The PRDU has been working in, and with, Afghanistan for more than seven years (see Editorial on Page 2). For most of this time, the international spotlight has been shining elsewhere; now it is shining brighter than ever on Afghanistan. At such an important time, we set out below our perspective on the crucial reconstruction issues that lie ahead.

In order to succeed, the overwhelming task of reconstruction in Afghanistan needs to be turned into a ‘process of the willing’, where all actors collaborate and contribute. Most critically, this must be an environment in which Afghans are assured of an influence on the process, but equally important, one in which they have responsibility for carrying the process forward. Consequently, it is proposed to set up a Joint Reconstruction Council, comprised mainly of Afghans, including respected representatives of the various geographic and ethnic groups, able to work hand-in-hand with UN officials and donor governments to assume responsibility for establishing priorities and allocating resources. What really matters is not what reconstruction is able to deliver but how it is able to deliver and when.

Rather than attempting to enforce participation, involvement should be encouraged by inviting different geographical regions to submit proposals to the Joint Reconstruction Council, for the funding of interventions designed to meet their specific, locally identified requirements. Such proposals may be technically facilitated by agencies but would follow...
A vital role for the United Nations

Malcolm Harper – Director of the United Nations Association, UK & Ireland – is a long-standing member of the PRDU Advisory Panel. Here he reports on what the UN has done and, more importantly, should be doing since 11th September.

The appalling atrocities perpetrated in the United States on 11th September defy description. Having been in Central Manhattan that morning, I know something of the stunned shock which followed. For the US this was a particularly acute crisis. But it was also a crisis for the rest of us – and for the United Nations.

The almost total media silence on what happened in and around the UN from 11th September onwards has led many people to believe that the UN did nothing. That is not true – Secretary-General Kofi Annan has led the argument in favour of a full and correct legal process being employed in the search for those who planned, financed and supported these attacks.

The UNA response should be seen in two distinct parts. Firstly, there is the need to find the political will (and patience) to undertake the thorough and painstaking gathering of evidence so that the UN Security Council can issue indictments against those who are shown to be suspect through the collection of reliable evidence against them. The war in Afghanistan has been no adequate substitute for that process and we are fearful that a proper police investigation and subsequent judicial process may now never be realised. It is very hard for some of us to hear supposed justifications of the acceptability of aerial bombardment aimed at al Qaida and Taliban members almost certainly killing more innocent Afghan civilians than Americans and others slaughtered in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington. In our view, the international coalition against terrorism – whatever, in the UN, that word means – would have developed more satisfactorily if it had been set up and administered by the UN under a clearly worded mandate of the Security Council. We can think of a number of member states who would feel much more comfortable as part of an UN rather than an US-led coalition.

Secondly, there is the crying need for a full process to research and define what are the root causes of terrorism. What makes people so alienated and angry that they cease being political activists and become the planners and/or perpetrators of such evil deeds? We do not believe that any member state of the UN has the capacity to deliver totally objective findings. National self-interest still rules in each and every one of them. However, the UN does have that capacity. Its many Specialised Agencies, Funds and Programmes and its Secretariat could bring together academics, UN and other (governmental and non-governmental) staff members, experienced war and other correspondents, former terrorists, victims and others into a thorough programme to define at least in some areas what are terrorist actions and what causes them to be perpetrated. I have no doubt of the UN’s capacity to deliver on such a process; but what I deeply fear is that it would not be given adequate resources to be able to do so by Governments with sufficient skeletons in their cupboards to want to hush up various very uncomfortable truths.

The more the US Administration continues to threaten all those whom it dislikes by branding them either terrorists or the harbourers of terrorists, the more it threatens to make war on them, and the more it uses the current crisis as an excuse to develop its (almost universally) criticised Missile Defense dreams, the more distant will become the truly international response which is so clearly needed.

Perhaps the time is coming for the members of the Security Council of the United Nations to show some real leadership at last by forging a coalition which, in constructive and persuasive ways, can tell the US that, if it chooses the road of violence, it will be traversing it alone. Meanwhile, the European Union, the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the Islamic Conference, religious organisations the UN’s regional bodies, ASEAN and others could seek to deliver the resources needed to tackle the complex issues involved in rooting out terrorism in non-violent ways. The US would always be welcome to join that process – but on the world’s terms and not just Washington’s.

Sadly, there is little likelihood of the UN being used as it should be because too many of its members are unwilling to provide adequate leadership in the wake of the US going through one of those periods in its history when it is not prepared to shoulder the superpower’s responsibilities in the interests of us all.

In the UNA we never give up arguing for that UN role to be realised – and we plan to continue the struggle for as long as is needed.
Landmines & unexploded ordnance

A view of the future from PRDU associate Rae McGrath, independent advisor on post-conflict issues, and Nobel Peace Prize co-laureate. Rae was instrumental in the establishment of the first wide-scale United Nations mine clearance operations in Afghanistan, and founded the mine clearance NGO – Mines Advisory Group.

When the Soviet Forces finally withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989 they left a country destroyed. Their strategic reliance on anti-personnel mines ensured that Afghans would continue to be killed and maimed by Soviet hardware for many years. A fact which has rarely been acknowledged by the international community is the culpability of the Soviet military in actively, and illegally, targeting non-combatants through the use of landmines. Mines were only part of the problem, however. Ten years of war left the whole country scattered with every kind of unexploded ordnance (UXO), from anti-tank rockets and hand grenades to tank shells and air-dropped bombs. Since 1989 the continuing civil war has added substantially to both problems.

More positively, the Afghan humanitarian clearance programme has developed into what is widely recognised as the most effective and professional national landmine initiative in the world. Staffed and managed almost entirely by Afghans working largely for indigenous NGOs, the programme has cleared almost 550 million square metres of mine- and UXO-affected land since January 1990. These committed humanitarian teams have worked in a difficult and dangerous environment throughout the ongoing civil war, and are a face of Afghanistan rarely recognised by the international media who have found the popular myth of a country totally populated by gun-toting extremists a more saleable image to portray.

Although landmines present a greater human and economic threat and have a substantially greater impact on reconstruction and development, it is worth noting that, in an average year, twenty times as many items of UXO are destroyed than landmines.

The clearance programme has often faced funding difficulties, due primarily to the shifting regional policies of international donors and their general failure to understand the essential nature of mine and UXO eradication within the wider context of rebuilding Afghanistan. Another negative factor has been the long-standing and forceful position of the United Nations, that all funding be channelled through the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA), which has limited the organisational development of the indigenous NGOs that implement the programme whilst tending to conceal the comparatively peripheral role of the UN.

But Afghanistan now faces a situation, in relation to landmines and UXO, which is likely to put back the work of the Afghan de-miners by many years. The United States has deployed, and continues to deploy, a huge tonnage of ordnance in its response to the actions of the Taliban and the continued use of landmines. Mines were only part of the problem, however. Ten years of war left the whole country scattered with every kind of unexploded ordnance (UXO), from anti-tank rockets and hand grenades to tank shells and air-dropped bombs. Since 1989 the continuing civil war has added substantially to both problems.

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Clearance of US ordnance can be expedited, and civilian casualties limited, if the US authorities release details of each bombing mission to the Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA), the Afghan NGO responsible for survey. While there seems no logical reason to delay the release of such vital information, the Kosovo experience illustrated that logic and humanitarian concern may not always prevail over the priorities of mindless military secrecy – it was many months before US bombing records were made available to the UN Mine Action Centre in Pristina despite the fact that the victims being injured and killed during the delay were the very people who the bombing was designed to assist.

Some observers are concerned that the UN will now substantially increase the number of long-term international technical advisors. This would be an enormous step backwards – from the start of the programme administrative and technical management have been tasks undertaken by Afghan staff, and the growth of local NGOs such as MCPA, ATC (Afghan Technical Consultants), and OMAR (Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation) are a tribute to the abilities and commitment of their technical and management teams.

A more positive response, which could ensure that mine and UXO clearance is given the necessary priority by the international community, may arise from a dawning Western recognition that Afghanistan has been used, betrayed and ignored for far too long. If the emphasis is placed on funding Afghan organisations to repair and rebuild their damaged country and, through that process, offer young Afghans an alternative source of salary and rebuild their damaged country and, through that process, offer young Afghans an alternative source of salary to the Kalashnikov, some good could be salvaged from the current conflict. This will not be charity but deserved reparation, which the developed world owes Afghanistan for being, at best, idle spectators to its destruction and decline.

1. Estimate is based on reports from specialists in Afghanistan and on verified failure rates of the CBU-87, which contains 202 BLU 97B bomblets, during the Gulf War and in Kosovo.

Manual mineclearance requires good equipment and training.

September 11th attacks in New York and Washington. While this is not the forum to challenge the relevance of, or justification for, the US attacks it is unquestionable that the impact on non-combatants will be disproportionate in the long-term and, on that basis alone, the bombing contravenes international law. This relates especially to the use of cluster bombs, a strategy which is likely, based on the estimated 600 CBU-87 cluster bombs dropped so far, to leave at least 18,000 unexploded BLU-97B combined-effects bomblets in civilian areas. These bomblets are extremely sensitive to any disturbance and have claimed many innocent victims after their use in Iraq and Kosovo. Ordnance used by the US forces differs from that deployed by the Soviet and Afghan combatants, so there is a need for Afghan engineers to receive the relevant technical training.

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Preparing personnel for the rehabilitation effort

As a part of a joint venture between the PRDU and the University of Pisa’s International Training Programme for Conflict Management (ITPCM), a two week training programme for humanitarian workers and capacity building personnel is to be held in Pisa, Italy from 25 February – 8 March 2002.

Preparing for the Rehabilitation Effort in Afghanistan is intended for mid- and senior-level staff anticipating deployment in Afghanistan – from intergovernmental organisations and NGOs, police/military personnel, and journalists. Thirty-six delegates were selected from over 200 applications. The training programme is being organised under the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with assistance from the Italian Armed Forces, and has the endorsement of a variety of international agencies including UNOPS, the International Labour Office, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The international course faculty will be composed of academics from both the PRDU and ITPCM, in addition to representatives of international and non-governmental organisations, journalists and military personnel selected for their knowledge of the topics and proven training capacity.

PRDU in the news

The unrelenting media attention on the war in Afghanistan has seen an increased demand for interviews, input and comment from PRDU faculty, both on the war and on the emerging plans for post-war reconstruction.

In October, Professor Haleh Afshar appeared on the BBC’s Question Time and Any Questions. Dr Sultan Barakat and Gareth Wardell (PRDU Research Fellow) were interviewed on BBC World Television during November. Meanwhile, Arne Strand (PhD Student at the PRDU) has been in demand by the Norwegian media.

Finally, in an overtly politicised environment, reconstruction can contribute to the creation of ‘gun neutral’ spaces for civil society to mature. It is of critical importance that civilians be centre-stage in the decision-making on Afghanistan’s reconstruction. The process must by-pass War-Lords and ensure that those appointed to the Joint Reconstruction Council have not been directly engaged in conflict, but are there as qualified and respected representatives of technical expertise and the wisdom of local elders. The international community must be seen to reward peace, not war.

The above text is taken from a discussion paper Facing the Challenge, Sharing the Responsibility: Towards a ‘Joint Reconstruction Council’ for Afghanistan by Sultan Barakat, Arne Strand and Gareth Wardell from the PRDU. The paper was circulated to all delegates at a conference sponsored jointly by UNDP, The World Bank and The Asian Development Bank, entitled Preparing for Afghanistan’s Reconstruction, which was held in Islamabad, 27–29 November 2001.
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tension and instability are likely to forces resistant to change. Political which there remain strong and powerful Afghanistan is a conservative society in superficial changes relating to women, Nevertheless, it is clear that despite led to changed attitudes and aspirations. vocational skills training (for some) has facilities, and to education and of responsibility in the absence of men. More households are now headed by war and displacement has exercised 'one-size-fits-all' solutions. to move away from standardised, vulnerable, however there is a need continue to be necessary for the most prosperous Afghan society. Relief will the building block for a peaceful and for agencies to focus on the family; consequently there is a need to recognise the diversity of capacities and aspirations that exists within a group that comprises half a nation.

To obtain a copy of Capitalizing on Capacities of Afghan Women (ISBN: 92-2-112921-7) please contact ILO – tel: +41 22 799 7069 fax: +41 22 799 6189 e-mail: ifpcrisis@ilo.org

As part of the rapidly developing plans for reconstruction in Afghanistan, the PRDU was commissioned by the UN’s International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva, in November 2001, to undertake a desk study of the current situation of women in Afghanistan, to include recommendations for possible future strategies designed to reintegrate women into the work force.

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hile most recent attention has focused on the impact of the Taliban regime, it is clear that the abuse of women’s human rights is part of a larger landscape shaped by over 23 years of conflict, and cannot be attributed to any one regime.

Key issues to emerge were the significant disparity in the lives and expectations of urban and rural women, and the importance of education and cultural sensitivity in effecting change. Afghan women see themselves first and foremost within the framework of the family; consequently there is a need for agencies to focus on the family as the building block for a peaceful and prosperous Afghan society. Relief will continue to be necessary for the most vulnerable, however there is a need to move away from standardised, ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions.

The experience of 23 years of war and displacement has exercised a profound impact on Afghan women. More households are now headed by women, who have taken on new areas of responsibility in the absence of men. Exposure to refugee camp health care facilities, and to education and vocational skills training (for some) has led to changed attitudes and aspirations. Nevertheless, it is clear that despite superficial changes relating to women, Afghanistan is a conservative society in which there remain strong and powerful forces resistant to change. Political tension and instability are likely to remain for many years to come. Consequently, agencies working in Afghanistan need to be prepared to commit for the long haul; in this cultural milieu there are no ‘quick-fixes’.

Over the last five years, Afghan women have been the subject of unprecedented levels of interest and international attention; most of it well intentioned, much of it ill informed. Interventions designed to assist Afghan women need to work with them, not for them. There is a need to recognise the diversity of capacities and aspirations that exists within a group that comprises half a nation.

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An Afghanistan Inter-Agency Technical Consultation on Health was held on December 10, 2001 at the Secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva. Sultan Barakat was invited as an advisor, and their were also representatives from WHO, UNCHR, ICRC, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM.

The objective was to outline a strategy for immediate and long-term health interventions and support in Afghanistan, looking into inter-agency coordination, standard approaches, and to address the most pressing needs.

It was agreed that establishing an effective working relationship with the Afghan Health Authorities is imperative in order to obtain standards and approaches acceptable to them.

Plans for a joint inter-agency, country-wide assessment of Afghanistan sometime over the next six months was discussed. The aim would be to both assess emergency health needs in the short–medium term more comprehensively, while also identifying future reconstruction needs in the sector. A follow-up meeting is planned for February 2002.

PRDU Afghanistan publications

The author studies the philosophy and practice of NGO institutional development, making practical recommend-ations for policy makers and practitioners. A theoretical understanding of the concept of NGO institutional and organisational development is developed, and current practice scrutinised.

From Rhetoric to Reality The role of aid in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan Edited by Haneef Atmar, Sultan Barakat & Arne Strand (1998; 106pp (illustrated); £20.00; ISBN 0 904761 66 5)
In January 1998 a group of practitioners, policy makers and donors were invited to York to: debate lessons learned; discuss the challenges of the current operating environ-ment in Afghanistan; develop further initiatives/ guidelines which could enhance local capacities for peace. This report of presentations, case-studies and group discussions sets out specific challenges, recommendations and commitments.

Urban Rehabilitation in Kabul Bridging between Communities and Institutions S. Barakat, M. Ehsan, J. Leslie & A. Strand (1996; 68pp (illustrated); £10.00; ISBN 0 904761 57 6)
This workshop was attended by Donors, International NGOs, UN agencies and Kabul Municipality. Real workable findings were produced on opportunities/ limitations of involving local community and institutions in the rehabilitation process. Guidelines of Good Recovery Practice were compiled and adopted by the NGOs and UN as a basis for their work in Kabul.
Mohammed Hassan BABIKER
Sudan
(Altafij Scholar)
Background in law

I worked with The Carter Centre representing the Government of the Sudan, to implement the Nairobi Peace Agreement (1999). The following year we drew together a plan to disarm, disband and relocate The Lord Resistance Army (LRA), an opposition faction fighting the Government of Uganda in the North. I participated in the Ministerial meeting held in Kampala (September 2000), as well as the meetings of Joint Committee between Sudan and Uganda in Nairobi (May, June, August 2001). My main area of interest is how to integrate ex-combatants in civil society life.

Mary BRYANT
Canada
Background in agriculture and food aid research

In 1997 I volunteered in Angola, helping to increase nutrition by establishing gardens with IDPs in a desert town. A grant then enabled me to investigate energy lows of a Cuban government model for small-scale sustainable farming systems, developed to illustrate the possibilities of agricultural diversification. The aim was to boost economic advantages for rural people, stemming the flow of Cubans to overcrowded urban areas. For the past year I have worked towards increasing the nutritional content of food relief assistance in Nova Scotia for the 24,000 people who use food banks each month in the province. My main interests are abroad, seeking new ways to increase food security in war-affected zones.

Elinor CURREY
UK
Background in psychology before various volunteer projects and employment in the Probation Service

Undergraduate research in cross cultural issues in counselling inspired my continuing interest in trauma treatment. Since graduating, I have been involved in a number of voluntary projects: studying treatment at a Trauma Care centre; participating in community projects in the UK and Mongolia; and mentoring young people classed as ‘at risk of offending’. These experiences, along with employment in probation hostels working with difficult and dangerous offenders, have further developed my interests in social rehabilitation. I am particularly keen to investigate programmes that aim to restore psychological well-being in post-war communities.

Ashraf HENDY
Palestine
(Barakat Trust Scholar)
Background in architectural and landscape design

Since graduating in architecture (1995) from Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey, my professional experience has been in architectural and landscape design. I started in private practice before taking up official posts in Turkey and the Palestinian National Authority, where I have helped to design and conceptualise various high profile architectural projects. In 1998–99 I attended a post-graduate course on Cultural Heritage Management – Conservation & Restoration, in Italy. I am interested in issues of strategic planning for reconstruction.

Azhari IDRIS
Indonesia
(Soros Foundation Scholar)
Background in humanitarian work

After completing my MA in Education in Sydney, Australia (1998), I returned to Aceh to teach at the University of IAIN Ar-Raniry. I also became involved in a number of humanitarian works, channeling aid to IDPs and returnees as the armed conflict between Free Aceh Movement and the Indonesian Army/Police escalated. I carried out research on the impact of the Military Operation Zone (1989–98) in Aceh, in collaboration with local and international NGOs, and conducted training on peace education to high school and university students. Before coming to York I worked with the Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) in Aceh to facilitate dialogue between Free Aceh Movement and the Government of Indonesia. I worked in the field with monitoring teams from both sides, to investigate incidents, monitor the delivery of humanitarian aid, carry out assessments, meet commanders, and strengthen confidence in order to reduce tension and violence.

Andrea JAMES
UK
Background in humanitarian work

I have over nine years experience with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), mainly working in their Emergency Operations Centre which supports UNICEF Headquarters and country offices designated as being in emergency or incipient emergency. One of a team of eight, I worked to obtain and provide essential information to assist or alert the relevant participants in advance of, and during, crises. After the popular vote for independence in East Timor in 1999, I worked for UNICEF, East Timor to re-establish the office for augmented operations. UNICEF already had an office in Dili, but during the post referendum violence it was destroyed. For a one year period (1994–95), I worked with the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) where I was responsible for coordinating the support package required to ensure that the twelve zone and sub-zone offices of UNOSOM throughout Somalia received all essential supplies for their day-to-day operation. This also included organising the repatriation of displaced persons from Mogadishu to their town of origin.

Aliou K. JAMMEH
Gambia
(DfID Scholar)
Background in public administration and political science

I have degrees in Public Administration from Uganda (1997), and Political Science from Malaysia (2000). My thesis for the latter was on Conflict
and Conflict Management techniques in West Africa, taking the case of ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group) in Liberia. After graduating, I was interned at the Carter Centre in Atlanta, USA (January–May 2001) where I wrote weekly updates on the conflict and political developments in Uganda prior to the Country’s Presidential Election in May 2001. Undertaking this MA programme at the PRDU will help me to understand how to develop war-torn societies into viable and stable entities once again.

Senad KAMENICA
Bosnia
(Altajir Scholar)
Background in journalism

I began my career in 1978, as an editor and writer for several independent magazines and newspapers. In 1988 I was a correspondent for Radio Sarajevo 2 and Radio Titograd (now Radio Montenegro). A year later I became a television news reporter. During the war in Bosnia, I filed front-line reports for more then two years. In 1994 I began work with the International News Desk of Bosnia and Herzegovina Television (TV BiH), and was appointed as their correspondent from Brussels, mainly filing reports from the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. During 1995–96 I was a guest lecturer at the Department of Journalism of the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain. I then spent some time reporting from countries in the Middle East, and the US, before becoming Chief Editor of News and Current Affairs programmes at TV BiH in 1997. Prior to coming to York, I had become one of their Senior Correspondents, as well as Editor and Coordinator of the South East European News Exchange.

Robert LUKOCZKI
UK
Background in Development Studies and logistical support

Following 10 years as a logistician for a variety of UK haulage firms, and as a fundraiser, I began studying in the field of development. After graduating with an MA in Third World Project Planning in 1999, I undertook an environmental workcamp to China, promoting issues of decertification and cross-cultural youth awareness. Since then, I have worked in Albania and Kosovo as a social project volunteer, helping to organise community activities such as sports events, a Children’s Rights Day and Aid distributions.

Raz MOHAMMAD
Afghanistan
(A.C.E. Scholar)
Background in humanitarian assistance and logistics

Since 1995, I have been working with the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan – for the past two years as Deputy Regional Coordinator. Here I contributed to initiatives that promote understanding of UN policies; developed an assistance strategy; ensured effective management of joint UN services; encouraged greater coherence in planning, monitoring and evaluating assistance activities; and identified emergency humanitarian needs and types of assistance required. I also represented the UN in discussions with authorities and organisations, facilitated missions to the region through logistical arrangements, and ensured the security of UN staff and property.

Martine MILLER
USA
Background in political science and international development

In 1993, my interest in refugee and IDP populations developed in Germany while volunteering in a centre for refugees, and I obtained a position with a small NGO in southern Angola as a field worker in an IDP town. Here I conducted research on the demobilisation of child soldiers, and taught in six small schools. As a result of my international experiences, I obtained degrees in Political Science and International Conflict and Development Studies at Indiana University, with a focus on Africa and Southeast Asia. I then spent four months in Southeast Asia researching refugee flows and issues on the use of children in the military in Nepal, Myanmar, and Cambodia. Back in the United States, I assisted the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor in the research and writing of the 2000 Human Rights Reports, and the American Bar Association Central and Eastern Europeans Law Initiative in the creation of an assessment tool intended to determine country compliance to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Before coming to York, I worked with the US Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, with a focus on the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

Diana KLEIN
Israel
Background in international relations and peace studies

I majored in International Relations, Communications and Journalism, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1993–98), before becoming project coordinator and associate facilitator at the University’s Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace. My work here included co-facilitating training for trainers (a problem solving workshop for Palestinians and Israelis), and working with a Palestinian partner on further training projects. I was also a research assistant for a conflict resolution manual for Israeli/Palestinian high school teachers (adapting existing manuals for local needs), and coordinated the establishment of the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict Transformation Network. I have also attended short course programmes in Austria and Hungary which specialised in peace and conflict training.
... Student Profiles 2001–02

**Luis PALMEIRA**  
Portugal/UK  
Background in civil engineering

Although Portuguese by birth, I have spent most of my adult life in the UK. As a Civil Engineer, I decided to put my technical skills to use within a humanitarian context. In 1996 I joined an NGO in Bosnia focusing on post-war reconstruction of infrastructure. I was responsible for the extensive reconstruction of housing, schools and hospitals, as well as the re-integration of ethnic minorities and community development programmes. In 2000, I was appointed Chief Engineer for co-ordinating, designing and managing engineering projects and operational activities of NATO/KFOR in Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania.

**Philip ROBINS**  
UK  
Background in clerical work before studying politics and history

I spent many years working for the Post Office in various clerical capacities before deciding to act upon my interest in development work. I have recently graduated from the University of Durham in politics and history. My studies included the Crusades, the Cold War, N. Ireland, Tibet, the Middle East, the Pacific Rim, the relationship between order and justice, international relations, development and the international political economy. My dissertation enabled me to develop my interest in the question of identity as I investigated the growth of political Islam in Malaysia and its implications for her multi-ethnic society.

**Yumiko SAITO**  
Japan  
Background in management and political studies

I began work at an institute of management, which consulted on the supply of education programmes for employees. Initially in the Distance Education Division, I moved to Management Development, planning and developing training materials. After seven years, I came to England to study Political Studies. I am really interested in reconstruction after conflict, especially in the post-Cold War changes, and I would like to work for international organisations for humanitarian aid after this MA.

**Ihsan ULLAH**  
Pakistan  
(Altaijir/DfID Scholar) Background in agricultural economics and political science

After graduating in Agricultural Economics in 1999, I joined Pakistan Campaign to Ban Landmines (PCBL), where I volunteered for two years, collecting data about land-mine victims. My responsibilities were to meet with the local people of the project area, and motivate and convince them to stop the use of landmines in personal conflicts and rivalries. I facilitated PCBL in conducting various workshops, seminars and conferences for mass awareness and advocacy. I facilitated foreign missions in the area and acted as a channel between their personnel and the locals. I really enjoyed the challenge of dealing with the religious tribal people.

**Maaike VAN MIN**  
Holland  
Background in psychology

For years I have been interested in humanitarian work, and studying at the PRDU offers the opportunity for me to acquire a secure basis for working in the field. For the past few years I have been reading psychology at the University of Groningen, focusing on clinical and social psychology. By giving therapy to students for 10 months I was able to put some theory into practice and, although this was very interesting, I wanted to combine my interest in human behaviour with humanitarian work. My experience should provide a good foundation for understanding the many psychological consequences of war.

**Anna WALTERS**  
UK  
Background in conflict and development

I have been working for the British Government for seven years, of which four have been in the field of conflict and development. During this period my work has included humanitarian assistance, refugee and migration policy, institutional relations with the UN, strategy development, evaluations and programme reviews. My overseas experience includes an upbringing in the Middle East, teaching at a university in rural China, working for the Department for International Development (DfID) in India, and several shorter working trips, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Uganda, Tanzania, Geneva and Brussels. I am presently on a two-year traineeship at DfID to become a humanitarian specialist, of which the first year is the Post-war Recovery Studies MA at York, followed by a secondment to an international organisation working on humanitarian affairs.

**New DPhil student analysing peace treaties**

Having completed two years of study at Queen’s University, Belfast, David Russell has recently transferred his DPhil to the PRDLI.

My research is based on comparative methods for managing inter-communal conflict, with a specific focus on reconstructed constitutional design. Under the supervision of Dr Roger MacGinty, I am now analysing peace treaties in Lebanon (Ta’if Accord, 1989) and Northern Ireland (the Belfast Agreement, 1998). As a broad aim, my research seeks to delineate mechanisms for generating stable democratic governance in plural societies. In particular, I hope to identify ways in which communities can be reconciled in a sense of collective citizenship, and yet still maintain the recognition upon which their continued adherence to a political process often depends.
On 1 January 2002, I visited the mosque of Mazar-e Sharif with an Afghan friend. At different times on our way into the colourful complex, three men stopped us. The first asked us to pay – my friend said that this was against Islam. The second vehemently asked if I was Muslim – my friend explained that Islam is open to anyone. The third man came towards me, smiling. After giving me the Muslim greeting he took me inside the mausoleum and described all the wonderful features of the shrine of Ali. It was my first time in a Mosque; its beauty and mysticism impressed me.

From what I can see, in this month and a half spent in Afghanistan so far, the three men I met in the mosque represent different aspects of the country at this delicate stage. The extreme poverty is visible everywhere. Basic products are readily available, but prices are very high, and increasing as much as the unemployment rate. The Afghan society seems in a continuous struggle between a mainly rural rigid tradition, and a more open urban vision. This clearly applies to the relationship with foreign ideas/people, the role of women in society, and the creation of a common vision of what the country should be.

The ethnic divide – particularly in a cosmopolitan city such as Mazar where Uzbeks, Tajiks, Hazaras and Pashtuns cohabitate – appears significant. Differences seem to be mainly fuelled by warlords seeking power. In reality there seems to be a common cultural set of values and Dari is clearly the lingua franca, at least in the region.

All women in Mazar wear the burqa (a tradition far older than the Taliban regime), but they use make-up and they dress in a very elegant way. They are not fearful when they talk to us; on the contrary they demonstrate high self-esteem. While the discrimination against women has been real during the past regime there is no visible sign, at least in Mazar, of a deep submission of women to men. Still, as a newcomer, I had difficulties to adjust to/accept/feel comfortable in an almost exclusively male environment. Only a few women are in the streets. In the guesthouse where I am staying, men clean, cook and do the laundry. In the restaurants, there are no women, either as customers or staff.

The optimistic heart and the pessimism of the mind combine in order to make our work, as foreigners, more helpful to the efforts of Afghans. My presence in Afghanistan constitutes a valuable opportunity to continuously complement, revise and enrich my academic preparation (acquired during the MA course in Post-war Recovery Studies) with practical experience.
MA in Post-war Recovery Studies ...

MA student Maaike van Min, from Holland, reports on the Field Study to Sri Lanka (hosted by FORUT), which took place from 8–19 December 2001 and was led by Dr Alpaslan Özerdem.

Flying into Sri Lanka you can see the legacy of the 20-year civil war. On the ground, destroyed aeroplanes from the attacks in July, numerous roadblocks, military personnel and a three o’clock curfew made it apparent that Sri Lanka is a country enduring a protracted conflict.

Into this environment came 17 PRDU scholars from 14 countries, representing the faculty. The purpose of the 14-day visit was to offer them the opportunity to conduct hands-on field research in a country in conflict. The study was hosted by FORUT, a Norwegian/Swedish-based NGO, which has a very strong working relationship with PRDU.

The masters students formed two teams, as prearranged in York. One group of eight students was assigned to conduct field research in the Anuradhapura. This district is located in the centre of the island bordering the Vavuniya District, where fighting has been ongoing between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and government troops. The fighting has had a major impact on villages close by, which have been resettled numerous times. Therefore, Anuradhapura has had an influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who now live in welfare centres, relocated villages and with friends and relatives.

The second group of nine students went to the Puttalam District, located on the north-western coast. This team’s focus involved the 84,000 IDPs in Puttalam, who similarly live in welfare centres, relocated/resettled villages or with friends and relatives.

Both groups visited IDPs in all types of settlement, as well as local communities, host communities and agencies active in the areas.

Observations

The students focused on a number of main research topics: coping strategies, host community/IDP relations, NGO activities, ethnic minorities, shelter, security, education, capacity building, and food security. Such a diversity of interests gave students the opportunity to see different aspects of the challenges facing the IDPs.

The differences between the two districts were great. In the Puttalam district, the main challenges faced by the IDPs were the access to resources and the relationship with the host community. The resources in the district were stretched to the limit before the arrival of the IDPs. The problem has been exacerbated with the arrival of the IDPs, thereby contributing to tensions with the host communities.

In Anuradhapura the number of IDPs was much smaller and there was sufficient land available. The major challenge for the IDPs was to improve the quality of life. The greatest challenge faced by the villages near the Vavuniya border was security. Although their villages had not been attacked for over a decade, they still felt threatened by the presence of the LTTE.

The different challenges faced by the communities also led to different coping strategies. There were diverse ethnic groups in Puttalam, each with their own local committees. However, between the communities there was a degree of economic interdependence. They viewed the conflict in the North as a governmental issue and for them ethnicity was not a major concern.

In Anuradhapura, all the areas visited were either 100% Sinhalese or 100% Tamil Muslim and it was noted that within their education the Sinhalese children were not taught Tamil language or culture.

In both districts there were several international and many local NGOs. Their main activities focused on micro-credit, health and pre-school education. In Anuradhapura, NGOs like SewaLanka worked on many of the same issues as FORUT.

Micro-credit programmes were implemented by NGOs through Community Based Organisations (CBOs). The CBOs, such as WODEPT,
provided business advice and training for their borrowers. Micro-credit has played an important role in enhancing families’ income. However, many programmes specifically target women and a major problem in Puttalam was lack of employment for men.

In Anduradhapura, many micro-credit programmes were used for agricultural livelihoods (in Puttalam there was limited land for agriculture). Rice, the most common livelihood in Anuradhapura, was used for consumption, and then as a cash crop. Interestingly, the main concern for people was their livelihood. The resources they had were used for that purpose, and only later were issues like shelter addressed.

In Anuradhapura, most people had land around their houses and used brick in construction. The situation was different in the welfare centres and relocated villages, where people had much less land and materials to build homes. In Puttalam the houses were packed together and the quality of the houses varied. Their biggest problem was the lack of land.

Impressions

Host/IDP relations
The NGOs active in the districts do relieve some of the problems faced by the people, but they also create new ones. In Puttalam the impression was that many of the NGOs focused their attention on the IDPs and less on the host communities. The host communities are also greatly affected, for instance in sharing their land. NGOs could mitigate this by directing additional assistance to the host community and by working on strengthening an integrated civil society.

Dependency
An additional problem with NGO’s activities was the creation of dependency and ‘learned helplessness’. It was noted that many of the communities in Anuradhapura felt they would be lost without outside assistance. Whether or not this is actually the case remains difficult to assess. Although FORUT worked through CBOs this did not seem to give people confidence that they had enough knowledge and resources to take care of their own needs.

Security
In Anuradhapura, there were a number of issues around security. Home guards – men from the village trained and paid by the government – provided villagers with a sense of security. However, it is felt the effects of the programme have the potential to become negative. Already, the weapons are used for purposes other than security, for instance to kill animals. The men are effectively becoming stakeholders in the conflict and no thought has been given to their future demobilisation. There is also potential for them to form their own militia, or simply to sell arms to existing groups, thereby possibly feeding into the war.

General
The visit to Sri Lanka provided an opportunity to see how a country operates in an ongoing conflict. In many cases, the people made the most of a situation they were forced into, with amazing resilience.

The problems faced in Sri Lanka are complex, and stem from a combination of the conflict and successive governments’ inability to address overall development. The conflict has exhausted many of the country’s resources and there is a general lack of money to provide for basic needs. Both health and education are stretched beyond capacity. Particularly in Puttalam, economic hardship has been caused by an influx of IDPs from the conflict.

The field study in Sri Lanka provided an opportunity for the PRDU MA students to experience first-hand the complexities of working in a country affected by conflict. It complemented the theoretical taught component of Term 1 and illustrated the use of research methodology in the field.

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Every year the PRDU celebrates United Nations Day on October 24 – the day on which the UN Charter was ratified – by inviting distinguished speakers to share their knowledge and expertise at our Open Day. For 2001, in addition to two guest speakers, we were privileged to welcome The Lord Mayor and Sheriff of York.

The first speaker was Colonel Bob Stewart, best known for his assignment as UN Commander during the early military intervention in Bosnia. He spoke about his experiences and the difficulties encountered during the operation. This was followed by some dramatic film footage, which gave the delegates a real insight into what conditions were like for the troops serving in Bosnia. A summary of his talk **Saving lives in Central Bosnia** is featured here (right).

Then Dr Catherine Barnes, Editor of the journal Accord, spoke about the work of Reconciliation Resources and the Accord Programme, before her main address on “International Involvement in the Tajikistan Peace Process: Opportunities for Learning”. She described some of the main features of the Tajikistan Peace Process and identified key factors, with relevance to UN involvement in peacemaking in general, and for Afghanistan in particular.

The afternoon proved a highly successful event, with more than 75 delegates attending.

**Summary of Col Bob Stewart’s talk**

During 1992–93, Col Bob Stewart became something of a media personality with his almost nightly appearances on British TV news programmes – a deliberate strategy on his behalf, because he saw it as the only way to force an international understanding of the discriminate killings of innocent civilians in central Bosnia.

He led the first British UN military contingent into Bosnia-Hercegovina during the 1991–95 war in the Balkans.

As he described, there was considerable ignorance by politicians as to what the war was all about – the general message being that the three ethnic groups had always been fighting each other and this was just a resurgence of inter-ethnic hatred.

Finding the general UN response to be one of appeasement and detachment, such that civilian abuse went unchallenged, he set his troops the mission “to save lives”; wherever he met obstruction to entry or indifference to killing by ethnic forces, he would challenge them in the name of the UN (in which he is a firm believer).

His main achievements came in central Bosnia – Travnik and Vitez. The burning alive of civilians in their homes in the village of Ahmici was exposed to the world by Stewart through the use of the media. Until then the UN and its constituent nations had preferred not to acknowledge the full horrors of what was happening.

Questioned by the audience about strategies towards defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan, Stewart advocated the use of ground forces but shunned the use of bombing because of the inevitability of civilian casualties.

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**Civil Society project in Jordan**

Sultan Barakat and Richard Jones (DPhil student) recently undertook consultancy work – on behalf of the British Council and high ranking university officials.

As part of this ongoing project, six senior lecturers from JUST will be in the UK from 27 January to 5 February 2002, visiting institutions that will provide further information sharing and advice on: gender awareness; community participation/education; and management of change. The final two days will be a workshop facilitated by PRDU and Department of Politics lecturers, who will present key parameters of democracy and development discourse.

**Other News**

**York rises in the national research league**

The University of York is celebrating news of outstanding official research ratings. Eighteen of York’s 23 departments, including Politics, have been awarded ratings of 5 or 5* for the quality of their research, and this should help to attract more research funding for the Department. The 5A rating denotes that staff have achieved international excellence for their research output. Coupled with their perfect 24/24 Subject Review score (a measure of teaching quality), this means that the PRDU is part of one of the top politics departments in the UK.

PRDU lecturer Dr Roger MacGinty’s book on the Northern Ireland peace process has just been published. *Guns and Government: The Management of the Northern Ireland Peace Process* (Palgrave: 2002, ISBN 0333779142), co-authored with Professor John Darby, examines factors that accelerate or obstruct political movement during a peace process, with chapters on political and constitutional change, violence, economic factors, external influences, the role of public opinion, and the importance of political symbolism.