



# *Grassroots Peacebuilding in Action and Dialogue*

*Inaugural Symposium of the  
International Institute for Community Based Peacebuilding*

*University of Toronto, Canada  
June 9-12, 2005*



# Grassroots Peacebuilding in Action and Dialogue

This event, held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto from June 9-12, 2005, was the inaugural symposium of the International Institute for Community-Based Peacebuilding.

The Institute is a global information network and training resource accessible to practitioners, policy-makers, and theorists who are involved in community-based peacebuilding. It consists of two main elements: (1) a series of bi-annual symposia to be held in different parts of the world, of which our inaugural symposium will be the first, and (2) a global information network and training resource accessible to and influenced by its intended users: practitioners, policy-makers, and theorists who are involved in community-based peacebuilding.

Grassroots Peacebuilding in Action and Dialogue brought together a group of 45 local and international participants engaged in grassroots peacebuilding theory and practice and representing 13 countries. It was a highly interactive event and encouraged sharing of experiences, collaboration on educational materials, learning new skills, developing new theoretical insights and working to build an ongoing network for mutual support and the sharing of stories, resources, and knowledge.

See Appendix B for a history and rationale of how the symposium came to be.



# Symposium Programme

## Grassroots Peacebuilding in Action and Dialogue

### Friday June 10

8:30 – 9:00	<b>Registration and Light Breakfast</b>
9:00 – 9:20	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <i>Anne Goodman, Rick Wallace, and Edith Klein</i>
9:20 – 9:30	<b>Sharing of Waters</b>
9:30 – 11:00	<b>Introductions – Sharing Circle</b>
11:00 – 1:30	<b>Case Study Session 1: Peacebuilding at Home</b> <i>Victoria Freeman; Charles Levkoe; John Wilmerding; Annie Simpson; Dorothy Christian;</i>
1:30 – 3:00	<b>Lunch</b>
3:00 – 6:00	<b>Case Study Session 2: Peacebuilding in Conflict Zones</b> <i>Gjorgji Nikoloski; Dr. Nimo Haji Abubakar; Shukria Dini; Grace Feuerverger; Elias and Heyam Jabbour</i>
6:00 – 7:00	<b>Dinner</b>
7:00 – 8:00	<b>Storytelling as Peacebuilding: Workshop with Dan Yashinsky</b>
8:00 onwards	<b>Storytelling (Continued)</b>

### Saturday June 11

8:30 – 9:00	<b>Light Breakfast</b>
9:00 – 12:00	<b>Case Study Session 3: Peacebuilding Across Borders</b> <i>Miriam Yosowich and Hina Khan; Eileen Omosa; Amina Sharif Hassan and Anne Goodman; Robin Edoh</i>
12:00 – 1:00	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 – 4:00	<b>Case Study 4: Post-Conflict: Healing, Forgiveness and Reconciliation</b> <i>Harry Mika; Nomiki Yekani; Charles Tauber; Kendra Holtzman; Felicien Nemeyimana</i>
4:00 – 4:15	<b>Refreshment Break</b>
4:15 – 4:30	<i>Ravi Bhatia - Gandhi's model of education and its relevance in promoting peace and non-violence</i>
4:30 – 6:30	Training Roundtable
6:30 – 7:30	<b>Dinner</b>
7:30 onwards	<b>Social gathering with music, videos, pictures, and conversation</b>

### Sunday June 12

9:00 – 9:30	<b>Light Breakfast</b>
9:30 – 12:00	<b>Gathering and Future Plans</b>
12:00 – 1:00	<b>Lunch and Closing</b>

---

# Detailed Programme Information

## A. CASE STUDY SESSIONS

***Philosophy and rationale:*** Topics and groupings for these sessions were derived from information provided to us by the participants in their questionnaires. In each session we aimed for internal coherence and a combination of experiential and theoretical perspectives. Cross-cutting themes of youth, diaspora issues and collaborative research will be infused in all the sessions.

Each three-hour session will be broken into 3 blocks: a 15- minute presentations from each of the presenters; 30-minutes of discussion and questions; participants will then break into small groups for the 60 minutes to discuss their own experiences, understandings and approaches in light of the issues raised in the presentation. Guiding questions will be provided. This structure will allow an opportunity for all participants, not just the presenters, to present their views and share their experiences.

Please note that Case Study Session 1 is shorter than the others, because it is on the first morning which also needs to accommodate introductions. We encourage small groups to continue their discussions over lunch.

### ***Session Details:***

#### **Case Study Session 1: Peacebuilding at Home** (Friday 11:00 am – 1:30 pm)

Since we have gathered on Turtle Island/ North America, our first session will explore peacebuilding in the North American context. We will look at ways of building peace in a local community setting, as well as the important issue of dialogue and peacebuilding between the first peoples and newcomers on Turtle Island. We expect that this topic will have implications and ideas for all the participants, wherever “home” is for them,

*Facilitator:* Rick Wallace

#### *Presenters:*

*Victoria Freeman* – Building peace between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal communities

*Charles Levkoe* – Using community gardening, democratic learning and spirituality for peacebuilding

*John Wilmerding* – Theoretical overview of Restorative Justice and the interplay between community-driven and indigenous methods

*Annie Simpson* (Peacebuilders International) – Providing circle training and facilitation to community members to help youth charged under the Youth Criminal Justice Act

*Dorothy Christian* – Art as a peace builder

**Case Study Session 2: Peacebuilding in Conflict Zones** (Friday 3:00 – 6:00 pm)

In conflict areas all over the world, thousands of people and organizations are working with great determination and against formidable odds to build bridges between communities in conflict and to lay the foundations for a durable peace. This session examines some of these efforts in conflict zones around the world at different stages of the conflict cycle.

*Facilitator:* Miriam Yosowich

*Presenters:*

*Gjorgji Nikoloski* – Inter-ethnic conflict prevention in Macedonia

*Dr. Nimo Haji Abubakar* – Her contribution to peacebuilding in Somaliland

*Shukria Dini* – Theoretical discussion: “Building Peace from the Bottom-up: Women in Somalia”.

This presentation will examine how women in war-torn Somalia are contributing to peacebuilding using a space of civil society that was not available to them in the pre-war period.

*Grace Feuerverger* – Grace will share her work on Jewish-Palestinian coexistence in an Israeli village.

*Elias and Heyam Jabbour* – Sulha, a traditional method of conflict resolution

**Case Study Session 3: Peacebuilding Across Borders** (Saturday 9:00 – 12:00 am)

Community-based peacebuilding does not occur in isolation. While conflicts may be localized, there is always a larger context to the conflict, and peacebuilders find that their efforts both affect and are affected by actions and situations elsewhere. This session examines ways people are working across borders to build peace by creating regional and international networks and coalitions, as well as working in diaspora communities.

*Facilitator:* John Wilmerding

*Presenters:*

*Karambu Ringera* – Karambu will present her current work and future plans and visions on a regional and international level for working to overcome the devastation of disease, conflict, and poverty in Africa.

*Miriam Yosowich and Hina Khan* – Miriam and Hina will describe their Pro-Palestinian and Pro-Israeli work with Shalom-Salam@York, a campus-based peacebuilding group.

*Eileen Omosa* – Eileen will present her experience using a cross border approach for conflict management.

*Amina Sharif Hassan and Anne Goodman* - Will share their experience of “Peace Begins at Home”, a series of workshops in the diaspora Somali community in Toronto.

*Robin Edoh* (Afri-Canadian Peace Mission International) - Shuttle Diplomacy in Peace Building within and between countries in Africa

**Case Study 4: Post-Conflict: Healing, Forgiveness and Reconciliation** (Saturday 1:00 – 4:00)

Signing a peace settlement is not the same as achieving sustainable peace. Long after the ink has dried and the high-profile actors have gone home, the real work of peacebuilding continues, with community-based peacebuilders playing a key role in community healing and reconciliation. This session examines the role of community-based peacebuilding in several post-conflict situations.

*Facilitator:* Eileen Omosa

*Presenters:*

*Harry Mika* - Alternative approaches to reconciliation and justice between paramilitary ex-combatants in Loyalist and Republican working class areas of Northern Ireland.

*Nomiki Yekani* - the work of the Umtapo Centre in promoting peace and anti-racism in post-Apartheid South Africa, with a focus on the role of youth.

*Charles Tauber* - the Strategy of Complex Rehabilitation and the theories and practice of working with health as an important element in peacebuilding in Croatia and other countries of the region.

*Kendra Holtzman* - the impact of forgiveness in the personal/political lives over time of youth in former Yugoslav based on a case study of a three-week, spiritually-based conference held in 2002.

*Felicien Nemeyimana* – As coordinator of Coalition for Peace in Africa, Felicien will talk about post conflict reintegration and reconstruction in Rwanda

**B. TRAINING ROUNDTABLE** (Saturday 4:30 – 6:30 pm)

This session will provide participants with the opportunity to discuss their training methods and materials. The roundtable will bring together, in a comprehensive format, the techniques and ideas discussed in the case study sessions. A question/answer period will be included to allow for dialogue on training issues. The session will open with Debra Joy Eklove introducing the Art of Living dedicated to creating peace from the level of the individual and fostering human values in the global community. It includes a Mind/body/breath experiential component.

Please sign up for a 15-minute timeslot at the registration table if you are interested in presenting at this session.

Some of the questions and concerns that might be considered at this session include:

- The notion of praxis, the integration of theory and practice; reflection and action
- Engaging critical reflection on the assumptions underlying current practices
- Collaboration between practitioners and theorists
- Developing education/training programmes that are relevant for use in practice, theory-building and policy-making

Facilitators: Raj Bardouille and Gjorgji Nikoloski

### **C. STORYTELLING WITH DAN YASHINSKY (Friday 7:00 – 8:00 pm)**

Dan Yashinsky is a Toronto storyteller, author, editor, and instigator of storytelling events. He founded the Toronto Festival of Storytelling (1979), 1,001 Friday Nights of Storytelling (1978 and ongoing), and co-founded the Storytellers School of Toronto. He travels internationally as a storyteller, and created/hosted CBC Radio One's Talking Stick in 1999.

This session will enhance our understanding of storytelling as peacebuilding. Dan will engage participants in the telling of traditional fables, proverbs, and stories relating to peace and conflict. Participants will be invited to tell their own tales at this session and throughout the rest of the symposium.

With the permission of participants these stories will be taped and from them we will work to create a storybook and audiotape that can be used as a tool for peacebuilding.

### **D. GATHERING AND FUTURE PLANS (Sunday 9:30 – 12:00 am)**

Facilitators: *Charles Tauber* and *Shukria Dini*

This session is an opportunity to share visions and make plans for the future. We would like to see the session end with the establishment of ongoing working groups, who will continue their work, using internet and website where necessary.

John Wilmerding, Charles Tauber and Kendra Holtzman will give a short presentation on the John Woolman College. This could possibly lead to planning for institutional collaboration. Other topics for future work include, but are not limited to:

- developing training materials
- collaborative research projects
- developing the storybook and ways to use it

This session will be followed by a working lunch from 12-1, with a closing go-around.

# Symposium Presentations

The Stop Community Food Centre  
*Charles Levkoe*



The Stop Community Food Centre strives to increase access to healthy food in a way that:

- Maintains dignity
- Builds community
- Challenges inequality



**The Food Bank** 

 **Drop In Programs**

**Community Kitchens** 

 **Healthy Beginnings**

**Urban Agriculture**

Year-round food production and environmental education initiative




Self discovery and expression

Knowledge Acquisition and skill development

**INDIVIDUAL LEARNING**

Transformative Learning

Health Benefits

Modeling Democracy

Civic virtues

**Collective Learning**

Diversity

Social Interaction

Delinking

**Earls court Park Community Garden Project**






# Building Peace in Somaliland

*Dr. Nimo Haji Abubakar*

## Summary of Presentation:

Dr. Abubakar practices medicine in northwest Boroma in the only hospital in the region covering three districts. The hospital tries to provide basic Ob-gyn/surgery but is lacking in basic standards of health. 1.4% of people in Somalia land are HIV positive. Those with HIV/AIDS, experience stigma, marginalisation and lack treatment. There are no ARVs or treatment available for opportunistic infections, no facilities to treat AIDS patients, and no prevention programs or labs for testing. Somalia is in a state of denial over HIV/AIDS in Somalia. AIDS stigma extends to the children of AIDS patients who are often marginalized from their communities. Somalia does not have the capacity to respond to the pandemic. Dr. Abubakar believes that in light of the absence of HIV/AIDS treatment in Somaliland, the establishment of neo-natal care (to reduce mother-to-child transmission) and prevention programs are essential to preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS. In addition there must be changes to social attitudes towards those with HIV/AIDS, to replace stigma and marginalisation with kindness and compassion.

## Presentation Slides:

### *Republic of SOMALIA*

*(Independence on July 1<sup>st</sup> 1960)*



### Background – The former republic of Somalia

- Independence on July 1<sup>st</sup> 1960
- 1969 – Military Revolution
- 1977-78 – Somalia was defeated by Ethiopia in the Ogaden war
- From 1978-onward

**-The proliferation of clan based rebel groups kept Somalia in a constant state of political and military turmoil.**

- 1991-War in Mogadishu between rebel forces and the government of Siad Barre.



- SNM regime after Siad Barre's government.
- 1991-Jan.1992-SNM came to power in the northwest especially in Hargeisa.

- **Jan.1992-Fighting broke out in Burco that lasted for a week.**

- **March 1992-war broke out in Berbera.**

- **The Gadabursi peace mission intervention of Berbera conflict.**

- **The sheikh conference.**

- **1993-National peace building àBorama conference.**



- **Nomination of President and Vice President and two years transitional government was formed.**

- **1995-fighting irrupted in Hargeisa between the government and rebel forces.**

- **Somaliland’s second civil war was brought to an end by a second national conference held in Hargeisa between Dec.1996-1997.**

- **Feb.2001-The parliament passed legislation allowing the formation of political parties.**

- **Elections were scheduled to take place by Feb.2003.**

- **May2002-President Egal died.**

- **There was a smooth and peaceful transfer of power to the vice president, Dahir Rayale.**



- **Dec. 2002 Municipal election took place.**

- **March2003-Dahir Rayale was elected for president and Ahmed Yusef Yasiin as vice president from the UDUB party.**



*THE FLAG OF SOMALILAND*



**BORAMA  
GENERAL HOSPITAL**



## HIV/AIDS

About 1.4% of people in Somaliland are affected with HIV.

They are marginalized and discriminated by society

People of this country are still in a state of denial.

These are the most challenging cases!



**“ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE”**

\*\*\*

## **“Building peace from the Bottom-up: Women in Somalia”** *Shukria Dini*

I am very pleased to be here today. I thank Anne for giving me this opportunity to participate at this forum. My current research examines the role of Somali women in peace-building. The roles and contribution of women in peace-building and their specific peace-building strategies are under-researched and often marginalized. It is my intention to study this important issue. Peace is an important issue to me personally. The lack or absence of peace in my homeland, forced me to become externally displaced person – refugee.

In 1990s, the Somali state collapsed and a deadly civil war emerged. The international community has been attempting since 1991 to resolve the political fragmentation of Somalia. The needs of the people within the country have been the focus of sporadic relief efforts by humanitarian and development agencies. Attempts to build a sustainable peace of capacity-building in Somalia have been initiated by external donor agencies such as the United Nations

and international non-governmental organizations. In addition, there are local grassroots organizations in Somalia which have been responding to the humanitarian crisis. So what contributions do Somali women make in the peace-building processes?

I chose this title for several reasons. I am a firm believer of bottom-up approach to peace-building. (empowering, ownership, finding local solutions – imposing peace a very negative thing). Peace is a justice issue, security, development, human right and a gender issue.

Most literature on peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction portrays women in conflict zones as largely passive victims who are caught up in a conflict beyond their control. Weak, vulnerable and traumatized, women and children are the ‘human face of conflict,’ and are often used to attract aid and call for immediate top-down approach to peace-building. This assumes that women passively accept the situation in which they are found and are also passive objects in a conflict which rages around them, rather than active actors who engage with, and affect, their environment. Feminist scholars and activists critique the continued depiction of women solely as victims, vulnerable and without any agency (Cockburn, 1998; Enloe, 1998). Women have played and continue to play major roles in both armed conflicts and peace-building for economic, social and political reasons (El-Bushra in Jacobs, et al., 2000). For example, in Somalia, women had an influence over whether their clansmen went to war through their roles as poetesses and raconteurs. Like men, women are confronted to make rational choices to either contribute to the war-machine or to peace, and understanding this can highlight the agency of women to both war and peace. Women’s reality is more complex, as they are victims, perpetrators and supporters of war and of peace (Giles, et al., 2003). Women are also bridge-builders whose participation in peace-building efforts are crucial in finding a sustainable peace (Cockburn, 1998). Women’s identities, as well as their various experiences of war, need to be understood as context-specific and as positioned in strategic ways that are in constant flux in both war and peacetime.

Why is Somali women’s participation important? The full participation of women and their organizations is vital to the reconstruction process as well as building a genuine and inclusive peace. Somali women’s roles and efforts in peace-building at the grassroots level have been important in rising from the ashes and normalizing people’s lives and livelihoods. One of the positive aspects of the Somali conflict is that it opened up a space for women, as rigid and hierarchal social relations disintegrate. It is in this space where Somali women building peace in their communities. Such space is crucial as it allows women to voice their concerns and participate in peace-building and post-conflict transformation processes. This space can be a space for the transformation / re-structuring of patriarchal structures and norms which existed prior to war. In this regard, Somali women have found ways to shape their ravaged society. Women’s active agency and activism in peace-building at the grassroots level, can enrich the new leaderships styles as well as present unique problem-solving strategies (in Adam and Ford, 1997)

Throughout the world women are largely excluded from peace negotiations which are intended to bring durable peace. For example, from Colombia to Somalia, it is often male leaders / warlords who do most of the peace negotiations to end wars. Many peace negotiations sponsored by the international community and neighboring countries often give male leaders the entitlement to make peace on behalf of women and children. This perpetuates the idea that women’s contribution to peace-building is less valuable than what men can offer at the negotiation tables.

In various communities in Somalia, women have been very active in peace-building at the grassroots level. The exclusion of women from peace-building and reconstruction processes reinforces traditional patriarchy, where women are denied active roles in the public sphere in the post-conflict period. For Turshen and Alidou, gender-insensitive and gender-blind state-led or top-down approaches to peace-building and rebuilding can have a devastating effect on women (2000). Expanding the circle for peacemaking and peace-building is pivotal to finding a genuine peace. It is also crucial to accommodate individuals and important actors, particularly women often sidelined from the mainstream peace processes. According to Brand-Jacobsen and Jacobsen:

A peace culture, and the force necessary to confront the dynamics and structures of violence and transform them towards peace, cannot be found in institutions and organizations coming from above or abroad. It can only be found in broad social involvement in building peace (in Galtung et al., p. 76).

Women's activism in various war-torn societies has been visible and continues to be a force which is responding to the needs of their communities (Kumar, 2001). Since the collapse of the Somali state in the early 1990s, women's organizations have increased in number and with the help of international donor partners continue to push for an inclusive peace. Somali women organizations have been attempting to build peace and to reconstruct communities through small community development projects in various parts of Somalia. Some of women's organizations have successfully organized and asserted themselves both socially and politically in the communities in which they have operations. Their contributions are unique and pivotal in finding durable solutions to the Somali crisis.

Women in Somalia have an enormous potential to contribute to the process of peace-building. Darby and MacGinty criticize the mainstream approach to peace-building as top-down and male-dominated processes (see also Kumar, 2001; Cockburn, 1998 and Sorensen, 1998). They note that often:

Those who hold the guns or the dominant positions on the battlefield when a cease fire is called become negotiating partners regardless of their ability to represent their community. Other voices, often those without firepower, tend to go unheard (2003, p.3).

A non-inclusive and top-down approach to peace-building has huge ramifications for women, as it ignores their everyday contributions to peace-building at the grassroots level even when their peace-building works are marginalized.

Understanding women's crucial contribution to peace-building requires going beyond the common perception held about their experience of war. Women's specific and diverse experiences of war need to be acknowledged and recognized. Their image as victims and vulnerable needs to be changed to an image which recognizes women as active, valuable agents with capacities and abilities to transform their war-torn society. Grace Machel's study *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* clearly states that including women at the early stages of peace-building will broaden their participation in the discourse of negotiation and nation-building

(Machel, 2001). Efforts should be made to link the informal (women's grassroots peace-building activities) and to the formal (top-down level) peace-building.

\*\*\*

### **Oasis of Dreams**

*Grace Feuerverger*

The Oasis of Dreams is a village where Palestinians and Jews live together in peace. Grace made six trips from 1991-2003 as an educational ethnographer. At the elementary school, both Jewish and Palestinian children and teachers from villages throughout Israel attend school together. At secondary school Jewish and Palestinian students return to their respective villages but receive conflict resolution programs. Though students attend school together in elementary school but they separated for high school. There is concern that the village will be infiltrated by insurgents however good will has prevailed until now.

The Oasis of Dreams was founded by Bruno Husar who had a vision for peace in the Middle East. He was Jewish born but during WWII he hid in a monastery, was converted to Catholicism and then became a Dominican priest. He kept his Jewish identity and performed interfaith work in Israel with the belief that all three major religions should be represented in Israel. He leased land from a monastery and presented God with an ultimatum that within a year he would receive a sign telling him to establish a village for peace and a conflict resolution program. Within this time serendipitously a Swiss, Jewish and Arab couple arrived to begin the village. It developed into a village of peace where Jews, Arabs, and others live as friends and experience peace. In addition, it is a center where children from elsewhere in Israel can join together and experience peace and friendship.

\*\*\*

### **House of Hope – Israel**

*Elias and Heyan Jabbour*

Elias and Heyan established the House of Hope in 1978, where both Jews and Palestinians who want peace, can live together. Elias believes that both Jews and Palestinians want peace but the problem lies within the hierarchy of politicians on both sides. Ignorance is the enemy, not the people. People do not listen to one another. The situation requires people who understand both sides of the issue to explain it to those who do not understand.

The House of Hope puts Jews and Arabs under one roof. After 27 years, thousands of people have come together, put their problems on the table for political discussion. They enter as enemies but leave as friends. For some Jews this is the first time ever entering an Arab home.

There is room for everyone to share the land. 50 years of war has led nowhere. The worst form of coexistence is better than the best destruction. The time has come to try peace, a peace that is more than the absence of war.

Elias advocates for the study of peace as a subject that is as important as other subjects. Peaceology – the Study of Peace.

\*\*\*

**Peace is the only Solution**  
*Miriam Yosowich and Hina Khan*

Appropriately Hina and I were asked to speak at a Conference session entitled “Grassroots peacebuilding across borders”. Indeed our group, Shalom-Salam@York is a student based grassroots club that does look at peacebuilding within a diaspora community, of Pro-Palestinians and Pro-Israeli’s, which include many other groups as well, who want to see peace on campus and the Middle-East. However, the biggest concept that we want to get across to students and our community is that we are Pro-Peace and as such, we are not divisive, but inclusive of everyone.

In campuses across the world, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was exported and often ensues in verbal conflicts on campuses. York University wasn’t much different in that. Initially, Shalom-Salam@York had started out as a forum to hold dialogue between the conflicting parties, but we quickly realized, that we must go beyond that. We were born as the brain-child of an inspiring individual and brilliant Professor; Saeed Rahnema. Courageously, he teaches a class at York University entitled “War and Peace in the Middle-East” and he does talk about the most painful aspects of the conflict. But year after year, he continues to say to his classes “We have two choices; we either bleed each other out, or we create peace. Really, we have no choice but peace”.

Thus, Professor Rahnema helped former conflictual students of his class, such as Hina and I, come together and realize that there is another choice but conflict and that is peace, but we have to walk the long and difficult road of peace together and in harmony. Still, we cannot offer peace to our fellow students and colleagues on campus and in the community, without discussing the difficult issues. We realized that many people who were directly involved in some way in the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts were our fellow students. Hence, there is a lot of trauma those individuals carry that cannot be eradicated by just saying ‘let’s have peace’. However, what we try to do is give peoples a chance to come to our forums and main events and have a voice. It has been said that conflict is not necessarily a bad thing, and that is true. However, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a very painful conflict, especially for the diaspora community, who often feel helpless when things go wrong in that area of the world. What the conflict in our campuses does is bring the issues out that exist. Often there is a lot of propaganda involved, but nobody can deny that there is a conflict in Israel-Palestine and that people everywhere are affected by this conflict.

So, we realize that there is a lot of trauma involved on both ‘sides’, so then how can we tackle the issue of peace and promote it? Well, it’s simple and complicated. The simple thing lies in the fact that there is no other way but peace. The complication revolves around the issues that affect both groups of peoples. Whether it’s right of return, or security or water, these issues are central to this conflict, and then of course there are issues of land. What Shalom-Salam@York’s mandate is, is

to create a space for peace on campus and support peace in the Middle-East. We attempt to create dialogue that demands strict adherence to mutual understanding and respect, an end to ‘othering’, and involves the process of humanizing each group to the other and put an end to demonization. We won’t achieve peace by blaming each other for the conflict and the terrible conditions under which people are forced to live in Palestine or the insecurity people feel in Israel. The point is each one of us is a human being, and as such we are each other equals. The same applies to our campus, we are human beings first and then we have identities. We can only realize our full human potential by reaching out to each other, feeling each other’s pain, understanding the issues away from the propaganda and realizing that we must work together, equally to achieve a sustainable peace. That doesn’t mean that we sing peace songs and hold each other’s hands, which to me are great ways of expressing peace nonetheless, but we have to deal with the emotional, psychological and physical trauma of the conflict. We must never avoid the realities of the conflict, no matter how painful.

Hina rightly said “We cannot separate Israel from Palestine and Israelis from Palestinians”. Both are already linked, both rely on each other and validate each other. And they are already living with each other, whether good or bad. That is why Shalom-Salam@York calls for dialogue on campus. That is why we work so hard to get the two groups to talk to each other. That is why we open our club to everyone, because we are inclusive of everyone who wants peace for the two peoples.

We cannot and do not believe in violence. There is no excuse for violence by both groups either in the Middle-East or especially not on campus. And by violence, we mean both verbal and physical. Shalom-Salam@York is a non-violent peace movement. We believe that war and violence achieves nothing but destruction and that is why we urge people to rethink the discourse around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Let’s not call one another ‘enemies’, let’s get rid of this word, because it’s a violent word that just leads to more violence, structurally, emotionally and physically.

Realizing that there is a lot of anger and resentment centered on this conflict, we urge people to share this and share their experiences. Again, I cannot put enough emphasis on the point that we must put each other in one another’s shoes and try to see the ‘other’ side. Only by understanding what the ‘other’ group is going through and realizing that we must stop any oppression, violence and unequal treatment, only then can we get rid of the ‘other’ and become human to each other. We must heal and we have to go through a long process of recognizing the conflict, recognize that both sides are involved and start a process of forgiveness and healing. Admittedly, this is easier said and done and this is extremely painful, but we must start to trust each other and work together toward a common goal of peace and for this we need equal conditions.

There are many times when people have pressured us to take a stance on Israel-Palestine in terms of one state or two state solutions. We’ve decided not to do that, because we don’t have the right in the west to form an about what should be done in Israel-Palestine. Only the peoples of the land living in this painful situation have the right to do that. The peaceful solution to the conflict must come from the peoples of Israel-Palestine on a grassroots level, and not from the west or corrupt politicians.



There have also been times when Hina has been told that “if you don’t support suicide bombings, then you are not with the Palestinian cause”, or when I’ve been told that “if you don’t support the Israeli military, then you are not with the cause”. We have been called traitors and things even worse than that. We have experienced racism, sexism, etc, etc. Still, we forge on, because we have no other choice. Peace is the only way of the future; otherwise we will face utter destruction and desolation. We are a non-violent movement that doesn’t use tactics that other groups use. As a non-violent movement, we mainstream gender and recognize that women and men are both equally important in the peace process and that both women and men have to be included equally.

Unfortunately, there are a lot of presumptions and assumptions about Shalom-Salam@York by fellow students. Though they hardly know us, don’t attend meetings, forums or events, they form an opinion about us and then spread rumors. Or even if they do attend they form their own opinion about us. It is true that on occasion we had to deal with members or executives that didn’t follow the mandate of Shalom-Salam@York and either chooses to ignore our rules or had a conflict of interest with our agenda. That is something we cannot help and that is something that we have noted in our constitution, that took us over a year of painful work to write, that should such things occur, we have rules and procedures that we follow to correct this problem. But what has to be realized is that we have to be given a chance to do so.

Indeed, our constitution was the cause that took up a lot of our time, and especially one of our founding Executives, that is now going on to Master’s studies at another university. It was hard and painful work, because we realized that we have to have rules that ensure the ongoing success of the ground-breaking concepts that we developed in this group, and ensure that future leaders will not bend or twist rules and regulations. Our constitution forbids all racism, sexism, Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism, gay bashing, etc, etc. Freedom of speech is encouraged at all times, but there is a limit if freedom of speech crosses to hate speech, which we don’t allow under any circumstances. We appreciate constructive criticism, but not personal verbal attacks. We appreciate everyone equally. Our constitution is the heart of Shalom-Salam@York, and dialogue is our key, and active non-violence, mutual respect and understanding our guiding principles. We still have a lot of work to do in the future, and we know that in the last two years we haven’t done nearly enough forums and dialogue groups and indeed events to really try to capture the spirit of peace in students, but we will always do our best to create dialogue and understanding, because that is what Shalom-Salam@York ultimately is a dialogue group that tries to create relationships and connections between the groups and ultimately puts them together as one pro-peace movement. Just like our poster says; “Together we stand, divisive we fall”.

\*\*\*

### **Women’s Role in Building Peace** *Amina Sharif Hassan and Anne Goodman*

Amina talked about the project entitled “the Voice of Somali Women for Peace and Reconciliation”. Based on the recognition that peace begins at home, the need to create dialogue among family members is considered pivotal. To create such dialogue in the Somali community in Toronto, a series of workshops on women, youth and men were held. In order to give meaning to an abstract concept “peace”, the project developed simple illustrative tools, using flip charts in

creative ways to clarify the concept of peace and to also work with elders. Amina added that the generation gap between the young and elderly needs to be understood and such understanding can create space for peace.

As it is not easy to work in one's own community, creating dialogue among family members at home brings people together, which is important for peace building. Women play an important role in creating dialogue among family members.

Amina also alluded to the UN Security Council resolution 1325 – involving women in the peace process. Encouraged by the good experience of the dialogue approach among men, women, youth and the elders in the Somali community, Amina mentioned that based on this experience, there was the possibility of developing an international model, as the nature of civil conflicts in the affected countries is not that dissimilar.

\*\*\*

## **Peacebuilding Across borders: The Case of Greater Karamoja Region** *Eileen Omosa*

### **Greater Karamoja Region**

The Greater Karamoja Region covers parts of:

- South-western Ethiopia
- North-eastern Uganda
- North-western Kenya
- South-eastern Sudan

The area is mainly inhabited by a contiguous group of people related by language, location and natural resources. These are the Merille (Ethiopia), the Turkana and Pokot (Kenya), the Jie, Nyangatom, Toposa and Didinga (Sudan), and the Dodoth, Jie, Matheniko, Tepes, Bokora, Upe and Pian (Uganda)



### **Livelihoods**

- Pastoralism
- Cultivation
- Trade

They share limited resources that are spread over time and space, across local and national borders, hence dictating their seasonal movements in search of water and pasture. In the process of moving and sharing the limited resources, they are bound to differ on certain issues leading to conflicts

### **Examples of Resources**

- Wildlife
- Forests
- Livestock
- Minerals
- Precious stones/vermiculate
- Water
- Fish
- Quarry/sand
- Land for agriculture
- Sceneries
- Camping site

### **Conflicts**

- Although the conflicts have been there for many decades, their current trends, span and scope have changed and expanded
- The conflicts have been altered in terms of their frequency, fatality and intensity, to the point where they are becoming increasingly intolerable. They involve use of modern weaponry; are intra-ethnic, inter-ethnic, and cross-border

### **Cross border approach**

- Cross border approach is in line with the current reality of conflict situations which transverse ethnic, district and national boundaries
- The cross border approach becomes decisive in that most of the individual ethnic communities form alliances for raids, defence, or to access the limited water and pasture resources for their livestock, and to exchange goods and services

### **Why Cross Border Approach**

- Pastoralists occupy over 70% of the Kenyan land, and 50% of Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda – each
- Contribution to national economy: E.g. ASALs cover 80% of Kenya's landmass that supports 30% of the national population, 70% of the livestock population, and 50% of wildlife population in the country – that in turn supports tourism that contributes 25% of the national foreign exchange earnings
- Can be a threat to security – are gateways to neighbouring countries
- The arising conflicts have a spiral effect
- CSOs act in isolation, results in duplication of activities, competition

### **Definition of Cross border**

Multi-levels I.e.

- Within communities i.e. family, clan
- Between communities
- Between districts
- Across international boundaries

*Intra i.e.*

- Clans and families at Tot in Marakwet district
- Saboti Vs Luhya + Sabaots + Kikuyu + Teso all of Trans Nzoia district

*Inter i.e.*

- Pokot Vs Turkana at Kainuk Fighting over water and grass, Pokot Vs Njemps

- Between districts
- Pokot Vs Sebei Fighting over grass and water
- Pokot vs Samburu over livestock
- Pokot Vs Turkana over livestock, watering points, grazing lands, development projects like the Turkwel Gorge Hydro power station

#### **Across international borders**

- Toposa, Nyang'atom, Didinga Vs Turkana over pastures, land
- Jie and Dodoth Vs Turkana over pasture, water, livestock

#### **Examples of Initiatives**

- Peace negotiations aimed at transforming conflict
- Trade through promotion of products from each area
- Linkages at the local authorities level
- Collaborative natural resource management
- Formation of multi-level networks
- Strategy to sensitize and lobby national government leaders to in turn lobby their counterparts
- Strategic linkages with key local, national and regional institutions
- Information sharing sessions - work plans and progress reports
- Multi-level Networks
- Multi-level local authorities Forum
- Strategies mainstream gender and HIV/AIDS in all cross border peace initiatives
- Promotion of alternative livelihood sources
- Early warning and monitoring systems
- Identification of migration patterns, facilitate collaborative activities
- Identify regional organizations like IGAD, COMESA, EA Community, etc with a cross border mandate, and lobby them to facilitate cross border peace initiatives

\*\*\*

### **Shuttle Diplomacy**

*Robin Edoh, Africa Canadian Mediation*

The conflict situation in Africa and other parts of the world over the last four years has posed serious challenges to peace loving actors not only in Africa but also across the international community. The devastating effect of these wars has caused an immeasurable damage, and left human and development casualties in these once peaceful countries. When we saw the challenges that confront us as practitioners and as peace-builders, we were compelled to explore in those challenges the opportunities for alternative dispute resolution method as a tool for peace-building. The continuous escalating nature of conflicts in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Uganda, and lately the Sudan has propelled us to use new frontiers in building peace in Africa. This new method is called “Shuttle Diplomacy”.

The aim of shuttle diplomacy is to create a transnational peace-building and peace-making project that is more sustainable, cost-effective and inclusive pathways of dispute resolution

between a variety of different actors in Africa. In this method, we would work with local peace-builders, conflicting actors which include country versus country, state versus state, state versus sub-state group, clan versus clan, etc., bearing in mind that the nature of the kinds of conflicts that exist in Africa are not only political and economic, but also cultural and historical, and include such sensitive issues such as political unrest, human rights violations, as well as resource, border disputes, property and land ownership disputes, etc. Shuttle Diplomacy is also seen as a mechanism to harness peace-building initiatives between two countries at war path and between actors in conflicts within a country.

The “Shuttle Diplomacy” project developers are confident that community-based approach to peace-building will be successful in Africa because peace-building in a variety of forms, have existed for centuries and continue to be a favourable pathway for dispute resolution. Therefore, it is, our firm belief that by creating a transnational peace-building network in which a culturally-sensitive, and innovative avenue of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) method will be introduced into the practices and languages of international diplomacy, a positive contribution will be made towards helping everyone cope with the responsibilities and new challenges of being part of a rapidly globalized and internationalized community. Looking at tragic events, which have unfolded around the world and some countries of Africa in the past year alone highlights for more effective pathways of peace-building, dispute resolution, diplomacy, and communication, and hence we believe shuttle diplomacy could be the answer.

It is also not a secret that while international peace missions have been effective in curbing violence and conflict and restoring stability in some areas of Africa and other parts of the world, there is a growing skepticism among governments, and other actors about the effectiveness of external intervention, as well their intentions. We believe that many conflicts have been made worse, and many conflicting actors are increasingly likely to distance themselves away from, and even reject the sincerity of such diplomatic missions. Furthermore, external mediators have often gone to African hotspots and other conflict zones without a crucial knowledge or understanding of the cultural, political, historical, and economic circumstances that surround the actors’ lives and give root to the conflicts.

Given the anticipated volume of cases, the number of African countries and state actors within those countries potentially involved, and even greater number of actors, it becomes necessary for shuttle diplomacy between these countries to encourage and empower local actors themselves through training and education to use alternative dispute resolution method as a means to sustain a lasting peace within their countries, states and communities for sustainable development. Our objectives in fulfilling the mission of peace-building in Africa.

- We believe that the local actors who are directly involved in a conflict or war path are critical to peace-building efforts, if progress is to be made in attaining the needed peace. Our aim is to ensure that these actors in the dispute are empowered to make decisions, and not making the decisions for them. Through Shuttle Diplomacy between actors in a conflict, we will locate, support and empower and work with local actors as they deal with conflicts in their communities.

- It is important to note that understanding the root causes of any dispute could lead partly to resolving the dispute. In this situation, Shuttle Diplomacy will begin by conducting an in-depth assessment of all dispute situations before attempting to deal with the conflict.
- Collaboration in peace-building is very essential. Therefore, we see our role as not conflicting with already existing peace-building efforts in place in these countries, or a duplication of their efforts, rather we see our role as complimenting their already existing efforts and working in collaboration with them to attain a lasting peace for the conflicting parties.
- Some conflicts can arise within a country out of religious, cultural, or ethnic differences. Such conflicts are special kinds of conflicts and require specific approaches. In some countries and cultures of Africa, culture becomes the way of life a group creates during the course of its history. It is the way its members think and behave. It includes the values and beliefs they hold, social practices and structures influencing their conduct (customs, food, art, dress, etc.) and the languages they may speak. In some cultures in Africa, parties prefer to communicate through a go-between or third party because direct confrontation may hurt or impede the relationship. Some parties may prefer to talk to a third party who will give suggestions and may act as intermediaries. Whereas in some other cultures, dealing directly with the other party to a conflict is ideal; talking to others may be seen as gossip or increasing the conflict unnecessarily. A third party may be asked to intervene if it feels like they will help ease the already tense situation. Shuttle Diplomacy Approach is sensitive to such conflict situation.

\*\*\*

## **Post – Conflict Reintegration and Reconstruction in Rwanda**

*Rev. Felicien Nemeyima*

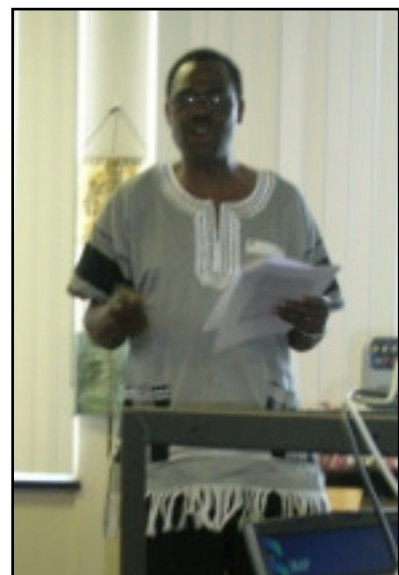
*Executive Director, Peace Building, Healing and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP)*

I feel greatly honored to be with you and be given an opportunity to share Rwanda’s experience on post conflict reintegration and reconstruction process.

Allow me to express my sincere thanks to the International Institute for Community Based Peacebuilding for organizing and hosting this inaugural symposium on grassroots peace building in action and dialogue that will create an international forum of peace builders to share their insights especially on achievements, challenges as well as lessons learned trough selected case studies.

### **I. Introduction**

- Rwanda is known as the land of a thousand hills, located in East-Central Africa. It is bordered by the Democratic



Republic of Congo to the West; Uganda to the North; Tanzania to the East and Burundi to the South.

- The country is only **26338 square kilometers** with a **population of 8.1 million**.



- 90 percent of its citizens live in rural areas and is one of the few countries in Africa, with a single common language and culture.
- Over centuries, the three socio-economic classes found in Rwanda, namely the Hutus, Tutsis and Twa, intermarried and many share clan linkages.
- Collectively, this helps to consolidate their commonality. Unfortunately, persecution of some forced them to flee - no responsibility was acknowledged and they were left into the hands of their neighboring countries. The causes of their displacement from home were not well understood hence not well addressed. The result was anger and bitterness, which later led them into bloodshed both inside and outside the country. Since 1959-1994, the youth in refugee camps listened to their elders about how they had been forced out of their homes by their own people, then their determination was to plan how to regain their identity and humanity.
- While they did so, those inside prepared count attack.
- Several times they failed to return. It was after a long way that they reached home in a critical traumatic situation of the Rwanda genocide in 1994.

### **Rwanda Genocide was UNPRECEDENTED :**

- In its scale
- In three months of violent death between 800,000 and one million people were killed
- The fact that the deaths were inflicted on individuals by individuals using traditional means ( machetes, hoes, etc...)
- Attacks were made on neighbors by neighbors and even by relative one upon another.
- The failure or inability of the World community to intervene or to stop it happening.
- The few points could help you to understand how anger, hatred, were driving people to revenge

### **The questions remain:**

- How is it possible that so many people were killed so quickly?
- How were the killers mobilized?

- How were they convinced to kill their neighbors?

Experts in conflict analysis cite the media as one of the main contributing factors.

In spite of these, we are celebrating God's faithfulness to human being and we are grateful for the restoration of peace due to support from peace building programs around the World.

Personal healing has provided opportunities to reach out to other communities for transformation and then to reintegration and reconstruction.

## **II. Management of Post Conflict Period in Rwanda**

### 1. The issue of Trauma Healing and Reconciliation.

The purpose of the post conflict reconciliation and trauma healing program was to assist Rwandans to reconcile with themselves, each other, those around them and with God; heal their wounds and together reach out by providing opportunities and support for reconciliation and healing activities for communities through their own initiatives.

There is a nine year old child in Rwanda who said "when I grow up I want to kill all those soldiers who killed my family" because he was so angry at what has been done to his family. So, just as reconciliation takes a long time, so does healing.

### 2. Key Focuses:

- Awareness building/seed planting
- Training
- Coordinating and networking
- Resources development and dissemination
- Providing support for:
  - Trauma healing process (emotional, spiritual, physical, economic, educational).
  - Promotion of peace
  - Prevention of continuing retribution.
  - Transformation of conflicts
  - Building of skills in mediation
  - Celebration of differences
  - Helping divided people to be reconciled (intra-personal, inter-personal)
  - Training/building skills in bringing reconciliation.

### 3. Target Groups:

- People centered professionals (i.e. Teachers, Health workers, pastors/ evangelists, community leaders dealing with traumatized people of all backgrounds:
  - Displaced at home and abroad ( temporary until resettlement)
  - Victimized ( raped, amputated, abused)
  - Negative or mixed perceptions of civilians vs. combatant
  - Widows
  - Orphans



- Separated families, friends, work mates

4. Goals of the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Program:

- Restoring the attitude of life
- Releasing the painful past
- Reconstructing the relationship
- Reopening the future
- Reaffirming the relationship

5. Strategies:

- Africans, despite their ethnic backgrounds believe in the existence of a creator, Methods of finding peace in war torn countries of Africa, which are devoid of recognition of God are bound to fail (This is through songs, proverbs, stories about God).
- The community leaders considered as representatives, resources to resolve normal and every day conflict that occurs in the community for the stability were consulted. They know the modalities, traditional methods and mechanisms that exist within a community's setting for resolving conflict and reconciling communities.
- Recognition of sacred places in each community's area of habitation. These sacred areas would well serve as venues for conflict resolution between elders of both sides.
- Radio/TV programs remain a powerful medium and one of the best channels in reaching people of all categories including those with little formal education. Examples:
  - PHARP's radio program , Humura meaning " Take comfort" on Rwanda Nation Radio. The topics covered include: healing, reconciliation, trauma identification, health and HIV/AIDS, roles of the youth, women and the elderly in reconciliation to name but a few.
  - La benevolencija conveys its message through " Museke Weya" meaning "The light at dawn". It conveys messages of diversity and pluralism, economic equality and social justice among others.
  - Internews uses a whole new approach. It aims to bring audiovisual news to Rwandese around the country, even in the remote and poorest areas.
- Gacaca court is a community-based process. The hearings are more comprehensible and they help everyone to understand what is at issue, and what the purpose of justice is as part of a process of reconciliation.
- PHARP trainees have utilized the training workshops to heal from their own trauma caused by war, genocide, poverty and HIV/AIDS, and to help others find healing from the trauma(s) they have experienced. In this process, a collective identity is formed by the internalization of the collective problem, trauma, and the identity becomes grounded in the healing and new identities that are resultant of externalization of the principles of the training and socialization. As this collective identity begins to shape, new patterns of interaction create a process of communal healing.
- Sharing/ exchanging ideas

**III. Lessons Learned From the trauma Healing process:**

- Wounds are deeper than expected
- Healing is a process and must continue

- Forgiveness is more costly than expected
- Mixed group families have a double woundedness
- After healing in Rwanda comes, it will help other countries
- It is difficult to face a person when giving forgiveness
- Not everyone who participated in the workshops wants to be healed/transformed.
- Some people felt betrayed and expressed considerable anger

#### **IV. Achievements:**

- Some refugees returned home peacefully and welcomed in their communities.
- Community members participated in the decision making process in relation to reintegration and reconstruction.
- The returnees participated together with those they found in the country to build houses, schools, roads and hospitals.
- Associations were formed by both returnees and the survivors of the genocide
- Those trained have reached out and trained others.
- Trauma awareness training for those whose work addresses psych-social needs such as doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers has been completed and they are doing their work of healing.
- Micro-Finances projects have taken root.
- Improvement in media.
- People no longer get angry or want to revenge.
- People work together against community crime.
- Concern or action by leaders is one of the signs of response to community's transformation.
- The African's own contribution to recognition that good governance and the respect for rights is a collective matter.
- The African States have taken steps to improve their own readiness, political and military, to intervene to prevent or end conflict on their own continent (Example: The proposed stand-by brigades could be based in Kenya. Rwanda and other African countries have sent troops in Darfur- Sudan).
- Measures have been taken to prevent a local tragedy becoming a regional or global catastrophe and shame.
- Reintegration of ex-combatants.
- The government and Faith based organizations are working together for rebuilding peace in Rwanda.

#### **V. Challenges**

- A huge number of people are suspect due to GACACA court (Estimation: 700,000). Due to challenges that Gacaca court is facing some people may be innocent and condemned due to their positions in the communities.
- Fear of survivors of their security and of the witness to reveal the truth on genocide.
- Life has returned to normal in Rwanda, but cash is hard to come by, so people have to worry about accumulated debts; diseases are prevalent, while medicines are scarce.
- Children start primary school but the drop out rate is artificially elevated because so many parents find that their ability to provide school fees does not match their desire to do so.
- In many cases some children are heads of families while others' parents are in jails.

- Some refugees have not yet been returned.

## **VI. Recommendations**

- Peace builders should understand and address the issue of refugees by providing trainings in the area of peace, healing, reconciliation and other necessary skills in order to face the future with hope.
- Media/information should not insert war instead act as a good mediator.
- Poverty eradication should be addressed and worked on.
- Education should be our major focus especially for those who are not able to attend schools.
- Peace education should be taught from the early age.
- Pray for leaders to be concern about their people.
- Peace builders should have a strong network.

## **VII. Conclusion**

The process of reintegration and reconstruction is a long one and must be handled with wisdom. For peace to be effective, there some basic pillars to sustain it:

- We can't give what we don't have. A peacemaker must have experienced peace in his/her life.
- Respect for sanctity of human life and human dignity.
- Good governance where dialogue is institutionalized at every level formally and informally, where democracy is not just a popular concept but a normal practice seen and experienced by all.
- Practical sharing in the development of the society where no one is demonized but appreciated.
- Eradication of poverty is an integral part of making peace stay, grow and overflow.
- There is need to observe dates when society has peace as the reason for our celebration.
- A deliberate effort to have space for God in all plans of consolidating peace is vital, as we know there is a spiritual dimension in peace maintenance.

\*\*\*

## **Gandhi, Non-Violence and Education**

*Ravi P. Bhatia*

*Educationist and Peace Researcher*

### ***ABSTRACT***

People recognise Gandhi as a man of great spirituality, as a political activist who struggled against the British Empire when it was at its zenith, and as an embodiment of non-violence. But he was also a proponent of simple living and a clean and healthy environment. He was also a pioneer of basic and relevant education for the masses and strongly emphasized girls' education besides that of boys both in cities and in villages. His idea of basic education catered to the everyday needs of ordinary people and it did not lead to mere 'bookish' knowledge but imparted relevant education and skills. The importance of this kind of education is well recognised in the

world today. Some educational strategies in many parts of the world are modelled after Gandhi's concept of education, which he formulated in the early 1920s.

Gandhi also emphasized non-violence in all aspects – in thought, in action, and in strategy to achieve desirable goals. Today, the world over, many political leaders, activists, and peace researchers are following and propagating the path of non-violence to solve complex political and social problems that we are confronted with. Leaders like Martin Luther King, Bishop Desmond Tutu, President Nelson Mandela, Vaclav Havel, and others have followed Gandhi's concept of non-violence by suitably modifying it to meet specific needs, where necessary. Many Asian countries have also adopted non-violent methods to overthrow their oppressive regimes

For Gandhi, universal and relevant education was the essential spiritual building block of man and his actions. Gandhi combined his concept of basic education with political action and non-violence. In this violent world of terrorism, pre-emptive strikes, and militarisation, these twin concepts of education and non-violence are as salient today as they were in Gandhi's times.

### ***INTRODUCTION***

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in 1869 in the present state of Gujarat on the west coast of India. His father and mother were both very religious people and promoted religious harmony and peace. His mother observed fasts and vows throughout her life that left a deep imprint on Gandhi. Many of his father's friends were *Jains* who believed in total non-violence, peaceful living and vegetarianism. There was an element of Christian influence also on Gandhi, especially the concept of charity.

At the young age of 13, Gandhi married Kasturba who was also of the same age. Years later, he felt that he should not have been married at that early age and his experience subsequently made him hostile to the practice of child marriage in India. In 1888 at the age of 19, Gandhi left for England to for a law degree after giving a promise to his mother that he would avoid eating meat and drinking wine. In the beginning he lived the life of an average British gentleman but soon started questioning himself about moral values of life. He read many books including the Bible, the Old Testament, and the Gita and was deeply impressed by the ethical teachings of these books that helped him in his life later to emphasise ethical and moral behaviour. He was also influenced by Tolstoy's ideas of non-violence and peace.

He completed his law studies in 1891 and returned to India. But soon he got an opportunity to go to South Africa and went there in 1893. It was not long before he saw the plight of the Indians in South Africa and the injustice and humiliation that they had to endure. He himself was the victim of a very horrid incident. Once, when he was travelling by train from Durban to Pretoria in a first class coach, he was thrown out of the train because first class was reserved for whites only. Indians had come to South Africa as indentured labourers in the 1860s suffered all sorts of indignities and humiliation. Gandhi decided to fight against these discriminatory policies and practices. The Indian humiliation was to increase even further when a proposal was made to take away their voting rights. They had to carry their identity cards at all times and a bill was being proposed under which they would be fingerprinted and their houses could be searched. Along with some other well meaning and influential Indians, he decided to fight against the injustice and discriminatory policies of the white government. A large number of Indians decided to burn

their identity cards in public as a mark of protest against the injustice. Gandhi's protest was peaceful, non-violent, and powerfully symbolic. Gandhi carried on these protest movements later also but he never indulged in violent action. Whenever, a movement tended to become violent, he would suspend it or call it off.

Gandhi had developed a non-violent and peaceful means of protest and used it effectively in many cases. He called his method '*satyagraha*,' or peaceful resistance. He was to use this method most effectively when he returned to India in 1914. He had already become somewhat of a celebrity by the time he reached India.

### ***GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE***

Gandhi was unhappy with the situation in India. On one hand he saw how India had been politically subjugated by the British; on the other he saw the social and economic plight of the majority of Indians who were living in acute poverty and under social inequality and injustice. He also saw violence in many forms. There was of course violence committed by the British against any one who dared oppose their rule. But there was also violence between communities and different castes in India and violence in both towns and villages due to economic and social conditions of the people. Gandhi wanted India to be free of the British yoke but he wanted to use *ahimsa* or peaceful means of achieving this goal. At the same time he also wanted to free India of its poverty, backwardness, conflict between the towns and villages and the potential for social and economic violence.

Gandhi emphasized non-violence in thought, in action, and in strategy – to achieve peace and economic wellbeing. Today, the world over, many political leaders, thinkers, and peace researchers are following the path of non-violence and are using this strategy and, shall we say, the 'dharma' (its essence in all its manifestations) of non-violence to solve complex political problems with which we are faced. Leaders like Martin Luther King were influenced by Gandhi's peaceful methods of protest and resistance. Others like Bishop Desmond Tutu and President Nelson Mandela have used these methods successfully in South Africa by suitably modifying them to their own specific situations. Gandhi was opposed to violence and expanded the concept of *ahimsa* (non-violence) to the political and social system prevailing in India.

According to Anthony Parel (1), Gandhi's ideas on these issues are not those of an idealist but are founded on ground reality, and are feasible and practicable in the contemporary world. Although Gandhi was a proponent of non-violence, he was also a realist and knew that there are situations where violence would be necessary. If a country was under attack, it was the duty of the state to defend against the attack by all possible means. In this context, Gandhi (2) stated,

I think that a nation that has no control over one's own defence forces and over her external policy is hardly a responsible nation. Defence, its army is to a nation the very essence of its existence.

He further stated that if a country were not strong enough, it would be forced into colonial subjugation. Gandhi aimed at establishment of a *swaraj* (independent sovereign state) and a *su-raj* (well-governed state). Gandhi also believed that a state could be governed well and non-violently only if there is an absence of structures of violence in the society so that the vast

majority of people are non-violent. This principle places the responsibility of war and peace equally on the shoulders of both the political leaders and the ordinary people. Leaders can promote peace if the people are non-violent, and the masses can behave non-violently only if the leaders eliminate the structures of violence that exist in the society and the state.

The state that Gandhi had in his mind is a state that has the interest of its nationals foremost in its mind that is governed well, and is able and strong enough to protect its citizens from external aggression and subjugation. A dictatorship or a weak state that is not able to protect itself would not fit into the concept of an ideal state that Gandhi promoted.

Today, in this day of bombings, terrorism and violence, Gandhi's emphasis on non-violent and ethical means is all the more important and relevant. But while remaining non-violent, one has to adopt different strategies to achieve desirable goals. Gene Sharp (3), the well-known pacifist and scholar has written extensively on non-violent strategies of dealing with brutal dictators.

Violence is endemic in contemporary times both at the levels of family and society as well as at the state and international levels. Terrorists are spreading the cult of revenge and violence through their dastardly actions. Systematic violence is the means adopted by societies and all oppressive regimes in various countries. Political classes can promote peace only to the extent that the masses are non-violent. And the latter can become non-violent only if structures of violence existing in a state are removed. These structures consist of socio-political inequalities, caste, class, religious disparities, gender discrimination, and the urban and rural divide, to name some principal causes. Unless these structures are done away with, there is little likelihood of a peaceful, non-violent society.

### ***GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF BASIC EDUCATION***

Most governments and scholars now agree that education is a desirable objective in itself and is also the means for development of society and people. Countries with high achievement levels in the field of education also have high indices in other areas like economic prosperity, good health, longevity, and general welfare etc. It contributes to reducing infant mortality rates and curbing population growth. We also know that education helps us in understanding developmental issues and transformation of society into a more just, peaceful, prosperous and equitable one. It also helps us in understanding and analysing concepts of violence and peace.

Can education help us to avoid or reduce conflict and promote social, economic wellbeing and peace? It is a difficult task, but not an impossible one to redesign educational objectives to reduce disparities, highlight the evils of violence and offer non-violent means to avoid conflict and violence. Before discussing this aspect, let us briefly recapitulate some principal objectives of education. According to some scholars some of the principal educational objectives are:

- all round development of the child – including imparting skills, knowledge, values, learning how to learn, and so forth;
- development of the society – including creating wealth and improving the wellbeing of people, reducing social, economic, educational, and other inequities;
- providing jobs to people both in urban and rural areas;

- creating and developing new knowledge and technology and overcoming ignorance prejudice and prosperity; and
- answering philosophical questions such as the place of man in the world, the role of religion, and understanding the meaning of peace.

It is now an accepted fact that education is essential for all round development of human beings and society and it also helps in the upward mobility of society. It also helps in creating jobs and those people who are able to acquire necessary skills are able to get jobs in this competitive world.

More than 70 years ago, Gandhi propagated simple and far-reaching objectives in his concept of *Nai Taleem* (New Education). He spoke of education for all -- both boys and girls, for urban and rural children. A few years ago, the Indian parliament passed a Constitutional amendment making education one of the fundamental rights of the Constitution (Bhatia (4)).

Gandhi's concept of education stressed the integration of 'the world of knowledge' with 'the world of work,' a concept we are familiar with in today's language as vocational and relevant education. He felt that this was essential for the poor of India who would not only get some basic knowledge but also acquire useful skills to be utilised throughout life. These skills in Gandhi's time included weaving, pottery, stitching, and the like, but in today's time would also include repair of radios and electronic devices, maintenance of tractors, cars, bicycles, and tube wells, first aid, nursing, computer and entrepreneur skills and the like. Some would be more relevant for men and others for women.

The fundamental premise of the *Nai Taleem* was that it would teach simple skills to the people and help them remain in villages as useful citizens and not be forced to leave for towns and cities looking for unskilled, poorly paid, and degrading jobs. What was true in Gandhi's time is still relevant in today's world where we see highly formally educated people without jobs and villagers under the impact of urbanization and globalization migrating to cities in search of any odd job such as rickshaw puller or rag picker.

A right type of education will make people more self-reliant, help them get reasonable jobs, bridge socio-economic disparities and the rural-urban divide, and generally help in the society becoming more egalitarian, harmonious, and contented. This would help in the creation of a just social order where there is a reduction of conflict and violence caused by socio-economic disparities.

For Gandhi, education was not only a formal learning of language or basic arithmetic or history or geography of a country. It was based on the concept of relevance. In what way is the education being imparted to the children especially in rural areas, relevant to their needs and physical, mental and moral development? Gandhi emphasised education not only for boys but also for girls. For Gandhi, a right type of education would lead to learning skills which could be utilised for providing jobs for a large number of people. For him, universal and relevant education was the essential spiritual building block of man and his actions. Gandhi combined his concept of basic education with political action and right means. Should we not follow Gandhi's thoughts

and practices on education and non-violence in today's complex world where there are injustices, disparities, and terrorism?

### ***REFERENCES***

- (1) Parel, A. (2004). "Gandhi, War and Peace". New Delhi: *Gandhi Marg*, 26(April-June), pp. 15-18
- (2) Gandhi, M. K. (1958/1994a). The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Volume 48 p. 304. New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India.
- (3) Sharp, G. (2003). *There are Realistic Alternatives*. Boston: The Albert Einstein Institution.
- (4) Bhatia Ravi P. (2001) "Development of Education as a Fundamental Right in India", *Gandhi Marg*, Vol. 22, No. 4 January-March.

\*\*\*



# Appendix A:

## Public Event Presentations

Prior to the symposium, on Thursday June 9 from 7:00-9:30 pm at Innis Town Hall in Toronto, the following panel of speakers, from a variety of local and international settings, shared and discussed their challenges, successes, strategies and theories as well as how they conceptualize their peacebuilding work:

**Nomiki Yekani** - National Youth Programs Coordinator, Umtapo Centre, South Africa. The Umtapo Centre aims to contribute to the empowerment of oppressed people and the expansion of a self-reliant ethos in a country where the greatest majority of its people have suffered serious exploitation and dehumanisation. Umtapo Centre works towards the empowerment of women, the promotion of peace and antiracism, economic justice, adult literacy, and youth leadership.

**Dorothy Christian** - Video artist, producer, director & writer; Co-founder of Turning Point: Native Peoples and Newcomers On-line. Dorothy is a member of the Spallumcheen Indian Band from the interior of BC. Her production experience includes over 75 mini documentaries for VISION TV, the national multi-faith network, freelance producing for CTV, APTN News & in-studio directing for Creative Native series & the Art Zone series. Since September, 2004 Dorothy has been the Executive Director of the Indigenous Media Arts Group in Vancouver, BC.

**Amina Sherif Hassan** - Co-founder and coordinator, Voice of Somali Women for Peace, Reconciliation and Political Rights.

**Harry Mika, Ph.D.** - Professor of Sociology at Central Michigan University (USA), and Senior Research Fellow in the School of Law, Queens University of Belfast. An applied researcher and practitioner, Harry has worked closely with more than seventy-five community-based justice initiatives in the United States and abroad, on program design, implementation and evaluation themes. Since 1997, Harry has been extensively involved with the development of alternatives to paramilitary punishment violence in Loyalist and Republican working class areas of Northern Ireland.

**Charles Tauber, M.D.** - Founder and Director, Coalition for Work With Psychotrauma and Peace, Croatia. The CWWPP works with issues of health, particularly mental health, civil society and peacebuilding in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia on a grassroots level. The organization has developed the Strategy of Complex Rehabilitation for the (re-) integration of post-conflict societies. Further, the CWWPP is working as the chief implementer with a number of local organizations in the region on the establishment of the Inter-University Field Institute for Post-Conflict Studies and Peacebuilding in Vukovar, Croatia. [www.cwwpp.org](http://www.cwwpp.org).

## Umtapo's Peace and Anti Racism Education (PARE) Perspective *Nomiki Yekani, National Youth Programs Coordinator of Umtapo Centre*

Distinguished guests, it is an honour for me to present at such a gathering and be speaking on this international panel. Coming to North America for the first time from my little village of Qongqotha in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, it is indeed a daunting experience.



I am currently based in Durban and work as a National Youth Programs Coordinator of Umtapo Centre. Umtapo's mission is to conscientise and mobilise people, particularly youth, to take control of their lives in the struggle for sustainable peace, development and human rights. And, its slogan Free the mind Free the land, encapsulates our belief that before our land can be truly free, we have to decolonise our minds (our hearts). Hence, Umtapo's commitment to popular education and training.

In 1994, South Africa underwent a transition from an oppressive and undemocratic society – characterised by racism and political violence and inter-cine wars amongst and between rival political factions – to a fledging “democracy”. The euphoria that followed heralded a miraculous leap from hatred, violence, suspicion, anger and feelings of superiority and inferiority, into a “rainbow” nation of “peace” and non racialism. South Africa was hailed all over the world, and is still is, as an example of a country from which the rest of humankind could learn to bury the hatchet and live in peace in a civilised manner.

Just over ten years down the line, violence, anger, hatred, suspicion, and feelings of superiority and inferiority and of betrayal still manifest the daily lives of the majority of the populace. It is evident on a daily basis when people interact with one another in schools, factories, from hospitals too government corridors. The euphoria is gone and bitterness has set in. The mistaken belief that elections will rid society of the scourge of racism, violence and injustice overnight has proven to be a naïve one.

Many around the world make the assumption that countries in Africa become liberated as soon as the colonialists/oppressors either hand over or are forcibly removed from overt control of these countries. However, the peacelessness that prevails in our communities and societies is a result of many centuries of brutal racism and violence perpetuated in the name of colonialism and neo – colonialism. After dehumanisation of African people during slavery and colonialism, the gesture of leaving Africa to African rule is in many instances a false and deceiving one. Either token representatives of the colonialists in darker skins take over to further enslave the majority of the people under the banner of neo colonialism or the countries are so plundered that they barely survive without handouts from the very oppressors ensuring that they remain in bondage.

Why am I talking about this when we are discussing grassroots peacebuilding?

In South Africa, as would probably be the case in most “Third World” countries, it should be the context for any endeavor in peacebuilding, and whilst many of you may have heard this before, I am talking from my own experience at the grassroots level in a South Africa that is considered one of the most powerful nations on the African continent, at least materially.

The Umtapo Centre’s Peace and Anti Racism Programme (PARE), as it is called, started off as a resolution at an Umtapo Centre Conference in 1994 to set up a Pan African Peace Centre, a resolution that was supported by the then Assistant Secretary of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), Honourable Pascal Gayama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, amongst others, and it developed in 1996/7 into a training program for Community Peace Activists.

The Umtapo Centre believes that PEACE cannot become a reality if it does not start with yourself, if it does not become a part of your daily life in and with your family, your friends and your community. The PEACE that we are talking about means inculcating anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-exploitation, and anti-violence. It means embracing UBUNTU: loving, caring, sharing and living in harmony with each other. One cannot preach about peace whether it is in the church, the temple or the mosque and immediately thereafter return to one’s home or place of work to exploit another human being or beat up one’s wife or abuse a child or send troops to kill innocent people in another country. That person has no peace within him/her and therefore will never be able to practice peace. A person who is peaceless cannot meter out justice, a person who is peaceless cannot uphold human rights, and therefore a person who is peaceless cannot run a country in the interests of the majority of the people of the country. Hence, the ongoing violence, thuggery, and corruption in much of the continent of Africa. People made peaceless through years and years of dehumanisation want to or believe they can run a country before decolonising their own hearts and minds. That’s impossible!

For those who are part of Umtapo and its programmes this has come to symbolise a new way of looking at one’s own situation, it has brought hope when there was despair, it has brought light where there was darkness. It has become a rallying call wherever peace activists trained by Umtapo exist: from educators to learners to community activists. Started as a programme of Umtapo that was to give an Afrocentric perspective to peacebuilding and focusing on training and conscientisation, particularly for community peace activists, it has since become a slogan, a rallying call, almost a social movement, gaining in momentum each year, particularly amongst young people in rural and semi – urban areas.

Recently, President Mbeki and others have tried to raise the hopes and aspirations of the people of the continent through notions such as the African Renaissance and NEPAD. Laudable as they are, they cannot succeed unless this spirit takes root from the bottom up and begins to permeate every facet of our lives. You cannot promote Ubuntu in schools but deny people access to basic needs. If there is poverty there will be no peace. If there is hunger, there can be no peace, if there are diseases such as HIV and Aids there can be no peace. Peace becomes a mirage where there is no economic justice. Therefore, Umtapo continues to make these links and the course just completed is one such attempt. Umtapo recognises that for PARE to be relevant to the majority of people, it has to be holistic in nature.

Umtapo's PARE is anchored on the historical materialist approach which makes it activist in focus and firmly rooted in the history and struggles for peace of peoples across the globe and more particularly Africa. The approach is based on understanding the origins and history of violence and racism in Africa. It emphasises the historical realities that have confronted the African continent and how these realities have impacted on our individual and collective conduct. *If we do not know who we are and where we come from, we will not be able to determine where we want to go to.*

Having traced the root causes of peacelessness in Africa, PARE then draws on the experiences, values, cultures and philosophy of African thinkers and uses Africa and its people as an inspiration to restore to African people their humanity and their dignity.

The most important goal of PARE is EMPOWERMENT. Empowerment is process through which people and/or communities increase their control or mastery over their own lives and the decisions that affect their lives. Empowering education, therefore, must supply the means by which people deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. Thus meaning the creation of self – reliant communities that:

- are able to understand their reality and to analyze the factors that shape that reality
- has the ability to decide what and where it wants to be ( in their own terms be able to define developmental goals and to put together a development plan to achieve this)
- are willing to change their situation for the better and that will ensure the sustainability of such efforts

This is what PARE strives to do particularly in so far as peace, human rights and the values associated with a more humane world are concerned. Developing the capacity to ensure individual economic advancement which we call today BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) is not the empowerment that we are talking about. This is an individualistic, capitalistic notion that benefits a few at the expense of the majority and all it does is replacing the white capitalist with a black one. The empowerment we talk about ensures that an individual sees him/herself as part of a whole, as part of a collective whose mission is transformation of society for the betterment of all. Only through this collective critical action by those who have been empowered will the end result be true liberation.

Umtapo's PARE is a long term strategy and process. While the short to immediate term work of diplomats, politicians, heads of states and peacekeeping forces in attempting to curb violence and instability in Africa will continue, the quiet revolution of PARE must begin to take root in the schools, communities, and government hallways throughout the continent of Africa and the world.

More importantly, it is the youth of Africa, towards whom our energies need to be channeled. We must deliberately build and develop those who will bring to bear the kind of society that we want.

At Umtapo, we have consciously taken that route and we are seeing the fruits of this and the immense possibilities in our own PARE programme in South Africa, particularly at the grassroots level.

If we had half the resources of the armaments industry in Africa, the continent of Africa would surely be able to lead the way towards a more peaceful and humane world.

I will end by congratulating the Transformative Learning Centre at the University of Toronto for organizing this event. The issues that affect the majority of the people of the world i.e. the poor and disadvantaged, who live out peacelessness daily, are usually discussed at international forums from an academic and intellectual perspective. Grassroots peacebuilding in action and dialogue, I believe, does not fall into that category. There is hope for the future.

As Steve Biko in his unique and gifted way wrote, “We have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere in the distant horizon, we can see the glittering prize”.

Firstly, I will close by quoting Kaoru Nakamaru, Chairperson of International Affairs, Institute of World Peace:

*“In the effort to achieve world peace, I focus on the way of life, rather than the way of power. When some people talk about creating world peace, they intend to achieve it through the power of governments. The world peace I am interested in is based on the human spirit. There is a big difference. When individual people begin to realize the power they have inside, their spiritual power, this is what will bring about world peace”.*

\*\*\*

## **Peacebuilding Through the Arts** *Dorothy Christian*

Good evening. My colonial name is Dorothy Christian and I am of the Okanagan & Shuswap Nations of the interior of BC. I carry two tribal names, Animkeebinese Kwe from the Ojibway peoples of this land -- I was adopted into a Clan when I lived here & my other name is Kwash Kay is from my own peoples in BC. I would like to acknowledge the people and the spirits of these lands for affording me the space to bring my voice to this panel. And I would also like to give thanks to the organizers of this gathering for inviting me here. I went to university here, so in a strange way its like coming home!

I'd like to start by giving you a bit of personal background, the why's and what for's of how I got involved in “Peace building” and “Reconciliation” in the first place. This is information that is not included in formal bios or resumes.....

There have been two Indian Wars in this country in this past decade, the so-called OKA Crisis in 1990 in Mohawk Territory and Gustafsen Lake in 1995 in Secwepemc (Shuswap) Territories (in my own homelands). Both of these historical events were armed conflicts. I was at both these wars. I won't go into the in-depth details of my involvement, suffice to say I worked with the spiritual peoples to make sure the people behind the lines weren't killed by the Canadian Army. I will say both these wars were life changing experiences that affected me deeply & shifted my way of being in the world.

I went to both those wars prepared to give up my life because I was filled with RAGE as I know many indigenous peoples are. I totally understand the RAGE and the desperation that leads indigenous peoples, or any peoples for that matter to pick up arms to defend the lands, or themselves. The suppression of people's voices and oppression of people's ways of living on the land can only go so far before the poverty, powerlessness and outright disregard and disrespect pushes people into a state of "do or die" frame of mind. That's when people pick up guns.

I won't go into the colonial history of this country. I'm sure you're all aware of that history, whether its here in Canada, or Africa or South America. The template seems to be the same! We all have our colonizers.....

In August 2003, Victoria Freeman and I were asked to be at another international gathering in Switzerland.....A Peace organization had a week long conference around Human Security & we were on a panel that was called, "Understanding The Other". Victoria & I will be together again tomorrow at the symposium in the first Case Study: "Peacebuilding At Home" session.

In many ways, this conversation today, feels like it's a continuation of the talk we did in Switzerland in 2003. In that talk I acknowledged the powerlessness of being "a colonized" Indigenous woman in Canada.....AND I acknowledged the need for healing from that life experience. In academic circles, I believe it's referred to as the "decolonization" process. That's as academic as I will get, I find academic language is very stifling and very distant from my human experience.....In 2003 I said, I believe both sides of the street have to do some healing work, by that I mean the "colonizer" and the "colonized" must work at regaining their humanity. I refuse to believe that people who are from the colonizer cultures don't feel PAIN from what they or their ancestors are responsible for. I must tell you it gets awfully tiresome when people automatically put me in the "victim" role and assume that I'm the only one in the equation that needs "help" or healing work.

My healing journey started long before those Indian wars in 1990 and 1995 and it continues to this day. It's an ongoing process. For me, it's not just about going to one or two sweat lodges to release the pain and the negativity or going to see a therapist a few times to reach an intellectual understanding of the historical injustices. It goes far deeper than that.

My healing journey has been a bumpy one – LOTS of ups and downs. I made a choice to utilize a holistic approach steeped in my indigenous worldview and that means taking care of myself on all levels: mental, emotional, physical and spiritual.

When I was at this university, I worked on a double major in Political Science and Religious Studies. My focus was intentional. I had a lot of rage to work out towards the Christian churches and I had difficulty in the concept of "forgiveness". It felt way to Christocentric to me.

When my sister & I were working out our relationship with the man who sexually abused us as children, we went to see this Elder woman who is now passed on. My sister wanted to "forgive" our stepfather and I was appalled at the thought! I asked her to come with me to talk to this Elder about the concept of forgiveness. To make a long story short, the Elder woman told us a word

that was about this long (motions with hands) & from hearing the word, I knew it was a concept connected to the heart....it translates to something like “making your heart right with the Creator”.

In our Elder’s way of thinking & seeing the world (i.e. in our worldview), the man who hurt us is the one who should be asking us for forgiveness. We were told the only responsibility we had was to the life force we carry. She warned us that if we harbored any negative feelings towards anyone, that we would hold it in our bodies and that it would eat away at us inside and cause illness. She told us we needed to make “our hearts right with the Creator” and give those ugly feelings to the Creator....and that the only person we had a responsibility to was to the life force we carry within ourselves and to the Creator.

That teaching is steeped in spiritual law, and not in the rule of law of any country!

What I’ve learned so far in my decolonizing process or on my healing path about “reconciliation/peace building” work is that its damn hard work. I say “so far” because it’s an ever growing, ever evolving process. It can’t be superficial, it can’t gloss over the surface of the past, as so many “do gooder” Liberals want to do.

Luckily I have non-Native women who have become deeply loved friends and effective allies who also work at reconciling the Native/non-Native relationship in Canada. I think of our alliances, relationships, friendships as a “microcosm” of the larger relationship between Native and non-Native people in this country. I have three women I am in consistent dialogue with.....Victoria Freeman, Cathy Stubington and Jessie Sutherland.

I believe the reason we have been so successful in developing our alliances/friendships is because we are committed to working out the real issues and we don’t run away when we get UNCOMFORTABLE.

Victoria, has without a doubt shouldered the hardest part of my healing journey. When Victoria & I first met I was dealing with the absolute hatred and rage that I carried in my heart for the colonizers of this country. I won’t go into the details of how our relationship evolved.....we’ve already done that on an international stage in 2003. We’ve known each other now for about 16 or 17 years & they haven’t always been easy years. BUT throughout the ups and downs of our deeply committed relationship we have built a solid friendship & alliance.

We have learned to trust each other. We engage in a deep emotional/spiritual process. Through time, I saw that Victoria wasn’t running away from my pain. So many people do that – they want indigenous peoples to “let bygones be bygones”. Or they throw money at us and expect that we will accept this as an acknowledgement of their actions and expect us to carry on with the status quo.

The status quo is no longer acceptable. I believe that message came thru loud and clear when the Mohawks and the Shuswap people picked up guns in 1990 and in 1995.

In my search for alternative ways of coexisting, I’ve been blessed in my healing/reconciliation journey to have two other women cross my path, Cathy Stubington & Jessie Sutherland. They

are both engaged on a deep level with regard to healing the relationship between Native & non-Native people in this country. I will go into more details about how my work intersects with these non-Native women allies in tomorrow's session.

What I've learned from my friendships, relationships, and alliances with all three of these women is that I have to think outside of the "Victim-offender" paradigm which is so entrenched in the colonized/colonizer relationship. Not only do I have to think outside that box, but I have to ACT OUTSIDE that box. I've stopped thinking and acting like a victim & so now I look across the table at another human being who is in pain, rather than at someone who has hurt me!

I work very hard at having integrity with myself and with my friends & allies, in other words, my words must BE CONGRUENT with my actions.....Another important thing I've learned is that I must be AUTHENTIC with my allies. I must be REAL. And, I must be willing to be UNCOMFORTABLE from time to time. There are times when I've had to look at things that I didn't want to look at.....e.g. my own racism & my own superiority (well, they're one in the same)

I've learned that in building any meaningful relationship, we must be real with each other – as soon as it becomes superficial, my spirit begins to question the integrity and the quality of the relating that is happening – even tho, on a conscious level I may not be aware of it at the time, my spirit FEELS it.

So the bottom line is BE AUTHENTIC, BE CONGRUENT IN WORDS & ACTIONS and BE WILLING TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE.....those small steps will help pave the bridge of understanding the other.

\*\*\*

### **What is Peace?** *Amina Sharif-Hassan*

What is peace about? Is it lack of war? We need to define peace in our own terms. It is a multidimensional as it has many different meaning to those who are in different places, situations and cultures. People will not know the value of peace unless they experience the lack of peace with in them selves or with in their surroundings. Again what is peace? What it means in the south and what is means in the north? What are your peace ensuring parameters? What makes you feel that you are in a state of peace? Does peace mean the same in everywhere? Talking about peace do we mean the same thing? Or we need to identify a common ground and new terms of reference on what we all mean by peace? Are we thinking the same way or not? Are we talking the same peace? This makes me some times confused. For me I found peace is a very complex issue because what peace means for some is a disaster for others, because it messes up their own specific interest which makes them take the move as a violation of their stability and violation of their comfort zone, and visa - versa so it becomes a vicious circle that can be balanced only with a balanced power, equitable power, sharing, righteousness, justice as well as morality and ethics. In addition to that Peace is the state of freedom from war or disturbance, or a treaty ending war as Oxford dictionary explains. It is also a state of freedom from fear and



threats of any kind. Peace is the state that guaranties all human rights confirm factor, it is a state of emotional, and social stability and development. It is a state of environmental safety, human security, success, prosperity, and many more

Peace flourished in a situation of balanced two or more forces functioning together and create equilibrium. In the history of the world and our present days no power will grant to another power to enjoy peace, but one have to earn it and struggle for his/her existence and get the capacity and the means that essential to maintain the equilibrium and avoidance any imbalance.

Each place and people have different priorities then from other who happen to reside different location, have different socio-economic, different values as well as different ecological and environmental settings. With different attitude and values.

Peace is not as a shoe that fits everyone in the same way. Which means we lack a practical concept that standardizes peace in a global way.

In Somalia, and experience related to that is that I see Somalia as many parts of the world is a victims of multiple and conflict socio-economic systems that was alternated to build it's nation in both the pre-colonial era, post colonial eras. Such systems are Capitalism, Socialism, Communism, Islam, Christianity, tribalism, and anarchy. As we know the majority of the above systems were proved absolute and dysfunctional, some are already collapsed and some other are in the verge of collapsing with in their original society.

So all those who were educated in these different systems are advocating prevailing their preferred system of governance, which they know very minimum about it or they are ignorant about it. But due to alliance purpose, each group favour a system which will link them to a powerful government to gain political favouritism, and to gain a global status too, as well as political alliance and economic assistance. This created a conflicting ideology among the warlords as well as among the pastoral and urban communities. So each group are alongside the pre mentioned system. They defend something that they do not understand its benefits or disadvantages to their cause whether it is legitimate or illegitimate. There for Somalia is in state of confusion. Most of these systems are imported from overseas and not endogenous. . As a result, the 12 peace agreements that held during the past 14 years did not last long. At the present the 13<sup>th</sup> is still in turmoil situation.

Remember Somalia is not alone but most of the third world countries, more or less are experiencing the same or holding power through dictatorship means. They claim democracy but there is no freedom of speech and freedom of expression in writing. And by any means they do not contribute any just and progressive system in the globe. Because they imitate to work on systems that they do not believe but only try to imitate only.

### **In conclusion**

We are in worldwide crises, to save our earth and the humanity it is important:

1. To promote and establish a quality and good leadership
2. Create and nourish a global and common understanding of peace.
3. Redefine peace and peace tools is essential for long lasting peace in the globe

4. Abolition of wars, control of arms production and movements
5. , Community capacity building and conflict mediation
6. Skills training, and increased employment opportunities
7. Exchange technical assistance and expertise to equivalent values of resources
8. Respect to cultural and religious values
9. Increase nation self determination with in the global context
10. To apply effectively comparative advantage in international trade
11. Equal access to world market
12. Stop malicious politics, egoism, and hypocrisy
13. Build trust and harmony among people and nations
14. Forgiveness and use the past for learning purpose ,
15. Learn form our mistakes/ not to repeat the same mistakes
16. Remove economic barriers and encourage fair trade
17. Increase applicable research for development
18. Remove all barriers that hinder progress and development.

I will lastly conclude what goes around comes around. Who he/she sows thorn, will harvests only and only thorn as a yield. And who he/she sows goodness will harvest only and only goodness as a yield. Peace begins at home, let us start with our selves and our home to reap everlasting peace for all.

# Appendix B: Rationale for the Symposium and the Process of Organizing It

## *The History of the International Institute for Community-Based Peacebuilding and conceptualizing its inaugural symposium*

In 2001 Edith Klein, Rick Wallace and Anne Goodman received funding for the project *Inter-Cultural Community-Based Peacebuilding: A Comparative Pilot Study*, which was conducted from October 2001 to March 2002. This study examined community-based peacebuilding initiatives in four countries at various stages of ethnic conflict: Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, Slovakia, and Serbia.

In all these situations, it was found that despite considerable odds, and with little or no support, community-based peacebuilders were doing vitally important work to create the conditions for a durable, just peace. Despite great differences in geographic location, these practitioners had similar needs and concerns that were not being addressed including an overwhelming feeling that they were working in isolation, a longing to connect with others in similar situations, a desire to acquire a greater theoretical knowledge, challenges in acquiring stable funding, and concerns about evaluation methods that were commonly used by funders.

The study concluded with a number of recommendations that included:

- Emphasizing evaluation as a tool to improve practice
- Fostering dialogue among practitioners in different situations
- Developing connections between practitioners, academics, policy makers and donors
- Working for more integration of theory and practice in peacebuilding
- Establishing an international network of community-based peacebuilders
- Creating and maintaining a database of community-based initiatives

Upon returning home it was noted that despite media headlines reporting on conflicts in Israel/Palestine, Northern Ireland, and Slovakia, the work of community-based peacebuilders was invisible in the mainstream media. It also became apparent that this perspective was entirely lacking in many academic institutions and forums.

Reflecting on the research findings and post-research experiences, the researchers decided to create an international institute that focused on community-based peacebuilding. It was visualized as having two components: (1) regular symposia and (2) an ongoing global network.

## *Planning the inaugural symposium*

Because the symposium was not an isolated event, but rather the founding of an ongoing organization, a great deal of thought was put into its design. It would include opportunities for grassroots peacebuilders from around the world to share their experiences, theories and practice; to learn from each other; and to develop opportunities for ongoing work together. It would also include like-minded academics who shared an interest in bridging the gaps between community

and university; and between research and practice. It would strive for a mix of participants, both geographically and by interest.

The event was designed to be small to give participants the maximum opportunity to interact with and learn from one another and to build the foundation for an ongoing network. It was designed without concurrent sessions so that everyone could be included in all the activities.

The main organizers, who now included Carolyn Webb, a University of Toronto graduate student, embedded in its design a participatory process that would shape both the symposium and the ongoing organization. The application process included a questionnaire (see Appendix C) that was designed with several aims in mind. (1) By responding to it, would-be participants were made to realize that both attending the symposium and being involved in the network would involve active discussion and participation. (2) It allowed organizers to select applicants who could best advance the aims of the symposium. (3) Responses were used to shape the symposium's agenda.

After receiving all of the applications, the organizers looked for patterns in the applicants' interests and tailored the symposium to their needs. Roles, such as moderators and notetakers, were also assigned to the participants based on their responses to the questionnaire.

The process of organizing the symposium led to an event that met the interests of those attending and where participants were able to share their talents and feel as though they were fully involved. The symposium was very well received and the philosophy that informed it remains central to the international network.

# Appendix C: Participant Questionnaire / Registration

## International Institute for Community-Based Peacebuilding Participant Questionnaire/Registration

This questionnaire has been created so that we can get more information about you and so that you can begin to think about your participation in the symposium that is to be held from June 9-12<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Your answers to the questionnaire will help us tailor the sessions to better meet your interests and needs. As well, some of the information may be shared with other participants upon arrival at the symposium. Please return this questionnaire either electronically to [peacebuilding@oise.utoronto.ca](mailto:peacebuilding@oise.utoronto.ca) or by mail to Anne Goodman, TLC – OISE, University of Toronto, 252 Bloor St., West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1V6.

\*\* Please note that there will be no fee for registration but we will be asking participants to give a donation towards some shared meals. We are suggesting a donation of \$60 that will be collected at the symposium.

### Details about yourself:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Country/Countries you represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Institution you are associated with: \_\_\_\_\_

Mandate of organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your role within the organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Other peacebuilding roles that you play: \_\_\_\_\_

What would you want other symposium participants to know about you? \_\_\_\_\_

### For participants who do not reside in Toronto:

#### Accommodation

Will you need accommodation for the duration of the symposium in Toronto? Yes  No

For which dates will you need accommodation? (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

If No, where will you be staying? \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, are you able to finance this accommodation? Yes  No

Would you be interested and/or willing to stay in the home of a local person? Yes  No

Would you prefer a room at the Annex Quest Guesthouse near the symposium? (approximate cost:

\$79+ tax/night) Yes  No

**Other Funding**

Can you provide or find funding for your own travel costs? Yes  No

If no, what funding assistance do you require in order to participate in the symposium? \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Do you have any dietary preferences/food allergies that we should know about?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your interest in the Institute (symposium and network):**

(1) Why does the idea of this Institute excite you?

(2) Besides your participation in the case study sessions, working groups, training, and interactive activities is there any other way that you would like to contribute to the symposium?

- Present the work you do during one of the case study sessions.
- Present a theoretical perspective on community based peacebuilding
- Lead a Community Arts Project
- Demonstrate a training model
- Facilitate one of the sessions

Please explain in greater detail \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

(3) What are your specific topics of interest?

- Youth
- Community gardening and environmental projects
- Community arts
- Diaspora communities
- Program evaluation
- Participatory Research – what about?

- 
- Developing training materials
  - Other
- 

(4) What do you feel you and/or your organization could contribute to the Institute?

(5) What do you feel you and/or your organization could gain from the Institute?

# Appendix D: Words of Appreciation

Symposium participants provided the following words of appreciation following the symposium:

“I would like to express my sincere appreciation for having afforded me the opportunity to participate in the just ended symposium on grassroots peace building, which I found extremely informative. Secondly, I met some terrific people, both activists and academics / researchers involved in this extremely relevant but challenging area. I hope to further advance on and support the work being carried out by these dedicated people. The contact list provided will help in this direction. I also hope to pursue research in this area in the coming months. Let me also add my voice in saying that the symposium was very well organized and the hard work put in was well recognized by the participants. I look forward to taking part in similar meetings of the Institute. Thank once again for this wonderful meeting.”

“I have personally benefitted from the symposium - I have learned new ideas or approaches to peacebuilding. The symposium was special in many ways. It brought people from various background and skills to discuss about ways of building peace in a troubled world. For example, grassroots folks, academics, researchers, doctors, leaders and staff of NGOs building peace, documentarians such as our lovely Dorothy, storytellers, theoreticians, graduate students, community activists, youth activists were brought together to share their experiences and approaches to peacebuilding in various communities. We learned from one another, laughed together, ate together and must of all embraced and affirmed each other. And this will stay with me forever. Thank you for bringing us together. I look forward to our next symposium.”

“I'm so happy I was at this gathering in Toronto. You are all very inspiring to me. Whenever I go into overwhelm about the "state of the world or my personal world" I'll close my eyes to remember our time together -- it was so good to learn about all the things you're all working on to bring peace to your immediate environments. I was so impressed by the willingness of all of you to open up and bring your beautiful energies, and water, to the opening and closing water ceremonies. On Friday, when you shared the story of your water, gave voice to your intentions and expressed what you were hoping to achieve - and again on Sunday during your closing remarks - I realized I was in a very special circle amongst vibrant, conscientious and loving individuals.”

# Appendix E: Symposium Participant Profiles

## **Lyn Adamson - Canada**

Lyn is a lifelong Quaker peace activist and feminist based in Toronto. She has sat on the board of directors of Peace Brigades International and Global Nonviolent Peace Force. Lyn is currently a trainer and consultant on conflict resolution issues for both community groups and international organizations.

## **Raj Bardouille - Canada**

Raj Bardouille is an independent consultant based in Mississauga (Ontario), who has worked for the United Nations in conflict and post-conflict development, including peacebuilding in Africa. Through her work with the UN, Bardouille participated in post conflict development issues and prepared reports for the General Assembly and the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Countries Emerging from Conflict. She helped find ways in which international community could assist war-torn countries in Africa to prevent their relapse into civil conflict.

## **Ravi P. Bhatia - India**

Ravi P. Bhatia has recently retired from the University of Delhi in India as an educationist and peace researcher. He is a member of several international peace research organizations and would like to share Gandhi's model of education and its relevance in promoting peace and non-violence.

## **Dorothy Christian – Canada, Native Peoples**

Dorothy Christian is a video artist, producer, director and writer. She is also a Co-founder of turning-point.ca: Native Peoples and Newcomers On-line. Dorothy is a member of the Spallumcheen Indian Band from the interior of BC. Her production experience includes over 75 mini documentaries for VISION TV, the national multi-faith network, freelance producing for CTV, APTN News & in-studio directing for Creative Native series & the Art Zone series. Since September, 2004 Dorothy has been the Executive Director of the Indigenous Media Arts Group in Vancouver, BC.

## **Shukria Dini - Somalia**

Shukria Dini is a Ph.D. candidate at York University's School of Women's Studies, currently researching the contributions of Somali women's organisations to peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in Somalia. Her research includes ways in which women in Somalia claimed a space in civil society that was not available to them in the pre-war period, and how they are now using it. Shukria came from Somalia to Toronto as a refugee.

## **Keti and Jovan Dzamov - Macedonia**

As Peacebuilders International Programme Developers for Macedonia, Keti and Jovan, currently based in Toronto, have been involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution between communities in conflict in war-afflicted areas of Macedonia. Keti's work includes facilitating reconciliation programs, as well as promoting conflict resolution techniques as part of



psychosocial workshops for young refugees. Jovan also worked on the reconciliation program to rebuild relations between warring communities. His focus lies in promoting and applying peacebuilding techniques in domestic violence cases.

### **Robin Edoh – Africa and Caribbean**

Robin Edoh is a Program Coordinator with Africanadain Peace Mission International in Toronto, a non-profit organization with a mandate to introduce conflict resolution in African and Caribbean countries as a tool for peacebuilding and crime prevention. As a mediator for the past five years, Robin has worked with others to build peace and create awareness in the African/Caribbean communities on the use of mediation as a tool for crime prevention.

### **Debra Joy Eklove - Canada**

Debra Joy Eklove is a transpersonal psychotherapist, holistic practitioner and a member of the Art of Living Foundation in Toronto, an international organization dedicated to creating peace from the level of the individual, and fostering human values within the global community. She would like to discuss the success of the Art of Living programs, work of the organization with people from many diverse backgrounds and cultures, as well as programs for trauma survivors, such as the tsunami and 9/11 survivors.

### **Grace Feuerverger – Canada, Isreal/Palestine**

Grace Feuerverger is Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. A child of Holocaust survivors, Professor Grace Feuerverger grew up in a multicultural and multilingual home in Montreal and brings her personal and professional experiences to bear on her teaching and research work. Her research interests focus on theoretical and practical issues of cultural and linguistic diversity, ethnic identity maintenance, and minority language learning within multicultural educational contexts, as well as on conflict resolution and peacemaking in international settings.

### **Victoria Freeman – Canada, Native Peoples**

Victoria's working life has included supervising a model-rocket launch site, practising sheep midwifery, teaching English in Swaziland, Africa, co-ordinating a major women's literary conference, raising funds for the world's first circumpolar English/Inuktitut literary magazine, and writing, editing, and mothering. She has written *Distant Relations: How My Ancestors Colonized North America* and is co-moderator of Turning Point: Native Peoples and Newcomers On-line. Victoria is currently pursuing a PhD in history at the University of Toronto.

### **Kimberly Gibbons - Canada**

Kimberly Gibbons is Co-Founder and member of a Toronto-based women's human rights network, Women Building Peace by Peace, and Symposium volunteer. Kimberly has worked as an educator and programme coordinator in Costa Rica, India, Japan and Canada, and has strong interests in sustainable, human-centred development, human rights education and transformative learning. She hopes to gain from the diverse peacebuilding experience of Symposium participants.

### **Dagny Gingrich - Canada**

Dagny is a recent graduate of a masters program in sustainable livelihoods at York University, Toronto. She is a member of the Toronto Peacebuilding Network.

### **Anne Goodman - Canada**

Anne Goodman teaches in the Adult Education and Counselling Psychology Department of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) and is an active member of several peace groups. She is Associate Director of the Transformative Learning Centre at OISE/UT, and Director of its focal area on Peace and Human Rights. An activist, educator, trainer and researcher, Anne has extensive knowledge of and experience with community-based peacebuilding locally and internationally, and is one of the primary actors in bringing the International Institute of Community-based Peacebuilding to fruition!

### **Nimo Haji Abubakar - Somalia**

Nimo Haji Abubakar is a family physician working in Borama, Somaliland, where she recently returned after many years in Canada. She has set up programmes to help women and children to deal with the after effects of the war, dealing with economic issues, education, health and leisure. Nimo also represents the Voice of Somali Women for Peace, Reconciliation and Political Rights (VOSP), an international network, and wants to develop peacebuilding workshops and programs in Borama.

### **Kendra Holtzman – United States, Former Yugoslavia**

Kendra Holtzman is a Ph.D. candidate at University of Iowa. Her dissertation is on political forgiveness in the former Yugoslavia. Kendra also serves on the National Advisory Board to the National Council of Churches, and strives to be a bridge builder in her academic research, church, work and personal relationships. In coming to this symposium she hopes to share not only her research on forgiveness, spirituality, interfaith and international relations, but also her deep commitment to interdisciplinary networking.

### **Zora Ignatovic - Macedonia**

Zora Ignatovic, based in Toronto, is interested in promoting ecological actions through grassroots initiatives, as well as the development of sustainable, self-supporting, community-based long-term programs. For Zora, peace may stand for a million things, but it's the only thing worth learning about – and that's the main reason she is attending the symposium.

### **Elias and Heyam Jabbour - Israel**

Elias and Heyam Jabbour are the founders of the first Arab peace centre in the Middle East. Located in Shefa-Amer (Shefar'Am in Hebrew), Israel, the House of Hope International Peace Centre has served as a forum for dialogue between Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druze and all other groups concerned with conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence. Elias is also one of the principal leaders and practitioner of *sulha* – the traditional Palestinian way of peacemaking and reconciliation.

### **Edith Klein - Canada**

Edith Klein is currently a Resident Fellow at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies, in the Munk Centre for International Studies, at the University of Toronto. She is a political

scientist who conducts research on the politics of Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia. Edith has been carrying out field work in the Balkans over the course of the last twenty-five years, researching health care delivery, youth, social values, and most recently the role of the third sector in social and political change in Serbia.

### **Charles Levkoe - Canada**

Charles Levkoe is the Urban Agriculture Coordinator with The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto, and Board Member with Peace Brigades International.

### **Robert Massoud – Canada, Palestine**

Robert, a Palestinian-Canadian living in Toronto, has promoted greater understanding of cultural and political realities surrounding Israel / Palestine through personal initiative and action in founding “Zatoun”, fair trade olive oil from Palestine, as well as “People Talking”. People Talking brings larger groups together to speak about Israel / Palestine in a safe and respectful space.

### **Jen Maurice - Canada**

Jen is currently a Masters candidate in the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology at OISE/UT.

### **Mary Jane McKitterick - Canada**

Mary Jane is currently a Masters candidate in the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology at OISE/UT.

### **Lara McLachlan - Canada**

Lara McLachlan comes from Canada, but she sees herself a “citizen of the world”. She has participated in “volunteers for peace” work camps in South America and is a friend of all the world’s “street people”. Lara would like to learn more about peace – what it is, where it is, why it is and why it is not. Above all, she would like to learn how to make it. Lara is a Masters candidate in the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology at OISE/UT.

### **Harry Mika – United States, Northern Ireland**

Harry is Professor of Sociology at Central Michigan University (USA), and Senior Research Fellow in the School of Law, Queens University of Belfast. An applied researcher and practitioner, he has worked closely with more than seventy-five community-based justice initiatives in the United States and abroad, on program design, implementation and evaluation themes. Since 1997, Harry has been extensively involved with the development of alternatives to paramilitary punishment violence in Loyalist and Republican working class areas of Northern Ireland. He is presently engaged in comparative research and practice on the roles of former combatants and ex-prisoners in community peacebuilding processes.

### **Felicien Nemeyima - Rwanda**

Felicien Nemeyimana is the Executive Director and Coordinator of Programmes of the Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP). Based in Kenya, PHARP also works in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, D.R Congo and Sudan. It is committed to fostering peace, healing and reconciliation in hurting community through training in counseling,

peacebuilding, conflict management and non-violence, and the reintegration of child soldiers. Felicien is actively engaged as a trainer, organizer and presenter at diverse international forums, and is currently Chairman of Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA).

### **Gjorgji Nikoloski - Macedonia**

Gjorgji Nikoloski, currently living in Guelph, Ontario, has been actively involved as President, trainer and External Coordinator with the Centre for Psychosocial Support and Mental Health Care, a non-government organization in Macedonia. He has extensive experience working with refugees of different ethnic backgrounds in Macedonia.

### **Eileen Omosa - Kenya**

Eileen Omosa specializes in natural resource management for sustainable livelihoods. She has extensive experience with natural resource-dependant communities and other stakeholders in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Southern Sudan. In her work, she has dealt with food security, conflict transformation, gender mainstreaming and HIV/AIDS issues. Additionally, she works on organizational strengthening, networking, research and policy process through participatory processes. Eileen is currently on a three-month placement with Canadian Crossroads International, in Toronto, working on HIV/AIDS prevention and public engagement activities on the Make Poverty History Campaign.

### **Natalie Sarjeant**

Natalie is the Project Coordinator for the "Talk Works - Violence Hurts" initiative at Peacebuilders International. She is the past Chair of YouCAN! (Youth Organizing to Understand Conflict and Advocate Non-Violence) Toronto Planning Team and has coordinated numerous training sessions and forums for the national and international youths on Resolving Conflicts and Action Planning. She is also an active member of the Toronto-based, St. Stephen's Community Mediation team.

### **Amina Sharif Hassan - Somalia**

Amina Sharif Hassan is the Co-founder and Coordinator of Voice of Somali Women for Peace, Reconciliation and Political Rights, the first Somali Canadian Women's Organization in Toronto. This organization mobilized Somali women to get involved in peace negotiations and take part in decision making.

### **Annie Simpson - Canada**

Annie is a community mediator with St. Stephen's Conflict Resolution Service (Toronto). Her peacebuilding activities include restorative justice work with Peacebuilders International, work with youth at risk, and as a facilitator/trainer for the YWHA.

### **Charles Tauber - Croatia**

Dr. Charles Tauber is the Director of the Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace (CWWPP), in Vukovar, Croatia. The Dutch-registered organization has worked in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia-Montenegro since 1995 on issues of grassroots health, particularly mental health, civil society and peacebuilding. Charles has many roles in the organization: therapist, mediator, teacher, advocate for health, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue, human rights, and the Head of Mission for Southeast Europe.

**Rob Tyler - Canada**

Rob is a psychotherapist in Toronto who deals with trauma and addictions.

**Rick Wallace - Canada**

Rick Wallace is a co-founder of the International Institute for Community-based Peacebuilding. He is currently doing his Ph.D. in Conflict Resolution at Bradford University in the UK, and is particularly interested in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal solidarity work and peacebuilding. Rick has extensive experience coordinating community-based conflict resolution in Toronto, as well as training and facilitating across cultures. Before this, he worked in Rwanda for UNHCR from 1993-1995.

**Carolyn Webb - Canada**

Carolyn is currently a Masters candidate in Adult Education and Environmental Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Under a Graduate Assistantship, she has been responsible for much of the coordination of "Grassroots Peacebuilding in Action and Dialogue".

**John Wilmerding – United States**

John Wilmerding is the Founder and Director of the Coalition for Equity-Restorative Justice and a former UN Secretary for Restorative Justice. He is working toward founding a college that would teach peacemaking at an undergraduate level, as well as establishing grassroots peacemaking as a distinct academic discipline. John also has a strong background in community arts and teaches at John Woolman College in Vermont.

**Nomiki Yekani – South Africa**

Nomiki Yekani, a young woman from rural South Africa, became interested in peace and anti-racism work and gradually evolved from being an activist in her own geographical region to the being the National Co-ordinator of the Peace Africa Youth Forum, a project that grew out of the work of Umtapo Centre in Durban, South Africa.

**Miriam Yosowich – Canada, Israel/Palestine**

Miriam Yosowich, a Co-President of Shalom-Salam@YorkU, is actively engaged in developing respect and mutual understanding between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian factions on the York University campus, and in the Toronto community at large. Some of Miriam's interests include youth issues, community arts and Diaspora communities. She plans to work as a mediator and international human rights lawyer in the future

# Acknowledgements

*Thank you to the following individuals and organizations  
for your generous support of this initiative:*

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

**Connaught Committee, University of Toronto**

Dan Yashinsky

**Healing Divas**

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

**Michael Wheeler**

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/UT)

**Peacebuilders International**

Transformative Learning Centre (TLC)

**Women's Peace Resource Education Centre**

*None of this would have been possible without the help of our volunteers:*

- ♦ Roland Basha ♦ Kim Gibbons ♦ Dagny Gingrich ♦
- ♦ Jen Maurice ♦ Mary Jane McKitterick ♦ Lara McLachlan ♦
- ♦ Natalie Sarjeant ♦ Annie Simpson ♦ Miriam Yosowich ♦

*Many thanks to the Institute's Partners and Sponsors:*

The Creative Vocalization Studio ♦ Centre for Social Justice

**International Holistic Tourism Education Centre**

Mindfulness Practice Community of Toronto

**New Songs for Peace ♦ Ontario Council for International Cooperation**

Ontario Voice of Women ♦ Peace Initiatives International-Africa

**Queen East International Solutions**

Scarborough South West New Democratic Party Riding Association

**Shalom-Salam@York ♦ Somali Canadians Today ♦ Tikkun Toronto**

turning-point.ca: Native Peoples and Newcomers Online

**United Nations People's Movement**

Voice of Somali Women for Peace, Reconciliation and Political Rights

**Vukovar Field Institute for Post-Conflict Studies**

World Literacy Canada