

GPPAC ADOPTS A NEW FOUR-YEAR GLOBAL WORK PLAN

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) emerged from an week-long International Steering Group (ISG) meeting in March 2006 with an ambitious four-year global work plan. Produced by the International Secretariat and regional representatives both before and during the ISG meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, it represents the fruit of months of planning.

The approach for the second phase of GPPAC is two mutually-supporting strategies: *Building Consensus to Prevent Violent Conflict and Promote Peacebuilding* and *Enabling Joint Action to Prevent Violent Conflict and Promote Peacebuilding*.

These encompass the following sub-programmes;

Launch an international awareness raising campaign to bring the inspiring stories of conflict prevention to mass audiences, by focusing initially on the UN International Day of Peace (21 September).

Develop and coordinate the network's interaction capacities and activities while making connections from local municipalities up through the highest officials of the United Nations.

Contribute to professionalizing the field of early warning and early response—through gathering and applying lessons learned and best practices—we will support the development of early warning centres.

Strengthen the global network—including through network management and communications structures that increase transparency—and seek out better ways to utilize the skills, talents and value that our partner organizations bring to the network.

Engage in a process of identifying, collecting and disseminating essential knowledge—and developing it—starting with a pilot project examining the impacts and value of peace education programmes.

The ISG's choice of Nairobi as location for the meeting was not accidental. A region touched by violent conflict, where many GPPAC members excel at conflict prevention, it had long been the intention of GPPAC's coordinating body to hold one of its bi-annual meetings in East Africa.

Regional Secretariat Nairobi Peace Initiative - Africa (NPI-Africa) took on the role of co-organizing the ISG meeting, which included an opening session on "Consolidating Peace: Post-Accord Peacebuilding, Reconstruction, Prospects and Challenges" that drew national and regional dignitaries. To take us temporarily out of the abstract discussions, NPI-Africa organized a visit to a local partner called the Kibera Youth Programme for Peace and Development (KYPPEDE), located in Kibera, East Africa's largest slum.

The ISG members were privileged to meet Kibera residents and activists.

As part of the introduction to Kibera, the ISG was treated to a play performed by youth that dealt with the uprising which generated widespread political violence.

Approximately 80% of Kibera's residents are unemployed, and inhumane conditions persist, including a lack of clean water and sanitation. Despite these circumstances, residents are able to survive on very little; the widespread informal economy was in ample evidence, as was the unmistakable resilience and strength of its people.



KYPPEDE's Tom Onditi gives the ISG a tour of Kibera

SOLIDARITY AND DEMOCRACY MISSION TO TIMOR-LESTE

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Southeast Asia together with World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA), and the Asia-Pacific Solidarity Coalition (APSOC) undertook a Solidarity and Democracy Mission to Timor-Leste between 27 August and 1 September 2006. Disturbed by the violence in recent months, they felt compelled to visit and view the real conditions on the ground.

The representatives met the President, the current and former Prime Ministers, national leaders from various political persuasions, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, leading civil society organizations, and groups of ordinary citizens, including internally displaced persons.

The Mission sensed a great deal of frustration and anger. One of the team members

personally experienced the threatening environment when a group of angry youths surrounded him at night. Although there are longstanding problems that exacerbated the tensions and violence, the immediate causes were fundamentally political. The crisis was not inevitable; on the contrary, it could have been prevented, and thus can also be resolved. There was a strong desire from the people of Timor-Leste for constructive dialogue among national leaders,

➔ continued: *Solidarity and Democracy*

in order to create the atmosphere and conditions for the resolution of the crisis and restoration of peace.

Hence, the Solidarity and Democracy Mission to Timor-Leste made the following initial recommendations:

- 1) Appropriate reconciliation mechanisms should be developed at both the national and community levels.
- 2) The reestablishment of security must include community participation, especially of women; and the use of traditional and cultural resources for conflict transformation is encouraged.
- 3) All international forces, whether bilateral or multilateral, must show utmost sensitivity, and must avoid reinforcing divisions within society.
- 4) Appropriate Timorese security forces should be properly reconstituted and take over public security responsibility as soon as feasible.
- 5) The international community should facilitate dialogue among political leaders, complementary to the domestic processes.
- 6) Official dialogue processes must ensure the participation of Timorese civil society.
- 7) Political actors must be circumspect in their use of language, especially terminology referring to divisions in society.
- 8) National and international media should report on related issues in a responsible manner, to avoid inflaming tensions and creating divisions.
- 9) The main political parties must reach a compromise on the electoral law as soon as possible, to facilitate the elections to be held smoothly and on schedule.
- 10) The Pact for National Unity signed on 8 July 2001 should be reaffirmed at a suitable time before next year's elections.
- 11) The government, as well as international and Timorese civil society, should put more emphasis on youth activity programs.
- 12) The political leaders should issue a national appeal assuring people a peaceful return to their respective communities.

For more information see www.iidnet.org or www.wfda.net

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE 2006

In 2001 UN Resolution 55/282 set aside 21 September as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence. The UN International Day of Peace presents a unique opportunity for GPPAC to raise awareness on conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The day stands or falls with the number of organizations and individuals honouring and celebrating it, and GPPAC member organizations as well as many others have certainly taken that to heart! To highlight the many exciting events and activities that took place across the globe, the coming issue of the GPPAC News will be dedicated in part to the International Day of Peace 2006. If you cannot wait, see www.peoplebuildingpeace.org.

PEACE EDUCATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN SCHOOLS

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict's subprogramme *Knowledge Generation and Sharing* is focussing its first pilot on Peace Education and Conflict Resolution in Schools.

The academic *theory* and the civil society *practice* of conflict prevention and peace-building are not always well synchronized: A more inclusive approach to gathering theoretical models, lessons learned and best practices from the field is needed to improve the professionalism of the entire field and to bridge the gap between theory and practice. In these efforts, the GPPAC has an important role to play. The GPPAC will engage in a collaborative learning process to identify, collect and disseminate essential knowledge already

existing with our grassroots organizations. To begin this process, the network will start with a pilot project focusing on peace education and conflict resolution programmes in schools.

Peace Education and Conflict Resolution in Schools

Remarkable progress has been made in recent years in peace education and conflict resolution in schools. For this subject to gain further acceptance, however, and particularly in regards to the goal of having peace education made compulsory in formal schooling systems, there is a need to rigorously evaluate the subject, its methodology and the impact of projects to date. To this end we connect to experts on different levels who are already working on this key issue both inside and outside GPPAC, such as the Hague Appeal for

Peace's Global Campaign for Peace Education and the newly established International Network for Conflict Resolution in Schools and Peace Education (INCREPE). The latter network came out of the GPPAC Global Conference at the United Nations headquarters in New York, July 2005. During this conference a working group consisting of 47 participants representing 25 nations discussed the subject of peace education and conflict resolution in schools.

Together with INCREPE, GPPAC plans to organise regional meetings on each continent, either co-organized by, or in close cooperation with Ministries of Education and, on occasion, local authorities in the different countries.

Plans are already underway for several regional consultations in: Latin America, Central and Eastern Africa, Northeast Asia, West Africa, the Pacific and in the Balkans. The last conference mentioned is planned to take place in December this year in Belgrade. These meetings will, as far as possible, build on one another, creating a chain of conferences, in which the outcomes from one conference are carried over to the next. We aim to accumulate different experiences with the purpose of encouraging cross-fertilization, so as to ensure that conferences are not simply organized for the sake of holding a conference but serve as genuine exercises in common learning.

PEOPLE BUILDING PEACE ONLINE!

On 21 September 2006, the website www.peoplebuildingpeace.org was re-launched, and it will over time become an important awareness raising tool. Most importantly, it is a portal to the online database of the book *People Building Peace II: Successful stories of civil society* which was presented at the GPPAC Global Conference at the UN Headquarters in New York last year. Not only does the database include all the stories and analysis from the book, but it will be added to and updated over time to include ever more case studies. It can be accessed through the main website, or by typing in the URL www.peoplebuildingpeace.org/thestories/. Finally, translations of the book in French and Spanish are now available on cd-rom from the European Centre for Conflict Prevention, www.conflict-prevention.net.

GPPAC AT THE FIRST WORLD PEACE FORUM

Born out of the Iraq anti-war movement, the first World Peace Forum was held in Vancouver between 23 and 28 June this year. It brought together over 5000 people and covered topics as diverse as government renunciation of war, nuclear disarmament and global warming. The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) was represented on the panel discussion on the creation of national Departments of Peace in governments around the world by Mr. Paul van Tongeren. GPPAC's Northeast Asian regional initiator Peace Boat also played a prominent role, with the boat sailing into Vancouver Harbour on the final day of the Forum. Peace Boat participants actively took part in a number of panels, and gave dance and drumming performances in the closing ceremony. After the celebrations, all those gathered walked through the streets of Vancouver to send Peace Boat off to its next port of call. For more information, see www.worldpeaceforum.ca and www.peaceboat.org



Marchers walk down to Peace Boat's ship in Vancouver after the closing ceremony of the World Peace Forum. Photo credit: S. Mizumoto

UN PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION CONVENES WITH PROMINENT GPPAC PARTICIPATION

Many UN agencies are involved in different aspects of the complex peace puzzle—from violence reduction to arms control to peacekeeping—but these operations often fail to work in an integrated way. Therefore, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) welcomes the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which fills a serious gap in the UN system in dealing with peacebuilding to ensure that countries emerging from violence will make a successful transition from war to lasting peace. The PBC will not undertake peace-

building activities itself, but will provide advice to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The inaugural meeting of the Commission took place on 23 June, 2006 in New York. GPPAC was one of just four civil society organizations invited by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to this meeting, at which Angola was elected as Chair, and Norway and El Salvador appointed vice-Chairs for a one-year period. In a later meeting the Organizational Committee selected Sierra Leone and Burundi as the first two countries for advice, at the request of the Security Council.

society. A letter has been sent around to the Chairs of the PBC, on behalf of WFM, FES and GPPAC with several requests for ensuring civil society engagement with the PBC.

Further, GPPAC's regional steering groups in the African regions seized the momentum setting up meetings with key civil society actors, UN and government representatives in the selected countries Sierra Leone and Burundi. Representatives from these processes presented their outcomes in the 5 September seminar, and will also take part in the first Country Specific Meetings, 12-13 October, in New York.

Despite the lack of a mandate to conduct conflict *prevention*, the Commission is very likely to become a focal point on peace-related issues within the UN system. For this reason, it is important for civil society to monitor closely the Commission's planning and activities on an ongoing basis, and look for entry points to provide much-needed expertise and knowledge, especially from local communities. We encourage GPPAC network members and other interested members of civil society to consider how they might contribute to the work of the peacebuilding commission.

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Inaugural Meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission

The GPPAC global secretariat and the World Federalist Movement (WFM) developed plans to conduct several monitoring activities already set in motion after the World Summit in September 2005, including producing briefing papers and organizing seminars. The first seminar took place on 5 September, 2006 in New York, co-organized with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). The seminar focused on the country specific working groups and interaction of the new PBC with civil

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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 organizations, governments and multilateral organizations, 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 organizations 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 organizations, governments, regional organizations and the United Nations.

NEW ISSUE PAPER ON EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE



Issue paper 1: *Early Warning and Early Response: Conceptual and Empirical Dilemmas*

By Anna Matveeva.

This paper is the first in a series of studies into issues in conflict prevention and peacebuilding by civil society by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). It is based on a literature review, the author's experiences as a practitioner and discussions held at the workshop with WANEP in Accra in February 2006. The report is significantly enriched by the discussion during the GPPAC Early Warning and Early Response Expert Group meeting in Soesterberg in April 2006.

The purpose of this study is to close some gaps in methodological questions and to

highlight practical dilemmas involved in early warning / response initiatives, extracting general lessons and points for reflection. It calls for a community of practice where these issues and dilemmas can be refined further, experiences shared and empirical theory built from practice.

This research is part of the Mobilizing Early Warning and Early Response programme of the Global Partnership and builds on the experiences and material offered by GPPAC members and other civil society organizations.

Digital version is available on www.gppac.net
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