

Conflict Prevention Newsletter

Volume 6 / Number 2
November 2003

A PUBLICATION BY THE EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND TRANSFORMATION IN CO-OPERATION WITH SAFERWORLD AND INTERNATIONAL ALERT



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New literature

The Global Partnership presented at the UN

At the invitation of Jan Kavan, president of the 57th General Assembly of the United Nations, 88 member states gathered in the UN's Trusteeship Council Chamber in New York to discuss the opportunities and challenges of civil society's contribution to conflict prevention.

At this gathering, the ECCP, three Regional Initiators, and the UN-NGO Conflict Prevention Working Group (CPWG) presented 'The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention' on behalf of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict. Supportive statements from Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Danilo Türk and from many member states can be considered a milestone in the involvement of the UN and its member states in the Global Partnership. The following day, Assistant Secretary-General Gillian Sorensen and Danilo Türk invited the ECCP and the CPWG to discuss the further integration of the initiative into the UN with the Inter-Agency/Inter-Departmental Resource Group on Conflict Prevention. In the editorial below, Dr. Bartoli* reflects on a new phase, a third wave, of debate on prevention.

To prevent violent and deadly conflicts is to envisage, implement and sustain a human system that may produce convincing, credible and realistic alternatives to the use of violence. Prevention will not work until these alternatives are accessible, reasonable and self-evident. Many states recognised long ago that if they are to maintain internal cohesion and be sustainable, they must develop mechanisms to prevent and avoid social and political unrest, armed resistance and foreign threats. Political systems have, in different forms and to different degrees, assured groups that their interests and needs are represented, thereby allowing conflicts to be resolved peacefully. When a political system is unable or unwilling to provide for these channels of representation, conditions arise for their violent expression.

Unfortunately, many states around the world do not possess deeply rooted and highly functional political institutions. Many states owe their existence to European colonialism rather than a positive, constructive and sustained state formation process. Lacking the necessary institutions and infrastructure, many states struggle to contain political differences within the boundaries of non-violent exchange. Rather, the lack of effectiveness in representing interests and needs gives birth to

violent strategies for a more assertive handling of power. When representation is inadequate, violation of human rights routinely occur, and the political system reacts with rigidity, the violent option is frequently chosen by those who perceive the destruction of the old regime as an indispensable step towards full representation and development.

Inadequate representation

There are other cases in which the inadequate representation of the interests and needs of one group is coupled with the highly efficient repressive structure of the other. The case of the apartheid regime in South Africa comes to mind. At time, states have been involved in destructive activities that led to massive violence. Auschwitz and Treblinka would not have been possible without the direct, sustained and consistent involvement of a — highly efficient — state. So, if we are to prevent violent and deadly conflict, we will need to look at the interaction between peoples and states, avoiding both a failing state and an overly oppressive one.

This past summer, to the great surprise of many, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 57/337 on the Prevention of armed conflict. It is a very

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This quarterly Newsletter is available at no cost to organisations and individuals engaged in the field of conflict prevention and transformation. For a free subscription, please send a fax or e-mail message. Your comments and letters to the editor will be appreciated. You are also invited to send in information about upcoming events and vacancies.

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This Newsletter is published by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention, the secretariat of the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation.

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Karel Meijer/MMS Grafisch Werk

Printing

Drukpartners, Amsterdam

ISSN 1569-1012

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significant step that closes a decade of work on the notion of prevention within the UN system. UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali initiated the first wave of this debate within the system. In *An Agenda for Peace*, in the early 1990s he stressed that 'demands on the United Nations have surged. Its security arm, once disabled by circumstances it was not created or equipped to control, has emerged as a central instrument for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and for the preservation of peace.'

His stages (preventive diplomacy; peacemaking; peacekeeping; peacebuilding; development) have been revisited several times within the UN system and among scholars in an attempt to identify systems that could ensure the feasibility of armed conflict prevention. The debate within the system has been intense and has been supported by the extraordinary contribution of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflicts. The influence of that work is still very vivid and significant. Following these auspicious beginnings a second wave emerged with Kofi Annan's appointment as UN Secretary General and his desire to see prevention of deadly conflict as a prominent element of his tenure. The UN led the debate by calling upon its own agencies and bodies, regional organisations, and member states to move from 'a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.'

At the forefront

This wave has been marked by Secretary-General Annan's commitment to making prevention a priority and by a series of publications and reports, including the *Brahimi Report on UN Peace Operations* (2000), the *Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict* (2001), the *Responsibility to Protect - Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*, and numerous Security Council resolutions on prevention. It was this wave, continuing into the summer of 2003, that helped put prevention at the forefront of the world's peace and security agenda. The events of September 11, 2001, however, moved terrorism to the top of the agenda, leaving only limited room for continuing the prevention debate. As the global community continues working to address the immediate threats of terrorism, the long-term shift to a preventive approach to peacebuilding and conflict management has never been more relevant. This is why the UN

General Assembly resolution 57/337 on the Prevention of armed conflict is so significant. It concludes a phase which has lasted more than a decade, which has transformed the way in which the UN sees the prevention of violent and deadly conflict. States now seem to be ready for a new phase, a third wave of debate on prevention. In this phase the positive and constructive contribution of civil society will become even more urgent and necessary. States are not extraneous structures. They are the product of political processes that must attract the collective investment of a committed citizenry. Too often, the relation between states and civil society, especially as represented by NGOs and CBOs, has been difficult. Integration has not been easy; funding preferences of donors have created tensions; inefficiencies of state structures have made cooperation uneasy.

However, the growing awareness that many threats require intense trans-border cooperation is encouraging practical steps in the direction of further integration. The primary role of the state in conflict prevention is clear and has been reaffirmed in all UN documents. Yet, to fulfil this role, states need a close collaboration with civil society to make sure that representation of interests and needs is effective and that all resources available to signal early-warning and constrict relevant political will, shall be in place. States need civil society in order to make sure that no social groups are marginalized, neglected or intentionally targeted. Civil society needs a family of states that will encourage the prevention of violent deadly conflict within and outside each state's borders. The 2005 conference on the role of civil society in conflict prevention will be an extraordinarily important moment for this synergy to emerge. Prevention can be the key to a new phase of political representation that will be fairer, more balanced and stable. The network that we are creating by preparing the conference and the content that is emerging from this interaction is going to shape the debate for the time to come. Hopefully, through the collaboration between states and civil society, a truly human and truly secure cohabitation of the planet may be secured

* Dr. Andrea Bartoli is a senior research scholar at Columbia University Center for International Conflict Resolution. He is also the representative of the Community of Sant'Egidio to the United Nations.



Symbolic 'web-weaving' exercise at the end of the workshop

Southeast Asian and Pacific peacemakers look at lessons learned

SEARCHING FOR PEACE

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Developments and news regarding the European Platform's multi-annual Searching for Peace Programme are reported quarterly in this Newsletter. The Searching for Peace Programme records, describes and analyses prevention and management efforts in the main violent conflicts in the world. Conflict surveys of these efforts are produced, as well as complementary Regional Directories, which contain profiles of the main local and international NGOs working for peace in specific regions. Also, workshops are organised to share experiences, to exchange lessons learned and to strengthen networking.

Thailand and the Fiji islands are separated by more than 9,000 kilometres and an equally wide gulf in culture and history. Is it possible for peacebuilders from two such widely separated worlds - and those from dozens of locations in between - to learn from each other? That was the challenge last May, when some forty conflict resolution activists and academics from Southeast Asia and the Pacific travelled to the Indonesian island of Bali for a three-day workshop.

The participants represented a diverse cross-section of those engaged in peacebuilding in a vast and highly complex region. Some were involved in

human rights monitoring and advocacy, some in inter-faith dialogue, some in humanitarian assistance, some in mediation and lobbying, some in research, and some in journalism. They came from large and small organisations working at all levels, in Cambodia, East Timor, Fiji, the far corners of Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, the Solomon Islands, and Thailand. Their common purpose was to compare notes and share knowledge about their personal experiences in peacebuilding, to develop recommendations for improving the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts, and to strengthen the network that has slowly been growing among

peacebuilders and conflict resolution specialists in the region.

The workshop was co-organised by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention and the Centre for Security and Peace Studies at the University of Gadjah Mada (CSPS, based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia). It was supported by grants from the Dutch development agency Cordaid, the New Zealand Agency for International Development, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The workshop, said ECCP's Annelies Heijmans, was designed as a 'participatory learning activity'. Rather than imposing any single perspective or framework on the participants, then, the

organisers encouraged the participants to consider a wide range of strategies and approaches to peacebuilding.

Day One of the workshop focused on discrete *Track two* peacebuilding efforts, undertaken by individuals and organisations outside of official channels. Four themes were explored: the media as an instrument for building peace, indigenous approaches to peacebuilding, religious approaches to conflict transformation, and security sector issues, including both security sector reform and disarmament.

The participants heard often of the difficulties and frustrations of those working for peace in difficult situations. For example, Nani Farida, a journalist reporting for *The Jakarta Post* from conflict-torn Aceh, Indonesia described the many difficulties she faced in a situation where, she said, she felt like 'an ant trapped between two elephants'. And Father Bert Layson, a Catholic priest working on conflict resolution in Mindanao (Philippines), told of the all-too-frequent setbacks he has endured as cease-fires have continually given way to new outbreaks of fighting over the past six years. But from Farida and Layson, as well as others, there were also instructive reports of successes and

breakthroughs. Father Layson, for example, reported on the establishment of *Spaces for Peace*, an example of co-operation between his own Christian parish and Muslim communities, which he described as 'a comprehensive rehabilitation project designed not only to rebuild physical destruction caused by war but also the strained relationship of people.'

Other participants described successes in tapping into traditional conflict resolution structures in West Papua, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji. And Soth Plai Ngarm explained how a coalition of peace activists and civil society organisations in Cambodia managed to spur a successful weapons collection programme, first on a local level, and ultimately across the nation.

Multi-actor approaches

On Day Two the focus of the workshop shifted to multi-actor approaches to conflict resolution. Participants described case studies in Mindanao, Aceh, and East Timor where peacebuilding was taking place at both the grass roots level and along *Track one* - intervention through official channels at the governmental and international level. Small group discussions addressed specific issues of concern to

peacemakers: dealing with hard-liners, education and changing attitudes, reconciliation, and networking and advocacy activities.

The workshop concluded on Day Three with discussions on 'gaps' - in knowledge, infrastructure, and the connections among those working for peace, for example - which had been identified during the first two days, and with recommendations on a wide range of actions which need to be taken in order to work more effectively. As the participants departed, they were already confronting new challenges as the conflicts in Mindanao, the Solomon Islands, and Aceh intensified. 'We still face conflict,' observed Adriano do Nascimento, an East Timorese human rights activist, during a symbolic 'web-weaving' exercise at the end of Day Three. 'But through this workshop, where we've heard so much and learned so much, my expectation is that we have built greater solidarity and strengthened our networking to work for peace in the region.'

The workshop report 'Lessons learned from Peacebuilding Efforts in Southeast Asia and the Pacific' can be ordered at info@conflict-prevention.net and is free of cost.

Best practices and lessons learned

A compendium of useful strategies

Building Peace

- Identify the underlying issues and look for shared objectives and mutually compatible agendas, which can be addressed to bridge the divide and build trust.
- Build peace one block at a time, one person at a time.
- Talk to all the stakeholders at all levels over and over again, and keep them continually informed about what is going on.
- Peace is only possible when there is authentic dialogue, and authentic dialogue is only possible when there is mutual respect. Conversely, respect and trust develop from the process.
- Mediators need to establish their credibility.
- If hard-liners walk away from face-to-face talks, set up parallel discussions to keep the process on track, and keep both sides informed via a trusted go-between.
- If the 'outcome' - an agreement signed by the adversaries - is given a higher priority than the 'process' - genuine

acceptance of peaceful co-existence, justice, and reconciliation - prospects for long-term peace will be adversely affected.

- Complex conflicts require complex conflict resolution strategies. Each action can make an incremental difference in the overall situation, but multi-track, multi-actor approaches combining a range of strategies at all levels have the best chance of making significant and lasting impact.

Preventing violence / maintaining peace

Addressing problems in the security sector

- Clearly articulate - and codify - the role that the security forces are to play in society.
- Separate military forces from police forces, require that military officers resign their commissions in order to participate in politics.
- Establish mechanisms to hold the security services accountable for their actions.

A compendium of useful strategies *(continued)*

Disarmament and demobilisation

- Include a programme of disarmament, demobilisation, and re-integration into any peace settlement.
- Disarmament programmes should be undertaken in conjunction with programmes to enhance the capabilities and competence of police and security forces, and a long-term peacebuilding strategy.
- Communication and co-operation with civil society - in both urban and rural areas - is essential to insure full understanding of both weapons reduction programmes and related security sector reforms. Organisations working on these programmes should use consultative and participatory processes to ensure that available resources and knowledge are used effectively and to build trust within civil society for the new security sector.

Constitutional / legal measures

- Introduce checks and balances into the governmental structures, including, especially, an independent judiciary and accountability on the part of both the executive and the legislative branches to the voters.

Indigenous and religious approaches

- Indigenous mechanisms can be utilised in times of crisis or emergency to restore order when governmental structures have collapsed.
- Outside parties involved in post-conflict nation building should educate themselves about traditional governance systems and incorporate them into the governance and justice systems they establish.

Reconciliation

- Reconciliation at all levels - personal, between individuals, and between larger groups - requires a variety of approaches and focuses: (1) cultural; (2) political; (3) economic; and (4) indigenous and religious, and a full range of actors.
- Mechanisms for achieving reconciliation include: revitalising and/or exploiting customary law practices as frameworks for reconciliation; people-to-people approaches; working through neighbourhood organisations; involving respected persons and groups; organising public forums; engaging in trauma healing processes; and arranging for compensation - often symbolic - from the perpetrators to the victims
- Reconciliation can take place through official or unofficial channels, at the grass roots level or at the national level.
- Truth and reconciliation commissions have been shown to be highly effective in healing the wounds caused by conflict and injustice.

Strengthening organisations and maximising impact

- Develop networks and coalitions with like-minded partners.
- Don't overlook the necessity of creating solid organisational foundations for networks, with a core group to provide leadership and guidance, reliable secretariat to co-ordinate activities, and adequate funding.
- Distribute the responsibilities among network members to take advantage of experience, skills, and access.
- Identify individual friends within funding agencies who resonate with what you are doing, and work with funders to develop mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Take a 'rice cake approach' to advocacy and organising: work at the grass roots level to build support, but focus as well on public officials, lawmakers, policymakers; the media; the international community; NGOs, etc.
- Continually evaluate effectiveness, and document lessons learned to apply in future actions.
- Strategise about how to use peacebuilding as an overarching concept to bring together a broad range of organisations and actors for a common purpose.

Communications and media

For activists/peace builders:

- Learn the appropriate ways to deal with the press - the rules, parameters, and limitations.
- View the media as a 'tool' to be used for communication and advocacy to maximise any opportunities for publicity, and anticipate media reactions to your actions.
- 'Package' the message so that it is attractive and 'marketable' to mainstream media.
- Target the media itself - journalists, editors and owners - as an object of advocacy.

For journalists and other media professionals:

- Develop training programmes to enhance the professional skills of journalists and acquaint them with peace journalism practices; provide journalists with information on security management so they can accurately gauge and minimise the risks they face.
- Be aware that both sides will try to manipulate them.
- The media can contribute to both the escalation of conflict, by sensationalising violence and spreading hate, or to conflict resolution, by showing the costs of conflict and the possibilities of peace.
- The media can serve as a channel of communication between warring parties that refuse to talk to each other directly.

News from the European Platform and the Centre

The European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation is a network of more than 150 key European and international NGOs involved in the prevention and/or resolution of violent conflicts in the international arena. Its mission is to

facilitate networking, to encourage co-operation and exchange of information as well as to develop advocacy activities among participating organisations. The European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP) acts as the secretariat of the European Platform.

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict Programme

See the Editorial and Special in this Newsletter

The annual Platform meeting

The annual meeting of the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, on October 15-16, provided an important opportunity for key European organisations active in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding to get involved in the regional process of research and consultation leading up to the regional conference of Northern and Western Europe. At the Platform meeting discussion covered the structure of the European conference and the issues upon which the conference should focus.

The Dublin conference

The Northern and Western European conference on the roles of civil society and the European Union in conflict prevention activities, co-organised by the ECCP and the Irish government during their EU Presidency, will be held in Dublin from March 31 till April 2, 2004. The first two days of this conference will be co-organised with the Irish government and the Irish NGO Steering Committee. The conference will generate a Regional Action Agenda which will be presented to the EU member states and governmental representations at their gathering on the third day of the conference, mainly organised by the Irish government.

In the Dublin conference we will present and discuss the future ambitions and goals of the European field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The main question to be addressed will be: *'based on our experiences, where do we go from here?'* The answer will be formulated in an Action Agenda, with recommendations and plans on how to move forward.

Information centre

The ECCP has built a website for the newly launched project Global Partnership in the Prevention of

Armed Conflict. This website www.conflict-prevention-dialogue.org will supplement the European Platform's website www.conflict-prevention.net.

Searching for Peace programme

The Searching for Peace programme is aimed at recording, describing and analysing prevention and management efforts in the main violent conflicts in the world. Surveys of these efforts are produced per region, along with complementary directories, which contain profiles of the main local and international NGOs working in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. In May the ECCP organised a workshop in Indonesia on lessons learned on Southeast Asia and Pacific peacebuilding efforts.

People Building Peace

In June 2003 a follow up to People Building Peace was launched. People Building Peace is a project aimed at collecting and publishing inspiring stories of peacebuilding, with special attention to examples of successful peacebuilding by different key actors, such as women's groups, churches, media, the corporate sector, etc. Furthermore it explores important issues such as networking, campaigning, interaction, early warning, development and peacebuilding, traditional methods of conflict resolution etc. and best practices and lessons learned.

Media and Peacebuilding

A book entitled *The power of the media: a Handbook for Peacebuilders* was published by the ECCP in collaboration with IMPACS and the European Centre for Common Ground in June 2003. The book aims to provide a comprehensive guide to organisations working in the field of media and peacebuilding, organisations planning future projects in this field, including donors. As one of the outcomes of the ECCP's Media and Peacebuilding project it provides readers with an operational framework, evaluation methodologies, best practices/ lessons

learned, a selection of case studies, and a directory with profiles of relevant organisations. The Media and Peacebuilding project aims to build on an existing body of research and experiences of the role that media can play in peacebuilding, in order to provide a set of guidelines on the processes which make media interventions in a conflict effective and sustainable. The book is also published on the website of the European Platform: www.conflict-prevention.net

An international seminar will be held to launch the book on December 15 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (changed from October 17). This seminar will bring together practitioners, NGOs working in this field and donor organisations to further discuss lessons learned and best practices of media in peacebuilding. There will be presentations from John Marks, president of Search for Common Ground, Shauna Sylvester, president of IMPACS, Canada and from Internews amongst others. The international seminar will be followed by a roundtable discussion on December 16. For more information contact Juliette Verhoeven at the European Centre

Email: j.verhoeven@conflict-prevention.net

Conflict Resolution in schools

The European Centre for Conflict Prevention organised, in cooperation with the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO and others, an international conference entitled *Conflict Resolution in Schools - Learning to live together* on September 15-16, 2003. This conference, which took place in the Netherlands, gathered together 180 participants from around 45 countries. By bringing experts, practitioners and policy makers together from many countries, the conference aimed to establish best practises and recommendations, pool resources and bring the issue to the attention of policy makers, education authorities and schools. The international conference was followed by a national conference on September 17.



**SAFERWORLD
INTERNATIONAL ALERT**
ENHANCING EU IMPACT ON CONFLICT PREVENTION

Outlook on Brussels

Jointly prepared by Saferworld and International Alert, this regular Supplement to the Newsletter will focus upon developments in the European Union relevant to conflict prevention. It will aim to keep NGOs up-to-date with how European policy makers and opinion formers are responding to the challenge of preventive action. Each Supplement will provide the latest information and analysis on EU policy processes and conflict prevention initiatives.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The EU Rome Seminar on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa ♦ **Conflict in Africa: African and EU's responses** ♦ **Peace & security in Africa: Next steps for EU-Africa engagement**

EU Rome seminar on Africa **Enhancing EU-African relations**

In an attempt to reinvigorate the stalled EU-Africa dialogue, and address the cycle of conflict across Africa, the Italian Presidency of the EU, in association with Saferworld and International Alert, organised a high level seminar on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa in Rome this July. In addition to inviting representatives of EU Member States and Accession countries, the Italians took the unique step of inviting African civil society representatives. This offered the EU an important opportunity to listen to those with direct experience and expertise of conflict situations.

The formal dialogue between the EU and Africa was indefinitely postponed earlier in the year when disputes over the invitation of Zimbabwe caused the EU to cancel the EU-Africa summit in Lisbon. Despite this broad breakdown in communication there is a sense of renewed commitment to address peace and security issues in Africa by the Africa Union (AU), the EU and the international community. The seminar built on the new framework for peace and security in Africa established at the second Summit of the Africa Union in Maputo mid-July, which included discussions on the establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council; on the G8 Africa Action Plan agreed in June and on commitments from both the EU and G8 on supporting the Peace Support Operations Framework for Africa for the development of an African peacekeeping force.

The Italian seminar was therefore timely and as the UN Secretary General's Special

Advisor on Africa, Dr Ibrahim Gambari, noted in an opening speech, the conference provided a platform to address 'how today's EU-Africa partnership can effectively deliver assistance to the people of Africa'.

As with much current thinking in the post September 11 security environment the conference began with discussions focusing on the importance of utilising 'hard security instruments' or military approaches to conflict prevention rather than 'soft instruments'.

Keen to emphasise that whilst welcome, peacekeeping can do little more than contain a situation and is in fact a form of 'crisis management' rather than conflict prevention, the civil society representatives argued that equal emphasis must be placed upon using soft instruments as well as hard instruments to ensure lasting peace. In the words of one commission representative: 'Peace is the absolute pre-requisite without which no development can even be envisaged'.

The civil society participants represented a cross section of Africa, and had a range of experience both at the grass roots level, and at the policy level. It was made clear to all present that civil society enhances opportunities for peace and conflict prevention and whilst it is not a substitute for an effectively functioning state, it plays a wide-ranging and complementary role.

For a comprehensive roundup of the seminar's conclusions see the article in this Outlook on Brussels: 'Peace and Security in Africa, Next Steps for EU Africa engagement.'



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Conflict

The African response

Well over a third of the least developed countries in Africa are involved in conflict. Economically active people are dying, states are collapsing and development opportunities are being undermined. But is Africa really the 'hopeless continent' that The Economist once described it as? Efforts to achieve peace in Angola, Sierra Leone, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan have progressed and Kenya experienced a peaceful transition of power following multiparty elections. This progress has coincided with the establishment of the Africa Union (AU) and their endorsement of the New Partnership for Africa's Development's (NEPAD) peace and security priorities under the banner of the Africa Peace and Security Agenda (APSA)¹. All these moves should give cause for optimism.

The African Union

The AU has set the stage for a continent-wide approach to the new peace and security agenda, arguing that it is integral to achieving wider economic and social development. Plans are progressing for the establishment of an African Peace and Security Council, an early warning system and an Africa standby force, which is due to be operational by 2010. The EU has pledged 10 million euro to the AU for their work in this area and is keen to develop a fund for African peacekeeping with the use of European Development Funds. Furthermore, it is apparent that there is a growing awareness of the root causes of conflict and the factors which drive it. NEPAD's six priority areas for peace and security, for example, include action to manage the exploitation of resources, prevent and eradicate illicit weapons trafficking, and improve good governance.

Sub-regional organisations

The challenge now is to ensure that these continent-wide approaches are effectively integrated into the sub-regional economic and conflict prevention initiatives carried out by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In other fledgling sub-regions, institutions need support to emerge into

functioning organisations capable of making a contribution to conflict prevention. Underpinning all of these initiatives should be the involvement of local civil society groups. Without the support of local populations the high level responses are not guaranteed success and pressure for change will be absent.

Civil society

Within Africa, civil society engagement has taken shape on different levels. On the continental level, there have been efforts at institutionalising civil society involvement with the AU through the establishment of the Economic, Social and Cultural Committee and the Pan-African Parliament. Furthermore, the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Culture for Africa, an institution which initiated from African civil society, has also been taken up within the AU and will be used as a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of AU plans and projects. Within sub-regional organisations civil society involvement has fluctuated, with very few of the REC's working with civil society on a sustained and institutionalised basis. The implementation of the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) within IGAD is a positive development, as this is mainly implemented by civil society.

On a national level, civil society in most parts of Africa is very active on

issues of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Several networks of like-minded organisations have developed, such as the Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA), Peace Tree Network, the Peace and Development Network and the Network of African Peace-builders, to name but a few. These networks are based on the acknowledgement that some issues are better addressed on a regional basis, that many similar issues are faced in different parts of the continent, and that the networks can provide a valuable forum for sharing experiences and undertaking joint advocacy or activities in response to conflict. The Cotonou Agreement has also created new momentum for civil society to form national Cotonou platforms or committees as well as the global ACP Civil Society Forum, which can ensure that ACP-EU co-operation adequately addresses concerns relating to conflict in Africa. In some African countries civil society is still weak and the political environment may not always be conducive to more 'political' activities such as peacebuilding.

Broadly, however, progress is being made on conflict prevention at the continental, regional and local levels in Africa. All these initiatives, not just a commitment to military crisis management via the African standby force, require sustained EU and international support in order to achieve the longer-term goal of conflict prevention. <

¹ The AU is the successor to the OAU. NEPAD was the amalgamation of three key initiatives on taking African development forward and was formally adopted by the OAU and established in 2001. NEPAD is therefore a programme of the AU, even though it has a separate management structure in the form of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee and Secretariat based in South Africa.

in Africa

The EU's response

The recent African-led developments in peace and security, through the AU and NEPAD, provide important opportunities to address some of the worst consequences of conflict, poverty and exclusion on the continent. The EU is the natural partner to support these processes. In recent years, the EU's Common, Foreign and Security Policy has focused on neighbouring countries in the Balkans. Since the start of the new millennium, the EU has, however, raised Africa up the political agenda due to the realisation that conflict undermines the impact of their development support for poverty reduction, undermines good governance and human security and could create fertile breeding grounds for terrorism on the continent.

The EU has the unique capacity as a regional union to have significant and positive impact on promoting structural stability in Africa. The Member States have strong historical ties with Africa, there is widespread engagement on the ground and the EU is the largest trading bloc and aid donor to Africa. Under the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement (2000),¹ the EU also has a solid policy framework for EU-Africa political, economic and trade relations. Under this framework, the EU can employ a multiple, integrated approach to conflict prevention through its political instruments (political dialogue, declarations, troika missions, demarches, joint actions, special envoys and common positions), its military and civilian crisis management mechanisms (including the Rapid Reaction Force), trade co-operation, its Justice and Home Affairs instruments and its development and humanitarian budget lines.

In 2002 and 2003 alone, the EU has successfully implemented a variety of these instruments for the management and prevention of violent conflict in Africa. These include the deployment of the joint EU peacekeeping force to Bunia in DRC, the use of special envoys and political dialogue in Liberia, the near establishment of monitoring and control mechanisms for the illicit trade in conflict diamonds (through the Kimberley Process), support to the South African Development Community (SADC) for the implementation of the SADC Protocol

on Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials and the identification of conflict prevention as a priority area of co-operation in the regional and country strategy programming of the European Development Fund (EDF) in Africa. The EU has also provided institutional support to the AU, to regional infrastructure and cross-border projects and is increasingly, under the Cotonou framework, focusing on strengthening civil society networks to contribute to African peace and security. The EU has also this year lent its support to the establishment of an African peacekeeping force by 2010 through the Peace Support Operations Facility (PSOF) - approved by the AU Assembly at the AU Summit in Maputo in July - to be financed by funds 'shaved-off' from allocated National EDF funds. The EU-Africa relationship is therefore a special one, and there is a strong framework and political commitments made by both EU and African leaders to address the peace and security issues in the African continent. Progress has been made, however, there still remain significant challenges, and opportunities, for enhancing EU-Africa relations in this regard.

Challenges for EU-Africa engagement

Some of the obstacles to a strengthened EU-Africa partnership for peace and security include the challenge of resource allocation, which is, in essence, dependent on EU political will and

prioritisation. This is made worse by the divergencies in foreign policy interests and engagement by EU Member States in Africa. In the EU shift in its security agenda, there is also a risk of the anti-poverty approach being subordinated to the 'war on terror' (to the detriment of other important development needs). The absence, or weak capacities, of African institutions (whether it is the AU, regional economic communities, national governments or local civil society) and a lack of complementarity between the different levels of governance in Africa also make it difficult for the EU to engage on any consistent level. A state-centric approach to the EU-Africa partnership limits the opportunities the EU has for forming peace networks between civil society, parliamentarians and the private sector and there can be a tendency for the EU to focus on short-term emergencies, rather than working, in parallel, on long-term conflict prevention activities. With challenges, however, come exciting opportunities which, given time, co-ordination and political will, can be translated into meaningful practice on the ground. The Rome seminar on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in July this year provided some useful insights into the opportunities presented to EU and African leaders for enhancing peace and security in Africa (summarised in the following article). Time will tell, however, whether these opportunities are put into practice. <

¹ The EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement provides the framework for EU-Africa engagement through diplomacy, trade and aid. The Cairo Declaration (March 2000), the Ougadougou follow up report (November 2002) and the Council Common Position Concerning Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa (May 2001) also provide policy guidance for engagement. The recent Commission's Communication on the EU-Africa Dialogue (June 2003) also builds on reinvigorating the dialogue process.

Peace and security in Africa

Next steps for EU-Africa engagement

The Rome EU seminar on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa was an important event as it re-focused attention on EU-Africa relations. It also acted as a landmark for the bringing together of high-level EU officials and African civil society representatives in this forum.

Conclusions

Among the conclusions drawn was the agreement that the EU-Africa dialogue needs to be re-invigorated through a more **regular response mechanism for dialogue** to reflect the dynamism of conflict in Africa and the EU-Africa partnership. As part of this process, it was felt that the potential for the **EU-UN-AU trilateral partnership** for peace and development should be maximised by speaking with one voice, and ensuring that complementary roles and responsibilities are clearly articulated and acted upon. The recent cases of African peacekeeping forces intervening in the stabilisation of crises in Burundi, Liberia, Ivory Coast and Democratic Republic of Congo were cited as examples of the importance of tripartite co-operation between EU, UN and African actors in peace support operations. There was consensus, however, that in the long-term an **African stand-by force** would be the most appropriate response to such crises. The AU Peace Support Operation Facility, to be financed by European Development Funds, was approved by the AU Assembly at Maputo, with the target of setting up an African brigade as a pan-African rapid intervention force by 2010. There were questions raised, however, regarding issues of ownership, accountability and control of African peacekeeping capabilities.

Sub-regional organisations were pinpointed in the seminar as key institutional players in the prevention and resolution of violent conflict in Africa. ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD are leading the way in this regard through mobilising peacekeeping activities, early warning and regional economic and

political integration. In order for the continent-wide peace and security efforts to succeed, the importance of extending and co-ordinating regional efforts with continent-wide ones to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts was stressed. The important role that the EU can play in supporting the AU and UN in strengthening regional organisation's conflict prevention capacities and, in other cases, fulfilling this role in the absence of a sub-regional institution (such as in the African Great Lakes region) was also recognised.

There was widespread support amongst the seminar participants for optimising an integrated and mutually reinforcing approach to **development, trade and conflict prevention**. The prevention of longer-term conflict in Africa was recognised as dependent upon strengthening its overall economy and providing more opportunities for its people. It was also agreed that the EU's trade policies towards Africa should incorporate and be measured against both the Millennium Development Goals and EU commitments to conflict prevention. Linked in with this was the argument for addressing **economies of war** as natural and mineral resources in failed states fund the activities of armed groups. Oil exploitation has, for example, been a major conflict trigger in Angola, Nigeria and recently Sao Tomé and few benefits have reached the populations. It was proposed that the EU should continue to apply political pressure on setting codes of conduct and standards, and that mechanisms are created to ensure that natural and mineral wealth supports development and structural stability in Africa, rather than undermines it.

Finally, there were many voices (both European and African) during the seminar expressing the need for strengthening **civil society's active role in building peace and security** in Africa. The EU and UN have acknowledged, for some time, that the state alone cannot prevent or resolve conflict, however, nor should civil society be viewed as an

alternative to the state. Civil society should instead complement and strengthen the state system. The various roles that civil society play were identified as: holding governments to account, exercising pressure on warring parties and fostering dialogue, mediating conflicts, raising awareness, advocating for peace, capacity building, promoting democracy at all levels and policy development. It was argued, however, that the EU and European NGOs are failing to systematically communicate with or utilise the expertise of African civil society in the policy making process, and that there is little clarity on the nature, size and legitimacy of civil society in Africa at all levels. It was agreed that representative civil society organisations need and deserve support, both financially and sometimes technically, via skills transference and that the EU is well placed to provide this support through its wide range of programmes and budget lines. Whilst funding for civil society organisations is available for development-orientated work, one of the challenges identified during the seminar was that civil society organisations working in the field of conflict prevention have greater difficulties accessing these funds.

Next steps

The EU-Africa Working Group has prioritised conflict prevention high on its agenda. The Report from the Rome Seminar detailing the conclusions and recommendations were fed into the EU Africa Working Group discussions for analysis and follow-up. Some key operational decisions were made at the September meeting of the Working Group including the decision by the Italian Presidency to update the *Council Common Position Concerning Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa* (May 2001). This is to evaluate the effective implementation of the main elements of the Common Position and to reflect the recent developments in Africa regarding the new Peace and Security Agenda (including the

Key recommendations from the Rome seminar

- Re-invigorate the EU-Africa dialogue through the establishment of a regular, consultative mechanism between the EU and AU on matters related to peace and security. The establishment of regular contacts in Addis Ababa between the local EU Heads of Mission (HOM) and the EU Commissioner for Peace and Security should be the first step.
- Support the African mechanisms in place, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the Panel of Eminent Persons.
- Support the establishment of a complementary, resourced and accountable peace support operations facility (PSOF).
- Strengthen the capacities of, and complementarity between, African regional organisations under the AU peace and security framework through, for example, supporting the co-ordination of expenditure across regional organisations on PSOs and other crosscutting issues (such as small arms, illicit exploitation of natural resource and terrorism).
- Strengthen the coherence between CFSP, Cotonou and other trade agreements to better link up development and conflict prevention. The impacts of trade should also be measured against both the Millennium Development Goals and the EU commitments to conflict prevention.
- Establish an EU Special Advisor on Africa (similar to the UN) to assist with co-ordinating CFSP and DG Dev issues across the pillars.
- Address economies of war through supporting on-going initiatives (such as the Kimberly Process and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) and implement mechanisms to ensure that resource wealth supports development and structural stability in Africa for the wider population, rather than undermines it.
- Recognise, via political statements, the important role that civil society can play towards enhancing the peace and security agenda.
- Ensure civil society input into the policy making process: civil society co-ordinators in EC delegations, the EU HOMs and the EU-Africa Civil Society Forum would all be avenues through which closer consultation could take place.
- Undertake regional civil society mappings in Africa to identify the civil society organisations with the relevant expertise to advance the eight priorities of the African Peace and Security Agenda.
- Review mechanisms for financial support to civil society organisations for conflict prevention work through the current development budget lines with the aim of creating a more flexible, transparent and accessible funding mechanism for this work by civil society in Africa.

establishment of the AU and NEPAD and the proposals for the establishment of a Peace and Security Council and a Peace Support Operations Facility under the AU).

The EU has also been in recent discussions with the UN regarding the Great Lakes regional conference next year, to be convened by the AU and UN (lead by the UN Special Representative for the African Great Lakes and co-chair of the conference, Ibrahim Fall). The conference will aim to address the major issues affecting the region including peace and security, democracy and good governance, social and economic development and regional integration. Six countries in the region will participate, however, it is as yet unclear

the role that civil society actors will play. In the absence of a legitimate, coherent regional body in the Great Lakes region, if the conference succeeds in enabling multi-stakeholder and representational participation, it could provide a promising opportunity for building an on-going process of dialogue between the key national, regional and international actors in the region.

The EU's engagement in initiatives such as the regional conference in the Great Lakes and the international seminar in Rome reflects the EU's keen strategic interest in African peace and security. Through its various instruments and notable relationship with Africa, the EU could continue to have significant impact on those

affected by conflict in Africa. This can only take place, however, with sustained European and African political will and resources for a long-term, joined-up approach to the continent's peace and security issues.

A full report on the EU Rome Seminar on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, including recommendations and a detailed discussion paper, can be obtained from either Alice Hutchinson (ahutchinson@saferworld.org.uk) or Lindsay Alexander (lalexander@international-alert.org)

Update from the EU

By Barbara Sellier
EPLO

Debate over EU Security Strategy

At the request of the European Council, Javier Solana presented last June his outline for an EU security strategy, 'A secure Europe in a better world'. The paper starts by outlining the new threats the EU is facing: terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and

failed states and organised crime. It then identifies three strategic objectives. The first one is to extend the zone of security around the EU. Secondly the paper suggests building an international order based on effective multilateralism. The third objective is to counter the new threats through the broad range of

external policies and instruments at the EU disposal. The paper mentions conflict prevention but places greater emphasis on the hard wing of crisis management and suggests increasing military spending.

EU leaders received the paper favourably and the paper is now debated

at the European Parliament and the European Commission. A final version will be presented for adoption to the European Council meeting in December.

EPLO, the network of 19 conflict prevention NGOs in Europe, has decided to produce a series of amendments to the paper that it will present to the Council. EPLO questions the analysis of threats and would like the paper to insist more on the root causes of conflict and the need to adopt a longer term approach, through civilian engagement.

Initiative for a European Peace Building Agency

EU Defence Ministers have continued their discussions over the creation of an agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research and armaments. Meeting in Rome at the beginning of October, they decided to rename it as the European Defence Agency and to set it up by the end of the year. One of its central tasks should be to develop the interoperability of national military capacities and strengthen European research in the military field.

In reaction to that exclusive focus on the development of EU military capabilities, EPLO has decided to advocate for the creation of a parallel European Peace Building Agency. The Agency would act as a network agency for Member States civilian capabilities. As a new institutional arrangement it could enable better inter-pillar

coordination and coherence. Indeed missions that are undertaken in the context of the 4 civilian areas of crisis management identified by the Feira European Council (police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection) are related to different competencies, either national (2nd and 3rd pillars of the EU treaty) or European Community competencies (1st pillar of the Treaty) and therefore split between the Council of the EU and the European Commission.

The mandate of that European Peace Building Agency would cover (inter alia):

- Monitoring Member States commitments in developing civilian capabilities.
- Coordination of deployment of civilian experts in the field.
- Setting up of standards for recruitment and training (improve professionalism).
- Setting up of standards in conduct of operations (spread best practice).
- Engage with civil society and ensure cooperation with other multilateral institutions (UN).
- Facilitate political research on conflict prevention and crisis management.

Support for African peacekeeping operations

The European Commission is in the process of establishing a Peace Financial Facility to support African Peacekeeping operations. This Peace Facility has first been announced at the African Union Summit in Maputo last

July. In the words of Commission President Prodi, 'The issue now is whether some development-assistance resources should be used upstream, to help with peace-support operations. (...) The ultimate aim is not to send peacekeeping forces here or there, but to bolster Africa's own capacity to deal with conflict situations and peace enforcement.'

The Facility aims at reinforcing Africa's own capacities to deal with conflicts and at strengthening regional solidarity through the contribution of all African countries. It also places peace and stability at the forefront of development. According to Poul Nielson 'peace and security is an important innovation in our cooperation.'

The funding for it is to come from the European Development Fund. The Facility should have an initial amount of EUR 250 million and receive an additional EUR 150 million from voluntary contributions from African countries. It will not be a permanent fund and it will not cover all the costs but rather the additional costs incurred by African countries that send troops.

Some NGOs have criticised the strong focus on expensive peace keeping operations while other conflict prevention sectors such as security sector reform and longer term approaches are neglected.

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International Calendar

November 2003

- 3/4 European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy
- 18/19 General Affairs and External Relations Council
- 25/26 European Parliament Committee on Development and Co-operation
- 25/26 European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy
- 28/29 'Conclave' of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in the framework of the IGC

December 2003

- 1/2 European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy
- 1/2 European Parliament Committee on Development and Co-operation
- 9/10 General Affairs and External Relations Council
- 12/13 European Council in Brussels

January 2004

- 1 The Irish government will take over the EU Presidency

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict

The story so far



In 2002, in response to the Secretary-General's Recommendation 27 in his report The Prevention of Armed Conflict, where he urges 'NGOs with an interest in conflict prevention to organise an international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field', the European Centre for Conflict Prevention proposed an integrated global programme of research, consultation and discussion, leading to an international conference at UN Headquarters in New York. Kofi Annan supported the initiative and an intensive period of consultation within the conflict prevention community began. The outcome was an International Preparatory Meeting, scheduled for Nairobi in June 2003, but switched at the last minute to the Netherlands for security reasons. Sixty delegates from all over the world met in the Dutch town of Soesterberg to discuss the purpose and planning of the programme.

What happened there and how are we going to proceed?

The story so far



At Soesterberg, delegates from all over the world selected an International Steering Group (ISG) to oversee the programme. The ECCP's offer to act as its secretariat was accepted. The delegates agreed a lightweight but robust co-ordinating structure to unite coherently the various regional initiatives (at this moment preparatory processes have started in 15 regions): a series of parallel regional processes, flexible enough to encompass regional differences but sufficiently aligned to give coherence to the whole. These regional processes, described in this special feature, are the heart of the project. They offer each region a set of unprecedented opportunities: to influence international policy and thinking on conflict prevention; to clarify their relations with the UN and its agencies; to build better relations with governments; to consolidate their networks: and to set their own regional agendas for the coming decade. Finally, the participants agreed on a name for this initiative: *The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict*.

Besides the regional processes, the international dimension is also important. The original impulse came from the United Nations and we can assume that agreements made at the international level will increase the level of political commitment to conflict prevention and to the role of civil society within it. The UN agencies and departments will be involved in this programme through the NGO-UN Prevention Working Group in New York. Besides many bilateral meetings, this resulted in three gatherings at which the programme was presented and discussed: in April, the programme was presented to some twenty UN Mission representatives; in

September a panel presentation for UN Member States was organised under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Jan Kavan. Supportive statements of Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Danilo Türk and of many Member States at the UN can be considered a milestone in the involvement of the UN and UN member states in the Global Partnership. The day after, Assistant Secretary-Generals Gillian Sorensen and Danilo Türk invited the ECCP and the CPWG to discuss with the Inter-Agency/Inter-Departmental Resource Group on Conflict Prevention how to further integrate the initiative into the UN.

The programme aims to explore the role of civil society and NGOs in the prevention of armed conflict, and future interaction with the UN, regional organisations and governments. The content-part consists of the collecting of lessons learned, best practices and case studies of local and regional organisations, examples of interaction, and finally regional Action Agendas, feeding into an International Action Agenda, to be discussed at the final conference in 2005. To ensure that there are a core set of issues that are explored in each region, the International Secretariat has commissioned a paper on civil society in conflict prevention, *The Living Document*, that sets forth a framework of crosscutting themes and questions that can be further developed and deliberated throughout the process.

In this special you can read more about the regional processes and the work being done at the United Nations in New York. For more information on this programme please check www.conflictprevention-dialogue.org

The International Preparatory Meeting

From June 4-8, 55 participants were brought together at the conference centre Kontakt der Kontinenten (Contacts between Continents) in Soesterberg, the Netherlands. They deliberated on a way forward in *The Role of Civil Society and NGOs in the Prevention of Armed Conflict Programme* (which has since been named: *Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict*). Participants were selected through a participatory process and included representatives from NGOs who have been involved in regional preparations and meetings concerning the Global Partnership; NGOs who had the potential of acting as regional initiators for the Global Partnership; international NGOs active in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as well as some governmental and United Nations representatives.



The International Preparatory Meeting (IPM), was organised jointly by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention and the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa (NPI-Africa). The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Nairobi, Kenya, but was moved abruptly to the Netherlands due to negative travel advice by certain countries, which complicated travel arrangements.

Goal

The goal of the International Preparatory Meeting was to decide on the process, content and structure of the Global Partnership, leading up to the international UN Conference in 2005; and to identify regional initiators to act as catalysts for the Global Partnership in each region.

The regional initiators are expected to start up a process of



assessing the needs and issues of their own region in relation to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, collecting lessons learned and best practices, and eventually organising a regional conference in 2004 to set the agenda for the international conference in 2005, and to give input for a UN Action Plan.

Output

The IPM, drew participants from many different walks of life, but who all had one thing in common: their passion for the

field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. This meeting first gave them a chance to get to listen and learn from each other's experiences before setting out to frame the initiative. The output of the IPM includes (but is not limited to):

- Decisions on the structure of the international framework as well as a model framework for the regional processes.
- Decisions on the process of the programme leading up to the conference at UN Headquarters in 2005.
- Interest and enthusiasm from the regions leading to ownership of the process.
- The appointment of a Provisional International Steering Group.
- A preliminary list of actors and issues to be focused on during the programme.
- Several ideas for a name for the initiative.

Supporters

This meeting would not have been possible without the generous support from our donors. A special thanks goes to the Federal Republic of Germany, who particularly supported the International Preparatory Meeting. The Programme 'The Role of Civil Society and NGOs in the Prevention of Armed Conflict' is financially supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Irish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cordaid and World Vision.

The Regional Process

The regional process is the heart of the Global Partnership. It is designed to ensure that all those working in conflict prevention, wherever they may be in the world, have a chance to contribute to the future development of the field. Each region is free to organise its own process in the most appropriate way, within a broad framework necessary to preserve the coherence of the global initiative. One outcome is defined: a Regional Conference in 2004 that will put forward recommendations for the International Conference at UN Headquarters. However, it will be up to each region to frame other outcomes such as a Regional Agenda for the coming decade.



As the process evolves, regions can learn from each other either directly or via the International Steering Group (ISG) and its secretariat (ECCP). To ensure that balance and coherence are maintained in the international programme, the ISG will make certain that the various regional processes are on roughly the same scale and that certain broad themes are addressed world-wide. As specific issues emerge as important, the international secretariat will commission papers from experts and feed these back into regional discussions (examples are: women and peacebuilding or codes of conduct). Regions will also be able to exchange ideas and have discussions via websites and email, making the regional process part of an international dialogue.

Planning

Broadly speaking, a Regional Initiator¹ will launch and co-ordinate the programme in each region. The Initiator's tasks are (after consulting with key regional and national NGOs, academics, UN agencies and if possible, governments) are to:

- set up a representative Regional Steering Group (RSG);
- establish a secretariat;
- estimate budgets;
- draw up funding proposals.

The RSG/secretariat will then:

- organise a regional programme of research and discussion that will raise the key issues and include the relevant actors in the region (either on a regional basis or via national focal points);
- raise funding for the regional process, in collaboration with the international secretariat;
- keep in touch with the international programme via the ISG/secretariat, which is available for advice and support as required;
- organise the Regional Conference;
- prepare a Regional Agenda for the next decade;
- draft a set of recommendations for the International Conference at UN Headquarters.

¹ Regional Initiators are generally organisations that:

- are active in conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- are already part of a regional network
- are engaged with local, national and international actors
- have a regional focus
- have sufficient organisational capacity and experience

Flexibility

It is important to stress that the various regions are currently at different stages in the process. Some Regional Initiators have already produced a detailed activity plan for 2004, including ideas concerning the regional conference, while others are still consulting with their partners. It is planned however, that during the last two months of this year, all Regional Initiators will have their plans ready for 2004.

Each region can explore its own issues and priorities, as well as pursuing the general themes that emerge via the ISG. Regions are encouraged to involve all the relevant sectors and to ensure that grassroots practitioners play a major role in discussion. One fundamental element of the programme is the request to collect case studies of conflict prevention in action.

THE REGIONS

Africa

The African continent has in recent years suffered a disproportionate share of the world's violent conflict. Networks of conflict prevention organisations have sprung up in large numbers in Africa, and it is necessary to share the common experiences, to bring the different organisations together and to create a common regional action plan. Within this framework, the regional process for the international programme has been introduced in Africa. To enhance the process, the continent has been divided into three sub regions where separate regional/national consultations and activities will lead up to three sub regional conferences.

West-Africa

The *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)*, having members in almost all West African countries, was endorsed as acting regional convenor.

In response to nearly a decade of violent conflicts throughout West Africa, scholars and academics from the region but based in the United States established WANEP in 1998. WANEP's vision is of a West-African region characterised by just and peaceful communities where the dignity of the human person is paramount and where the people can meet their basic human needs and decide their own direction.

The first phase of the regional process, running from 2003 until early 2004, seeks to form national civil society forums in existing network countries and other non-network countries. The network countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leon and Togo. WANEP intends to extend the project to Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Niger, which are not member countries. By engaging in broad consultation with CSOs, Community Based Organisations (CBO), NGOs and other relevant actors WANEP will identify and form thematic groups in the various countries to establish national focal points, gather case studies of best practice and design country-specific action plans. During the process WANEP will associate and collaborate with friendly governments to increase their awareness of the role of civil society in the prevention of conflict. In the second phase of the project WANEP intends to form a Regional Steering Group (RSG) to plan a Regional Conference. The RSG will be made up of representatives from the WANEP Secretariat, national forums, government agencies and UN agency field offices. The RSG when formed will engage in consultations with CSOs, its membership, governments and other relevant organisations

as it plans and fund raises for the Regional Conference in 2004. This will constitute phase three. The RSG will facilitate exchange of communication between the International Steering Group (ISG) and the national forums.

A Regional Conference will be organised by the RSG as phase four of the project. The Conference will climax the regional process. It will be informed by the action plans and output of the various national thematic group consultations and discuss key issues and lessons learnt. The conference will prepare a regional agenda for the next decade and draft a set of recommendations for the International Conference at the UN Headquarters in 2005. This will constitute the fifth and final phase of the project.



Left: Fatoumatta M'Boge (WANEP); right: Florence Mpaayei (NPI)

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Central & Eastern Africa

Several East African organisations came together in March 2003 in Kenya to discuss the programme and added value of it for them. Further structuring of the sub regional process was decided on, and the *Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa (NPI-Africa)* was selected by the participating organisations to act as regional convenor for Central & Eastern Africa, including the Horn and the Great Lakes. NPI-Africa was founded in 1984 under the name *Nairobi Peace Group (NPG)*, as a response to events in the Horn of Africa. Ten years later NPI changed its name to NPI-Africa, reflecting its current Africa-wide engagement.

Within the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, initial discussions and consultations have been on going. In collaboration with the ECCP, NPI-Africa called a meeting for 14 to 15 March 2003 in Nairobi, in which key organisations from the region and representatives of regional organisations participated. During this meeting the need for engagement with the initiative was underscored. The programme is seen as an opportunity to highlight lessons learned and best practices, in a process of sharing information across borders, beyond their own countries and continent. In addition, the programme could provide the chance for them to stand as a united platform, with a single collective voice on peace agreements and other peace processes, giving them more power and respect. As a result, there would be closer cooperation between the Civil Society Organisations and the

UN and other organisations such as the EU, World Bank and multilaterals, and other donor agencies with which they would work for the betterment of their communities. The programme was seen by all as an extension of what they are already doing and not as an extra activity.

Following the Nairobi meeting, NPI-Africa has followed up with the national focal points with the aim of establishing how the process of sharing the programme was unfolding. Different sub-regional and national focal points have been selected, these include the Inter-Africa Group for the Greater Horn and Ethiopia, PeaceNet in Kenya, the HUREPI-Trust in Tanzania, and CECORE in Uganda. Communication has continued with the national focal points. The national focal points will initiate consultations in their respective countries with a broad preparatory group. The different national conferences will be held from October 2003 until March 2004. The output of all the various national meetings will result in a Regional Conference, which will be organised after March 2004. The timeframe for the process in the Eastern African region is planned to bring forward the Regional Conference after March 2004, and develop a regional action plan before the conference at the UN Headquarters in 2005.

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Southern Africa

In Southern Africa another Conflict Prevention Network that has members in all the SADC countries has been identified as regional convenor, the *Southern Africa Conflict Prevention Network (SACPN)*.

The SACPN was established in 2000 as a result of a series of capacity-building projects by the Finnish Conflict Prevention Network KATU in Southern Africa. The mission of SACPN is to develop and promote conflict prevention by providing a forum for research and reflection, by providing expertise, and by empowerment through training, information sharing and advocacy. The network of SACPN is represented in each of the Southern African countries where local chapters of conflict prevention NGOs have been established. These local chapters will be the core building blocks of the consultation process of the programme. SACPN will establish the coordination of the initiative of the programme, and the organisation will establish linkages with other key regional bodies. The process will include initiating, and holding, national conferences in each Southern African country, to facilitate grassroots input from civil society. The process will lead to the Regional Conference, which is planned to take place in mid-2004.

An initial discussion aimed at taking forward the programme was held on 23 July, 2003 in Johannesburg. At the meeting representatives from COPA (Coalition for Peace in Africa), SACPN, CSVN (the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation) and ISS (Institute for Security Studies) were present. During the meeting it was agreed that a Regional Steering Group should be established and be promoted jointly by SACPN, NAPS (Network of African Peace Builders) and COPA. It was also decided that opportunities in August and November 2003 should be used to further discuss

the process. In August 2003 SACPN held a seminar with local NGOs to discuss and collect ideas on issues pertinent to them and to debate ways of strengthening local network linkages. In attendance were eight church-based organisations, nine NGOs, and ten Regional Steering Group members of SACPN. The meeting came up with suggestions to strengthen SACPN's role in using national networks to collect information and share the main tenets of the programme. These suggestions are as follows: each Regional Steering Group member is to link up with UN offices in their home countries and find out how civil society is already linked up with the UN. Also local initiatives/opportunities need to be used to further elaborate the process. SACPN needs to link up with existing networks and collect documentation on national agendas that have already been set. Thus SACPN wants to use its national networks to convene civil society at national level.

In November 2003 two meetings are scheduled. From 9-13 November a training seminar will be held in Botswana organised by NAPS and ASPR (Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution). The last three days of the seminar will be attended by SACPN, NPI (Nairobi Peace Initiatives), WANEP (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding) and NAPS. These organisations are working together on a book titled *Peace Education and Practice in Africa*.

From 9-11 November, 2003, the Southern Africa Social Forum will be held in Zambia. SACPN hopes to use this event to collect information on the issues that concern civil society in Southern Africa, to share the main tenants of the programme, and to put SACPN and the programme on the map.

Thus the Regional Steering Group will support national discussion and conferences to work towards facilitating a Regional Conference which will take place in 2004. This conference could ultimately be consolidated into a sustainable regional and African initiative that could inter alia forward recommendations through the UN Conference in 2005.

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Europe

The Caucasus

The Caucasus stands out in the long list of troubled spots on the post Soviet map. In recent years the region has faced a cluster of ethnic wars and, high- and low- intensity conflicts. Violent conflicts have taken place in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, North Ossetia, Chechnya, and certain areas of Dagestan. The violent conflict in Chechnya is still ongoing and continuously 'spilling-over' into neighbouring regions. Tensions between certain ethnic groups remain high.

The strategy of civil society and NGOs in conflict prevention needs to be clearly defined and properly addressed. Conflict prevention activity in this region is quite new and as yet not effectively developed because of the lack of experience

in this field. The presence of extensive humanitarian programmes in the region have led to the creation of many local NGOs that function as the implementing partners of large humanitarian agencies. This development of civil society institutions has been an indirect consequence of humanitarian programmes in the region. As a result the capacities for the local civil actors to work outside of direct humanitarian programmes and their capabilities for playing a key role in conflict prevention/management have not, thus far, been substantially developed or supported.

The initiative of launching the programme in the region is positively supported by a number of the regional NGOs and networks working in the field of conflict prevention and is regarded as a good opportunity to strengthen the existing networks and stimulate cooperation among them. Civil society actors believe the programme will greatly contribute to the effective interaction between civil society, UN and regional authorities, so it will lead to a more integrated approach to conflict prevention. The development of a regional Action Plan and strategy will aim to: (a) raise public awareness of peaceful means of conflict resolution in the region; (b) strengthen regional networks and improve interaction between civil society, regional organisations and the UN; (c) cooperate with other regions internationally; and (d) elaborate a regional Action Agenda with recommendations to the UN.

The regional initiator for the Caucasus is the *International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN)*. ICCN is a peace making, research and training institution, one of the leading non-governmental organisations in the Caucasus. The ICCN plays an active role in peacebuilding and civil society building in Georgia and the Caucasus region. It has professional experience in IDP/refugee studies, peace education including training in a number of fields, public diplomacy (track-two) efforts across conflict zones, cross-border activities and peace campaigning, international expertise and networking. The ICCN is a strong and active member of a number of regional and international networks. The ECCP and ICCN have developed a partnership to initiate and develop the Caucasus regional process and link it to a global process for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The regional process in the Caucasus covers regional actors in the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) and North Caucasus (Russian Federation). The process will stimulate the discussion of the issues that need to be immediately addressed. In autumn 2003, the first regional conference will be held to help shape the structure and format of the Caucasus regional process. The conference will bring together as many actors as possible to add their value to the process. The preliminary consultations with regional actors have demonstrated high interest and active involvement of NGOs, regional networks, the representatives of international organisations and regional authorities. The first regional meeting will include several large regional networks - the Caucasus sub network of the CIS NGO Working Group on Conflict Management and Prevention; the Caucasus Forum; the Caucasus Refugee NGO Network (CRINGO); Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development; South Caucasus Institute of Regional Security; and the Strengthening and Development of Caucasus Network for Social Research and Conflict Resolution. It is expected that many more organisations will become active participants in the regional process by the end of the first phase.

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East and Southeast Europe

The cultural, social and economic differences in this region are vast, however, every country has one thing in common - transition. Although the destinations might be different for different countries, they are all in the process of change. This process of transition determines the different character of the different conflicts themselves. Even though the region lacks stability, no open conflicts have been observed. The conflicts generated by this transition process have had a predominantly social character and have been considered internal matters even though every state in the region has had to face similar problems.

Irrespective of their different political orientation, states in the region have had to cope with the same type of conflicts. The contradicting political and economic interests within the region, as well as the different orientation of the various states and groups, are slowing down the international cooperation across the region as a whole. Twelve years of post-soviet reforms have not brought stability and predictability into the life of the majority within these countries. Most of these problems - violation of human rights in Belarus, the Moldovan/Transdniestrian conflict, the issue of the Crimea - has not been resolved, despite the best efforts of governments, OSCE, the EU and the international community. Fortunately, there are also positive signs in the region: the Ukraine for example managed to prevent latent conflict erupting in Crimea and in the western part of Ukraine, which, if ignored or dealt with in a wrong way, could have evolved into serious confrontations.

The regional programme in Eastern and Southeastern Europe would determine for the region involved, the domains and aspects of the collaboration between UN agencies and Regional organisations such as the OSCE and non-governmental organisations. Further, it would clarify the positive and the negative sides in the processes toward a better and more fruitful, result-oriented collaboration. It will also establish a better understanding of the common goals and objectives in the domain of prevention of violent armed conflicts as well as bringing out some new approaches to these issues.

Planned activities

Priority will be given to broadening the participation and support of other regional networks and organisations in the preparatory process, and organising and facilitating a discussion about the interaction of civil society and the UN system in the framework of conflict prevention / management activities in the region. Secondly, a regional archive of information materials about civil society activities in the field of prevention and management of violent conflicts will be set up, while a related web-page will be developed on the base of the existing web page of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) NGO Working Group on Conflict Management and Prevention. Thirdly, a regional workshop will be organised to activate the regional preparatory process to the UN Conference. At this workshop the participants will discuss the role of the civil society in the prevention of armed conflict and the opportunity for the conflict-prevention and peacebuilding community to consolidate its rapid

development; the basic problems in the region and possible methods and strategies for their solution; the project for the further development of the regional preparatory process as well as decide on a fundraising strategy; a regional leading agency that will become a permanent regional representative to the International Steering Group and create a regional steering group.

About the initiators:

The *William R. Nelson Institute* - Moldova, in collaboration with *Nonviolence International* (Russian Federation) and the *Joint Committee for Democratization and Reconciliation* (Moldova), will be responsible for the initiating phase of the programme in this region. These organisations participate in the Western CIS Regional Network on Conflict Management and Prevention. This network, which is part of a broader, CIS-wide network, currently unites 19 representatives of civic organisations from Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine. The organisations involved have good contacts with their colleges both in Eastern European states, as well as in Russia and other CIS regions. The coming months the William R. Nelson Institute - Moldova will begin a consultative process to involve other organisations in this region and to create a regional steering group.

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The Balkans

During the 1990s the Balkan region attracted the attention of the world as the break up of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia led to terrible conflicts throughout most parts of its territory. To call these conflicts inter-ethnic is to oversimplify and to list all the possible causes would take too long.

Today, there are five newly established countries in the region of former Yugoslavia. Given that the conflicts took place several years ago, peacebuilding and conflict prevention are issues of great importance. Several parts of the region still have conflict potential: South Serbia, Macedonia and Sandzak (or Raska region). During the 1990s, the process of reconciliation was initiated by individuals trying to re-establish cultural and economic links. NGOs dealing with the return of refugees and legal issues connected to estate ownership also contributed. It took some time before officials began to deal with it these issues at the highest level but several trade agreements have now been signed and national leaders have held regular summits on security and cooperation in the Balkan region.

The situation regarding peace initiatives within each country in the region differs from country to country. While peace initiatives have the open support of politicians at the highest level, obstacles remain in the attitudes of local politicians and the acceptance of initiatives among the public at the local level. Apart from the countries mentioned above, Bulgaria and Albania will also participate in the Balkan regional process. During the 1990s conflict prevention became an issue of great importance in these countries.

In the Balkans, the *Nansen Network*, comprising eight offices in the region of former Yugoslavia will act as regional initiator. The Nansen Network grew out of The Balkan Dialogue Project, which was initiated by Nansenskolen,

Lillehammer and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), based in Norway. This network was approached and asked to take on this initiative through one of their main partners, PRIO. The Nansen Network accepted the invitation and has begun a consultative process to involve other Balkan organisations and to create a regional steering group. The Balkan group will include: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania and Bulgaria.

In order to fulfil this objective, representatives of the Nansen Network agreed on the following strategy during Phase I of the regional process:

- research on the peacebuilding initiatives in the Balkans;
- identifying potential partners;
- bilateral meetings with potential partners, September-November 2003;
- developing a joint approach and general agenda for national meetings due to be held in Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia & Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Albania prior to the Nansen Network Annual Meeting in Banjaluka, November;
- to identify and contact potential donors for funds;
- to adopt and distribute the materials (information sheet & brochure);
- to form a Regional Steering Group by December 2003.

The three key criteria for selection of the organisations/individuals for the regional conference should be based on: their motivation, their devotion and the results of their work in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Considering these criteria, the following groups were identified as possible participants and partners in the process:

- Organisations that work cross-border
- Distinguished individuals
- NGOs dealing with non-violent action
- NGOs dealing with transformation of conflict
- NGOs supporting processes of reconciliation
- Media (distinguished individuals and associations)
- Women's organisations
- Conscientious objectors
- Local authorities
- Politicians taking positions in institutions that contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Donors.

Proposals for future initiatives focus on the local, national and regional levels. In the first phase, local meetings with NGOs, INGOs, local authorities and donors will take place. There will also be one national meeting for each country in the region to which representatives of all groups will be invited. It is estimated that in November 2004, the Balkan regional conference will take place.

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Context of the region and challenges

The focus of most Western, Southern and Northern European NGOs is mainly on (post) conflict regions outside Europe. On the other hand, their activities mostly focus on European governmental institutions, such as their own local governments, but also the European Union and the main

European security institutions. These activities include amongst others, research and dissemination of information, lobby and advocacy, early warning and crisis management. The main challenge of the European NGOs is to set up stronger networks to integrate existing knowledge and come up with combined lobby and advocacy activities. Also, the regional European process should focus on defining the specific role of European NGOs as 'engaged outsiders' in the prevention of armed conflict in regions just outside Western Europe (Balkans, Caucasus) and beyond.

Activities so far and planned

The Irish Government will hold the Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2004. They have proposed that the ECCP co-organises a conference on the interaction between civil society organisations and governments in relation to conflict prevention and peacebuilding from March 31 to April 2, 2004 in Dublin. The ECCP discussed the conference during two different, one-day meetings with the Irish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ireland Aid. A provisional agreement has been reached on Irish support of content and funding for this part of the regional process.

The first two days of the conference will be organised by the ECCP in co-operation with the Irish Steering Committee, consisting of several Irish development and peacebuilding NGOs, headed by Cooperation Ireland. The third day will be organised by the Irish Government, in cooperation with the ECCP. This will be a high-level meeting where governments, representatives from ministries of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, and from the enlarged European Union will hear the conclusions of the previous two days and decide what role they could play.

In preparation for this conference a draft Regional Action Agenda will be produced. It will finally be discussed and defined at the Dublin Conference and will be presented to the Governments on the third day. In this Regional Action Agenda the European NGOs can express their major issues of concern and identify common goals and strategies, which will stimulate the EU member states to implement conflict prevention and peacebuilding in their overall foreign security and development policies.

Issues and priorities

The following issues will (amongst others) be on the agenda of the Dublin Conference:

- Supporting a more integrated approach to crisis management and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.
- Civilian involvement in areas of (post) conflict.
- Development and peacebuilding.
- Advocacy and lobby, and
- Interaction between state and non-state actors.

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Latin America and the Caribbean

The regional programme in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) aims to address issues related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, through a region-wide processes of networking, consultation and research. This work will be founded upon and intricately linked to the strong involvement

and participation of civil society organisations and networks, in coordination with similar initiatives from other regions.

The regional initiator for the Global Partnership in Latin America and the Caribbean is the *Regional Coordination for Economic and Social Research (CRIES)*. This is a twenty-year old LAC network with long-standing experience and a solid reputation in participative research with civil society organisations and networks and which also has experience in dialogue and joint action with inter-governmental and governmental organisations. CRIES is a founding member and initiator of the Greater Caribbean Civil Society Forum and the Forum on Citizen Diplomacy (FDC)² in LAC, which will participate in the aforementioned regional process. CRIES acts as a catalyst for the programme in Latin America and the Caribbean, ensuring the start of the regional process in 2003 in all sub regions, bringing together as many interested groups as possible while promoting the process so that those interested have the chance to add their value to the process. To ensure civil society involvement and support for the LAC regional process and its monitoring, a Regional Steering Committee and an Advisory Board will be established on the basis of grass roots, local, national and regional nominations, in coordination with the International Steering Committee.

The LAC region is divided into four sub regions: Central America and Mexico, the Caribbean, the Andean region and the Southern Cone. The regional process is articulated on the basis of a series of sub regional workshops and conferences to be held in 2003 and 2004, including two regional conferences in 2004. These will allow a process of networking among civil society organisations and networks, as well as with governments, intergovernmental organisations and other relevant actors. Parallel to this process will be the development of a regional plan of action and proactive platform, which will aim to:

- increase awareness on peacebuilding and conflict prevention among the societies of the region;
- coordinate its recommendations and agendas with other regions worldwide; and
- produce and present an Action Agenda with recommendations to the UN in 2005.

Through regional consultation, networking and increased participation, this process will emphasise the importance of the role of civil society organisations and networks in addressing and dealing with conflict prevention actions and peacebuilding initiatives, both on the regional and global levels.

The preliminary sub regional consultations taking place in 2003 will involve discussion to promote deep-rooted regional involvement from the grassroots up to the larger networks. These consultations will include meetings in the sub regions of Central America (Guatemala, July 2003), Southern Cone and Brazil (Argentina, November 2003), Greater Caribbean (Cuba, February 2004) and Andes (Colombia, December 2003). The outputs so far include an initial draft of a position paper on peace security and conflict prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean. This document serves as a starting point for the regional Action Plan by putting the major issues on the table for discussion. There will be an electronic forum in October 2003 so that individuals and organisations can discuss the draft online. To read a copy of

² The FDC is an umbrella organisation encompassing network organisations, which include CRIES, HRI, Colombia's Andean Service Committee, CEAAL, ABONG, REPEN, SERAPAZ, Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, CLADEM, and PIDHDD among others.



Andrés Serbin

the position paper, please refer to the CRIES website (www.cries.org).

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Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) stretches from Morocco to Iran and from Turkey to Yemen, including Israel. Therefore, one of the major challenges for the Global Partnership in this region is how to include Israeli civil society organisations in this process. As this has proven to be very difficult the strategy has moved toward dealing with individuals more than with organisations, per se.

There are no effective regional networks dealing with the issue of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in MENA. The Global Partnership thus offers a good opportunity to establish a regional network. It was concluded at the International Preparatory Meeting in June 2003 that several contacts need to be established and as this MENA process also includes Israeli organisations, sensitivities have to be taken seriously. Another issue of concern is that in several countries, such as in Syria, Egypt and Iran, there is hardly any legal room for civil society organisations to operate.

The Regional Human Security Center (RHSC) based in Amman and Panorama-The Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development based in Jerusalem were both interested in taking on some of the roles of regional initiator. It was therefore decided that they would share the responsibilities and act as the provisional secretariats until the preparatory regional seminar will take place.

The Regional Human Security Centre at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy was established with the support of a contribution from the Canadian Department of Foreign Trade and International Affairs. It is the first centre of its kind in the region, and seeks to promote awareness of human security issues in the countries of the Middle East. More specifically, it seeks to do the following:

- Identify common issues threatening the human security of people in the Middle East.
- Serve as a forum where practitioners, experts, and

academics can discuss and propose working solutions for human security threats.

- Submit relevant recommendations and solutions to policy makers.
- Raise the level of awareness of human security issues among practitioners and policy makers.
- Serve as a source of information on human security issues in the Middle East.
- Conduct full-scale studies on human security issues.

The Palestinian Centre for the Dissemination of Democracy & Community Development was established in 1991 in Jerusalem with the aim of raising the awareness of the Palestinian people of democratic concepts, and notions of civil society. The organisation runs its programs through three offices in Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Gaza.

Its main objectives are to:

- participate in the development of Palestinian society, and to promote the notions of the civic society amongst Palestinians;
- disseminate the norms of citizenship, accountability, transparency, and good governance;
- help the Palestinians build a civil, democratic, and pluralistic society;
- build the human resource and institutional capacities of different sectors and organisations;
- promote the scientific research methodology and provide young researchers with the required skills and researching opportunities.

Panorama has more than 10 years experience in this field and will therefore focus more on the research side of the project. As RHSC has more capacity for organisational tasks and establishing regional contacts, they will organise meetings and actively network in the rest of the region. A preparatory meeting will be organised in October in Amman with RHSC, Panorama, and ten other key-organisations from other countries such as Lebanon, Iran, the Gulf States and Egypt. At this meeting, the regional process and the regional conference following that will further be discussed. A proposal for co-fundraising will be on the agenda as well. At the regional conference, planned for mid-2004, the regional steering group will be elected.

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North America (Canada and USA)

The process in Canada is being co-ordinated by the *Canadian Conflict Prevention Initiative (CCPI)*, formed in January 2003. This is an initiative of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC), a network of Canadian NGOs and institutions, academics and individuals engaged in activities that address the causes and consequences of violent conflict. The CCPI was formed to take advantage of this opportunity to deepen the debate on conflict prevention and enhance conflict prevention networks not only at the global level but also at the national level as well.

The key activities identified for the CCPI include:

- building stronger conflict prevention networks at the national, regional and global levels;
- engaging in dialogue with the Canadian government on mainstreaming conflict prevention policies;
- collaborating to develop field-based conflict prevention partnerships in selected southern countries;
- researching the activities of Canadian organisations working on conflict prevention and other applied research, and
- outreach through schools and colleges, the media and the World Wide Web.

A survey of Canadian civil society organisations has recently been completed, and will be presented at the two-day Canadian Peacebuilding Consultation meeting, organised by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, in October 2003. The survey results provide an overview of 'who is doing what' in conflict prevention in Canada, identify conflict prevention themes of most relevance to a Canadian constituency and solicit ideas about the value Canada might add to the global initiative. The discussion initiated in the survey will be deepened during a half-day gathering of Canadian civil society organisations to be held on the margins of this consultation meeting.

At the same time, planning will begin for a North American conference on conflict prevention to be held in 2004; colleagues from the US and Mexico are being invited to Ottawa to participate in the planning session and the peacebuilding consultations as a whole. While there is an understanding in the North American region that each country has unique experiences and different national political, cultural and economic circumstances, there is also a strong desire to identify areas of common experience and potential collaborative activities on conflict prevention. Some of these may include cross-border issues, particularly in light of the 'war on terror', indigenous experiences with conflict prevention and youth and conflict prevention.

In the USA, interested organisations held a preliminary consultation on May 8 in Washington, DC. From this group, a US Steering Committee has emerged, representing conflict resolution practitioners, academics, security interests, human rights, international law, peace advocates, and the development/humanitarian assistance community. This group is developing a proposal for work within the United States, in preparation for a North American event and the international conference. Preliminary proposals call for a two-track effort focused on 'The Search for Security.' The first track would be a series of grassroots dialogues undertaken in co-operation with one or more organisations that have developed expertise in involving a broad spectrum of the public in intensive dialogue sessions on specific policy topics. The second track would engage a selected group of influential policy makers in Washington in a process of developing policy options for

gaining security. Both tracks would address a similar set of questions focused on defining security in an interdependent world and the role of military and non-military (conflict prevention!) strategies in achieving security.

Representatives of the US Steering Committee are meeting late in October with Canadian colleagues to begin planning the North American efforts.

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Asia and the Pacific

The socio-economic political diversity that is an intrinsic feature of the Asia Pacific region determines to a great extent the divergent human security issues in this region. Whereas the region recorded enormous economical strides in the last decades as is the case of the Asian Tigers, this region is also home to poorly developed countries such as Bangladesh, and has also had to contend with highly volatile socio-economic and political crises and conflicts, which continue to plague the sub-continent.

For instance while the economic crises in Indonesia have helped pave a foundation for democracy, the internal tensions and conflicts within Indonesia have also escalated with far-reaching security and stability implications for the region. From Nepal, the Philippines to the Solomon Islands in the Pacific, internal strife and tensions continue to pose threats to the socio-economic political stability in the region. The region has also had to contend with cross border escalation of tensions such as the nuclear stand-offs between Pakistan and India, North Korea and the USA, and other countries in the peninsula. Also, the cross-Border Strait tensions between Taiwan and China and the arms build up aimed at deterrence poses threats to the already very volatile region. In addition the post September 11 developments have further plunged the sub-continent into more complex conflicts grounds. Ideological resentments and radicalism are on the rise. Meanwhile Japan is entering alternate remilitarisation and engagement policy fields.

It can be rightly said that the socio, economic, political diversity and the historical developments which is a distinct feature of the region, to a great extent determines the broad range of security issues and points of frictions that continue to plague the region. It is against this backdrop that the region perceives the programme as a more than timely endeavour that will help provide an alternative paradigm and framework to help de-escalate, resolve and prevent the conflicts that have plagued this region for decades.

Though the range of issues in Asia and the Pacific region are numerous owing to the diversity of the region, localised security concerns have continued to have macro implications for the whole region. For instance, instability in Afghanistan and in Central Asia have implications to countries as far off as

Australia, while the political stand off between North Korea and the USA continues to have such major security implications to the neighbouring countries, Japan and South Korea. Though the geographical expansiveness and the socio economic political diversity in this region necessitates the implementation of the programme at sub-regional levels comprising of South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, the Pacific, and Central Asia, the interconnectedness of security concerns in this region calls for a synergy of efforts in conflict prevention.

In this regard though the programme will be implemented at sub regional level, which will comprise, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia, the Pacific and Central Asia. Mechanisms will be developed to ensure that the programme also focuses on cross cutting proactive conflict prevention mechanisms which will help address the macro issues that pose macro security concerns in the region. In all sub-regions the regional processes will be implemented in three phases. The consultative phase, the regional action phase and the regional conference phase. While the region will aim at contributing to the formulation of conflict prevention mechanisms at global levels, it is envisioned that the programme in this region will go beyond the 2005 UN to ensure that resolutions and conflict prevention mechanisms are implemented and adhered to.

Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia

The programme in Southeast and Northeast Asia was discussed in a two-day consultation meeting between 30 September and 2nd October 2003. Eighteen participants representing civil society groups, INGOs and research institutes in the two sub-regions converged in Mindanao to deliberate and consult with regards to the implementation of the programme in the region. The Initiatives for International Dialogue convened this consultation meeting in collaboration with ECCP, the Gaston Ortega Peace Institute, and People's Solidarity for participatory Democracy and the Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network.

Objectives of the meeting were to determine whether the two regions would implement the programme as one region, identify a regional initiator and national focal points form a Regional Steering Group (RSG) in addition to identifying research needs and gaps and drawing an action plan.

At the end of the consultation several recommendations were put forward. In view of the regional diversity, the two regions will implement the programme separately. Nevertheless, in order to maintain a regional outlook, it was recommended that mechanisms be developed that would enable the two sub-regions synergise their conflict prevention efforts within given frameworks.

The meeting also identified research strengths and gaps that would determine the content outlook of the programme in both regions. It was also resolved that conflict would be addressed within two categories. These being armed conflict and latent conflicts that were further categorised into cross border and intra state conflicts.

Southeast Asia

The *Initiatives for International Dialogue* (IID) organisation was nominated to take up the Regional Initiators responsibility for Southeast Asia, while *Peace Boat* and the *Asian Exchange for Regional Alternatives* (ARENA) became the co-initiators for the Northeast Asia region.

National focal points were identified and a regional Southeast Asia steering group was formed. The national focal points in Southeast Asia comprised of the participating

organisations: FORUM Asia Thailand, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute Philippines, Women's League of Burma/Burmese Women's Union Burma, Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network Indonesia and Sisters in Islam Malaysia

The region plans to initiate and conduct research that will highlight conflict prevention initiatives that are in place. This will be carried out in collaboration with civil society organisations at grassroots level. The research will provide lessons learnt which will help identify functional frameworks that will determine the appropriate mechanisms and guidelines for interactions amongst different actors in the field of conflict prevention in addition to identifying root causes of conflict, latent and potential. The findings will provide a foundation on which proactive mechanisms for conflict prevention will be formulated. The programme will also provide the region with opportunities for strengthening networking and enhancing advocacy and lobbying capacities.

The regional action plan is to culminate with the regional conference, which is planned for August 2004. This will provide an opportunity to collate the research findings and lessons learnt as a basis for drawing recommendations for incorporation into the International Action Agenda to the UN, while also formulating follow-up action plans for the programme in the region.

The regional Initiator

The Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID) is a solidarity and advocacy institution that works for the promotion of human rights, and capacity-building through solidarity among the peoples and civil society in the region. It has been in the forefront of the solidarity movement for East Timor being the secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Coalition for East Timor (APCET) since 1994, and is currently playing a key role in facilitating grassroots engagement of the peace process in Mindanao and advancing the call for democratisation and tripartite dialogue in Burma. The IID currently works on various campaigns on human rights, peace and democracy and capacity-building efforts in other parts of Southeast Asia. The IID is governed by Board of Trustees drawn from a broad sector of Philippine society. Its programmes are however informed by input and critique from its broad regional network partners and constituency. Management is led by the Executive Director who is assisted by a Coordinators Committee composed of the different Programme heads. The IID usually works with coalitions, which it convenes as the vehicle to implement its programmes.

Regional Initiator and Contact person for South East Asia

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Northeast Asia

The Consultation meeting in Mindanao nominated *Peace Boat* and *Asian Exchange for Regional Alternatives (ARENA)* to be the co-initiators in the region. In addition the two organisations form the focal points for both Japan and Hong Kong respectively, while *Women making Peace* was nominated to be the focal point in South Korea.

Though the region seeks to implement the programme at sub-regional level independent of Southeast Asia, the participating organisations at the Mindanao Consultation acknowledged the opportunities that the programme offers particularly with regards to strengthening and building networks across regional boundaries. The meeting recommended the need to enlarge these networks to incorporate all the other sub-regions in this region within the framework of the programme.

Amongst the issues that were perceived as critical in Northeast Asia and for which proactive conflict prevention efforts are crucial is the remilitarization of Japan and the build-up of nuclear power arsenal in North Korea. The China Strait was also considered a potential conflict situation that needs proactive conflict prevention efforts.

The first activity for the programme in this sub-region is to incorporate more organisations into the programme through dissemination of information. To achieve this, Peace Boat will facilitate the translation of the brochure into Japanese, while ARENA will facilitate the Chinese translation. The consultative meeting for the region is planned for February 2004. The objective will be to identify additional research areas and formulate strategies to document peace-building efforts as contributions to lessons learned. Northeast Asia plans to strengthen networking with other regions in Asia by way of encouraging participation at different national forums and steering group meetings within the four sub-regions. This was perceived as one of the mechanisms that will enable to build and maintain networks across the region in addition to sharing lessons learned.

Peace Boat pledged to provide the itinerary for the coming year. The programmes at different regions are invited to utilise the facilities on this boat to hold conflict-prevention conferences and forums. Peace Boat will provide the facilities to the programme at subsidised rates.

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South Asia

The SA Regional Consultative Meeting will take place in Sri Lanka on 8 and 9 November 2003. Participants for this meeting will be drawn from key organisations and civil societies from the region. Sridhar Khatri, the Executive Director of *The Regional Centre for Strategic studies (RCSS)* in Sri-Lanka is the regional initiator for this region while the *Department of International Relations of Karachi University* and the *International Centre for Peace Initiatives* are the national convenors for Pakistan and India respectively.

The objective of the brainstorming meeting will be to formulate the regional program content, take an inventory of existing research and identify current research needs and gaps with regard to the priorities, identifying national convenors for Nepal and Bangladesh and nominating members of the Regional Steering Committee. While the meeting will aim at formulating an action plan that will encompass the programme content and process for South Asia, it is however envisioned that South Asia will organise five national conferences in 2004: in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and two in India. These national conferences will form forums through which the programmes will be initiated at national levels. It is expected that these national forums will enrich the programmatic content of the programme through research and documentation of practical conflict prevention efforts and practises from grassroots civil society organisations. RCSS will also facilitate the participation of the global programme to the World Social Forum, which is scheduled to take place in Mumbai in January 2004. The programme will be presented in a panel discussion. The WSF will also provide an opportunity to conduct the first India National Conference whose objective will be to develop a program and an action plan. The national action plans for the South Asia region will culminate in the regional conference where the research findings will be collated, and in the formulation of the regional agenda that will form part of the global civil society agenda to be presented at the UN Conference in 2005.

About the Regional Initiator

Established in 1992, the RCSS is a South Asian forum for studies, training and multi-track dialogue and deliberation on issues of regional interest. The Centre is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organisation for collaborative research, networking and interaction on strategic and international issues relating to South Asia. The main objectives of the Centre are to sponsor and co-ordinate research on South Asian strategic and security related issues, promote interaction among scholars and other professionals in the region and beyond. RCSS also fosters linkages and collaboration between research institutions devoted to studies on issues related to conflict, conflict prevention and resolution in South Asia.

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The Pacific

The Pacific regional programme will cover all conflict zones within Melanesia (including newly independent East Timor), Polynesia and Micronesia, and Australia and New Zealand. This initiative is more than timely in the Pacific, which has been riddled with conflict and tensions across a wide range of areas. It is acknowledged that in order to achieve lasting peace in this region the participation of civil society is crucial. The programme offers an opportunity for involving civil society in conflict prevention and resolution initiatives in the region. The programme will be implemented in three phases in this region. This first phase of the project will be implemented from November 2003 to January 2004. The second phase will comprise the national activities in 2004. This will be followed by the last phase which will be the regional conference in 2004. The first regional consultation meeting will be held in Suva on 26th - 28th November 2003. The consultation is intended to bring together organisations in the region involved in conflict prevention, who will have an opportunity to formulate the process and content in the region. Representatives of regional government institutions, research centres, multilateral organisations will also be invited to certain sessions of this first regional consultation. The consultation is an opportunity to engage and secure the support of regional governments, UN agencies and other civil society organisations for this project. An important outcome of this regional consultation will be the development and adoption of a Regional Action Plan

About the Provisional Regional Initiator

The regional initiator for the Pacific is the *NGO Coalition on Human Rights (NGO-CHR)*. This is an umbrella organisation of 14 NGOs in Fiji, ranging from women's rights advocacy groups, the main national trade union umbrella body, disability rights advocacy, gay and lesbian rights, constitutional and other rights based advocacy groups. Both the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Advocacy and Research (ECCREA), which has a strong peace-building component, and the Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) are also affiliates of the NGO-CHR. The Coalition was established in 1996 to encourage networking between human rights advocacy groups in Fiji and as a means to offer support and solidarity to member organisations' objectives and the protection and development of human rights in Fiji generally. Although mainly a national umbrella organisation, the NGO-CHR have over the past few years developed links with other umbrella NGO bodies within the region particularly within the area of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Affiliate members also have their own individual links and networks with other regional NGOs and international partners.

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Central Asia

Central Asia comprises the five former Soviet Republics Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. After more than 10 years of independence and a civil war in Tajikistan, these countries are facing problems deriving from internal and external threats such as instability arising from ethnic tensions, in particular in the Ferghana valley; interstate disputes over resources and borders; Islamic militancy; absence of viable democratic institutions and growing restrictions on the civil society activities; and regional instability and risks of spill-over from Afghanistan and Xinjiang.

The discussion of conflicts, peace and regional stability in Central Asia has been limited, for the most part, to the governments of the republics. The role of civil society, the communities themselves which create lasting peace and who benefit most, is rarely mentioned.

How do people struggling with conflict themselves present the conflict and its environment? What activities have local communities initiated to curb conflict, from who have they solicited assistance and how can their efforts be replicated?

The situation has become especially intense as weapons have filtered their way not only into the hands of criminals, but into the homes of average, law abiding citizens. The tensions in the cross-border areas, growing suspicions among neighbouring peoples, deepening poverty and, as a result, the increased possibility of armed conflict makes the region extremely explosive.

NGOs working with communities have a very important role. Being in close touch with local populations, NGOs observe the first signs of potential violence and act to prevent or transform conflict when they can, or inform local authorities and international organisations that the situation requires more intensive conflict resolution. NGOs are the first stage of preventive action working to avoid further emergency measures.

The *Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI)* has taken up the role of regional initiator. It is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organisation with a mission to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts. To achieve this, it aims to co-ordinate community-based activities and civil forums, which promote peace, tolerance, and conflict resolution strategies, and to support locally initiated solutions to regional inter-ethnic conflict. One of its main programmes in the field of conflict prevention are the Mass Media for Conflict Prevention programme, the Conflict Prevention through Support of Civil Initiative programme and the Ambassadors of Goodwill in the Ferghana Valley programme. FTI works in close cooperation with NGOs in the region and is establishing a regional network.

Project activities:

- FTI has compiled a list of 56 Central Asian NGOs, which have been informed about the forthcoming project: 'Suggestions on Cooperation' (the Regional Process). These NGOs are engaged in conflict prevention, community mobilisation, legal issues, research, youth and gender issues. Furthermore FTI started to define potential partners within civil society, NGOs, the UN and governments to work on the prevention of armed conflicts in Central Asia, to distribute information about forthcoming activities and to determine the scope and depth of interested parties.
- Two working meetings of the national co-ordinators will be held to develop and co-ordinate the project activity strategy, to exchange views and experiences, and establish communications between the NGOs of the region. In

September, the first regional meeting took place in Bishkek. National co-ordinators were appointed and a regional steering group was established. The report of the regional meeting will be distributed mid-October.

- One national meeting with the representatives of civil society, NGOs, the UN and governments will be held in each of the countries. Between twenty and thirty participants are expected take part in each of the national meetings. Primary attention will be given to the participation of NGOs which practice in the field and which are able to bring the voice of civil society to the meetings. At the national meetings, the participants will discuss and map regional problems, prioritise areas for collaboration and develop recommendations for the regional conference.
- Research on the condition and potential of civil society in Central Asia will be undertaken, namely to what extent is civil society ready to adopt and support programmes on conflict prevention. Research will include material about national-traditional experiences on conflict prevention, and an analysis of the experiences, histories, successes and challenges of past efforts.
- An advocacy campaign calling for the involvement of participants from civil society will be actively encouraged, utilising a number of resources, including mass media.

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Content of the Programme

Here's an update on the most recent developments regarding the content and research component of the programme Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts.

Initiating the process

After the International Preparatory Meeting (IPM) in June, it was clear that the regional processes for the Global Partnership were off to a good start. Therefore, in July, the ECCP turned its attention to the content and research aspect of the programme. Dr Catherine Barnes¹ was commissioned to develop a framework for shaping the content of the programme and the link with the regional process, focusing on overall research outputs such as the book *People Building Peace* and the Action Agenda. *The Working Document - A Process Framework for Researching the Substantive Content of the Programme* will be the key guiding mechanism of the 'action research' approach.

The Living Document

In order to encourage the first steps of the process and frame the research agenda of the programme, Catherine Barnes produced *The Living Document - A Framework for Substantive Exploration of the Opportunities, Challenges, Dilemmas for Civil Society Engagement in Preventing Armed Conflicts*. The aim of this document is to create an integrated framework of core issues and questions that can be addressed in different ways in all the

other aspects of the programme. It is referred to as a *Living Document* because participants in the different regional and international forums of the programme are invited to develop it further by adding their own issues and questions as well as their responses to the issues and questions posed in earlier versions. As such, it will be the central vehicle for systematising the 'action-research' frame of the programme's research plan. This iterative process - which will be managed by the International Secretariat and overseen by the International Steering Group - should result in the development of a coherent body of theory that is grounded in the diverse experiences of the practitioners involved in the programme.

This framework of questions to initiate discussion takes the central question guiding the programme - how can civil society actors play an effective role in preventing armed conflict and building just societies? - and develops five cross-cutting themes to explore possible answers:

- What can civil society actors do to prevent armed conflict and create just societies?: key actors and issues.
- Developing strategies and mobilising for effective action.
- Ethics of practice: legitimacy, accountability, efficacy and codes of conduct.
- Resources and capacity building: creating the social infrastructure for prevention.
- Interaction: coherence in CSO, government and inter-governmental organisation engagement.

Under each theme are a number of sub-headings and a series of questions to explore them. These questions are intended to stimulate thinking about some of the various challenges connected to the theme, however, it is not expected that they will be 'answered' as they are not meant as a research agenda. Instead, this document aims to provide a useful frame for discussion at the regional preparatory meetings and at the regional conference.

International Advisory Group on Content & Research

As discussed at the IPM, the Global Partnership is in the process of establishing an International Advisory Group on Content and Research matters, made up of individuals who are very experienced and knowledgeable regarding the main issues with which we are dealing. We also seek geographical balance in composition. The task of the International Advisory Group on Content and Research will be to provide overall guidance of the research component of the programme including the process toward the Action Agenda.

Issue papers

On those key topics and actors that will be discussed in more than one region we would like to have issue or discussion papers that could serve as input for the discussions at the regional meetings and later as input for the *People Building Peace* publication.

The frame for the issue papers is:

- state of the art with respect to the issue
- the current debate
- added value and complementarity and how to counter negative effects
- recommendations
- references.

1 Ms. Barnes is an independent consultant and Associate of Conciliation Resources (a London-based NGO). She has extensive experience in action oriented research and was responsible for several reports on peace processes such as in Tajikistan, Sierra Leone and her latest report was on Public Participation in Peace Processes.

Presenting 'The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention' to the UN

The adoption of General Assembly Resolution 57/337 *Prevention of armed conflict* in July 2003 was the latest in a long line of expressions of the desire to implement prevention as a guiding principle for the UN system. By Vasu Vaitla*



This desire began as far back as the drafting of the UN Charter itself (see various paragraphs of Article 1), but was largely frozen in time due to the Cold War. It once again gained prominence in

the 1990s and was expressed in UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace* (1992) and its *Supplement* (1995), UN Security Council debates in 1999 and 2000, and in UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's *Prevention of Armed Conflict* (2001) report. This new wave of prevention has coincided with the rise of civil society activism in global governance and in the prevention of violent conflict. In recognition of this Jan Kavan, the President of the 57th General Assembly, invited the ECCP and the NGO Conflict Prevention Working Group (CPWG) in New York to present 'The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention' initiative to member states on September 4, 2003. Similarly, in an effort to further integrate the initiative into the UN, Assistant Secretary-Generals Gillian Sorensen and Danilo Türk invited the ECCP and the CPWG to dialogue with the Inter-Agency/ Inter-Departmental Resource Group on September 5,

September 4

At the request of Jan Kavan, 88 member states gathered in the Trusteeship Council Chamber with members of the Global Partnership, Under Secretary-General Jan Egeland, Assistant Secretary-General Danilo Türk, and Dr. Mary B. Anderson (President of Collaborative for Development Action) to discuss the opportunities and challenges of civil society's contribution to conflict prevention. Many of the representatives of states

that are normally supportive of prevention and civil society activism (i.e. Sweden, Canada, Japan, Australia, etc.) were expected to be supportive of the global initiative. Indeed they were. However, other states such as Pakistan, Croatia, Chile, Sierra Leone, and Mexico intervened with constructive



Paul van Tongeren (left) and Jan Egeland

'I know of no successful peace process that has not included cooperation between governments, inter-governmental organisations, and civil society organisations.'

JAN EGELAND, UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

suggestions and questions that enriched the three-hour dialogue. Furthermore, the Permanent Mission of Italy read a prepared statement on behalf of EU members that was indicative of the overall tone of the session - while many questions and concerns exist for member states about engagement with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), clear support exists for exploring and understanding the issues that will strengthen the partnerships between governments, inter-governmental agencies, and civil society in preventing deadly conflict.

As the UN and governments struggle to meet the formidable challenges of preventing deadly conflict, there is growing realisation, as was expressed during the session, that civil society is an indispensable partner. CSOs not only increase the effectiveness of prevention efforts, but can also offer unique capabilities for prevention efforts. CSOs can train UN and governmental personnel to work in the local culture, facilitate access to the local populace, evaluate peacebuilding programmes to increase their effectiveness, and train local populations to work on these programmes. CSOs offer a unique ability to analyse local conflicts and provide early warning since they 'live in communities and experience the dynamics of conflict first hand.' Finally, CSOs can ensure sustainability of prevention efforts by continuing capacity-building projects after external actors have departed.

While acknowledging the positive contribution CSOs can make to prevention, member states cited that there was a general lack of knowledge and understanding surrounding civil society and how CSOs work. In fact, some civil society actors are parties in violent conflicts and others, even well-meaning international NGOs, exacerbate situations (such as giving aid that can fuel conflict). Issues such as what civil society means must be clarified. Member states urged CSOs to produce compendiums of CSOs, their work, and lessons learned. Finally, some member states requested the UN system to explore creative ways of working with CSOs and addressing prevention - giving CSOs more structured access to the Security Council so they can provide early warning reports, mandating the General Assembly to make prevention a regular issue in its programme of work, and creating a more consistent and structured co-operative relationship between local CSOs and UN field offices.

September 5

The intent of the presentation to the UN Inter-Agency Resource Group, composed of representatives from various UN departments and programmes, was to integrate the project into the UN more formally than the periodic meetings that the CPWG and ECCP have been conducting over the last year. The presentation of the three representatives from regional processes (Dr. Andres Serbin, Mrs. Raya Kadyrova and Mr. Emmanuel Bombande) gave impetus to a lively discussion on the positive role of CSOs in prevention and in the impediments and challenges that lie in improving the role of CSOs in working with the UN.

UN representatives identified various integral roles that CSOs can play in prevention, covering the full length of the spectrum - from the ideational to the practical. At the ideational level, CSOs can be *norm-creators* by creating a culture of prevention from the ground up whereby citizens encourage and make it politically possible for their government to adopt preventive policies. Similarly, CSOs can be *policy entrepreneurs* by pressuring governments to act when early warning signs show a potential for deadly conflict. Practically, while the international community focuses on systemic macro-level (global)



'Civil Society Organisations know the situation on the ground best because they live in communities and experience the dynamics of conflict first hand.'

EMMANUEL BOMBANDE, the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in Ghana

consequences of preventive action (such as the consequences of intervention on sovereignty), CSOs offer micro-level (community and individual) solutions that address root causes that better ensure sustainability of everyone's efforts.

However, different parts of the UN have learned to work with CSOs at different speeds. Whereas the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) has learned to open its doors to CSOs when they have something to say, UNDP has struggled to understand CSOs and who the local actors are, how they can work, what they do, what their capacity is, and what they can and can't do. If these and other issues such as legitimacy and accountability can be addressed, a multi-sectoral approach that involves cooperation between UN agencies and CSOs is possible.

These are just some of the challenges articulated on September 4 and 5 that must be addressed by this initiative. Some of the answers may be elusive for the time-being, however the support for us to undertake these challenges was clearly expressed by the UN system. Member states requested continuing dialogue on these issues. Similarly, the DPA has committed itself to encouraging support for this initiative within the UN system, help the ECCP seek funding from the UN Foundation, and invited the CPWG to work on the next UN prevention report.

* Mr. S. Vasu Vaitla, Initiatives of Change Representative to the UN (New York). For detailed reports on these meetings, please contact the ECCP or contact the author at vasu.vaitla@us.iofc.org

Conflict Resolution in Schools

Learning to Live Together

On September 15 and 16, 2003, the international conference *Conflict Resolution in Schools: Learning to Live Together* took place in the Netherlands. The conference was a great success with 180 participants from around 45 countries, who shared a wealth of expertise, dedication and enthusiasm.

Over the past few years, interest in the field of conflict resolution in schools has grown considerably. Several recent instances of extreme violence in schools and among youngsters have opened many eyes to the importance of establishing conflict resolution programmes in schools in order to further respect, understanding and a more peaceful environment among pupils. Important new research has demonstrated the benefits for pupils and teachers, as well as for academic achievement and a more positive school climate in general. Pupils benefit not only from better results and a more positive attitude towards school, but also gain increased assertiveness, communication skills and self-control.

Teachers find that their work is more rewarding in an enjoyable classroom climate with healthy interpersonal

relations, and claim that this significantly reduces the dropout rate. Furthermore, conflict resolution skills learned at school can also be used in out-of-school situations, and the institutionalised teaching of these skills thus has a positive impact on societal problems as a whole.

Inextricably linked to this development there is also growing interest in academic research and in educational planning on the theme of Education, Violence and Social Cohesion. The central question in this discussion is how the content and processes of current formal education relate to processes of social exclusion and violence, as well as how to create alternative practices which can stop these processes and contribute to a more cohesive society and a culture of peace.

These issues were addressed in a series of working groups, plenary speeches and debates. Experts and practitioners from a wide range of countries were brought together in order to share experiences, lessons learned and best practices, focusing on practical guidelines for setting up conflict resolution programmes in schools. These programmes range from 'practical' initiatives that contribute directly to creating and maintaining safer and more stimulating learning environments, such as peer mediation and restorative practices, to curriculum change focusing on tolerance, coexistence and social cohesion education.

Even though each working group focused on a specific subject, there were clear overarching themes that relate to all conflict resolution models in all school situations. Some of the distinct preconditions for conflict resolution education (CRE), for instance, were recurring themes in almost every debate:

- the necessity of a whole-school approach to a programme, involving not only students and teachers but also parents, school management, other school staff and the wider community;
- the need for capacity building and broad support for the programme, crucially involving the majority of the teachers and the heads of school;
- the need to have continuity in a programme rather than making it a short-term, extra curricular 'event'. Implementing a programme needs a thorough analysis of the needs of a particular school, a 'mainstreamed' implementation and regular evaluation.

A brief selection of the conclusions and recommendations that came out of the various working groups highlighted the following points:

- Conflict Resolution Education should be mainstreamed in a school's curriculum and should be part of the school's ethos;
- training teachers is essential both in-service and pre-service;
- local, national and international networks between schools and



practitioners are very important for sharing best practices and lessons learned;

- programmes have to be reshaped for every region and every school. Networks and the sharing of other programmes are nevertheless of crucial importance as they bring in new ideas and evaluation;
- the fields of peace education, conflict resolution and coexistence/tolerance/social cohesion education show great overlap and work towards the same basic goals. Nevertheless, they are still very much seen as different fields and treated as such. Closer links and co-operation should bring these fields together;
- youth, women and minority groups should be heard and involved in the development of CRE curricula.

The establishment of an international

‘Last month, I lived what felt like a marvellous dream: people from every corner of the globe gathered together to share their experience teaching young people to live in peace. I left with a renewed sense of commitment to this work.’

RICHARD COHEN, founder and director of School Mediation Associates, USA.

network in this field this was a central topic at the conference. It was agreed that the conference should not be a one-off event, but should form the basis for continuing discussion. Education will also be an important topic in the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, with discussions on this issue in each of the regions. As for the conference, only the establishment of a loose network could be agreed to at this stage due to limited resources. Participants from Norway, England, Germany, Canada, the US and West Africa have already committed to this, and with their help the ECCP is looking forward to keeping the great spirit from this conference alive and taking it further.

Reader and final report can be ordered through the ECCP website



New Literature on Preventing, Managing and Resolving Conflicts

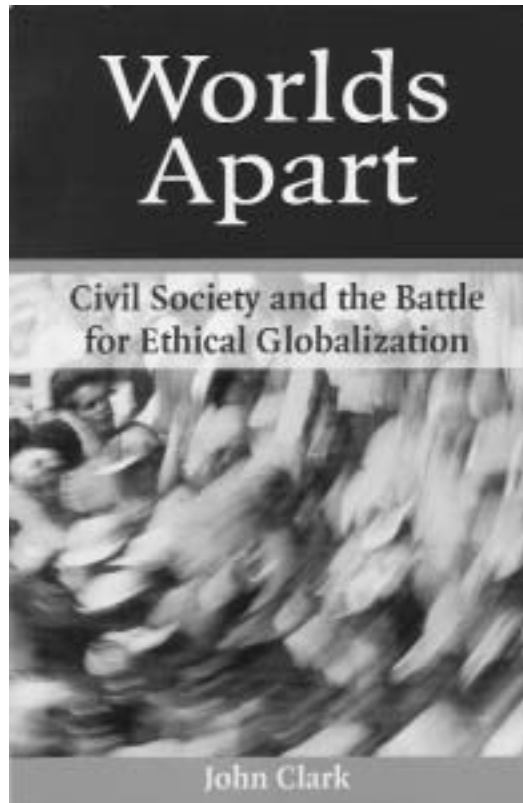
compiled by Pieter Schultz (European Centre for Conflict Prevention)

Optimist in pessimist's clothing?

John Clark, **Worlds Apart: Civil Society and the Battle for Ethical Globalization**

London: Earthscan Publications, 2003, ISBN: 1 85383 987 6
[Reviewed by Jim Wake]

Towards the end of *Worlds Apart: Civil Society and the Battle for Ethical Globalization*, author John Clark repeats an analogy he made in an earlier book, *Democratising Development*. Then he had compared North-South relations to a monopoly game (the British variety, where the wealthy come from Mayfair, the poor inhabit Old Kent Road, and players collect £200 for passing ‘Go’). The players from Old Kent Road might collect £200, but they fell deeply into debt, and the game never ended. Now, he writes in this new volume, ‘the game of monopoly is still going on but the Mayfair players have taken over more of the board and have hiked the price of landing on their squares. They even own much of the property on the South’s squares, and someone rich has copyrighted the use of the name Old Kent Road. What’s more, players now only get £150 for passing ‘Go’.



The analogy follows a generally pessimistic analysis of globalisation. Despite the claims of the ‘integrationists’ that the global economy is good for everyone on the planet, Clark argues that the current order puts business before people and trade before development, fails to address widening gaps in wealth and power, and ignores environmental and sectarian problems.

Clark shows how globalisation has provided new advantages in just those economic sectors where the North has an interest while stacking the deck against those lower-tech sectors where the South has interests.

He then goes on to debunk the claim that open trade policies correlate to higher growth and reduced poverty. Indeed, he says, most prosperous countries relied on tariffs to protect their domestic markets as they developed and subsequently switched to free-trade

strategies to boost their own exports.

And yet Clark doesn’t condemn globalisation out of hand. He admits that he is ‘closer to the critics of the present order than its defenders’ but also quotes Nobel prize-winning

economist Joseph Stiglitz asserting that 'the problem is not with globalisation, but how it has been managed.' Clark doesn't think that most advocates of global markets are evil, only that the 'system' is unfair.

Other critics of the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and other symbols of globalisations are, less tolerant, notes Clark: 'The cheerleaders of globalisation and their critics might just as well live on different planets; the rich and poor virtually do. We are *worlds apart*.'

The virulence of globalisation's critics has not always been healthy or constructive, says Clark, but nonetheless, he believes that the protests against globalisation 'have done

the South an invaluable service by elevating issues of trade and economic justice on the world stage.' Civil society has been gaining strength and - ironically, since it is a reflection of globalisation - is also increasingly interconnected. And so it has an opportunity, Clark argues, to influence the policies that are at the heart of globalisation - on the environment, on trade and labour practices, and on economic justice and good governance.

In the last part of *Worlds Apart*, Clark elaborates on the premise he introduces at the outset: 'What is needed is a broad and powerful civil society coalition pressing for globalisation to be managed ethically'. Ethical globalisation would welcome the benefits that accrue

from globalisation but realign priorities to benefit poor people. And Clark is convinced that it is civil society that can best apply the pressure to level the playing field.

That is actually debatable - if the right political leaders were to implement the right policies and say the right things, they could apply even more effective pressure - but in the real world, it's safe to assume that a gang of crusaders for ethical globalisation will not assume power any time soon. And as long as that does not occur, Clark offers both a cogent analysis and a hopeful prescription for progress towards at least a slightly more just world order.

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Calendar of Events and Conferences

- **RESPONDING TO CONFLICT: STRENGTHENING POLICY AND PRACTICE PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR AGENCIES WORKING IN AREAS OF TENSION AND CONFLICT**

November 17-21, 2003, Birmingham, UK

SPP is a residential course for staff of international and national agencies with advisory and management responsibilities for relief, development, rights and peace-building programmes. It is particularly relevant for those engaged in the planning and implementation of aid and development programmes and those concerned with developing policies for appropriate responses in complex, political emergencies. There will be a process of selection for the course on the basis of the above criteria.

For more information: www.respond.org/courses.html

- **TRAINING EVENT IN PEACEBUILDING, CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

November 18-20, 2003 Oslo, Norway

CCM, the Center for Peacebuilding and Conflict Management is a Norwegian non-profit foundation working towards a culture of peace and constructive management of conflicts

A 3-day training course in association with the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform in Oslo (venue to be confirmed). Lead facilitator is Michelle Parlevliet responsible for the HR and Conflict Resolution programme at the Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town (South Africa). Graham Dyson from CCM Norway will be co-facilitator. Graham worked as a human rights lawyer in South Africa in the 1980s and is presently working on projects in or about Norway, Sri Lanka, the Balkans and Russia/Chechnya.

Some of the questions that will be raised in the workshop:

- What are the fundamental differences between human rights and peacebuilding/conflict management approaches?
- How do activities conducted by actors from these two fields (and others, such as peace activism, humanitarian and development aid and peacekeeping) affect each other?
- Is there sufficient dialogue between the different fields?
- How can we improve the synergistic potential in the interface between the different approaches, methodologies and activities?
- How can we best deal with the tensions implicit in the interface between accusatorial and/or rights based approaches, where the prevailing paradigm is often 'right and wrong', where lawyers, courts, judges, and punishment are often important, and the interest-based approaches implicit in dialogue and mediation?
- What are the real differences between reconciliatory approaches such as those behind the South African and Reconciliation Commission, and the International War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia- are these processes really so different?
- Are these responses between imprisonment and amnesty, which could more creatively contribute to justice?

More information: www.ccm.no/eng/news.html#MichelleParlevliet

- **INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN PEACEBUILDING (NEW DATE)**

December 15, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (changed from October 17)

An international seminar will be held to launch *The Power of the Media*, a new book from the ECCP in cooperation

with the European Centre for Common Ground and IMPACS. This seminar will bring together practitioners, NGOs working in this field and donor organisations to further discuss lessons learned and best practices of media in peacebuilding. Presentations from John Marks, President Search for Common Ground, Shauna Sylvester President IMPACS, Canada and from Internews amongst others. The international seminar is followed by a roundtable discussion on December 16. Contact Juliette Verhoeven at the European Centre for Conflict Prevention for more information. Email: j.verhoeven@conflict-prevention.net

- **SPHERE PROJECT GLOBAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS**
January 25- February 2, 2004, Geneva, Switzerland

This popular course is for people who train in the humanitarian sector. Priority is given to trainers based in countries that are vulnerable to disasters, including freelance training consultants, training organisations, or people with a training function as part of their job. Consideration is also given to people who would be in a position significantly to disseminate the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards. Course participants in the past have included headquarters and field staff from international and national NGOs, the UN, donor agencies, and training organisations in addition to academics and independent consultants.

More information: www.sphereproject.org/training/totad