



Jonathan Powell's new book *Talking to Terrorists: How to End Armed Conflicts* is published by Bodley Head on 2 October [2014](#)

Synopsis

From jungle clearings to stately homes and anonymous airport hotels, *Talking to Terrorists* puts us in the room with those who seek to change the course of history. Here are the terrorists, secret agents and go-betweens who make up the invisible world of negotiations between terrorists and governments.

Across the world governments proclaim that they will never 'negotiate with evil'. And yet they always have done and always will. Why then do we ignore the lessons of this history of clandestine communication, often with devastating consequences?

Jonathan Powell has spent nearly two decades mediating between governments and terrorist organisations. Here he argues that no conflict – however bloody, ancient or difficult – is insoluble. With attention to the lessons of the past, patience and above all political leadership, they can be solved, even where previous attempts have failed.

Talking to terrorists will always be practically difficult and morally hazardous. But it is the right thing to do. Drawing on conflicts from Colombia and Sri Lanka to Palestine and South Africa, this optimistic, wide-ranging, authoritative book is about why we should and how best to go about it.

About the Author

Jonathan Powell has spent half a lifetime talking to people and organisations labelled as terrorists.

He runs Inter Mediate, a London-based charity for negotiation and mediation that focuses on the most difficult, complex and dangerous conflicts, where other organisations are unable to operate.

In 1997 he met Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness and became instrumental in negotiating peace

in Northern Ireland. In 2008 he suggested publicly that western governments should open talks with the Taliban, Hamas and al-Qaeda. Today, he works on different armed conflicts around the world and is the UK Prime Minister's special envoy to Libya.

He is the author of two books, *Great Hatred*, *Little Room* and *The New Machiavelli*. He lives in London with his wife and two daughters.

Jonathan will be appearing at the following Festivals:

03.10 Southbank Literary Festival

07.10 Cheltenham Festival

16.10 Prospect magazine

18.10 Belfast Festival – interview with chair [Mark Carruthers](#).

27.10 Bristol

He will also be appearing on the following:

Today programme

CNN Amanpour

Channel 4

Andrew Marr

Hardtalk and Irish (RT1/Newstalk)

BBC 5 live

Murnaghan

Prospect Magazine