

GPPAC CELEBRATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE WORLDWIDE

The UN International Day of Peace, celebrated globally on 21 September, presents a unique opportunity to raise awareness on conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the many inspirational activities undertaken by GPPAC members around the world. If you have other stories to share with us, please contact Marte Hellema at m.hellema@conflict-prevention.net, and we will post all your activities on our website www.peoplebuildingpeace.org.

ANGOLA

In Angola, a reflection meeting was organised with many peace partner organisations, particularly church and secular ones. The meeting was held at the training centre of the Christian Council of Churches in Angola and journalists were invited to cover the event. On the same day, a press briefing and a meeting with politicians was held.

ARGENTINA

In Chaco, Argentina, the Regional Coordinator for Economic and Social Research (CRIES) in cooperation with the Founding Institution for Mediation (FIME), organised a panel discussion and a presentation of the documentary "Latidos de Paz". Various representatives of the



Mayor Bob Chiarelli of Ottawa, Canada presided a meeting of community leaders

provincial government, parliamentarians, members of civil society organisations and academics from the local community participated in the event.

BRAZIL

The Associação Palas Athena and UNESCO organised a roundtable entitled *Peace is like Health as Violence is like Illness – promising*

perspectives for healthier coexistence at the auditorium of the São Paulo Art Museum. Some 100 people attended.

CANADA

Project Ploughshares Calgary marked the day with an Open House combined with speeches and a pot-luck in their new office. The event was followed by the screening of the documentary *Peace One Day* at the Plaza Theater.

In Ottawa, Mayor Bob Chiarelli presided a meeting of community leaders. Presentations were given about the new organisation, *City of Peace Ottawa*, whose aim is to foster peacebuilding at the municipal level. The meeting was enriched by music, prayer and a drama performance.

FIJI

Women's Action for Change (WAC) arranged a pancake breakfast which was enjoyed by 30-40 diverse Fiji Police Force staff, including Divisional Commanders, and WAC management, staff, volunteers and the local university radio station, Radio Pasifik Triple 8FM. →



Roundtable hosted by Associação Palas Athena and UNESCO in São Paulo, Brazil

➔ continued: International Day of Peace

WAC are sometimes confronted with the disinterested, biased or violent side of the police in their social justice and human rights work. However, on the International Day of Peace, WAC wanted to affirm the gradual changes that are occurring in the Fiji Police force. The breakfast was accompanied with presentations from both sides and the premiere performance of WACs new community play, which over the next two years will be performed all over the country in rural, remote and urban centers to create increased awareness on prevention of all forms of violence against children, but also to affirm ethical and nonviolent leadership.



Citizens' Constitutional Forum went on a Peace March through Suva, Fiji

Also in Fiji, the Citizens's Constitutional Forum (CCF) went on a Peace March at sunrise along the sea wall. For the occasion a special t-shirt was printed, which read "You can't shake hands with a clenched fist". The march was followed by a Peace breakfast in the garden of CCF, which was even attended by members of the Fiji Parliament.

Peace messages were prepared or delivered spontaneously. One came from a mother, who urged her two grown sons not to put their lives at risk in accepting a contract with a security company in Iraq. Security companies enrol young Fijians, paying them more than they would earn at home, and send them to Iraq as security personnel, where many of them have been killed since the beginning of the Iraq war.

KENYA

PeaceNet, the Kenyan GPPAC Focal point, organised two radio shows, both of which were aired on the 21st of September. The live show was held on a channel called East FM, and provided a good overview of the GPPAC process and the activities lined up for the day in other parts of the country.

The recorded show was more elaborate with extensive information on GPPAC, the Day of Peace, planned global activities, the role of Kenyans in supporting this important day, a range of activities that were taking place in different parts of Kenya and the linkage of the GPPAC process and activities on the day of peace. This was aired by the national radio broadcasting station, The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. It was heard all over Kenya and appealed to Kenyans to mark the day through peace and reduced violence.

Together with other members of GPPAC, World Vision Kenya held a peace festival at Kainuk, a symbolic town identified with clashes between two neighboring Kenyan pastoralist communities, the Pokot and Turkana. The two communities have been engaged in conflicts over grazing land, scarce water and the effects of drought and famine. The festival included cultural performances from both communities, joint displays about livestock rustling, music, song and dance, bringing together youth, women and elders. The occasion was graced by the presence of the Government's Provincial Administration. There was joint consensus

that the two communities would continue commemorating the day of peace as a way of ensuring that they continued to stay united, since dialogue is a key tool for conflict resolution.

A meeting of peace elders from North Rift districts of Baringo, Marakwet, West Pokot, Samburu and Turkana converged at Eldoret supported by GPPAC Kenya. The elders were from the District Peace Committees, being one of the most influential sectors of their communities. The meeting coincided with the day, so they could be educated about it. The elders agreed to continue being messengers of peace and propagate the message of International Day of Peace within their respective peace committees. They also pledged to propagate peaceful coexistence for their communities as a means of reducing armed conflict.

KOSOVO

In Kosovo the Council for Peace and Tolerance with support from World Vision Kosovo organised the Mitrovica Week of Peace, which included; a round table debate with youth leaders about *The role of youth in improving life in Mitrovica*; youth/children's initiatives to demonstrate that religions and cultures had coexisted in the past, and should continue to coexist in the future; a child rights training session to raise awareness of their importance and to learn about how they can be enforced; an anti-corruption seminar to learn about the wider effects of corruption and ➔



In Mitrovica, Kosovo 50 children (10 from each ethnic group) gathered for a visit to the local 14th century church Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Sokolica



250 schoolchildren formed a peace sign on the beach in Scheveningen, the Netherlands © Dirk-Jan Visser

➔ continued: International Day of Peace

the problems a culture of corruption causes to the development of a healthy society; a sports day for peace to emphasize that sports and other activities with neighbors should be a normal part of everyday life; and a peace art competition. The week culminated in the International Day of Peace, with a final event celebrating Mitrovica's cultural and traditional diversity, including speeches, energetic performances of music, poetry, traditional dress, dance from each ethnic community, and food.



An extra special event took place in Lebanon where the memory of war was still fresh

LEBANON

In Beirut the celebrations of the International Day of Peace had extra importance given the war that had just taken place. The Arab Partnership for Conflict Prevention and Human Security, under the guidance of the Permanent Peace Movement organised a day full of music, theater, dance, candle lights, singing, painting, exhibitions, peace promises, peace prizes, flyers, pamphlets, t-shirts, cap, posters, peace check-points and plenty of media attention at the Achrafieh, Jeitawi, Jesuit Public Garden.

A press conference on the 13th September and a special 15 second TV-commercial had already sensitized the people of Lebanon about the day.

THE NETHERLANDS

A coalition of Dutch organisations, People Building Peace Netherlands (PBP-NL), held a big event at Scheveningen, a seaside suburb of The Hague. The Scheveningen prison wall was painted with artistic graffiti, and some 250 schoolchildren formed a peace sign and had a video link via satellite with children in the DR Congo doing the same, national and international hip hop and reggae artists performed, a beach pavilion was filled with debates, theater, music, arts, interviews, dance and drinks, and much more. (www.planetpeace.nl)

NICARAGUA

From Nicaragua, Chris Chapman of the Minority Rights Group International reported on a historic alliance. For the national elections that November, on the International Day of Peace, two sworn enemies would jointly support field candidates in a region, inhabited by Afro-descendant and indigenous groups, in spite of the history of violence between the two groups, marking a new beginning. (<http://uk.oneworld.net/article/view/139784/1/?PrintableVersion=enabled>).

PAKISTAN

The United Nations Information Centre and the Fatimah Jinnah Women University ➔



Audience at Peace Day Seminar at the Fatima Jinnah University, Islamabad, Pakistan

➔ continued: International Day of Peace

organised a discussion on the campus to raise awareness on the day and to reflect on how to contribute to peace in the world. One of the speakers was Prof. Rifaat Hussain of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, the Regional Secretariat for GPPAC-South Asia.

PHILIPPINES

A Peacebuilding Workshop for Asia-Pacific Youth Leaders was held from September 19 to 22 organised by the Center for Peace Education (CPE) of Miriam College, Philippines, in cooperation with the GPPAC Philippines and Southeast Asia, Pax Christi Pilipinas and the Peace Education Network. The training enabled the youth

participants to discover their potential as builders of a culture of peace that rejects violence in all its forms and upholds justice, respect for life and human dignity. It also sought to provide not only knowledge and peacebuilding skills but value orientations and action possibilities so the youth can take a leadership role in peacebuilding efforts.

There were 72 participants from the Philippines, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Timor Leste, Korea and Japan, representing 23 youth organisations, including GPPAC volunteers.

RWANDA

The GPPAC – Rwanda Focal Point commemorated the day by organizing three activities. First of all, there were two 15

minute broadcasts on the Rwanda National Radio. The first was aired on September 11th explaining the GPPAC process and the International Day of Peace. The second on September 18th tried to sensitize people in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes Region to join the whole world to commemorate the day. It was estimated that at least 5 million people listened. Secondly, a letter was written to religious congregations in Kigali, asking them to pray and meditate for peace on 21st September, a call that was answered by many. Lastly, some hundred participants from different organisations in Kigali City met to commemorate the day together. They watched the film *Sometimes in April* on the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda, reflected on the film, exchanged ideas on conflict prevention and building durable peace and shared snacks at the end. The discussion on conflict prevention and peace building were centered on the following questions:

- Could the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda have been prevented?
- How can Rwandans live positively with the consequences of the genocide of 1994?
- How important is our role as individuals in building durable peace?

An organisation of Rwandan national university students involved in peace building and reconciliation organised a debate on peace at the National University and passed messages of peace on the National University Radio 'Salus' in Butare City.

On 18 August, Etoile.com organised a youth rally for peace and reconciliation in Karongi City, in which the participants were called to join the whole world on 21st September to meditate on peace. ➔



Peacebuilding Workshop for Asia Pacific Youth Leaders in the Philippines



GPPAC Japan and Peace Boat held candle event at the Meiji Park, Tokyo, Japan

➔ continued: International Day of Peace

SEOUL

A peace concert was held in Seoul, jointly organised by over 16 religious and civil society organisations. A performance by renowned baritone, Anthony Brown was the main feature of the evening, followed by various speeches, a non-denominational prayer for peace and the creation by participants of peace postcards.

TAIPEI

A protest was held to promote human rights, attended by a number of human rights and other organisations. This was followed by the event *Rejecting Wars, Praying for Peace*. Photographs from wars and armed conflicts were displayed, and representatives from different religious groups and civil society

organisations expressed their united front against wars and violence.

TOKYO

GPPAC Northeast Asia and Peace Boat held a candle event appealing for peace in Lebanon, Palestine, Israel and Iraq. Hundreds of participants came to Meiji Park to hear testimonies from Lebanese and Palestinian activists, presenting their ideas of what can be done for peace and enjoy a lively and emotional performance by musical duo Kotobuki. Candles were lit that formed the word *heiwa*, meaning *peace* in Japanese, to display solidarity and hope for a peaceful future, for both the critical situation in Northeast Asia, the Middle East, and all. A giant banner was drawn to be given to children affected by the war in Lebanon.



The candles spelled the word "peace" in Japanese

ULANBAATAR

Young students gathered at the Mongolian State University to exchange views and opinions about peace and foreign relations at an event organised by the Blue Banner. This received much positive media coverage, and quite some information about the International Day of Peace and GPPAC was published in national newspapers.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Centre for International Peacebuilding organised an event at St. James's Church Piccadilly in London, in conjunction with The Silent Minute. A special message from Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General was read, and the newly created UN Commission for Peacebuilding was honoured by inviting young interns from Peace Child International to show the kind of work they are doing in education, both in the UK and abroad. Input about the work of World Youth Service and Enterprise was followed by a conversation between an Israeli and a Palestinian on the peacebuilding work of women in Israel/Palestine, followed by questions and discussion among the audience.

As part of GPPAC, World Vision UK promoted seven snapshots of conflicts, focusing especially on how conflict impacts children. *Seven Conflicts on the Day*



For the activities in Taipei special wristbands were made

➔ continued: *International Day of Peace*

of Peace looked at Afghanistan, Darfur, Middle East, Nepal, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Northern Uganda. (www.worldvision.org.uk/server.php?show=nav.830)

VLADIVOSTOK

In Vladivostok citizens learned about the International day of Peace from information posters on city avenues and streets and *Children drawing the PEACE*, with children drawing their pictures on the pavement. A ceremonial meeting took place near the Russian Peace Fund building. Participants



Students gathered at the Mongolian State University in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

expressed their solidarity through a Minute of Silence for Peace. A festive concert was the closing, with all participants singing the song of peace, *The Sun Circle*.

ZAMBIA

In Lusaka the media was invited to attend a press briefing at the Protea Hotel, where representatives of peace-oriented organisations shared their experiences. Throughout the country schools planted trees as a symbol of environmental protection, international cooperation, cultural diversity, tolerance and peace.

The inter-faith organisation, Believe Organise New Plans Again Under Liberty held a conference for youth leaders of different religious affiliations attended by 200 delegates which culminated in a radio program on one of the community radio stations. Local council representatives and nurses from clinics were also invited to share their perceptions of peace.

An exhibition on peace artifacts was held at the Lusaka National Museum by the artist Chipu Simuchembu. Many people and the media came to see it. Through MISA, a number of flyers, explaining the day and calling on people to join the commemorations were dispatched to member institutions.

At Victoria Falls an Earth dance was organised to send the message of peace. The Earth dance is the largest global synchronised music and dance event for peace in the world. It took place a week before the International Day of Peace and acted as a kickoff event.

To sensitize people various stakeholders sent mobile phone text messages to remind their families, friends and colleagues about the importance of peace. According to the information from CELTEL, one of the leading mobile providers in Zambia over a thousand messages were sent.

GOVERNMENTS, FOUNDATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY SEEK COOPERATION ON CONFLICT PREVENTION

Our premise is that not one actor - civil society, government or the United Nations - can resolve nor prevent conflict. It is essential then, if not imperative, to develop a common goal and to build a partnership among these actors to prevent and resolve conflict." This view, expressed by a participant, perfectly summarises the main conclusion of the *Strategy Meeting on Strengthening Cooperation between Governments, Foundations and Civil Society in Peacebuilding*, held October 12-13 in The Hague, the Netherlands. Around 50 participants from over 30 countries, made up of representatives of civil society organisations, governments and foundations,

convened for this meeting which was organised by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), and chaired by Kai Brand-Jacobsen, Director of PATRIR Romanian Peace Institute. The Strategy Meeting took place following a GPPAC International Steering Group (ISG) meeting earlier that week.

Government representatives from Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Spain and civil society organisations all recognised the value of the contributions each can make to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as well as its necessity. In addition to its direct cost in human suffering, violent conflict has been identified by the UNDP and many others as a – if not *the* – major hindrance to realising the Millenium Development Goals, further underlining the importance of preventive measures. Civil society's added value was acknowledged in its ability to respond flexibly, to reach where governments cannot and to speak to parties which governments may not be able to access. However, challenges were also evident, particularly in terms of resources.

This is where the moral, financial and political support of governments can help to broaden constituencies for peace. Inspiringly, numerous examples of how this is already being done and steps to support governments and civil society actors in working effectively together were shared, including those of the AMANI Forum (The Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace) and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in Western Africa, in particular their cooperation with ECOWAS.

To move from agreement to implementation, participants spoke of the need to put in place effective **infrastructures** for peacebuilding at the local, country, regional and global levels, and to build **coalitions for peace** amongst all key actors. Examples given of infrastructures for peace included the Office of the Presidential Advisor for the Peace Process in the Philippines; joint government-civil society peacebuilding initiatives; government departments, offices and commissioners for peace, and early warning systems.

Several government representatives were interested in looking for opportunities ➔

As a basis for the discussions during the Strategy Meeting, Dr. Catherine Barnes wrote the research paper "*Governments and Civil Society Organisations: Issues in working together towards peace*". Both the summary and the full paper can be found on www.gppac.net.

➔ continued: governments, foundations...

for cooperation with GPPAC in the future on matters of joint interest, such as further research, jointly-organised seminars or other activities that will enhance the shift from reaction to conflict prevention and human security. A shared vision between

civil society, like-minded governments and foundations is vital to make the transition towards effective ways of dealing with conflicts.

This article is based in part on a communiqué written by Kai Brand-Jacobsen, who chaired the meeting.

PEOPLE BUILDING PEACE ONLINE!

On the International Day of Peace, the 21st of September 2006, www.peoplebuildingpeace.org was re-launched after having undergone a face-lift.

Whereas the GPPAC site is mainly intended for our network, the PBP site aims to reach out to the larger peacebuilding community and other interested outsiders in order to generate momentum and support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

You probably have already seen the 'stories' section of the website (www.peoplebuildingpeace.org/thestories/) where you can find our collection of inspiring stories of how civil society has made a difference in conflict areas around the world.

The 'stories' section of the website plays a major role in both our international awareness raising campaign and knowledge

generation and sharing programme. This collection contains all stories from the publications People Building Peace I and II, but we would like to continue to add inspiring new case studies, as well as update older ones. The 'stories' section on the website offers us peacebuilders a chance to promote conflict prevention by sharing successful peacebuilding initiatives with a great number of people.

We would, therefore, like to ask you to contribute to the website by providing us with inspiring cases from your network or perhaps your own organisation. The cases are not only meant to provide inspiration but are also intended to raise the profile of people working for peace within different parts of civil society. The website can then become a unique place on the internet where the challenges, lessons learned, successes and other sorts of experiences of people working for peace can be shared with the larger peacebuilding community and other interested outsiders.

COMPETITION FOR PEACE INITIATIVES!

Ashoka's Changemakers *Entrepreneurial Peace Collaborative Competition* showcases innovative and high-impact projects that anticipate and manage violent conflict. You are invited to submit entries for the competition online between now and January 15, 2007 on www.changemakers.net. A panel of judges will select a group of finalists, who will be announced and hosted at the Skoll World Forum in March 2007. The three finalists will be selected through an open online vote, and each winner will receive an award of US\$5000. All entries will be archived online, providing an excellent opportunity for all entrants to showcase their work and to learn from that of others.

Your story...

- ... can inspire others to get involved in peacebuilding.
- ... can attract attention to your region and organisation.
- ... on the website is an opportunity for you to showcase what it is that you do.
- ... is needed to make this initiative work.

Please send your suggested stories to Malin Brenk (m.brenk@conflict-prevention.net)

NETWORKING FOR PEACE: A REVIEW OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

In order to further strengthen the capacities of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) to function as an international network, researcher Willemijn Verkoren of the University of Amsterdam was commissioned to carry out a network review. Her final report, entitled *Networking for Peace: Opportunities for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict*, has just become available. Ms. Verkoren conducted her research through a combination of surveys, interviews and a literature study. Also included in the final report are the main outcomes of an expert seminar on networking, which was organized by GPPAC last October.

Despite criticism, nearly all stakeholders who participated in the study felt they had benefited from their participation in the network. The main advantages of

membership mentioned included access to knowledge and expertise in the field; the opportunity to exchange experiences with others; gaining contacts and partnerships; raising the visibility and legitimacy of the participating organizations through their membership of GPPAC. Other positive aspects of GPPAC include the sense of solidarity and moral support the network provides, its global coverage, and the openness to differing points of view within GPPAC. At the global level, there was a great deal of appreciation for the global conference that was held in 2005, and the International Secretariat's lobby activities, particularly with the UN.

However, there is also room for improvement: members felt there had been a loss of momentum since the global conference, they would like to see a clear shift from a "talking network" to an action

network. Furthermore, they would like to see greater continuity in the process, with greater follow-up and interaction between meetings and better linkages between the various levels of the network. Two strong recommendations were that GPPAC should ensure that its priorities and objectives are shared by all involved, and that these should be sufficiently focused and attainable. Recommendations were also made to improve democracy, transparency and the structure of the network, among other things.

Some of these issues are already addressed in the Work Plans for the coming four years, and others will be taken up by the International Secretariat and the International Steering Group, in consultation with the broader network.

The full report can be found on www.gppac.net > research.

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THE VISION AND MISSION OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

VISION

We call for a fundamental change in dealing with violent conflict: a shift from reaction to prevention, as an approach that will save lives, and prove more effective and less destructive. We seek a world in which people and governments elect non-violent means, rather than armed conflict, to achieve greater justice, sustainable development, and human security. The participants in the GPPAC process are committed to the following principles (presented more fully in the *Guiding Principles and Values in People Building Peace: A Global Action Agenda for the Prevention of Violent Conflict*):

- Prevention of violent conflicts is possible and should be pursued to the fullest extent by all peaceful means.
- We commit to transforming the conditions that give rise to violent conflict.

- As civil society actors, we believe that preventing violent conflicts requires the forging of effective partnerships and networking among civil society organisations, governments and multilateral organisations, among others.

MISSION

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict is building a new international consensus and pursuing joint action to prevent violent conflict and promote peacebuilding, based on the Regional Action Agendas and the Global Action Agenda. GPPAC maintains a global multi-stakeholder network of organisations committed to act to prevent the escalation of conflict into destructive violence at national, regional and global levels. This multi-stakeholder network includes civil society organisations, governments, regional organisations and the United Nations.

RECENT GPPAC PUBLICATIONS



In October 2006, GPPAC published the paper "Overview of Conflict Prevention Capacities in Regional, Sub-regional and Other Inter-governmental Organisations", produced by John Packer, Craig Collins and Erik Friberg. The first section of the paper attempts to sketch current roles and trends regional inter-governmental organisations (RIGOs) in preventing violent conflict. The second section provides an overview of the institutionalized prevention capacities of selected RIGOs. For more information please send an e-mail to r.heemsker@conflict-prevention.net.

Following *Early Warning and Early Response: Conceptual and Empirical Dilemmas* by Anna Matveeva, a second Issue paper was written

for GPPAC by Dr. Catherine Barnes: *Agents for Change: Civil Society Roles in Preventing War and Building Peace*. Based on the experiences and discussions of the first three years of the Global Partnership, its purpose is to provide an in-depth review of the many roles and functions of CSOs, and an overview of the key challenges facing the wider field of civil society working for peace.

The third issue paper in the series is *Networking for Peace: Opportunities for the Global partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict* by Willemijn Verkoren. Please see "network review" on page 7 for more information.

All three papers can be found on www.gppac.net > research.

FUNDING

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