



The Global Coalition for
Conflict Transformation

Thirteenth GCCT Newsletter - September 2015

Introduction

TransConflict (www.transconflict.com) is pleased to present the thirteenth 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-December 2015 – 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. [Natural Resource Conflict Transformation Center Nepal](#) – (Nepal) – its mission is to become a leading organization in the study, research, documentation and transformation of natural resource based conflicts for resource management, livelihood support and to create peaceful and civilized society. The natural resource based conflict transformation process adapted by NRCTC-N is a unique approach in dealing with natural resource based conflict; it is participatory, inclusive, fair and transparent.
2. [Association for Social Research and Communications](#) – (Bosnia-Herzegovina) – especially concerned with mapping, memorialisation and raising living monuments. UDIK helps post-Yugoslav societies to establish the rule of law and to accept the legacy of massive human rights violations in order to identify the criminal responsibility of perpetrators, to meet justice and prevent the repetition of such crimes.
3. [Women’s Interfaith Council](#) - (Nigeria) – whilst its vision is “a society where Muslims and Christians live together in peace, where the rights of women are respected, and where women are protagonists of peaceful coexistence and development”; its mission is “to enable women of faith associations work together to bring about peace, stability and development in Kaduna in particular and Nigeria in general by addressing conflict issues and issues of concern to women with the primary focus on conflict, poverty, insecurity and vulnerability”.

[Please click here for further information on how to join the Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation \(GCCT\)](#)



2) GCCT Members in Focus – UMAM Documentation and Research from Lebanon

TransConflict is pleased to showcase the work of UMAM Documentation and Research from Lebanon, a member of the Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation.

Lebanon's religious and ethnic complexity, and challenging regional environment, have often proved a source of violence; from its own fifteen year-long civil war to Israel's 2006 attack on Hezbollah. One organization contending with the legacies of such violence is UMAM Documentation and Research (UMAM D&R), which aims to preserve, examine and debate the memories of civil violence as well as to provide a platform for public access to, and exchange of such memories. UMAM D&R affirms that "Lebanon's relatively recent past requires that important evidence and artefacts of its history be carefully collected, protected, and promoted to the public."

The failure to strengthen Lebanon's state institutions contributed directly to its cultural amnesia, as evidenced by the lack of a national archive and public library. Where the elites have acknowledged the country's history, they have done so by adducing fragmented memories to achieve short-term political gains rather than long-term national stability. As a part of Lebanese civil society, UMAM D&R strives to overcome this by confronting Lebanon's past through the creative promotion of archival projects, cultural initiatives, technical workshops and outreach programs in Beirut, throughout the country and regionally. Such initiatives prompt citizens to recall the violence despite the hostility to history that permeates Lebanon's sociopolitical fabric.



In order to achieve these goals, UMAM D&R focuses, in particular, on:

- "Recalling the violence and diffuse culture of hostility that rules social and political life in Lebanon.

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- Enabling the generally disempowered yet growing chorus of voices that call for the adoption of a transitional justice approach tailored to Lebanon's specific needs relative to its successive postwar deadlock.
- Acknowledging publicly the ongoing cycles of blame and counter blame within the nation's political discourse despite the ever-present threat of renewed political violence. Today, the voices being raised help build the case that the national predilection for closing the files of the past has failed, and that Lebanon must urgently begin the painful yet essential task of truth seeking. Clearly, taking any other course will accomplish nothing more than keeping open the wounds of our society."

Martial Justice for All?

UMAM D&R recently launched an EU-supported project, entitled Martial Justice for All? Lebanon's Military Court: A "State of Martial Law" Within a "State of Law", which employs documentation, research and awareness raising/advocacy to tackle the issue of military justice and the fact that legislation still permits civilians to be prosecuted by military courts.

As Lokman Slim from UMAM D&R explained:

"Our starting point for this project was the shared notion that the Lebanese have become habituated to tolerating the conditions imposed on them by Lebanon's perpetual "state of exception." Those conditions include the routine postponement of elections, the absence of any genuine state budget and the steadily increasing interpretation of the mandate of the military court. [Today's] discussions will focus on issues...that concern us as citizens rather than just human rights activists or legal practitioners."

Resources for reconciliation

UMAM D&R is working to initiate collective reflection on Lebanon's violent past through a comprehensive collection of archival material and cultural artefacts, plus research and technical workshops. Such resources allow the public to both debate and exchange memories, with discussions about the past often fostering reflections on the present-day situation in Lebanon. Ultimately, such engagements contribute powerful building blocks for the future by strengthening understandings about national and individual identity formation, plus recognition of responsibilities and blame that can underpin reconciliation and redemption.

'The Hangar' serves as UMAM D&R's independent platform for stimulating artist and cultural exchanges that deal with individual and collective memories of Lebanon and its war-scarred past. It is the only institutionally independent cultural space in Dahiyeh, where UMAM D&R is located, and has become

one of Beirut's leading social and cultural institutions. Through The Hangar's artists-in-residence and grants programs, artistic reflection on Lebanon's past is promoted. This is further supplemented by UMAM D&R collection of various materials, such as journals, books, political propaganda, speeches, photos, streets signs/graffiti and oral testimonies; produced by both the perpetrators and victims of violence. The Hangar has several times been closed due to the security situation in Lebanon, including during the 2006 War when the space incurred physical damage. In addition, UMAM D&R has developed several informative websites, including UMAM-DR.ORG and MEMORYATWORK.ORG, which offers access to thousands of war-related articles, wartime and UMAM D&R-developed publications and other data.



Missing persons – the Syrian dimension

UMAM D&R has long drawn attention to those who went missing during Lebanon's "civil war"; focusing not only on those who went missing within Lebanon proper, but including those believe to have been detained in Syrian prisons and other detention facilities. This topic has been explored through panel discussions, treatises and artistic advocacy initiatives, such as the "German Chair" performance or the "Damascus Road" exhibition. Such efforts recently lead the Syrian Ambassador to Lebanon, Ali Abdul Karim Ali, to assert the "issue has become a symphony you [Lebanese] like to conduct, but there are no detainees or abductees or missing Lebanese in our prisons...your children are not in Syria. I will not accuse anyone but they are not in Syria that no Lebanese were being held in Syrian prisons."

In response, UMAM D&R sought to debunk the Ambassador's statements, asserting that "he who lies once, lies again...". UMAM D&R were compelled to:

"remind this "statesman" that each time the Assad regime released Lebanese (and non-Lebanese whose tracks had been lost in Lebanon)—in 1998 and again in 2000—the action was preceded by

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a similarly strong statement that denied the existence of Lebanese political detainees in Syrian prisons. Those statements were followed later by confirmation that the individuals set free were indeed the very last of the Lebanese being held behind bars. It may also be helpful to remind the distinguished Ambassador that the regime he represents agreed previously to include the topic of Lebanese missing in Syria on the agenda that would guide Syrian-Lebanese talks held with the government led at the time by Saad Hariri...Finally—and although we could certainly offer other reminders—we believe it is important to remind Ambassador Ali that the Lebanese Parliament is preparing to vote on a new law that would provide the same type of financial reparations given to those released from Israeli jails to those set free from Syrian prisons...”

With most of the Lebanese political elites having wilfully ignored the gravity of Lebanon’s violent history and the echoes of civil war that contribute to renewed bouts of violence, UMAM D&R has focused its resources on archiving Lebanon’s past – collecting, preserving and publicly promoting a diverse range of historical evidence and artefacts. Dealing with Lebanon’s past is fundamental to minimizing the likelihood of renewed conflict, and the activities UMAM D&R engages in take to heart the Principles of Conflict Resolution. For UMAM D&R, “advocating Lebanon’s recollection of its violent past represents a critical, inescapable task in its national redemption and advancement in the new millennium.”

[Please click here to learn more about](#)
[UMAM Documentation and Research](#)
[from Lebanon](#)



3) GCCT Insight and Analysis

This section provides an overview of the insight and analysis produced and published 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. [The right to peace as a condition for a democratic and equitable order](#) – TransConflict gives its support to a joint written statement calling those States supporting the human right to peace to take action during the next session of the Council (September) in order to extend the mandate of the Working Group, with a view to complete the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Peace.
2. [Pursuing the Right to Peace](#) – The lack of action of the Human Rights Council concerning the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Right to Peace means the suspension of the codification process of the human right to peace at the United Nations. Nevertheless, there is a natural majority of States in favour of the right to peace within the Human Rights Council, enough to take forward the codification work and complete it successfully.
3. [The United Nations as one mind](#) – Rene Wadlow – Reforms of UN structures is difficult – basically impossible – because the system works “well enough” to suit most governments and that most governments are not willing to risk major changes in the world society because of unknown consequences. Therefore change and improvements will come only through forceful and coordinated efforts from the nonstate sector.
4. [Conflict resolution in South Sudan - notes towards an institutional analysis](#) – Dr. Nick Waterman – Given the dualistic nature of institutions and the nature of collective decision-making, a durable peace needs to accommodate changes in policy priorities over time that may reflect the outcomes of institutional processes and competing interests, rather than focus solely on individual protagonists.
5. [The great wandering](#) – David B. Kanin – mass migration continues to define Europe as a system of human fluid dynamics.
6. [Reappraising Western failures during the break-up of Yugoslavia](#) – Gerard M. Gallucci – As we approach the sad day of 20 years on from the Srebrenica massacre, it has become – unsurprisingly – the object of much reappraisal and speculation. The events of that summer are just the middle of a long Western failure to comprehend the nature of the break-up of Yugoslavia and to act in a timely fashion to limit the damage.
7. [The Syrian catastrophe and the world's deafening silence](#) – Dr. Alon Ben-Meir – The bloodletting and massive destruction that has swept the nation is not a mere tragic event; the magnitude of the destruction and loss of lives is catastrophic by any measure unseen since the horror of World War II. The world is largely watching with apathy, and those with unique interests in the conflict play politics with the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrians who died in vain as there is no salvation in death while unspeakable anguish and pain still awaits the living.
8. [The OSCE - strains and renewal in the security community](#) – Rene Wadlow – On 1 August 2015, the Helsinki Final Act, the birth certificate of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) turned 40. Today, however, it is not clear that the current leaders of

the 57 governments of the OSCE have the wisdom or skills to lead to a renewal of the Security Community. Very likely, as in the period between the events of 1968 and the start of government negotiations in 1972, there will need to be non-governmental voices setting out new ideas and creating bridges between people.

9. [**Kicking the bomb down the road**](#) – David B. Kanin – Iran gains a lot and Israel a little from the nuclear deal.
10. [**Transnistria, Northern Cyprus and Donbass – lessons learnt and not to be repeated**](#) – Anastasiya Marchuk – The lessons and knowledge accumulated from Transnistria and Northern Cyprus should be a valuable asset when tackling another emerging frozen conflict in Europe – the Ukrainian Donbass.
11. [**From hunting heads to building peace**](#) – Charlotte Melly – Conciliation Resources has been working with tribes and other Indigenous Peoples (IPs) communities in the Philippines to improve early warning and early responses to violent conflict.
12. [**Entering a fracture zone**](#) – Bridget Storrie – The refugees in the park in Belgrade seem to be part of a fracture zone that is becoming increasingly easy to trace; across Greece, Macedonia and Serbia and on through Europe, to the camps at Calais and beyond. And while this fracture zone is long it is also deep, underpinned as it is by a shadowy network of exploitation and corruption at one level, and political manoeuvring on another.
13. [**Forgiveness – who decides?**](#) - Paul Gallagher - It is time for individual acts of forgiveness and reconciliation to be allowed. This unhelpful self-righteous anger on behalf of your community or your people should be challenged. Individuals should be allowed, in their own time, to choose their own method of dealing with the harms visited upon them. They should not be made to feel guilty; they are not betraying anyone. It should be their choice as individuals.
14. [**The trial of Hissène Habré – an advance for world law**](#) - Rene Wadlow - The trial of Hissène Habré, former President of Chad, marks a new step in trans-national law. Habré will be tried in a specially constituted court created by a treaty between the African Union and the State of Senegal. It will be important to see if this new African court will be a one-time-only institution for the Habré trial or if it becomes a permanent institution of world law.
15. [**What is inhibiting peace in the Greater Horn of Africa?**](#) - Kisuke Ndiku -Research on peace in the Greater Horn of Africa demonstrates a complete lack of recognition of the role of non-violent means and techniques to address conflicts.
16. [**The road to Srebrenica – the West’s \(non\)response**](#) - Paul Gallagher - It has been 20 years since the Srebrenica Massacre and the cheerleaders of the West’s intervention were everywhere to be seen during the recent commemorations. But where were they when it was all happening?

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

4) GCCT Activities, Advocacy, Research and Requests

Understand to Prevent - the military contribution to the prevention of violent conflict

TransConflict is pleased to present a publication, entitled 'Understand to Prevent', which explores how, in practical terms, military forces can contribute to the prevention of violent conflict.

By Edward Canfor-Dumas

'Military thinking on the utility of force is at a crossroads.'

A startling sentence with which to begin a military publication – but *Understand to Prevent* is no ordinary document.

Published in April this year, it's the midpoint of a four-year international project to explore how, in practical terms, military forces can contribute to the prevention of violent conflict.

At its heart is a radical proposal – that while military forces are currently expert in war-fighting, they must extend their knowledge and skills to become specialists in conflict. A hair-splitting distinction? No, a fundamental one, which many in the field of conflict transformation accept as a starting-point.

Understand to Prevent takes conflict to be a natural and inevitable feature of human relationships, which arises when we perceive, correctly or not, that something we care about is being threatened or denied. Violence is a response to conflict, a way of trying to 'resolve' it through force – but other approaches are available.

Understand to Prevent is an initiative to bring those other approaches to the attention of the military and, drawing on military capacities and understanding, forge a new path.

Key to the success of this new path is the growing recognition by the military of the need to work much more closely with the mosaic of other actors operating in this field. And key to that will be winning the trust of NGOs and CSOs in particular, to assure them that the military want to contribute and not to dominate.

Understand to Prevent is being developed in response to the increasingly complex nature of contemporary armed conflict. As war between states has declined, intra-state and transnational violent conflict has increased. Non-state armed groups are more numerous and more powerful, and 'war among the people' is now the norm.

As a result, military forces are being challenged to multi-task – to get involved in prevention and keeping the peace; to support 'post-conflict' stabilisation, peacebuilding and state-building; to provide

humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; and, when called on, to fight wars. Understand to Prevent seeks to offer military forces a much larger – and more nuanced – toolkit with which respond.

It's led by the UK's Ministry of Defence think-tank, DCDC, supported by Engi Conflict Management, and is part of the much larger Multinational Capabilities Development Campaign, a coalition of mainly – but not exclusively – NATO states.

It concludes in December 2016 and welcomes comment from all those who are active in the prevention and transformation of violent conflict. Please email u2p@engi.org.uk.



Preface — A new focus

Military thinking on the utility of force is at a crossroads. Thirteen years of continuous warfare — in Iraq, Afghanistan and the brief intervention in Libya — have delivered only limited and uncertain political gains. Trials of strength have been won, but not the clash of wills. The most recent intervention — Iraq, again — is asking the same questions, with the answers no clearer than before.

Member Nations of the Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) are also facing the consequences of pulling back from overseas engagement — how to retain talented personnel, how to manage budget cuts and, above all, how best to prepare for an uncertain future?

Opinions are divided about how the role of the military will evolve in the coming years. Will it continue fighting ‘wars amongst the people’, or are the biggest risks still posed by powerful nation states? Should the military be preparing to mix the two strategies, or will the pervasiveness of cyberspace, and its use by friends, allies, whole populations — and our adversaries — force us to significantly change the way that we configure and use our armed forces? Will the gathering effects of climate change drive more conflict or stimulate more cooperation, calling on the military to contribute in ways that are, as yet, unclear, and certainly outside its traditional roles?

Against this uncertain background, *Understand to Prevent (U2P)* argues for a new focus — a shift of military effort from crisis response (waiting for the future to happen) to ‘upstream’ engagement to positively manage conflict, prevent violence and build peace.

In practical terms, while warfighting will always remain the foundation of military capability, we need to supplement the current spectrum of effects practised by most Western nations (shape-persuade-deter-coerce-intervene) with a new human-centred model. With this new model, the military will offer persistent modulated engagement — a continuous presence through the deployment of scaleable, bespoke tailored joint forces to respond intelligently and appropriately to each circumstance and engagement proactively. Specifically, supporting locally-led prevention initiatives through an altered spectrum with a different emphasis — ‘understand-engage early-act-endure-assess’.

This new model will provoke challenge, not least from areas of the world where the military are seen as part of the problem rather than possible contributors to the solution. It is also likely that some of those working in development and peacebuilding fields will regard with scepticism, or even hostility, to the prospect of military boots marching into ‘their’ space.

For the military to be effective in this new approach, they must be accepted as a trusted contributor. Trust will therefore have to be built with the many other actors in the field, some of whom will not be our usual partners.

Additionally, understanding of the human domain has to broaden and deepen in order for us to engage with other actors effectively. We must also develop a better understanding of conflict itself, and embrace the distinction between conflict, violence and violent conflict — related but different concepts that call for different approaches, and which render the term ‘conflict prevention’ too blunt to be useful.

Based on these human-centred insights, an understanding emerges of the wider contribution the military can make; namely, as ‘conflict specialists’. Their legitimate range of activity runs from personal mediation at one end of the spectrum, through conflict resolution and transformation, to deterrence and — if necessary — warfighting.

We welcome feedback on the ideas put forward in this publication and hope that it will prompt a wider discussion about how the military can play a proactive and strategic role in helping to create a less violent world.

Edward Canfor-Dumas is director of Engi Conflict Management.



International Youth Work and the development of community relations in Northern Ireland

TransConflict is pleased to present an introduction to the relevance and benefits of International Youth Work for the continued development of Community Relations in Northern Ireland, prepared by Inside Out, a member of the Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation.

By Fergal Barr

Since 1998 I have been involved in what has come to be known as International Youth Work. As you might suspect there is no one fixed definition (or many definitions for that matter), not least of all because there are many that still have problems defining youth work let alone international youth work. And given the nature, style, structure and context of youth work in different countries it's hardly surprising that defining international youth work is in itself difficult.

I have long advocated greater involvement in, and a more pro-active approach to what I simply term 'the international' among practitioners in Northern Ireland. I believe it is one of the most if not (arguably) the most effective method of learning. I make this assertion because I have seen at first hand many of the benefits that young people, young leaders, youth workers and other practitioners (who engage with young people) have gained from participating in international programmes. In fact, there is plenty of evidence of such contained in this report.

I have witnessed young people shed the metaphorical bucket-full of tears, young leaders change their career aspirations, practitioners make life-changing decisions and older nearly retired youth workers become completely animated and reinvigorated as a result of their involvement in the international setting. I also make the assertion from the perspective of what might have been, at least in one case anyway, but where I'm certain there are lots of cases that many a youth worker can relate to.

In August 1989, I was an 18 year old in one of the old government-run Youth Training Programmes, i.e., 'Youthways'. I had just come back from my second 'Young People Together' International Camp in Lisdoonvarna – an unforgettable experience – so much so that I had actually paid to go second time around! A year earlier, one of the other young people in our group whom I counted on as a good friend at the time was supposed to attend one of the camps. For whatever reason, he was unable to take part.

Fast-forward to early November 1994 and I was to learn that the very same young man was arrested for his part in the Rising Sun Bar massacre in Greysteel. Disbelief is not a strong enough word for anyone who knew him from our time in Youthways – complete bewilderment of how this quiet, unassuming young man with whom I had come to know well, a guy I hung out with and laughed with on so many occasions became involved in one of the most notorious events in the history of the Troubles will always live with me.

I often wondered had he taken part in the ‘Young People Together’ Camp in Lisdoonvarna and enjoyed a similar experience to mine would his life have been different. No guarantees of course but just maybe, just maybe. And thus the sense of what might have been.

I do believe his network of friends would have been different, his aspirations enhanced and more so his ideas about the importance and benefits of mixing in diverse company might have steered him in another direction and thus his involvement in the Rising Sun Massacre might never have been.

To say that this young man ‘wouldn’t have hurt a fly’ is no exaggeration (or at least in August 1989 it certainly felt like it) but as was so vividly demonstrated on that day in November 1994 when standing in the bedroom of a student friend and hearing the news emerge on the radio, the realisation that the dividing line between those who (and still do) become involved in political violence and those who don’t suddenly became very apparent....and very thin. A lesson to us all!

Had that young man gone to Lisdoonvarna perhaps his life might have been very different because aside from the positive healthy benefits that involvement in ‘the international’ or more specifically International Youth Work brings I also know that it has the capacity to bring about fundamental change in people’s lives and therefore if one less person becomes involved in violence of any kind or is less likely to advocate or promote among others, sectarian, racist, homophobic or sexist opinions, then international youth work can indeed support the change that we crave in Northern Ireland and/or other conflict societies for that matter.

Fergal Barr is a freelance youth worker and currently voluntary Co-ordinator of The Inside Out Programme in Claudy. He became a professionally qualified Youth Worker in 1995 but has been involved in Youth Work full-time since leaving school in May 1987.

Inside Out’s vision is one of “an active and healthy rural youth population in Northern Ireland.” Its mission is “to create, facilitate and promote opportunities for young people to work in partnership with adults to advance and realise the aspirations of young people living in rural areas.”

TransConflict will publish further extracts from a report into the relevance and benefits of International Youth Work for the continued development of Community Relations in Northern Ireland.

**Please click here to learn more about
Inside Out from Northern Ireland**

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

EUROCLIO Annual Conference in Belfast - Reimagining Remembrance and Dealing with the Legacy of a Violent Past

TransConflict is pleased to present information about EUROCLIO's 2016 Annual Conference in Belfast, entitled 'Reimagining Remembrance and Dealing with the Legacy of a Violent Past'.

2016 marks the centenary of two important events in Northern Ireland History, namely the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme. Both events have come to be seen as key moments in the history of both sides of a divided society. How these issues, amongst others, are taught can provide a number of obstacles for teachers to address. How can we teach controversial history in a responsible manner?

EUROCLIO (European Association of History Educators) is inviting you to register in the 23rd EUROCLIO Annual Conference Professional Development and Training Course on 'Reimagining Remembrance. Dealing with the Legacy of a Violent Past in History and Heritage Education' in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The conference will run from the 19th until 24th March 2016.

Educators from all over the world are invited to apply to participate in one of the most significant history education conferences in Europe.

The conference aims to explore this question through an active programme which will engage the participant in workshops, dialogue tables, open spaces, on-site study visits, public debates and reflective and interactive panels. The core group of teachers and heritage educators will be involved in activities that will empower them to engage their students and other target groups in critical debate from multiple perspectives. For questions contact **Aysel Gojayeva (Project Manager)**.

*Visit the **conference page** for more information about the conference fee and practical information.*

Download the Preliminary Programme.

Additional Information

Background

Societies which have experienced conflict and reached a peace accord have difficulty in moving from "negative" to "positive" peace. Often remembering and commemorating the difficult past presents particular challenges in the reconciliation process for governments, civil society and history educators. Northern Ireland is no exception to this.

This conference will take place close to Easter, 2016. In the spring and summer of that year two important events are being commemorated locally, the Easter Rising and the first day of the Battle of the Somme, both of which, subsequently, have helped shape cultural and political attitudes in Northern Ireland.

These occasions can be exclusive and therefore cause community tensions but there is also the potential to re-examine their significance from a wider range of perspectives including the present and, thereby, re-imagine the contribution this deeper understanding might make to building a transformative peace. Participants attending the conference would have the opportunity to engage with the on-going debate within civil society as to how best these events might be handled, to experience educational initiatives to help young people better understand the Decade's historical and contemporary importance and to reflect on how similar events are remembered in their own countries.



Course Outcomes

History, Heritage and Citizenship Educators are encouraged to take part in this unique International Training Course, as it aims to achieve for individuals the following outcomes:

- Increased participation and dialogue in European Community of History Educators.
- Raised awareness of cultures and identities through field trips, and reflection on the teaching of history across Europe.
- Access to new partnerships, including schools, local, regional, national and international educational authorities and institutes in different fields and sectors.
- Recognition of developed competences in history education through lifelong learning in the international context.
- Access to innovative history education tools from across Europe with a focus on education for peace.
- Improved English-language competence through facilitated and engaged dialogues.
- Understanding the challenges related to dealing with public commemoration in divided societies.
- Conference report for wider dissemination, including educational resources, and academic papers.

Aims, Theme and Programme

- To engage in a Europe-wide debate on the experience of Northern Ireland civil society as to how sensitive events should be remembered.
- To compare and contrast the experiences of Northern Ireland as well as other countries across Europe and beyond on teaching sensitive history in a divided society and adopting different approaches in applying the historical process to sensitive events from the past.
- To share educational initiatives which help young people better understand the 1912-22 decade's historical and contemporary importance and to reflect on how similar events are remembered in their own countries.
- To exchange innovative tools, methods and professional knowledge with all other Educators in Europe to aid teaching locally and in their own countries.
- To develop a common understanding of innovative and responsible history education as a bridge for education for reconciliation, peace education, intercultural education and human rights education.
- To disseminate and explore implementation of innovative history teaching resources and guidelines produced by national, international, NGO's and intergovernmental organisations.
- To transform the shared experiences of integrated and cross-border history education in diverse societies into tangible guidelines for European educators and policy-makers.
- To explore the role of local (educational) authorities in bridging cultural/historical viewpoints in divided societies taking the example of the city of Belfast.
- To strengthen synergies between EUROCLIO and history educators in Northern Ireland in order to establish and build the capacity of History Teachers' Association of Northern Ireland.

The course is embedded in the 23rd EUROCLIO Annual Conference, which aims to bring together around 200-250 History Educators from all of Europe and beyond for a rich and active programme of 6 days, filled with debated, discussions, presentations, workshops, on-site study visits to commemoration sites, schools and educational establishments, city tours and receptions and a social-cultural programme that connects colleagues internationally in a fun and friendly way.

Please click here to learn more about
EUROCLIO

SADAD Liberia begins Community Dialogue on Constitutional Review Process

Students Against Destructive Actions and Decisions (SADAD) Liberia has begun soliciting community views on the constitutional review process of the Republic of Liberia and the possible national referendum

By Haje L. Paasewe

Liberia has entered a new era of peace and democracy after years of military rule, political instability and civil unrest. It is now time to come together to strengthen the nation and decide how the state should be governed.

Some time ago, a presidentially-appointed committee (Constitution Review Committee, the CRC) was established and tasked with organizing, leading and managing a review of the 1986 constitution. The mission has been accomplished. The committee, through its Chairperson, has presented report from the review process to the president of the Republic of Liberia.

Before and even after the presentation of the report to the president, attention was drawn to one of the propositions coming from the constitution review process – proposition 24, the call for Liberia to be declared a “Christian State”.

As tension continues from the Central Liberia Capitol of Gbarnga in Bong County to the grounds of the Capitol Building on the bypass, several reaction were generated from the public through radio programs, print and social media, especially in May and June 2015.

In Liberia, the two most dominant religions are Islam and Christianity. The present constitution of Liberia does not indicate any particular religion as a state religion and that has continued for so long. Why now, many pondered.

The president rejected the proposition.



Like culture and ethnicity, religion is one of the basic agents of socialization that quickly attracts people attentions because it has to do with faith and belief. Experience shows that most conflict situations in Africa take the face of either religions or ethnicity. Is this the actual case?

On May 20, 2015, a local daily in Monrovia published, “Christian State ‘a Threat to Muslim Existence’”. Several other publications were made through different outlets. Many are still wondering what the referendum will be like.

Based on these backgrounds, the [Students Against Destructive Actions and Decisions \(SADAD\) Liberia](#) has begun soliciting community views on the review process and a possible referendum.

What does the SADAD community response dialogue want to know?

- What does the common man understand about peace – definitions and forms?
- How can he/she relate peace to religion?
- How can one avoids potential religion tension?
- How does the community envisage the country after the referendum?

Who is the dialogue targeting?

Community stakeholders including – men and women, religious and traditional leaders, youth representatives/leaders, women groups, teachers and motorcyclists union.

Future plans?

After the stakeholders’ community response dialogue, SADAD hopes to organize a meeting with media practitioners so as to encourage peace friendly communications.

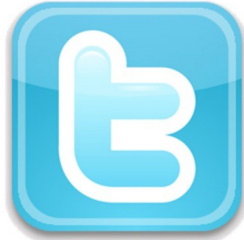
Findings from both the community response dialogue and media engagement meetings would be shared with stakeholders and partners.

Haje L. Paasewe is National Program Officer and Acting Executive Director of Students Against Destructive Actions and Decisions (SADAD) Liberia, a youth and students transformation group established in 2008.

[Please click here to learn more about Students Against Destructive Actions and Decisions \(SADAD\) Liberia](#)

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