



The Global Coalition for
Conflict Transformation

Bi-monthly Newsletter - June 2013

Introduction

TransConflict (www.transconflict.com) is pleased to present the third bi-monthly Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation (GCCT) newsletter, which provides a host of insights into the work of the GCCT and its members. The main purpose of this newsletter is to a) share information about the work of the GCCT and its members to a wider audience, and b) to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between GCCT members themselves and with other interested parties.

- [Click here to learn more about the GCCT](#)
- [Click here for a complete list of GCCT members](#)

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To contribute to the next edition of the GCCT newsletter – which will be published in mid-September – please contact TransConflict at - gcct@transconflict.com.

1) New members of the GCCT

The GCCT was pleased to welcome a host of new members in the past several months, including (click on the links below for further information):

1. [Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation \(CCMT\) – Zimbabwe](#) – CCMT's vision is a society where people actively participate in creating social and economic justice by managing and transforming all forms of conflict constructively. CCMT's mission is to enhance communities' capacity do deal with conflicts by raising awareness and creating synergies among decision-makers and local stakeholders in conflict processes, thus building sustainable and constructive impacts towards transforming conflict and enabling a stable and durable peace. CCMT works to transform the ways in which societies deal with conflict – away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem solving to find culturally-appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively. CCMT provides relevant and quality training services to various organisations and groups; established a resource centre through which interested members of the public can access information on conflict management and transformation; provides conflict intervention services to individuals, groups, private sector companies and organisations; and conducts research into traditional and non-traditional conflict transformation approaches relevant to social conflicts in Zimbabwe.
2. [South Sudan Youth Participation Agency \(SSYPA\) – South Sudan](#) – works to empower youth leaders as peace ambassadors and beacons of hope for South Sudan. SSYPA has organized several peace building and conflict transformation activities across the nation for the past 10 years, through which it has both assisted and witnessed young people taking the lead to transform conflicts in South Sudan. SSYPA works closely with Norwegian Church Aid, the Oslo Center and CHF in South Sudan, primarily targeting youth. The South Sudan Youth Development Project, funded by CIDA, promotes effective and meaningful youth involvement in the development of their communities. It works to strengthen the administrative capacity of SSYPA, a network of 47 youth organizations in southern Sudan and facilitates collaboration among its member organizations. Additional programme activities include HIV/AIDS education and awareness, mine education and awareness, psycho-social support programs, community peace building and reconciliation, skills training and other local rehabilitation efforts.

[If your organization is interested in joining the Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation \(GCCT\), then please click here for further information on how to apply!](#)

2) GCCT Members in Focus – Peace Dialogue – Armenia

Peace Dialogue, which is registered in Armenia, unites different peace and civic activists from Armenia, Russia, Georgia, Germany and the Netherlands.

For more than four years, Peace Dialogue NGO has been working in the field of peacebuilding, endeavouring to create a peace movement and peace culture in the Caucasus region. The dream of a regional peace movement has hinged upon civic engagement and development in Armenia and in the region as a whole; and it was especially important that youth undertake an important role in this processes.

Guided by its partners' years of international experience in different conflict regions, and through its own local and regional studies, Peace Dialogue highlights the importance of:

1. overcoming a culture of indifference and silence;
2. developing citizens' critical and analytical thinking so that they can differentiate reality from propaganda;
3. emphasizing non-violent resistance;
4. recognizing the importance of the role and voice of the citizen;
5. promoting civilian supervision of decision-making processes, and;
6. ensuring civic participation in the peaceful resolution of local, national and regional conflicts.

Through the development of civic activism, Peace Dialogue promotes a culture of peace and tries to contribute to the formation of a global peace movement. In such a culture, everyone would understand their role and responsibility in the community and in securing peace, both within their respective countries and the wider region. Citizens would be vested with the right to demand peace from the authorities and to struggle for the rule of law, social justice, and civic engagement in social and political processes.



Given the existing problems and socio-economic context, it is expected that education, non-violent resistance and change-directed dialogue are the best methods for promoting the organization's four main strategic directions:

1. formation of peacebuilding potential;
2. formation of respect for human rights and democratic values;
3. promotion of civic peace initiatives, and;
4. advocacy on behalf of victims of conflicts.

Non-Violent Resistance

In the process of achieving social, economic, political, and ecological reforms, Peace Dialogue emphasises the importance of non-violent resistance, which is the basis for all the organization's activities. Participants of the peace movement should have no other principle than achieving peace only through peaceful resistance.

Peace Dialogue has chosen the following methods of activism to achieve its desired impacts - citizen awareness, civil disobedience, peaceful marches, the organization of campaigns, social advertisements, withholding of economic and political cooperation, and the establishment of civilian control.

Over the past two years – with the active participation and usually at the initiative of youth in the community – Peace Dialogue implemented more than 40 events at the local, national and regional levels. With the support of Germany's Owen e.V., Peace Dialogue also implemented local initiatives in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia

At the beginning of 2013, Peace Dialogue started a two-year project entitled “Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia.” The aim of this initiative is to stop violations of human rights in the armed forces and to develop the safety of Armenia, plus the safety of those soldiers who protect it. Peace Dialogue believes that this project will result in greater public awareness about the poor human rights situation in the armed forces. In order to create public demand for solving this problem, Peace Dialogue also expects to mobilize and involve local, national and international actors, who can, in turn, involve experts from the European Union, NATO and the OSCE.



The project is also expected to help reform the educational curriculum of the Armenian Ministry of Defence; achieved by developing suggestion packages and teaching manuals to support the development of officers-in-training with an advanced level of human rights education. In pursuit of these expectations, various activities are being planned based on the particularities of each target group.

Civic Education

The educational component is particularly important. The methods selected by Peace Dialogue for developing analytical and critical skills among individuals involved in the peace movement give an opportunity to raise taboo issues, including violence and human rights violations. Furthermore, methods that would create a platform for resolving those issues through non-violence have also been chosen.

The social, economic and political situation in the country, combined with Peace Dialogue's experience, were the basis for selecting theatrical tools as the most effective and applicable, especially in youth peace work. Peace Dialogue's activity is based on Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and the theatrical methods of Brazilian socio-political activist, Augusto Boal. There were at least two reasons for this choice. First, the methods were quite interesting and motivating, allowing Peace Dialogue to raise even the most taboo issues, explore the problem from different dimensions, and discuss and identify the interests and needs of different parties involved in the conflict. Second, this approach it decreases the possibility of aggression in the existing repressive political context.

Through the organization's three-year project, entitled "Let's See...Let's Choose...Let's Change...", many like-minded young people from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorno-Karabakh had the chance to get acquainted with forum theatre and newspaper theatre, which were later widely used through their local initiatives.



In 2012, the educational component intensified through conflict transformation training, which was based upon the needs and interests of the movement's participants. Through Peace Dialogue's projects and youth initiatives, trainings and discussions were organized on the following themes: gender roles, media impact, human rights and civic activism, civic awareness concerning ecological problems, alternative journalism, and the use of modern technology in civic activism.

[**Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation \(GCCT\)**](#)

Dialogue

Peace Dialogue considers dialogue between conflicting parties to be one of the most important peacebuilding tools. Dialogue is the best way to ensure face-to-face communication wherever communication is hampered. During Peace Dialogue's activities, it has been important to create a safe space for the representatives of the parties involved in the conflict where they could meet to share all their concerns and presuppositions.

Peace Dialogue sees dialogue as a preliminary step for building new relations, raising one's own needs and discovering those of others. Dialogue, meanwhile, is seen to be in a unique and specific socio-political context.



Establishing dialogue oriented towards change between the parties involved in community, national and regional conflict starts from the individual level. Peace Dialogue is convinced that change was possible only from individual consciousness. This will, in turn, result in behavioural change.

While overcoming a culture of silence is a priority in societies where violence was long defined as a tradition or a cultural value, Peace Dialogue considers dialogue formation as indispensable and as the most effective tool for raising issues and looking for solutions.

By using many theatrical methods to establish dialogue – including holding movie screenings and discussions on different social and political themes – a platform was formed for youth from the societies involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to raise their everyday issues, exchange perspectives on different topics with their peers, and learn about the histories, perceptions, experiences and expectations of the parties involved in the conflict.

**[Please click here to learn more about and contact
Peace Dialogue from Armenia](#)**

3) GCCT Insight and Analysis

This section provides an overview of the insight and analysis produced by members of the GCCT on a variety of conflict and conflict transformation related topics (click on the links below to read the entire article):

1. [Using images in struggle – creating another social reality](#) – by [Modus Operandi](#) – Art has the capacity to create another social reality, to give voice to the voiceless or to imagine a reality beyond conflict. Dreaming a new future is an effective weapon in struggle.
2. [Thoughts on community and commemoration](#) – by *Dr. Orna Young* – The question of representation is a key issue in the issues of commemorations, many of which have had their ownership taken by the very individuals who are viewed as embodying the antithesis of the communal spirit evidenced at such events. This ownership is seeking to emphasise the exclusivity of a community, while binding that exclusivity to dysfunctional rhetoric so many in these communities have sought to move beyond.
3. [Time for the UN Security Council permanent five to give up their vetoes?](#) – by *Gerard M. Gallucci* – Why has the relationship between Washington and Moscow not become more “normal” and permitted a greater degree of partnership in the Security Council? Reasons exist on both sides. But the world would be a better place if the US stopped trying to remake it in its own image and instead worked within the international community as part of that community.
4. [“If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got”](#) – by *Dr. Orna Young* – There needs to be a re-assessment of who is brought to the table in efforts to build and develop relationships. To move beyond the constant re-visiting of the same issues, perhaps we need to move the conversation beyond those “usual suspects”. The demographics of those engaging in these specific talks suggest that while many have shifted in their thinking to find areas of mutual concern and agreement, “new” voices will soon need to be heard.
5. [Between agitation and victimization – is Erdogan still a winner after Gezi park?](#) – by *Dr. Ulas Doga Eralp* – Erdogan’s lack of anger management might not only cost him the presidency but also damage Turkey’s growth projections in an increasingly volatile region. His last meeting with the Taksim Solidarity Movement delegation might have been a positive sign that Erdogan finally is arriving at the same conclusion, but his insistence on the use of violence discourages such optimistic predictions.
6. [Bosnia and Herzegovina today – the view from Tuzla](#) – by *Mirjana Kosić* – In spite of the demographic turbulence that Bosnia and Herzegovina has endured, Tuzla has remained largely multi-ethnic in composition, with Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Croats and Serbs residing side-by-side.
7. [Serbia and Russia – far right friendships?](#) - by *Vladimir Ninković* - Whilst some may be tempted to use radical, far right organizations as proxies for their daily political goals, they would be wise to remember that even the most powerful political and security actors have in the past ‘overplayed’ with fire and created potent adversaries.

**To contribute analysis and insight to TransConflict.com,
please contact us at office@transconflict.com**

4) GCCT Activities, Research and Requests

Partnership on Community-Based Sustainable Peace Analysis Research (2013-2014)

Location	Eastern Africa - Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda , South Sudan , Ethiopia, and Kenya
Implementing Organization	Active Non-Violence Initiatives Kenya
Partnership Request	Three-years of funding and research support

a) Introduction

Eastern Africa is the newest frontier for exploiting high-value resources – including minerals, gas, oil, land and water – and developing large scale infrastructure and farms. For the communities affected, it is imperative to better understand the pillars of peace that can help transform conflict. As such, this community-based peace research focuses on locations where resource exploitation has commenced; deploying teams of researchers to facilitate participatory, community-led research that identifies existing and potential pillars of peace.

This research is based upon the premise that increased community engagement in peacebuilding – grounded in locally-identified pillars of peace – will impact the root causes of resource exploitation-driven conflict. The findings will better inform peacebuilding and advocacy, particularly with respect to conflict over community domains, heritage and livelihoods. Furthermore, it will raise awareness about the need to legislate for the rights of communities, whilst strengthening community links to national legal and governance frameworks.

b) Partnership Requirements and Methodology

Such a community-led research process requires financial and research support over a three-year period. [Active Non-Violence Initiatives Kenya \(ANIK\)](#) undertakes to act to co-ordinate all aspects of the research, including the dissemination of findings. The key purpose of the proposed partnership - between the communities themselves, peace researchers, funding entities and ANIK - is to ensure that research is conducted in three countries per year in 2013 and 2014.

The community-led research targets rural, subsistence-based communities, primarily farmers and pastoralists. Facilitative participatory approaches will be employed, supported by systematic scientific research. Researchers will be deployed to relevant communities for a period of six to nine months. All the researchers will possess practical community experience, whilst being acquainted with knowledge on the overall effects of resource extraction in Africa. Upon completion of the process in each country – which will generate technically competent sampling of comparative community experiences and perspectives – the findings will be disseminated through a variety of channels, including academia, practitioners and policy-makers.

ANIK has developed a multi-faceted approach to community-led research, including logistical and coordination facilities to identify viable partners at each level. ANIK will be responsible for facilitating the review and learning forums, and providing regular progress reports for each

country. Coordination, information and knowledge management will help to shape and advance sustainable peacebuilding; capitalizing on the greater levels of community voice, participation and engagement in the process of peace research. ANIK is committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical governance, financial management, transparency and accountability.

c) Overall Objectives and Outputs

The overall objective is to identify the impact of high-value resource extraction on the various pillars of peace, plus the interrelations between communities that inhabit such localities.

Other strategic objectives include to:

- a) Explore and document community perspectives and perceptions on the processes used in the allocation, zoning-off and development of high-value resources;
- b) Examine the impact of extraction of resources on community livelihoods, domains, heritage and culture, sharing these concerns with government and the private sector;
- c) Identify legally-executable community-based options for strengthening the key pillars of peace at the local level with respect to resource extraction on community land.
- d) Analyse rights-based issues related to communities and their cultural domains, heritage, territories and natural resources; including consultation procedures and processes, plus benefit-sharing of high-value resources with local communities.

Outputs from Research Process:

- a) Design of community-led peace analysis and research guidelines;
- b) Systematic documentation of issues from a community perspective and enhanced knowledge in this sector;
- c) Networking of local entities to facilitate sharing knowledge for information-based action;
- d) Linking communities to sources of information within governance structures, thereby helping articulate issues related to community livelihoods and rights;
- e) Widened partnership and collaboration of peace builders in pragmatic learning processes.

Conclusions

This research will highlight the key pillars of peace in communities affected by high-value resource extraction driven conflict; thereby mapping out how peace can be sustained and enhanced. The findings will provide the basis for lobbying government and the private sector to ensure local communities enjoy the necessary protection. Furthermore, the process will strengthen communities by giving voice to their concerns over the impact of resource exploitation. On the basis of the research, a series of practical recommendations will be addressed to governments and the private sector, particularly the extractive industries. The findings will also be of value to peacebuilders and all those interested in conflict transformation in Africa; adding value to policy research and making, plus interventions that address community rights and livelihoods. The community-led research will contribute to knowledge about conflict transformation in in Africa, offering both practical and academic experiences and insights.

5) GCCT Declarations

Minnesota Declaration - “A call for justice for victims of Liberia’s civil war”

On April 20-21, 2013, Liberians under the auspices of the Coalition for Justice in Liberia (CJL) comprised of Liberian human rights advocates in collaboration with international human rights organizations, assembled at the historic Continental Hall in the city of Brooklyn Center at which time attendees evaluated the state of human rights and justice for victims of Liberia's 14-year civil war. Following two days of intense deliberations, the conference participants observed the followings:

- a) That the state of human rights is being weakened and remains a challenge amidst growing concerns that Liberia’s policymakers have not taken adequate steps to address the neglected issue of justice for the victims of Liberia’s 14-year civil war living both at home and abroad.
- b) That the lack of confidence in the justice system of this postwar country has rendered it weak and inefficient to handle the tasks of bringing about transparent justice to Liberians victimized by the civil conflicts.

Therefore, participants at the conference unanimously affirmed that in order for genuine peace, reconciliation and national healing to take place, it is extremely fundamental that the issue of justice for hundreds of thousands of Liberia's war victims be addressed.



As a child, Rabbie played in the alleyways by his home on Benson Street, one of Monrovia’s main thoroughfares and the site of fierce fighting during the civil war. Photo by Cameron Zohoori, published under a Creative Commons License.

In light of the foregoing, the conference-participants declared their commitment to continue their advocacy for justice for Liberian war victims, and thus resolved to take the following actions:

1. To intensify human rights awareness campaign on the issue of justice for victims and survivors of Liberia's 14-year brutal civil war;

2. To identify, and bring to public view, Liberia's war criminals who may be hiding in the United States, Europe, Africa, and other parts of the world;
3. To expand its outreach efforts in the cities of Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Providence, Staten Island, and other parts of the United States where Liberians impacted by the war lived;
4. To assist war victims who still suffer Post-traumatic symptoms and other mental conditions with support services to help with their healing;
5. To empower war victims to pursue legal actions against war perpetrators, including seeking compensation for abuses, tortures, and deaths of relatives by war criminals during the Liberian civil war;
6. To conduct periodic trainings with the sole purpose to empower war victims as well as help them acquire knowledge and skills they need in order to engage in self-advocacy activities;
7. To mobilize Liberians and non-Liberians of conscience in a mass campaign dedicated to working for justice on behalf of victims of the Liberian civil war;
8. To pursue collaborative efforts with Liberian and non-Liberian justice groups at home and in the Diaspora and working together on programs to improve the conditions of Liberian war victims;
9. To bring attention to the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report which provides a roadmap while at the same time builds genuine peace and reconciliation in Liberia.

Towards this end, the conference reaffirmed its commitment to bring an end to the entrenched culture of impunity which continues to threaten the foundations of peace in Liberia.

Issued this 21st day of April 2013 in the City of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

[To learn more about the Movement Against Violence and Impunity in Africa, a member of the GCCT from Liberia, please click here!](#)

6) Follow the GCCT and the TransConflict

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[Click here to add your name to TransConflict's e-Declaration in support of the principles of conflict transformation!](#)

