

Abstract

Peace agreements form a crucial element of strategies to bring security from outside: they involve third party mediators during the negotiation stage and often peacekeeping troops to guarantee the agreement at an implementation stage. Peace roundtables usually involve top politicians and military leaders, who negotiate, sign and / or benefit from the agreement. What is usually and conspicuously absent from peace negotiations is broad-based participation by those who should benefit in the first place: citizens. More specifically, the local level of security provision and insecurity production is rarely taken into account.

This paper reviews parts of the academic debate on power sharing and war termination touching on some key findings by main researchers working on the topic. The ambivalent African experience with Arend Lijphart's four main ingredients of consociational democracy (grand coalition, minority veto, proportional representation, group autonomy) is summarised. Recent major African peace agreements (1999-2007) are analysed, detailing their power-sharing content. Most agreements contain some – though varying - power-sharing devices. Most striking is the variation in the important question of who is sharing power with whom. Obviously, only those present at the negotiation table could really count on being included in major ways. Finally, three country cases are analysed over a longer time period: Côte d'Ivoire (2002-2007), Liberia (1994-2003), and Central African Republic (1996-2007). The conclusion focuses on the factors of failure of peace agreements that place a heavy emphasis on power-sharing.

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