

Workshop 2

Blind Spots: How to Deal with Conflict Resources and Economic Crimes?

Organised by:

Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)/German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management

Abstract

Natural resources play a crucial role in many armed conflicts around the world. Illegal armed groups often exert control over natural resources in order to fund their war effort; many authoritarian regimes abuse a country's resources to keep their power in place. It is common to find that war-torn countries suffer from high levels of corruption and that the revenues of public goods are embezzled to the benefit of the elite. The international community has, over the past years, developed a series of tools to control the exploitation of natural resources and to stop economic crimes, but international legislation relative to economic crimes is still underdeveloped and important gaps still exist in the treatment of crimes related to natural resources. In particular, these crimes have, until now, not been systematically included in transitional justice proceedings following the end of armed conflicts or the fall of authoritarian regimes.

The workshop aims at analyzing the relationship between transitional justice, development cooperation, natural resources, and economic crimes, considering different levels of action. The objective of the workshop is to identify and better understand the cross-cutting issues between transitional justice, development cooperation, and conflict resources.

Guiding Questions

- How can discourses about conflict resources, transitional justice and development cooperation be linked? What are the chances of linking the different approaches?
- How can economic crimes be systematically included in transitional justice interventions? What are the challenges?
- What experiences have transitional justice mechanisms and international aid organizations made in the field of anti-corruption initiatives?

The workshop will start with a conceptual introduction presenting the main interrogations and the stage of research on the subject, and then consider two case studies (TRC Sierra Leone and StAR-Initiative Peru).

Resource Persons

- Dr. Emily Harwell
- Nelly Calderón Navarro, Instituto Peruano de Derecho Registral, Peru
- Yasmin Sooka, Foundation for Human Rights, South Africa

Facilitation:

- Wolf-Christian Paes (BICC)