



**THE ROLE OF THE RIGHT TO TRUTH IN POST-
CONFLICT SOCIETIES FACING TRANSITIONAL
JUSTICE PROCESSES**

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ABSTRACT

Post-conflict societies emerging from war or repressive regime face many challenges in their path towards complete restoration of peace. Old violence might have left a legacy of human rights violations, deep communal wounds, strong societal division, economic destruction, and general distrust on state institutions to deal with. This thesis analyses the potential role that the right to truth can play in post-conflict societies engaged in transitional justice processes. It is argued that the right to truth is owed as a matter of justice to victims of gross humanitarian law and human rights violations. However, many times providing justice is sidelined in the interest of social stability in the belief that forgetting the past may lead to reconciliation and lasting peace. This is not granted although has actually happened in some cases as in the Spanish or Portuguese transitions to democracy. Nevertheless, to build peace over ignoring past injustices is not only unfair, but also is a bad way to show a new regime commitment with human rights. Moreover, the right to truth and the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms can significantly contribute, when some conditions are met, to foster a lasting and sustainable peace grounded on broad justice and reconciliation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECtHR: European Court for Human Rights.

IACtHR: Inter-American Court for Human Rights.

ICC: international Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

ICTR: International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

ICTY: International Criminal Court.

IMT: International Military Tribunal.

USSR: United Soviet Socialist Republics.

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