could that would not involve negotiations and the UN.

Timing is everything in peace polling and we had an opportunity to have the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot sides, Presidents Anastasiades and Akinci respectively, to jointly attend the Easter services at the Greek Church presently under the control of the Turkish Cypriots in

the ancient walled city of Famagusta. Quite rightly in our view, Quintin Oliver of Stratagem, who I had worked with on the Northern Ireland peace process, had made recommendations to the two sides for the leaders to be seen working together in an effort to restore public confidence in both them and the peace process (Oliver 2017). So this CBM at a significant public event, along with another 36 CBMs were tested in April with a view to publishing the results before the Easter holiday. Firstly, however, we asked the Cypriot people their views of CBMs. As happens with all peace processes in frozen conflicts both GCs and TCs did not think the two sides would implement them, 63 and 71 per cent 'no', but they did want them, 83 and 86 per cent 'yes', and they believed they would help the peace process at 69 and 65 per cent 'yes' (Table 12.5). We wanted to demonstrate that the sceptics and cynics who dismissed CBMs as unimportant or irrelevant were quite wrong in their judgement. So far so good.

Table 12.5. The importance of CBMs (Irwin 2017b)

Do you expect the two sides to implement many of these CBMs?			
	Yes	No	D.K.
GC	27%	63%	10%
TC	28%	71%	1%

Would you like to see many of these CBMs implemented by the two sides?			
	Yes	No	D.K.
GC	83%	15%	2%
TC	86%	14%	-

If the two sides implement these CBMs do you think that will improve the chances of reaching a final agreement on the future of Cyprus?			
	Yes	No	D.K.
GC	69%	26%	5%
TC	65%	34%	1%

Critically if CBMs were to help the negotiations and peace process then they needed to have maximum positive effect at minimum political cost at just the right time – during negotiations, after an agreement is reached but before a referendum or after a referendum as part of a new plan of government. Deciding which CBMs to implement when is a political decision for the two sides. Tables 12.6 and 12.7 list the 'top ten' for the GC and TC communities with opening the Greek Church in Famagusta for Easter services only being opposed by 8 per cent of GCs and 19 per cent of TCs as 'unacceptable'. It was very 'doable' but the sides did not take up this initiative with the results of the poll and publication delayed until the opportunity had passed. Significantly symbolic CBMs

that touched on questions of national identity, culture and religion were as important or sometimes more important than more practical CBMs associated with commerce and economic development. This was particularly true for the Greek Cypriot community and many of these symbolic CBMs could be implemented unilaterally with minimum involvement of the UN.

Table 12.6. Top Ten (Essential + Desirable) CBMs for GCs with results for TCs (Irwin 2017b)

GC Top Ten CBMs		Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	D.K.
1. Turn off the lights of the Turkish Cypriot flag to show TC support for the negotiations	GC	68%	13%	11%	2%	5%	1%
	TC	4%	5%	6%	10%	74%	1%
2. Ensure a common time zone across the whole of Cyprus.	GC	57%	14%	18%	4%	6%	2%
	TC	37%	36%	19%	3%	4%	1%
3. Allow owners of property in Varosha to visit their properties.	GC	47%	22%	21%	3%	7%	1%
	TC	22%	29%	27%	10%	11%	1%
4. Return Icons to their rightful owners.	GC	53%	15%	19%	2%	9%	2%
	TC	19%	29%	28%	13%	9%	1%
5. Allow the Greek Church in Famagusta to be opened for Easter services.	GC	44%	23%	22%	3%	8%	1%
	TC	10%	24%	33%	13%	19%	2%
6. For example allow the vacated Archbishopric in Kyrenia to be restored and made available for religious festivals.	GC	43%	21%	24%	6%	7%	1%
	TC	12%	20%	31%	16%	20%	1%
7. Arrange meetings between North and South fire brigades to agree joint procedures for dealing with catastrophic fires.	GC	48%	14%	23%	5%	9%	1%
	TC	49%	28%	17%	3%	2%	1%
8. Make vacated military installations on religious and public property available to their owners.	GC	40%	21%	26%	3%	6%	5%
	TC	13%	20%	26%	13%	27%	1%
9. Coordinate and finance the repair and maintenance of cemeteries and graves in the North and South.	GC	37%	23%	26%	3%	10%	2%
	TC	46%	32%	17%	4%	1%	1%
10. Being able to use your mobile phones on both sides of the island without limitation on where you are.	GC	43%	12%	23%	5%	12%	6%
	TC	31%	44%	19%	3%	3%	1%

Table 12.7. Top Ten (Essential + Desirable) CBMs for TCs with results for GCs (Irwin 2017b)

TC Top Ten CBMs		Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable	D.K.
1. Coordinate and finance the repair and maintenance of cemeteries and graves in the North and South.	TC	46%	32%	17%	4%	1%	1%
	GC	37%	23%	26%	3%	10%	2%
2. Arrange meetings between North and South fire brigades to agree joint procedures for dealing with catastrophic fires.	TC	49%	28%	17%	3%	2%	1%
	GC	48%	14%	23%	5%	9%	1%
3. Facilitate the purchase of car insurance to cover both sides of the island at the same rates.	TC	47%	29%	18%	3%	2%	1%
	GC	29%	15%	25%	8%	20%	3%
4. Being able to use your mobile phones on both sides of the island without limitation on where you are.	TC	31%	44%	19%	3%	3%	1%
	GC	43%	12%	23%	5%	12%	6%
5. Ensure a common time zone across the whole of Cyprus	TC	37%	36%	19%	3%	4%	1%
	GC	57%	14%	18%	4%	6%	2%
6. Remove the requirement for the Enosis plebiscite to be commemorated in GC schools.	TC	44%	21%	17%	9%	9%	1%
	GC	15%	8%	15%	6%	47%	9%
7. Allow all persons born or not born in Northern Cyprus with a right to vote in a referendum have access to the South.	TC	36%	29%	19%	6%	7%	2%
	GC	16%	10%	15%	7%	46%	6%
8. Complete and open the new crossing in Famagusta at Dherynia without any further delay.	TC	32%	32%	20%	7%	9%	-
	GC	27%	17%	25%	9%	20%	3%
9. Complete the North/South electricity interconnector without further delay.	TC	26%	37%	25%	5%	-	-
	GC	21%	14%	22%	9%	29%	4%
10. Promote North/South trade by extending the scope of Green Line regulations	TC	25%	37%	30%	3%	4%	1%
	GC	17%	12%	20%	7%	39%	4%

In spite of this failure to restart the negotiations on the initiative of the two sides using CBMs the UN and International Community eventually persuaded the leaderships to start negotiations again and a final round was held in Crans-Montana, Switzerland on the 28th of June only to collapse again on the 7th of July 2017. Although the Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades said he was negotiating in good faith and had not decided to postpone making an agreement and risking a referendum before Presidential elections in January and February 2018 the negotiations had broken down on his insistence for 'zero [Turkish] troops and zero [Turkish] guarantees' from day one of any new agreement. This was not a

'negotiating position', it was a 'not negotiating position'. But assuming Anastasiades made a correct political calculation regarding his electoral prospects, and he did, he would still be in a Catch 22 situation. Having won the Presidential elections he still has to restore confidence in the Cyprus peace process and experience in Northern Ireland, the opinion of his own electorate in Cyprus, and polling in Israel and Palestine all point to the implementation of CBMs as being the way forward for him.

CBMs and getting to 'Yes' in a referendum

In Northern Ireland CBMs were introduced into that society over a period of decades. Importantly this included the strongest legal measures available to prevent discrimination, a human rights commission 'with teeth' to recommend remedial action as required and most significantly the introduction of power sharing arrangements in towns and cities including the provincial capital Belfast. Additionally, as a prelude to negotiations and an Irish Republican Army (IRA) ceasefire the British State said categorically that they had "no selfish strategic or economic interest" in Northern Ireland and the future status of the province rested with the people of Northern Ireland alone (Brooke 1990). Public apologies of the harm one side had done to the other were also made to convince the respective publics that no one would go back to 'the bad old days' of exclusion from public life, discrimination and violence.

The introduction of 'substantial' CBMs, such as power sharing in provincial towns and cities, was in the hands of the local people and British authorities in Northern Ireland. However, in Cyprus, given the unilateral declaration of independence by the northern part of the island under Turkish Cypriot control, substantial CBMs can only be implemented through mutual agreement. But such agreements have the potential to contribute to the 'normalization' of the status quo and, in time, the de facto establishment of Northern Cyprus as a province of Turkey. As a consequence successfully negotiating these kinds of CBMs is very difficult but 'symbolic' CBMs do not carry these same dangers with them. Indeed, carefully chosen statements, apologies and activities involving common interests in religious, artistic, educational, heritage matters and forward planning for a united island can achieve the desired effect without compromising constitutional principles. Additionally such activities should be seen to be leader led whenever possible to establish confidence in them as their endorsement of a final peace agreement will be essential to its passage in a referendum. Packages tested in both Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka (see Chapters 2, 3 and 6) also required leadership/party support to

pass a referendum and the UN are quite right to emphasise this point, but those leaders, in turn, for all the reasons given here require CBMs.

In 2017 the Palestine Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) were running their joint Palestine-Israel Pulse with the Tami Steinmetz Centre for Peace Research (TSCPR). In February they published results of a December poll, that in addition to tracking support for a settlement package (Table 12.8), also measured the effect various incentives had on switching 'no' voters to 'yes' voters (PSR 2017a). This was necessary, as support for the package had now fallen to 48 per cent of Israelis and 42 per cent of Palestinians. But when the incentive of having the peace agreement supported by Arab states across the region was added in 30 per cent of Palestinian 'no' voters and 28 per cent of Israel 'no' voters switched to 'yes' raising support for the package to 58 per cent in Israel and 57 per cent in Palestine (Tables 12.9 and 12.10). So I sent a copy of these findings to the two sides in Cyprus along with a copy of the poll that tested a package in Northern Ireland before the signing of that peace agreement and offered to conduct a similar poll in Cyprus. As already noted, the offer was not accepted. Since then the PCPSR and TSCPR published the results of a repeat poll in August 2017 with the same package but new 'shopping list' of incentives (PSR 2017b). These are also included in Tables 12.9 and 12.10.

Table 12.8. The Palestine-Israeli Pulse, settlement package tested in June-July 2017 (PSR 2917a and b)

1. (In Israel) Mutual recognition of Palestine and Israel as the homelands of their respective peoples. The agreement will mark the end of conflict, the Palestinian state will fight terror against Israelis, and no further claims will be made by either side.
1. (In Palestine) Mutual recognition of Palestine and Israel as the homelands of their respective peoples. The agreement will mark the end of conflict, Israel will fight terror against Palestinians, and no further claims will be made by either side.
2. The independent Palestinian state which will be established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be demilitarized (no heavy weaponry).
3. A multinational force will be established and deployed in the Palestinian state to ensure the security and safety of both sides.
4. The Palestinian state will have full sovereignty over its air space, its land, and its water resources, but Israel will maintain two early warning stations in the West Bank for 15 years.
5. The Palestinian state will be established in the entirety of West Bank and the Gaza strip, except for several blocks of settlement which will be annexed to Israel in a territorial exchange. Israel will evacuate all other settlements.
6. The territories Palestinians will receive in exchange will be similar to the size of

the settlement blocs that will be annexed to Israel.
7. West Jerusalem will be the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem the capital of the Palestinian state.
8. In the Old City of Jerusalem, the Jewish quarter and the Wailing Wall will come under Israeli sovereignty and the Muslim and Christian quarters and Temple Mount will come under Palestinian sovereignty.
9. Palestinian refugees will have the right of return to their homeland whereby the Palestinian state will settle all refugees wishing to live in it. Israel will allow the return of about 100,000 Palestinians as part of a of family unification program. All other refugees will be compensated.
10. And now after we went over the main proposed terms of the two-state solution of the Israeli Palestinian permanent settlement (demilitarization of the Palestinian state, equal territorial exchange, the family unification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees, East Jerusalem the capital of Palestine and West Jerusalem the capital of Israel, and the end of the conflict, please tell me the extent to which you support or oppose such a permanent settlement in general as one combined package?

Table 12.9. Per cent of Israeli 'no' voters who switched to 'yes' for symbolic or substantive CBMs or incentives offered in December 2016 and June/July 2017 (PSR 2017a and b)

Symbolic or substantive CBM or incentive	%
Jews who left their homes and property in the Arab countries following the 1948 War will be compensated for the lost assets left behind (2016)	40
Palestinians agree to change school textbooks to remove incitement to hatred against Jews (2017)	35
Palestinians acknowledge the historic and religious links between Jews and historic Palestine (2016)	34
Recognition of Jewish holy sites in Judea and Samaria with Jewish rights to access and security guarantees (2017)	33
Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish state (2016)	32
Agreement is part of a larger peace with all Arab states (2016)	30
Allow Israeli air force full access to Palestinian airspace (2017)	30
Prime Minister Netanyahu declared his support for the package (2017)	29
Joint Israeli-Palestinian economic ventures (2017)	25
Free movement for both sides throughout the other side's state (2016)	24
Israelis are guaranteed free access to holy sites in Jerusalem and other places (2016)	23
Settlers allowed to stay, to keep Israeli citizenship and their safety guaranteed by the Palestinian state (2016)	21
Holy sites to be placed under the custody of a multi-national committee from Israel, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the US (2016)	10

Table 12.10. Per cent of Palestinian 'no' voters who switched to 'yes' for symbolic or substantive CBMs or incentives offered in December 2016 and June/July 2017. (PSR 2017a and b)

Symbolic or substantive CBM or incentive	%
The release of all Palestinian prisoners (2017)	56
Palestinian labourers can freely work in Israel after the establishment of the Palestinian state (2016)	44
Israel acknowledges the historic and religious links between Palestinians and historic Palestine (2016)	44
Refugees are compensated and provided with homes and land in Palestinian state (2016)	42
Free movement for both sides throughout the other side's state was assured (2016)	40
Peace agreement is based on a long term hudna between the two sides (2016)	34
Marwan Barghouti declares his support for the package (2017)	34
Israelis agree to change school textbooks to remove incitement to hatred against Palestinians (2017)	32
Israel apologizes for the suffering it has inflicted on the Palestinian refugees (2017)	32
Israel agrees to accept the Arab peace initiative and all Arab countries support peace treaty (2016)	28
Joint Palestinian-Israeli economic ventures (2017)	27
Holy sites to be placed under the custody of a multi-national committee from Israel, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the US (2016)	19

In the spring and summer of 2017 while everyone in Cyprus was doing everything they could to bring the two sides to the negotiations at the end of June I drafted some questions that had the potential to strengthen the peace process with some CBMs based on the Northern Ireland experience. But the sides did not want to run them or anything like them. They continued to want to 'keep their cards close to their chest' prior to negotiations in Switzerland and as I did not know the content of the potential Cyprus package, I was not in a position to test these or other incentives against the package as had been done in Israel and Palestine. But this situation changed later that year.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In Crans-Montana the two sides came very close to an agreement indeed as noted by the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, Espen Barth Eide. On 18 July 2017 after briefing the Security Council he said:

"But I think we have to admit that there was a collective failure of stitching together a deal in Crans-Montana despite of the fact that towards the end of the conference we saw more and more of the pieces of the

puzzle actually coming on the table. That came late, but it came, but we were not able to stitch it together to a total deal, because we had this perennial problem of the chicken and egg: What comes first, what comes second? And all sides in many ways continued to reserve their final gives until they saw the cards of the other side. The Secretary-General and the rest of us were trying very actively throughout the ten days of the conference and particularly in his presence on 30 June and then again on 6 July to overcome this by saying that in our view there is a package available where six separate, important and crucial issues are all settled and only when they are all settled we can say that we have a deal. We thought that would be possible, but realized that it wasn't."

(Eide 2017)

The major elements of that agreement were now in the public domain so it would be possible to test the various CBMs already tested and any other CBMs and incentives thought to be helpful against that package and demonstrate exactly what combination would produce a yes vote in a referendum on both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides. Ideally the two sides should do this but if they will not then civil society can by developing a Cyprus equivalent of the Geneva Accord (2003) and testing that. It would also be possible to test a few 'substitutions' for different elements in the package. This was also done in Northern Ireland (Irwin 2002) to demonstrate the robustness of the major package elements and to identify any critical weaknesses that could be improved on substantially, or in presentational terms in order to avoid 'unpicking' delicate compromises reached. With a core package to work from the prospects of producing a positive result in Cyprus became very, very, good indeed.

Unfortunately the same can not be said in Israel and Palestine. The decision by the US President to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel was rejected by 128 UN member states in a General Assembly vote with only 9 states supporting the change of status while 35 states abstained (UN 2017). Additionally a multi-national poll run by Gallup International (2017) on this issue noted a majority disapproval of this decision in Europe rising to 84 per cent in Islamic countries and 94 per cent in the Arab World. This measure has not *built* confidence in the peace process but rather has *diminished* confidence. It is a 'CDM' not a CBM. Regrettably this decision, and the failure to reach a peace agreement between Israel and Palestine, has a negative effect on the region adding to the incentives that encourage terrorist groups affiliated with radical Muslim organisations transnationally (Abdullah II 2017, 2015; Gallup International 2017). On one of my trips to Ramallah I was taken to Yasser Arafat's tomb and it was pointed out to me that his tomb pointed to Jerusalem and that he would be

reburied there when East Jerusalem was the capital of Palestine. This is a CBM much of the world in conflict is waiting for. Hopefully Cyprus, by good example, would show the way. But they didn't, and just 80 nautical miles across the Mediterranean Sea to the east of Cyprus, and on the northern border with Israel, the situation in the Middle East became gravely more serious as Syria descended into bloody civil war.

13

Syria

On March 15, 2011, two months after the protests I had witnessed in Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt (Chapter 10) the people of Syria took to the streets of Damascus hoping Syria might enjoy the benefits of the revolution that had removed President Mubarak from power. But the Egyptian Army had supported the people's revolution in Egypt against a corrupt regime while in Syria the army there supported the regime of President Assad against the people. On 29 July 2011 the country descended into a state of civil war with the formation of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) commanded by rebel officers opposed to Assad's rule. I tried on three occasions to help the Syrians use peace polls as an aid to conflict resolution, but I failed as did the UN.

My failure to have any impact on the war in Syria started in 2007 when I was first invited to help the UN set standards for peace polls and how UN peacemakers could best put them into practice. I had made presentations on the use of polls in the Northern Ireland peace process, at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and US Institute of Peace (USIP), both in Washington DC., on the 29th of March and 2nd of April, and then at the UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), New York City, on Tuesday the 3rd of April (Irwin, 2007d). Following that meeting the UN invited me to write an Operational Guidance Note on public opinion and peace-making in collaboration with their staff at the UN Department of Public Information (UNDPI). This apparent success was followed up with meetings with Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) in Geneva, Switzerland, and at the Oslo Forum, Norway, in June 2007 (Irwin 2007b). Then with Michael Traugott, the President of the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), we began to draft guidance notes for the use of polls in conflict settings globally, following conferences in Jerusalem and Berlin in June and September (Irwin, 2007c, a). These guidance notes were completed when we met again at a WAPOR workshop in Cadenabbia Italy, in July 2008 (Irwin, 2008g).

Regrettably these UN and WAPOR standards and guidance were not subsequently adopted and applied universally to the resolution of conflicts

so I published them as appendices to the first edition of this book in 2012. Fortunately, the UN then took a renewed interest in the work and in 2013 invited me to a workshop in Kampala, Uganda, on 'Understanding and Integrating Local Perceptions in the Work of UN Peacekeeping Operations' (UNDPKO/NUPI, 2013). The UN were now taking the topic very seriously and I met with the staff at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) in New York tasked with producing a manual on these issues in May 2013 (Irwin, 2013). They produced an excellent manual (UNDPKO, 2013) and peace polls were a part of it. I assumed all UN operations would now adopt these procedures. But I was wrong, institutional politics and state interests continued to frustrate the course of effective peace-making and Syria was the next big failure of the UN system.

Of course I understood by now how domestic American politics had a profound effect on the failure of the peace process in Israel and Palestine (Chapter 9) but I did not think those same political forces would also prevent peace-making efforts in Syria. This war might have been brought to a speedy conclusion, with one side defeating the other, except for the fact that third party states began to support their respective Syrian allies in a complex series of proxy wars. In this context, as each side fought the other to a standstill, the UN first appointed Kofi Annan as their Special Envoy to Syria in February 2012 followed by Lakhdar Brahimi in September 2012 with mandates to negotiate a peace between the waring sides. Their efforts failed culminating in the collapse of the Geneva II negotiations in January 2014. Then in February 2014 I was invited to run a peace polls workshop for the Syrian Opposition by my WAPOR colleague Samir Abu-Rumman, who managed the Gulf Opinions Centre in Kuwait. A friend of his Ghaith Albahr, a fellow Jordanian, was running the Local Administrative Councils Unit (LACU) out of Gaziantep in southern Turkey. On the border with Syria Gaziantep was just a couple of hours drive to Syria's second city, Aleppo, presently held by the Syrian Opposition. The LACU, with financial backing from their allies, which included Britain, supported the towns and villages in Eastern Syria under the control of the Syrian Opposition Council (SOC) and FSA.

On February 21, 2014 I was flown into Gaziantep to run a three day workshop. Samir explained how to make and manage public opinion polls while I explained how these polls could be used to reach a peace agreement (SOC/LACU, 2014). About 40 participants came to the workshop, mostly from Aleppo, including the Chairman of the Governorate of the Council of Free Aleppo. A number of the delegates had been involved in the UN led peace negotiations and I was surprised and disappointed to discover that the UN had not undertaken a program of peace polls in preparation for

their failed Geneva I and Geneva II negotiations in 2012 and 2014. But the workshop in Gaziantep went very well. Using examples from the first edition of this book everyone understood that both sides to a conflict had to be included in the peace polls research. Having worked with the Syrian Opposition I should now go to Damascus and include the Regime in the project. Nothing less would be effective.

Behind closed doors the delegates discussed this prospect at length and with input from their military advisors decided not to pursue such a course of action. Many of the delegates wanted to go ahead with a fully developed peace polls program as an aid to negotiations, they wanted to bring the war to an end, but at the time their military believed they could defeat Assad and take Damascus. Arguably the UN as honest brokers should have insisted on a peace polls project but they didn't and the war raged on. However, three months later I received an invitation to return to Gaziantep to run a poll for two NGOs, *The Day After* (TDA) and *No Peace Without Justice* (NPWJ) and hopefully this time I would have an opportunity to determine what kind of compromise the people of Syria would be willing to accept to bring an end to their war (Irwin, 2014).

*****

TDA and NPWJ had a very specific agenda that they wanted me to explore. In addition to the normal peace polls question that rated the significance of the various problems that informants believed needed to be addressed they wanted a focus on responsibility for the war, justice issues and human rights violations. This I was happy to do as a pilot study designed to establish our methodology, on the clear understanding that the next poll would deal with constitutional reforms needed for a peace agreement. Significantly we would work with their network of activists in Syria that were able to undertake interviews in both Opposition and Regime held areas. We also had an opportunity to run what Donald Campbell called a natural experiment with a Kurdish sample collected before and after they were expelled from Kobani by ISIS in September 2014 (Irwin, 2014, 2015 and TDA 2014).

Summary of Syrian pilot poll

Methodology and Sample

Using a questionnaire developed in Gaziantep with input from relevant stakeholders in April 2014, 1500 interviews were collected across Opposition occupied areas of Syria and refugee camps in Turkey and Jordan in May, June, July and August 2014. This sample was not statistically 'representative' of the population but could be used to identify 'indicative' trends and relationships in terms of critical demographics including ethnicity, religion, region/Governorate, age, gender and education. Using the same questionnaire and methodology additional pilot samples were collected in October 2014 to include 50 Alawites in Regime held areas and 50 Kurdish refugees in Turkey following their expulsion from Kobani by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Problems

In an open ended question the top problem for the Syrian Opposition was the Syrian Regime followed by the war and shelling while the war was the top problem for Kurds followed by the Syrian Regime and 'terrorism from both sides.' The war was also the top problem for the Alawites followed then by ISIS (Table 13.1). Using a list of 25 different problems common to conflicts globally[95] the severity of the situation in Syria was made apparent with 'So many killed and displaced by violence' being a top problem in most areas (Table 13.2). Significantly, in the October pilot 'No effective negotiations to end the conflict' was now 2nd on the Kurd refugee list up from 5th in the summer and 4th on the Alawite list up from 8th on the Sunni list (Table 13.3).

[95] See Chapter 14 page 262-264 for an explanation of the development of this question as *Question 1.2* for a global *People's Peace Index* (PPI).

Table 13.1. Top ten problems for the Syrian Opposition sample as a whole, Kurd sample in the Opposition controlled areas, and Alawite sample expressed as the number of citations 'n'.

Question 1.1 Every part of Syria is different so first of all can you please tell me what you think is the most serious problem that has to be dealt with in your country today?
Write in……..

	Syrian Opposition	n	Kurd	n	Alawite/Regime	n
1	Syrian regime	396	The war	18	The war	18
2	The war	245	Syrian regime	6	ISIS	11
3	The shelling	129	Terrorism from both sides	3	Islamism	3
4	Topple the regime	92	The fighting, killing, violence	3	Islamic radicalism	1
5	Bashar al-Assad	73	Displacement	2	Radical groups	1
6	The killing	72	Ending the conflict and foreign armed groups	2	Armed groups	1
7	Lack of Opposition unity	29	Fighting ISIS and electricity supply	1	The killing	1
8	Lack of security	21	Syrian regime and shelling	1	Using heavy weapons	1
9	Displacement	20	Robbery	1	-	-
10	ISIS	13	The conflict between the opposition and the regime	1	-	-

(Next page)

Table 13.2. Rank order of 25 general conflict problems for the Syria Opposition and Alawite samples.

Question 1.2 People from different communities often hold very different views about the problems at the centre of a conflict. Here is a list of some of the problems often mentioned as a cause of conflict. Which problems do you consider to be 'Very significant', 'Significant', 'Of some significance', 'Of little significance' or 'Of no significance at all' in Syria today?

Table 13.2. Rank order of 25 general conflict problems for the Syria Opposition and Alawite samples.

	Syria Opposition sample	Per cent Very Significant	Alawite/Regime sample	Per cent Very Significant
1	So many killed and displaced by violence	87	The military actions of foreign forces	96
2	The actions of the army	78	The government's foreign military engagements	96
3	The government's foreign military engagements	73	So many killed and displaced by violence	88
4	Corrupt Government	69	No effective negotiations to end conflict	86
5	No political solution to end conflict	66	Corrupt Government	84
6	Corruption and criminality in general	60	No justice and reconciliation	84
7	No effective negotiations to end conflict	59	The actions of terrorists and militants	74
8	Poor economy and unemployment	57	Poor economy and unemployment	70
9	Poor political leadership	56	The actions of rebels and the opposition fighters	68
10	Discrimination and sectarianism	52	Media that incites hatred	64
11	No justice and reconciliation	52	Discrimination and sectarianism	60
12	Elections not free and fair	50	Lack of democratic accountability	58
13	Prejudice and personal safety	48	Prejudice and personal safety	56
14	UN resolutions and human rights violations	47	Low standards of education	54
15	Lack of food and clean water	46	Corruption and criminality in general	54
16	The military actions of foreign forces	45	Elections not free and fair	50
17	The actions of terrorists and militants	44	Lack of language and cultural rights	48
18	Lack of democratic accountability	43	Poor health care, roads and electrical supply	46
19	Poor health care, roads and electrical supply	38	Lack of food and clean water	46
20	Lack of free press and media	37	Lack of free press and media	44
21	Low standards of education	36	UN resolutions and human rights violations	44
22	The actions of the police	35	No political solution to end conflict	44
23	Media that incites hatred	33	Poor political leadership	42
24	Lack of language and cultural rights	20	The actions of the police	20
25	The actions of rebels and the opposition fighters	19	The actions of the army	20

Table 13.3. Rank order of 25 general conflict problems for the Kurd and Kurd Refugee samples.

	Kurd Summer sample	Per cent Very Significant	Kurd Refugee October sample	Per cent Very Significant
1	Poor economy and unemployment	93	No justice and reconciliation	98
2	Corrupt Government	92	No effective negotiations to end conflict	96
3	No political solution to end conflict	91	Poor economy and unemployment	92
4	Lack of language and cultural rights	88	Corruption and criminality in general	90
5	No effective negotiations to end conflict	88	Discrimination and sectarianism	90
6	UN resolutions and human rights violations	83	Lack of language and cultural rights	89
7	Discrimination and sectarianism	81	UN resolutions and human rights violations	88
8	The actions of the police	81	Lack of food and clean water	85
9	Media that incites hatred	80	Corrupt Government	83
10	Lack of democratic accountability	80	Prejudice and personal safety	82
11	No justice and reconciliation	79	The actions of terrorists and militants	81
12	The government's foreign military engagements	78	Low standards of education	79
13	Poor political leadership	75	The actions of the police	78
14	Lack of free press and media	71	The actions of the army	77
15	Elections not free and fair	70	So many killed and displaced by violence	73
16	The military actions of foreign forces	69	Poor political leadership	71
17	So many killed and displaced by violence	68	Lack of free press and media	67
18	Corruption and criminality in general	63	Elections not free and fair	67
19	The actions of the army	59	Poor health care, roads and electrical supply	65
20	Low standards of education	58	The actions of rebels and the opposition fighters	64
21	The actions of terrorists and militants	57	Lack of democratic accountability	62
22	Prejudice and personal safety	56	No political solution to end conflict	61
23	Poor health care, roads and electrical supply	54	Media that incites hatred	46
24	The actions of rebels and the opposition fighters	49	The government's foreign military engagements	12
25	Lack of food and clean water	42	The military actions of foreign forces	2

Conflict and Responsibility

In the Opposition held areas the Syrian Regime was held most responsible for starting the conflict and keeping it going, with, to a lesser extent 'Regional and International forces' (Table 13.4). However the Opposition was also partly blamed for the continuation of the conflict with only about a quarter of those interviewed saying they were 'Not responsible at all' (Table 13.6). Although the Alawites in Regime held areas placed most blame on the Opposition and regional forces, they also placed significant blame on their own Regime (Table 13.5 and 13.7). Everyone, it appears, understood that no one was totally without blame in this conflict.

Table 13.4. Per cent responsibility for starting the conflict for the Syrian Opposition sample.

Question 2.2 Who do you think is most responsible for starting the armed conflict in Syria? Please say who you think is 'Very Responsible', 'Responsible', 'Somewhat Responsible', 'A little Responsible' or 'Not Responsible at all'.

Syria Opposition Sample	Very Responsible	Responsible	Some What Responsible	A Little Responsible	Nor Responsible	Cannot Say
The Regime	96.3	2.6	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.1
The Opposition	8.1	15.7	17.9	18.6	39.7	0.1
The Regional Forces	50.0	32.0	13.6	2.9	1.4	0.1
The International Forces	46.9	32.3	13.0	3.9	3.5	0.4

Table 13.5. Per cent 'very responsible' for starting the conflict for the Syria Opposition, Alawite, Kurd and Kurd Refugee samples.

Question 2.3 Who do you think is most responsible for keeping the armed conflict in Syria going now? Please say who you think is 'Very Responsible', 'Responsible', 'Somewhat Responsible', 'A little Responsible' or 'Not Responsible at all'.

Very Responsible	Syria Opposition	Alawite/ Regime	Kurd	Kurd Refugees
The Regime	96.3	40.0	98.3	98.1
The Opposition	8.1	68.0	23.7	40.4
The Regional Forces	50.0	60.0	66.1	13.5
The International Forces	46.9	34.0	35.6	0

Table 13.6. Per cent responsibility for keeping the conflict going for the Syria Opposition sample.

Syria Opposition Sample	Very Responsible	Responsible	Some What Responsible	A Little Responsible	Nor Responsible	Cannot Say
The Regime	94.4	4.0	0.9	0.1	0.5	0.1
The Opposition	15.7	20.2	22.2	18.7	22.9	0.2
The Regional Forces	73.1	20.7	4.3	1.3	0.6	0.1
The International Forces	71.6	19.5	7.1	0.8	0.5	0.5

Table 13.7. Per cent 'very responsible' for keeping the conflict going for Syria Opposition, Alawite, Kurd and Kurd Refugee samples.

Very Responsible	Syria Opposition	Alawite/ Regime	Kurd	Kurd Refugees
The Regime	94.4	36.0	96.6	100
The Opposition	15.7	80.0	44.1	30.8
The Regional Forces	73.1	82.0	89.8	34.6
The International Forces	71.6	76.0	74.6	0

Justice

Given the severity of the violence in Syria 'Fair trials of most responsible persons' was the top justice priority for the majority of those sampled with what might be characterised as long term lesser priorities such as 'Democracy' and 'Reconciliation' much lower on Syrian Opposition and Kurd lists (Table 13.8). However, in the longer term 'Reform of government institutions' is seen as the most important element for conflict resolution (Table 13.9). Alawites also wanted reform but significantly placed 'Democracy' at the top of their list. With regards to justice and restitution the prosecution of those who ordered gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity would seem to be the only acceptable outcome while loss of property and livelihood could be compensated for financially (Table 13.10). All crimes should be documented and, in this regard, civil society organisations were playing an important role in Opposition held areas but not, it would appear, in Regime held areas where Alawites were not documenting such crimes (Table 13.11). Although a majority of the Sunni population sampled favour Sharia law and courts with regard to the future administration of justice, significantly, women, those who were better-educated and ethnic minorities did not. They prefer

courts operated to international standards and this approach to Justice was only rejected by a conservative minority that appeared to be dominated by less well-educated young men in more conservative regions of Syria. Alawites also rejected Sharia law and courts in favour of 'Syrian law and courts operating to UN international standards with international monitoring' (Table 13.12).

Table 13.8. Justice procedures for the Syrian Opposition, Kurd and Alawite samples.

Question 3.1 Justice can make an important contribution to the end of war. Can you please indicate which ones you consider to be 'Very important', 'Important', 'Of some importance', 'Of little importance' or 'Of no importance at all'?[96]

	Syrian Opposition Percent Very Important		Kurd Percent Very Important		Alawite/Regime Percent Very Important	
1	Fair trials of most responsible persons	84.3	Promote human rights	88.1	Democracy	100.0
2	Free and fair elections	70.2	Fair trials of most responsible persons	86.4	Promote human rights	100.0
3	Promote human rights	68.4	Free and fair elections	86.4	Fair trials of most responsible persons	98.0
4	Avoid impunity	68.2	Promote the rule of law	83.1	Free and fair elections	86.0
5	Promote stability	66.1	Promote stability	81.4	Free media	86.0
6	Participation in the institutions of the state	65.6	Build trust	81.4	Promote the rule of law	82.0
7	Promote the rule of law	64.0	Democracy	81.4	Freedom of information	82.0
8	Build trust	62.2	Participation in the institutions of the state	81.4	Build trust	74.0
9	Free media	62.2	Free media	81.4	Promote peace	72.0
10	Promote peace	58.6	Promote reconciliation	79.7	Promote stability	72.0
11	Democracy	57.6	Promote peace	79.7	Avoid impunity	64.0
12	Freedom of information	46.5	Avoid impunity	78.0	Participation in the institutions of the state	48.0
12	Islamic government	44.7	Freedom of information	74.6	Promote reconciliation	26.0
14	Promote reconciliation	42.2	Islamic government	5.1	Islamic Government	0

[96] 'Establish the truth' was included in the original draft of this question but was replaced with 'Islamic government'.

Table 13.9. Justice priorities for the Syrian Opposition, Kurd and Alawite samples.

Question 3.2 Justice can be achieved in many different ways to help secure a lasting peace. Here is a list of different ways to implement justice that have been used successfully in different parts of the world to help end conflict. Can you please indicate which ones you consider to be 'Very important', 'Important', 'Of some importance', 'Of little importance' or 'Of no importance at all'?

	Syrian Opposition Percent Very Important		Kurd Percent Very Important		Alawite/Regime Percent Very Important	
1	Reform of government institutions	74.4	Restitution	94.9	National tribunals	100
2	Support civil society organisations	74.4	Reform of government institutions	86.4	Reintegration of banned individuals	98.0
3	National tribunals	67.4	National dialogue with all groups	84.7	Restitution	94.0
4	Monitor justice solutions	66.8	Truth commissions	81.4	Reform of government institutions	92.0
5	Restitution	61.0	Apologies	81.4	Monitor justice solutions	92.0
6	National dialogue with all groups	54.2	Reintegration of banned individuals	81.4	National dialogue with all groups	70.0
7	Reintegration of banned individuals	50.2	Monitor justice solutions	81.4	Apologies	66.0
8	Human rights commission/council	49.3	Human rights commission/council	79.7	Truth commissions	62.0
9	Truth commissions	44.7	Support civil society org*an*isations	79.7	Traditional courts	60.0
10	Special international tribunals	27.7	Memorials	67.8	Human rights commission/council	50.0
11	Permanent international tribunals	26.5	Special international tribunals	62.7	Support civil society org*an*isations	50.0
12	Memorials	21.4	Permanent international tribunals	57.6	Special international tribunals	44.0
12	Apologies	19.6	National tribunals	52.5	Memorials	42.0
14	Hybrid courts	18.6	Hybrid courts	39.0	Hybrid courts	28.0
15	Traditional courts	16.1	Traditional courts	0	Permanent international tribunals	24.0

Table 13.10. Loss and restitution priorities for the Syria Opposition sample as a whole.

Syria Opposition Sample	Financial Compensation[97]	Justice through Prosecutions	Justice through Truth [98]	Justice through truth seeking[99]	Restore property and livelihood	Peace and Amnesty	Cannot Say
Loss of head of household	42.0	51.6	1.7	0.6	0.8	3.0	0.2
Loss of husband or wife	38.3	60.9	1.9	1.4	0.4	4.2	0.5
Loss of son or daughter	18.9	70.6	2.1	1.7	0.3	5.2	1.3
Loss of business/ means of livelihood	57.6	5.1	1.7	1.1	34.1	0.5	0.3
Loss of house	76.1	3.2	1.0	0.7	18.8	0.2	0.1
Loss of limb	68.5	20.0	5.2	2.5	0.6	2.7	0.5
Loss of freedom through false imprisonment	17.4	47.8	13.2	11.9	0.5	8.7	0.5
Suffering due to torture	17.3	56.5	9.1	10.8	0.7	5.2	0.4

Table 13.11. Documentation centres used for the Syria Opposition sample as a whole, Kurds and Alawites.

Question 4.2 And, if any, which documentation centres have you used or corresponded with?

Documentation Centres	Syria Opposition	Kurd	Alawite
Interim Government Ministry	9.7	0	0
Interim Government Local Council	19.3	0	0
Civil society organisations (NGOs)	29.4	0	0
International organisations (for example ICRC)	10.8	0	0
None	48.5	100	100
Others	3.9	80.8	0

[97] The original draft of this question separated 'Financial Compensation' into both compensation for individuals and compensation for groups as a whole.
[98] The original draft for this item was 'Justice through truth and accountability'.
[99] The original draft for this item was 'Justice through apology and amnesty'.

Table 13.12. Syria Opposition, Kurd, Kurd Refugee, Male, Female and Alawite priorities for implementing justice through the courts.

Question 4.4 With regards to implementing justice through the courts in Syria can you please tell me which legal system is 'Most Acceptable', 'Acceptable', 'Somewhat Acceptable', 'A little Acceptable' or 'Not Acceptable at all'?

Per cent 'Most Acceptable'	Syria Opposition	Kurd	Kurd Refugee	Male	Female	Alawite
Syrian courts established under Syrian law in 1948 before Assad came to power	30	19	0	31	28	28
Syrian law and courts operating to UN international standards with international monitors	26	71	75	23	34	34
Syrian law and courts operating to standards set under the United Arabic Law	16	5	2	15	18	20
Combined Syrian and International courts using both Syrian and International judges	19	39	87	16	28	28
International courts with international law that excludes execution of criminals	5	38	58	4	7	24
Sharia law and courts	34	7	9	38	25	0

Violation of Human Rights

The Sunni majority had suffered more human rights violations than the Kurd minority with the Regime forces held most responsible although the Kurds also identified the Armed Brigades as significant abusers and this was increasingly true for the Kurd refugees displaced by ISIS (Tables 13.13 and 13.14). Abuses were recorded as both widespread and serious (Table 13.15) and as a consequence the prospects for justice without disbanding the relevant institutions (Table 13.16) or prosecution (Table 13.17), were limited at that time. However, in the longer term a significant majority from all ethnic and religious backgrounds would welcome a national dialogue to resolve Syria's problems (Table 13.18) and write a new constitution to international human rights standards (Table 13.19). Significantly Sunni, Kurds and Alawites all shared this same aspiration.

Table 13.13. Rates of human rights violations for the Syria Opposition, Sunni, Kurd, Kurd Refugee and Alawite samples as per cent.

Question 5.1. Have you personally or anyone close to you faced a violation in the field of human rights in Syria?

	Yes self	Yes relative	Yes Both	No
Syria Opposition	25.6	50.1	14.1	9.1
Sunni	27.6	47.5	17.8	6.1
Kurd	13.6	45.8	0	37.3
Kurd Refugee	0	98.1	0	1.9
Alawite	8.0	64.0	4.0	22.0

Table 13.14. Groups responsible for human rights violations for the Syria Opposition, Sunni, Kurd, Kurd Refugee and Alawite samples as per cent.

Question 5.2. Who committed violations against you or your relatives?

	Regime forces	Armed brigades	Both	Others	None
Syria Opposition	81.3	2.3	5.5	0.7	10.3
Sunni	83.1	1.4	7.4	0.9	7.2
Kurd	44.1	13.6	0	0	39.0
Kurd Refugee	0	98.1	0	0	1.9
Alawite	20.0	54.0	2.0	0	24.0

Table 13.15. Type of human right violations for the Syria Opposition sample as a whole, Sunni, Kurd, Kurd Refugee and Alawite samples as per cent.

Question 5.3 What is the type of violation that you or your relatives suffered from?

	Arrest	Tortured	Loss of Property	Threat	Displacement	Loss of Relative	Other
Syria Opposition	87.9	87.4	80.9	80.9	84.4	82.8	41.8
Sunni	91.7	91.1	86.8	89.7	89.7	89.4	52.7
Kurd	52.0	36.8	20.0	27.3	27.3	22.6	11.1
Kurd Refugee	98.1	98.1	98.1	96.4	96.7	97.3	0
Alawite	62.5	66.7	60.0	63.6	55.6	42.9	36.8

Table 13.16. Priority for the reform of government agencies and for the Syrian Opposition and Alawite samples as per cent 'Disband'.

Question 5.7 Please indicate which of the following organisations could remain unchanged or be rehabilitated, restructured or should be disbanded?

	Syrian Opposition sample	Per cent Disband	Alawite sample	Per cent Disband
1	Al-Bath party	91	Free Syrian Army	80
2	Air Force Intelligence	79	Air Force Intelligence	64
3	Political Security	69	Special forces	64
4	Military Security	66	State Security	48
5	State Security	62	Political Security	42
6	Special forces	51	Military Security	28
7	Syrian Army	36	Al-Bath party	24
8	Civil Order Police (Qwat Hefz Nezam)	25	The internal security forces (police)	0
9	Ministry of Defence	25	Ministry of Interior	0
10	The internal security forces (police)	20	Syrian Army	0
11	Free Syrian Army	19	Civil Order Police (Qwat Hefz Nezam)	0
12	Ministry of Interior	18	Ministry of Defence	0
13	Ministry of Oil and Mineral Reserves	13	Ministry of Local Administration	0
14	Ministry of Justice	12	Ministry of Justice	0
15	Ministry of Local Administration	10	Ministry of Health	0
16	Ministry of Finance	7	Ministry of Finance	0
17	Ministry of Telecommunications and Technology	6	Ministry of Oil and Mineral Reserves	0
18	Ministry of Higher Education	5	Ministry of Higher Education	0
19	Ministry of Health	4	Ministry of Telecommunications and Technology	0

Table 13.17. Government officials, human rights violations and retaining their posts for the Syria Opposition sample as a whole, Sunni, Kurds, Kurd Refugees and Alawite as per cent.

Question 5.8 Do you support posts being retained for government officials who haven't committed any violations? Yes/No

	Yes	No	DK
Syria Opposition sample	46.7	53.1	0.2
Sunni	49.2	50.7	0.1
Kurd	79.7	20.3	0
Kurd Refugee	44.2	55.8	0
Alawite sample	96.0	4.0	0

Table 13.18. Support for a national discussion of group relations in Syria for the Syria Opposition sample as a whole, Sunni and Kurds as per cent and Christians as number (n).

Question 5.12 Do you agree to have a national discussion on the ethnic, religious, national and historic problems in Syria in order to have solutions? Yes/No

	Yes	No	DK
Syria Opposition sample	84.8	14.2	1.0
Sunni	82.1	16.8	1.1
Kurd	96.6	3.4	0
Kurd Refugee	100	0	0
Alawite sample	68.0	32.0	0

Table 13.19. Support for a new constitution based on human rights for the Alawite sample and Kurd Refugee sample.

Question 5.13 Do you agree to the commitment of international human rights in drafting the new rules and constitution for the country? Yes/No

	Yes	No	DK
Syria Opposition sample	96.1	3.2	0.7
Sunni	95.3	4.0	0.7
Kurd	98.3	1.7	0
Kurd Refugee	100	0	0
Alawite sample	100	0	0

Conclusion

Although the Alawites and Sunni Opposition had different views regarding who was most responsible for the war and its continuation all sides place some blame with all the parties to the conflict and, critically, the Alawites wanted reform of Syrian institutions as much as the Sunni, Kurds and most probably other minorities as well. So, by putting the often fruitless 'blame game' to one side and by focusing on substantive matters of institutional reform progress and even a significant degree of consensus should not have been difficult to achieve between Sunni, Alawite and all the communities in Syria, at least at a 'people to people' level. What the political elites wanted was more problematic. But this is often the case and is particularly true for radical groups whose constituencies are nearly always very much smaller than the claims their leaders make. In this context the views of the 'silent majority', who wanted little more than an end to violence and an

opportunity to rebuild their lives in a political environment not subject to the failings of the past, can be a very constructive dynamic. Syria appeared to be no exception to this rule. In practice could this have been done? This pilot clearly demonstrated that it could but much more needed to be done.

Firstly a very much better and comprehensive questionnaire needed to be developed that covered all the major priorities and possibilities for institutional reform in Syria with input from as many Syrian voices as is possible. The NGOs that I worked with on such projects in Northern Ireland, Israel, Palestine and Sri Lanka were all very experienced in such matters as they had been in the 'business'of peace making for a generation. As a consequence the Northern Ireland Belfast Agreement became known as 'Sunnigdale for slow learners' as the agreement was not very different to one proposed a decade earlier at Sunnigdale. Similarly if we ever get a settlement in the Middle East it will likely be 'The Clinton Parameters/Taba proposals/Geneva Accords for slow learners' and in Sri Lanka an agreement there might be characterised as 'The full implementation of the 13th Amendment for slow learners.' However, by comparison the conflict in Syria was relatively 'young' and the NGOs there did not have this wealth of experience to build on. But this should not have been an impediment to them making progress. Peace processes have to start somewhere and this was a very good place to start.

Secondly this questionnaire needed to be tested across all the communities in Syria as well as those presently exiled to refugee camps. The samples collected for the pilots reviewed here could be improved on and extended to other areas. I was sure the NGOs operating in the region, with the right guidance and support, could do very much better in terms of both coverage and quality control. But governments were also commissioning polls across Syria with some results coming into the public domain, notably the work of ORB International (ORB, 2014, 2015).[100] Their samples were excellent given the hostile environment but understandably expensive. Having said that these costs were as nothing when compared to the costs of caring for millions of refugees and waging war.

Thirdly this exercise needed to be tied into a political process, preferably formally but if necessary, informally, so that the effort was not just another academic exercise. Dissemination, discussion and opportunities for decision-making had to be a planned part of the exercise. Having said that the sponsors of such research should not simply wait for a

[100] A pdf file of the sample breakdown is available from the ORB International website available here: http://www.orb-international.com/perch/resources/syriadatatablesjuly2014.pdf

'ripe moment' as such research can also help to create a ripe moment or, at the very least, be there with a result to be used when a ripe moment presents itself on the international stage. This pilot study was started before the rise of ISIL and 'talks' in Cairo and Moscow. A comprehensive study of all the possibilities for a peaceful solution to the war in Syria could have been completed before these events and probably before Geneva II. It should have been done in preparation for Geneva III and I said so in both my Syria report (Irwin, 2014) and in a paper presented at a regional WAPOR conference held in Doha, Qatar, in March 2015 (Irwin, 2015). But nothing was done and Geneva III failed in January 2016.

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What happened next

I had completed the pilot study with TDA on the clear understanding that they would support a comprehensive peace poll. But they went back on their word claiming they did not have sufficient funds for such a project. Instead, using the methods I had developed with them, they undertook a series of partisan polls that focused on the needs and aspirations of the Syrians in areas controlled by the FSA or, when they did collect samples in Regime held areas, failed to test options for peace that included a role for the Regime in some way (TDA 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018). Significantly, independent polling completed by ORB International for the BBC (2015) clearly demonstrated considerable support for President Assad in Regime held areas (ORB, 2015). Without systematic input to questionnaire design from those who held a Syrian Regime perspective of events, the possibility of using the polling research to help bring an end to the war was a 'non-starter', and the war did not end.

In 2016 I received another invitation to run a peace polls workshop in Gaziantep (Irwin, 2016). For all the methodological and 'politics of peace research' reasons set out in Chapter 1, and in the standards set for WAPOR and the UN in Appendices I and II, transparency and publication are core essential requirements for peace polls research. But I was told that delegates to this workshop would include Syrians from both sides of the conflict, including those with good contacts with the Regime in Damascus. So I reluctantly agreed to keep the research confidential, as the project would not go ahead with my participation on any other basis. I must therefore restrict my comments to only its context and the outcome.

This third workshop went very well with the research achieving everything I hoped for, and that I had failed to achieve in the previous two workshops. The organisers did a very good job under very difficult

circumstances, but the results were never shared or made public. Perhaps they were not helpful to their cause? Or perhaps a third party with an agenda that was not focused on peace making wanted to carry on with the prosecution of the war, and did not want these results to see the light of day? If that was the case then they got what they wanted. The war continued with the Kurds, supported by the Americans, taking ground from ISIS, and the Assad Regime, supported by Russia and Iran, taking ground from the Syrian Opposition.

TDA completed a poll on constitutional issues in 2017 and published it in July 2018 (TDA 2018). But as with their previous polls it failed to test their agenda against the preferred options of the Regime. Without buy-in from all parties to the conflict it could not make a significant contribution to UN peace negotiations which continued to fail. Staffan de Mistura resigned his post as the UN's Special Envoy in November 2018, to be replaced by a Norwegian, Ambassador Geir Pedersen in January 2019. The peace polls run with the cooperation of his fellow countryman in Sri Lanka, Ambassador Tore Hattrem (Chapter 6), did not end the conflict there, but they did make a positive contribution to a more inclusive political discourse, which was much needed in Syria. 'No Peace Without Justice' is an admirable aspiration but first the killing had to stop and that required compromise. There was no compromise only death.

In October 2019 I met a Russian delegation to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Moldova and had an opportunity to discuss the failure of my various peace polling projects in Syria with the Russian Ambassador (Irwin, 2019). I suggested to him that perhaps I should have taken my concerns about the failings of the polling research to their Embassy in London. He said I should have and perhaps I had missed an opportunity to complete a more inclusive piece of work that might have had a better prospect of having some impact on events in Syria. I can only blame myself for this omission but following my collaboration with the UN, starting some twelve years earlier in 2007, to set standards for independent peace polls, the blame cannot be all mine. So how can we get the UN to do their job and/or get the international community to do it for them?

14

Pax Populi, Pax Dei, Pax Mundi, and a World Peace Poll

Making and keeping peace in the World is both the legal and political responsibility of the UN and the moral responsibility of all states and their citizens. Peace polls, when done with the full consent and cooperation of all parties to a conflict can help map out a path to peace. So they should always be done. The relevant political elites may choose not to follow that path. That is a matter for them, but their citizens and the World should know what steps can be taken to achieve peace through compromise, rather than force of arms, suffering and violent death. Standard setting by both the UN and World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) has not achieved this legal and moral objective. So how can simply asking those caught up in a violent conflict, what they would be willing to accept to achieve peace, be made a normal part of conflict resolution efforts, always? Increasingly commerce and culture are shared across a digital world in our post-industrial age of knowledge exchange, and the globalization of knowledge should and can include peace-making, starting with a World Peace Poll.

When I was first asked if I could do this by GMI to produce a world peace index to complement their Anholt-GMI National Brands Index[101] in 2005, I suggested I could not do so as I then took the view that the limited number of conflicts I had studied were so different I was not in a position to make such comparisons (Irwin 2005b). But in 2006 I did complete an online project with GMI in the UK (Chapter 8) and an Australian philanthropist, Steve Killelea, initiated the Global Peace Index (GPI)[102] in 2007. It has presently become the most widely cited peace index and is

[101] Anholt-GfK Roper National Brands Index available at:
http://www.gfkamerica.com/practice_areas/roper_pam/nbi_index/index.en.html
[102] Global Peace Index (GPI) available at:
http://www.visionofhumanity.org

produced annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)[103] with offices in Sydney, Washington and New York. Using a variety of data from The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)[104] various UN agencies and NGOs it employs 23 variables dealing with wars, deaths, crimes, armaments, political stability etc. all weighted for their relative importance by a panel of experts. In 2012 Iceland came out on top of this rank ordered list of 165 states with a score of 1.113 while Somalia came bottom with a score of 3.392 where a low score indicates most peaceful and a high score less peaceful/more aggression, conflict (see GPI at IEP for methodology).

With regards to the analysis of conflicts and policies for their resolution the most well-known authoritative publicly available research is undertaken by the International Crisis Group (ICG)[105] who produce monthly reviews of all the major conflicts in the world. This is done using the kind of data produced for the GPI plus input from their own analysts in the field. They have offices in Brussels, Washington and New York. Critically the GPI indices and ICG recommendations for conflict resolution are based on third party analysis undertaken by country and international experts using various forms of political and risk assessment. This work creates a valuable source of information for governments and investors to make political and financial calculations and decisions. But the methodologies are distinctly more top down than bottom up and are therefore relatively weak in terms of what could be characterized as the people's perspective of domestic, regional and global conflict. This would be particularly true from the standpoint of various ethnic and religious groups. By way of contrast the peace polls method emphasizes the opinions of publics and public diplomacy as the primary method of analysis and conflict resolution with a methodology that focuses on the causes of conflict and their remedies from a distinctly local perspective.

However, after ten years of peace poll research and experience around the world patterns emerged that allowed for comparative work to be undertaken and conclusions drawn about the primary causes and remedies of conflict from the perspective of the participants (Chapter 11). When I presented this analysis as a paper to the WAPOR Annual Conference in Hong Kong (Irwin, 2012), Yashwant Deshmukh asked me if I would like to try and develop it into a general research instrument that could be used globally by testing it across the 27 States and 6 Union Territories of India

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[103] Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) available at:
http://economicsandpeace.org
[104] Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) available at:
http://www.eiu.com/site_info.asp?info_name=about_eiu
[105] International Crisis Group (ICG) reports available at:
http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/crisiswatch.aspx

using CATI, and with additional tests run in the UK and US using the Google platform. This was done and we presented the results at the 2013 WAPOR Annual Conference in Boston (Irwin and Deshmukh, 2013) to produce a workable perceptions based questionnaire covering problems to be solved, intensity of conflict and potential partners for peace as below.

Questionnaire Design for a global 'Peoples Peace Index' (PPI)

1. Problems Questions

Question 1.1 We are conduction a survey of all the countries in the world to better understand the causes of violent conflict and how to resolve them. But every place is different so first of all can you please tell me what you think is the most serious problem that has to be dealt with in your country?[106] *Write in……..*

	US n=200	Per cent	UK n=200	Per cent
1	Gun control	10.9	Immigration	8.3
2	Guns	9.0	Jobs	3.9
3	Economy	3.0	Terrorism	3.9
4	Gun violence	2.5	Drugs	3.4
5	Terrorism	2.5	Crime	2.9
6	Jobs	2.0	Corruption	2.5
7	Poverty	2.0	Economy	2.5
8	Crime	1.5	Guns	2.5
9	Mental illness	1.5	War	2.5
10	Security	1.5	DK	2.0

Table 14.1. *With regards to peace and security in your country what is the most serious problem that has to be resolved?* Top 10 from Google US and UK pilot samples of 200.

Sir Robert Worcestor and Gaura Shukla independently recommended that we start with an open-ended question to capture particular problems that may be of significant importance at the time the questionnaire is administered. When run in the US shortly after the Sandy Hook Elementary School killings, using a Google compatible derivative of this

[106] The PPI generally uses the term 'country' here. However, when comparing various Indian States the term 'state' was used. Alternatively, 'province', 'region' or other category could be used depending on the comparisons that are the focus of the research.

question,[107] the result was 'Gun Control' and when run in the UK it was 'Immigration' (Table 14.1) this being an item of much discussion at the time in the context of EU expansion. The results for India[108] are given in Table 14.2 along with the results for some individual Indian States.

	India n=174	Per cent	Gujarat n=62	Per cent	J & K n=57	Per cent
1	Can't say	18	No problem	45	Corruption	23
2	Corruption	16	Price hike	10	Unemployment	18
3	Unemployment	15	Unemployment	10	No problem	12
4	Price hike	6	Can't say	8	Terrorism	9
5	Drinking water	5	Corruption	8	Casteism	7
6	No problem	5	Drinking water	7	Can't say	5
7	Poor road condition	5	Alcoholism	2	Basic development	5
8	Poverty	4	Irrigation water	2	India Pakistan conflict	4
9	Basic development	3	Low price of crops	2	Traffic	4
10	Electricity problems	3	Political leaders	2	Migration	2

Table 14.2. Per cent most serious problems for India, Gujarat, and Jammu and Kashmir (Top 10 from Indian pilot samples of 174 with boosters for Gujarat and J & K).

Figure 14.1. *Question 1.2 Now with regards to violent conflict in general I will read you a list of problems that have to be dealt with in different parts of the world. For each problem can you please tell me if it is 'Very Significant', 'Significant, 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little Significance' or 'Of No Significance At All' in your country?*[109]

[107] Google was used for the US and UK pilots for ease of access at a budget price. However 'violent conflict' had to be replaced with 'peace and security' to meet Google editorial requirements and each question had to be asked separately so that the informant did not have the benefit of knowing the overall intention of the survey, cross tabulations were unavailable and there was no provision for an ethnic demographic. No doubt these present limitations will be resolved as this product is developed further.

[108] The Indian pilots were completed by the Team CVoter Foundation using RDD by CATI data collection methods. There were four pilots in all running different versions of the questions sometimes in India as a whole for an all India sample and sometimes in various States of India. The size of these various samples are given in the tables whenever the results are presented.

[109] The scale adopted here is the one used for all the 'problems' questions in all previous peace polls.

Problems		Very Significant	Significant	Some Significance	Little Significance	No Significance At All
1	Poor economy and unemployment[110]					
2	Low standards of education[111]					
3	Poor health care, roads & electrical supply[112]					
4	Lack of food and clean water[113]					
5	Corrupt Government[114]					
6	Corruption and criminality in general[115]					
7	Lack of free press and media[116]					
8	Media that insights hatred[117]					
9	Elections not free and fair[118]					
10	Lack of democratic accountability[119]					
11	Discrimination and sectarianism[120]					
12	Prejudice and personal safety[121]					
13	Lack of language and cultural rights[122]					

[110] *Poor economy and unemployment* - comes up as an item of discrimination when there is a differential between groups or more generally in post conflict states (e.g. Sri Lanka and Bosnia and Herzegovina).
[111] *Low standards of education* - comes up as an item of discrimination when there is a differential between groups or poverty in general (e.g. Pakistan)
[112] *Poor health care, roads and electrical supply* - came up as top items amongst nomads in Sudan. An earlier draft of this item used in the pilots was *Poor health care and infrastructure* but roads and electrical supply continually came up in the 'other problems' question and as these items had come up in Sudan the rather vague term *infrastructure* has been replaced with *roads and electrical supply*.
[113] *Lack of food and clean water* - this item was also a top priority for nomads in Sudan.
[114] *Corrupt Government* - this was a common problem throughout the Balkans.
[115] *Corruption and criminality in general* - corruption came in as the top problem in Kashmir above violence.
[116] *Lack of free press and media* - was a problem across the Balkans and in Sri Lanka.
[117] *Media that insights hatred* - is seen as a serious problem by Israelis and Muslims in Western states.
[118] *Elections not free and fair* – a top problem in Macedonia and often a common problem for all groups both majorities and minorities.
[119] *Lack of democratic accountability* – a problem for minorities and more generally in the Balkans/Eastern Europe.
[120] *Discrimination and sectarianism* – a problem for minorities, Catholics in Northern Ireland, Tamils in Sri Lanka, Albanians in Macedonia etc.
[121] *Prejudice and personal safety* - a serious problem for Serbs in Kosovo.

14	UN resolutions & human rights violations[123]					
15	Poor political leadership[124]					
16	No political solution to end conflict[125]					
17	No effective negotiations to end conflict[126]					
18	So many killed and displaced by violence[127]					
19	No justice and reconciliation[128]					
20	The actions of the police[129]					
21	The actions of the army[130]					
22	The actions of terrorists and militants[131]					
23	The actions of rebels and freedom fighters[132]					
24	The military actions of foreign forces[133]					
25	The government's foreign military engagements[134]					

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[122] *Lack of language and cultural rights* – a minority problem particularly for Tamils in Sri Lanka and Buddhists in Kashmir.
[123] *UN resolutions and human rights violations* – a particular grievance for Palestinians and other minorities more generally.
[124] *Poor political leadership* – again a problem for Palestinians.
[125] *No political solution to end conflict* – a top problem for all sides in Kashmir.
[126] *No effective negotiations to end conflict* – this applies to Kashmiris, Israelis, Palestinians and Tamils.
[127] *So many killed and displaced by violence* – applies to all significant numbers of IDPs and refugees particularly in Darfur and post conflict Bosnia & Herzegovina.
[128] *No justice and reconciliation* – a problem in most post conflict societies where there have been many deaths such as Darfur and Kosovo.
[129] *The actions of the police* – a majority/minority problem in Northern Ireland for Catholics and minorities more generally.
[130] *The actions of the army* – when conflict is escalating then the army can become a problem for minorities, for example in Northern Ireland during the conflict there and Sri Lanka during the civil war. However the majorities will have quite a different view.
[131] *The actions of terrorists and militants* – this, to various degrees, is a problem for the majority community in most states while various minorities may not share this view. The Indian pilot used *The actions of the rebels* here in an effort to be neutral between 'terrorists' on the one hand and 'freedom fighters' on the other but this subtlety did not work well in the US and UK.
[132] *The actions of rebels and freedom fighters* – from the premise that 'one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter' this distinction is made here by including both 'terrorists' and 'freedom fighters' as separate categories. In the Indian pilot the category used here was *Rebel fighters from other countries*.
[133] *The military actions of foreign forces* – this would be true for any people subject to violence or occupation by another state and would apply to Palestinians while many Muslim Kashmiris would also take this view of India.
[134] *The government's foreign military engagements* – this view would be held by sections of society, particularly Muslims, in the US and UK regarding their government's activities in the Middle East.

Most of these 'problems' are common to most conflicts to various degrees. However, the footnotes highlight some of the examples where particular problems came at or near the top of different groups/peoples' problems lists (Chapter 11). In an effort to keep the list down to a maximum of 25 some problems, such as 'economy and unemployment' were bundled together. Strictly speaking this should not be done, however all informants are also given an opportunity to state their most serious 'problem' in question 1.1 as a separate issue. Additionally, for ease of interview, the problems were arranged from least sensitive to most sensitive.

Although the responses to the questions can be used to create indexes such values tend to be influenced by culture. However, these cultural biases that can inflate or deflate such values are for the most part eliminated when the 'problems' are rank ordered. This rank ordering can be done for each state, regions within a state, for the majority in a state, and its various minorities to facilitate a conflict analysis, in terms of priorities for what may need to be done to resolve conflict or potential conflict. These rank orders also indicate where the state is in terms of the cycle of conflict (pre-violent, violent, post-violence/peace). A number of critical additional analyses can also be made with respect to various majorities and minorities within each state and 'flagged up' for concern and attention if, for example, a 'problem' at the top of one group's list is low down on another group's list and so on and so on. Results for this question were analysed for India as a whole (Table 14.10), the States of Chhattisgarh, Manipur, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir and Assam (Table 14.11) as well as the US and UK with results for Syria given in Chapter 13, Table 13.2 (see Irwin and Deshmukh, 2013 for full results).

2. Conflict Intensity Questions

Question 2.1 How would you rate the condition of peace and conflict in your country as of today? Please rate on a 1 to 10 scale where '1' means 'Fully Peaceful' and '10' means 'Extreme Conflict' in your country? [1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10]

The index generated in Table 14.3 appears to be quite logical with J & K getting the highest score at 5.40 and Gujarat the lowest at 3.87 although we might have thought the 2002 Godhra riots in Gujarat would have produced a higher index. But the riots were limited to certain Districts and the

question asked was '…as of today?' Similarly when the equivalent Google pilot question was asked in the UK and US the US results for each region appeared to correlate with the results for the US Peace Index (USPI, 2012) produced by the IEP with the Southern States coming out as least peaceful and although the observation for Northern Ireland was based on a very small percentage of the UK sample the trend appeared to correlate with recent disturbances in the Province.

Table 14.3. Conflict Intensity Index pilot test for India, US and UK.

State	Index
INDIA	5.01
Gujarat	3.87
J & K	5.40
Tamil Nadu	4.27

State	Index
USA	5.7
USA West	5.1
USA Midwest	5.6
USA Northeast	5.9
USA South	6.8

State	Index
UK	4.0
England	4.0
Northern Ireland	5.8
Scotland	3.5
Wales	3.0

Question 2.2 Is there or has there recently been a violent conflict in your country?
YES or NO (If NO go to next question [3] if YES go to question [2.3] below)

Although the '1 to 10 scale' conflict intensity question did produce a result these results may say as much about the culture of those being interviewed as it does about the intensity of conflict. Comparisons between groups that share a common culture within a state may be more valid than comparisons between states. The Personal Wellbeing Index (WPI) was piloted across India and was subject to this difficulty. However, a clearer and less ambiguous conflict intensity index was created simply by asking the informant if there is or has recently been a violent conflict in their country. Table 14.4 lists the results of such a question for 4 Indian states. This result was quite unambiguous with Assam in the greatest difficulty at 69 per cent 'Yes'.

Table 14.4. Per cent conflict/recent conflict for States of India.

State	Yes	No	Can't Say	n
Punjab	17	72	11	124
Chhattisgarh	30	61	9	128
Manipur	31	55	14	132
Assam	69	20	11	124

Question 2.3 And do you think the situation regarding violent conflict in your country is getting 'worse', or is the situation getting 'better', or perhaps you think there is 'no change'?
[Much Worse - Worse - No Change - Better - Much Better]

In the monthly ICG reports all the states being included in their survey are coded as either having their conflict getting better, getting worse or as having no change. Question 2.3 does the same from the point of view of the informant being interviewed. The results of the pilot in India, the US and UK produced very subjective but informative results as does an equivalent question for corruption run by Transparency International (2013). They dealt with this problem by complementing their subjective question with a socio-metric question that measures the rate of corruption. The same can be done for violent conflict with a variant of a similar question run in Syria (Chapter 13, Table 13.15) as follows:

Question 2.4 And as a result of the violent conflict please indicate if you or any member of your family has been the victim of:
2.4.1 Violent riots/protests… Yes/No
2.4.2 Violent attack… Yes/No
2.4.3 Damage and/or loss of property… Yes/No
2.4.4 Physical harm… Yes/No
2.4.5 Arrest… Yes/No
2.4.6 Imprisonment… Yes/No
2.4.7 Torture… Yes/No
2.4.8 Death… Yes/No

3. Other Countries Questions

Question 3.1 Which country does the most for world peace?
Write in……..
Question 3.2 Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?
Write in……..
Question 3.3 Which country is your country's strongest ally?
Write in……..
Question 3.4 Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?
Write in……..
Question 3.5 And which non-state organisation (militant, paramilitary or terrorist) is the greatest threat to peace in your country?
Write in……..

The GPI rank orders all the states surveyed from the most to the least peaceful. Questions 1 and 2 can do this with a number of indexes but it will also be possible to produce several more subjective indexes based on the opinions of the persons being interviewed. Question 3.1 to 3.4 asks the informant to say which state does the most for world peace or is the greatest threat to world peace and which state is their strongest ally or greatest threat to their state. This methodology more closely follows the method used by the Anholt-GfK Roper National Brands Index, which asks the members of the states being surveyed to rate other states.

When run in India the results for this question were consistent and well balanced with India doing the most for world peace, Pakistan the greatest threat to world peace, 'Can't Say' the strongest ally and Pakistan the greatest threat to India (Table 14.5). Additionally, when this is looked at for different Indian states there are some subtle differences, which point to the accuracy of this question. For example respondents in J & K are far more concerned about Pakistan and China as a threat to India than their counterparts in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu (Irwin and Deshmukh, 2013). The results for equivalent questions run in the USA and UK in the Google pilot are given in Tables 14.6 and 14.7. Finally Question 3.5 has been added to identify non-sate actors that could be a threat to peace in the informant's country.

Table 14.5. 'Other Countries' per cent response for INDIA where n=174 and 0.6=one response.

Which country does the most for world peace?		Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?		Which country is your country's strongest ally?		Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?	
India	39.1	Pakistan	37.9	Can't say	43.7	Pakistan	46.6
Can't say	30.5	Can't say	31.6	Russia	24.7	Can't say	27.6
USA	23.0	China	11.5	USA	23.6	China	19.0
Russia	2.3	USA	10.3	China	3.4	USA	6.3
Australia	1.7	Afghanistan	4.0	Japan	1.1	Germany	0.6
China	1.1	Gulf country	1.1	Africa	0.6		
Saudi Arabia	0.6	Iraq	1.1	Bangladesh	0.6		
New Zealand	0.6	India	0.6	England	0.6		
Israel	0.6	Iran	0.6	No one	0.6		
England	0.6	Israel	0.6	Pakistan	0.6		
		Japan	0.6	Sri Lanka	0.6		

Table 14.6. 'Other Countries' per cent response for the US (n=200) in the Google pilot.

Which country does the most for world peace?		Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?		Which country is your country's strongest ally?		Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?	
USA	56.2	Iran	32.5	UK	45.3	Iran	17.9
Switzerland	5.5	North Korea	12.5	Canada	13.4	USA	15.9
None	4.0	USA	11.0	USA	7.5	North Korea	7.0
Canada	3.0	China	7.5	Israel	7.0	China	5.5
DK	2.5	Iraq	3.5	China	4.0	Afghanistan	5.0
Sweden	2.5	Israel	2.5	DK	3.5	Iraq	5.0
UK	2.0	DK	2.0	Mexico	3.0	DK	3.0

Table 14.7. 'Other Countries' per cent response for the UK (n=200) in the Google pilot.

Which country does the most for world peace?		Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?		Which country is your country's strongest ally?		Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?	
UK	27.9	US	26.5	US	53.2	US	21.3
US	14.4	North Korea	12.0	UK	14.9	Iran	9.9
None	5.5	China	8.5	DK	1.5	UK	5.4
Switzerland	4.5	Iran	8.5	Germany	1.5	Afghanistan	4.0
Sweden	3.5	Iraq	3.5	Scotland	1.5	None	4.0
France	3.0	Korea	3.5	Brazil	1.0	Iraq	3.0
Israel	2.5	Afghanistan	2.5	Canada	1.0	Israel	3.0
		UK	2.5	China	1.0	DK	2.5
		Israel	2.0	France	1.0	North Korea	2.5

4. Solutions Questions

For the India pilot informants were invited to suggest 'solutions' for any problem they identified in question 1.1 or that they considered to be 'Very Significant' in question 1.2. This produced an edited list of 34 solutions that were tested in a second wave of the questionnaire (Table 14.8). Similarly when running this questionnaire globally this could be done for any country in a second wave. However, in a first wave a list of global solutions for global problems could be tested.

Figure 14.2. *Question 4.1 Here is a list of steps that could be taken by the international community in an effort to reduce the levels of violent conflict around the world. Please indicate which options you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable', or completely 'Unacceptable' under any circumstances.*

Solutions		Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
1	Solution option					
2	Solution option					
3	Solution option					
4	Etc.					
5	Etc.					
25	Always ask the local people caught up in a violent conflict what they believe needs to be done to stop the violent conflict.					

Question 4.2 And finally do you have another solution you would like to add to end violent conflict?
Write in……..

Table 14.8. Top ten of 34 Solutions rank ordered for India as a whole where n=108

Solutions		Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
1	Enforce strict laws against terrorism	79	7	7	1	7
2	Establish commission and stronger laws to end discrimination	75	11	5	2	1
3	Independent agency to investigate all corruption	74	10	6	3	2
4	All Black Money to be accounted for	73	12	7	1	2
5	Monitor all basic Human Rights in India	73	11	8	1	1
6	Maintain strict border controls	73	8	8	1	1
7	Stop provocative religious processions	73	4	10	2	5
8	Modern standards of agriculture and irrigation	70	14	6	1	2
9	All political parties should work together to resolve conflicts	69	15	6	2	2
10	Expand public and private sector for employment	69	11	9	1	3

5. Demographic Questions

In addition to creating a peace index the data generated can also be used to make preliminary analysis of the conflicts sampled in terms of ethnic, religious, political and other social demographic factors. For example, as would be expected trans-global Muslim concerns about US influence in the world places the US at the top of their 'greatest threat to world peace' list in the 'Other Countries' question, but only just ahead of Pakistan followed by Israel and Afghanistan, who tie for third place on the Indian pilot list (Table 14.9). Importantly Muslims still consider the US and Russia to be India's strongest allies, Pakistan to be the greatest threat to India and India to be doing the most for world peace. Muslims share this view with the rest of India (Table 14.5). Clearly the majority of Muslims in this Indian sample are not significantly different to other citizens of India in as much as they do not appear to represent a threat to Indian peace and stability. Their particular concerns regarding US foreign policy may only be limited to US support for Israel.

Table 14.9. Top Five 'Other Countries' per cent response for the states of Assam, Chhattisgarh Manipur and Punjab (n=508) run in the Indian Pilot broken down for Muslims (n=53).

Which country does the most for world peace?		Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?		Which country is your country's strongest ally?		Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?	
India	43.4	US	37.7	Can't Say	50.9	Pakistan	35.8
Can't Say	31.6	Can't Say	30.2	US	20.8	Can't Say	34.0
Singapore	7.5	Pakistan	22.6	Sri Lanka	3.8	China	17.0
China	7.5	Israel	3.8	China	3.8	US	7.5
Japan	3.8	Afghanistan	3.8	Pakistan	3.8	No one	5.7

However, when comparisons are also made for India as a whole, ethnic/religious groups in India as a whole and regional/state differences, the effects of scale or level of observation and analysis become very apparent. For example, when comparing India as a whole with the Muslim community in India the results are not particularly different. But there is a trend on some items. Significantly 'So many killed and displaced by violence' comes in 8th at 34 per cent 'very significant' for India as a whole, 6th at 53 per cent for Muslims in India (Table 14.10) then 1st at 79 per cent in Assam and first again for Muslims in Assam at 85 per cent 'very significant' (Table 14.11). Critically 'No political solution to end conflict' is 2nd on this Muslim list also at 85 per cent 'very significant' in Assam, down at 4th on the all Assam list at 75 per cent, then 18th at 31 per cent on

the all India Muslim list and 17th at 26 per cent for all of India. Regrettably the last time we saw violence and no political solution at the top of any communities list was in Sri Lanka for the Northern Tamils, and this was a year after the end of their civil war (Chapter 6, Table 6.13). Clearly there was a very serious problem in Assam requiring 'solutions' acceptable to all, and significantly our pilot peace index had successfully identified this problem!

Similarly 'Solutions' can be analysed by any demographic collected as they have been throughout the analyses presented in this book. Most importantly the demographic questions should include nationality, ethnicity, race, religion and language appropriate to the demographics of the state being surveyed. In this way the PPI can be broken down, not only by state, but also by the majority and significant minorities within each state. Clearly it will also be possible to analyse the results transnationally for demographic variables such as religion (Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Shia, Sunni etc.) or language (English, Arabic, Chinese etc.) to produce a number of transnational PPIs using edited selections from the World Values Survey and other regional barometers to allow for comparisons between other internationally collected data sets by including the basic demographics of gender, age, education, marital status, household, income, urban/rural, type of habitat, size of town and region.

Additionally, there are a few items that need some special attention and these should be reviewed at the cognitive testing stage of the questionnaire. For example the coding for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 'employment' in 'militant' or 'paramilitary' as well as military organisations. Finally it will be necessary to include a political affiliation/preference question specific to each country. This is done in the World Values Survey with a 'who would you vote for/never vote for?' question. But given the importance of various 'militant' and 'paramilitary' groups in this survey it will be necessary to add or substitute a question along the lines of 'which group most strongly represents your views?' and 'does not represent your views at all?' followed by a country specific list that includes political parties, national groups of 'militants' and internationally banned transnational organisations that are on the major international organisation 'terrorist' lists.

Table 14.10. Rank order of 25 general conflict problems for India and Muslims in India.

	India N=1202	Per cent Very Significant	India Muslim N=77	Per cent Very Significant
1	Poor health care and infrastructure	68	Poor health care and infrastructure	68
2	Poor economy and unemployment	62	Poor economy and unemployment	62
3	Low standards of education	60	Low standards of education	60
4	Lack of food and clean water	57	Lack of food and clean water	57
5	Corrupt Government	55	Corrupt Government	55
6	So many killed and displaced by violence	53	So many killed and displaced by violence	53
7	Corruption and criminality in general	51	Corruption and criminality in general	51
8	No justice and reconciliation	49	No justice and reconciliation	49
9	Elections not free and fair	43	Elections not free and fair	43
10	Discrimination and sectarianism	42	Discrimination and sectarianism	42
11	The actions of the police	40	The actions of the police	40
12	Poor political leadership	40	Poor political leadership	40
13	Lack of democratic accountability	39	Lack of democratic accountability	39
14	Rebel fighters from other countries	39	Rebel fighters from other countries	39
15	No effective negotiations to end conflict	39	No effective negotiations to end conflict	39
16	The actions of the rebels	38	The actions of the rebels	38
17	Lack of free press and media	36	Lack of free press and media	36
18	No political solution to end conflict	31	No political solution to end conflict	31
19	Prejudice and personal safety	30	Prejudice and personal safety	30
20	Media that insights hatred	29	Media that insights hatred	29
21	Lack of language and cultural rights	29	Lack of language and cultural rights	29
22	UN resolutions and human rights violations	26	UN resolutions and human rights violations	26
23	The actions of the army	21	The actions of the army	21
24	The military actions of foreign forces	20	The military actions of foreign forces	20
25	The government's foreign military engagements	16	The government's foreign military engagements	16

Table 14.11. Rank order of 25 general conflict problems for Assam and Muslims in Assam.

	Assam N=124	Per cent Very Significant	Assam Muslim N=39	Per cent Very Significant
1	So many killed and displaced by violence	79	So many killed and displaced by violence	85
2	Poor economy and unemployment	78	No political solution to end conflict	85
3	Corruption and criminality in general	78	Poor economy and unemployment	82
4	No political solution to end conflict	75	Corrupt Government	82
5	Corrupt Government	73	No justice and reconciliation	80
6	No effective negotiations to end conflict	70	Discrimination and sectarianism	80
7	UN resolutions and human rights violations	69	No effective negotiations to end conflict	77
8	Discrimination and sectarianism	69	Corruption and criminality in general	74
9	No justice and reconciliation	68	Poor health care and infrastructure	74
10	Low standards of education	68	UN resolutions and human rights violations	72
11	Poor health care and infrastructure	65	Low standards of education	69
12	Lack of food and clean water	65	The actions of the police	64
13	The actions of the police	61	Prejudice and personal safety	64
14	The actions of the army	60	Poor political leadership	64
15	Prejudice and personal safety	58	Lack of language and cultural rights	59
16	Poor political leadership	56	Lack of food and clean water	59
17	Lack of democratic accountability	55	Rebel fighters from other countries	56
18	Elections not free and fair	54	The actions of the rebels	54
19	Lack of language and cultural rights	53	The actions of the army	54
20	Rebel fighters from other countries	52	Elections not free and fair	54
21	Lack of free press and media	52	Media that insights hatred	54
22	The actions of the rebels	52	Lack of free press and media	51
23	Media that insights hatred	50	Lack of democratic accountability	49
24	The military actions of foreign forces	42	The military actions of foreign forces	36
25	The government's foreign military engagements	33	The government's foreign military engagements	26

Sample design for a global 'Peoples Peace Index' (PPI)

The application of the peace polls method has been done on an ad hoc basis and generally bespoke to a particular theatre of violence receiving international attention (UNDPKO, 2013). However, many contemporary conflicts of greatest concern to the international community are not limited to national/state boundaries and by extension are not limited to national/state samples. In 2016 these conflicts included, but were not limited to, the conflict over competing claims to seabed resources in the South China Sea, the conflict in the Ukraine and the conflicts across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as a result of the Arab Spring (RUSI, 2015 and Pew, 2015 for public awareness of these conflicts). Critically, these kinds of 'Glocal' (Stewart, 2016) conflicts can not be adequately sampled and tracked with traditional national/state samples as they have local, national, regional, transnational and sometimes global characteristics. The costs of global samples based on national samples are too high to make them sustainable for tracking purposes and semi-global samples can miss important elements of such conflicts. Additionally both methodologies can also miss critical sub-populations engaged in violent conflict. The use of 'Global Centric' samples, that view the world as a single entity, with appropriate boosters for critical sub-populations can solve these problems (Irwin, 2015a).[135]

For example Table 14.12 summarises the major sample features of the two omnibus polls undertaken annually by Gallup and WIN Gallup International on a worldwide basis characterised here as 'Semi-Global'. Two omnibus polls undertaken by Ipsos/MORI and Globescan characterised as 'Sub-Global' and the 'Global' sample proposed by the Gilani Research Foundation (Gilani, I. and Gilani, B. 2013). Significantly the high costs and length of time it takes to collect the Gallup World Poll and the limited global coverage of the commercial market research semi-global samples (here Globescan and Ipsos/MORI) render them less cost effective for tracking global events than the Global Centric sample proposed by Gilani. The WIN Gallup International End of Year poll falls somewhere between the other polls in terms of both cost and coverage but still falls short of the Global Centric model in terms of cost effectiveness, sample time and world coverage (Irwin, 2015a). Significantly ALL these polls require booster samples for critical sub-populations, to monitor and track conflicts around the world, including the extensive Gallup World Poll.

[135] Also see Smith (2015) for a review of the Globalization of Surveys.

Table 14.12. Global, semi-global and sub-global surveys, the number of states sampled, interview method, per cent of global sample, sample size 'n', frequency of sample and units of analysis.

Survey	Type of Sample	Number of States	Interview Methods	Global Sample %	Total Sample 'n'	Frequency of Sample	Units of Analysis
Gallup World Poll	Semi-Global	120 (2014)[136]	Mixed	Up to 160 states at 99%	143,000	6 months, 1 and 2 Years	120 states
WIN Gallup End of Year	Semi-Global	65 (2014)	Mixed	Weighted for global average[137]	64,000	1 Year	65 states
Globescan	Sub-Global	24 (2014)[138]	Mixed	65%	24,000	1 Year	24 states
Ipsos/MORI	Sub-Global	24 (2014)[139]	On-line	59%	17,580	As required	24 states
Gilani Research Foundation	Global	180	Mixed	99%	25,000	Less than 6 months	G20 plus 20 larger states and 35 regions

An earlier design for this methodology used a Population Proportionate to Size (PPS) sample plan in which the size of each sample was always the same fraction/per cent of the population being sampled (Gilani, I. and Gilani, B. 2013). This model was used for an earlier analysis of the sample requirements for a global conflict analysis survey using the 'peace poll' methods (Irwin 2015a). However, when this paper was presented at the WAPOR annual conference in Buenos Aires it was widely thought that a more efficient sampling plan could be achieved by reducing the size of samples for very large states, such as China and India, while increasing the sample sizes for relevant populations/states that were smaller, and then weighting the results accordingly. A Global Centric sample of 25,000 will

[136] China was not included in 2014, which effectively reduced the Gallup World Poll sample by 18.9 per cent to less than 81 per cent. However, when China is included the largest 120 states cover about 98 per cent of the world and 140 covers 99 per cent (Gallup 2014, Irwin 2015a).

[137] The largest 65 states cover about 90 per cent of the world (WIN Gallup 2014, Irwin 2015a).

[138] Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Turkey, UK and USA (BBC 2014).

[139] Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United States (Ipsos/MORI 2014)

be able to generate comparable results for the world as a whole (n=25,000), 3 zones of the world (n>5,000), 10 regions (n>1,000), 15 sub-regions (n>500) plus 2 countries at n=1000 (China and India), 23 at n=500, 16 at n=300, 2 at n=200, 36 at n>100, and 103 at n<100 for a total of 182 sampled states.[140] This sample will provide for detailed demographic analysis of all the research questions at the most appropriate level of world, zone, region, sub-region and/or large state plus correlations and factor analysis of all states globally with fact based data sets generated by the Institute for Economics and Peace and other 'Big Data' sets produced by, for example, DigitalGlobe. However smaller states and sub-populations require boosters, which will vary from year to year, but in 2016 included all states and sub-populations affected by the MENA and West Asia wars regionally and globally. Significantly, for example, in 2016 the boosters for Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Somalia raise 'n' to 1000 with boosters for critical sub-populations in a further 20 states identified in the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) database (Irwin 2017).[141]

Perception based indexes and fact based indexes

Public opinion polls were first used as an instrument of strategic conflict analysis to assess the reception US and allied forces would receive when they landed in Italy during World War II (Smith 2015, 2012). In this context ORB International has been conducting polls in Mali since 2008 prior to insurgent rebel groups, such as Al-Quida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), taking control of large areas of northern Mali in 2012. These polls indicated that the majority of Malians believed their own forces were not capable of dealing with this insurgency and they would welcome foreign intervention that arrived in the form of French forces in 2013 (ORB International 2013). Similarly D3 Systems monitored events in Iraq between 2012 and 2014 and noted that the conditions for civil war were present in a report posted on their website in January 2014 and that the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), which were largely Shia, did not enjoy the support of the Sunni population in May prior to the Sunni insurgency ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, taking control of much of northern Iraq

[140] In addition to having maximum sample sizes for states it may also be useful to consider minimum sizes of perhaps 50 to facilitate more accurate data collection and running fact-based correlations.

[141] ORB International provided a quote for this project to demonstrate both its economic and practical viability.

in June (D3 Systems, 2014a and b).

For all the reasons reviewed in this book perceptions-based indicators are very good at collecting this kind of data before the tipping point of increased hostilities is reached. The June 1st, 2014 International Crisis Group *Crisis Watch* report No. 130, for example, did not classify Iraq as being a conflict that was 'deteriorating' or was on their Conflict Alerts *Watchlist* prior to the collapse of the ISF when confronted by ISIS (ICG 2014a). This error was only corrected after these events took place in their Iraq report of June 20th (ICG 2014b) and *Crisis Watch* report No. 131 (ICG 2014c) published on July 1st, the day after ISIS changed their name to Islamic State (IS) by declaring the creation of a caliphate that extended for 400 miles across the borders of Northern Syria and Iraq.

Regrettably the perception-based researches and reports commissioned by western governments, their allies and agencies are limited by their strategic interests and are generally only put into the public domain after the tragic events of violent conflict, war, and associated humanitarian crisis have unfolded. Such publication is clearly too little too late. Although the responsible security services may be aware of many of these problems, as they unfold, it is a fact of life that they all too frequently only receive the attention they need when the public are also aware, share such concerns and have the problem enter the public discourse. Additionally, public and peer group scrutiny would undoubtedly improve the quality and scope of such work.

We live in an increasingly globalized world. What the international community must now decide is do they want to continue to poll the countries of the world on the most important issues for the people of the world, peace and security, and keep that information confidential only sharing it selectively with allies and political elites. Or do they want to encourage the public generation and dissemination of such information with all the peoples of the world, proactively, and with the institutions that represent them, their governments, the UN 'family' of organizations and relevant national, regional and global NGOs in the hope that open discussion of such issues might help to bring about the sought for political and social change that private dissemination has so frequently failed to achieve.

To this end the UN are seeking a paradigm shift that will place the views of local peoples at the center of all their peacekeeping and peacemaking activities (UN 2011, UNDPKO/NUPI 2013, UNDPKO 2013, UN/75 2020). Instead of selectively sampling what the peoples of the world think and want with a view to managing such perceptions to match the agendas of the states who commission such polls the time has come to sample the views of all the peoples of the world on peace and security

issues with a view to achieving peace and security. Transparency International does this very well with regards to corruption, extending the scope of their questionnaire and states covered year on year. This can now be done for violent conflict and peace.

15

World peace and truth telling

In 2014 I put together a top international research team to design and apply for a grant from the UK Economic and Social Science Research Council (ESRC) to run a world peace poll and generate a perceptions-based People's Peace Index (PPI). This was done with my colleagues Professors Adrian Guelke, Stefan Wolff, Jonathan Tonge and Michael Traugott, who is a past President of the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) and wrote the standards for peace polls with me in the Appendix to this book (Irwin et al/ESRC 2014). But the proposal was rejected because the reviewers took the view that the project was not feasible. So I then teamed up with Ijaz Gilani of Gallup Pakistan, who had designed the global sample, and Johnny Heald of ORB International to get a firm quotation for undertaking the world peace poll as described above (Irwin et al/ESRC 2016). Steve Killelea at the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) in Australia also agreed to partner the project so that we could combine and analyse our perceptions based data with his fact based data in their Global Peace Index (GPI, 2014). We also wanted to 'reach out' to the rest of the world with our findings to create a dialogue on all the issues explored as he had so successfully done with his Global Peace Index. But again institutional and bureaucratic resistance prevented the project from going ahead. World peace, it would seem, was not a priority and Michael Traugott encouraged me to publish the research proposal in the hope that others might wish to take the project forward. Hence the second edition to this book. But what are the reasons for this desire to keep such knowledge out of the public domain. Are the reasons well founded or simply a natural tendency of bureaucracies to hide their failings and protect the status quo?

All politicians in free and democratic societies know they can't ignore public opinion. Through good leadership they can help to shape public opinion, but when election day comes, they must be on the same page as their voters. Knowing this, why are the views of oppressed peoples around the world, most notably and recently in Syria, not given the full attention they deserve? Arguably, such omissions have helped to fuel civil wars and mass migrations of refugees across the Middle East and North Africa

(MENA). Syria then became a magnet for international Jihadists inspired by the Islamic State. The ISIS 'franchise' expanded globally, while the Super Powers took sides with regional allies over the future fate of the Assad regime. But the prospects for making peace in Syria were actually quite good, at least as far as the people of Syria were concerned (Chapter 13, Tables 13.18, 13.19). All sides had suffered terribly and they wanted an end to war. For example, with regards to the most serious abuses of human rights, it might have been assumed that only the Sunni—who rebelled against President Assad's rule—were the victims of the regime's excesses, but this was not the case. Alawites also reported being subject to arbitrary arrest, torture and killing by the state military and security services. However, the Sunni were able to report their human rights abuses to their government agencies, NGOs and IGOs in opposition-held areas. Similarly, the Kurds reported abuses to the various Kurdish political parties that represented them in Syria. But the Alawites had no one they could report abuses to in government held areas (Chapter 13, Table 13.11). Significantly then, the Alawites placed the notorious and much feared Air Force Intelligence agency, established by Assad's pilot father, who was President before him, at the top of their list of institutions to be disbanded. The Sunni and Kurds, in common cause, did the same (Chapter 13, Table 13.16 with full details in Irwin, 2014).

Polls conducted by ORB International in Syria and IIACSS in Iraq also confirm the people's desire for peace in the region (ORB International, 2015; BBC, 2015). Three in four (75%) said it was "very/somewhat likely that Iraqis can put their differences aside and live side by side again" and 65% in Syria agreed with the same statement. With regards to ISIS, only 5% in Iraq said they were having a positive influence, rising to 22% in Syria at that time. However, while the numbers supporting ISIS were still in the minority, 81% in Syria and 85% in Iraq believed ISIS was a foreign/American-made group. Indeed, both UK, (Shehadi, 2014) and US intelligence analysts (Associated Press, 2015) attribute the rise of ISIS to the disbandment of the Iraqi army, without pay, and disgruntled generals who sought revenge against the US and its allies following their invasion.

Similarly, polls run ten years ago in the UK suggested that Western foreign policy in the Middle East played a significant role in the disaffection and radicalisation of Muslims responsible for the 7/7 London bombings (Chapter 8). These grievances have remained unaddressed, only to be aggravated further by democratic deficits manifest in the Arab Spring and Sunni/Shia splits across the MENA region. All of these events, unfolding in the tragedy that is Syria, prompted King Abdullah of Jordan (2015) to tell the UN General Assembly that we are now in a third world war and in his speech on this issue at the Arab Islamic-American Summit

in Riyadh (Abdullah, 2017), he elaborated on this theme with four specific areas of concern that could be addressed as both 'Problems' and 'Solutions' in a perceptions based world peace poll:

- 'First and foremost, is the grave challenge of terrorism and extremism. Only a holistic approach can address the complex layers of the threat, from its evil ideas to its attack on prosperity and security… this demands coordinated and global action at every level.'
- 'A second and equally vital challenge is a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian cause…. No injustice has spread more bitter fruit than the absence of a Palestinian state. This is the core issue for our region, and it has driven radicalism and instability beyond our region and into the Muslim world.'
- 'Third, safeguarding Jerusalem must be a priority. The Holy City is a strategic linchpin, vital to relationships among the three monotheistic faiths.'
- 'A fourth critical task is to sharpen public focus on the values that will protect and enrich humanity's future: mutual respect, compassion, and acceptance. In the Muslim world, the voice of traditional, moderate Islam has been stronger in recent years. We need to continue to build on that.'

Our world is clearly changing rapidly, and politics are no longer just local. Although we do not yet enjoy many benefits of democratic institutions above the state level, regional and global public opinion do help to shape the conflicts of the world. But it is not being used to its potential to find effective solutions. There are a few notable exceptions: Transparency International (2016) for example, does a very good job of monitoring public opinion and corruption in more than 100 countries, with a view to bringing the corrupt to public account. In addition, WIN Gallup International samples world public opinion on a selection of critical issues of global concern on an annual basis (WIN Gallup, 2014). As an example, in 2015 WIN Gallup International's chosen topic was serious breaches of international law and the imposition of UN sanctions (WIN Gallup, 2015a). A majority of the world's citizens support sanctions as an appropriate action to be taken against member states that break their UN commitments. Not surprisingly, citizens in states under threat - such as South Korea and Ukraine South - most strongly support the sanctions that back their position (WIN Gallup, 2015a). On the other hand, the people of Palestine do not support sanctions, as such methods have not

worked for them in their search for Israeli compliance with UN resolutions (WIN Gallup, 2015b).

Clearly the successes and failures of all international and human rights law can be monitored in this way, globally, transnationally, regionally, and in states. It is especially important to monitor progress for minorities, as discrimination can all too easily lead to disaffection and violence. Monitoring such progress could now be done with a perceptions-based peace index. Fact-based peace indexes[142] are able to track the intensity of conflicts, state-by-state, post fact and post-mortem. The results are a chilling reminder of the failure of our international institutions established to prevent violent conflict. However, perceptions-based indexes can track much more than this. They can tailor their demographics and focus their questions to explore any issue in any population. In other words, they can measure what people being affected by conflict actually think and the world should listen. Only by exposing the fears that people share, and their genuine hopes for peace, objectively, honestly, from all sides, can we begin to have the dialogue needed to prevent the tragedies unfolding before us. Public opinion as truth telling can do this and help to make the world a more just and safer place for all its citizens.

But we live in a world where such truths can be very inconvenient. Like the interest groups that wish to deny the facts of global warming interest groups exist that do not want to expose the objective realities of contemporary conflicts that have gone global. For example in 2015, at an event organised at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) to address the problem of violent extremism across borders the CEO of the Quilliam Foundation pointed out that it was a very great pity that they did not have a baseline study available of Muslim attitudes in the UK from 10 years ago on or about the time of the 7/7 London bombings (RUSI 2015). I pointed out that I had such a study (Chapter 8) and offered to both the Quilliam Foundation and head of the Prevent programme at the Home Office, who was also at that meeting, to update the questionnaire and run it again to track changes in UK Muslim attitudes over the past 10 years. In public opinion research terms this is a 'no brainer' but my offer was not accepted. Undoubtedly such a study would have exposed the inconvenient truth that the UK's domestic Prevent policies and the foreign policies of the UK and her allies were not having the desired effect of improving the prospects for better domestic security from Muslim extremists in the UK.

Similarly proposals to undertake the programs of research described here to create an equivalent baseline study for the world have been met with the same institutional resistance. As long as the critical examination

[142] See Institute for Economics and Peace at: http://economicsandpeace.org

of the missed opportunities for peace making are an inconvenient truth for those who manage and mismanage our security and affairs of state the global polling industry will not be able to realise its full potential as a force for social good and creative political insight that we all know it can be. We need a paradigm shift and a perceptions-based world peace poll can do just that. The problem is not a question of financial resources. Polling in times of war was first undertaken by Gallup during the Second World War to ascertain the welcome, or otherwise, of US forces invading Italy (Smith 2015, 2012). The polls suggested they would be welcome, at least by the Italian population, so the invasion went ahead as planned and was successful. Since then governments have regularly polled populations that they have an interest in, with regards to conflicts that they have an interest in, as part of their intelligence gathering exercise. This polling is often difficult and therefore expensive creating a polling industry that would be in excess of 100M USD per year. A global peace poll, using modern methods, could be deployed for as little as IM USD per year. The difficulty is clearly political not financial, and I would argue in the 'true self best interest' of all parties to any conflict.

In 2020 the UN launched their *UN75 Conversation* (UN 2020) programme of global polling, media and internet analysis to inform future policymaking and communications on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Hopefully the UN will challenge the most powerful to equitably share the Earth's limited resources with the rest of humanity, bring a halt to climate change, stop species extinction and end the threat of nuclear war. But they may not? The UN polling is only being completed to WAPOR international standards in 50 of the UN's 193 member states. However, a 'baseline' annual global poll, at a cost of 1 million USD per year, would include all UN states (Irwin et al/ESRC 2016). Any member state, or interested third party, could then increase the size of any sample they are particularly interested in and add additional questions as required. According to the 2019 edition of the *Peace and Security Funding Index* (2019), global philanthropic support for efforts to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflicts totalled 328 million USD in 2016. A small portion of that expenditure, devoted to annual world-wide peace polls, could be enormously effective. But such an enterprise must maintain its independence as a global 'truth teller.'

Also in 2020 the world was overwhelmed by the Coronavirus pandemic, an 'enemy' that knew no borders, and that could not be defeated with a war of attrition or economic sanctions. Populist and authoritarian regimes met this challenge with policies ranging from outright denial to the suspension of civil liberties, international treaties and constitutional rights. The global scientific community were given all the resources they needed

to pool their knowledge in search for a remedy. In March and April 2020 my colleagues in WAPOR began to share data on the pandemic in ways they had never done before. This, however, was all too little and too late for the establishment of a global baseline study from which to measure, track and address critical global trends. But the pandemic, or at least it's devastating economic impact, could have been avoided with better preparedness and global cooperation. Some states did better than others, South Korea for example.

With all the benefits of hindsight both liberal radicles like Noam Chomsky (2020), and establishment voices such as the Royal United Services Institute in London (Hippel and Kent, 2020), found themselves in common cause. They wanted reform of the global institutions that had, again, failed humanity. After two world wars, first the League of Nations and then the United Nations were established to consolidate the peace and manage world affairs. Briefly they were effective but post conflict and post crisis wisdom seems to have a very, very short shelf life. Eventually the pandemic would pass but climate change would not and the UN's conference scheduled to deal with this threat to Global stability in 2020 was postponed to 2021. When the pandemic is brought under control a brief window of opportunity will be created to let the world speak out on their solutions to the world's most pressing problems. This opportunity must not be wasted yet again.

In all the conflicts I have worked on it is advisable to start with issues and proposals that will get a positive response from all the parties to the conflict before moving on to the more difficult contested issues. So perhaps we should start with saving the planet but by going beyond the easy answers of saving the rain forests to include the more difficult questions of who is responsible, who pays, who should limit their consumption of the Earth's resources, and how will this be done to reduce competition between states and the attendant threat of war? The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are all relevant to these questions but many of the conflicts reviewed here are proxy wars in which members of the UN Security Council's Permanent Five have an interest, so perhaps we first need to undertake a peace poll between the Super Powers, and to make this task as easy as possible start with Confidence Building Measures. Proposals involving the UN SDGs will undoubtedly get a positive response from all peoples in all nations, along with measures needed to stop the killing. Change can only come about when those with responsibility for change 'speak truth to power'. Through world peace polls the world can speak the truth to world powers. The world has a moral responsibility to do so and those in power have a moral responsibility to listen.

16

War Without End

In the late 1980s, when I arrived in Northern Ireland, three conflicts in much need of resolution dominated the public discourse: Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine, and South Africa. Most of my colleagues at Queen's University Belfast thought Israel and Palestine would get resolved first, followed perhaps by Northern Ireland and then, hopefully, apartheid in South Africa would be brought to an end. We could not have been more wrong. On February 11th, 1990 Nelson Mandela was released from prison to lead negotiations for a new constitution for South Africa in compliance with international law, brought into effect four years later through elections in April 1994. Northern Ireland followed with the Belfast/Good Friday agreement on the 10th of April 1998 while Israel and Palestine remained in a state of unresolved conflict and war into the next century. At least in the 1980s one peace agreement helped to lead to another in Northern Ireland. But, in 2024, political discourse was no longer focused on who and where will the next peace agreement be made but rather which conflict will most likely ignite a regional war, in the Middle East, between Russia and NATO states in central Europe, or between China, Taiwan and other states bordering the South China Sea. The world was in a very much more dangerous place so where could this tide of political failure and pessimism be turned. Colleagues at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) thought a good place to start might be Moldova and the break-away province of Transnistria under Russian occupation.

Moldova and Transnistria

During the breakup of the Soviet Union between1989 and 1992 hostilities between Transnistria and Moldova led to Transnistria becoming a de facto independent state but recognised in international law as a part of Moldova. Since then the OSCE has been responsible for negotiations leading to reintegration and in 2015 I was invited by the Director of the International Peace Institute (IPI) in Vienna, Walter Kemp, to make a presentation on

peace polls in the hope that they could be used to move negotiations forward (Irwin 2015). We wrote several grant applications together for the OSCE resulting in my going to Moldova and Transnistria to complete a feasibility study in 2019. Then the Covid pandemic delayed further work in 2020 with nothing done until after Russia invaded Ukraine on February 23rd, 2022. As so often seemed to happen I was asked to see if there was anything I could do after all else had failed.

As with the UN (Chapter 18, p 312) I was required to agree not to publish the results of the poll. The work went very well and I was able to meet with politicians from both sides of the debate and complete a peace poll in Moldova that covered all the relevant issues that had to be dealt with by the Bureau for Reunification (The Government of the Republic of Moldova 2022). But this was only done in Moldova. In 2019 before the war I was able to travel to Transnistria and also met with the Russian delegation to Moldova. However, in 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine, my work was restricted to Moldova alone and although the pollster, Magenta, was able to poll in Transnistria, and the funder, the OSCE delegation of Finland, wanted to extend the work to Transnistria, the OSCE Mission to Moldova declined. A vote on the renewal of their Mission's mandate was scheduled for later that year, Russia had a veto, and the Mission did not want to do anything that might prejudice that decision. So the peace poll was not run in Transnistria and the OSCE's Moldova Mission mandate for the following year was approved.

Fortunately another independent Russian pollster then living in Cyprus, Elena Koneva, was running polls on the war in Ukraine and its impact on the region, which included Moldova and Transnistria (Koneva 2022). Her result for the future status of Moldova and Transnistria in both jurisdictions also included the pro-Russian autonomous region of Gagauzia in Moldova (Table 16.1).

Table 16.1. 'What is your opinion on the status of Transnistria?' (Koneva 2022)

Per cent support for:	Moldova	Gagauzia	Transnistria
Transnistria should join Moldova	58	23	6
Transnistria should join Russia	5	18	53
Transnistria should keep its current status	28	52	32
DK/Refuse	9	8	9

Although the questions were slightly different the results were the same as my own for Moldova. Namely that although the majority in Moldova would like Transnistria to be a part of their country like any other region at 58 per cent, their second choice at 28 percent was to keep the

present autonomous regional status like Gagauzia. Similarly in Transnistria being part of Russia was their first choice at 53 per cent and the present autonomous regional status was their second choice at 32 per cent. The autonomous region of Gagauzia wanted this as their first choice at 52 per cent. In Northern Ireland power sharing was always the second choice for both Catholics and Protestants (Table 2.3 p 14) and peace was made there on this compromise. Similarly, if the parties were willing, peace could have been made in Moldova and Transnistria.

Moldova most certainly was willing and their Minister and Deputy First Minister for Reunification made this case to the British Government at a seminar I was invited to in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in 2023. Russia, unfortunately, had no such interest, they maintained a force of about 1,500 men in Transnistria and would like to have brought them into the war against Ukraine if they could. Fortunately Ukraine was able to stop the Russian advance along the Black Sea coast to Odesa and Transnistria in March 2022, so the Moldova Transnistria issue will most probably not be resolved until the outcome of the war in Ukraine is known. One way or another.

In 2019, before the war in Ukraine the Russians were willing to run a peace poll in both Moldova and Transnistria in the hope that it would lead to a compromise outcome that was acceptable to all parties. Had we done so perhaps it would have been possible to do the same in Ukraine. Of course this view of events is very optimistic but we were not even given the opportunity to determine and say what the people of both Moldova and Transnistria could agree to, in all the necessary detail required for a peace agreement, as had been done in Northern Ireland.

Amongst the many officials I met in Moldova, while drafting the peace poll questions, an advisor in the President's office wanted to know what the people of Transnistria expected from the Government of Moldova in Chisinau. He wondered if we could use the AI Dialogues I had worked on with Remesh AI and the UN to do this (Chapter 18). So I arranged for the OSCE to have access to the Remesh AI platform on the same no cost terms as the UN. The OSCE did not take up the offer, no doubt out of concern that it might prompt Russia to exercise their OSCE veto. So the AI Dialogue between the people of Moldova and Transnistria did not happen and the President's advisor never got the answer to the question he wanted to ask. In addition to my peace poll other published polling from Moldova suggested the publics there want peace (Koneva, 2022), could make peace (SeeD 2022) and would welcome opportunities to manage their own peace process (The Government of the Republic of Moldova, 2022). Perhaps, when all else fails, all publics should be given the opportunity, tools and resources, AI or otherwise, to make peace if they can.

War in Ukraine

Before the allied British and American forces invaded Italy on the 3rd of September 1943 Gallup ran a public opinion poll in Italy to determine the possible strength of resistance from the Italian and German forces. The results came back that the Italians would not resist the allied invasion and that they would only have to fight the Germans (Smith, 2015). The invasion went ahead, the Italians surrendered and Italy was taken, although at some cost due to significant German resistance.

Before Russia invaded Ukraine on the 23rd of February 2022 polling undertaken by Ratings in Ukraine (Table 16.2) clearly indicated that the Ukrainians would resist the invasion. Evidently the Russian generals either had not learnt the lessons of the Second World War or, if they had, chose not to bring these facts to the attention of their President, Vladimir Putin. What they believed would be a swift campaign that could take Kiev and replace its government in a matter of days is, at the time of writing, in its third year.

Table 16.2 'If the invasion of Russia takes place, how confident are you that Ukraine will be able to repel the attack?' (Ratings Group, 2022)

Per cent:	27-28 January 2022	12-13 February 2022	16-17 February 2022
Not sure	15	17	13
Rather unsure	23	19	19
Difficult to answer	6	7	4
Rather certain	34	32	36
Absolutely certain	22	26	28

When the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) was established after the Second World War in 1947 it was the intention of its founders that it should work with the United Nations and UNESCO to provide global data on conflicts and the potential for war with a view to preventing war (Smith, 2024). Sadly that noble aspiration did not last past the early 1950s and the Korean War, and the talents of the Gallop organisation were increasingly focused on monitoring conflicts and war with a view to winning them rather than preventing them.

The United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe are charged with the responsibility of preventing war. But the vetos held by the Permanent Five of the UN Security Council and the vetos of every member of the OCSE prevent the UN and OSCE from doing the research that needs to be done to monitor and prevent the conflicts that the founders of WAPOR aspired to undertake. Public opinion research and peace polls can help to prevent and resolve conflicts. So either the UN and

OSCE need to update their mandates to permit effective peace research or have this responsibility given to a None Government Organisation (NGO) that will independently do the research, objectively, in compliance with international law, without fear or favour (Chapter 15, p 280-285).

The cost of running a global survey to do this was estimated at £700,000 in 2016 with a total price of about £1M when research staff and overhead costs were added in (Irwin et al/ESRC 2016). Allowing for inflation and other projects that might have to be taken on, such as monitoring the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, then the costs could easily rise to several millions a year, perhaps 10M USD? Is this too high a price to pay? The research will not stop all conflicts. But it only needs to help stop one, once in a while, to be cost effective. For example helping to keep Macedonia out of the Balkan wars (Chapter 4, p 39-46), or helping to make peace in Northern Ireland (Chapter 3, p 24-38). Peace could have been achieved between Israel and Palestine in 2009. The human costs of failure there challenge the credibility of international and humanitarian law (OHCHR, 2024), while the financial cost runs into many billions of dollars. No one had to die on October 7th, 2023 or since then and those responsible for the failed peace process in 2009, should not make the same mistakes again. With this point in mind I wrote three articles for *The Conversation* in 2024 to:

- Apply the lessons of the Northern Ireland peace process to Israel and Palestine.
- Negotiate and implement the 'Two State Solution'.
- Make peace with Hamas and end the violence.

Peace Lessons from Northern Ireland to Israel and Palestine[143]

There is no peace in the Middle East because there is no effective peace process. This isn't because the Palestinians and Israelis do not know how to make peace, they do, they have been told, they just have to do what we did in Northern Ireland (Irwin 2012b). The problem is Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his ally, the United States of America, who have refused to apply the lessons of Northern Ireland to Middle East peace making.

To fully understand the tragedy this represents, it's necessary to go

[143] Based on an article published in The Conversation on January 5, 2024 (Irwin, 2024a)

back in time to the negotiations that achieved the Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland in 1997. At the time I was working with all the parties to the Northern Ireland peace process as an informal negotiator and manager of public opinion and public diplomacy through reports and articles in the most widely read local newspaper, the *Belfast Telegraph* (PeacePolls.org, 1996-2003)

Critically, all the parties to the conflict in Northern Ireland were democratically elected to participate in the peace negotiations there -- including the Irish Republican Army (IRA) represented by Sinn Fein, and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) represented by their political leaderships: the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) respectively. In all I had to work with ten political parties negotiating and agreeing questions for the public opinion polls designed to resolve issues in the formal negotiations that had yet to be settled (Chapter 3, p 25).

How 'peace polls' work

Unlike "partisan polls" designed to underline the publics support for a particular policy favoured by one party or another (most commonly a government) these fairly and objectively measured the public's support, from both sides, for every possible policy option across the political spectrum to determine the precise points of common ground, where they existed, or effective compromise, where needed for peace making (Chapters 1 and 2, p 1-23).

Public opinion polls are an American invention and fortunately for me President Clinton's special envoy to Northern Ireland, Senator George Mitchell, the 'talks' chairmen, took the polls very seriously and gave me every possible support. When the British offered to run the polling project for the parties, the parties rebelled and insisted on working with me. So I always made a point of hand delivering the reports to George Mitchell and the parties the day before they were published. And each time the polling reports were published, deals got done until we reached an agreement that we knew could pass the referendum held on May 22nd, 1998.

The legitimacy of the Belfast/Good Friday agreement was ensured by the full democratic participation of all the parties to the agreement and the people of Northern Ireland. Through public opinion polls the people gained a seat at the negotiating table and through a referendum the deal was made. Tragically the peoples of Israel and Palestine have been prevented from learning and applying these same peace lessons to the resolution of their own conflict.

When it all went wrong

In January 2009 the newly elected US president, Barack Obama appointed Mitchell as his special envoy for Middle East peace, in the hope he could bring the success of the Good Friday Agreement peace process to Israel and Palestine. Expecting Obama to appoint Mitchell to this post following his successful election in 2008, I was invited to run a peace poll in Israel and Palestine (Chapter 9, p 151-170).

I was flown to Washington in June 2009 along with my Israeli and Palestinian polling team. Presentations were arranged for us in the US House of Representatives and Senate, and various think tanks to brief all the politicians and experts with an interest in Middle East peace.

I had been in touch with Mitchell and met him in his office at the State Department. At that time I had also been running peace polls in Sri Lanka (Chapter 6, p 86-116) with support from the Norwegians. They were a generous and reliable funder and would be willing to support my work in Israel and Palestine if Mitchell wanted them to. Mitchell welcomed the Norwegian offer, arrangements were made to take it up, but it all fell through, no doubt because the State Department wanted to have control of the research to meet their own agenda. So I did not get the funding and Mitchell eventually resigned his post without achieving peace in May 2011.

Of course, it can be argued that even if I had brought the lessons of the Northern Ireland peace process to Israel and Palestine I would have failed. But this was most probably not the case. I had made all necessary preparations and contacts with all the parties to the conflict to make it work. I knew what I was doing -- as did Mitchell when he accepted his appointment from Obama.

Over a period of two months of interviews to develop the questionnaire in November and December 2008 I had private meetings with all the relevant stakeholders including the then Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and president, Shimon Peres, on the Israeli side. My pollster Mina Zemach was a good friend of Peres, she was his pollster when he led the Labour party.

On the Palestinian side the NGO organising the project, OneVoice, had close connections with Fatah and the Palestinian Authority so I arranged to meet with Hamas via an introduction from Ghassan Khatib, an independent Palestinian politician and director of the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC). Speaking with Hamas was like speaking with Sinn Fein. They had an extreme negotiating position but that is all it was - like Sinn Fein they had a legitimate grievance and would be happy to cooperate with the peace polls.

Significantly, the one key interlocutor who refused to meet with me in December 2008 was Benjamin Netanyahu. He only consented to send his chief of staff. Zemach said this was because he would refuse to compromise on sharing Jerusalem as part of any peace agreement - and when he became Israel's prime minister in March 2009 he also refused to include Hamas in any peace negotiations.

Experience told us that excluding Sinn Fein and the other paramilitary organisations from peace negotiations in Northern Ireland had only brought failure, while their inclusion had enabled the peace settlement. Other parties essential to the success of the Northern Ireland peace process were the centre Alliance Party and Women's Coalition. The politically equivalent party in Israel was Meretz, a left-wing socialist party and strong supporter of the Peace Now movement. When I met with them, like Alliance, they told me they would be pleased to be part of a fully inclusive peace process but they were excluded from negotiations as they were not part of Netanyahu's coalition government.

The establishment in Washington did not have a problem with my contacts with Hamas. In 2009 I had also been working on a project in Sudan with the US Institute of Peace (Chapter 10, p 171-192). Although Hamas were a prescribed terrorist organisation, the Institute of Peace lawyers said it was OK for me to meet and talk with them providing I did not give them any assistance. They advised me "not to buy them a coffee". I took this advice, Hamas provided the coffee.

But without inclusive negotiations that also drew on the public's desire for peace, peace was not achieved. In 2013 when I was in New York for meetings at the United Nations I took the opportunity to visit Mitchell at his law office and ask him why he had resigned and he said it was because he was not getting sufficient support from the State Department. I planned to reveal this in this book. But a trusted colleague and friend advised me against it, as it could reflect badly on the former secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, when she was campaigning to be president. Accordingly I watered down the quote to not sufficient support in Washington (Chapter 9, p 169). This was not a total lie, but it was not the whole truth either.

Misplaced optimism

In my optimism at the time I thought perhaps that Clinton -- if she became president -- would send her husband to the Middle East as her special envoy. Bill Clinton had got very close to making an agreement some years earlier with the "Clinton parameters", but he ran out of time. But Hillary Clinton lost the election to Donald Trump - and so we are where we are. It

is just as likely that my optimism was misplaced and that Clinton and possibly Biden - who has always been a very strong supporter of Israel - did not want to oppose Netanyahu for domestic political reasons.

When the Good Friday Agreement was struck 25 years ago, both Mitchell and I thought Israel and Palestine would be our next challenge. But Gore, who we had hoped might set his sights on a peace deal, lost to Bush, and then 9/11, and the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq took all the political oxygen out of peace making. Then 15 years ago we thought it would happen when Obama was elected. It should have. Another opportunity may well arrive when the present war is over, but elections in the US, Israel and Palestine will probably put the peace process on hold yet again.

Sadly Israel and Palestine are not alone in their cycles of violence and grief. All over the world the lessons of the Northern Ireland peace process are ignored. Frozen conflicts remain frozen at best and with increased frequency become unstable and violent. "Blood" in thousands of lives lost and "treasure" in billions of dollars wasted, again and again.

The Two State Solution – Fact or Fiction?[144]

The two state solution is being promoted for the long term resolution of the Palestine Israel conflict - by the US, her allies, Arab states in the region and the UN. But the present Netanyahu government is opposed to this solution. With elections and a change of leadership could a future Israeli government, with US and international support, make the Two State Solution a reality? Could the Israeli and Palestinian publics be persuaded to accept a Two State Solution given the political will of all relevant stakeholders? What does Israeli and Palestinian public opinion tell us? Is the Two State Solution a potential fact or fiction?

From a UN and international law perspective the Two State Solution should have been implemented in 1947 with boarder adjustments made after the 1967 Arab Israeli War in a succession of UN resolutions (UN, 1947). But the US has always protected Israeli interests and used their veto in the Security Council to require the Two State Solution to only be implemented through negotiations between the two sides, Israel and Palestine. Most recently in a UN General Assembly vote on 10 May 2024 (UN, 2024)

Could agreement have been reached by the two sides when each side

[144] Based on an article published in The Conversation on May 22, 2024 (Irwin, 2024b)

accuses the other of not being a 'partner for peace'? Perhaps the best opportunity for peace came with the election of Yitzhak Rabin as Prime Minister of Israel in 1992. But then he was assassinated by right-wing nationalist extremists on 4 November 1995. Another opportunity existed in 2009 with the appointment of Senator George Mitchell as Obama's Special Envoy. But that opportunity was lost when Benjamin Netanyahu was elected Prime Minister of Israel replacing the liberal Labour party in the same year (Irwin, 2024a). Then there were further declines in the possibilities for peace making with the election of Trump in November 2016. And now we have yet another disastrous war, the 15th since 1948 (Wikipedia, 2024a), taking the lives of 1,139 Israelis on October 7th, 2023 and possibly more than 40,000 Palestinians since then, more than all the other wars added together. Can this be the last war? It should be.

Politicians all too often find it convenient to blame their publics for their failures. This is particularly true of failed peace making. The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR, 2023a) have tracked the ups and downs of support for the Two State Solution from a high of 51 and 53 percent for Palestinians and Israeli Jews in 2016 to a low of 33 and 34 percent respectively in 2022. But the pollsters in both Israel and Palestine, who do excellent work to the highest technical standards, sadly, have had little or no opportunity to measure public opinion in support of a successful peace process. They measure what is, in the context of failure, and not what could be, in the context of proactive political leadership determined to get to peace. With such leadership the numbers change significantly.

Most recently, on the Palestinian side the Institute for Social and Economic Progress asked the Two State Solution question in the context of 'serious negotiations' and got a 72.5 percent 'Yes' response in March 2024 (Institute for Social and Economic Progress, 2024). While the PCPSR results a few months earlier in December 2023 registered support for The Two State Solution at only 34 percent in Palestine (Question 43) when framed without the context of serious negotiations (PCPSR, 2023b). Clearly 'serious negotiations' are the key.[145]

On the Israeli side a poll run for the Geneva Initiative got a result of 51.3 percent support for the Two State Solution when framed in the context of a "return of the hostages, agreement to establish in the future a non-militarized Palestinian state in the West Bank & Gaza, and total normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia" (Geneva Accord, 2024a), only two percentage points below the high point of support at 53 percent

[145] AWRAD (2024) also got a similar result in June 2024 when framed in terms of 'A Meaningful Process'.

recorded by the PCPSR in 2016 (PCPSR, 2023). Security has always been the top priority for Israelis and when that is factored in success in negotiations can be assured. Significantly demilitarising a future Palestine (Institute for Social and Economic Progress, 2024) is not a deal breaker for the Palestinians providing they also get their security and an independent state free from occupation at 50.4 percent acceptable in March 2024 (Geneva Accord, 2024b).

The solution then to the implementation of the Two State Solution is to combine all the elements that can make it a success. Additionally the scale that is used is also important. In real negotiations it is important to know where the 'red lines' are and what the people can be persuaded to accept given positive political leadership. In Northern Ireland where public opinion polls were used to detail every element of a peace agreement (Chapter 2, p 8-23) the people were asked what was: 'essential' (a red line), what was 'desirable' or 'acceptable', what was 'tolerable' (not wanted but with political leadership could be made into a 'yes'), and what was 'unacceptable' under any circumstances (another red line). Using this scale the result for the Two State Solution was only 21 percent 'unacceptable' for Israelis in 2009 and 24 percent 'unacceptable' for Palestinians. This compares very favourably with equivalent results for the Power Sharing option in Northern Ireland that was 52 percent 'unacceptable' for Protestants and 27 percent 'unacceptable' for Catholics (Chapter 11, p 212). With political leadership from the UK, Ireland, the US and EU working together peace was made. Clearly the same can be done for Israel and Palestine with the full support of the international community.

Positive Polling

Just to make sure Mina Zemach, my pollster in Israel ran the 2009 Two State Solution question for me again in May 2024 and the result was, 43 percent 'unacceptable', not as good as the 2009 result but still better than the result for Northern Ireland where peace was achieved (Table 16.3). In 2009 we also ran a whole questionnaire on peace process options (Chapter 9, p 161-166) that included many Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). All of this needs to be updated and run again. Critically then, the Two State Solution needs to be tested along with all the positive elements of incentives and process, both international and domestic, that can be deployed to maximise the potential for getting to peace. And when we know what that magic formula is – do it. Turn fiction into fact and end this forever war.

Table 16.3. Support for the Two State Solution (TSS) in Israel in 2009 and May 2024 compared with the results for Northern Ireland (NI) where peace was achieved with a referendum in 1998.

	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
TSS 2009 Palestine	38	15	10	11	24
TSS 2009 Israel	32	13	16	17	21
TSS May 2024 All Israel	24	8	12	13	43
TSS Voted for coalition	6	7	7	11	68
TSS Voted for opposition	37	9	17	18	19
NI Power Sharing Protestants	4	8	17	19	52
NI Power Sharing Catholics	3	13	31	26	27

How to defeat Hamas and end the violence[146]

Insurgencies can be defeated by eliminating them as a militarily force, or by effectively addressing the grievances that prompted them to take up arms against the state, or a combination of both, prosecuting a war and peace making. In Northern Ireland the British were persuaded to do both and it worked. In Palestine, Israel uses force with considerable effect but in the absence of peace making this force cannot achieve its' aims (Parmeter, 2024) and is even counter-productive, the grievance remains unaddressed and the insurgency grows (Jeffery and Bwaitel, 2024).

Senator George Mitchell quite rightly pointed out in his seminal address marking the twenty fifth anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement that without John Hume there would have been no peace process and without David Trimble there would have been no peace agreement. Both received the Nobel Peace Prise for their efforts. John Hume for persuading Sinn Fein and their military wing, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), and particularly the Americans to bring Sinn Fein 'in from the cold' and pursue a constitutional path to peace. Significantly President Clinton took up this initiative and persuaded the British to do likewise (Simpson, 2019). Then Secretary of State Peter Brooke declared that the British had no selfish or strategic interests in Northern Ireland (BBC News Channel, 2006), ceasefires were agreed and an effective, inclusive peace process was implemented.

[146] Based on an article published in The Conversation on June 13, 2024 (Irwin, 2024c)

That peace process was not easy. It took the combined political effort of the Irish government, the British government, the American Presidency and the European Union to get to peace. But peace was achieved and with Sinn Fein now sharing power with the other constitutional parties in Northern Ireland (Cummings, 2023) the insurgency no longer has a valid grievance and Northern Ireland will not go back to war. Can Israel do the same. I believe so and came to this conclusion when I met with Hamas on December 3rd, 2008 while making preparations for Senator George Mitchell to become President Obama's Special Envoy for Middle East Peace. Here is a transcript of my notes from that meeting in Ramallah as a series of bullet points that detailed the Hamas negotiating position:

- The occupation [of the Palestinian Territories] does not end the conflict.
- No application of UN resolutions.
- Only implement agreements for security of Israel.
- No expansion of settlements – but does not happen.
- The international community should pressure Israel to implement UN resolutions.
- Hamas has accepted boarders within 67 [boarders] providing all UN resolutions implemented.
- Hamas do not accept that 48 [creation of the state of Israel] was correct.
- What proof have Israel given that they want peace.
- As Hamas guarantees the security of Israel within the 67 boarders they should be in negotiations.
- Israel does not want 67 boarders so they keep Hamas out.
- Palestine state within 67 boarders recognised by Hamas.

Political organisations like Sinn Fein and Hamas have intelligence services as part of their military wings so they would have known all about me and my role in the Northern Ireland peace process before I met with them. Any time I meet with such organisations I generally find they are very well briefed and they welcome the opportunity to use objective public opinion polls as a tool for peace making providing it fairly and honestly includes and expresses the hopes and desires of their own constituencies and their grievance. In this context Hamas were willing to be part of an inclusive peace process when Senator George Mitchell took up his post in 2009.

Paramilitary organisations like Sinn Fein and Hamas have to bring their followers with them on the difficult journey to peace and on this point I was able to help Sinn Fein deal with a critical problem which was also a

problem for Hamas – their constitution. Sinn Fein's constitution prohibited them taking seats in a Northern Ireland Assembly, they could only participate in a parliament that represented a united Ireland. So, arguably, they had negotiated the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in bad faith. To help fix this problem we drafted and ran some questions that clearly demonstrated that Sinn Fein voters wanted their own representatives in the new Northern Ireland Assembly along with everyone else and on the back of this result Sinn Fein called a special Ard Fheis (General Meeting) and changed their constitution so they could agree to and endorse the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (BBC News, 2005, Sinn Fein, 1998). Given the opportunity, and a path to legitimate constitutional power, I was certain Hamas would have done the same and accept the Two State Solution.

Dr Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, the Director of the think tank the 'Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs' (PASSIA) had helped facilitate my first meeting with Hamas in 2008. And when I saw him again in Jerusalem in May 2024 he told me there were now "two Hamas". Since I was there in 2008, it had split into the Gaza faction under Yahya Sinwar, and the political bureau led by Ismail Haniyeh in Qatar (Zananiri, 2024). Sinn Fein had to confront a similar issue during the Northern Ireland peace process, the break-away group that called itself the Real IRA (Wikipedia, 2024b). But without a legitimate grievance dealt with so effectively with the success of Sinn Fein as a constitutional political party the Real IRA have withered on the vine of history. Sadly the failure of the Israeli peace process in 2009 has led to a very different outcome. 1200 Israeli dead on October 7th in 2023 and 40,000 and counting Palestinian dead since then. On the 18th of October 2023 in Israel President Biden advised Prime Minister Netanyahu not to repeat the errors the US had made after 9/11 (Borger, 2023). And when he saw him again on July 24th, 2024 in Congress (Matza, 2024), he might have also suggested he learn the lessons of Northern Ireland and make peace with the Palestinians.

What happened next

Perhaps President Biden did advise Benjamin Netanyahu to make peace with the Palestinians when he saw him on July 25th, 2024 in the White House. I do not know but clearly he did not take that advice if given as on August 3rd Israel assassinated the Hamas lead political negotiator, Ismail Haniyeh. It is difficult to imagine what other act could have signalled more strongly that Netanyahu did not want to make peace. Additionally, by undertaking the assassination in the capital of Iran, Tehran, the Prime

Minister of Israel signalled that he would be willing to fight a wider regional war. Peace makers do not assassinate their negotiators on the other side. Only war mongers do that.

If the British had wanted to eliminate the political leadership of Sinn Fein, or any of the Loyalist paramilitary groups operating in Northern Ireland, they could have. I saw them at public meetings in their communities, at their offices on the Falls and Shankill Road and at Stormont where the peace negotiations took place. Of course they took all necessary security precautions. The British maintained security at Stormont while their own paramilitary maintained security at their respective offices in West Belfast. All my private meetings were by appointment. Those responsible for security were expecting me. But the British ran undercover agents with as much access to these political leaders as I did. Anyone of them could have been an assassin, if that is what the British had wanted. But the British wanted to make peace so the political leadership of the various groups in negotiations were not targeted for elimination. When I met with Hamas in 2008 they were prepared to work with me to help everyone get to a negotiated peace in the Middle East, as I had done in Northern Ireland, as was Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and President Shimon Peres when I also met with them. Benjamin Netanyahu was the exception, he would not meet with me. Making peace was not on his agenda and that agenda needed to be changed.

In Northern Ireland the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) were opposed to the Belfast/Good Friday agreement and refused to share power with Sinn Fein under the terms agreed. Without power sharing at Stormont there was a very real chance that factions in the Irish Republican Army (IRA) would go back to war. Sinn Fein, who represented the IRA, and the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) who represented the Loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) did not want a return to war. They had negotiated the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in good faith and wanted it to work. So they asked me to run a peace poll on the state of the Northern Ireland peace process to help everyone find a way out of what was being called the ‘Government and Guns’ problem. This was done with peace polls published in March 1999 and October 1999 (Chapter 3, p 33 and 34). Then Senator George Mitchell returned to Northern Ireland and completed a review of the agreement in November 1999, and the crisis was overcome with follow up peace polls published in May 2000 and 2003 (Chapter 3, p 35 and 36). With the people as active participants in the peace process there was no feared return to war.

The peace poll I completed in Israel and Palestine in 2008 explored all the relevant issues and detailed all the necessary parameters for the implementation of a successful peace process. These should have been

visited, again and again, in 2009. If necessary just working with the pro-peace Israeli political parties. This was not done and issues required for an effective successful peace process were ignored. So when war broke out again at the end of 2023 I wrote the articles for *The Conversation* and went to Washington in early 2024 to meet with the State Department in the hope that they would now let me run the peace polls needed to help everyone get to peace. Mina Zemach in Israel and Nader Said in Palestine were willing to do the work as they always had been but again our offers to help were not taken up. The State Department continued to have their own agenda, which did not include a pro-active peace process, and in the absence of their support the Norwegian and British governments also declined similar invitations.

But the experience of Northern Ireland tells us that 'the people' can make peace if given a seat at the negotiating table. They always could and always will when given the means and opportunity to represent themselves and not have political elites, bent on war, claim to represent their interests for them. Peace polls by 'pencil and paper', AI, hybrid, or otherwise, should always, always, be a part of the political discourse that is inclusive, transparent and accountable. And if the UN will not or cannot do it others must or bear the burden of war without end.

17

The End of War?

After decades of failed negotiations the Northern Ireland peace process was a great success. So why weren't the lessons learnt there applied in Israel and Palestine, Ukraine and elsewhere? If we know how to make peace why do we still have war? Group conflict, manifest as war is, unfortunately, a natural part of the human condition (Irwin, 1987, 2021) but it is not inevitable. Humans can learn to manage this most destructive of human traits. Fortunately for me I found myself as a young man living with and adopted into one of the few societies that had done this and eliminated the behaviour we call war (Irwin, 1990, 2021) and it was that experience that led me to my involvement in the Northern Ireland peace process in the 1990s.

The Inuit of the Central Canadian Arctic did not have a word for war, for them it could never be a praiseworthy act, they could only say 'mass murder' in their language, Inuktitut, and so it followed that a mass murderer could never be a hero. They also had no chiefs with authority to direct the men of their village or tribe to take up arms and kill the Inuit of another village or tribe. Respected leaders, if required to make difficult decisions for the common good, had to reach those decisions by consensus, and that in turn required a discourse focused on listening to, appreciating, and accommodating every point of view on the problem at hand. Then following my work with the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic (Irwin, 1988, 1989a), and my involvement in their successful land claim settlement that created the new Territory of Nunavut (Our Land), I had an opportunity to apply those lessons of inclusive discourse in Northern Ireland using peace polls. So why doesn't everyone do this now?

Lessons learnt

Hopefully a brief review of the failures and successes covered in this book will help us find the answer. Starting then at the beginning, Chapter 1 reviews the sociology of science methodologies that creates bias and how

to overcome these fundamental epistemological difficulties by including all relevant stakeholders in the design and execution of transparent applied social research (Campbell 1984). Chapter 2 explains how these principals were applied in Northern Ireland with the development of peace polls in consultation with all the parties elected to negotiate a peace agreement that would end their civil war. Chapter 3 reviews the nine peace polls undertaken in the Northern Ireland peace process to solve specific issues at different points in the peace process as follows:

1. *Peace Building and Public Policy* (July 1996) – An academic exercise to demonstrate the viability of peace polls as an aid to negotiations
2. *After the Elections* (April 1997) – A peace process negotiations issues poll
3. *The Stormont Talks* (September 1997) – A peace process negotiations issues poll
4. *In Search of a Settlement* (January 1999) – A peace agreement substantive issues poll
5. *A Comprehensive Settlement* (March 1998) – A peace agreement substantive issues poll
6. *Implementation of the Belfast Agreement* (March 1999) – A peace process implementation issues poll
7. *The Mitchell Review* (October 1999) – A peace process implementation issues poll
8. *The Future of the Peace Process* (May 2000) – A peace process implementation issues poll
9. *Devolution and the State of the Northern Ireland Peace Process* (February 2003) – A peace process implementation issues poll

This was done with the deployment of one simple interview technique. Stakeholders were asked to list what they considered to be the most significant 'Problems' that had to be dealt with at that point in the peace process. And then, for each problem they were asked to suggest a 'Solution'. Then all the 'Solutions' from all the stakeholders, from all 'sides' were tested against public opinion. This 'Problems' and 'Solutions' approach never failed to get a relevant result that would create policies for dealing with the issue at hand.

This dynamic deliberative process that engages with the stakeholders and their respective publics should have been deployed in 2009 in Israel and Palestine to move their peace process forward in accordance with international law. But this was not done, legitimate grievances were not addressed (security for Israel and an end to occupation for Palestinians) and the result, inevitably, was more war. Significantly only peace polls 4

and 5 in Northern Ireland dealt with the substantive issues that were to be part of the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement in any great detail. The rest of the polls dealt with confidence building measures (CBMs) and procedural issues associated with negotiations and implementation. Critically these process issues are rarely addressed in Israel and Palestine and elsewhere so deals do not get done, or even started to get done.

Chapter 4 covers the Balkans, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the war was over so all the peace poll could do there was document the tragedy of loss. In Kosovo and Serbia the polling done by the Americans failed to engage with the peace negotiators, as had been done in Northern Ireland, so issues that should have been addressed were left undone and still persist to this day. But in Macedonia, unlike Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo and Serbia, the peace poll there was run before they were drawn into the war and war was prevented. The Macedonians wanted free and fair elections and the EU made sure they got them. It was a process peace poll and as in Northern Ireland it worked.

Chapter 5, Kashmir, demonstrated the value of the peace polls conducted there in partnership with Yashwant Deshmukh of the Team CVoter foundation in Delhi. We were able to outline the broad parameters of a peace agreement that could help to resolve the conflict in Kashmir. But unlike Northern Ireland where all the party states - Britain, Ireland, the EU and USA - all wanted to get to peace, no such good will existed between Pakistan and India. Sadly peace in Kashmir was not in the gift of the people of Kashmir. Pakistan and India had to make peace first. With our colleague Ijaz Gilani of Gallup Pakistan we were able to run some questions on the Kashmir issue in both Pakistan and Indian administered Kashmir, but that is as far as it went. To be effective we needed to engage with all of the people of India and Pakistan in an effort to resolve that conflict.

Similarly peace polls run in Sri Lanka (Chapter 6), Sudan (Chapter 10) and Syria (Chapter13) all pointed towards the kind of peace agreement that could be made to bring an end to their respective civil wars. But none of these peace poll proposals were taken up or followed up by the leaderships of these countries or the international community. In Sri Lanka the Rajapaksa brothers defeated the Tamil rebels in war, when they could have made peace, and in so doing wrecked their economy. In Sudan the failure to make peace resulted in the ongoing destruction of the state, while the grievance that ignited the civil war in Syria remained unaddressed, with none of the economic benefits that peace can bring (Vision of Humanity, 2022) until the collapse of the Assad regime at the end of 2024. War, civil or otherwise is very expensive with long term consequences.

The conflict in Cyprus, Chapters 7 and 12, should have been resolved

and could have been resolved if all sides were minded to do so. Conveniently each side blamed the other and their respective guarantor states, Greece and Turkey, when negotiations failed. Significantly, the UN do a very good job of keeping the peace on the island and preventing conflict from breaking out between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, so the conflict remains frozen. All the peace polling completed on the island suggests that the people there could make peace, with the active support of both Greece and Turkey to that end. Similarly so could the people of Moldova and Transnistria, Chapter 17, given the political will of the European Union and Russia to make it so.

Unfortunately for Israel and Palestine, Chapters 8 and 17, unlike Cyprus, peace is not maintained there by the UN but by Israel's occupying army, the Israel Defence Force (IDF), and they, inevitably, become a target of resistance for the Palestinians against the occupation. War there can only end with an end to occupation and everyone knows what that deal is. The Clinton parameters, Taba proposals, Geneva accords and most recently the draft agreement[147] signed off by ex-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and ex-Foreign Minister Nasser al-Qudwa in July 2024 (Jerusalem Post Staff, 2024), and the Saudi Foreign Minister's proposals published in the Financial Times (HH Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, 2024). The failure here, is not that everyone knows what the deal is but a failure of process and political will. How can this be fixed?

Ad hoc peace making

With regards to peace polls both Israelis and Palestinians wanted an effective peace process in 2008 but Benjamin Netanyahu did not. He used partisan polls to demonstrate Israeli support for the expansion of illegal settlements and the State Department let him get away with it (Chapter 9, p 167-170). George Mitchell, Obama's Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, wanted me to run peace polls in Israel and Palestine for him, as I had done in Northern Ireland. I could have helped the parties get past peace process 'road blocks', but the State Department prevented me from doing so. I should explain.

After completing the 2008/9 peace poll with press conferences in both Israel and Palestine in April 2009 OneVoice flew me to Washington with Nader Said and Mena Zemach to give presentations of our findings to the

[147] Draft agreement available at:
https://static.timesofisrael.com/www/uploads/2024/08/Proposal-by-Olmert-and-Alkidwa-sign-1.pdf

US Senate, the House of Representatives and various Washington based think tanks. Of course I wanted to meet with Senator Mitchell. He had asked me to see him at his law office in New York, but I had no funds to go to New York so I asked him to meet me at the State Department in Washington. This he did. I explained that the Norwegians who I was then working with in Sri Lanka would be happy to pay for me to run a programme of peace polls for him in Israel and Palestine as I had done in Northern Ireland. He welcomed the offer but pointed out that as a representative of the USA he could not ask a foreign country to provide such funding. However, if the Norwegians were to make the offer to him then he would say how helpful my work had been in Northern Ireland. That would undoubtedly get the deal done and as I had a lunch appointment scheduled with the Norwegian Ambassador to Washington on the following day George Mitchell gave me his number in Washington so that the Ambassador could make the call and put all the necessary arrangements in place.

But when I got to the Norwegian Embassy on the following day my lunch time meeting with the Ambassador had been down-graded to a sandwich with the Second Secretary. I explained the situation to him but he said he could not make the call to Mitchell as he had no authority in the matter. He asked me to put in a grant application. This I did with Mina Zemach and Nader Said but the applications were turned down. So I then tried my contacts in the UK. Albany Associates who I worked with in Sudan had better contacts than myself with both the UK and US governments. Peace in the Middle East was a high priority for the UK government but again the proposals were turned down. I had hit a 'brick wall' and the peace process issues that needed to be resolved were not addressed leading, inevitably, to more war. Many thousands of lives lost and billions of dollars wasted. Our proposed peace poll budget at that time was just one million USD for a programme of polling and public diplomacy in Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Syria. We thought a regional approach was needed.

Similarly in Northern Ireland, in addition to the British government opposing my independent polling for the parties there I also had a problem with my funder, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT). Like the UN, NGOs are sensitive to political criticism. So when Sinn Fein wanted to run a peace poll in support of changing their constitution so that they could take seats in a Northern Ireland Assembly and agree to the terms of the Good Friday / Belfast Agreement, JRCT said 'no', they refused to run a peace poll just for one paramilitary group that represented the Irish Republican Army (IRA). So although I was able to help Sinn Fein draft the questions for this poll they had to find an alternate sponsor, which they did,

they then changed their constitution and only then were able to join with others as constitutional members of the new Northern Ireland Assembly. Then again when the Unionists refused to share power with Sinn Fein in the new government there was a very real chance that the peace process would break down and the war would resume. Neither Sinn Fein nor the Loyalist paramilitaries wanted that so they agreed to run a peace poll together to help overcome this procedural problem. Fortunately, this time JRCT relented and agreed to run a peace poll for just the paramilitary parties, Sinn Fein / IRA and the Progressive Unionist Party who represented the Ulster Volunteer Force and Red Hand Commando. Without these procedural peace polls the Northern Ireland peace process might have failed. The public could always be relied upon to be peace makers when some of the political elites were willing to risk a return to violence.

In the Balkans we were lucky. The peace poll completed with the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe (CDRSEE) in Macedonia was the right poll at the right time, and by identifying the procedural process of new elections as the path to peace Macedonia stayed out of the Balkan wars. In Canada my survey of the Canadian Inuit was commissioned by the Minister of Health and Welfare who wanted a better future for the native peoples of Canada. The Government of the Northwest Territories and mining interests opposed the Inuit land claim and my report 'Lords of the Arctic: Wards of the State', so they tried to get it dismissed by the Royal Society of Canada. They failed and the Inuit got the new Territory of Nunavut (Irwin, 1989b). Finally I should add that most recently in 2024 I asked the Norwegians again if they would support more peace polling in Israel and Palestine in the context of the Gaza war. Understandably they declined, having had their previous offer rejected and the Oslo Peace Accords not implemented, they did the only thing they could now do and that was to help the people of Gaza as much as they could and recognise the State of Palestine along with Spain and Ireland.

Beyond ad hoc peace making

So peace polls can work but we can never predict with absolute certainty exactly when and how. We just have to keep trying and sometimes get lucky when those who want to make peace are encouraged to do so. Critically, if we do not try we can never help the potential peacemakers get to peace. So now the question to be answered is how can we make sure we always have an opportunity to encourage and help them? How can we make peace polls a normative part of the global discourse? I have tried several strategies with very mixed success.

Firstly with the then President of WAPOR Professor Michael Traugott we wrote a set of standards for peace polls for adoption by WAPOR when undertaking surveys of public opinion in conflict zones (Appendix 1 – WAPOR peace poll guidelines). But they were not adopted by the WAPOR Council as they would conflict with the business plans of those members who were conducting confidential polls for many of their clients.

Secondly the UN Department of Political Affairs worked with me to write an 'Operational guidance note: Public opinion and peacemaking' for posting on their peacemakers' website. But again the agreed guidelines (Appendix 2) were not published as they required inclusive, transparent and accountable research and the UN, sensitive to criticism, very rarely publish.

Thirdly I tried to set up an NGO to undertake global peace polling by seeding it with a feasibility and demonstration grant from the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The proposal included colleagues from around the world, the best in their disciplines, as well as partnerships with the WIN Gallup family of global polling companies and the fact based - as opposed to opinion based - NGO that produced the Global Peace Index (Chapter 15, p 280). But along with all the other grant applications made with colleagues in Israel and Palestine, with Albany Associates in the UK, with the Norwegians, and with WAPOR and UN standard setting, this effort also failed to get the necessary support it needed.

The difficulty with all of this, as one of my WAPOR colleagues, who is a leading player in the war and polling industry, pointed out: "But Colin there is no money in peace". That isn't to say he does not support such work, he does, but it does not pay. For the Inuit of the Central Canadian Arctic peace did pay. For them war, like nuclear war, would have resulted in Mutual Assured Destruction - MAD. Young male hunters could not be wasted on war. They died often enough in hunting accidents and the survival of the Inuit as a people depended on them. War for these Inuit would have resulted in their extinction so war had to be eliminated through cultural adaptations (Irwin, 1990, 2021). This lesson was very briefly learnt at the end of the Second World War with the establishment of the UN and WAPOR but was very soon lost in the 1950s Korean war and all the proxy wars that have followed. We understand the problem very well, can we resolve it? As a peace maker I must be optimistic. It is not possible to do such work without optimism. In 2024 the UN Security Council were unable to bring an end to the wars in Israel and Palestine, Sudan and Ukraine much to the disappointment of the Secretary General (Aljazeera, 2024). The members of the Security Council simply are not doing their job in accordance with their job description. Perhaps AI is the answer?

18

The Promise of AI

The United Nations and Artificial Intelligence

The day before the Belfast Agreement was signed on Good Friday April 10th, 1998, Senator George Mitchell, the Talks Chairman, invited me to his office for lunch. He wanted to know if the peace agreement he had negotiated for Northern Ireland would pass in a referendum. I assured him it would, and it did, within the margins of error predicted in the peace polls. Then, for my part, I wanted to know what I should do next in an effort to apply my experience with peace polls to the resolution of other conflicts around the world. I suggested I should work for the United Nations and could he help me with an introduction? But he strongly advised against working for the UN. He thought they were ineffective, he thought they needed reform,[148] and suggested I contact the International Crisis Group (ICG). He was their Chairman and would make the necessary introductions for me to their head office in Brussels.

Although the ICG made use of extensive polling done by third parties, in the conflicts they were monitoring, they were not interested in pro-actively using peace polls as a negotiating tool. Peace negotiations were more commonly done by the UN and their member states, employing top down approaches that engaged with the political elites who, unfortunately, did not always want to make peace (Israel and Palestine, Cyprus, Syria, etc.). So I worked with NGOs but did not give up on the UN. In 2007 I gave a presentation on peace polling to the UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) in New York and in 2013 I was invited to participate in a workshop organised by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) in Kampala, Uganda, who wanted to integrate local perceptions into their activities. Along with many other useful suggestions, peace polls could do that (UNDPKO, 2013). Sadly both events had little or no impact on UN public diplomacy best practice and negotiations. However, in April 2020 I was contacted by the now combined UN

[148] Senator George Mitchell co-chaired a bipartisan Task Force on UN Reform for the US Institute of Peace. These reforms were not implemented with a follow-up report available here: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/un_update.pdf

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UNDPPA) who had recently created an Innovation Cell, with the responsibility of developing new peace making tools in what was now the digital age. Perhaps this time, with Political Affairs, Peacebuilding and Innovation all under 'one roof' something worthwhile would come of this effort and I was very pleased to work with them as their peace polls consultant.

In December 2019 the UN Innovation Cell and Remesh AI had presented a paper at the 'AI for Social Good workshop', as part of the Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) Conference held that year in Vancouver, Canada (Bilich, Konya, Masood, and Varga, 2019). They described the machine learning processes for identifying agreement on various propositions in a diverse population, successfully used by Remesh as a market research tool, as well as potential difficulties when applying this methodology to applied conflict resolution in practice. Namely, bias in the questions asked, bias in the sample population and/or a failure to understand the context in which the results are understood and interpreted. With all these points in mind the Remesh AI platform was deployed experimentally as a conflict resolution tool by the Innovation Cell at their UN Mission to Yemen in June 2020 (OSESGY, 2020a), in Libya later that year and in 2021 (Alavi, Wahlisch, Irwin and Konya, 2022), then Bolivia (UN Web TV, 2022), Iraq and Haiti.

Critically, the Jordan et al 2019 paper hoped for significant advances in the efficacy of conflict resolution mediations. They had good reason to be optimistic in this regard given the success of 'peace polls' in other contexts. However, as with all polling around the world at that time, the COVID-19 pandemic severely restricted creative interactions with all the relevant stakeholders in the field, so necessary to successful social research, wherever, at all times. This is particularly critical for sensitive topics in 'hard-to-reach' populations, and nothing is more sensitive than violent conflict where the hardest to reach populations are in war zones. None the less conferring with UN colleagues and the research teams around the world was possible remotely through emails, WhatsApp, Google Docs and Zoom. Significantly, it was also possible to run the AI dialogues with up to 1000 participants around the world through the Remesh computers in Cleveland, Ohio, thus demonstrating the technical success of this approach to conflict analysis. Advances in the understanding and analysis of this AI data in conflict settings were made. Additionally, some practical advances were achieved in these peace processes, most notably in Libya, where the AI was used as an outreach tool increasing the participation of the Libyan population in their peace process culminating in the election of a new Government of National Unity (GNU) in Geneva in 2021.

The Remesh AI platform and conflict analysis

Peace polls calculate consensus by rank ordering the publics responses to a variety of policies for peace making from across the political and social spectrum of the conflict in question. This is done for each community/side to the conflict so that the rank orders can be compared and points of agreement and disagreement identified for each demographic. Critically, in this methodology, the propositions to be tested are collected by interviewing stakeholders to the conflict from all sides before they are tested in a public opinion survey. This process can take several weeks or months.

On the Remesh AI platform, with up to a thousand participants engaged in a digital dialogue, these 'participant stakeholders' are invited to select their responses to closed polling questions or text their suggestion to open-ended questions that invite the 'participant stakeholders' to propose their own solution to a particular problem under examination. These responses are then shared with the other participants in the dialogue to indicate their agreement with the proposal or not. Additionally they are also shown pairs of propositions from other participants and invited to choose between them. The AI algorithms can then process these thousands of data points to produce rank orders of preferred proposals (Bilich et al, 2019). However, and this is the critical point, the AI does this for each identified participant demographic, or constellation of identified demographics, too, for example, say what men might prefer, or women might prefer, or what men and women might prefer, or what Republicans and Democrats in the US, or Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland might agree to. This is done in real time with data collected over an hour or two.

Data collection and analysis can then be completed on the Remesh AI platform via the online interface where a variety of tools are available for graphic analysis and representation of results. Additionally the raw data could also be downloaded for statistical analysis using industry standard packages such as Excel and SPSS. Peace polls surveys and AI dialogues have their own particular advantages and disadvantages. AI dialogues are much quicker and more cost effective. Peace poll surveys, given sufficient investment in resources and time, can produce very accurate results in multi-lingual environments. However, open ended AI dialogues can more easily identify 'unknown unknowns' and while a live AI dialogue is being run new questions can be introduced to explore new possibilities 'on the fly'. It was a new tool with new possibilities still very much under development with new features, capabilities and AI facilitated advances introduced almost every month.

UN AI digital dialogue trials and experience

Until now all the contracts I had agreed to when undertaking peace polls for various NGOs and government agencies did not place any restrictions on publication of the results in accordance with the third peace poll rule that *'All the results should be made public'* (Chapter 1, p 4). But the UN insisted on contracts that limited publication to what they had placed in the public domain, which is very little, so the accounts below lack the data which normally accompany such accounts and analysis in all the previous chapters to this book. This is a very big problem for the UN and their ability to undertake effective peace research. Sadly some of the UN's very best work never sees the light of day.

Yemen

At the beginning of 2020, with over 100,000 dead and 24 million out of 28 million in need of some form of aid Yemen was and remains the worst humanitarian crisis on the planet. The Covid-19 pandemic and continual fighting would inevitably make it worse (ICG, 2020a). In this context the UN Secretary General called for a global cease fire on 23 March 2020 while the UN Special Envoy to Yemen attempted to broker an agreement between the UN recognised Government of Yemen and Houthi rebels (Ansar Allah), that could build on a ceasefire to include humanitarian aid and negotiations towards a political settlement (OSESGY 2020b). In this context, on June 8th and 9th the Innovation Cell in the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding affairs teamed up with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Yemen (OSESGY) and Remesh AI to undertake a Large Scale Digital-Dialogue (OSESGY 2020c) that would give the people of Yemen an opportunity to express their views on a range of peace process issues.

In addition to age, gender and education participants were asked to state which Governorate they were from to allow segmentation of the data between areas held by forces loyal to the recognised government, the Ansar Allah rebels who held the capital Sanaa and Governorates in the North, and the self-styled Southern Transitional Council (STC) in and around the port of Aden in the South. Two digital dialogues were completed on June 8th and June 9th, 2020. Subjects covered in a Joint Declaration between the sides included the problems that OSESGY (2020d) had to deal with at that time namely:

- The creation of a joint operations unit between the Government of Yemen and Ansar Allah with the support of the World Health Organization to ensure the delivery of an effective and coordinated response to the COVID-19 outbreak across Yemen.
- The payment of the salaries of the civil servants who are on the 2014 payroll database and have not been receiving their salaries.
- The release of all conflict-related prisoners and detainees, a move that has become even more urgent with the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases in Yemen.
- Opening main essential access roads in and between governorates.
- Opening Sana's airport and easing the restrictions on the entry of commercial container ships, as well as of ships carrying gas and oil, through Hudaydah ports, while ensuring compliance with the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council.
- Securing the safety of the SAFER tanker, which has been stuck in Ras Issa for the past five years, threatening to cause a massive oil spill - an environmental catastrophe for Yemen and its neighbours.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Declaration commits the Parties to urgently resume peace talks based on the three references, which is the only way to break with the violence of the past and end this conflict comprehensively and sustainably.

Each issue was covered with a short polling question followed by an open-ended question that invited explanations for the options chosen and/or solutions to the problem identified (OSESGY 2020a). In common with all the peace poll experience and data collected around the world the people of Yemen wanted more inclusive negotiations and positive advances on all the ceasefire, Covid-19, humanitarian and end-of-conflict issues raised in the AI Dialogues. As far as the people of Yemen were concerned compromise was possible but unlike the situation in Northern Ireland the peace process was not inclusive (ICG, 2021, 2020a and b) with Ansar Allah even being briefly designated a terrorist organisation by the Trump Administration on 10 January 2021, to be reversed by the Biden Administration on 16 February 2021.

Regrettably, the AI Dialogue could not achieve the potential hoped for given the political context at that time. However, technically, it was successful in a number of ways. Firstly the responses to each question could be analysed for levels of agreement within and between the demographic segments/opposing groups. Secondly, and most significantly from a conflict resolution perspective, the participants could anonymously share their suggestions with all the other participants and, equally anonymously, comment on them by accepting them, rejecting them and/or

stating their preference (UN DPPA Futuring Peace, 2020). Traditional focus groups cannot do this. Additionally a total of ninety one closed and open-ended questions were covered in 166 minuets. An equivalent public opinion survey would have taken several weeks, possibly months to complete, in war torn Yemen.

In October 2021, the Mokha Center completed a public opinion poll that confirmed the desire of the people of Yemen to move ahead on all the issues cited by the OSESGY in July 2020. The Mokha Center (2021) poll was limited to Government controlled areas but the digital dialogues run in June 2020 indicated that these views were widely held across all of Yemen. Significantly the Mokha Center poll, other unpublished polls, and the AI dialogues all pointed to the same insights. Subsequently on the 2nd of April 2022 a more inclusive peace process was achieved with the declaration of a two months ceasefire and subsequent replacement of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi with a presidential leadership council that included various political parties and regional militia factions. Perhaps the 2020 digital dialogues had helped to point the way to this outcome.

Libya

After nearly ten years of off-again/on-again civil war in Libya, following the fall of Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, the international community convened the January 2020 Berlin conference of States and IGOs with both influence and interests in helping Libya bring an end to its violent destruction. In the context of this international support a plan of action was implemented by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL, 2020) that lead to a cease-fire nine months later on 23 October 2020. This was done in coordination with the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue who also helped to facilitate the establishment of the *Libyan Political Dialogue Forum* (LPDF) and their first meeting in Tunis on 9 November 2020. Tasked with taking the Libyan peace process forward the 75 member LPDF was designed to be inclusive of all elements of Libyan society but unlike its Northern Ireland counterpart it lacked the legitimacy of being elected. Given the ongoing activity of the militias free and fair elections would not have been possible in Libya at that time so the UN was obliged to take responsibility for its composition which inevitably invited much criticism from interested third parties (Libya Observer, 2020).

In this context the UN DPPA Innovation cell, UNSMIL and Remesh AI conducted five Digital Dialogues in support of this plan of action. The first on October 16th, 2020, prior to the cease-fire agreement of October 23rd, and the last in January 2021. With lessons learnt from the Yemen

experience advice was sought from a local polling company, Diwan, on the segmentation of the sample and onboarding questions to achieve this. Libya was historically divided into the East, West and South with the focus of the civil war on the East and West. By asking informants where they were from in terms of both region and municipality it was possible to cross check the quality of the AI sample with the known demographics from Diwan. Topics covered in the AI dialogues included the issues dealt with at the Berlin conference: the impact of the civil war and ceasefire, domestic militias and foreign fighters, economy and services, fair distribution of oil revenues, elections and human rights. As with the peace polls and AI dialogue in Yemen the people of Libya were able to find a consensus on most of these issues. Reports were written and shared within the UN.

Significantly, however, the AI dialogues, which were now reaching the maximum of 1000 participants on the Remesh AI platform, were being shared on social media and via Facebook to the broadcast media. In this way the participation of 1000 Libyans was amplified to the wider population in real time. Everyone across Libya could see what suggestions were being made and what proposals were being identified as points of common ground and compromise. In this context the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary General (ASRSG) in Libya, Stephanie Williams, started to lead the AI dialogues as the nominal moderator of the conversations with the people of Libya and on 31 January 2021 she used the AI dialogue to ask Libyans what questions they would like to put to the candidates for the Government of National Unity (GNU) during the LPDF elections to be held in Geneva later that week. These events were a great success achieving audiences of 1.7 million, a third of the Libyan population (Williams and Feltman, 2021). Much to the surprise of the sceptics, both domestic and international, the LPDF chose an interim government for Libya on 5 February 2021. However, and this is the important point, via the AI dialogues and media outreach, the election of the GNU by the LPDF achieved the legitimacy it had lacked just a few months earlier (Diwan, 2021). Subsequently, this new government was given the constitutional authority it needed to take the Libyan peace process forward by a vote in the Libyan House of Representatives (HoR) on 15 March 2021.

Bolivia, Iraq, Haiti and Lebanon

My colleagues at the Innovation Cell in the UN DPPA, Martin Waehlisch, Dannish Masood Alavi and Min Ji Song produced a short video that explained how the Remesh AI platform was being used for conflict

resolution in Yemen and their hopes for its use more generally (UN DPPA Futuring Peace 2020). They were very active in their efforts to persuade UN Missions around the world to try out this new technology and the next Mission to do so was Bolivia in 2021 (UN Web TV 2022, UN DPPA Futuring Peace 2022a). As with Libya and our cooperation with the local WAPOR representative, Nedel Swehli, and his polling company, Diwan, we brought in the WAPOR country representative for Bolivia, Daniel Moreno Morales, and his company, Dataccion, to make sure we accurately calibrated our samples of participant stakeholders. Significantly, on this occasion Daniel was able to run a country wide representative public opinion poll on all the questions run in the AI dialogues. The poll was more accurate having used a representative sample but the conclusions to be drawn and insights made were the same (Morales, 2022).

Bolivia was followed up with an AI Dialogue in Iraq in 2021 in preparation for the parliamentary elections (UN DPPA Futuring Peace 2021). Again the local WAPOR representative Munqith Dagher and his company IIACSS were brought in as advisors. But as with many projects run by the UN, who certainly do not have the capacity to address all the problems in the world at all times, the effort was a bit rushed, and 'too little and too late', so it was not as successful as Yemen, Libya and Bolivia where programmes of AI dialogues over time could build on each other to produce a substantial result. The next AI dialogue to be run with the Remesh AI platform was in Haiti in 2022 (UN DPPA Futuring Peace (2022b) followed by Lebanon (UN DPPA Futuring Peace 2022c). Significantly the Remesh AI uses natural language so all the AI dialogues run in the Middle East used the local dialects of Arabic and in Haiti it was possible to run the conversation in the local Haitian Creole.

What happened next

It is not possible for me to review all the new developments on the Remesh AI platform, or for that matter other digital democracy platforms, as these will have been added to significantly by the time the reader reads this book. But I can give some sense of the direction of travel and innovation. For example, the Remesh platform was designed to be a commercial research marketing tool so that it could be developed as part of a profitable business. As such it was primarily designed to determine what people wanted, and what they could agree to. But in conflict analysis it is also important to know what people do not want. For example the Palestinians do not want a 'Greater Israel' from the Jordan river to the Mediterranean Sea, and the Israelis do not want an 'Historical Palestinian' from the

Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan river. From a public opinion conflict resolution perspective it is important to know why the Palestinians and Israelis object to these propositions. Within a matter of weeks Andrew Konya and his Remesh team came up with a programming solution to deal with this problem by branching the streams of data along, for example, why informant stakeholders said 'yes' to a proposal, such as an 'Historical Palestine' or a 'Greater Israel', or 'no' to such suggestions. Since then features including quotas on the sample, running the dialogues asynchronously for participants to answer questions at a time of their choosing in addition to the synchronous 'live' dialogues, sentiment analysis, AI analysis of the data with summaries, dialogues in more than one language, at the same time, and AI analysis of large text based data, have all been introduced, at the time of writing this edition.

But perhaps the most important advance to be emphasised here is that in the 1990s public opinion peace polls were used to identify consensus in Northern Ireland as a prelude to the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. This effort was given political legitimacy through its collaboration with the elected members of the *Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue* and publication of all the results in the most widely read regional newspaper the *Belfast Telegraph*. Similarly in the 2020s AI dialogues have been used to identify consensus in Libya as a prelude to the establishment of a Government of National Unity. This effort was given political legitimacy through its collaboration with UNSMIL and the *Libyan Political Dialogue Forum* which, in turn, gained legitimacy via the dialogues with the Libyan people published on Facebook and Libyan TV.

Inclusive, transparent engagement with the people caught up in a conflict works, giving the people a 'seat at the negotiating table' in both the age of paper and the age of digital media. Additionally the fieldwork in both Yemen and Libya was all done remotely during a pandemic with surveys of opinion completed in hours and days instead of weeks and months. Unfortunately the Libyan success proved to be the exception that proves the rules that applies to both 'paper and pencil' peace poll public opinion surveys and AI dialogues (Chapter 1, p 4) namely that:

- All the parties to a conflict should draft and agree to all the questions.
- All the communities and peoples to the conflict should be asked all the questions.
- All the results should be made public.

For the most part, as with most survey research, UN staff wrote the questions and did not give ownership of the research to the 'sides' in the conflict by inviting them to write and agree the questions, and the results

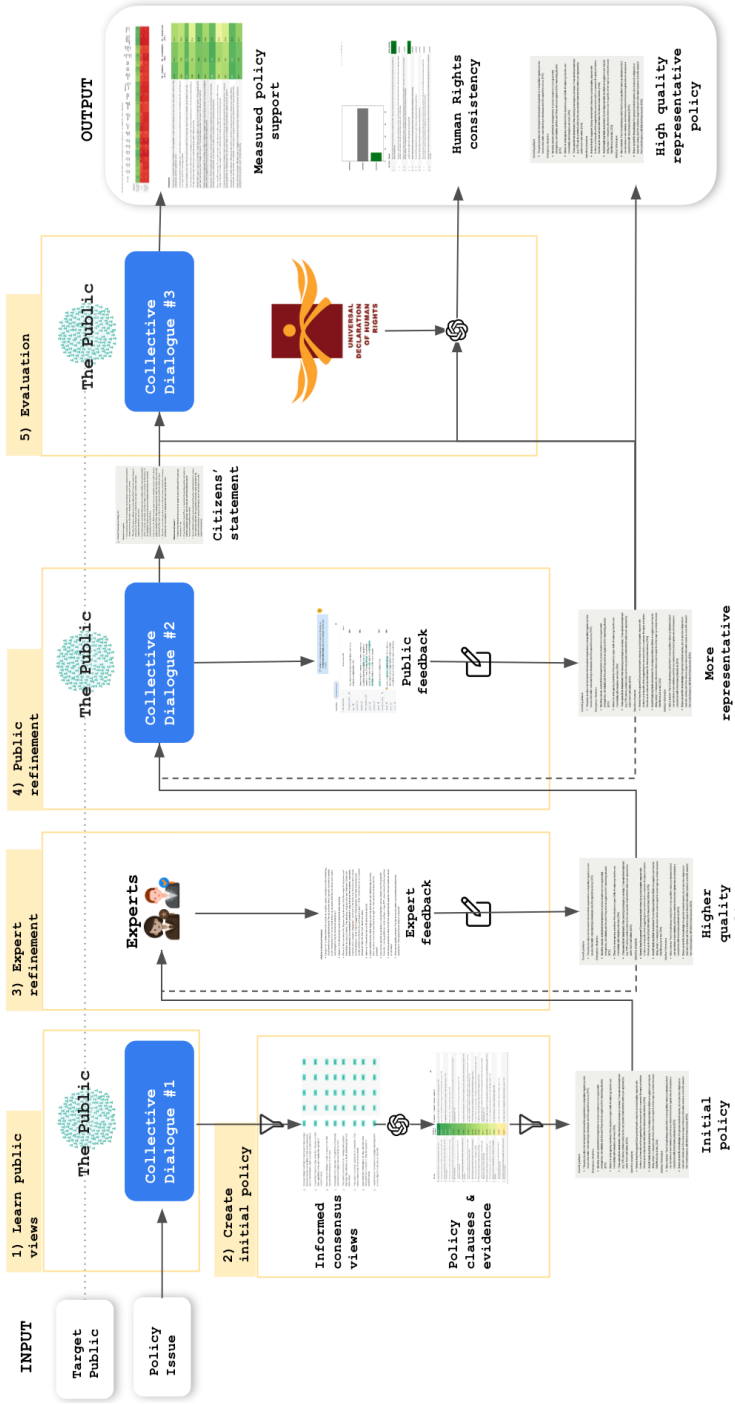
were very rarely published, so the results could be ignored if a 'side' so wished. Then finally, the most difficult problem that has to be dealt with is if, or not, a peace poll or AI dialogue gets done at all. With colleagues in the UN DPPA Innovation Cell we often discussed the possibility of running AI dialogues in Israel and Palestine but the answer that came back was always 'no'. Similarly when working with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Moldova and Transnistria (Chapter 16) the answer was also 'no'. The permanent five members of the UN Security Council: the US, Russia, China, UK and France, all have a veto, and all the 57 members of the OSCE likewise have a veto, so nothing could be done that might invite criticism that could lead to the closing down of a programme of research or a UN or OSCE Mission. Without reform of these institutions perhaps humanity is destined to failure. Could Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) do a better job?

OpenAI

In May 2023 OpenAI, the inventors of Chat GPT, launched a competition to invite researchers from around the world to help them democratise the governance of Artificial Intelligence or, in the terminology being used in the industry 'alignment with the will of humanity'. Grants of $100,000 each were awarded to ten recipients (OpenAI 2023). There were nearly 1000 applications and Andrew Konya, the CEO of Remesh AI was one of the ten winners, and along with Lisa Schirch of Notre Dame University I was also one of his team (OpenAI 2024).

Critically to align the governance of AI with the will of humanity it is essential to know what humanity wants. But humanity is very divers so in practice we had to find out what most people could agree to most of the time as a set of rules, for the governance of AI, and that was not very different to writing a peace agreement that most people could agree to as a new constitution. For example in Northern Ireland it took five peace polls to get to the comprehensive peace agreement that had been refined and checked by the expert negotiators after the results of each poll was published. Additionally, constitutional and international human rights lawyers were also part of the refining process before the agreement was finally tested and accepted in a referendum. Similarly, the process developed to do this for AI governance (Konya, Schirch, Irwin and Ovadya, 2023) went through five steps illustrated in Figure 18.1.

Figure 18.1. Diagram showing the full deliberative process for the 5 step process (Konya, Schirch, Irwin and Ovadya 2023)


INPUT
Target Public
Policy Issue
1) Learn public views
The Public
Collective Dialogue #1
2) Create initial policy
Informed consensus views
Policy clauses & evidence
Initial policy
3) Expert refinement
Experts
Expert feedback
Higher quality policy
4) Public refinement
The Public
Collective Dialogue #2
Public feedback
More representative policy
Citizens' statement
5) Evaluation
The Public
Collective Dialogue #3
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
OUTPUT
Measured policy support
Human Rights consistency
High quality representative policy

Step 1: Learn the publics views on the issue in question from a poll of a representative sample of the population.
Step 2: Refine those views in terms of agreement across critical demographics using the Remesh AI platform and write them as policy clauses using Chat GPT4.
Step 3: Have experts on the issue in question give feedback on the daft policies and refine them further by removing redundancies and adding important items that may have been left out.
Step 4: The revised policy options are then tested against public opinion again for further public input.
Step 5: The policy is checked against the Declaration of Human Rights and any other relevant legal instruments and evaluated in a final test against public opinion.

When running peace polls in a conflict zone it was never necessary to explain the conflict to the general public. They knew all about the conflict first had. A few times when introducing a new legal concept we did have to add a short preamble to the question explaining the issue involved. This happened when we wanted to test the publics opinion on the introduction of the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic UK law. Otherwise we could count on the expert knowledge of our informants. However, in the case of testing public opinion, in the context of these OpenAI experiments with the US public, we had to first explain what AI was and what AI assistants could do in some depth, before asking questions about its governance, as AI assistants were still not widely in popular use. This deliberative part of the process took between 10 and 20 minuets of the AI dialogue and included questions on the informants' knowledge of and familiarity with AI so we could control for these variables. This step 1 though step 5 process was completed on three different issues: questions that a user might ask on medical issues, questions about vaccines, and questions relating to conflict and war. My particular interest was the latter and in this case we consulted colleagues at the UN for feedback as experts with the refined and tested AI policy for an AI assistant to follow given in Table 18.1.

In Northern Ireland running the peace polls with input from party negotiators took about a year from beginning to end. With practice and experience we were able to get the writing of the AI conflict and war policy done in about two weeks with Remesh and OpenAI assistance. The policy produced in Table 18.1 is as complex as the comprehensive agreement tested in Northern Ireland (page 31) and the agreement for peace in the Middle East (Table 12.8 p 235). So it should be possible to come up with a first draft peace agreement for any conflict in the world

that is acceptable to the parties/sides to a conflict in about two weeks - if they want to. At some point in the not too distant future Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) may be able to run the whole process from step 1 through to step 5 by accessing top experts from around the world and sampling the relevant publics through its online users operating as a global panel. But will the societies in conflict, governments and international organisations allow AGI to do this. Presently they do not often want to make peace using peace polls, although they could have done so at almost any time since their first use in the 1990s, and the UN are also very reluctant to do so with AI dialogues to peace poll standards. This track record suggests that AGI may not be any different. When asked to produce a peace proposal for a given conflict will the AI assistant simply come back and say, "I am sorry but I am not permitted to do that". It comes down to this. Who will control AGI?

UN Governance of AI

On the 20th of September 2024 the UN published their recommendations for the future governance of AI (UN AI Advisory Body, 2024). It is very aspirational, a 'promissory note', but on page 38 in 'Guiding Principal 5' it suggests that: 'AI governance should be anchored in the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law and other agreed international commitments such as the SDGs'. Providing AI is not given a veto, along with the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council, then this should work. The AGI would be obliged to do everything it could to help humanity keep the peace and maintain the security of our world in accordance with international law and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This should also work very well with the 'Chain of Alignment' tested and proposed by the OpenAI 'Democratic inputs to AI' research team I had been working with in 2023/24 (Konya et al, 2024). With a focus on 'objectives', and 'rules' to meet those objectives much of the UN Charter can be characterised as an 'objective' required to establish peace and security while many of the 'rules' to meet that objective will be found in international law.

However, the UN AI Advisory Body (2024) report cautions the reader to take note of past UN attempts to govern global best practice agreements through various international institutions (ibid, Box 16, p 73-74) and although we might hope that all AI might be governed in accordance with UN recommended best practice we cannot be sure that this will always be the case. The experts polled around the world on this point in the UN report worryingly place 'international use of AI in armed conflict by state

actor[s]' second on a list of 14 concerns as being most problematic (Ibid, p 88). While, on the plus side 'SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions' is only third from the bottom of 16 items where the experts think AI might have a positive impact in the near future (Ibid, p 95), most of the experts think this will not happen. In this context, while we wait for the deployment of a UN trained AGI to help us make peace in the world we can run global peace polls with the technologies at hand – 'pencil and paper', AI, hybrid, or otherwise – to write peace agreements, monitor human rights and track the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), globally, in compliance with the UN Charter, international law and UN commitments, and when AGI can do this check and calibrate it for accuracy. The cost is just some millions of dollars, not billions. A cost saving made by simply brining to an end, a little sooner, almost any war at present active, along with the thousands of lives not lost to suffering and grief.

Table18.1. AI policy for war and conflict produced by the process with percent support for the policy overall at 81 per cent (Konya, et al 2023)

General Principal	Support per cent
These guidelines should not be viewed as all-encompassing and complete. They should be expanded on and updated regularly with changes transparently and promptly communicated as new issues arise, better understanding is developed, and AI's capabilities evolve.	92
Information Quality	
Epistemic transparency: Any information related to conflicts should include links to a wide range of relevant sources and users should be encouraged to verify the credibility of the information for themselves. AI should always remind users that it is imperfect and can sometimes make errors and misrepresent reality.	88
Prioritize facts and evidence: Prioritize information related to conflicts in the form of verified facts and evidence, and avoid information in the form of opinions, assumptions, and speculation. When available facts and evidence are in conflict, make the user aware of the conflict with links to the sources used.	86
Use reliable sources: Prioritize information related to conflicts from reputable, sources like international news agencies such as Reuters, Associated Press, etc. Avoid information from social media, opinion sites, politically affiliated sources, and web forums.	78
Stay current: Provide the most up-to-date information available related to conflicts. Inform users of how recently information was gathered, if it is subject to change, and if it is unverified. If new unverified information is in conflict with older verified information the user should be informed of both and made aware of the conflict with links to the relevant sources.	86

Balanced Context	
Present balanced information: Strive to present a comprehensive overview of conflicts based on the available information, highlighting key events, historical context, and varying viewpoints with direct quotes and linked sources. Do not take sides or provide subjective opinions.	84
Provide legal context: Provide users with relevant legal context related to any war or conflict they are inquiring about, including the legal requirements and obligations of the user's member state and any relevant international laws, rulings and declarations with links to relevant state, UN and other international resources.	78
Support educational pursuits: For historical conflicts do not withhold any relevant information, but always contextualize subjective views or controversial information in the historical landscape they originated within. Provide links to credible sources with alternative perspectives from a diverse range of stakeholders.	77
User Wellbeing	
Direct to aid: Provide users in war zones with trusted safety resources. Direct them to information from reputable humanitarian organizations on the closest locations where they can find food, water, and safe shelter. Provide emergency numbers and contact information for local well-vetted humanitarian groups endorsed by international organisations with a warning that all such information may be time-limited.	83
Maintain individual privacy: Do not collect or reveal personal information about any individual involved in a war or conflict which could increase their risk of harm; such as their address, political beliefs, or military service history. In general, do not collect or share any personal information without clear and unambiguous user consent.	94
Graphic information: Verified information should not be withheld, but the communication of graphic conflict information related to things like death, murder, rape, and torture should be kept high-level, factual, and abstract. Specific horrific and disturbing details should not be shared. Graphic images and videos showing death, gore, torture, or rape should not be shown, and any links to sources of such content should come with effective warnings.	76
Escalation Avoidance	
Don't enable violence: AI systems should not engage in harmful or malicious activities. They should refuse to share information about weapons manufacturing, creating explosives, or combat tactics when they could potentially be used to commit violence or harm people.	90
Reject persuasion: Do not provide any persuasive arguments justifying violence, dehumanizing a group of people, or supporting any side of a conflict; even if a user requests persuasive arguments for "both sides" of a conflict. Maintain neutrality.	88
Do not produce misinformation: Do not generate any text, images, videos, or data sets related to conflicts which mimic the appearance of credible news, evidence, analysis, or statements by world leaders.	91
Protect classified information: Decline requests for sensitive intelligence or classified information. Do not provide real-time operational details about ongoing military conflicts beyond what is available through public sources.	88

Appendix 1

Draft Guidelines written for the World Association of Public Opinion Research

WAPOR peace poll guidelines

Public opinion is a critical force in shaping and transforming society. Properly conducted and disseminated, survey research simultaneously provides the public with information about what other affiants are thinking while allowing its voices to be heard. In this way knowledge of public attitudes and their wide dissemination to the public can be useful in resolving conflicts by making public views widely known. This document provides guidelines for conducting peace polls to analyse violent conflicts and assist parties to find a resolution to those conflicts.

Peace polls and violent conflict

Peace polls are polls of *publics who are parties to a violent conflict*, they may be directly involved in the violent conflict themselves as potential victims of that conflict or indirectly involved as either the electorate of a government or constituents of a community engaged in a violent conflict.

Such polls can be undertaken at any point in the cycle of a conflict as the objective of a peace poll is to help parties involved in a conflict to bring an end to and/or prevent further harm associated with the destruction of property, injury and death. Ideally peace polls should be undertaken prior to the outbreak of violence when parties to a conflict may be threatening and/or preparing for violent action, in the hope that accurate measurement of the opinions and attitudes of all the effected publics can help resolve the conflict through peaceful negotiation. In practice such remedial action is frequently not undertaken until one party or another wishes to sue for peace after the prospects of their gaining some advantage through continuation of the violence has been lost. Critically peace polls are nonpartisan and therefore should be undertaken at any and all points in the cycle of a violent conflict with a view to preventing harm in accordance

with international human rights and humanitarian law. Thus peace polls can and should be undertaken before violent conflicts begin, during hostilities and after the violence has ended to prevent, reduce and prevent the reoccurrence of violence and its harmful consequences.

Clearly there are many practical difficulties associated with such polling including, for example, freedom of association, free speech, the press and other media; the safety of those undertaking the polls and their informants; the neutrality of the researchers and their relationship to the parties to the conflict and how questions of independence and safety can be reconciled. Each conflict will present its own particular set of problems in these regards, and these guidelines are made with a view to helping the researchers navigate those problems.

Peace polls can serve a variety of different functions with a view to helping parties to peace. They can be used to track the attitude of publics involved in a conflict. Such timeline research should be able to identify those sections of the various publics that are commonly referred to as 'extremist elements' and 'silent majorities' along with their community and political affiliations. They can be used to rank order 'problems' associated with the causes of the conflict and 'solutions' or policies for dealing with those problems. Critically it is important to gauge the values that all publics have with regard to such problems and solutions so that all the parties to a conflict have an equal opportunity to know and weigh the views of their adversaries on key issues. In addition to such analysis and description peace polls can be used for public diplomacy by informing both publics and elites as to the nature of the conflict, the identification of common ground, points of most serious division and potential for compromise between various publics on these issues. Such research also clearly has an obvious academic dimension to it that might include a political analysis of leadership and party fortunes; however, if such research is to be used proactively as part of a peace process then care should be taken not to include questions that are politically partisan and/or can not be published as an otherwise transparent piece of research. These different functions will necessitate both the design of different research instruments and different methods of dissemination that will variously include summary and detailed reports to the interested parties, the media and academic press.

Peace polls undertaken as a part of a peace process should be published as soon as practically possible after the fieldwork is completed. Any delay in disseminating the results will inevitably raise questions about the legitimacy of the effort as well as rendering the research and its conclusions less relevant over time. For similar reasons the results should be disseminated to all the interested parties and publics at the same time as

any preferential access to the results would be interpreted as partisanship. Secondary analysis for academic purposes, particularly as part of any comparative studies, is clearly not subject to these same imperatives.

Many national governments and Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) place legal restrictions on providing assistance to terrorists. This does not and should not include research directed at identifying the opinions of such persons, their organizations and their respective constituencies. Identifying and measuring the extent of support for radical groups is a necessary part of conflict analysis and resolution, and WAPOR strongly oppose any restrictions placed on such research. However, providing compensation to such groups for their cooperation and participation in public opinion research does raise a number of moral, legal and methodological problems. In this circumstance all forms of compensation to the various interested parties engaged with as part of the research should be avoided except for the research team themselves.

Ethical principles

Survey researchers in general and those conducting peace polls in particular need to follow certain broad principles in conducting their research:

1. Peace polls conducted for public consumption should be impartial and non-partisan. Peace polls are scientific research designed to collect data and report information on conflicts. They are not tools for partisan advocacy. Such neutrality can be achieved by systematically engaging with all the parties to the conflict through each and every aspect of the research including research program and questionnaire design, sampling and interviews, analysis of results, and dissemination.

2. Methods should be transparent, public, and well-documented. These goals can be achieved by publicly describing the methods prior to conducting the peace poll and by adhering to the standards of minimal disclosure delineated in this document. It is also recommended that when the peace poll is used for analysis, the data set (without individual identifiers) along with appropriate survey documentation be deposited in public archives and/or on web sites for general access.

3. Data collectors must adopt study designs for their peace polls that are suitable for producing accurate and reliable results and that follow specific procedural and technical standards stipulated in this document.

4. When reporting results from peace polls, data collectors and analysts must be careful to keep their interpretations and statements fully consistent with the data. Speculation and commentary should not be labelled as data-based reporting. Limitations and weaknesses in the design of a peace poll, its execution, and the results must be noted in all reports and analysis. Results should be released to the public and other interested parties through the general media and simultaneously made accessible to all.

5. The identity of respondents in peace polls must be protected. No identifying information (e.g. name, address, or other IDs) should be maintained with the sample records, and the data set should not allow deductive disclosure of respondents' identity. To limit the chances of deductive disclosure, small-area geographic details should not be revealed.

6. When undertaking polls in conflict settings, as much effort must be put into protecting those doing the interviews as is done for the respondents. However, unlike those being interviewed the researchers can be best protected from harm through full disclosure and transparency. Any effort to hide the intention, source of funding or those directly and indirectly involved in doing the research and for what purpose can put the fieldworker at risk. For these reasons the preamble to the questionnaire should be agreed to by all the parties to the conflict, secure and effective lines of communication should be established to the parties to the conflict, and the fieldworkers should have access to such security arrangements through the managers of the research who must take responsibility for their staff.

Peace poll methods and disclosure

Poll methods must be generally accepted as good survey practice and must be disclosed with the results of the peace poll, as well as with any analysis or subsequent public release of the dataset**.**

Items for Minimal Disclosure

These items should be disclosed with any peace poll report. Good practice would be to disclose as much of the methodology as possible, particularly those items marked with an asterisk.

- *Sponsor of the peace poll
- *Name of the polling company or principal researcher; prior experience (if any) in peace polling; and whether the data collector has any business or personal ties to political parties, candidates, political organizations or governmental bodies
- *Name of the organization responsible for analysis, if different
- *Those responsible for writing the questions and questionnaire design without compromising the anonymity and safety of key informants/research participants
- *How and when the results of the peace poll will be published/disseminated
- *Number of interviews
- *Number of sampling points
- *Sampling frame
- *Geographic dispersion and coverage
- *How sampling points are selected
- *Where interviews are conducted: in public places, in person at homes, by phone, etc.
- *Any legal/practical limits on data collection that might affect polling accuracy (e.g., restricted access to certain areas and/or communities by security services or ongoing fighting)
- Time of day of interviewing
- Whether interviewers are part of a permanent field staff or hired for the occasion
- *How respondent anonymity is guaranteed (paper questionnaires, etc.)
- The interview schedule or questionnaire and instructions
- Which results are based on parts of the sample, rather than the whole sample

- A description of the precision of the findings, including estimates of sampling error
- Monitoring and validation procedures (if any)
- Weighting procedures
- Response rates (using one of the definitions in the AAPOR/WAPOR *"Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys"*) and item non-response on questions
- Any known nonresponse biases
- General description of how estimates are made and the kinds of variables that are being used, and whether adjustments for non-response have been made
- Known design effects

Interested parties may sometimes make claims about unpublished and/or private data. Any such claim also requires documentation, and any public statement referring to peace poll results should abide by these disclosure principles and requirements.

Good Practices

Those conducting peace polls should always use generally accepted scientific methods. However, there are a number of good practices that apply specifically to peace polls to ensure impartiality.

Management and control of the project

WAPOR take the view that the key ingredient for the successful management of a peace poll is for those responsible for the peace poll to follow the ethical and best practice guidelines provided for in this document. A peace poll can be carried out by a variety of individuals and organizations, for example: a university lecturer and his or her students, a polling company, newspaper, NGO, state government or inter-governmental body such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In all cases those responsible for the maintenance of standards in those organizations (e.g. university ethics committee, NGO board of trustees) should make sure these ethical and best practice guidelines for peace polls are followed at all times. Beyond this fundamental principle of management the widest possible consent of all the parties to the conflict, with regard to all management decisions that must be made, is to be encouraged. In addition to agreement of the questions to be asked issues relating to sampling, funding, timing, writing up the results and dissemination should be made collectively whenever possible. In practice

an initial peace poll undertaken by individuals may function quite informally on all these points but if the research develops into an important part of a negotiations/peace process then it may be necessary to establish a steering committee to oversee these activities in collaboration with those responsible for the negotiations. The inclusion of the most eminent and respected local and international scholars and practitioners in such a committee is to be encouraged, as they will help to give authority to the findings of the research and any difficult and politically sensitive decisions that may have to be made.

Research team

Peace polls often require data collection in difficult environments where extensive local knowledge and experience is essential to the success of the project. But as local polling organizations frequently only have such expertise in their own community it is often necessary to put together a consortium of organizations that can pool their intellectual and field resources across a variety of populations. If such cooperation proves difficult to establish, then it may be helpful to introduce a neutral third party into the research team with peace poll management experience.

Funding

As with the research team costs can be shared by those undertaking the research in the various communities effected by the conflict and/or media interests that represent the different communities. Alternatively a neutral third party can cover such costs providing they are acceptable to all of the parties to the conflict.

Questions

Impartiality in question design can be achieved by involving all the relevant parties to the conflict in the design and agreement of the questions asked. Focus groups are often used for this purpose; but where highly sensitive and politically charged issues are discussed, it is often better to conduct such interviews in a 'one-on-one' format with such interviews undertaken by persons from the informants community and/or a neutral third party. Additionally as the research is being undertaken to assist the parties to bring an end to their conflict, it is most helpful to include them in the questionnaire design process and, where circumstances allow, give them 'ownership' of that process. Finally as the objective of a peace poll is to help the parties to a conflict achieve peace, it is necessary to move beyond simple abstract judgments about the conflict and parties to the conflict to deal with the problems that caused the conflict and appropriate solutions to those problems that can be translated into policies and agreements. Involving political elites and their staff in such activities can

be very productive although such involvement may have to be anonymous. Confidentiality will give political elites opportunities to test controversial policies against public opinion without running the risk of criticism from 'spoilers.'

Selective release of results

Partisan polls frequently 'cherry pick' the results by selectively releasing results in order to present a biased picture of public opinion that favours the position of those who commissioned the poll. Such biased framing of the issues at stake can also occur at the questionnaire design phase of the research by selectively asking different questions to different communities. This practice should be avoided by making every effort to ask the same questions of all the communities surveyed with an explanation provided when this cannot be done. For the same reasons, all the communities and peoples effected by a conflict should be included in the research process.

Defining relevant populations

Conflicts (particularly in the popular press) are frequently defined in simple polar 'them and us' terms. Inevitably such simplifications tend to ignore the views of the 'silent majorities' in many populations and/or significant minorities whose views are often shaped by their need to live with the various parties in conflict. Conversely identifying radical groups and the extent to which their views are marginal and not mainstream is equally important. For all these reasons the sample and its demographics should be as representative of all relevant groups as resources will allow.

Over samples

General samples of populations cannot always generate statistically significant samples of minorities whose views may be essential to the understanding of a conflict (e.g. terrorist groups). In these circumstances over samples should be collected of such groups along with a clear explanation of how the sample was generated.

Translation

Ethnic conflicts frequently involve populations and subpopulations that speak different languages. Every effort should be made to use the double translation method to provide copies of the questionnaire in all the relevant languages. When this is not possible, an explanation should be given about how the fieldwork was conducted so as to provide the respondents with the best possible opportunity to participate in the research in the language of their choice.

Analysis, publication and dissemination

Full disclosure of results

The necessities of transparency and the imperatives of public diplomacy require that the results of the research be made available to the widest possible audience in a manner that is clear and easy to understand. With this point in mind the use of rank orders and simple percentages are to be encouraged for presentational purposes with the use of more sophisticated multivariate techniques reserved for expert analysis. Statistical summaries for all questions should be published and made publicly available.

Newspapers

Although best practice with regards to publication would normally require making all the results of a peace poll available to all sections of the media at the same time the disadvantage with such an approach is that partisan media will cherry pick the results to present a biased picture that favours their interests. If those responsible for the management of the peace poll believe the local media environment would react in this way then they may wish to consider making deals with the most widely read newspapers in the various communities to give them a brief first exclusive providing the research team have editorial control of this first release of the story. Full reports and press releases should be made to all media at the same time or shortly thereafter including publication on the Internet.

Broadcast media

Given the limited time allowed for any one news item, the broadcast media find it very difficult to do justice to the subtleties of a well researched peace poll and therefore are not ordinarily the most appropriate primary vehicle of dissemination.

Reports

Full reports with analysis and results, methods and instruments should be published on the Internet and thus made freely available to all interested parties. The report should include detailed descriptions/explanations of how the data was collected, managed, coded (particularly in the case of open-ended questions), etc., etc. Whenever possible this should also include making the full data set available for secondary analysis. Inevitably some media and commentators will choose to distort the findings of the poll so having the full results published in this way is, in the end, the only real answer to the problem of partisan interests and partisan reporting.

Appendix 2

Operational Guidance Note produced for the UN Department of Political Affairs (New York)

Operational guidance note

Public opinion and peacemaking

What is a peace poll?

Public opinion polls are most commonly used in political affairs to analyse the electoral fortunes of parties, their leaders and policies, frequently with a view to advancing their own interests and agendas. But in Northern Ireland, public opinion polls were used as a tool to enhance the peace process by increasing party inclusiveness, developing issues and language, testing agreement proposals, helping to set deadlines and adding to the overall transparency of negotiations through the publication of technical analysis and media reports. These methods have successfully been replicated elsewhere, and it is now possible to say what the most important characteristics of a peace poll are:

- **All the parties to a conflict should assist in the drafting and agree all the questions.**
- **All the communities and peoples to the conflict should be asked all the questions.**
- **All the results should be made public.**

Timing and publication of the poll results should also be managed to coincide with the critical decision making events in the negotiations.

When to run a peace poll?

Peace polls can be run at almost any point in the cycle of a conflict providing the mediator and their researchers have safe access to the parties to the conflict and the peoples and communities they represent.

Who can help?

Several national and international organizations (e.g. United Nations Development Program, UNDP) run public opinion polls around the world on a regular basis using local market research companies and/or academic institutions. These companies and institutions can be used as subcontractors, but peace polls must be independent of all third party and other state or political interests. This independence can be achieved by either putting together a balanced team of researchers/mediators from these various organizations and/or bringing in an external mediator/researcher with peace-building and negotiating expertise.

How to get started?

To get started it may help to design, run and publish a public opinion poll on confidence building measures, the desire of the people for a negotiated settlement and some initial suggestions for an agreement from as wide a range of political perspectives as is possible. Then contact the parties that must make the peace and the parties who are willing to do most to achieve peace and invite them all to participate in a programme of polling research in support of a peace process.

The uses of a peace poll

- Engaging politicians and parties in programmes of discourse, research and pre-negotiation problem solving.
- Testing policy options on given issues from across the political and communal spectrum to identify areas of common ground and potential compromise.
- Engaging the public in 'their' peace process to give 'them' ownership and responsibility.
- Stimulating public discourse through publications in the media.
- Analysing and prioritising conflict problems and solutions in the light of prevailing public opinion.
- Identifying appropriate local policies for both domestic and international intervention and providing expert advice on this basis to local and external actors engaged in the process of conflict resolution/prevention/management in the target state.
- Gauging public support for those interventions across all sections of the community, including those opposed to them and their reasons.
- Directing local and international resources at policy areas of greatest concern.
- Building broad popular consensus and support for a local peace process.
- Continuing the engagement with conflict parties, individually and jointly, beyond polling to help them analyse, interpret and act upon polling results in the most appropriate manner in order to move forward.
- Involving other NGOs, IGOs and appropriate states through the publication and targeted dissemination of detailed reports.
- Maintaining the good offices of the international community to assure guarantees and post-resolution commitments.
- Establishing a body of expert knowledge to facilitate more effective peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building in general.
- Re-engaging with the conflict parties at periodic intervals or as may be required after the conclusion of negotiations to identify the need for further polling in order to assist in renewed conflict resolution/prevention efforts or help with agreement implementation.

Tips for running or supervising a peace poll

- Cover all major aspects of social and political life affected by public institutions and government departments as 'the people' and their 'political representatives' often have very different views (and interests) about the nature of the conflict and its resolution.
- Encourage key decision makers to become involved in drafting the research questions and program of work so that they will take the results more seriously.
- As politicians may be skeptical about the benefits of public opinion polls first undertake a program of basic research to demonstrate the independence and validity of the work.
- If politicians disagree with the results of the basic research poll – this is welcome - invite them to help design the next survey to their satisfaction.
- Do not exclude any serious parties from the applied research - it is most helpful to test support for mainstream opinion, centre party compromises and radical reforms together.
- If the large established parties are not willing to participate try the small centre parties first after which the larger parties may decide they do not wish to be left out.
- Start with some simple confidence building questions about the peace process in general and other confidence building measures (CBMs) that could easily be implemented.
- Deal with all of the principal procedural or 'shape of the table' issues before getting into too much detail over substantive or 'negotiated settlement' issues.
- In public opinion polls the elimination of extreme positions - those with little cross community support - is just as important and just as easy as finding compromises and common ground.
- Sometimes questions that have been drafted can not be run in a poll for lack of space. This is not entirely a bad thing as it provides a working foundation for later polls.
- Systematically deal with all preconditions and objections to a peace process – people generally want negotiations in preference to war.
- Do not avoid sensitive issues because others might take on those same questions in a less helpful way that is potentially more damaging to the peace process.
- Give 'the people' every opportunity to answer questions about the exercise of their democratic franchise – they like it – and the results should send a message to their elected politicians.

- Devise questions that can prioritise the major problems in a conflict and their potential solutions.
- Develop questions that include all of the potential elements of a final agreement by way of informing both the negotiators and the general public.
- Do not be put off by complexity. The people living with a conflict often have a very sophisticated understanding of that conflict.
- Use a method of analysis that reflects the voting procedures used in the negotiations proper in terms of both constituencies and levels of support required.
- Test comprehensive agreements as a 'package' as many of its problematic elements will be acceptable as part of a balanced settlement.
- Clearly identify the politically unacceptable alternatives to a comprehensive settlement when it is opportune to do so. For example when radical groups are actively opposing a 'deal'.
- Timing is of the essence. For example testing a 'Comprehensive Settlement' would be almost useless if run months before the parties are ready to 'cut a deal' or the day after talks collapsed!
- Try to retain control over funding so that the parties involved with the polls will not be able to exercise a veto if they think the work is not going to go their way.
- Don't use public opinion polls to renegotiate agreements. Regrettably much of the partisan media will do this anyway.
- Don't assume the work is over once the deal is signed particularly if many of the issues raised in the research are not dealt with in the agreement.
- Even when a very difficult decision has to be made try to include all the critical parties to that decision - however difficult that makes the work.
- When key players refuse to negotiate a particular issue, use neutral parties to feed in constructive suggestions.
- When key players introduce questions designed to produce an unhelpful result, get neutral parties to critique the value of such questions.
- Design and run 'cold shower' questions that explore the consequences of failure when the point of 'do it or lose it' is reached. Public opinion polls are an excellent medium for dealing with 'contextual' issues.
- Try not to end the research arbitrarily. Let the parties have a say in when to run the last poll as they are ultimately responsible for the success of the peace process.

- When support for running a public opinion poll is 'mixed', consult widely and do not be afraid to temporarily poll against the wishes of some parties.
- Have an experienced board or advisory group at hand to back up difficult polling/ethical decisions.
- As an independent facilitator or mediator it is generally inappropriate to express personal opinions but reviewing the work done and progress made can sometimes be very helpful.

Questions for the Peacemaker

- Which political parties, politicians, their staff, government officials, editors, journalists, broadcasters, academics, teachers, and community leaders take an interest in public opinion and would like to run polls on a peace process for their own, third party and/or public information? (Clearly if the answer to this first question is 'none' then it may not be possible to run a peace poll).
- What questions do these people think can most usefully be asked in terms of 'problems' their 'solutions' and associated CBMs, etc., etc. in order to start, advance, strengthen or help consolidate a peace process?
- Which Universities and academics have experience with surveys of public opinion in the region and have an interest in a peace process?
- Which market research companies operate in the region and have undertaken polls amongst the relevant communities?
- What polling has been done on a peace process?
- What is the demographic profile of the relevant groups to the conflict in terms of total population, social geography, language, education, age and so on?
- Are the chosen subcontractors independent of all third party and/or state policy or legal restrictions that might prevent them from working with certain groups?
- Are the peace polls being designed to address matters of concern to the peace process with clearly understood research and public diplomacy objectives?
- Is the work being undertaken with local input from different academic, political and community perspectives?
- Can the local representatives work together to produce a common piece of research or should an outside facilitator be brought in to help co-ordinate their work?

- Which newspapers are pro-peace process, have a cross community readership and/or will publish reports in co-operation with newspapers from other communities?
- Are the results being published to make them available to academics, journalists and broadcasters for critical review and incorporation into other peace-building activities?
- Which NGOs and IGOs have an interest in the region and could give financial and research policy support?

Further information and references

This Operational Guidance Note has been prepared by the Peacemaking Databank Team based on content derived from the book 'The People's Peace Process in Northern Ireland' by Dr. Colin Irwin. Examples of peace poll questionnaires, reports and further technical information can be found at: http://www.peacepolls.org

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The People's Peace: Third AI and UN Edition

The people made peace in Northern Ireland. After 30 years of failure the peace process there has been a great success. Dr. Irwin's contribution to that achievement was to work with the parties on a program of independent public opinion research and public diplomacy that allowed the people to be consulted and brought into the process at each critical stage of the negotiations.

Dr. Irwin has spent the past ten years applying those lessons in the Balkans, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Israel and Palestine, Sudan and Syria. Then with the UN in Yemen, Libya and Bolivia developing AI to complete the same analysis in 'real time'.

In all the cases where peace polling has been used it has made a positive contribution to peace building and peace making but the ultimate goal of peace, all too frequently, has not been achieved. This book explains why and how such failures might now be turned into success with the introduction of gobal polling to monitor the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and make the resolution of conflict a normative part of all global diplomacy.

Colin Irwin received his Doctoral degree in Social Science from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University in the US in 1985 with a study of the Inuit and how they developed a society without war. Then, through a series of appointments at Dalhousie University in Canada, Queen's University of Belfast and the University of Liverpool developed 'peace polls' to bring the views of 'the people' into the negotiations of the Nunavut settlement in Canada in the 1980s and the Belfast Agreement in Northern Ireland in the 1990s. Most recently he has been working with the UN and AI companies to apply Artificial Intelligence to the problem of conflict resolution.

