



Telling the Truths: Truth Telling and Peace Building in Post-Conflict Societies (The RIREC Project on Post-Accord Peace Building) (RIREC Project Post-Accord Peace Bldg)

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"Truth telling is always important but never more so than when a country undergoes a transition. Getting to the truth challenges myths, half-truths, denials, and lies. When the silence is broken, it offers the opportunity for new beginnings. *Telling the Truths* is a major step in this direction." —**Alex Boraine**, Founding President and Chairperson of the Board, International Center for Transitional Justice, Cape Town, South Africa

"This interesting, well-written book is timely and important for scholars of democratic transitions and conflict resolution as well as those working in the areas of international law and organization." —**Jackie Smith**, Department of Sociology and Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame

Confronting the past has become an established norm for countries undergoing transitions from violence to peace, from authoritarianism to democracy, or both. This book draws from two bodies of literature—peace building and transitional justice—to examine whether truth-telling mechanisms can contribute to sustainable peace and, if so, how and under what conditions. The authors approach these questions by examining whether truth telling contributes to the following elements, all of which are deemed to be constitutive of sustainable peace: reconciliation, human rights, gender equity, restorative justice, the rule of law, the mitigation of violence, and the healing of trauma.

While the transitional-justice literature appears to have grasped the importance of truth telling for securing sustainable peace, few studies have undertaken empirical analysis and evaluations of the long-term impact of such mechanisms. Contributors to this interdisciplinary volume—from the fields of political science, law, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, and theology—accomplish that by closely examining how societies emerging from violence must in some way examine, acknowledge, and account for violence committed in the past in order to move forward.

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