



## **Trust-Building in Conflict Transformation**

### **Conference Report**

***10-11 September, 2008***

***VENUE: University Conference Centre, Gregynog, Wales***

### **Conference Aims**

The aim of the conference was to examine the role of trust in conflict transformation, particularly as it relates to violent conflicts where actors have frequently employed terrorism as a strategy. Trust is often the first casualty of terrorism and can be further undermined by punitive forms of counter-terrorism. At the same time, trust-building is central to establishing dialogue, the conflict resolution process and long-term conflict transformation. In a unique blend of presentations by leading scholars, conflict resolution practitioners, and media figures and discussion-based break-out sessions, participants explored a range of important issues, including: the theoretical foundations of trust in conflict processes; trust and the effects of terrorism; practical cases of trust-building and dialogue in cases of recent and ongoing violent conflicts; and trust-building as an alternative to radicalisation.

### **Conference Programme**

#### ***Wednesday 10 September, 2008***

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1:00 – 2:00pm | Arrival and registration   |
| 2:00 – 3:30pm | <b>Session 1: Trust-building in Theory and Practice</b><br>Professor Nicholas Wheeler, Aberystwyth University<br>Professor Geoffrey Hosking, University College London<br>Chair: Professor Michael Foley, Aberystwyth University |
| 3:30 – 4:00pm | Afternoon tea  |
| 4:00 – 5:30pm | <b>Session 2: Trust-building and Terrorism</b><br>Dr Basia Spalek, Birmingham University<br>Robert Lambert, founder of the Muslim Contact Unit<br>Chair: Dr Richard Jackson, Aberystwyth University                              |

- 6:30 – 8:30pm Conference Dinner
- 8:30 – 9:30pm **After Dinner Address**  
Professor John Tirman, MIT  
Chair: Professor Nicholas Wheeler, Aberystwyth University

***Thursday 11 September, 2008***

- 9:00 – 10:30am **Session 3: Trust-Building in Practice**  
Professor Mark McGovern, Edge Hill University  
Jo Berry and Pat Magee, Conflict Resolution speakers  
Chair: Dr Richard Jackson, Aberystwyth University
- 10:30 – 11:00am Morning tea
- 11:00 – 12:30pm **Session 4: Trust-Building and Iran**  
Professor John Tirman, MIT  
Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, SOAS  
Chair: Professor Nicholas Wheeler, Aberystwyth University
- 12:30 – 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00 – 3:30pm **Session 5: Trust-building as an Alternative to 'Radicalisation'**  
Robert Lambert, founder of the Muslim Contact Unit  
Arzu Merali, Islamic Human Rights Commission  
Dr Basia Spalek, Birmingham University  
Professor John Tulloch, Brunel University  
Chair: Professor Mark McGovern, Edge Hill University

**Introduction**

**Prof. Michael Foley** opened the conference by linking the topic of the conference to the continuing innovative work of the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University in pushing the boundaries of the subject of International Relations, and specifically its work in the sub-field of security studies. This was followed by a brief history of Gregynog which was for a time the family home of the philanthropist and leading Welsh internationalist Lord Davies of Llandinam, who founded the Department at Aberystwyth in 1919. Gregynog was later bequeathed to the University of Wales, becoming an international conference centre. Given the historic links of Gregynog to the Davies family, it was fitting that one of the organisers of

this conference was the David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies (DDMI) which is based in the Department at Aberystwyth.

**Dr Marie Breen-Smyth** then welcomed the audience and drew attention to the work of the Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Contemporary Political Violence (CSRV) and invited submissions to the recently established journal, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. She also mentioned a particular interest in hearing from scholars working on topics relating to perspectives on the Global War on Terror from the Global South, especially Africa.

### ***Session 1: Trust-building in Theory and Practice***

**Prof. Nicholas Wheeler**, Director of the DDMI, began by discussing the project that he and Prof. Ken Booth are leading at Aberystwyth on 'Trust-Building in Nuclear Worlds'. This builds on their 2008 book *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) and takes as its point of departure an investigation into how multidisciplinary theorising on trust can contribute to building cooperation and trust between nuclear-armed and arming states. This was followed by a talk which drew out some of the salient issues that the research is raising.

Prof. Wheeler noted the neglect of 'trust' in the disciplines of International Relations. Trust, he argued is available in civil life, but is the same trust available between states and nations? He identified three key factors that promote distrust at the international level, though he maintained that these had applications at all levels of political life. The factors are:

#### 1. The Security Dilemma

The security dilemma is the existential condition of uncertainty that confronts individuals and groups about the motives and intentions of others. This condition of uncertainty presents itself most acutely at the international level.

As a result, political Realism dictates that we 'must distrust'. The assumption of trust at the civil level does not apply at the international level because costs are higher and hence responsibilities upon leaders are that much greater. The problem is not only that trust is in short supply at the global level but also that it can be dangerous.

Prof. Wheeler argued that realists are right – uncertainty is existential – yet this doesn't rule out room for trust. States need trust to avoid spiralling distrust. In concentrating too much on misplaced trust, realists lose sight of the costs of misplaced suspicion, and hence lose opportunities for trust-building.

## 2. Peaceful and defensive self-images

Prof. Wheeler argued that a major driver of distrust is a peaceful/defensive self-image which leads actors to think that others – including potential adversaries – interpret their actions as they intend them. These images form a barrier to cooperation since each side thinks it is not threatening to others but forgets that the other side cannot have this level of assurance.

## 3. Ideological fundamentalism

- This is the problem of imputing malevolent intent based on a perception of what the other 'is' – its values, ideology etc – rather than how it acts. Deciding that a group is a foe removes doubt over motives and intentions, and leads states and other actors to impose a 'bad faith model' on each other's actions. Even cooperative moves are seen as a trick or a sign of weakness.
- Such an outlook is not *always* a bad thing, but it can be dangerous if applied to states which are acting out of peaceful/defensive motives, leading to a spiral of distrust that could have been avoided.

Ways forward:

Prof. Wheeler argued that we must ask how we can translate empathy into policies that promote trust, and to build trust we have to be prepared to accept the vulnerability that always accompanies relations of trust which requires what he called a 'a leap of trust'. He invited the conference to consider what 'leaps of trust' might be possible in the cases under discussion.

**Prof. Geoffrey Hosking** (University College London) took a historian's view on the issue of trust, arguing that it formed part of the 'deep grammar' of societies. He pointed out that trust is often an unconscious decision – such as the decision over which bank to join – but noted that trust means different things in different societies. Trust also changes throughout history, can be directed to persons (or collections thereof), and also can be directed to fate.

Further points:

- Discussions of trust can be too moralised: trust is not always a good thing
- Trust is not only a rationalist sentiment, it is important to consider its emotional element
- Globalised society means 'structures of trust' (e.g. pensions) are globalised:
  - o In view of this, we must make an effort to empathise (not the same as sympathise), yet despite mass tourism/media/education, this seems a way off.

- International investment/trade has had a huge impact on trust between nations, but what does this mean for other people?

Findings suggest that in crises of trust, we must broaden and democratise trust in response, in order to reduce inequality. As per Stiglitz, who notes economic globalisation has outpaced political globalisation, the answer could be democratising economic control.

## **Questions from the Audience:**

On trust in different societies?

Geoffrey Hosking (GH): the definition is the same, but the way it operates can be different. Trust cannot be the same across time and space.

Trust and solidarity?

GH: Trust may be necessary to solidarity but not all trust relationships involve solidarity

'Thick' trust and 'thin' trust. The former involves repeated transactions, the latter more common in the modern world.

Identity?

GH: Whom you trust depends on who you identify yourself to be  
Trust tends to cause complimentary distrust across boundaries

Can we assume trust?

Nicholas Wheeler (NW): We have to. When events disassemble this assumption we have a problem. Acting on the basis of trust allows this assumption.

GH: Rules and contracts can help to augment trust

Floor: On Georgia, there was a lack of empathy on both sides and a problem of colliding peaceful/defensive self images, especially with the US. Meanwhile there were feelings of weakness in Russia and within the Former Soviet Republics.

GH: We didn't cooperate in peacekeeping roles in the former Soviet space, we didn't consult over the Balkans, and we tried to bring in Ukraine and Georgia under NATO umbrella. As a consequence, Russia feels ignored and encircled. We've lost an opportunity.

Floor (further points/questions):

Is trust possible between institutions or just individuals?

Are trust relationships inverted in the global south?

Soldiers must have trust between themselves to operate, but is there also a need for trust between soldiers and the state they represent?

'Affective communities', does this represent trust?

The converse of trust is the suspect community.

Prof. Wheeler then raised a further question as to how trust relationships change when there is a change of leaders. For example, what were the consequences of the departure of Reagan and Gorbachev for US-Soviet relations? Both speakers agreed that this problem emphasised the need for developing robust institutions that could sustain trust as leaders changed, and both cited the case of the European Union as an example of what Wheeler and Booth in their book call 'embedded trust'.

### ***Session 2: Trust-building and Terrorism***

**Dr Basia Spalek** (Birmingham University) began with an account of her work with the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU), co-founded by Robert Lambert, in its efforts to promote partnership work between Muslim communities and the police for the purposes of counter-terrorism (CT). The account constituted a preliminary analysis of one strand of this work, looking at the nature of the partnership work, any tensions that might be apparent and the factors helping to sustain the partnership.

The MCU developed after 9/11. Its evolution was a learning process, designed to give clues as to the future of cooperation, and according to one Muslim community leader, it represented 'a real partnership'. The unit is considered controversial in its focus on solely the Muslim community, yet it enables in-depth understanding for the police – no easy task. The research has enabled an assessment as to the best partners for the MCU.

The MCU approach is seen as less hard-edged than traditional CT initiatives. It has adopted an empathetic approach, has been open about its CT purpose, acknowledged community grievances and is engaged in ongoing interaction and dialogue. The MCU takes a holistic approach to the social group whilst also considering sensitive inter/intra-community tensions. MCU officers have also acted as facilitators, empowering communities by providing help with access to resources. Furthermore, the unit has drawn on the presence and knowledge of Muslim police officers.

The main problem the MCU faces is what will happen to individual bonds, which have taken time to build up, when the individuals involved move on?

**Robert Lambert** (see the journal *Critical Studies on Terrorism* for interview) continued with more on the work of the MCU. He argued it was about trust. Both co-founders were experienced in CT and following 9/11 noted the continuities in the threat patterns. They wanted to address the same communities as the terrorists, thereby undermining the 'us and them' logic of the war on terror.

He noted the inconsistency in the government approach which espoused the virtues of diversity and inclusiveness in its approach following the Macpherson report, yet following 9/11 placed the Muslim community under a separate banner. Propaganda/suicide videos, he pointed out, demonstrated the need for terrorists to find reasons for their actions – developing trust is crucial in these situations. Indeed, the MCU almost had to act as ‘good’ terrorists themselves. As such, the link between trust-building and minority communities was made. Within these communities there is no trust but deep suspicion – taking risks to initiate trust-building measures will be an important consideration for policy makers in the future.

### **Questions from the audience:**

How do you initiate trust-building?

Robert Lambert (RL): Empathy on the street is insufficient; the question is what can be delivered? Distancing from the pejorative nature of the war on terror is important.

How is the ‘Muslim community’ defined by the MCU?

RL: Diversely. Involvement in a wide variety of areas acts as a bulwark. But Salafi Wahabi extremism is where the problem lies.

RL: This was not found to be the case.

Basia Spalek (BS): Operating at different levels, adopting a fluid approach to the community allows a snowballing effect to trust-building.

What of top-down approaches? And are there any thoughts on ‘real’ trust versus ‘false’ trust?

BS: Bottom up delivery allows the sort of delivery that a top-down approach finds difficult. The police/informant relationship is not one based on trust. Engagement as a partner of the MCU is a different type of relationship with little academic coverage.

Can we articulate ‘extreme distrust’? Also, has the MCU’s work filtered upwards?

RL: The radicalisation agenda moves us away from what is familiar. Without the wider Al Qaeda network at all levels, 7/7 would not have been possible. We have seen this before. Grievance has great traction, see Siddique-Khan: “we are doing to you what you have done to us”, we must hone in on these sentiments. Policy making should take note.

BS: Government must make space for MCU’s work.

Is there any sign of filtering up?

RL: No. The tone of the debate is still wrong.

Is there another example of the MCU?

Floor: In Northern Ireland there have been similar initiatives but police/legislative reforms are necessary for greater success.

## ***Session 2: Break-out group 1:***

The group faced three questions:

1. How does the language of terrorism close space for trust?
2. Is empathy between victims and perpetrators of terrorism possible?
3. What efforts can counter home-grown terrorism?

The group discussed whether the language of the US government, as the lead nation in the war on terror, was part of the problem. It was further noted that language in the blogosphere towards Muslim communities would not be used elsewhere. Hostility, it seems, is also driven by civil society.

The discussion then turned to the phenomenon of Islamophobia, the group agreeing that this was a serious problem with grave consequences for trust-building within communities. Gauging the extent of these attacks is difficult but those reported were thought to be only the tip of the iceberg. Islamophobia was seen as a worldwide threat. Islamophobia within the police was also pointed to as a worrying trend.

The grievances of Muslim communities were discussed. Seeing videos of foreign occupation forces in Muslim lands, and especially their misdeeds, was seen as a major factor, demonstrating the transnational linkages. It was agreed, however, that there was a number of ingredients amounting to a 'recipe' for grievance. The lack of an articulation of Muslim critiques in the mainstream press was noted.

The question of whether the MCU helps to build trust was asked. Dr Basia Spalek responded noting the difficulty of objectivity in social science and the need to look at those groups not working with the MCU. Social exclusion was an important factor. It was suggested that the MCU did not make any wider difference in police culture or government attitudes, and that the unit was potentially personality based. Interfaith forums were available to bridge divides but many groups were uninterested, and it tended to be forced.

Finally it was argued that, as in Northern Ireland, the grievances were not solely religious, there were different strands and actors at each level needed to take responsibility.

## ***Session 2: Break-out group 2:***

The break out session gave room for more discussions and engagement with one another. The following questions were asked in the first of these sessions.

1. To what extent does the language of terrorism and terrorist dehumanise and close down the spaces for trust?

Answer: labelling them with that title is the first problem but then does the name have to change before solving the problem. It should be looked at as a spectrum not a dichotomy.

2. What role can trust building play in efforts to meet the challenge of home grown terrorism?

Answer: it could definitely go a long way. The creation of safe forums where interaction can take place and where actors can speak freely without other actors taking any form of offence would be a step forward.

### ***After Dinner Address – Prof. John Tirman***

In his after dinner address Prof. Tirman presented the 'myth of the frontier' as a preconception which has decisively shaped US foreign policy. Ever since the frontier was closed, and the territorial integrity of the United States was finalised, there has been a crisis in American identity. This crisis was reflected in the subsequent 'extension' of the frontier into the Philippines, yet this expansion has not been simply territorial, but ideological too. This 'frontier ideology' has recurred in the war on terror. When Puritan ideals took hold post9/11, political discourses shifted toward the frontier mentality. Prof. Tirman asked how we might derive trusting relations from the frontier mentality but concluded with the assertion that the frontier mentality will prevail.

### ***Session 3 – Trust-building in practice***

**Mark McGovern** began with a presentation of his work with the Ardoyne Commemoration Project, a 'single identity truth recovery project'. Two conceptions of trust were identified: trust as essential to testimony work, and trust as a resource for social capital.

Ardoyne is a nationalist republican working class area of North Belfast, surround on three sides by loyalist working class communities, and an area of multiple social marginalisation and deprivation. During the conflict, seven out of ten of all sectarian killings occurred in Ardoyne with 99 people killed. Mark McGovern is the only member of the project not from the area.

300 people testified to the project and two important features were noted:

- 1) Control: testimony was in the hands of those who gave it; nothing was published until permission was given.
- 2) Inclusiveness: All cases of people killed from Ardoyne were included, not all were members of the nationalist community.

Suspicion of outsiders was intense, insider-outsider dynamics were complex, people were 'always screening'. The role of recognition, telling ones own story, was given as an important factor in individuals' relationship with the project.

The role of informers was the most taboo subject, and the project allowed space for this taboo subject to open up, building on feelings of trust. Problems noted included that of 'insider research', the reinforcement of positions within the community, the exclusion of others, and the problems of access to 'outsiders' (whether from within or without). The greatest fear of contributors was potential censure within the community. Self-trust - that is trust among community members - was almost as big a hurdle as the trust of outsiders.

The session then turned to the experiences of **Jo Berry**, whose father Sir Anthony Berry was killed in the 1984 Brighton bomb, and **Patrick Magee**, who planted the bomb for the IRA. There followed a moving discussion of their efforts to build trust in the aftermath of these events.

Jo began by marking the date, 11 September, and remembering the events of seven years ago. She admitted she was amazed at the point of trust that had been reached between her and Pat. Following the bomb, her Father was lost but so was a part of her. She felt involved in war and conflict, but wanted something positive to come from her experiences. She began with initiating a dialogue with members of the Belfast community, admittedly

taking risks but still needing to deal with the trauma. There was a sense of betrayal at one 'tribe' not listening – but for her the betrayal was about not being able to see the other as a human being.

**Pat Magee** then continued the conversation by remembering the day they first met on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2001. The two have since had 40 meetings – impossible if there was a lack of trust. Prior to the first meeting he had felt more of an obligation to attend, a 'post-conflict necessity', that the republican message was being censored. He had considered that an understanding might occur in the meeting but did this constitute trust?

The first meeting lasted 3 hours. At some point he realised that words weren't enough, that a political obligation was replaced by human obligation. He saw Jo's father as a valued human being. In the process of what had been done, he had killed a part of Jo.

He added that being able to speak freely requires an environment of trust although there are still some topics 'off limits'. Everything else is honest and any betrayal would undermine everything else.

Jo continued, saying that during the first 1 ½ hours she was aware of Pat's 'political hat'. She wanted to hear everything, thinking that this would be the only meeting.

At this point Pat remembered saying about halfway through, 'I don't know what I am' – a moment of taking a risk perhaps?

Jo admitted that at times she had felt angry but that politics can all too often miss the human side of events.

### **Questions from the audience:**

How did trust impact on other relationships?

Pat Magee (PM): Left the republican movement after prison. In talking to friends about BBC documentary which followed the meetings, he noticed that people were very suspicious about it, asking 'can you defend the armed struggle on the BBC'? He felt not but nonetheless saw it as an opportunity all the same, despite many misgivings from friends. It took time for this realisation to filter down to the community.

How far is this personal story reflected in wider community?

PM: Very complex. A very long way to go

Floor: Victims organisations are facilitating meetings

Mark McGovern (MM): There are ways to 'go there' – recognising experiences in others is crucial, there is some progress.

PM: Can't imagine victim/'perpetrator' meeting where 'perpetrator' wasn't charged

How was this part of a 'healing process'?

Jo Berry (JB): When bomb went off she 'felt the enemy'. Reconnecting has helped to move on, a transformation of the pain.

PM: Has felt at times he couldn't go on and felt 'a crash' after the meetings, yet he feels facing up to things is painful but necessary. Knowing that either could walk away is important to trust.

Are lessons transferable elsewhere?

JB: Absolutely, many meetings have taken place elsewhere, at conferences etc.

MM: Connections, practical lessons can be transferred, self-control is Important.

PM: People are at different stages of their healing process but dialogue is the start. Opposition to starting that process is what they are fighting against.

Is state of *post*-conflict setting necessary? Is there any potential ahead for victims of more recent Islamist violence?

JB: Climate of not being heard leads to violence as being seen only option, changing this climate is a shared responsibility

MM: Violence was still occurring when the Commemoration Project was set up. Certain things can be done.

JB: See the work of Combatants for Peace in Palestine

### ***Session 4 – Trust-Building and Iran***

**Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** (SOAS) introduced the session with three questions relating to trust-building and Iran:

1. Do states operate to create trust?
2. Do international relations obstruct trust?
3. Why do states not try to build trust?

He argued that the US and Iran were trapped in distrust and suspicion which had roots on both sides – what he called 'Cold Peace'. On the US side, he noted the following grievances against Tehran: 1) the 1979 hostage crisis; 2) Iranian support for militant groups, and Tehran's refusal to recognise Israel; 3) Iranian involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan; and 4) the Iranian nuclear programme.

Iranian grievances were given as 1) US interference in domestic affairs – a pathological fear of foreign involvement which is not unfounded; 2) US sponsorship of Saddam Hussein during Iran-Iraq war; and 3) destructive US

foreign policy in the region in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine. Iran sees itself as the natural leader of the Islamic world.

This was followed by some recent efforts to overcome these grievances perhaps borne out of a realisation that neither can fulfil their strategic goals without the other:

- Diplomatic/academic US-Iran talks on Iraq, realisation that US needs Iranian help in both Iraq and Afghanistan
- Talk of a more permanent US presence in Tehran

Prof Wheeler asked whether 'Cold Peace' was sustainable or whether lasting stability could only be built on new relations of trust.

**Prof John Tirman** (MIT) followed with a discussion of his latest work – a critical oral history project on the history of US-Iran relations (especially during the Iran-Iraq war). This is an attempt to discover any missed opportunities for cooperation which might furnish us with lessons for how to develop trust in the future.

He noted that Iran was rarely mentioned post-9/11 but would probably be a suspect if another attack occurred – trust has collapsed in a short time. He added another addition to the 'drivers of distrust' (Prof. Wheeler, Session 1) which was that US attitudes to Iran were driven by orientalism, specifically 'nuclear orientalism'.

The method of his work is 'critical oral history', to create an empathetic relationship between former adversaries so that they can discover how their one-time enemies felt threatened by actions that they saw at the time as peaceful/defensive. The method also seeks to promote reconciliation by leading the former practitioners to re-write their separate narratives to create a new shared narrative.

One question Prof. Tirman seeks to answer is why was there no normalisation in the Clinton moment? He sees preceding events as a rich source of misperception, arguing that historical grievances must be addressed before conflicts can move forward towards resolution. Yet, he further added that it is still possible to take leaps forward through national policies or 'transformational diplomacy'.

### **Questions from the audience:**

Must we refer to current events?

Prof. John Tirman (JT): Difficult logistically but there is a possibility that lessons can speak to current events, especially in pointing to how opportunities have been lost, thereby helping to seize future opportunities.

Would a Chatham House Rules setup be more productive?

JT: Assumption is that outcomes will become public regardless

Will participants check transcripts before publication?

JT: Yes

A common narrative almost impossible, is self-enrichment through the process of realising misperceptions as a resolution mechanism more important?

JT: A 'common narrative' about moving towards overcoming drivers of distrust, perhaps not a realisable goal or an end in itself.

What reflections are there on the adverse effects of intelligence services activities?

Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (AA): Trust can be built between societies not just necessarily states. The impact of intelligence services is normally negative but doesn't tend to determine events.

JT: Every two-three years US intelligence services leak warning about Iran and nuclear weapons, perhaps in an attempt to condition public perceptions. Intelligence services can have an influence.

NW: Flipside of this is the NIE report.

AA: 'Spoilers' are often right wing lobby groups in both US and Iran

JT: Speaks to role of disinformation in conflict dynamics

AA: Dominance of communication channels important.

#### ***Session 4: Break-out group 1***

The group attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the principle sources of distrust?
2. What 'leaps of trust' are necessary to improve US-Iranian relations?

Two steps were seen as necessary to overcome distrust: 1) recognising a common danger, and 2) formulating a common response. It was imperative for major states to make a move.

One leap of trust suggested was to abandon the commercial sanctions policy.

The US National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear activities that was made public in November 2007 could be seen as a shift in the discourse which might provoke policy efforts, yet there needs to be a common response within states as well as between them. The NIE was not followed by either.

Individual agency was seen as crucial in distrust and leaps of faith.

Prof Wheeler asked whether we can build trust from distrust, and added that contact between individuals was not always a panacea, noting the example of the Kennedy-Khrushchev 1961 meeting in Vienna which was arguably instrumental in leading the Soviet leader to believe he could push Kennedy around over Cuba, leading to the Cuban missile crisis.

### ***Session 4: Break-out group 2***

In the second break out session, the following questions were asked:

1. What are the principal sources of distrust in the US-Iranian nuclear relationship?

Answer: John Tirman said that he was told by the Iranians that all they wanted was respect and that lack of respect by the US over the last 30 years has had highly negative consequences. The Iranians see themselves as having a high status with their oil wealth and standing up to western imperialism, but regardless of this, they believe that Washington does not recognise them as worthy of respect and this breeds feelings of both resentment and humiliation.

2. What kind of leap of trust can break down the barrier of fear and suspicion between the west and Iran?

Answer: The opportunity to resolve these differences has presented itself on occasions, with both sides making important moves to build trust, but these have not been reciprocated. The challenge is for these unilateral moves to be repeated and reciprocated in the coming months and years.

### ***Session 5 – Trust-building as an Alternative to Radicalisation***

**Robert Lambert** began the session presenting 'radicalisation' as framed by Islamophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment, arguing that we should take this seriously in trust-building initiatives. The climate of anti-Muslim sentiment, he continued, led him to construct trust-building around counter-terrorism rather than counter-radicalisation, pointing out that it is the act of terrorism that we are acting against. Focussing on radicalisation, he argued, stigmatises certain communities.

**Arzu Merali** (Islamic Human Rights Commission) then spoke of her concern that trust-building can lead disenfranchised members of community to disassociate themselves from the group leaders. She argued that meaningful progress must tackle more fundamental sentiments, pointing out that many members of the Muslim community see these efforts as a smokescreen for institutional prejudice. She explained that we are talking not just about disenfranchisement, but extreme disenfranchisement, adding that mediators give the impression of trying to 'socialise' only one group.

**Dr Basia Spalek:** Spoke of the role of academics in trust-building. She argued that critical researchers can open up spaces for deconstructing dominant norms and academia can be a space for marginalised groups.

**Prof John Tulloch** (Brunel University) followed with a presentation on his work in 'negotiating the media' following the injuries he sustained as a victim of the 7/7 tube bombings, and his subsequent use by the media to support extending detention legislation, a move he opposed. Trusting relationships, he said, were formed immediately after the bomb went off – the first aid administrator, the physiotherapist, and so on – but what about the media? He argued for the growth of incremental trust through collegiality with the media. Reading a letter he wrote to Mohammed Siddique-Khan, he talked of the trust he had put in him, and how through ITN he had attempted to reverse Siddique-Khan's journey.

### **Questions from the audience:**

What space is there for moderate voices in the media?

Prof. John Tulloch (JT): Don't distrust the media, work with it. Academics must be more public

RL: Demonising Muslim radicalisation is counterproductive, see Tariq Ramadan.

JT: Major power structures are represented in the media, important not to be naive

To Arzu Merali (AM) – Are you entirely pessimistic?

AM: No, but struggling to see how power structures can be overcome. It's not just trust between communities, but trust within communities

Prof. Wheeler noted how weaker powers tend to be more likely to make leap of trust, citing Saddat's trip to Jerusalem 1957. He said that the international arena starts from distrust, and the domestic arena from trust, but these terrorist groups are starting from a position of distrust (in the media/society).

Dr Richard Jackson asked why has there been no report post-7/7? In the meantime he called for the need for consistency of conduct.

The conference concluded with the observation that academics and civil society groups do have the agency to act as trust-builders. It was noted that the problem of violent radicalisation is not solely what happens inside people's heads or their political views, but when they choose to use violence; there is no direct causal link between radical views and the propensity for violence. Academics have a responsibility to open up the ever dwindling space for a clear distinction here, particularly in allowing individuals and groups to express their political grievances without being securitised as potential threats.

## About the Speakers/Chairs

**Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** is the author of *The International Politics of the Persian Gulf* (Routledge, 2006), *Iran in World Politics* (Hurst & Co/Columbia UP, 2007/2008), and the forthcoming *A Metahistory of the Clash of Civilisations*. Educated at the Universities of Hamburg, American (DC) and Cambridge, he was the first Jarvis Doctorow Fellow at St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford. He teaches comparative and international politics at SOAS, University of London.

**Michael Foley** is primarily a specialist in US and UK politics and history. He has published in a variety of fields (e.g. history of ideas, political thought, constitutionalism, the presidency, legislative politics and leadership). His most recent book, entitled *American Credo: The Place of Ideas in US Politics*, was published by Oxford University Press in September 2007 and by OUP/New York in November of the same year. He is currently working on several projects related to the theme of populist politics and to the position of political leadership within the international dimension.

**Geoffrey Hosking** is Emeritus Professor of Russian History, at University College London. His latest book is *Rulers and Victims: the Russians in the Soviet Union* (2006). Professor Hosking spent the year 2006-7 at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton working on the history of trust, on which he is now writing a book. His article 'Trust and distrust - a suitable subject for historians?' was published in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol 16 (2006), 95-116.

**Richard Jackson** is Reader in the Department of International Politics, Aberystwyth University, where he is also the Deputy Director of the Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Contemporary Political Violence. He is the founding editor of *Critical Studies on Terrorism* and the author of *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counterterrorism* (Manchester University Press, 2005). He is co-editor with Marie Breen Smyth and Jeroen Gunning of a forthcoming volume entitled *Critical Terrorism Studies: Framing a New Research Agenda* (Routledge, forthcoming).

**Robert Lambert**, Research Fellow, University of Exeter. In December 2007 Robert retired from the Metropolitan Police Service after 31 years service, 28 years of which were spent in operational counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism. In January 2002, together with a police colleague he set up the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU), with the purpose of establishing partnerships with Muslim community groups both equipped and located to help tackle the spread of al-Qaida propaganda and recruitment in London. In June 2008 he was awarded an MBE for his police service. He has also

received awards from the Muslim Council of Britain, the Islamic Human Rights Commission and Islam Expo. He continues to work with Muslim community projects in London and is a strategy advisor to Street – a Muslim youth outreach project based in London. In October 2005 he embarked on a parallel academic project, researching key aspects of MCU partnership experience, for a PhD in the Department of Politics, University of Exeter (due for completion in 2009). He is also a member of two related research projects, led by Dr. Jonathan Githens-Mazer (Exeter) and Dr. Basia Spalek (Birmingham) respectively. In September 2008, he also commences work as a part-time lecturer at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St. Andrews.

**Patrick Magee** lives in Belfast and was the IRA operative who planted the 1984 bomb in Brighton that killed five people and wounded 34. **Jo Berry** is the daughter of Sir Anthony Berry, a Member of Parliament who was among Magee's victims. Since Pat's release from 14 years in prison, Pat and Jo have met and have appeared publicly together, including in a BBC documentary. They have talked in prisons, Universities, schools, peace conferences both national and internationally. They have now become friends and share with audiences their journey with the challenges and learnings. A quote from a participant at a Palestine/Israel peace conference said, 'Witnessing their dialogue causes the audience to confront the other, to acknowledge the reality of the other side, while not necessarily demanding or offering forgiveness.' For further information, please see: <http://www.buildingbridgesforpeace.org>

**Basia Spalek** is Senior Lecturer in Criminology & Criminal Justice at the University of Birmingham. Her research interests include British Muslim communities, crime, victimisation and community safety issues, as well as equality and diversity within the public sector, and communities, identities and crime. Her books include: *Islam, Crime and Criminal Justice* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), *Crime Victims: theory, policy and practice* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), and *Communities, Identities and Crime* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2008). Dr Spalek has also written policy documents relating to Muslim communities as well as to broader diversity issues, including: B. Spalek (2005) 'Muslims and the Criminal Justice System' in: *Muslims in the UK: policies for engaged citizens* (T. Choudhury ed) Budapest: Open Society Institute; and B. Spalek. (2005) *Horizon Scanning for the Crown Prosecution Service: equality and diversity*, Equality & Diversity Unit: Crown Prosecution Service. Dr Spalek has also conducted research looking at Muslim converts in British jails and in 2007 was awarded a research grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to examine partnership approaches between the police and Muslim communities for the purposes of counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation.

[http://www.iass.bham.ac.uk/study/socialresearch/religion\\_and\\_society/project.shtml](http://www.iass.bham.ac.uk/study/socialresearch/religion_and_society/project.shtml)

**John Tirman** has been since October 2004 the Executive Director of the Center for International Studies at MIT, where he is also Principal Research Scientist. He previously held senior posts at the Social Science Research Council, the Winston Foundation, and the Union of Concerned Scientists, and was Fulbright Senior Scholar in Cyprus in 1999-2000. He was educated at Indiana University in political science and history, where he was an I.U. Foundation Scholar. His Ph.D., in political science (political theory), was earned in 1981 from Boston University, where he studied with Howard Zinn, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Frances Fox Piven. There he was a Metropolitan Scholar and Teaching Fellow. Tirman has served as a trustee of International Alert, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, and the Foundation for National Progress, which publishes *Mother Jones*, where he was co-chair. He is author, or co-author and editor, of ten books on international affairs and U.S. foreign policy, including *The Maze of Fear: Security & Migration After 9/11* (2004), and *Terror, Insurgency, and the State* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). He is now writing a book on civilian casualties in U.S. wars, to be published by Oxford University Press. He has contributed to periodicals such as the *Washington Post*, *The Nation*, *Boston Review*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Boston Globe*, and many others.

**John Tulloch** is Professor of Sociology and Communications and Head of Research in the School of Social Sciences, Brunel University. He is the author of many monographs on television, film, theatre, literature and the sociology of risk. His next book will be *Images of Terror, Risk and War* (with Professor Warwick Blood). He was seriously injured in the 7/7 terrorist attack on London, and his image became one of the icons internationally of that day. He wrote the book *One Day in July: Experiencing 7/7* describing the personal and mass mediated process of identity construction he experienced after being three feet away from suicide bomber Mohammad Sidique Khan.

**Nicholas J. Wheeler** is Professor in the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University. His publications include: *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); (with Ken Booth) *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); (with Ian Clark) *The British Origins of Nuclear Strategy 1945-55* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); and (with Tim Dunne as co-editor) *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). He has written widely on humanitarian intervention. He is Director of the David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies at Aberystwyth University, a Trustee of the Welsh Centre of International Affairs, and a member of the United Nations Association of the UK's Policy Advisory Committee.

## **Contributing Organisations**

### **THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RADICALISATION AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

When we survey the carnage and public fear in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the Madrid bombings and the 2005 London bombs, the value of research to society on radicalization and political violence is clear. Never has there been a more urgent need to shed light on the underlying causes of political violence and terror, and to foster dialogue between the warring parties. The Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Contemporary Political Violence (CSRV) is located in the University of Wales, Aberystwyth's Department of International Politics. Based in the internationally renowned Department of International Politics, the oldest Department of its kind in the world, the centre brings together leading scholars committed to the study of radicalisation and contemporary political violence.

CSRV is dedicated to the development of new theoretical approaches and sponsorship of the dialogue between competing accounts of political violence. The team at CSRV is committed to building a world-class interdisciplinary research centre and to deepening the understanding of the use of political violence whilst promoting academic excellence in research and teaching. The centre aims to hold the tension between theory and practice and between divergent approaches to 'terrorism'. Therefore CSRV's work is also designed to contribute positively to contemporary debates and dilemmas about human security, rights and risks. CSRV holds that this work will not only advance scholarship in the field, but will also inform the formulation and implementation of public policy, thereby responding to the need of policy makers.

The Centre provides a collegial environment where scholars, students and policy makers can come together to contribute productively, creatively and ethically to the understanding of processes of radicalisation, the nature, cause and effect of political violence and the use of terror in the pursuit of political change, both locally and globally. CSRV aims to maintain an atmosphere in which issues such as trust and fear can be explored, as they apply to political cultures, and a respectful dialogue between critical and traditional/problem-solving accounts of radicalisation, political violence and 'terrorism' can be taken forward.

CSRV is building an extensive local and international network of collaborative relationships with academia, government, policy makers, donors, politicians, human rights advocates and other stakeholders. These relationships are crucial to the task of ensuring that the Centre is well briefed, that its work is

relevant to contemporary debates and its work is abreast of key developments in the field.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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## **THE DAVID DAVIES MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

The David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies (DDMI) was established in 1951 to commemorate the work of Lord David Davies in promoting a more just world through international cooperation, law, and organisation. The Institute moved to its new institutional home in the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University in 2002. The control, reduction, and elimination of the most destructive weapons humanity has invented was the driving spirit that motivated Lord Davies to set up the world's first Department of International Relations at Aberystwyth in 1919, and this normative vision continues to guide the work of the institute.

Its priorities have evolved with a changing global order to encompass an expanded security agenda, questions of international and global responsibility, and the status of the individual in a world of states. From its inception, the DDMI has sought to build bridges between the academic and policymaking worlds, and it provides a forum in which policy makers, officials, NGOs, academics, and the wider public can share different views and perspectives.

In 2007, DDMI started a major new research project on '**Trust-building in Nuclear Worlds**'. This developed out of ongoing work on security dilemma dynamics, and focuses on what Professors Booth and Wheeler argue is the neglected concept of trust in International Relations. This new area of research was launched in March 2007 at a track-two meeting organised by the Oxford Research Group on Trident and the future of the NPT. Overall, this project is developing a theory of trust-building in IR, drawing on contributions from other disciplines - particularly philosophy, sociology, social psychology and Business economics - which will then be applied to specific cases where nuclear weapons, or the potential for their development, contributes significantly to high levels of mistrust.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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