

## Perspectives of Conflict Transformation from the Middle East and Europe (CTMEE)

For more information:

<http://blogs.coventry.ac.uk/ctmee/>;

<http://blogs.coventry.ac.uk/researchblog/category/homepage/>

### Summary

'*Perspectives of Conflict Transformation from the Middle East and Europe (CTMEE)*' has facilitated an extensive programme of research, capacity building, and knowledge exchange between three partner institutions – the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations (CTPSR) at Coventry University (UK), Kadir Has University (Turkey), and the Arab American University in Jenin (occupied Palestinian territory). The goal of CTMEE has been to bring researchers together from the occupied Palestinian territory, Turkey, and the UK to jointly explore conflict transformation structures and processes that might be utilised in Turkey and Palestine, and how these processes and structures relate to understandings and practices of conflict transformation in Western Europe. CTMEE has had a significant impact on the exploration of conflict transformation – with a particular emphasis on the conflict between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians.

### CTMEE Objectives

- To identify appropriate conflict transformation strategies and methods for protracted violent conflicts.
- To examine the ways in which youth can constructively contribute to peacebuilding.
- To build a network of expertise on conflict transformation in the Middle East and Europe through workshops, conferences and other knowledge exchange activities.
- To provide opportunities for research on cutting-edge peacebuilding issues for postgraduate students.

### Results and Dissemination

CTMEE successfully brought together researchers from Coventry University, Kadir Has University, and the Arab American University in Jenin, through a series of research projects, workshops, and conferences to explore: (1) *youth and democratisation*; (2) *nonviolent action and resistance*; (3) *youth movements*; (4) *women and peacebuilding*; (5) *theatre and art in conflict transformation*; (6) *EU aid policy in Palestine*; (7) *boycotts of Israeli products in Palestine*; (8) *Palestinian-Israeli conflict in cyberspace*; (9) *human rights activism*; (10) *information technology and conflict transformation*; and (11) *entrepreneurship and conflict transformation*.

The results of the research conducted under this project have been disseminated through a variety of avenues:

**Conferences and workshops** – CTMEE project researchers initiated a series of annual conferences at the Arab American University in Jenin entitled *Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding in Palestine: Reality and Challenges* (1 – 2 June 2014; 5 – 6 May 2015). These conferences gather

together leading researchers on the conflict in Israel and the occupied territory and will continue as an annual legacy of the CTMEE project.



International conference at AAUJ - *Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding in Palestine* - 5 – 6 May 2015

CTMEE researchers have also actively participated in the yearly *Conference on Human Security* in Istanbul. Further, Arab American University researchers led a programme of workshops presenting their research in the West Bank to both Coventry University and Kadir Has students and staff including through Coventry University's Global Leaders Programme. Topics covered included research on 'Palestinian women and inheritance conflict', 'Information Technology and conflict in Palestine', 'Entrepreneurship and conflict resolution in Palestine', and the 'Palestinian student movements and democratization in Palestine'.

**Publications** – Individual CTMEE researchers have published or are planning to publish their findings in a variety of journals and books. CTMEE researchers are currently finalizing a major edited volume, *Conflict Transformation and the Palestinians*, which will critically analyse the conflict between Jewish Israelis and the Palestinians by exploring key transformational actors and strategies. This book will be one of the first in-depth exploration of the challenge of transforming violent conflict into just peace inside systems of oppression and external military occupation. A special issue of the journal *Conflict Transformation and Security* is also being finalized which will investigate the role of youth peacebuilders in the conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory.

**Teaching and training** – CTMEE researchers led the development of an MA Program in Conflict Resolution and Development at the Arab American University in Jenin. This MA program was launched in 2014, and is the first program of its kind, not only in Palestine, but in the entire Arab world. The program has grown quickly and is expecting approximately fifty students during the 2015-2016 academic year. This MA program has relied on extensive inputs from CTMEE researchers. There are several other examples of CTMEE researchers providing training under the auspices of this CTMEE project. Coventry University researchers provided numerous training sessions for academics and civil society leaders on conflict transformation and peacebuilding in both Palestine and Turkey. Kadir Has University researchers have provided support and training for civil society organisations in Palestine.



Conflict Transformation in the Middle East and Europe



Arab American University in Jenin, Occupied Palestinian Territory

## Social Impacts

The partnerships and collaborations between Coventry University, Kadir Has University, and the Arab American University in Jenin have had a significant impact on Palestinian society and academia. This project is allowing researchers to enhance their research networks and explore improved frameworks for conflict transformation in a variety of contexts from a cross-cultural perspective. CTMEE research outputs are building upon existing knowledge and informing policy and practical responses to violent conflict.

CTMEE has also allowed all three partner institutions to jointly develop their existing teaching and research initiatives. This project has motivated several new joint programming ventures such as joint MA and PhD programmes. It is anticipated that these joint programmes will continue as a sustainable legacy of project cooperation. As evidence, CTPSR and Arab American University are currently in active discussion and planning for future work together in a variety of consultancy and research projects.

CTMEE research has also benefited civil society organisations and international peacebuilding organizations in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. CTMEE researchers have engaged with a wide variety of governmental representatives and provided training to groups of civil society leaders in the West Bank.

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