

Negotiated State-Building: Unravelling the Complex Relationship between the State and Non-State Actors

Thursday 6 June 2024 15:00 (1h 30m)

Modern state-building increasingly involve complex negotiations and interactions between the state and non-state actors leading to contrasting results to order and wider state-building efforts. These negotiations and interactions are particularly key in (post)-conflict settings that are prone to volatility. This panel characterises key non-state actors which includes but are not limited to warlords, militias, rebels, insurgent groups and others emerging as significant players in shaping the trajectory, character, and eventual outcome of state development, particularly in fragile contexts. Concurrently, shifts in the state's policy choices such as inclusivity by co-opting these actors or exclusivity by disrupting them can often produce varied results in different contexts. This panel seeks to delve into the multifaceted roles of non-state actors, charting their power structures, organisational settings, evolving strategies, and motivations. Key in this respect will be analysing the ramifications of these factors on state development across diverse contexts.

Isar's paper examines the impacts of political elites' co-option and disruption by the Afghan states, arguing that the former led to order while the latter resulted in instability. Similarly, Piccolino explores how informal, illiberal strategies of co-option and appointments was effective in Côte d'Ivoire. Monroy-Santander and Carranza-Franco, looking at Colombia, delve into how criminal groups feeling excluded escalated military actions and sought amnesty, while victim associations leveraged transitional justice for resistance and influence. In addressing insurgency in Northeast India, Waterman shows how the state approach shifted from relying on force to a mix of deal-making, violent management and creeping forms of state-building which led to eroding certain insurgent groups while bolstering others. Finally, Nott and Bose discuss rebel-civilian interactions in Mexico arguing how the role of civilians impacted the behaviour of rebels governing them to transform more democratically than the state they were autonomous from.

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