

Narrating Futures Otherwise: Complexity, Hope, and the Politics of Imagination in Transitional Colombia

Wednesday 3 June 2026 15:00 (1h 30m)

This roundtable convenes scholars focused on Colombia's transitional process to examine how narratives and visions of the future are created, experienced, and contested in the wake of armed conflict. In mainstream peacebuilding discourse, the future is often portrayed through the lenses of hope, reconciliation, and progress. Yet, the everyday perspectives shared by victims, ex-combatants, and local communities reveal more intricate, ambivalent, and at times unsettling temporalities.

Participants will discuss how these future-oriented imaginaries both sustain and challenge the transitional project: how they intertwine memory, affect, and political expectation; how they articulate uncertainty and waiting as lived temporalities; and how they redefine what "peace" might mean beyond institutional or developmental frameworks. Engaging theoretical, ethnographic, and conceptual perspectives, the roundtable seeks to rethink the role of imagination in transitional contexts—not merely as a horizon of hope, but as a contested field where justice, recognition, and belonging are continuously negotiated.

Considering Colombia's current context—marked by persistent violence, social unrest, and renewed forms of exclusion—reflecting on the politics of futurity becomes both urgent and complex. The roundtable asks how narratives of the future emerge amid ongoing instability, and how they shape (or are shaped by) the fragile temporality of transition itself. By centring Colombia, it invites a broader reflection on who gets to imagine the future, which futures remain unthinkable, and how the turbulent present complicates the very possibility of imagining transformation.

Track Classification: Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and Human Rights Working Group