



The Global Coalition for  
Conflict Transformation

## **Bi-monthly GCCT Newsletter - November 2013**

### **Introduction**

TransConflict ([www.transconflict.com](http://www.transconflict.com)) is pleased to present the fifth 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-January – please contact  
TransConflict at - [gcct@transconflict.com](mailto: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 Research, Documentation and Publication – Kosovo](#) –advocates for transitional justice through the development of objective memory and the promotion of initiatives that normalize community and regional relationships. The Center’s long term vision is to develop methods for Dealing with the Past that may be helpful in constructing a history of Kosovo that dispels the two opposing victim-only myths. In doing so, CRDP will be the central advocates of Dealing with the Past issues in Kosovo, including economic losses, and documentation and archives.
2. [Samadana/m – Sri Lanka](#) – works to achieve a multi-ethnic and peaceful society in which people have the ability, courage and willingness to manage their own conflicts in a non-violent way by providing the necessary knowledge and skills, whilst creating a safe, neutral space for differing parties to discuss their problems. The situation in Sri Lanka bears testimony to the need to promote a culture of non-violence. Leaders and the community at large, however, remain unconvinced about the liberating and transformational power of non-violence.
3. [Advocates for Youth and Health Development – Nigeria](#) – a youth led organization engaged in peace promotion, conflict resolution, human rights and economic development, primarily through capacity-building, advocacy, research and documentation. AYHD’s vision is to create a Nigerian society in which every Nigerian, young or old, works towards peacebuilding, intercultural harmony, social and political integration, justice, economic and health development. AYHD’s mission is to work diligently, hand-in-hand with all stakeholders – parents, teachers, students, policymakers, community leaders etc. – to empower youth in the fields of peacebuilding, political participation, human rights, justice and economic development.
4. [Building Community Initiatives – Uganda](#) – focuses on building “self-reliant communities” in the Karamoja region. A flourishing community offers a peaceful and humane existence in which people are not only able to make their voices heard, but can also make use of the opportunities for self-fulfilment. BCI upholds the principles of conflict transformation by promoting non-violence; clearly understanding conflict stages and interventions; working with all parties to peacefully address conflict in the community; and understanding that everybody has a role in conflict transformation.

**[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 – Movement Against Violence and Impunity in Africa (MAVIA)**

**The Movement Against Violence and Impunity in Africa (MAVIA) was established 2009 in the city of Monrovia, Liberia. It has since been involved with community outreaches raising awareness and teaching about non-violence, peace, and human rights.**

MAVIA seeks to create a caravan for change, peace and nonviolence across the African continent and to ensure that the people of Africa live on a continent where there is justice, and respect for human rights and freedom of expression.

Education in Africa has paid insufficient attention to teaching human rights, peace and non-violence, each of which are vital to reducing tensions and outbreaks of violence. Through the establishment of nonviolence and human rights clubs, however, MAVIA has been able to manage conflicts in many schools and communities within the borders of Liberia.



### **Nonviolence and Human Rights Clubs (NHRC)**

MAVIA has launched Nonviolence and Human Rights Clubs (NHRC) in schools in several communities and 65 schools within the city of Monrovia, Liberia, and there are efforts underway to establish these clubs in schools within the Irvington, New Jersey area. MAVIA's Executives have held meetings with the City of Irvington regarding its project and the concept for establishing the clubs has been accepted. These clubs serve as active advocates of young people to attain basic rights, whilst at the same time teaching against violent behavior and approaches through awareness raising activities such as debate, discussions, and presentations. The clubs activities are communicated through song, dance, poetry, drama, drawing and public speaking. They are designed to increase awareness of violence, abuse and exploitation, in so doing educating and sensitizing their peers in schools and communities.

One of the main activities of these clubs is to empower youth to contribute to the change process in their schools and communities, which is one of the most effective tools that can be used in dealing with youth violence and inequality. The more input that youth have into the issues that face them, the more respect they have for the processes used in transforming them. One great idea of youth empowerment is a peer mediation programme. Youth are often more open to ideas and influence from their peers than from adults. They feel that that their peers are better able to relate to the issues involved. In effect, this programme comprise youth that can apply for membership of a youth association called a Nonviolence and Human Rights Club (NHRC) in each school represented, whereby active advocates of young people's human rights and gender equality will meet, discuss and embark on various activities to sensitize their school and communities.



MAVIA is confident that such a time has come for us to allow these young growing and aspiring leaders to contribute to uplifting their respective schools and communities by engaging other youth and learners in their knowledge and awareness of human rights issues. MAVIA often refers to these initiatives as train the trainers' programmes. In each school that MAVIA works in, a youth programme, called a Nonviolence and Human Rights Club (NHRC), should be established by the MAVIA's Public Education Programme.

The purpose of the clubs is to:

1. Promote the rights of young people throughout the school environment and encourage similar trends in their communities;
2. Provide youth and students with a safe, supportive environment so they can connect with their peers and explore positive examples of masculinity and male strength.
3. Help youth and students understand ways of traditional masculinity that contribute to violence, inequality and unhealthy relationships so they can become aware of these behaviours and empower themselves and others to rise above them;

4. Inspire youth and students with examples of healthy and strong role models of what it is to be a real adult today;
5. Encourage their inner leader by guiding them on how to promote equality and prevent violence among their peers and communities; and
6. To lead a campaign that will help reduce gun violence.



The objectives of the NHRC are to:

1. To provide learners and youth in general with a supportive space in which to connect with peers by promoting human rights and mutual relationships;
2. To promote an understanding that traditional ways of socialization and upbringing contribute to the fight against all forms of youth violence, thereby perpetuating peaceful coexistence;
3. To expose the learners and the youth to healthier, nonviolent models of adulthood;
4. To build the capacity of youth and students by sharpening their understanding about how to manage conflicts and at the same time standing up for the rights of others;
5. To reduce gun violence.

MAVIA is now seeking supports to extend its program to other parts of the United States, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana.

**[Please click here to learn more about the Movement Against Violence and Impunity in Africa \(MAVIA\)](#)**



### 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. [On reconciliation in Kosovo](#) - *by Nora Ahmetaj* - The Balkans, in general, and Kosovo, in particular, will not come to terms with the past without real political determination and recognition. The process of reconciliation cannot be taken as a separate process in Kosovo, since the legacies of the armed conflict affected all countries in the Former Yugoslavia, and thus needs to be addressed as such.
2. [Local peacebuilders demand an end to conflict in Kashmir](#) - *by Zafar Iqbal* - As the Kashmir peace process falters, cross-border skirmishes between Indian and Pakistani forces are becoming more frequent, and innocent people are being caught in the crossfire. Local peacebuilders are demanding this change and the peace process be brought back on track.
3. [A waiting game – Syria through the lens of conflict transformation](#) - *by Kirra Hughes* - Looking at Syria through the lenses of a few selected Principles of Conflict Transformation can offer new suggestions for peaceful actions as the fatigue of violence continues to grow.
4. [Kashmir – an integral part of what?](#) - *by Shams Rehman* - The dispute over Jammu and Kashmir has long been discussed from an Indian or Pakistani perspective, ignoring the views of those Kashmiris who feel that they have been denied their right to self-determination for over six decades.
5. [Two roofs over one school](#) – *by Martino Bianchi* - The evolution of the protests over the school in Konjević Polje seems to be the product of more profound social and political dynamics in Bratunac municipality, and indeed in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
6. [Palestine \(and Syria\) and Kosova](#) - *by David B. Kanin* - Regarding existential, zero-sum struggles it matters which side has more options.
7. [Addressing human rights violations in the Armenian armed forces](#) - *by Edgar Khachatryan* - With human rights violations in the Armenian Armed Forces having become a taboo subject, Peace Dialogue used simulations to raise awareness about the situation faced by soldiers, thereby helping breakdown the culture of silence that prevailed.

**[To contribute analysis and insight to TransConflict.com,  
please contact us by clicking here.](#)**

## 4) GCCT Activities, Research and Requests

### **PATRIR launches Global Operational Peace Support (Global OPS)**

*Global OPS is the world's only platform providing customized professional support for professionals, practitioners and policy makers in the field. Global OPS provides on-line and on-site modules offering customized technical assistance, coaching, mentoring and communities of practice to support leadership and practitioners in the field to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of your work and the programmes of your agency and mission.*

#### **Background**

Global OPS has been created to respond to a specific need in the field: to ensure that practitioners, policy makers and professionals working on key conflict issues have the support they need and the latest up-to-date access to key lessons, resources, materials and guidance for effective programming, practice and implementation.

#### **Vision and Mission**

Global OPS works to improve Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking Impact and Effectiveness through targeted, customized support and assistance to professionals in the field.

- **Vision** – For practitioners, agencies, organizations and governments dealing with conflict situations, peacebuilding, peacemaking, peacekeeping, prevention and post-war recovery to be able to improve their practice, policies and impact by having available to them the breadth of knowledge, expertise, and lessons available in the field – customized for their needs, realities and context – and linked to a world-wide community of practice.
- **Mission** – To ensure that practitioners, policy-makers and professionals in the field receive customized support, coaching and assistance to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of their work.

#### **How Global OPS works**

Global OPS modules are delivered both on-line and on-site. A customized on-line platform has been created to host on-line modules which address specific professional areas (topics) and provide participants with:

- State of the art professional knowledge, training and expertise on that issue
- Direct coaching, technical assistance and support to assist you in:
  - the work you are doing on the ground
  - the programme / mission of your organisation, ministry, agency
  - implementing your mandate / terms of reference

They are specifically designed for busy, full-time professionals working in the field. Modules are delivered to enable you to participate while working. They provide the specific benefit of giving you a framework of support, coaching, assistance and professional development on your exact thematics/areas of work.

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In partnership with the [International Peace and Development Training Centre \(IPDTC\)](#), Global OPS also provides on-site programmes at IPDTC's Global Academy in Cluj-Napoca, Romania and Executive Leadership Programmes in London.

Agencies, Ministries, Missions and Organisations may also request customised Global OPS modules to be delivered exclusively for their staff, partner organisations and specific stakeholder/participant groups.

## **Impact**

Global OPS is about impact. Its aim is to improve the impact of peacebuilding, peacemaking, peacekeeping, prevention and post-war recovery in the field. OPS has been created to help you – and your agency, mission, organization or ministry – to improve your capacity to achieve real impact and change.

Too much policy and practice to address key conflict issues in the field has little – and sometimes no – impact (or negative impact). Anyone working with conflict issues has seen the challenges of poorly designed, poorly planned, and poorly implemented missions and programmes. At the same time, the challenges – the complexity of the issues we're dealing with and the sometimes difficult contexts and realities we're facing in addressing them – can be significant. Global OPS is designed to serve the needs of professionals and their agencies, ministries and organizations. It has been built to help you achieve greater, real impact. Each OPS Module will be customized to your needs as practitioners, policy makers or professionals in the field. Through the chosen modules, you will engage with leading experts with in-depth practical experience and knowledge of the field – whose purpose is to be there to assist you in the actual work you are doing. Your fellow participants are practitioners, policy-makers, diplomats and professionals coming from across relevant agencies, institutions, organizations, ministries and missions. Support will be customized – designed to help you in the actual work and specific contexts you are involved in. OPS is not abstract, theoretical or 'pre-packaged', as many on-line and many on-site courses available today. It has been designed by experienced policy makers and practitioners, for experienced policy makers and practitioners. It is a professional service. Module Leaders are leading practitioners and experts in their field. Participants are practitioners in key positions, addressing the topic of the module. Through the module, you will have the opportunity to take up the real / actual issues you are facing on the ground, in your context, in your work, and receive coaching, guidance and technical assistance to improve your policy and practice, and to improve your impact as a professional in the field.

OPS is about changing the way we do peacebuilding in the world today. It's about bringing the best of our global experience and lessons developed in a wide-range of contexts and making them immediately available to practitioners and policy makers. It's about creating a professional community of practice, and ensuring that people in key positions have the support they need to do peacebuilding better.

**[Please click here to learn more about Global Operational Peace Support \(Global OPS\)](#)**

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## 5) GCCT Advocacy

### **Addressing human rights violations in the Armenian armed forces**

*With human rights violations in the Armenian Armed Forces having become a taboo subject, Peace Dialogue used simulations to raise awareness about the situation faced by soldiers, thereby helping breakdown the culture of silence that prevailed.*

**By Edgar Khachatryan**

Attempting to raise public awareness about human rights violations in the Armenian army, Peace Dialogue, organized various activities to help educate Armenian society. At the beginning of 2013, Peace Dialogue launched a new initiative, a two-year project called ‘Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia’, with the support of the Dutch organization, IKV Pax Christi. The aim of this initiative is to end human rights violations in the armed forces and to develop Armenia’s safety, plus the safety of those soldiers who protect it. Peace Dialogue hopes that this project will raise public awareness about the poor human rights situation facing the armed forces. In order to create public demand to solve this problem, Peace Dialogue works to mobilize local, national and international actors, who in turn involve experts from the EU, NATO and the OSCE.

Based on Peace Dialogue’s research, 25 fatalities were recorded in the Republic of Armenia (RA) Armed Forces from January to October 2013. Only three were the result of violations of the ceasefire signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1994. Regular ceasefire violations and constant information warfare indicate that the previously open war has become a hidden war. As people demand security from government, so government responds through the Army. At this stage, a strong Army remains the main means of securing stability.

There are, however, developments in this structure that are beyond the control of society. As society perceives the Army as the only means of protecting stability, they are inclined to forgive its human rights transgressions. A major part of society thinks that silence should be maintained in the face of human rights violations because of the precarious geopolitical status of the country. Many people perceive Armenia as being surrounded by enemies. However, the regime uses the taboo nature of the issue and a lack of civilian control over the Army to advance their interests.

Although the dangers in the army affect thousands of young conscripts and their families, the issue of this forgotten massacre remains unspoken in Armenian society. What is more, it has become a taboo issue in the country.

In order to address these challenges, Peace Dialogue is organizing a simulation trial, called ‘Fair Court’, in various cities across Armenia. Simulations help staff reveal the underlying factors and dynamics that are at work in real situations, whilst creating a learning method that is oriented on practical experience. Simulations generally attempt to recreate real life situations in a controlled context, often for educational or entertainment purposes. It is also a powerful method that gives the participants an opportunity to test their negotiation skills and their ability to manage conflicts. Furthermore, it promotes a space in which such taboo issues can be openly discussed in society. Fair Court, which is organized using the conflict modelling methodology, was presented

first to a number of Vanadzor citizens, and then in a number of cities and towns in Armenia. This case was based on a true story concerning the death of a soldier in the armed forces. The soldier was beaten and killed by fellow soldiers due to an argument. The incident could have been prevented by an officer on duty, but was not.



During the simulated court trial, audience members take on the roles of all parties and strive to achieve justice for their characters. The court hears details of the case - the witnesses and defendants. The defendants were soldiers who, under the influence of alcohol, had beaten a fellow soldier and unintentionally caused his death. The court also hears the officer on duty who, although he did not take part in the fight, did not prevent the soldiers from using alcohol on duty. Moreover, he also took part with great pleasure in the birthday party of one of those soldiers. After clarifying the circumstances and after hearing arguments from the prosecution and the defense, the court issues its verdict, based on the development and dynamics of the simulated trial case. At the real court trial of the same case, the officer received a mild punishment, was given an amnesty, and was released from the courtroom. The soldiers, who unintentionally caused the death of a fellow soldier, were sentenced to a long period of imprisonment.

Initially, the organizers believed that this simulation game would have an impact on the people and when they would take up the roles they would actually understand the issues and realize the significance of human rights protection. The results of the simulated court trial and its impact were reflected in the discussion that followed.

The participants and the audience were given an opportunity to share their impressions. Some of them expressed that the simulated court trial provided an opportunity to learn more about the judicial process and its peculiarities, allowing to put themselves in the shoes of those who take part in a trial. It is most important, however, that although some of the participants were previously unaware of the problems in the army, they were willing to discuss the problem after the simulation, rather than perpetuating the culture of silence.

*Edgar Khachatryan is the Director of Peace Dialogue, a member of the [Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation](#). Further information about this project is available by [clicking here](#).*

**[To learn more about Peace Dialogue, please click here!](#)**

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**6) Follow the GCCT and the TransConflict**

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**To follow TransConflict, please click on one of the following buttons:**



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

