Global reality nowadays is dynamic, vulnerable to such phenomena as increasing migration, fragmented societies engulfed by persistent conflict, and advanced technology which enables the transfer of global knowledge at an unprecedented scale. All of these facilitate encounters between different social groups. Within the body of research seeking to understand these inter-group encounters and relations, one common approach focuses on the analysis of meetings that take place within controlled environments, while taking to account the context, politics, different identities and power relations between the groups. However, in light of the transforming reality noted above, we ask whether this approach provides an adequate solution to the interpretation of the inter-group relations and tensions characteristic of today’s complex world. This roundtable discussion will explore and propose the need for an innovative approach to the interpretation of inter-group relations in the context of fragmented societies, migration, and new forms of communication via social media. Such an approach should focus on understanding relations as they are, in natural situations, rather than in arranged encounters under controlled conditions. The roundtable will demonstrate various investigative approaches by presenting such research on relationships, inter-group contact, and inter-group cooperation in the challenging and complex context of a fragmented society suffering from an ongoing national conflict whose visibility shifts frequently. This will help us establish the importance of creating a new “wave” of research, which examines such phenomena in a manner that is more relevant to today’s global conditions. We will explore the ways in which this third wave can enhance understandings of peaceful integration between groups whose relations are marked by persistent tensions and, more specifically, of elements which can promote cooperation in spite of tensions and differences between the groups.