



# Amnesty Database Project

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## What?

Amnesties have been vital to including armed combatants in peace negotiations and in emergent political and security institutions. They perform political settlement functions of elite inclusion, continuity and stability. However, international norms are now argued to preclude certain forms of amnesty. This project involved a compilation of all amnesties in situations of conflict, from 1990 until 2016, which traced when and how the amnesty occurred and its relationship to the peace process and agreements. It provided empirical data from which to consider how amnesties enacted during conflict contribute to political negotiations, and the consequences of international prohibition of amnesty as a tool to try to influence and shape which elites are included in the political settlement bargaining process. Lastly, it assessed the relationship between amnesties, inclusion of armed actors, and international norms.

## How?

This project updated and revised Mallinder's Amnesty Law Database to contain over 540 amnesties in over 130 countries from 1945-2011, to provide a sub-set of data for amnesty processes enacted during or after conflict. This sub-set of data was analysed to understand the relationship of amnesty to inclusion, and to the political settlement that results.

## Why?

Amnesties and debates over a 'Justice v Peace' trade-off play-out a version of the 'Stabile Elite v Participative and Inclusive' dilemma. By providing empirical data on amnesties and peace agreements, this project enabled a scientific assessment of how trade-offs between elite deals, and pressures for more normative settlement terms play-out in this area. It provided new information on how peace processes facilitate forms of inclusion and exclusion through the use of amnesties, and also contributed to understanding the relationship of international norms to political bargaining processes; an inquiry that runs across different themes.

## Who?

Louise Mallinder (Transitional Justice Institute)

## Key Publications:

- [\*Mallinder, L. \(2017\). Atrocity, Accountability, and Amnesty in a 'Post-Human Rights World'? \(PSRP Working Paper\). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.\*](#)
- [\*Mallinder, L. \(2018\). Amnesties and Inclusive Political Settlements \(PA-X Report, Transitional Justice Series\). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.\*](#)

For a full list of publications, search our [publications database](#).