

As published in *Approaches to Peacebuilding*, Ho-Won Jeong, editor  
(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)

## 4 Negotiation Readiness in the Development Context: Adding Capacity to Ripeness<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

International development situations are rife with conflict. Societies receiving development assistance are usually undergoing dramatic changes to their social, economic and political fabric. These changes can alter the status quo and reapportion the stakes within civil society and between civil society and government, often yielding discord, and sometimes outright hostility and violence, among groups that perceive a loss of power or influence.

If these groups have both the political will and the capacity to defend and promote their interests, they may decide to negotiate their differences and prevent, manage or resolve the conflict. But in many cases, civil societies in developing countries have the motivation and will, but not a sufficiently mature capacity to negotiate, enabling differences to escalate into conflicts undeterred. A major impact of such conflicts is to distract attention from, or derail, the initiating development activities and objectives.

This chapter examines the concept of 'negotiation readiness', which combines the motivation and willingness to negotiate (*ripeness*) with the *capacity* to negotiate with the external environment. Negotiation readiness adds to Zartman's concept of *ripeness* (1996), but is different from Pruitt's conception (1997). It is patterned on the concept of military readiness, which emphasises both the willingness *and* capacity to act or respond in armed conflict situations. Willingness *and* capacity are equally important in generating the decision to negotiate. If the disputing parties lack a sufficient level of capacity, they are *not* likely to decide to

negotiate their differences, fearing a concessionary, or worse, an exploitative, interaction, even if they are motivated and the conflict seems ripe for resolution. Thus, capacity and ripeness are strategically linked and both must be present for parties to decide to negotiate.

Development situations examined in this chapter include situations in which policy reforms are being implemented. This context can produce conflicts among stakeholders. In this situation, the playing field may not be level: government usually maintains greater power and authority over reforms, while civil society is often factionalised and without a single voice to represent its position. Moreover, civil society often lacks the maturity and experience to demand an equal place at the negotiating table to determine the direction of future reforms.

The ability to reduce or resolve these conflicts and move forward with development goals depends on the ripeness *and* capacity of the parties—their readiness—to negotiate. This chapter seeks to understand the centrality of this ‘negotiation readiness’ concept to successful development with implications for peacebuilding efforts. It puts forth the hypothesis that if parties lack sufficient negotiation readiness (that is, motivation *and* capacity), development and post-settlement peacebuilding efforts will suffer and may become deadlocked. On the other hand, if all parties involved in development or participating in implementing a peace agreement are ready to enter into negotiations concerning the implementation details, the results are more likely to be successful.

The essential thrust of the chapter is to understand the components, preconditions, situational impacts, and variability of negotiation readiness so as to be able to explain when parties feel comfortable enough to enter into negotiations *and* what might be done to stimulate or encourage parties to engage in negotiations. Drawing upon analogies to military readiness and referring to existing literature on negotiation ripeness and post-agreement negotiation, the chapter expands upon a framework that seeks to explain the decision to enter into negotiations (Spector, 1998). Several cases are presented to illustrate how readiness can be strengthened in development situations to facilitate the onset of

negotiations. Finally, conclusions are drawn on how the concept of negotiation readiness might be elaborated theoretically and tested pragmatically.

## CONFLICTS IN DEVELOPMENT SITUATIONS

Conflict almost always accompanies the implementation of policy change. Paradoxically, the implementation of policy change cannot proceed efficiently in an atmosphere marked by excessive or disruptive conflict. Thus, a necessary condition of implementing policy change effectively must be the design, development and institutionalisation of processes and structures that are capable of managing, if not resolving, disputes that threaten policy reform. Generating culturally-appropriate ways to overcome or, at a minimum, stabilise the effects of social conflict are important as well, in building indigenous capacity to apply, transfer and sustain conflict resolution and management processes and skills.

There are many opportunities for conflict to emerge in the process of implementing policy change. For example, conflicts can arise when there are attempts to change institutions and procedures; redistribute land, property and other resources; gain access to a backlogged court system; deal with bureaucratic gridlock; share power; relocate and resettle populations; and decentralise government. Disputes can emerge among stakeholders if they perceive the stakes to be high and their goals are incompatible or their interests clash. These disputes can concern either conflicts over policy objectives or disagreements over the means to carry out the policy (Matland, 1995). In extreme situations, aggrieved stakeholders may withhold their resources or actions that are required to implement policy or actively sabotage attempts to reform policy, engendering disruptive power struggles.

The very tasks that comprise policy implementation are fraught with potential conflict, both within and among stakeholder groups (Crosby, 1996). Table 1 examines the breadth of implementation tasks and the types of disputes that might be generated in accomplishing them. A common theme across all of

these tasks is the uncertainty caused by implementing policy change and the potential for loss of status and resources. These negatively viewed circumstances elevate the probability for conflict among the possible winners and losers.

**Table 1. Policy Implementation Tasks and Potential Disputes**

<b>Policy Implementation Tasks</b>	<b>Potential Disputes</b>
<p><b>1. Policy Legitimation.</b> The proposed policy initiative must acquire legitimacy in the eyes of those who will implement it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legitimising a new policy may antagonise stakeholders that oppose it and upset the status quo, yielding conflict.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Constituency Building.</b> The policy must be marketed and promoted to build an identifiable coalition of beneficiaries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those likely to lose from implementation of a new policy may form a counterforce to the likely beneficiaries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Resource Accumulation.</b> Resources supporting the capacity to implement the policy must be obtained or reallocated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reallocation of limited resources usually results in curtailing of old policies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Organisational Design and Modification.</b> Institutions must be reengineered or developed anew that are appropriate to the new policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing organisations usually need to be reoriented, displacing groups and individuals associated with the old policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Resources Mobilisation.</b> Resources must be redirected and mobilised to provide the capacity to conduct action plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redirecting resources can cause resistance from those who lose capacity.</li> </ul>

In pluralistic societies, both the formulation and implementation of policy change almost always evoke debate among governmental and nongovernmental groups that have conflicting interests concerning the issues at hand. However, implementation managers who remain alert to the context of policy reform—both the goals of reform and the levels of potential stakeholder conflict—will be better equipped to preempt or react quickly to the impediments to change that emerge with appropriate dispute resolution remedies (Matland, 1995). (See Table 2.) Certainly, when there is a general consensus favoring the implementation of certain policies, such as a health program to eradicate smallpox, there may be only minimal disputes. Implementation in these cases can be relatively straightforward technical activities, possibly hampered by resource availability or bureaucratic skill and motivation, but not by substantive disputes over the policy itself (Table 2). Some view implementation under these conditions as an *administrative* function of putting regulations and legislation into effect. However, even in a case of administrative implementation, conflicts may arise regarding resource distribution and differences in implementation approach across the technocratic groups that are entrusted with executing the policy. These conflicts may be resolvable by building confidence levels among stakeholders or by accommodating resource allocation needs.

**Table 2. Goal Ambiguity-Conflict Matrix: Policy Implementation Processes**

<i>Ambiguity</i>	<b>Low Conflict</b>	<b>High Conflict</b>
Low Goal Ambiguity	1. Administrative Implementation	2. Political Implementation
High Goal Ambiguity	3. Experimental Implementation	4. Value-Laden Implementation

(Adapted from Matland, 1995)

Clear goals ('low ambiguity') and high conflict among stakeholders usually yield a highly *political implementation* situation (Table 2). In such cases, actor goals or methods are incompatible with the proposed policy and political power must be wielded to resolve the impasse. This can result in the coercive use of power to impose a solution or in persuasive interactions among stakeholders involving negotiation or joint problem-solving. Examples of political implementation might include controversies over the demobilisation and relocation of guerrillas or the opening or closing of military bases.

The conditions defined in Cell 3, high goal ambiguity and low conflict, define many typical implementation scenarios in which development objectives are vague and open, but are relatively unthreatening; only limited groups in society are interest-motivated toward these objectives and no conflicts among them are generated as a result. Those who perceive a high personal stake in the issue and who get involved actively will play a dominant role in executing the policy. An example is the implementation of forestry policies or clean air or water regulations. The outcome depends heavily on the resources committed and the stakeholders that decide to participate. As a result, implementation is likely to vary from site to site and can be viewed as *experimental*, producing lessons learned at each site that can enhance future implementation activities.

Finally, the situation in Cell 4—high ambiguity and high conflict—is typical of the implementation of issues dealing with *highly salient symbols*, those that deal with the essential values, principles and goals that stakeholders espouse. Conflict may arise over the 'correct' vision of policy orientation on these issues, resulting in significant competition among groups and possible disruption of efficient implementation processes. An example of this type of implementation, especially among environmental stakeholders, is the siting of hazardous waste treatment plants. When the clash of strongly held beliefs dominates policy implementation, the dispute resolution techniques that are mobilised must be sensitive to the needs and values of the

stakeholders, not only to their interests. Several conditions or sources of conflict can generate resistance from expected implementers, as well as from beneficiaries:

**1. Absence of Consensus.** If the policies to be implemented are based on issues where there is limited consensus in society, conflict may emerge. Interested parties in government agencies, industry and society who are charged with responsibility for implementation or who must be relied upon to comply with a new policy may not agree with the substance of the policy or the means employed to implement it. In fact, the policy change may pit government authorities against other governmental and nongovernmental organisations that have conflicting interests on the issues. When policies remain contentious after their formulation due to remaining legal, political, social or economic questions, compliance with new policy may suffer and, worse yet, the implementers may try to obstruct it.

**2. Challenge to the Status Quo.** Stakeholders may find a new policy to be a direct challenge to their interests. They may fear that they will lose status, influence or assets as a result of a reformed policy, and so, may resist change by withholding their resources and failing to comply with the policy's requirements. A change in the status quo implies upsetting the existing power balance, arrangement of coalitions or distribution of assets and resources. Policy change is likely to introduce new issues, new actors, and new regulations and standards, producing a sense of uncertainty and risk in an established situation by redefining who are winners and who are losers. If stakeholders weigh their options and determine that they are better off *without* the policy—to stay with the status quo—they are likely to oppose or resist the change. This cost-benefit assessment may be more intuitive than quantitative.

**3. Adversarial History.** If the policy making and implementing communities are historical adversaries, the implementation period may be characterised by conflict. Any proposed change in policy, regardless of its technical merit, may be seen as an offensive

gesture, dredging up old enmities and wounds between historical adversaries. Regardless of the interests of the parties in the policy issues at hand, implementation may be viewed as just another opportunity to confront the other side.

**4. Exclusion.** When policy makers have shut out parties with potentially competing viewpoints from participating in the policy formulation phase, the implementation phase is a likely moment for their frustrations to be released. Such constituencies may have weak allegiances to the new policy. The imposition of new regulations or directives on parties that have been denied access during the initiation of policy dialogue is likely to be viewed negatively and responded to by questioning, delay, outright hostility or stalemate.

When disputes manifest themselves publicly, there are several possible consequences. Public resistance can emerge, resources can be withheld, implementing activities can be delayed, or the process can become hopelessly deadlocked. Worse yet, social and political unrest concerning one policy issue can spiral and trigger other conflicts, producing increasingly unstable situations.

A particular variant of development conflicts concerns dynamics in post-conflict peacebuilding situations. Here, again, conflicts may arise and negotiation may be required. The implementation of peace agreements are extremely sensitive junctures that determine whether the provisions that have been agreed upon at the negotiating table can be successfully 'sold' to the constituents who must enact them. Time and again in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for instance, agreements concluded through negotiation at the highest political levels fall asunder because constituents who must implement the peace provisions have not 'bought on'.

Research suggests that the more detailed the negotiated peace agreement, the more likely the implementation will have the intended consequences (Hampson, 1996). However, formal settlements to conflicts often include broad framework provisions, but remain silent on many of the important details. They define the

basic modalities by which the fighting will cease, the various factions will be disarmed, and reconciliation, institution-building and reconstruction will begin—all vital elements that usually require more implementation details. Many peace agreements, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, leave major details concerning their implementation unresolved or ill-defined, bequeathing these problems to the parties in the peacebuilding phase. Without detailed answers to such questions as safe havens, amnesties, demilitarised zones, weapon drop-off locations, agreement on neutral parties to administer disarmament, interim arrangements, elections, administration of essential services, rule of law, human rights, reestablishment of the judiciary, reestablishment of the economy, and so on, peace agreements can easily fall apart and renewed conflict can emerge.

The provisions of post-conflict peacebuilding, often promoted and sponsored by bilateral and international donor organisations, can radically alter pre-conflict power arrangements, thrusting certain groups into authoritative positions before they gain local legitimacy or the capacity to lead. The very circumstance of post-conflict peacebuilding is one in which established power balances in society are overturned and the reestablishment of orderly functioning relies on different groups or coalitions assuming new roles. Unless this new order is imposed autocratically, instability and unrest are likely to emerge during peacebuilding until there is common acceptance of the new arrangements or the newly empowered groups gain the resources and abilities to provide credible leadership.

#### NEGOTIATION READINESS IN DEVELOPMENT CONFLICT SITUATIONS

The principal mechanism to generate answers to such development conflict quandaries is *continued* negotiation among the disputants. When there are conflicts of interest over development issues, the parties can seek equitable resolution through dialogue and negotiation. Especially in the case of post-conflict peacebuilding

situations, it is through formal and informal *post-agreement negotiation* among these parties that sensitive details can get resolved, sometimes with the help of outside mediators.<sup>2</sup> These post-agreement negotiations serve not only to implement the peace agreement or other policy changes, but as a conflict management mechanism in often unstable and transitional post-conflict periods.<sup>3</sup>

But are disputants always capable of negotiating the details? These details may have been sticking points in peace negotiations which is why they were not resolved earlier. The parties still may view them as intractable and non-negotiable now. The success or failure of development and post-settlement negotiations depends largely on the *negotiation readiness* of the parties. Negotiation readiness can be defined as the combination of *political willingness* and *capacity* of parties to decide that it is in their best interest to negotiate an agreement rather than to continue the conflict. If any of the principal parties are not ready to negotiate, development or peacebuilding may come to a halt and conflict may reemerge.

While Zartman's 'negotiation ripeness' and Pruitt's expanded versions of the concept, focus on the motivational willingness to enter into talks as well as on perceptual elements, the concept of negotiation readiness proposed here adds another critical dimension of 'capacity', which, in development situations, may prove to be even more important to the decision to negotiate. Policy change disputants may be willing to negotiate the details of implementation, but may lack the tools, training and resources to adequately represent themselves at the bargaining table, especially if it is after years of prolonged conflict or suppression of civil society. This political skill or capacity gap can result in a critical asymmetry of political power among the parties, potentially yielding a potent disincentive to negotiating implementation. There may be a need to level the playing field among civil society groups and government with regard to their capacity to sit down at the bargaining table and negotiate solutions that all believe to be equitable and fairly achieved. The efficacy of donor assistance to strengthen civil society organisations may turn out to be the critical required element in generating negotiation readiness.

### **Ripeness**

By identifying and analysing ripe moments, ripeness theory seeks to understand and explain the fundamental decision to enter into negotiations. Zartman stipulates four basic conditions for establishing the ripeness to negotiate: (1) the existence of a *mutually hurting stalemate* or impending *catastrophe* that causes all parties to conclude that escalation is no longer an option and that deadlock is too costly; (2) alternatively, the existence of *mutually enticing opportunities* that offer rewards for negotiation that are too good to turn down; (3) a *perceived way out* of the conflict that does not sacrifice the parties' basic interests; and (4) valid and legitimate spokespersons who can commit their parties to the negotiation path (1989, 1996). Zartman's ripeness concept is primarily a motivational construct.

Pruitt has recently critiqued ripeness theory and has sought to incorporate it within the goal/expectation model of strategic choice (1997). He questions whether ripeness is a state or a variable, in which there could be degrees of ripeness. He also questions whether ripeness relates only to entering into negotiations or if it suggests the conditions for effective negotiations themselves. To satisfy these issues, Pruitt proposes "readiness theory," his extension to ripeness theory. It recategorises the ripeness conditions into two categories—the *motive* to achieve mutual cooperation and *optimism* that the other parties will reciprocate cooperative behaviour—thus adding perceptual to motivational dynamics in the theory.

### **Readiness**

One critical element is missing in these frameworks of ripeness or readiness that is extremely important in development and post-conflict negotiations, and that is *political capacity*. Making analogy to 'military readiness' may serve to inform our development of a 'negotiation readiness' framework. What does it mean to be ready militarily? The indicators used by US military

forces focus on four factors: personnel, equipment and supplies in hand, the condition of the equipment, and training (Gebicke, 1997). All of these are factors that measure the resources and capacity to do a job, in this case, to conduct combat. Also included in an assessment of military readiness are the threats to be confronted, the appropriateness of the resources to those threats, and the 'connective tissue' that makes this capacity viable—communications, coordination and planning. While there is still much debate on how military readiness should be measured (is it a snapshot state or dynamic? is it short-term or long-term? how do different missions affect readiness? etc.), its emphasis on the *capacity* of the parties can help expand our concept of negotiation readiness.

Motivation and perception are not sufficient to ensure the decision to negotiate; the parties must possess a degree of political skill, resources and power—some reasonable level of capacity—if negotiations are to be entered into and conducted effectively. These skills and resources must go beyond a group's military capacity, by which they may have waged their struggle until the peace agreement, to a capacity to act and represent their interests in a civil situation. The parties must have a sense of political identity and structure, be able to establish their interests and develop strategies and possess persuasive and tactical skills. But in a developing or post-conflict society, civil organisations are often underdeveloped or nonexistent. Institutions and societal rules and procedures may have to be reestablished. Reconciliation, reconstruction and institution-building require active negotiation among all stakeholders who have interests, motivation and a capacity to sit and react at the bargaining table. Power and resource asymmetry between the disputants will likely result in a failure to enter into talks and possible stalemate in peacebuilding or policy change efforts.

Referring to the propensity of ethnic groups to negotiate with the state to avert the growth of conflict, Rothchild emphasises the importance of developing at least the perception or appearance of symmetry between the parties to motivate negotiations (1997). Ethnic groups that are in a less powerful position in relation to the

state are not likely to be interested in peacebuilding negotiations unless the state takes initiatives to equalise the balance of power, to empower the ethnic groups and to enhance their political capacity. This might take the form of power sharing or confidence building measures. He cites South Africa as a good example of engaging ethnic groups in negotiation through such initiatives that leveled the playing field.

This chapter is only a first conceptual step toward understanding the problems of development conflicts and negotiation readiness. The following questions suggest the issues that need to be addressed to provide substance to a 'negotiation readiness theory'.

- What are the components of negotiation readiness and the decision to enter into negotiations?
- What are the necessary and sufficient conditions for a party to be ready? Are there degrees of negotiation readiness?
- How ready do parties have to be to decide to enter negotiations in a development or post-conflict situation?
- What are the preconditions for sufficient readiness? How much motivational ripeness versus perceptual optimism versus political capacity need there be?
- What are the likely consequences if all parties are not ready to negotiate?
- Are there situational or intervening factors that may impact negotiation readiness?
- Can something be done to stimulate the negotiation readiness of parties and thus make development and peacebuilding efforts more effective? What are the ways to enhance or stimulate negotiation readiness?
- How do the motivational and perceptual factors in ripeness theory interface with the resource, capacity and experience factors of readiness?
- How can the concept of military readiness inform the development of a negotiation readiness framework?
- What types of external support can enhance capacity building for development or peacebuilding negotiations?

- What are the implications for foreign donor assistance in post-conflict situations?

#### ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Several examples are presented below that depict cases where international donors, foundations or institutes have supported institutional strengthening of civil society to enhance their negotiation readiness. The three illustrations focus on situations in which policy changes are being implemented in the development context. In all cases, the strengthening of negotiation skills is seen to have favorable short-term results; long-term implications for the resolution of conflicts are more difficult to ascertain.

#### **The West African Enterprise Network**

Since 1992, over 300 business people in 12 West African countries have worked together as an Enterprise Network to seek policy change in their countries by strengthening their organisational and planning capacity and increasing their skills in advocacy (Orsini and Courcelle, 1996). Their goal is to enhance their dialogue with the State concerning business- and economic-related policy issues in which they are major stakeholders. Prior to establishing the Network across the 12 countries, the private sector maintained poor relations with the State. There was general mistrust, limited mechanisms for dialogue and unequal power positions. Businesses were typically dependent on 'favours' from the State, subject to restrictive regulations, and hostage to corrupt and rent-seeking bureaucrats. The business sector needed extensive capacity strengthening to participate as an equal partner in the policy process.

The means chosen for achieving greater capacity was through development of skills in strategic management (including techniques such as stakeholder analysis and political mapping) and advocacy (including techniques to help formulate interests and positions, organise around these interests, articulate and promote

these interests with government, lobby, use the media, provide public testimony and build coalitions). Strategic management skills are directly applicable to pre-negotiation situations, in which stakeholders need to analyse their own interests and contrast them with the interests of the other negotiators, plan their course of action, and strategise how they will carry out the negotiation process. Advocacy skills are valuable in promoting stakeholder interests effectively vis à vis the State, negotiating and using persuasive tactics and applying various resources (such as the press) to one's advantage.

Through training sessions, workshops and other interventions geared to strengthen the capacity of the Network members in negotiation-usable skills, the Network has begun to play an important negotiating and advisory role in many of the constituent counties. For example, in Ghana, the Network is consulted regularly as the representative of entrepreneurs in reforming economic policy. In Mali, the Network is asked by the government and legislature to give advice on proposed legislation and to negotiate with the Finance Committee on fiscal reform issues. In Senegal, the Network negotiates with government on post-devaluation business incentives. Across the other countries, the Network negotiates with the States on policy reform concerning access to credit, banking regulations, investment, tax reform and regional economic integration.

### **The Ugandan National Forum**

In 1989, the Implementing Policy Change Project (sponsored by the US Agency for International Development [USAID]) began working with both public and private sector groups in Uganda to develop an atmosphere for stimulating private investment, expanding exports, strengthening the financial sector and creating an equitable tax regime (Kalema, Mазzie and Ojoo, 1994). One important and concrete result of that work—and an illustrative example of 'dispute management systems'—was the establishment of the National Forum on Strategic Management for Private Investment and Export Growth in 1992. The Forum was conceived

as a sustainable body for dialogue, problem-solving and negotiation among various governmental and industry stakeholders to develop consensus toward specific action plans that promote investment. The Forum, by combining the forces of the private sector in one organisation, serves to enhance the power and capacity of businesses to negotiate with the government. It draws its legitimacy from the support it receives from the President of Uganda and from the Uganda Manufacturers Association.

Four working groups that meet continuously on specific issues strengthen the links among stakeholders and serve as a ready outlet for anticipating, managing, negotiating, and resolving disputes among them. Several broad issues have been addressed by these working groups that carry the seeds of dissensus, including shifting control over the economy away from government to the private sector; privatising public enterprises and increasing competition; restructuring several government agencies; dealing with corruption and developing a plan for land reform. Each of these issues threatens to change the status quo, redistribute resources and restructure who in society exercises economic power—all sensitive issues that can easily divide stakeholders and yield disputes. Not only do these working groups support consensus-building internally among stakeholders, but they help to forge unity among them by serving as externally-focused pressure groups on government, offering policy recommendations to government agencies and following through on implementation monitoring to ensure that reforms are made.

### **Ukrainian Negotiation Training for Government Managers**

Negotiation and consensus-building training is being provided to government managers in Ukraine through the Ukraine Public Administration Academy (with the support of the USAID's Implementing Policy Change Project). While different from the previous two cases in that the target of institutional strengthening here is government rather than civil society, the case is relevant because it demonstrates the importance of developing a strong capacity in negotiation skills to promote policy reforms. On many

fronts, but especially in the realm of the economy, Ukrainian policy reform has come to a virtual standstill because the various government ministries and agencies that must collaborate with one another do not have the skills or experience of negotiating with each other over competing organisational interests to develop mutually acceptable policy provisions. The problem also is prevalent within the legislature and between the legislature and the executive agencies. Under the socialist system, the decision-making culture had developed as a centralised, top-down model; decisions were made and passed to implementing agencies, not negotiated. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, this decision model has also changed, but the negotiation skills have still not developed sufficiently to fill the void, resulting in deadlock. It is hoped that the negotiation training program will begin the process of enhancing the capacity of these agencies and institutions to search for common ground on important policy issues.

## CONCLUSIONS

From a theoretical perspective, the expansion of the ripeness concept to the readiness concept, by adding the capacity element to the motivational and perceptual elements, makes it more responsive to development situations and generates better explanations for why parties decide to negotiate. Especially, in post-conflict peacebuilding situations, the negotiation readiness concept can offer a more realistic explanation of why certain peace agreements experience successful implementation and why others fail. Asserting the ripeness of a conflict, by itself, is not sufficient to predict the onset of negotiations; the parties must have the practical capacity to negotiate as well.

From a policy perspective, the concept of negotiation readiness immediately suggests that donor assistance might be well spent to enhance the capacity of civil society and government in negotiation skills. Especially in sensitive post-conflict situations, international donors might have a major impact on improving the chances of a peace agreement by channeling their support to

negotiation and conflict resolution training activities that help empower civil society groups and make them more capable of joining in post-settlement implementation negotiations as equal partners.

#### NOTES

1. The author gratefully acknowledges the support of the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation.
2. The importance of such post-agreement negotiations, especially at the local level to facilitate implementation, has been described and analysed by Evans, Jacobson and Putnam (1993) in the context of security, economic and North-South issues, and by Spector, Zartman and Sjöstedt (forthcoming) to assess the dynamics of regime governance and expansion processes.
3. The use of the negotiation mechanism as a form of conflict management and implementation of already negotiated agreements is only recently receiving attention by the research community, mostly as it relates to sustaining international regimes. Lodge (1998), for example, examines negotiation processes as consensus-building and regime governance mechanisms within the European Union. Spector, Zartman and Sjöstedt (forthcoming) analyse six international regimes to highlight the use of negotiation processes both at the domestic and international levels to iron out the details, implement, and expand upon the originating regime agreements. Putnam (1988) and Evans, Jacobson and Putnam (1993) examine the two-level game – the domestic bargaining that ensues to implement internationally negotiated agreements consummated by national signatories. What these studies conclude is that implementation of even the most carefully crafted agreements requires additional negotiation if they are complex multi-issue agreements. The development of dynamic and cooperative processes of post-agreement negotiation offers the basis for interested parties to bargain on the details and complexities that

could not be resolved in the originating agreement. Such after-the-fact negotiation also offers the possibility to modify and expand upon agreement provisions that, with the course of time, should be enhanced.

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