QUESTIONS FOR STRUCTURING REPORT B AND REPORT C: CRG'S RESPONSE

Introductory Note:

1. The responses to the questions mentioned below are to be read with the help of following documents (listed not in any particular order) sent by CRG to all CORE partners in the course of work on the CORE project:

- The full paper sent to BCR on "Governance Structures and the Current History of Peace Building in India's Northeast"
- Note on fieldwork in the Northeast and Bihar
- Theoretical note on the perspective of peace building in the Northeast stressing the post-colonial nature of the enterprise
- The minutes of the Varanasi meeting attended by the CORE participants in India on fieldwork in Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, and the Northeast
- Note on governance initiatives in peace building
- Note on "Premises of Peace building and Governance Structures in India"
- Bibliographic note
- Exhaustive status note on existing conflicts, their socio-economic background, and other relevant statistics appended with a large relevant bibliography.

2. The two options placed for Report B have strong interface as the experiences of the Northeast suggest. They may not be thus mutually exclusive. The replies are in that framework of interface.

Questions for Structuring Report B and C

Report B: "Approaches to Dialogue and Mediation – Concepts, Theories of Change and their Influence on Local Conflict Dynamics"

We intend to compare European and Indian approaches to dialogue and mediation in report B and therefore we are now thinking about which case studies and which initiatives are best suitable for our research. Currently, we are discussing two options for structuring B and would like to hear your opinion on this:

- One option is to compare dialogue and mediation approaches in several case study regions on several levels, like approaches of the Indian state, local /indigenous approaches, EU approaches in European conflict regions, in order to find out to what extent they are culturally sensitive to the context they are implemented in.

- Another option – and this is maybe the more interesting one, is to start with outlining EU (or UN) norms on mediation, dialogue, on how to deal with armed movements and terrorist movements and the respective theories of change these strategies are based on. In a next step we compare and relate them to the dialogue strategies of the Indian government in North East India

and Kashmir with the aim of investigating on common (liberal) norms and their appropriateness for the local context in North East India and Kashmir.

For selecting relevant initiatives in India we would appreciate it very much to hear your opinion on the following points:

Dialogue initiatives of the Indian government in Kashmir and North East India

Focusing on North East India and Kashmir one possibility is to analyse dialogue strategies of the Indian state regarding on how to deal with insurgents. As already announced from the field research teams in Kashmir emphasis in their analysis will be put on efforts of the central and state government for organizing dialogues and talks with various factions of the separatist leaderships through all party delegations and with individual government and non-government personnel. Field research in North East India has a similar focus, as the idea is to concentrate on the government of India's dialogue initiatives with NSCN and ULFA in Nagaland.

Questions:

Can you recommend any special dialogues which are worthwhile for having a closer look at, or in Kashmir or in North East India? Does it make sense to focus on Nagaland as representative example for the North East or would you suggest a different state?

Yes, Naga peace dialogues (from the Peace Mission onwards) can be a good case study. However we cannot say that there was a pre-determined strategy on the part of the government or its adversary. Often dialogues develop by way of coping with exigencies, though later a pattern can be evinced from the developments. Yet, the question is: can we say that the Naga case is representative of all such efforts? To answer in the affirmative is difficult as the experiences of say Assam or Tripura may be different with equally instructive lessons. CRG aims to bring out the heterogeneity of the peace dialogues, in as much as the conflict scenario is heterogeneous. One may say that lumping all conflicts in that geographical region as "Northeast" has been a strategy (for rapid mobilization of counter-insurgency forces, governmental expansion, etc), but it has not helped in bringing durable peace. In Tripura the issue of expansion of tribal rights and subsequently rehabilitation formed the main component of peace dialogue; in the Naga case the issue still is: how can be sovereignty federalized? In Assam it is still a case of mix of the two. In Tripura it is a "success story", in Nagaland it is a long drawn war only "by other means" or if one likes a no war no peace situation.

Can you recommend further local or indigenous initiatives to mediation/dialogue in the North East or in Kashmir, like for example the Naga Mothers Association which you find important for our analysis?

The participation of Naga Mothers in peace process must be studied in depth with its success and limits to their active involvement. Yet the issue will be: why is this experience "unique"? Why is the "Meirapeibi" case (Manipur) different? CRG's past research on this theme is extremely significant here. Once again, the point is the heterogeneity of the peace question and the limited use of a single framework. In some sense the Naga and Manipur experiences call for a thorough assessment of the possibilities of the Security Council resolution 1398 relating to participation of women in governance in conflict ridden regions. While the implementation of the measures clearly envisages actions from the top, the effectiveness depends on the strength of the civil society, in other words, the movement from below.

Besides this, we would like to know whether you could assist us a) in assessing relevant strategy documents of the Indian government or b) local /indigenous initiatives? This is crucial for us as they are at the center of our reports.

We are not aware of any government strategy document on peace dialogues for the entire Northeast. There are case specific positions and statements emanating from government emissaries. But the evolution of a strategy to the extent one can construe there is one must be studied. The three member Naga Peace Mission in the sixties of the last century has to be studied – its failure yet its distinct role in the Indo-Naga history of peace building. From the formation of a separate state of Nagaland to Peace Mission to Shillong Accord to ceasefire discussions beginning and resulting in the continuing ceasefire agreement followed by continuing political discussion on the terms of settlement is a fifty year long process which is significant and unique. This is so because of the stability of rebel political leadership, determination, consistent political demands, and the capacity for protracted attrition. As indicated earlier, Manipur experience may be different. Possibly the issue here is: how do we study the phenomenon of dialogue its plural forms? In other words, how do we conceptualize dialogue as plural?

EU - India strategic partnership & influence of international norms on Indian politics and local conflict dynamics

Does it make sense to research on the political implications of the EU-India partnership in the above mentioned conflict regions, e.g. does the EU –Indian cooperation on security issues from 2008 influence the politics of the Indian state on how to deal with insurgents in the respective regions?

CRG is not in a position to comment on this with great confidence. EU-India relations are notoriously localized in Delhi! Also there is not much evidence that at the governmental level EU perceptions on rebellions, insurgency, etc. have gone beyond "counter-terrorism" framework. However EU (commission) sponsored collaborative researches are opening up new angles and giving new insights. But CRG is unable to say if these insights are getting translated into policies or helping revision of policies.

Does the EU or UN concept on politics on indigenous people has any political impact or on the politics of the Indian state or on the conflict dynamics on the local level? *(This seems to be a very interesting and under-researched topic).*

However there is no doubt that UN concepts, resolutions, and statements have greater impact – on issues relating to indigenous people, human rights, participation of women in governance structures, autonomy, racism, divided people, etc. CRG's continuing research on the relevance or applicability of Security Council resolution on women's participation in governance in conflict regions in India and Nepal will be hopefully significant.

To what extent can "European" or Western norms of International organizations (EU, UN or the like)be found in the political strategies of the Indian government implemented in Kashmir or North East India, like implicit liberal assumptions on how peace can be achieved?

Again, CRG cannot answer this with confidence. However, what does seem to be the case is that the actual histories of peace building in India bring out the brittle nature of the implicit liberal assumptions and show the post-colonial nature of the peace enterprise. More than liberal theory, norms, etc, it is democracy by which we mean popular politics and popular democracy that is

involved in the peace question. Democracy is in all the cases is here defined by issues of justice and popular politics – which unfortunately do not seem t be foregrounded in EU norms or in any other liberal discourse.

Against this background it is maybe worthwhile to integrate India's laws on counterterrorism in the research to check to what extent they are influenced by the liberal peace discourse and to discuss about the political implications of them on the local level? *(As far as I know they have been highly criticized due to their deviations from the UN convention on counterterrorism, this is probably an interesting aspect for our research, too.)* What do you think about this issue?

They should be studied less as manifestations of liberal peace discourse and more as manifestations of post-colonial governmentality in an era of globalization.

We leave out our reflections on questions pertinent to Report C as JNU will be able to reflect on them better.

Report C: Potentials of Hybrid Conflict Transformation Agendas and Local Cultural Aspects for Peace

<u>Focus on Hybrid Local Governance Agendas</u>

As outlined in the concept note, topic C foresees the analysis of the interaction (or "hybridization") of international/national and local aspects and the cultural sensitivity of conflict transformation agendas. As a thematic focus, we would like to concentrate our research for report C on *strengthening local governance* as agendas that are transforming conflict. According to the Survey Preparation Background Report, we think that local governance is mainly part of field research in **Bihar/Jharkhand**, **Georgia** and **Bosnia**.

We imagine the contents of report C as follows: A theory part on interaction of agendas as well as on local governance as a conflict transformation initiative. In a practical part (information mainly out of field research), we would like to analyse interactions of external and internal/sub-national local governance agendas and see what comes out of these interactions. Then, we would like to analyse the resulting "hybrid" agendas and investigate benefits and drawbacks of "hybridity" regarding strengthening local governance. Finally, we will compare the "hybrid" agendas with local/traditional/indigenous initiatives of strengthening local (self-)governance and conflict transformation. This will give us information on how culturally appropriate and sensitive the "hybrid" agendas are.

<u>Criteria for Local Governance Agendas:</u>

The focus will be on agendas that strengthen participation in local governance through empowerment of the people (elected representatives, certain groups of society, etc.).

<u>Questions:</u>

- In order to concretise the research we will choose two local governance agendas per case to be analysed. For **Bihar/Jharkhand** we would like to ask you for your recommendation for agendas that are relevant, representative or of particular interest in the region (in a positive or negative way). In the Survey Preparation Background Report we read about the following agendas among others:

  - **Capacity Development for Local Governance** by **UNDP**, implemented in various states, among others: Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand. Duration: 2008-2012.

  - **Pahal: Shaasan Sudhaar Ki Ore**, by **Transparency International India,** operating in backward rural areas of Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa, since April 2009.

  Could you recommend one of these agendas or rather another more interesting one for the analysis for Topic C?

- Do the foreseen contents of Report C and the thematic focus (local governance) make sense in your view? What is missing, what is inappropriate in your view?

- As became clear in the workshop in June, "hybridity" is a concept mainly used in Western academia. Would you agree with a definition of "hybrid" as a collaboration or compromise between international/national and local/subnational approaches, activities, theories of change and norms?

- It would be interesting to compare one of the above mentioned agendas with an indigenous/traditional agenda in order to find similarities and differences in the approach. These similarities/divergences could indicate potentials and shortcomings regarding the cultural sensitivity and appropriateness of the above mentioned agendas. Do you know an indigenous/traditional agenda in the area of local (self-)governance implemented in Bihar/Jharkhand that could be meaningfully compared with the agendas mentioned above? Is there one that you anyway have planned to investigate in your field research or could integrate in your field research? This would be crucial since it will be very difficult for us to find information about such an initiative.

- We don´t know yet whether it makes more sense to compare initiatives within the cases or across the cases. What do you think of e.g. a comparison of local governance initiatives from Bihar with one from Georgia or Bosnia? Do you think a comparison between and Indian case and an European case makes sense at all?

- Since findings of the field research will feed into the reports on topic B and C, we would like to coordinate with you and ask you whether you have planned to do research on local governance initiatives, whether this is possible for you to do so?