



Alliance for Peacebuilding e-Newsletter

August 2007

We hope that you enjoy this brief e-Newsletter, which will keep you updated about AfP and its members' projects and events. Please let us know of any items that you would like to see included in future issues. To jump to a particular update, press the control key and then hold it down while clicking on the relevant hyperlink in the Table of Contents. Please e-mail any information, questions and comments to miriam@allianceforpeacebuilding.org.

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The Washington Group Developing Early Warning / Early Response Mechanism

Mobilization of an effective response to warnings of impending violence has been a priority for the peacebuilding community for many years. Building on the concepts developed by the International Conflict Prevention Consortium meetings held in Belfast, a small group has been meeting in Washington to craft a mechanism to identify appropriate locations for initiatives, conduct site visits to ascertain feasibility, develop specific plans, and mobilize action with local leadership and collaborative action by peacebuilding organizations. The Washington Group includes representatives from Swisspeace, the Canadian International Institute of Applied Negotiation (CIIAN), and AfP. Eileen Babbitt of the Fletcher School serves as chair of the initiative, Michael Lund serves as an expert consultant, and Milt Lauenstein continues to provide intellectual as well as financial support. The group has developed a conceptual framework, and it is about to launch a campaign to generate the resources needed to begin implementation. For information on the framework, please contact chic@allianceforpeacebuilding.org.

AfP Holds “Collaboration Connections” Meeting on the Horn of Africa

On July 9th AfP hosted a dynamic “Collaboration Connections” discussion about the multiple conflicts in the Horn of Africa on July 9. The group agreed that while the current focus of the conflict is in Somalia, the issues are regional, and therefore need a regional approach. Those attending agreed to form an NGO Horn of Africa Forum to keep all of the NGOs involved in the region focused, connected, and working together. The group also decided to encourage the United Nations and American University to convene a Horn of Africa Dialogue with governments, NGOs, and local civil society to seek a region-wide resolution to the persistent and multiple conflicts that afflict the region and prevent development.

An earlier Collaboration Connections session focused on Turkey. Participants agreed that there may be an opportunity at this time to have an impact on Cyprus. As a result, session leader Dr. Ron Fisher of American University and others directly engaged in Cyprus are developing plans for a follow-up session in the fall. To find out more information about Collaboration Connections, please contact Chic Dambach at chic@allianceforpeacebuilding.org.

USIP Sponsors Upcoming Symposium on Indices of Peace, Conflict and Instability in Washington, DC

On September 17th, USIP will sponsor a special symposium to examine the different methods, meaning and utility of the three major indices that have been produced this year on peace, conflict and instability. Joe Hewitt of the University of Maryland will present the Peace and Conflict 2008 report, Pauline Baker of the Fund for Peace will cover the Failed States Index 2007 published in *Foreign Policy* magazine, and Steve Killelea will present and discuss the Global Peace Index (GPI). The symposium, which will take place from 2:00-4:00 pm, is open to the public. AfP is helping to arrange the event, and we will send further details in early September.

USIP Holds “Cross-Cultural Negotiating Project Workshop on American Negotiating Behavior”

With AfP’s help, the United States Institute for Peace brought together a dozen renowned international diplomats and eight observers for a July 27-28 workshop on American negotiating. Attending diplomats candidly shared their perceptions of the attitudes, methods and styles US diplomats bring to the negotiating table. Through these viewpoints a picture of American negotiating tactics and techniques gradually took shape. Some diplomats indicated their belief that other countries negotiate while the US presents its position and expects everyone else to sign on. Participants also noted that individuals make all the difference, praising certain American career diplomats highly. There was some discussion of the role of “back channels” and multi-track initiatives, and recognition of the emerging value and significance of NGOs in the process. AfP President & CEO Chic Dambach participated as an observer, and he was able to discuss the concept of NGO engagement during several informal discussions. A book based in large part on this workshop will be published by USIP in 2008.

Annual Meeting / Retreat To Be Held From October 21 – 23 at Shawnee Inn

AfP’s 2007 annual meeting and retreat will be held at the Shawnee Inn in Shawnee on Delaware, PA, on October 21 through 23. There will be plenary sessions and workshops on several topics, but the primary theme will be “Integrated Peacebuilding.” We will invite participation from government agencies, relief and development organizations, the United Nations, and others to explore ways to improve overall effectiveness through collaborating and integrating everyone’s efforts. For more details on the Annual Meeting, please contact Christy Slice at Christy@allianceforpeacebuilding.org.

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The Program on Negotiation (PON) at Harvard and Boston Area AfP Members Help Sponsor Seminar Focusing on “Negotiation, Conflict, and the News Media”

At Harvard, the Herbert C. Kelman Seminar on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution has focused for the last two years on the theme of “Negotiation, Conflict, and the News Media.” The seminars, which are open to the public, typically pair an international journalist with an expert on conflict resolution for an in-depth discussion on how particular conflicts are reported. They are co-sponsored by the Nieman Foundation for Journalism; The Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School; The Weatherhead Center for International Affairs; The Joan Shorenstein Center on Press, Politics, and Public Policy; The MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program; and Boston-area members of the Alliance for Peacebuilding.

PON Managing Director Susan Hackley recently co-wrote an article about media and conflict for *Dispute Resolution Magazine* (Summer 2007) with Professor Richard C. Reuben, editor of the magazine and co-director of the Center for the Study of Conflict, Law, and the Media at the University of Missouri. Following is an excerpt from pp. 23 and 26:

The media and conflict connection has long gone unnoticed. But not any more, as a number of important institutions are beginning to make this an area of focus.

At a recent seminar on “Bridging the Divide Between Conflict Management and Journalism,” for example, CBS News producer, Joshua Yager and Deepak Malhotra, assistant professor of business administration at Harvard Business School, examined the issue of whether there is a “conflict bias in the media.” Do the media over-represent just one side of reality, the violent and inherently dramatic side? As Yager acknowledged, media coverage is about “the deviation from the norm,” and journalists too often make broad generalizations. When trying to tell a story in just a few minutes, journalists often lock people into roles and simplified caricatures. Malhotra suggested that the media have a quota for “good news” or news of nonviolent responses to conflict. Like affirmative action, the nonviolent news quota would help make up for past excesses in violent coverage. For more information about the Kelman Seminar series, see www.wcfia.harvard.edu/res_activities/seminars/oconflictres.htm.

Please contact Sarah Whitman (swhitman@law.harvard.edu) at PON to learn more.

Peace X Peace Hosts the Women’s Global Roundtable

Peace X Peace, an international women's organization that promotes dialogue and peace, hosts the Women's Global Roundtable, a live one-hour interview with a woman from another country. This weekly conference-call interview features stories, rich traditions, and personal triumphs of women from such countries as Afghanistan, Kenya, Cuba and Iraq. Every Tuesday evening at 8 pm EST/5 pm PST, women around the United States participate and address questions to the featured interviewee. During the call, her personal story, perspectives and reflections will bring to life the political, societal and gender issues of her region. The interviews are intentionally designed to be personal, informal and unrehearsed to preserve spontaneity and exploration between the woman and her audience.

The Women's Global Roundtable is designed to guide curiosity, open hearts, and expand lives within the global community of women. Peace X Peace believes that if there is to be peace in the world, women need to know and connect directly with one another across cultures. American women are forging new relationships with women around the world for friendship, dialogue and peace building.

The Women's Global Roundtable is a subscription program. For a \$1 trial subscription for one month, anyone can test out the calls. Each month thereafter a \$10 subscription fee will be deducted from a credit card. To subscribe and to learn more go to <http://www.peacexpeace.org/RoundTable.asp> or contact Jessica Worchel at jessica@peacexpeace.org. If you know of possible speakers, please contact Linda Higdon at linda@peacexpeace.org.

IPJ Shares Best Practices on Inclusive Peacebuilding with Nepalese in the Americas

The Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ) team of Interim Director Dee Aker and Nepal Program Officer Laura Taylor presented the topic "Bridging the Gaps: Peacebuilding across Gender and Generations" at the 2007 Association of Nepalese in the Americas (ANA) conference on July 1st. The conference was attended by an estimated 5,000 Nepalese and those supporting peace in Nepal, making it the largest ever gathering of Nepalese outside the country.

Aker and Taylor made their presentation as part of the Nepal Forum. Fellow presenters included Deputy Speaker of the Nepalese Parliament Chitralekha Yadav, Terai leader Upendra Yadav, and other Nepalese experts on the judicial system, democracy promotion, economics and Diaspora affairs.

While power is often perceived to be in the hands of the few, those historically excluded from decision making, such as women and youth, can make important

contributions to peacebuilding and reconciliation. In the democratic transition in Nepal, too often these stakeholders are sidelined in Track One negotiations. In addition, their concerns are seen as secondary to issues of national security.

Aker and Taylor presented relevant experiences from six years of working closely with Nepali partners and colleagues at the grassroots level and policy-making tables. They shared perspectives and alternatives proposed by participants in the IPJ workshops on transitional justice and gender inclusion. Rural voices were brought to this international forum from the interactive IPJ Peace Radio Project, which reached hundreds of people in village-level interactive listening groups in eastern and western Nepal.

These best practices offered alternative methods on how to transcend caste lines, economic barriers, historic prejudice, patriarchal biases and geographic isolation to engage in collective efforts that promote a peaceful democratic transition in Nepal.

All nine distinguished presenters of the Nepal Forum at the ANA, including Aker and Taylor from the IPJ, addressed Nepal's critical transition. People's expectations and hopes are high, while the political landscape is fraught with risks. The presenters emphasized that there is a need in this uncertain environment to move swiftly to implement lasting changes that can make a positive socio-economic impact on the country. In addition, the Nepalese people must have a clearly heard voice that affects this process of positive conflict transformation. For more information about the IPJ Nepal Project and the ANA conference, visit <http://peace.sandiego.edu>.

Search for Common Ground Helps Guide a Pioneering Mediation Bill Approved by the Moroccan Parliament

On July 24th, Moroccan Members of Parliament unanimously approved the first mediation bill ever presented by the Moroccan Minister of the Justice. The bill is the result of an ambitious consensus building program supported by the British government and co-implemented by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and the Moroccan Ministry of Justice.

SFCG has played a strategic role in the promotion of debate around the mediation bill through facilitating a series of six consensus-building roundtables and two mediation training cycles across Morocco. More than 500 experts from different backgrounds—lawyers, magistrates, civil society leaders, labor unions, members of parliament, and private sector representatives—actively participated. As an alternative way of resolving conflict, mediation will reduce the burden on the Moroccan judicial system, costing all parties less time and

money while helping to preserve social stability. As an example, in 2004 more than 3 million cases were brought to the Moroccan courts, with an average of 1,000 cases allotted to each judge. Thanks to mediation, a significant number of cases will be solved without going through complex court procedures.

For information, please contact Abou Fassi-Fihri, SFCG Programme Director in Morocco, at afassi-fihri@sfcg.org.

Update on Events and Publications at Brandeis University's Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence

The Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence is made up of three programs: Coexistence Research and International Collaborations, the Master's Program in Coexistence and Conflict, and Coexistence International (CI).

On October 4-8, 2007, Coexistence International and Theatre Without Borders will bring together international theatre artists and scholar/practitioners in the development and coexistence fields for a gathering entitled "Acting Together on the World Stage: Setting the Scene for Peace." The primary purpose of the gathering, which will take place at Brandeis University, is to further work on the forthcoming anthology "Performance and Peacebuilding in Global Perspective," which is scheduled for publication in 2008. Additional components of the event include a number of performances, classes and workshops that will invite creative, multi-disciplinary and collaborative approaches to various regional conflict scenarios. There will also be a public symposium on the topic "Art vs. Politics and Other False Dichotomies." The symposium will include a keynote presentation/performance by renowned Peruvian theatre group Yuyachkani, which worked closely with the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Coexistence International has recently released two new publication series. The first, entitled *Complementary Approaches to Coexistence Work*, examines where and how certain fields intersect with coexistence work. It offers resources and examples of the benefits and challenges of related fields working together to achieve sustainable peace. The second, which focuses on country studies, describes the state of coexistence within different countries and compares their diversity and coexistence policies. Thus it contributes to a wider understanding of the variety of approaches for addressing issues of coexistence at various levels. Both publication series are available in print form and online at www.coexistence.net. CI has also enhanced its resources page on the website, with publications divided up by relevant thematic areas in order to provide pertinent knowledge related to coexistence and a complementary approach.

Presently the third class of students in the MA Program in Coexistence and Conflict is engaged with field projects in areas such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Latvia, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda, South Asia, Jordan, USA, West Africa, and Palestine. The field projects are examining subjects including arms, refugee/immigrant issues, reconciliation and security. In September the MA Program welcomes its fourth class, with twenty-three students from thirteen countries matriculating.

For more information on the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence or any of its sub-programs, please contact Barbara Epstein at bepstein@brandeis.edu.

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