Abstract

During the past decades, peacebuilding has become a widely accepted conflict management mechanism in response to contemporary threats to international peace and security, attracting a number of diverse international actors to engage in measures which address the root causes of war in post-conflict states. Although the mechanism has been progressively applied, the evolution of its conceptual foundations is lagging behind. As a consequence, peacebuilding practices reflect an inconsistency both in the international actors’ conceptual understanding and approaches to creating the conditions of sustainable peace. This thesis aims at exploring the areas where greater uniformity in practices could increase the success of peacebuilding processes, and assessing the relevance and feasibility of the adoption of legal standards for ensuring a more coherent and effective implementation of post-conflict agendas. Through evaluating the lessons learned from the peacebuilding processes in Sierra Leone and Kosovo, the paper identifies primary factors which influence the performance of the diverse actors and the final outcome of their efforts. It will be discussed whether, relating to these factors, a need for future law emerged with the aim of providing more consistency by regulating matters of the conduct and participation of peacebuilding actors. This paper concludes that the adoption of international law rules on certain aspects of the operationalization of the principle of local ownership and accountability would contribute to obtaining positive results in peacebuilding. However, the political will to reform the current legal framework for international conflict management is yet to develop.