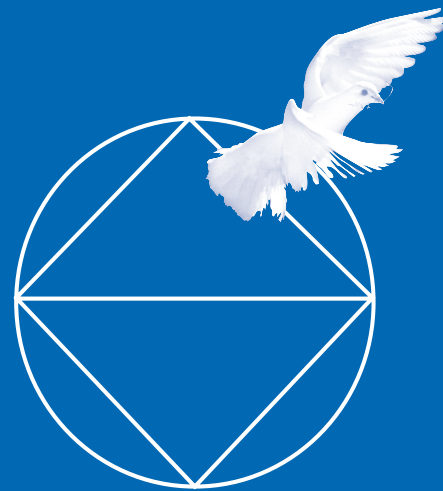


COURAGEOUSly CROSSING THRESHOLDS

29 Examples of International Peace Work



Bremen Peace Award of the Threshold Foundation
for exemplary Commitments for
Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

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Foreword

The decision of “The Threshold” foundation to offer a Bremen Peace Award has had and will continue to have my heartfelt support. After all, the award represents one more building block which publicly and effectively serves the original purpose of the foundation, namely to promote peaceful co-existence and reconciliation.

In a world which unfortunately still supports the use of violence by state or societal institutions to end conflicts, this award represents an attempt to find other means of controlling conflict through examples of non-violent intervention. It is not a matter of recognising peace orientated, philosophical and of course humane treatises, but rather of highlighting people and initiatives who have, in crisis-ridden times and through personal involvement, commitment and not least of all through the fact that they were not afraid to “swim against the tide”, set positive examples of hope for others to follow.

They are proof that when it comes to more humaneness, social responsibility and freedom from nationalistic egoism, the courage of our convictions is what is called for today. That is why I hold those people received an award by the foundation or those who have been recognised in some other way in very high esteem.

Bremen, September 2003,
Hans Koschnick
Former Mayor



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About the presented examples:

In the main part of the book 26 selected nomination proposals are presented beside the presentation of the award winners. The presentations contain general information on the left side for establishing contact with the organizations, a short profile of their work and bank account details for possible donations.

On the right side your find a longer text about the work of the organization. For that we used (partially edited by us) excerpts from the proposal texts which were handed in by the organisations / persons themselves, self-portraits and external information about the organisations / persons.

Courageously Crossing Thresholds and Breaking Vicious Circles

The idea for a peace award sponsored by The Threshold Foundation was born in 2002. It was a year full of battle cries between the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. News of the wars filled newspapers and was all over the TV but it also filled the hearts and minds of people everywhere. Increasing terrorism on the one hand and the return of war as a political means on the other overshadowed all efforts of civil conflict resolution and the commitment of many individuals and groups to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.



Which is why the idea of a peace award met with our enthusiastic approval. We did ask ourselves if perhaps there weren't already enough such awards, even in Bremen, but the spontaneous answer was: no!

Idea and Aim

When you award a prize you want publicity. You want to put something in the public eye that otherwise does not get enough attention. You want to gain recognition and encourage the recipients of the award to continue in their efforts. In other words: Our awarding of a prize for exemplary commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation means that we have a desire to make good news. Or to be more precise: a desire to make news out of something good and important so that the news is not just dominated by all that is bad and destructive in the world.

It is said, attracting attention is everything these days. But it is not the zeitgeist that predominantly controls us, rather it is the ancient insight formulated by Jesus of Nazareth:

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matt. 5:15)

Into the darkness of bad news and reality comes light. That too, is what the Threshold peace award

is all about: encouraging all those involved and all those who hear about it.

Announcing the Award and its Scope

We discussed the following: several or just one recipient? On what areas should emphasis be placed? National or international nominations?

There was a consensus on one idea from the very beginning: it should be of particular importance to award the "unknown peace worker", in other words those who quietly and without recognition demonstrate huge commitment to their cause. Dirk Heinrichs, founder of The Threshold Foundation, came up with this idea in the 90s as he traveled through the former Yugoslavia and got to know many "unknown" people who were trying with all their might to open up paths to understanding and reconciliation. At that time it was just an idea. Now it's time for that idea to be realised.

But we didn't want to have "unknown" as the only criteria. The phrase "particularly exemplary" should also be included! – regardless of whether known or unknown. And, as a third aspect we added the public effect achieved: we also want to recognise people in prominent positions who remain true to their convictions even when it goes against the main stream, thus demonstrating exemplary character.

So, in February 2003 we publicised the award in all areas in which the foundation is engaged: justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We advertised regionally, nationally and internationally – the latter mainly via the Internet and we couldn't wait to see what we would receive.

Encouraging Response

What we received was a lot. By April and May 2003 we had got almost 60 nominations or self-nominations. And, most of all, what we received was especially encouraging. All of the honorary members of the foundation board and advisory board worked through two thick readers of applications and nominations compiled by Dr. B. Luber, academic staff of the foundation. Not even 10 of the nominations were immediately eliminated for not meeting the minimum requirements, either formally or in terms of content.

What was left was an impressive collection of people and initiatives, mainly unknown to us, who were highly and personally committed to "shalom" in the greater sense of the word. There were proposals from all five continents: from Argentina to New Zealand. And they ranged from the daily commitment of a Bremen couple to the long-standing commitment of a top politician on the other side of the world. The first time I went through the pile it felt really good to see just how many people and groups were working for peace in all the crisis areas around the world.

Introduction

In cases where we felt the information given was not sufficient (you can say what you like on paper and the award money is substantial) we did our own research and asked for opinions from third parties. And only in very few cases did we have to say that the commitment mentioned seemed questionable or that our knowledge of it was insufficient.

The Brochure: Courageously Crossing Thresholds

This result prompted the foundation board and advisory board to shift the emphasis: Selecting the up to 3 award recipients should not be the sole main issue, but rather a brochure containing all the projects and people we deem worthy of an award should have the same weighting and be designed accordingly.

In order to keep the brochure manageable we had to set an upper limit of 30 examples which meant that we had to sort out another 20 candidates. During this process some very good but very well known activities were eliminated along with other activities which we had researched but of which we were not sufficiently convinced. Prominent individual candidates who were nominated were not accepted either – with the exception of the one award winner of course.

The results are available here in both German and English. We hope to create the same sense of encouragement in all readers as we experienced. And we also want to give them the opportunity to take up direct contact. We would like to publicly acknowledge the work of the people and projects introduced here and, last but not least, make an appeal for donations for them.

That is why we ask that all who receive this brochure pass it on to friends and acquaintances or order additional copies. It could act as a little Christmas present with the motto: bringing a little light into the darkness of bad news.

Selecting the Recipients

It was no easy task for the foundation to select the three recipients. Not because there were too few suitable candidates but because there were many who were equally worthy in each area. In the final selection the regional factor played a small role. Some of us regret that no project from the former Yugoslavia was selected for an award. There were many such candidates with whom we've been closely connected for a long time. The same is true of the Quaker Roswitha Jarman whose commitment in the Caucasus is certainly particularly outstanding.

Our three recipients are honoured as representative of all the other people and groups introduced in this brochure. To the best of our knowledge they work no better than the others and the others no worse than them. They all set themselves apart through their exemplary commitment and have the courage to cross thresholds and break vicious circles. They are "good news" for all of us.

In Memory

A. Schneider from Lilienthal nominated three young peace activists who were killed or critically injured in the spring of 2003 in Palestine. We have decided to remember them here:

- Rachel Corrie
- Tom Handal and
- Brian Avery.

They paid the highest price for their solidarity and non-violence. We remember them on behalf of all young, international volunteers regardless of their religion who put themselves between the front lines in Palestine and Israel – at any cost – and thus attempt to break the vicious circle of violence.

Reinhard Jung
Chairman of the Board
The Threshold Foundation



Award Winners

Sister Weronika Sakowska, Rwanda

Address:

Sr. Veronique Sakowska
Soeurs Pallottines
Keshero
B.P. 50 Goma
D.R. Congo

Bank Account:

Bank Account for possible
donations for the work of
Sister Weronika:

Dt. Prov. der
Missionsschwestern v. KA,
Kto.-Nr. 12 12 000
at Bank für Sozialwirtschaft
Köln,
BLZ 370 205 00
Purpose: Sr. Veronika



Sister Weronika Sakowska is a member of the Catholic Order of Pallotines and is from Poland. She was nominated by the German branch of the order in Limburg. Sister Weronika has worked for almost 10 years in a camp for refugees of the genocide in Rwanda (now near Goma, DR Congo).



She worked there with other sisters to establish a nutrition and health centre to, above all, provide orphans in this area the minimum in healthcare and nutrition. In addition, Sister Weronika has also gradually set up schools in this area, an area in which the educational system had become practically non-existent since the refugees started flooding in. She is now setting up a similar centre in the neighbouring Congolese border area, where, as is generally known, orphans are abused and forced to become child soldiers. In a situation in which hopelessness, sickness and death had and have the upper hand, Sister Weronika has, through her personal commitment, given people and especially children new hope, has saved many from a fate of starvation and death from disease and given them a new perspective beyond that of war and violence by setting up schools.



Parents Circle, Ramat Efal/Jerusalem, Israel

Address:

Parents Circle
1 Hayasmin St.
Ramat Efal 52960 Israel
Phone: +972-3-5355089
Fax: +972-3-6358367

4 Hameyasdim St.,
Jerusalem 96224 Israel,
Phone: +972-2-6437248,
Fax: +972-3-6447712
parents@theparentscircle.com
www.theparentscircle.com

Bank Account:

Bank Hapoalim, Asia House Tel Aviv
Branch 567
Account Number: 293505

Or cheque for Parents' Circle,
1 Hayasmin St., Efal 52960 Israel

Parents Circle was nominated by the Jerusalem office of the Hanns Seidel Foundation

Parents Circle is a union of Palestinian and Israeli parents who have lost their children to the violent conflicts in the Middle East. The members are united in grief and use various activities to make the public in the Middle East sympathetic towards a just peace agreement between Israel and Palestine. Parents Circle advocates conflicting parties coming to

understandings and political compromises that are more tolerable than further acts of violence. They consider the shock they all experienced at the fate of their deceased children as particular legitimization to convince the public of the absurdity of further bloodshed and to make clear that there are, after all, people in the enemy camps who both are in mourning and have fears but are also ready for reconciliation.



Hans Graf von Sponeck, Geneva**Address:**

Hans von Sponeck
Rte du Croix de Genthod 13
CH-1294 Genthod
Switzerland

Donations for children in Iraq:

Spendenkonto "IPPNW-Kinderhilfe
Irak" : IPPNW-Deutschland,
Account 50264639,
BLZ 665 512 90,
Stadtsparkasse Gaggenau



Hans Graf von Sponeck was nominated by the board of The Threshold Foundation

Hans Graf von Sponeck, born in 1939 in Bremen, served for 30 years as a diplomat in the UN. Most recently he held the rank of UN Assistant Secretary General responsible for the "Oil for Food" programme. In 2000

he, together with two other top diplomats, stepped down from this post and resigned from the UN out of protest against the sanctions policy of the Security Council and in particular the USA, responsible for the death of several hundred thousand Iraqi children. Since then he has done his utmost, with great public response, to support a policy of community of nations vis-à-vis the Iraqi people, a policy which serves the Iraqi population and is in keeping with the principles of human rights. In the end he was one of the deciding and competent opponents of the war in Iraq in the name of international law and human rights, most recently in a book he and Andreas Zumach published: "Irak , Chronik eines gewollten Krieges – Wie die Weltöffentlichkeit manipuliert und das Völkerrecht gebrochen wird" [Iraq, Chronicles of a Wanted War – How the World at Large is Manipulated and International Law is Broken]. In a

comprehensive 80-page interview, Hans von Sponeck's efforts, in spite of the opposition, to put a stop to the genocide committed against Iraqi children are brought to light. (Kiepenheuer 2003).

H. von Sponeck was selected as one of the first winners of the Threshold award because he fully committed himself to the causes of humanity, law, justice and peace, and in so doing accepted the personal consequences which ended his career as a top diplomat.



Region: Germany Western Europe



Städtische Gemeinschafts- hauptschule Duisburg, Germany

Address:

Städtische Gemeinschafts-
hauptschule Duisburg
Hanna Denskus
Lange Strasse 15
47228 Duisburg
Germany
Phone: 02065 - 63777
Fax: 02065 - 67518
email: denskus@aol.com

The Duisburg municipal community secondary school is a "School without Racism – School with Courage" which opposes violence and racism through various projects and campaigns.



Project coordinator Hanna Denskus writes:

We are a School without Racism – School with Courage. We were officially awarded this title by Aktion Courage, the German coordinators in Berlin on 15 February 2002. School without Racism – School with Courage is an international project for school pupils which began in 1988 in Belgium. The aim of this project is to combat violence and racism with lasting effect and to continue along this path through projects and campaigns. There are 143 schools in Germany (as at December 2002), and two in Duisburg. Schools are awarded this title on the basis of a joint vote of all those involved in the school (70% in favour) and evidence of projects. At our school this project is part of our agenda to renounce violence and improve the school environment and coexistence. We work together with companies and institutions in order to involve the local area and other parts of the city (Duisburg University, business, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, preventive police departments, violence-addiction-abuse and many more). The local press, local television and local radio report on our projects and campaigns. We regard the long-term project as a common path towards a world with less violence.

Groups demonstrating particular commitment are:

1. Project group 6a/b: Pupils meet after classes to publicise campaigns on the blackboard. It was this group that introduced the project to our school and have since supported it and continuously breathed new life into it.
2. Arbitrators: They meet after classes for training. They are aware of their special responsibility and believe in resolving conflict without violence.
3. Fifteen pupils from class 7b, who meet once a month and on special occasions, such as 9/11, to tend to memorials at the Trompeter cemetery. They weed, water and plant flowers, even during the holidays. There are three burial grounds for Russian and German soldiers and Ukrainian forced labourers there. History lessons are often held at the cemetery. They are working to preserve the memory.
4. What people do to each other: a project by classes 9a/b/c (history and German): Germany's Dark Age: Perpetrators and Victims in the Third Reich.

School Project "To remind of Jewish Children – To Help Indian Children", Delmenhorst/Germany

Address:

Projekt
„An jüdische Schüler erinnern –
indianischen Schülern helfen“
Werte- und Normen-Kurs der
Klasse 11
Fachgymnasium Wirtschaft, BBS I
27753 Delmenhorst /Germany
email: bbs1del@ewetel.net

Account:

Weltfriedensdienst Berlin,
Konto 505
Bank für Sozialwirtschaft,
BLZ 100 205 00,
for Maya-Schule „Ajaak Tukur“

One of the focal points of the project is remembering the fate of Jewish schoolchildren in Delmenhorst by naming streets after them and writing their names as graffiti. As the fate of the Jewish children is similar to that of the Indian Mayan children, the project group is also involved in the school twinning of the Delmenhorster Berufsbildenden Schule (vocational school) with a self-help school in Guatemala, which aims to revive Mayan culture through lessons in the Mayan language and learning about Mayan history.



The teachers involved in the project, Anne Frerichs and Klaus Margraf, write:

Our project is one of continuation, following on from one course of values and standards to the next. It began with the ter Berg children: the Delmenhorst municipal archives contain a letter, in which the head of the protestant school in Deichhorst informs the mayor that there are two half Jewish children at his school. Shortly after that, the family fled to Holland. Following the occupation of Holland, they were arrested and killed in Auschwitz. At our request, the town council decided to name a street after Sigmund and Hedwig ter Berg.

The next step was to find out which of the at least 11 other pupils who (according to a list in the municipal archives) had to leave Delmenhorst schools at that time, actually survived. Our pupils came up with the idea of creating a work of graffiti containing the first names of the Jewish schoolchildren as a commemoration by schoolchildren expressed in a way that is relevant to them.

We collect money for the autonomous Mayan school Ajaaw Tukur, our informal partner school. This school aims to revive Mayan culture by holding lessons in the native Mayan language and studying Mayan history.

Our last request for the time being is that the town council use the money saved by not educating Jewish children to the advantage of Indian schoolchildren – simply by sponsoring 11 Indian schoolchildren, and that other towns then also join this initiative.

**Kifa und Nathmi Jaradat,
Bremen/ Germany**

Address:

Mrs Kifa und Mr Nathmi Jaradat
Greifswalder Str. 22
28239 Bremen/Germany
Phone: 0421 - 6169547
email: info@jaradat.com

Mr and Mrs Jaradat from Palestine
work to promote understanding of
Islamic culture and religion in their
hometown of Bremen on a daily
basis and in a low-key way.

Account:

(for supporting an integration pro-
ject for foreign children and young
people in Bremen)
Kifa Jaradat
Account 12853537
Sparkasse Bremen
BLZ 29050101



Mr and Mrs Schmitz-Hünemann from the protestant Andreas parish in Bremen write:

Kifa and Nathmi Jaradat, born in 1954 and 1950, are a married couple from Palestine. They have been living in Bremen Gröpelingen since 1990 with their six children. Two other grown up children live in their native country.

Since 1998, when we first got to know the family, an exemplary mutual exchange of knowledge and ideas about Palestine, Germany, Israel, Bremen, cultural and religious issues has developed.

For example, we invited each other to Muslim and Christian festivals, where customs and meals were presented and shared.

Both families shared fond memories of the beautiful areas that the Jaradats know as their home and that our family visited during a short holiday which included a visit to the Christian holy sites.

We often used some of these memories to spread our enthusiasm to others. For example, members of the family agreed to our suggestion to come to our "Israel Afternoon" in October 2002 in the Catholic parish of St. Georg in Horn and prepare their special, tasty tea and falafel. At the end they spoke evocatively about their homeland as contemporary witnesses and natives; they supplemented their talk with slides and dances from the region and portrayed the country in which Jews, Muslims and Christians live together as a truly holy land with common roots, even if this is sometimes hard to imagine given its tragic present.

In November/December 2002 Mr Jaradat took part in three evenings about Islam at the Catholic educational centre in St. Georg. As the only Muslim present, he was able to talk to participants and answer their questions, where otherwise they would have talked about Muslims and not with them.

The open, accepting attitude prompted us to organise a visit to the Fatih mosque in Gröpelingen with a large group of senior dancers.

All these meetings were enjoyable and stimulating. We heard nothing said against Jews or Israel. Everything passed off in the spirit of understanding and mutual respect.



**Verein Dien Hong,
Rostock/Germany**

Address:

Dien Hong
Waldemarstr. 33
18057 Rostock/ Germany
Phone: 0381 - 128 69 70
Fax: 0381 - 768 99 71
email: dienhongrostock@aol.com
www.dienhong.de

Account:

20 500 85 85
BLZ 130 500 00 at
Ostseesparkasse Rostock

Following the racist attacks in Rostock Lichtenhagen in 1992, the association opened a Vietnamese-German meeting place which carries out cultural and educational work and provides social counselling for Germans and Vietnamese. It helps immigrants gain professional and language qualifications and works towards ensuring the successful integration of Vietnamese immigrants and promoting intercultural meetings to eliminate xenophobia.



Wolfgang Richter, who is the representative for foreigners in Rostock, writes:

The German-Vietnamese association Dien Hong was founded in the Sonnenblumenhaus following the race riots in Rostock Lichtenhagen in October 1992. The former Vietnamese contractual workers ultimately wanted to play a more active role in shaping their future and in particular make and organise contact with Germans living in the Hanseatic city. In February 1994 the association opened the Vietnamese-German meeting place, which carries out cultural and educational work and provides general social counselling for their fellow countrymen.

The Dien Hong association is committed to ensuring a better coexistence and increased equality of chances for Germans, Vietnamese and other immigrants. The work focuses in particular on helping immigrants gain professional and language qualifications and ensuring the successful integration of Vietnamese people. The activities of the association to combat xenophobia and racism and promote justice and peace have also been recognised beyond the boundaries of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

Its concrete objectives can be summarised as follows:

- Improving the professional and linguistic integration of immigrants in the area covered by the Rostock employment centre by means of careers advice and support as well as increasing linguistic competence through general and career-related language courses
- Qualified social counselling of Vietnamese, increasing the social competence and improving the social integration of Vietnamese people
- Maintaining Vietnamese culture, religion and tradition
- Support of young Vietnamese people at school and career preparation
- Promotion of intercultural and intergenerational meetings and the elimination of xenophobia
- Special help for the integration of older immigrants who are incapable of working
- Professional integration into the (first) employment market

Dien Hong is currently preparing to set up the first Vietnamese-German kindergarten group in cooperation with Waldemar Hof e. V. Rostock. This is due to open in winter 2003/04. In addition, the successful project carried out by Dien Hong in conjunction with the Agroecology Department at the University of Rostock, which involved ecologically growing Asian herbs and vegetables, will be continued. This project can also create jobs.



Deutsch-Afghanische-Initiative, Freiburg/ Germany

Address:

Deutsch-Afghanische Initiative e.V.
Belfortstr. 46
79098 Freiburg/ Germany
Phone & Fax 0761 - 8814854
info@deutsch-afghanische-initiative.de
www.deutsch-afghanische-initiative.de

Account:

Account number: 16 65 84 05
BLZ 680 900 00
Volksbank Freiburg

The DAI is an association of Germans and Afghans which has been implementing various help projects and development programmes for the reconstruction of Afghanistan on a voluntary basis since 2001: providing food, clothing and medical supplies, help in rebuilding schools, twinning programmes between Afghan and German schools, sponsorship schemes for orphans, cultural exchanges and the creation of a woman's advice centre.



Nina Kühtreiber, who works at the DAI, writes:

The DAI was formed in October 2001 in Freiburg im Breisgau as an informal association of a few local Afghans and people from the peace movement.

We began by collecting winter clothing and donations. Fundraising campaigns were held at many schools in Freiburg and pupils began to get actively involved. Thanks to the overwhelming public response, we were able to send five lorries with winter clothing, shoes, blankets and medical supplies in December 2001. Three of us, one Afghan and two Germans, flew to Iran to meet the lorries. They also bought almost one hundred tons of food and 1000 small oil stoves and brought all the relief goods to the Badghis region (Herat province/Afghanistan) which had, up until then, been without supplies. All the relief goods were personally distributed by our people as we had promised the donors from the outset that all the goods would directly benefit those in need.

Approximately six months after our activities began we established ourselves as a non-profit organisation, moved into an office and took on a part-time employee. Since then we have been concentrating on reconstruction projects with a lasting effect. One such project is the reconstruction of schools: in Shadai, to the west of Herat, a school was built in an area where children had previously had no access to education. There are definite plans for more schools in the nomadic area of Adreskan. What is special about these schools is that they are made of clay and built in the traditional cupola style. Just recently reconstruction work was begun on a grammar school in the Shomali Plain, north of Kabul, after months of mine clearance work had been completed. We also help schools with regard to allowing girls access to education.

The DAI has also set about arranging adoption schemes between Afghan and German schools to allow lots of young people to get involved in international understanding. So far six schools in the Freiburg area have officially adopted a school in Afghanistan and the pupils organise various campaigns to raise funds. In addition to the material aspect, we also promote – as far as general conditions permit – a cultural exchange. A woman's centre was set up in the Shomali Plain in winter 2002. Here widows are given the prospect of a reasonably secure life by receiving basic training as seamstresses. Persian lessons are also offered and a nurse provides basic medical care. A traditional clay building in a village organisation was hired out to house the centre.

Seminario Galego de Educacion para a Paz 

**Angel Iglesias Diaz /
Galician Seminar of Peace Education /
Compostela, Spain**

Address:

Mr. Angel Iglesias Díaz, c/o.
Galician Seminar of Education
for Peace
Basquiños 33, 1º B,
15703 Santiago de Compostela,
Galicia, Spain

Account:

Galician Seminar of Education
for Peace
Caixa Galicia, Axencia Urbana 22 ,
Rúa da Rosa nº 22,
Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
C.C.: 2091-0376-24-3040005877

Angel Iglesias Diaz is founder of the
Galician Seminar for Peace Education
in Santiago de Compostela (Spain),
author of various books about peace
topics and teaches in Spain and
Argentina about human rights, media-
tion, peace education and conflict
settlement.



Ana Amioni (from "Ciudades Educadores America Latina") writes:

Calo, as most of his friends know him, was born in 1934 in Asturias, Spain. His first years were definitely shaped by the horrendous experiences of the Spanish civil war and the post-war period. Being 17 years old he started his studies at a Jesuit School, being ordained as a priest. Since then he became involved in education. In 1970 he moved to the city of Vigo, in Galicia, Spain where he decided to leave the Jesuit order and become a teacher. In 1971 he married his present wife, Alcazar.

As a teacher, he is adored by his students and respected by his colleagues, always remembered for his kind manners and enthusiasm. In these years he starts radio programs for teenagers and a magazine "Antimatón" with pacifist messages and stories.

His education and teaching experiences shaped him profoundly and he turned to Peace Education obtaining from the Galician trade union a post as "liberated trade unionist"/ "liberado sindical" so as to dedicate himself completely to Peace. Later, he obtained the same permit from the Education Council of Galicia so as to concentrate his energies to establish the Galician Seminar of Education for Peace (GSEP) in 1985.

Being one of the founders, he is currently the coordinator of the Research Centre of the Galician Seminar of Peace Education, based in Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

He is a member of the Permanent Seminar of Education for Peace – Pro Human Rights Association of Spain; Permanent Seminar of the Children and Youth Literature "Gianni Rodari of Vigo", Spain. In 1994 he was the coordinator of the First European Congress of Teachers for Peace. He is also author of numerous publications related to Education for Peace and Human Rights.

As to illustrate his thought let us quote one of his works briefly:

"Our educational system is immersed in a social system which is violent in its structures. The educational system, thus, participates in this institutionalized violence of this soulless and fierce competitiveness, and it turns to be, in a way, an allied transmitter and reproductive of structural violence."

"The socio-critical model of Peace Education seeks solutions based on respect to freedom, dignity and human rights. (...) We assume the concept of positive peace, which accepts conflict as natural part of life, and searches its peaceful solution. In this sense, peace is a process which penetrates conflicts so as to regulate them in a cooperative and non violent way."

Four Peace Initiatives in Ypres, Belgium

Address:
c/o Filip Deheegher
Peace and Development Service
City of Ypres
Grote Markt 34
8900 Ieper/Belgium
Phone: +32 - 57 22 85 51
Fax: +32 - 57 22 85 76
email: vrede_ontwikkeling@ieper.be

Account:
Inquiries for bank accounts for the initiatives below via Mr. Deheegher.

The town of Ypres declared itself a “City of Peace” in 1985. Set against the background of complete destruction in the First World War, the town set up its own fund to provide financial support for local peace activities in Ypres.



Filip Deheegher (Peace and Development Service, City of Ypres) writes:

Since 1985 the city of Ypres, which was almost entirely destroyed in the First World War has been named “City of Peace”. Of the various local peace activities, the following four are particularly worth mentioning:

The “Mothers for Peace” group was formed in Ypres at the end of 1992 with the aims of making public and condemning violence against women in areas of conflict and restoring self-confidence and self-determination in women and children through various campaigns. Since its foundation the initiative has worked together with various women’s groups in Croatia, Bosnia, Algeria, Kosovo, Rwanda and Afghanistan, supporting their work.

The international committee of the Ypres youth council has been organising a youth exchange since 1991. Young people from conflict areas take part in the exchange, including for example, young people from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Israel, Palestine, Wallonia and Flanders (in Belgium). It is a particularly good idea to work with young people from areas of conflict given the tragic history of the city of Ypres.

The annual Käthe Kollwitz Peace Run has been held in Ypres since 1997. It brings together progressive NGOs, peace organisations, trade unions, student committees and youth organisations under a common manifesto. It originates in the history of Westhoek, the battlefield of the First World War with the countless pieces of evidence from it which have survived until now, including “The grieving parents” by the German artist Käthe Kollwitz at the military cemetery in Vladslo. Käthe Kollwitz and her artwork condemn this senseless war and symbolise the peace concept behind the Peace Run. The Peace Run does not just appeal to all the citizens to get involved (sport being the common denominator) by running, walking, cycling or motor cycling, it also makes participants aware of the peace issue. Each year a special topic is chosen. The idea is that people are confronted with the reality through discussion forums, information points, testimonials and a cultural program.

In 1989 Ypres began a partnership with the Romanian village of Recea. One of the reasons for this decision was the notorious policy of the former Romanian dictator Ceausescu, who wanted to destroy most of the traditional villages in his country and replace them with gigantic concrete housing estates. The plans provoked a storm of indignation. The countries of Europe were called upon to support certain Romanian villages and many towns in Belgium responded, one of which was Ypres. Ceausescu’s departure from the political stage in 1989 meant that it was possible to implement the partnership plan in a much more concrete way. The first small aid convoy left Ypres for Recea in 1990. Conditions in the village were abysmal, all the essential goods and services were virtually non-existent. Convoys with relief goods have been travelling to Romania every year since then.

*Region: Southern
Eastern Europe*





Putevi Mira /Kozarska Dubica, Bosnia

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At the beginning of its activities Putevi Mira ("Paths of Freedom") supported the return of Muslim refugees to the town of Kozarska Dubica in the Serbian Republic (Bosnia) in extremely difficult conditions, for example, through agricultural projects, legal advice and house hunting. Today its activities focus on looking after a youth group, providing free meals for a group of elderly people and medical and psychological advice to women.



Cima Zdenac, coordinator of Putevi Mira, writes:

Putevi Mira supports non-Serbian refugees returning to the Bosnian town of Kozarska Dubica (Serbian Republic). It is extremely difficult for this group to return because of the strong opposition they face from the town council and the Serbian population. Putevi Mira has set up an advice centre there to encourage people to go back to their home town. The office is also intended for all refugees and sections of the population in the town to begin a gradual rapprochement between the warring ethnic groups. At the end of 1999 the association was the first returning NGO to register in the Republic of Srpska. Cima Zdenac was then taken on in January 2000 to run the advice centre. In 1997 Cima Zdenac took part in the 1st training course of North Rhine-Westphalia and various peace organisations in Frille in her capacity as peace expert. She lives in K. Dubica and is familiar with the mentality of the people. This does not make her work any easier, because people come with great expectations which often cannot be fulfilled by the staff in the office.

From a political point of view K. Dubica was one of the towns under the rule of the SDS, a Serbian nationalist party, which tried to prevent the return of Muslim Bosnian and Croatian refugees. That is why there were no reconstruction programmes by international organisations for this town. The tireless work of the advice centre has helped ensure that at least a small amount of financial and humanitarian aid reaches the town and that international organisations such as the UNHCR, OHR and the IPTF try to get into contact with the advice centre as a local organisation.

We wanted to start with the women to develop peace and a new form of coexistence. Hence the advice centre organised a women's seminar entitled "Women's Steps Towards Peace". This seminar was a novelty in the town because for the first time since the war, women from different ethnic groups and from Germany took part. The women from K. Dubica in particular wanted to see a continuation of this seminar, as a special means of providing non-violent training and support for creating jobs. As this work cannot be done by the present staff, Sadija Becirevic, a participant in the women's seminar from Dubica, attended a course in "Civil Peace Work" in Germany so that she would be able to work in the field of "Women's Work" in the advice centre.

Due to the great plight of old and sick people, the advice centre set up a social welfare fund and took on a nurse, Azra Krivdic, who is the only one in the town to do house calls. Many elderly people live alone, without any family, and we have set up a room on our premises where they can meet up, chat with each other and make friends, make themselves lunch and receive a medical examination and medication. Since October 2001 two teachers, Marija Arnautovic and Nevzeta Marin have been involved in helping the returning children integrate into their new environment and into the education system. They help prevent problems at school. This services does not just help children returning from abroad who have difficulties with the Cyrillic language, but it is also open to all children who need help learning. We made our centre available to the electoral commission for the electoral registration of those returning and assisted as election observer.

There are many other breaches of human rights: those returning cannot get their jobs back – they have been taken by Serbian refugees. Many people do not receive any pension. They now have to pay for electricity, water, telephone etc. even though the Serbian refugees get everything free of charge. The government in the Republic of Srpska does not support the return of Muslim Bosnians and Croats; instead it supports the Serbs from Croatia that want to stay in Bosnia. Approaching the "other side" is much easier said than done. The war wounds have still not healed, crimes have not been avenged, the fears and prejudices could erupt again at any given moment. This means there is still much more to be done by NGOs in Dubica and throughout the whole of Bosnia.



Nikola Aleksic / Ecological Movement Novi Sad, Serbia

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As a representative and the head of a large Serbian NGO, Nikola Aleksic has been particularly committed to combating ecological problems in Serbia, which are usually given little attention and do not receive any official financial support. He has been involved in numerous ecological projects and has initiated several mass protests against environmental damage in Serbia.



Ostoja Drazic of the “Ecological Movement Novi Sad” writes:

As a member of the Novi Sad city council and cofounder of the city’s “Ecological Movement” which was established in 1990, Nikola Aleksic has significantly contributed to defending civil rights and justice from 1989 to 2002. During the years marked by civil war, political extremism, corruption and the destruction of the country and the social value system even the very idea of an organisation for environmental issues was remarkable. Yet through his commitment, Nikola Aleksic promoted the civil right of respecting the political right to have a say. Nikola Aleksic was the first candidate from an environmental nongovernmental organisation to be nominated for the regional parliament in Yugoslavia. Aleksic’s strengths are his arguments, his commitment to open and honest interaction and his efforts to put the long-term interests of the citizens ahead of the short-term interests of political parties or powerful pressure groups. For example, he has organised – often despite opposition from pressure groups – many public discussions and expert consultations about relevant ecological and urban problems in Novi Sad.

In Serbia there are very few people who, like Nikola Aleksic, have consistently put the interests of the public before their own. For example, when he worked night shifts he did voluntary work during the day for the Ecological Movement as the local ecological movement did not receive any financial subsidies from the city council or from abroad. Nikola Aleksic helped the people retain the belief that it is possible to defend the long-term interests of the majority, namely the “ordinary people” and that the people can use democratic means to actively oppose political manipulation, exploitation and intimidation.

In May 1995 Nikola Aleksic was elected Director of the Ecological Movement of the city of Novi Sad. His concrete campaigns and activities, which he initiated and organised, and his direct contact and work with the people have so far prompted approx. 15,000 individual and 160 collective members to join the ecological movement. He also played a key role in the foundation of over 40 local environmental organisations in Serbia.



Jasmina Ivosevic / “Bona Fides”, Bosnia-Herzegovina

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Jasmina Ivosevic is particularly committed for the activation of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In various projects she tries to make young people sensitive for responsibility and self-esteem and motivates them to stay in their country instead of emigrating. Such activation she does with special TV-programs and workshops, in which Jasmina Ivosevic tries to overcome the long political isolation and party rule in former Yugoslavia.



Vladimir Mitrovic (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in BiH) writes:

Promoting Tolerance and Understanding of Differences are the basic goal that Jasmina Ivosevic worked on. Twice each month, more than 2 million television viewers throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro tune into an hour and a half long youth talk show. During the show, young people, journalists, lawyers, and others express their views on topics ranging from ethnic tolerance to human rights to how to promote democratic principles. The show was not developed by TV executives; rather it was conceived of and is paid for by a youth-run, nongovernmental organization: Citizen Association Bona Fides.

Through producing its own biweekly television program, Citizen Association Bona Fides engages youth and adults in a critical dialogue on issues ranging from ethnic tolerance to human rights. Translated from Latin, bona fides means “good will toward helping others”. Established in 2001, the mission of Citizen Association Bona Fides is to help young people overcome the region’s legacy of war, hatred, and intolerance. As alternatives, it encourages open dialogue, the peaceful resolution of conflict, and active democratic participation.

Bona Fides is the brainchild of Jasmina Ivosevic, age 26, who founded the organization with the support of friends and family. As its Executive Director, she and two staff coordinate its activities from a small office in Bijeljina, a town situated in northeast corner of Bosnia-Herzegovina. More than 35 youth, ages 18 to 30, are members of the Association, with many others participating in its activities.

Central to Bona Fides’ work is awakening young people to their role as positive social change agents, capable of building a more positive future. Yet current statistics might discourage even the most optimistic among the region’s youth from believing in a better tomorrow. High unemployment, widespread poverty, and a pervasive lack of opportunity have resulted in growing alienation among young people. According to a recent survey, 63 percent of youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina seek to emigrate.

Such disturbing trends have not deterred Jasmina and her colleagues, who believe that true change starts small – in the minds and hearts of individuals. “The only way to begin is to start with the individual,” says Jasmina. “When you establish personal ties among people with different backgrounds it’s much easier to make wider connections.”

Central to Bona Fides’ efforts is breaking the grip that years of isolation and government propaganda holds on young people’s minds. “A large number of young people have formed their views based on the negative ideals of extreme nationalistic policies,” Jasmina explains. “They have had no opportunities to see further, to communicate with youth from other countries, or to educate themselves. Such young people are unable to accept others who have different cultures, religions, and customs.”

Through sponsoring local workshops and conferences, Bona Fides convenes diverse groups of youth and fosters lasting connections among them. In 2002, Jasmina and her colleagues organized six seminars, each attended by thirty youth. During the three to four day events, participants talked about such issues as the reconciliation process, human rights, ethnic tolerance, and the role of the media in the postwar period. “While in all three countries, the situation is quite different, when they [seminar participants] are together they start seeing similarities among them,” Jasmina points out.



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Adem Demaci is president of the
"Council for the Defence of Human
Rights and Freedoms" (with branches
in all 30 administrative units in
Kosovo). As a former political prisoner
of the Yugoslavian regime, human
rights activist and important symbolic
figure for Kosovo (he is director of
RTK state television), he is committed
to ensuring the return and reconcilia-
tion of all minorities in Kosovo.



Dardan Velija (Bulgaria) provides the following information and writes:

Adem Demaci was born in 1936 in Pristina. He studied literature and published various literary texts. During and following his time at university Adem Demaci became increasingly involved in defending the rights of Albanians in Kosovo and publicly condemned discrimination against them by the government in Belgrade. Following the publication of texts which called upon Albanians in Kosovo to put up resistance to the Serbian administration, Adem Demaci was imprisoned for the first time. On account of his other political activities he spent almost 30 years of his life behind bars between 1958 and 1990. Even before the war in Kosovo in 1999 Adem Demaci campaigned vigorously for the legal and peaceful break up of Yugoslavia without revenge or hatred. In 1991 he became director of the "Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms" (CDHRF) in Pristina, where he systematically recorded and documented breaches of human rights in Kosovo together with 25 colleagues and thousands of volunteers. Even back in 1991 an important aspect of the Council was that Demaci did not just include Serbs in his work, but also Bosnians, Turks, Croats, Romanies etc. This reinforced the credibility of the Council.

Following the war in 1999 Adem Demaci continued his activities at the CDHRF: he supported the minorities at risk and encouraged them to stay in their own homes in Kosovo. He strongly opposed any use of violence against minorities, which did not always win him the sympathy of the Albanians. Demaci, however, tirelessly tried to make the Albanians understand the importance of respecting the rights of all minorities. This approach has meant that the problem of minorities in Kosovo generally receives more public attention.

In 2000 the "Committee for Understanding, Tolerance and Coexistence" was founded as part of the CDHRF. It aims to incorporate Albanians, Serbs, Bosnians, Turks, Romanies, Hashkalis and Egyptians – i.e. all Kosovans. The tasks of the Committee include identifying the problems of the minorities, creating the conditions for the return and reintegration of the minorities, mediating in the resolution of ethnic conflicts and initiating the process of ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo. As part of his work for the Committee Demaci often visits the families of minorities and the disappeared in Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Demaci was the first Albanian to go to Belgrade after the war to lead by personal example with regard to reducing ethnic tensions and restoring the destroyed relationship between Albanians and Serbs. As a result of one of Demaci's initiatives, "Radio Television of Kosovo" began to broadcast the programme "Tolerance and Coexistence", which is dedicated to the minorities in Kosovo.



Eco Centre Latinovac, Croatia

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Since many years a Peace Camp is carried out in Latinovac in summer. There young people from all new countries on the territory of former Yugoslavia are participating and learn alternative styles of debating, non-violent conflict regulation and the decrease of enemy images. A special link exists to the town Vukovar with its high destructions during the Serbian-Croatian war.



Branka Drabek-Milekic, contact person of the center, writes:

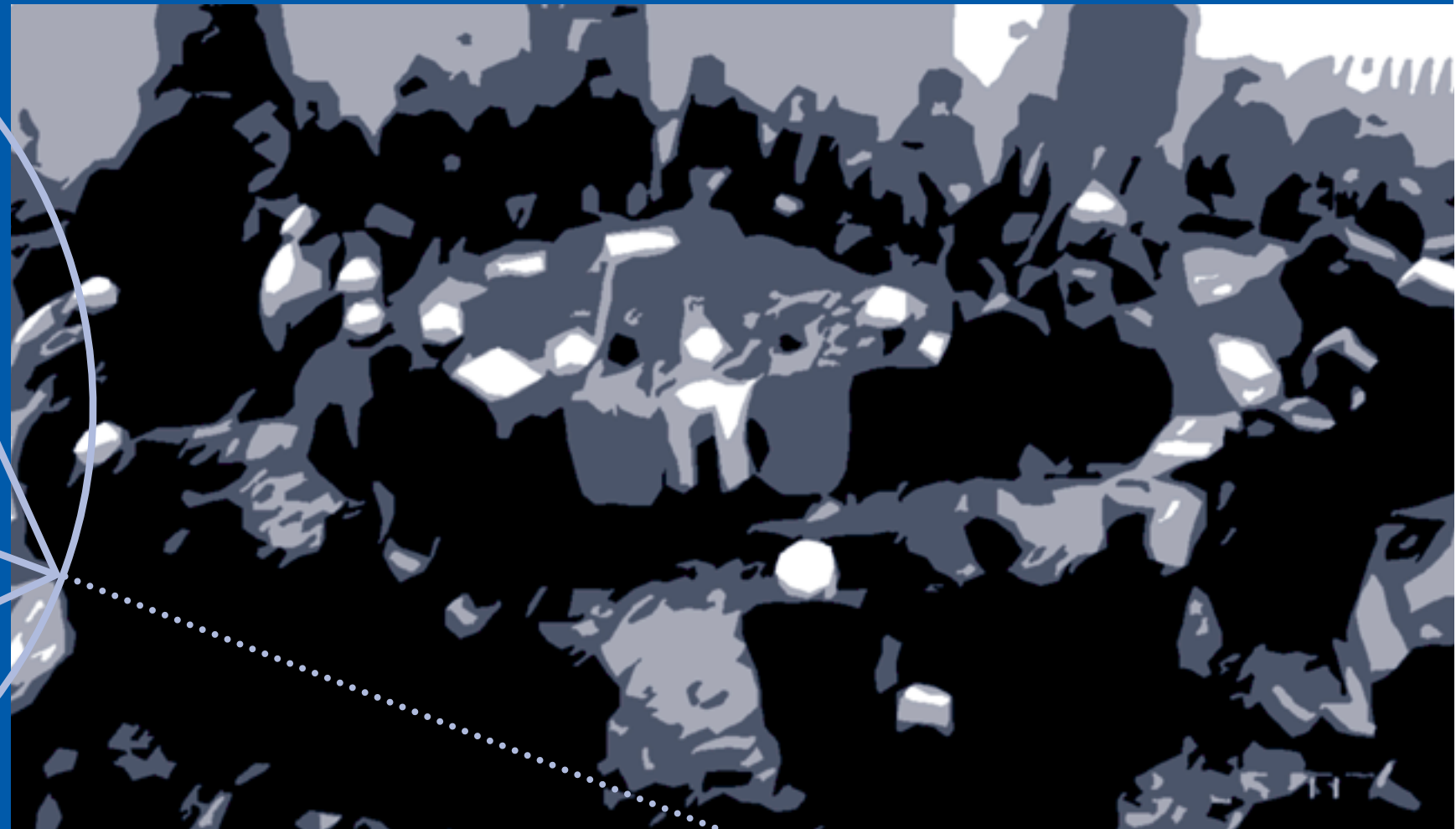
Established in 1995, Eco Centre Latinovac, has hosted many educational programs, cooperative projects, and volunteer initiatives in the areas of mediation and conflict resolution, environmental awareness, and the preservation and promotion of cultural traditions and heritage. The primary project of Eco Centre Latinovac is the "Seedlings of Peace" (Peace Camp). This summer camp invites youth from former Yugoslavia together for workshops, trainings, projects and activities that build awareness, trust, communication skills and lasting friendships.

The Peace Camp is an annual summer camp in Latinovac that brings youth together from all religious and ethnic backgrounds from prewar Yugoslavia, to build skills and be empowered in the areas of non-violent communication, active, reflective, and compassionate listening, mediation, cultural awareness, among other activities. The rural surroundings, supportive staff, and skills learned in listening and communicating, combine to create a "safe container" for participants to express and receive each other's views and experiences in a nurturing and protected environment. This support to take risks with expressing feelings and experiences opens hearts and minds to creative problem solving and the recognition of our common humanity.

Specific skills in non-violent communication, reflective and Compassionate Listening, and mediation are taught in a workshop environment by trained and certified facilitators. Other skills in computer science and fine arts as well as cultural crafts and environmental awareness are also important elements of the camp curriculum. In addition, games and exercises that encourage cooperation, creative problem solving, and systemic thinking are critical for implementing new concepts in a fun and engaging way. They also act as a metaphor for situations faced everyday at home as well as attitudes towards life in general. Another important part of this learning experience comes from making much of the decisions in camp through consensus. This process provides a constant opportunity to practice the skills learned in workshops and trainings.

Each camp has a volunteer work component out in the community. These projects foster volunteerism among the participants, provide opportunities to work and cooperate together on a common goal, and are of service to the surrounding communities. They also serve to build awareness of the camp in the general public where the work projects take place. Some of these activities have included reclaiming a city park, planting trees, and cleaning streets and beaches. Participants also take part in the maintenance and improvement of the village of Latinovac, where camp is currently held, by painting in the school and community house, cleaning and maintaining the church and grounds, and other needs in the public areas. Maintenance of the camp by cutting grass and doing yard work, preparing for the coming winter, etc. is also contributed to by the youth. Participants also contribute on a volunteer basis to the daily needs of cooking and cleaning. In addition, each year there is a mosaic or art project to commemorate that year's camp installed in the common areas.

*Region: Russia/
Caucasus*





Foundation "Eurasia"/ Orenburg, Russia (Caucasus Region)

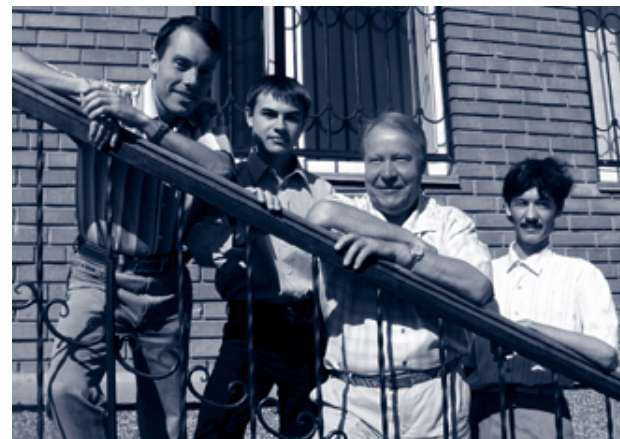
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Account-Nr. for Euro:
407 039 783 460 202 00006
Purpose: Donation for Culture
and Education

Eurasia works to promote international understanding, intercultural contacts and the support of disadvantaged institutions in the city of Orenburg. The organisation cooperates with all cultural institutions and the different religions represented in Orenburg and opened the first German language reading room there in 2002. Eurasia also organises Polish and Austrian film days and has set up a round table to discuss "Extremism and Tolerance".



The Eurasia staff writes:

Eurasia, the Orenburg based non-profit foundation, is a small organisation which promotes international understanding, intercultural contacts and the support of institutions discriminated against by the state such as libraries, museums and educational institutions in our city. The foundation was established by former employees of the Orenburg city council. When in 2000 the newly-elected mayor made a statement to the effect that international relations were not important and did not need to be maintained, three committed young people immediately traded in their offices and a secure civil service salary to undertake independent constructive work for the benefit of the citizens of Orenburg – even though there was no prospect of a regular income.

Without the great commitment of the staff, Eurasia projects would have been virtually impossible in this Russian city. Eurasia cooperates with all the schools and higher education institutions in the city. It targets young people and its contacts are people who are interested in culture. Eurasia also cooperates with all the churches as well as the synagogue and the mosque in the city. Various national cultural centres also cooperate with the organisation – all nationalities are welcome in Orenburg. Their goal is international understanding. There is no admission fee at Eurasia – all the events are free for everyone.

In January 2002 Eurasia opened the public reading room for German language literature in the Orenburg area library – the first institution of its type for everyone interested in German and German / Austrian / Swiss culture and for the ethnic German-Russians living in the city. The books, newspapers and magazines were collected from hundreds of sources, both national and private, from several countries. The library provided a room.

Eurasia organised the days of Polish film and Polish literature in conjunction with the Polish culture centre. It arranged for a Polish language teacher to come to Orenburg for a year to provide language lessons for the Polish community and other interested parties (primarily schoolchildren). The events became real festivals involving fellow citizens of all nationalities.

On the Austrian film day in May 2003 Eurasia invited all those interested in Austrian language and culture. The film, which was about a disabled boy who became a famous dancer, was encouragement for Russians of the same age suffering from the same illness. Eurasia invited them specially to this showing.

In August Eurasia invited representatives from all creeds and a broad cross-section of the general public in the city to the round table discussion entitled "Extremism and Tolerance." A seminar for school teachers, organised in conjunction with Sweden, with films and discussions opened the eyes of many educationalists, who were also given books on the subject.

Alexander Schmorell, who formed the famous "White Rose" together with Hans Scholl in 1942, also came from Orenburg. The fact that Alexander Schmorell did not just come from Orenburg, but also considered himself to be Russian until his execution in 1943 and told his friends from the White Rose of his love for Russia, was only acknowledged in Russia a few years ago. Members of Eurasia have been showing the "White Rose exhibition" in Russian cities since 1999. In 2002 several thousand mainly young people have a different image of Germany as a result.



South Caucasian Provincial Town Forum, Gyumri / Armenia

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BENEFICIARY:

CAUCASIAN CENTER FOR
PROPOSING NON TRADITIONAL
CONFLICT RESOLUTION METHODS/
passport details: 23803800710602

The Caucasian Town Forum offers elected political representatives and members of NGOs in the Caucasus border area a grassroots “Citizen Diplomacy” with meetings and workshops where they can debate about joint problems and possible solutions. Facing the high conflicts in that region that is often the first and sometimes so far only possibility for towns, villages and NGOs to overcome the mutual isolations and to reach new cooperative perspectives beyond the harsh official policy of enemy images.



Betty Sitka (contact person for the center) and Artush Mkrtchyan (coordinator of the center) write:

The Caucasian Forum represents a breakthrough on a number of levels – including not only crossborder cooperation, but also informal track two diplomacy among citizens of countries that do not currently have formal diplomatic relations.

The Caucasian Forum is designed to provide a space for local elected officials and NGO leaders of rural border communities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey to come together to share their common experiences, and to develop strategies for addressing common challenges. The smaller, more rural towns and villages that are far from their own capital tend to have more in common with other towns across the border than with their own metropolitan capital. Furthermore, most of the projects (both domestically funded and through international donations) that are undertaken to address economic, social and political issues are implemented in the capital – the rural areas are drastically underserved. By cooperating, the communities have discovered that they have quite a few shared experiences and challenges, and by pooling their ideas and enthusiasm they are more likely to be successful in addressing their community needs.

The first phase of this Caucasian Forum culminated in an extraordinary gathering in Tbilisi, Georgia in January 2003 where local elected officials from several communities in Azerbaijan sat around the table with their counterparts from Armenia (for the first time in over 10 years!) and Georgia, and together with their NGO partners from the three countries, they explored and documented common challenges and set up Country Implementation Committees (CIC) for each country. The CIC's include both NGO representatives and local elected officials. Since that gathering, which was the culmination of a year's work to set up -- specifically due to the very delicate nature of the Armenian-Azeri relationship at this time, the CIC's have conducted community inventories and priority-setting dialogues in four communities in each of the countries.

Other projects of the forum:

Project: “Peace at home, peace in the world” – this project directed to the rejection of enemy stereotype and formation of tolerance atmosphere in the frames of new generation. The participants of project are 100 teachers and 3000 students from Armenia. The same project intends to be organized in Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Project: “Journalists for peace” project training, which is directed to the media diversity and reconciliation of Caucasian nations. Participants are Armenians, Turks and Azerbaijanis.

Project: “Regional Center for Quick Response to Extreme Situations”. The project participating countries were Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The goal of the project was establishment of a virtual center, which will coordinate the work of the rescue teams and the departments of quick response of the region in the case of natural and artificial disasters, and organization of rescue and emergency activity in the case of emergency situations.

**Mrs Roswitha Jarman /
Quaker of German origin, UK**

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Roswitha Jarman has worked for many years as a teacher and conversational therapist in the northern Caucasus conflict region, where she introduces hostile peoples very gradually to the art of non-violent conflict resolution and listening and understanding each other. She also goes with people (mostly children) to the refugee camps to help them come to terms with their traumas. In so doing she makes a significant contribution to gradual reconciliation in this area.



Proposers, Wiebke Jung and Heike Mahlke (Ecumenical Service/Schalomdiakonot), write:

Roswitha Jarman has worked for many years in regions in the northern Caucasus. Since the collapse of the Soviet regime in 1990/91 there have been attempts in this area to achieve independence from Russia, which have in some cases led to fierce conflict amongst the peoples living there. These conflicts resulted in misery, destruction and large streams of refugees.

In order to bring people from the hostile ethnic groups together for discussion, Roswitha Jarman constantly crosses over the boundaries, working on both sides of the hardened fronts in Ingushetia, Ossetia and Chechnya. She volunteers herself as an “ambassador between the fronts” to overcome the mutual swell of distrust and prejudice. By listening empathetically, she gives people the opportunity to tell their tragic stories and helps them in this way to get through their traumas and find new courage to face life.

As a teacher and conversational therapist she makes her knowledge and life experience available in order to work together with doctors, teachers, students, young people and children on conflict resolution issues and help them develop their own programmes.

As an advisor and supervisor she supports the work and organisational development of local NGOs, such as ARD-Denal (Agency of Rehabilitation and Development) in Grozny. She regularly shares her knowledge and experiences in courses on handling civil conflict, demonstrating great charisma and persuasiveness.

Roswitha Jarman was born in 1935. Her father was in the armed forces and spent most of the war on the Russian front. She emigrated to the UK after 1945. As a Quaker, she has got to know many of the world’s trouble spots together with her husband Peter. The couple were also Quaker representatives in Moscow. She belongs to the circle of Ecumenical Service / Schalomdiakonot cooperation partners in Wethen.

On her return from a trip to the Prigorodny area in 1996, Roswitha Jarman described her work as follows: “To me, working for peace in this area means learning about the fate of the displaced people and finding ways of restoring their courage, and implementing practical measures for their future. This includes listening and understanding the situation now, as well as showing people that they are not alone and have not been forgotten.”

In 1998 Roswitha Jarman was unable to travel to the northern Caucasus because of the dangerous political situation. So she met up with Caucasians in Moscow. Whilst reflecting on this trip she describes the role of a peace worker: “As peace workers we can testify to the situation the people are faced with in their lives by listening to them, that is part of the healing process. We can show them stability by coming back again and again, and we can share skills with them that will help them resolve their issues and conflicts.”



Daghestan Centre of Peacemaking Initiatives "Sabur" / Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

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The work of the peace center Sabur focus on the geographic center of the Dhagestan Republic in the Caucaus, where in the region of Kadar there are a number of societal and international conflict potentials. Sabur counteracts that problems with workshops where elder people of different ethnic origin and commitment for non-violent conflict resolution meet with younger persons. In addition Sabur arranges training seminars for school children, communities and NGOs to improve the communication and has launched a "Liberal Club" which carries out events for inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance.



The chairman of Sabur, Kazimurza Sultanov, writes:

Daghestan Non-Governmental Organization "Sabur" is working out a peace-building project in Kadar zone (Buinaksk district) which is famous for wide spread of Vahabbism (an extreme variation of the Islam) and military operations (anti-terrorist campaign of the Russian Federal Army) in 1999. The Kadar zone is an area in the heart of Daghestan Republic. There are 8 villages in it. The total number of population is about 15 thousand persons.

Disintegration of the USSR and the following social and economic cataclysms resulted in appearance of extremist trends and ideologies on the political stage of several Russian regions. The social and political situation was not being controlled by local authorities. Since early 1990-s the Kadar zone became one the strongest centers (all over Russian Federation) for the Vahhabist ideology which was violently spread in all aspects of life. Women were prohibited to participate in social life. They were only allowed to run the house and bring up the children. The girls were not allowed to go to school. Vahabbist leaders did their best to isolate the population of Kadar zone from neighboring communities thus demonstrating intolerance to representatives of other cultures. The final stage was anti-terrorist campaign in August – September 1999 which resulted in considerable material (let alone moral) damage to local citizens. In a few cases people managed to obtain compensations for the ruined houses and property. Unfortunately neither the Governmental bodies nor the local authorities have taken care of compensating moral damage. No one has ever thought of working out and implementing a complex program on integrating the population of Kadar zone with neighboring communities. It is necessary to promote these people's social and psychological rehabilitation. It is necessary to save them from the label "marginal group", to prevent their isolation and restoration of terrorism danger.

In these difficult and conflictive circumstances Sabur arranges the following projects: Mavlids (meetings of respected old-aged persons of different ethnic groups aimed at reconciliation and passing peacekeeping experience to young generation). During Mavlid ceremonies the emphasis will be made on propaganda of such values as religious and ethnic tolerance, mercy, generosity, open-heartedness, peaceful disposition.

Sports competitions for the schoolchildren so as to make it possible for children from different villages (and of different nationalities) to communicate through sports. At the end of the competition all participants will be awarded with equal prizes thus not only confirming the basic Olympic principle (participation is much more important than victory), but also emphasizing the peace-building function of sports – "it is always better to compete on the sports ground than on the field of battle".

Training-seminars (for High school students, representatives of local authorities, NGOs, mass media) aimed to develop skills of conducting dialogue (in the round table format). The main objective is to form experience of discussing and resolving controversial questions through peaceful and constructive dialogue without extremist and terrorist methods which had recently become a norm. The seminars will serve as a significant part of psychological and educational program of training teenagers values of tolerance and peace culture. Arranging a liberal club mainly specialized in propaganda of cross-cultural (inter-ethnic and inter-religious) tolerance. Volunteer students will help us conduct social poll of the population and assist at seminars. All the events unite in one program – the reconciliation ceremony is followed by sports competition. After that psychological rehabilitation and intellectual growth of the new and formation of conscientious members of the civil society are promoted.

Region Africa





United Network of Young Peacebuilders, Africa

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Website: www.unoy.org

Account:

ABNANL2A 55 40 70 294
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UNOY is a network in Africa with various activities like: peace education, conflict management, campaigns against illegal weapons possession, Aids-prevention, commitment for the problem of child soldiers. It contributes to the networking of African initiatives, which work in such fields and improves their potential and capacities.



Imoh Colins from UNOY writes:

The United Network of Young Peacebuilders – UNOY – was founded as a result of an International Working Group, attended by young people from five continents that came together in June 1989 in Handel, the Netherlands to discuss the major problems, threatening the future and survival of humanity and the role of young people and youth movements as agents of positive change.

They identified the need for youth groups worldwide to work more closely together and to create some form of partnership with each other and other strategic organizations in order to save future generations from the scourge of war, grave environmental and other man made disasters, and together work for a “united and transformed world”. Thus, the United Nations Of Youth (UNOY) was born as a vision, a sign of hope, and a challenge for the future. The UNOY Foundation is a non-political, non-religious, non-governmental organization.

The UNOY works with Young people (age 17-30), / youth organizations from pre- post-and actual conflict regions who are NGO leaders, journalists, students and concerned young persons, active in the field of peace-building. In order to secure more concrete and lasting results, to address the local needs and strengthen local peace building initiatives, training seminars are carried out on a regional level in cooperation with local partners. Apart from global events we have organised, the major focus of the UNOY peace-building activities has been East Europe (Russia, Caucasus, Ukraine) and Africa.

A training workshop of UNOY launched the “African Network of Young Peace Builders” which networks young African peace activists. The aim is to empower the capacities and to exchange onsite experiences. The network unites projects and initiatives of peace work and makes a common platform for activities, public relations and fundraising. It is a framework which gives young African people the chance, to be actively integrated into violent conflict resolutions and reconciliation. Within the Network regional projects, seminars and programs are carried out in the following fields: Youth advocacy; Young women and peace-building; Youth and conflict transformation; Peace education; Illicit use of small arms and light weapons, children and armed conflict and HIV / AIDS.

**Andrew Greene / iEARN,
Sierra Leone**

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iEARN Sierra Leone
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website: www.iearnsierraleone.org

Andrew Greene has devoted himself
to young victims of the war in Sierra
Leone. He has set up an electronic
computer network, which young
people in Sierra Leone can use to ex-
change ideas and implement new
projects in the areas of human rights,
peace education, dealing with con-
flict and democratic culture.
This allows them to develop new self
esteem and to take on responsibility
in society.

Account:

Name of Bank:
Sierra Leone Commercial Bank,
Siaka Stevens Street Branch,
Freetown.
Bank Account Number:
AC #: 2029004



*In addition to information from the website, Alimamy Bangura
(iEARN Teacher Facilitator) writes:*

Andrew Benson Greene, Jr. comes from Sierra Leone and lives in Freetown. Andrew became aware of the fate of children in Sierra Leone following the conflict in his coun-
try which lasted over 10 years. He believes that appeasement by means of informati-
on technology can achieve something and improve the quality of life of those invol-
ved. It was this commitment that prompted Andrew Greene to form the national
branch of iEARN in Sierra Leone with Canadian support. iEARN is a global network,
which allows young people the use the Internet and other new technologies to imple-
ment joint projects. Andrew Greene has been active for many years in giving the lives
of children in Sierra Leone meaning again and increasing their prospects; children,
who have suffered as a result of unprecedented violence.

The Internet access provided by iEARN in Sierra Leone allows many young people in
Sierra Leone to come into contact with other young people across the world. They can
exchange ideas about peace issues with people of the same age from all over the
world. Andrew Greene also played a key role in ensuring that the computers donated
by international organisations for iEARN in Sierra Leone were installed in such a way
that those children affected by the war could learn useful IT skills and work together
with other young children from all over the world on relevant social issues using the
telecommunication technology. Andrew believes that child soldiers and children affec-
ted by the war can become ambassadors for peace by exchanging their ideas with
other people of the same age from all over the world by means of telecommunication.
He maintains that this does not just promote learning, but also social justice and inspi-
res a positive exchange because child victims of war can play a significant role in crea-
ting peace in their own villages and towns.

Andrew is fully committed to providing PC access to the young people he is devoted
to. For example, he takes his students from the outskirts of the capital by bus, walks a
long distance with them, and queues up with them in a cyber café to give them some
time on the Internet.



REACH ORGANISATION IN RWANDA
Reconciliation Evangelism And Christian Healing

REACH / Philbert Kalisa, Rwanda

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REACH is an inter-church network for helping and detraumatizing war victims and prisoners from the civil war in Rwanda. Through various projects REACH helps them overcome the wounds of war and gain new prospects. REACH also implements various long-term reconciliation projects and has been appointed by the government of Rwanda to help the courts in their investigation into the genocide of 1994.

REACH originated from the long-term commitment of Philbert Kalisa.



Jerry Barr, Sue Barr and Rev. Norman Bingham (supporters of REACH in the UK) write:

REACH originated from the tireless initiative of Philbert Kalisa. P. Kalisa was born and raised by his Rwandan parents in a refugee camp in Burundi. Unlike many of his contemporaries he did not opt for armed struggle, but instead started a theology course. Following his ordination he continued his theological training in England. The genocide happened in Rwanda in 1994, whilst Philbert Kalisa was studying at Trinity College. One million Tutsi and Hutu Rwandans were killed. Instead of going back to Burundi, Kalisa went to Rwanda. His vision was to set up an organisation for the reconciliation of the people there. He presented this vision in 1996 in numerous visits and seminars in many churches in Rwanda. Philbert Kalisa's commitment finally led to the creation of "REACH" ("Reconciliation, Evangelism and Christian Healing for Rwanda"). REACH is run by representatives from different churches in Rwanda; its general secretary is P. Kalisa.

REACH trains its staff throughout the whole country to help those whose loved ones were killed and those left physically scarred, impoverished and traumatised by the genocide. The wounds are still coming to light today. In addition, many of those accused of playing a part in the murders are now being released from prison. Since its foundation, over 15,000 people have received support and advice from REACH. The basic principle of the work is that anyone can receive help, irrespective of his or her confession or whether he or she is a Christian. As well as these reconciliation seminars, REACH has also begun small agricultural production initiatives, which are designed to benefit not just the widows of the genocide victims, but also the wives of prisoners.

In the meantime, the Rwandan government has been so impressed by the work of REACH in Rwanda, that it has invited the organisation to bring those people who will be involved in the so-called GACACA courts closer to reconciliation. These courts are currently being set up throughout the country to ease the burden on the legal system, which has to tackle the large number of people accused of complicity in the 1994 genocide who are still in prison. Philbert Kalisa and his team held an initial seminar on unity and reconciliation in December 2002 for these courts. It is planned to repeat the programme in the 12 provinces of Rwanda over a year long period, provided the necessary funds can be raised. Over 800 will be trained in the first year and the programme will run for five years in total.

REACH was Philbert Kalisa's vision, and without his energy and courage it would never have happened. He had the option of staying and working in Europe and in so doing ensuring a secure and prosperous life for his family. Instead, he decided to return to Africa and work alongside the suffering Rwandans. Thanks to his commitment, an organisation was established which works effectively for justice and peace.



Sinani / Durban and Pietermaritzburg , South Africa

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www.survivors.org.za

Account:

KwaZulu-Natal Program for
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Nedbank
Pietermaritzburg
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Account-Number: 13 40 50 49 36
Swift-Code: NEDSZAJJ

Sinani has been committed to the victims and survivors of violence in South Africa for over 10 years. It combines trauma and peace work on the one hand and community development and small projects which generate income on the other, thereby creating new prospects for the lives of those left traumatised. To this end Sinani holds stress and trauma workshops which help young people develop their personality, for instance, through small community projects. Women are another of Sinani's target groups: they receive help to overcome the consequences of violence in their families and to (re)gain dignity and respect in a society marked by ongoing violence.



Siegfried Schröder ("Weltfriedensdienst"[World Peace Service] Berlin) writes:

"SINANI" is the Zulu for "we are with you." And this is the agenda of the organisation which has been there for the victims/survivors of violence for over 10 years. The project was started at the beginning of the nineties in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Following the first democratic elections of 1994, there was a significant decrease in politically motivated violence. However, the traumatic experience of violence remained with a large part of the population. Levels of intra-societal violence in the province are also still extremely high. The violence no longer occurs along political power lines, but rather it takes the form of "acts of revenge" and family feuds. In particular, however, personal experience of violence, humiliation and dehumanisation from the apartheid era and the civil war have led to a substantial increase in domestic violence, child abuse and rape.

It is in this environment that the NGO SINANI/PSV operates with two offices in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The 23 members of staff work in many more than 20 partner communities in townships, informal and semi-rural settlements. SINANI only works at the concrete request of the individual communities. A "community intervention" is intended to reach all three target groups – children, young people and adults.

Every week contacts from the organisation meet up with different groups of men, women and young people who fought as child soldiers or in militias or who have been severely traumatised in other ways as a result of the civil war. Part of this involves talking about their own experience of violence. It is also a question, however, of helping the young people develop their personality, rebuild personal relationships in the community and develop prospects for themselves for instance. In this respect SINANI/PSV has learnt over the years that it is crucial to combine effective trauma work with "income-generating projects" and "community development."

SINANI/PSV also works with groups of ex-combatants, who were integrated back into society following democratisation. Addressing their social plight and simple ways of restoring their dignity (a birthday cake, for example) are successful first steps towards breaking the cycle of violence.

Besides young people, women are SINANI/PSV's primary target group. Many of them, wives and mothers, had to bury their closest relatives during apartheid and civil war. In the "reconciliation gestures" performed ritually by SINANI between two previously hostile communities, it is mostly the women who initiate and make these gestures.

Set against the background of increasing domestic violence, abuse and rape, it is the women's groups supported by SINANI that are now trying to re-establish values such as dignity and respect in the communities, and make public the link between violence against women and HIV/Aids.

To conclude, SINANI/PSV organises an annual "leadership forum", in which "traditional leaders", councillors and community leaders come together for two weeks to discuss democratic and participating community structures.

Region Middle East



Adina Friedman / Arad, Israel

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Adina Friedman has a more than 15 years long commitment within the Arabic-Israeli conflict, both as academic in the USA but also onsite in the Middle East. She works in various cross-border projects in the Middle East covering ecology, refugee work, culture and societal coexistence. In the USA she shows together with Palestine colleagues the possibilities of cooperation and tolerance between the conflict sides in the Middle East.



Adina Friedman writes:

For the past 15 years I have been working relentlessly on issues pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict. I grew up in Israel and in 1987, after completing my compulsory military service, I went to California to study. During this time I met Palestinians for the first time. I was confronted with different narratives about the conflict and was challenged to re-examine my own. Between 1987-1992 in California I was active in bridge-building efforts between Israeli (& Jewish) and Palestinian (& Arab) students on and off campus, while the first Intifada was raging and while talks between Israelis and Palestinians were still “illegal” and unacceptable to most.

Upon returning to Israel in 1992 I engaged in various Palestinian-Israeli endeavours, through NGO work, academia and personal venues. I worked on joint Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian collaborative projects in the fields of environment, refugees, culture, academics and coexistence and acted as an Israeli-Palestinian “liaison” attempting to bridge Israeli and Palestinian people and projects. I have travelled to Egypt and Jordan dozens of times, and have often organized encounters between Palestinians, Jordanians and Israelis.

In 1999-2000 I worked on a joint project concerning Palestinian refugees, which aimed at confronting and familiarizing Israelis and Palestinians with the reality of the “other”. With a Palestinian counterpart I guided groups of Israelis to refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This experience has had a profound impact on the course of my further work and research. The issue of refugees and the Right of Return is at the heart of the conflict and so far still constitutes a major hurdle. I am currently pursuing research on the Right of Return and its meanings to Palestinians and Israelis, in the hope that my findings will enable the two peoples to better “hear” each other. I also hope my work eventually affects policy making on this issue.

Between 1996-2000 I spearheaded, within the Israeli arena, a campaign concerning the illegal confiscation of Palestinian land by a neighboring Jewish settlement. I mobilized Israeli and Palestinian activists, local and international media, and the Israeli High Court on this matter. Such efforts, in which I have often participated, include the joint rebuilding of Palestinian homes demolished by the Israeli military, joint olive harvesting and others.

In August 2000 I came to the US to pursue my PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Unfortunately, soon thereafter the second Palestinian Intifada began, and violence and unrest have been raging in Israel/Palestine ever since. Since September 2000 I have given numerous joint presentations (with Palestinian colleagues) throughout the US on the conflict, trying to raise public awareness to it and to set an example of how a different kind of Israeli-Palestinian relationship is possible.

There are many other committed Palestinians, Israelis and others engaged in peace work, without whom my own continued commitment would be almost impossible. Being an Israeli acting in this context is often a predicament; however, I do my best to practice what I preach and lead by example, in the hope that others will join.

**Erella Shadmi / Maoz Zin ,
Israel**

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Bank code - IDBLILITGLM)
Mekaz Klal Branch (branch no. 159)
Account no. 341673

Erella Shadmi is a committed member of the Israeli women movement. Within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict she particularly raises the economic aspects of that conflict. Erella Shadmi is active in various Israeli women organizations and speaks up against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory for a long time.



Prof.Smadar Lavie, who handed in the proposal, writes:

In both her grassroots activism and academic and public writing, Dr. Shadmi is a fine example of what Antonio Gramsci termed “the organic intellectual” – a pioneer curving the cutting edge of both scholarship and social action. Shadmi received her PhD in Criminology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1989. Her dissertation offered a comprehensive analysis of the manner in which the police controls the public while operating in what we conceive of as free societies. Prior to that she worked for two decades at the Israeli Police Headquarters. She was somewhat forced into early retirement due to her coming out as a lesbian – an unheard of act those days and even today in law enforcement work places. Academic scholarship, thus, is her second career.

Presently, Shadmi is the freshest and most original voice in the fields of Israeli feminist studies and the Sociology of Policing. In particular one can situate her work in the budding scholarship on Whiteness, peace and social responsibility. While this intersectional scholarly analysis of race relation is a recognized field even in ivy league sites of Western feminism, in Israel, such scholarship seriously endangers one’s merit and promotion, given the almost total absence of non-Whites from Israeli academe, and the relative lack of discourse about such phenomena.

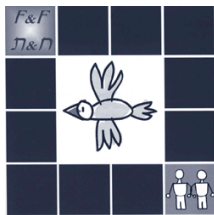
Almost all Israeli women scholars and peace activists are Ashkenazi (= U.S. European Jews) and upper class. The majority of Israeli Jews, however, is Mizrahi (Orientals, pl., heb., i.e., Jews of Asian or African decent), who thus feel excluded from this buddy-system of peace activism. Both Israeli academe and the Israeli peace movement, thus, are almost utterly detached from the Israeli Jewish public. They often use the Palestine conflict as career and grantsmanship tool. In so doing they rely on the silence (perhaps silencing?) of the Mizrahi on intra-Jewish racism, often times due to Mizrahi inability to articulate themselves in English, on the one hand. On the other hand, the Ashkenazi peace camp gets much support from outside Israel.

Shadmi’s present scholarship illuminates the Israeli peace movement’s disjointedness from issues of social-economic justice between European and Arab Jews. In it, she also urges the peace movement to take on the racial burden of its intra-Jewish privilege as agent for intra-Israeli social action.

Shadmi’s impressive record of feminist political action spans over the last two decades. She builds bridges, conjoining issues usually at conflict in the spheres of Israeli activism: the Israel-Palestine peace process; the resistance to intra-Jewish Ashkenazi racism; feminism and law enforcement, and lesbian emancipation.

Shadmi is a founding member of “Kol Halsha” (Woman’s Voice), Jerusalem’s Women’s Center – a refuge for women’s constituencies who usually feud outside it: Israelis and Palestinians, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi, the religious and the secular.

Shadmi has been one of the key figures in demanding the police to reform its policies on violence against women and the traffic in them. She is the most vocal and daring voice providing a critique of policing technologies and methods of oppressing Palestinians. She is also the founder of Women’s Watch, an organization to provide women with alternative security protection services not offered to them by the police, who focuses most of its attention on preventing Palestinian guerrilla activities, rather than on the day-to-day interpersonal security of Israel’s citizenry. Women’s Watch is to begin its inside actions in the near future. This organization is the first of its kind in the world.



Hand in Hand School, Jerusalem

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Account:

Spendenkonto
„Hand in Hand Schule Jerusalem“
Bank für Kirche und Diakonie Duisburg
Konto Nr 10 100 10 027
BLZ 350 601 90

In the "Hand in Hand school" Israeli and Arab children have bilingual classes together. The families of the children are also involved in this integration process. This bilingual lesson approach is a stimulating learning environment for the children themselves and a positive provocation for the surrounding world which is predominantly marked by foe images and segregation models.



Proposer, Kai Seyffarth, writes:

In the “Hand in Hand school” Jewish and Arab children learn together in bilingual classes. In doing so, they are living out a coexistence model, which is the absolute antithesis of the prevailing atmosphere of violence, fear and deep-rooted prejudices.

Schoolchildren, parents and teachers at the “Hand in Hand school” do not stand for big politics, or ideology or protests geared towards the media. They are not against anything at all, they are for something. For the hope that people can, through their own strength and conviction, overturn the borders that have apparently been so irreversibly marked out by politics.

It takes an extraordinary amount of courage to set up this type of cooperative school at a time of ubiquitous violence and overpowering foe images. Even many left-wing Israelis are now campaigning for the extensive segregation of Jewish Israelis and Palestinians. “Hand in Hand” is renouncing this logic.

Jews and Arabs do not come face to face here as abstract enemies, but rather as concrete, sometimes difficult neighbours and classmates. The families are also involved in this “reconciliation” process through the children, with joint excursions, renovation work to the school, parents’ evenings at which the problems encountered in the school are discussed. Many of the Jewish parents have begun to learn Arabic so that they do not fall behind their children.

The fact that Jewish Israelis are (partly) taught in Arabic must be considered a tremendous provocation. But this is the only way of achieving the balance that allows all pupils at the school to become partners. For the Arab children, the Hand in Hand school is a unique opportunity to receive an outstanding, secular education. The Jewish children learn that there is a third way, other than the contempt and neglect of the Arab population and an arrogant patronage: the way of respect. Is there any better way to peace? Peace is not a long-term objective here, it begins on the first day of school. The Hand in Hand school is supported by a small enthusiastic non profit organisation. Both Jewish and Arab founders of the school are deviating from the norms of their environment. They have chosen to do without recognition and making a career for themselves, they are courageously living for their inner convictions.



Ethiopia Project of Soroptimist Union, Israel

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Soroptimist is an international organization for women empowerment. The Israeli section of Soroptimist has supported Jewish immigrants from Ethiopia with their integration in the Israeli society. With a large exhibition, arranged by Soroptimist and shown in many Israeli towns, the attention of the Israeli society was drawn to the Ethiopian culture. In addition to the exhibition there were cultural programs and lectures to improve the local integration of Ethiopians in cities and villages. The whole project has decreased the large social and cultural distance between immigrants and the population in Israel.



The president of Soroptimist Israel, Hava Inbar, writes:

The Ethiopian Jews consider themselves as the descents of King Solomon, and the Queen of Sheba. Many of them lived in remote villages in the north of Ethiopia, and some lived in cities like Gondar and Addis Ababa. Until the 20th century they were isolated with no contacts with Jewish communities in the world, but kept the Jewish religion in their own way. Their dearest dream was to come to Jerusalem. Jerusalem of their dreams was the core of their spiritual existence. Their physical one was of constant deterioration due to their economic situation. When the state of Israel was founded (1948) a Jewish Frenchman scholar has expanded his previous efforts to bring their voice to Israel. In 1975 they were recognized as eligible to come to Israel under the "law of return". A big process of awakening started, to fulfil the urge to come to Jerusalem of their dreams. Whole families, old and young started to walk through the Sudan desert, on unmarked paths, hiding during day light (from fear of robbers and others) and walking at night. They were walking for weeks with very little food and water, and many didn't survive. This has turned to be their central myth of their exodus to Israel. The immigration to Israel started in 1978. The majority of the immigrants arrived in two large operations in 1984 and 1991. The population of the community in Israel now is about 85.000 people. The gap between life in Ethiopia and modern Israel, caused various problems for the community. It requires, as well, tremendous efforts from the people of Israel to overcome many barriers of cultural codes of communication, and the development of methods to ameliorate their integration in Israeli society.

Against that backdrop Soroptimist Israel started with a photo exhibition project in 1999, showing pictures of various persons of the Ethiopian society all over Israel. This exhibition has been presented in many places. The project started in 1999 when Pnina Evental, artist and photographer, and a member of Soroptimist Club of Givatayim, first met new comers, from Ethiopia. As an artist (and photographer) she have found the camera a compatible medium for her purpose, to learn more about the community and its culture. The project took 2 years (1999-2000), and focused on many aspects of the Ethiopian culture and people. The exhibition was first represented when the club of Givatayim hosted a Union gathering for a day of awareness to the Ethiopian community in Israel. It was a very successful event and the Union of Israel decided to make it into a "travelling" exhibition to cultural centers around the country, where our clubs were situated. This has been done with the aim to enhance the awareness of the general public to the culture and problems of integration of the Ethiopians. Every opening in every center was done with the Ethiopian people of the local community, who prepared their foods, their music and dances, and talked about themselves explaining the customs of their culture. The main exhibition took place in Jerusalem and was a significant event. There are continuing interactions between the clubs and the community.



International Women's Peace Service Palestine

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The IWPS documents human rights violations in the Salfit Governorate and protects the population against attacks from the military. It is active in the non-violent resistance against the occupation and destruction of Palestinian territory and supports initiatives for cooperation between the Israeli and Palestine peace movement.



Paula Abrams-Hourani (Women in Black Vienna) who made the proposal writes:

The International Women's Peace Service – Palestine (IWPS) began its work in August 2002. This courageous and remarkable team of 16 women is based in Hares, in the West Bank, and the project is scheduled to continue for three years. The members of the group are trained in non-violent resistance and have several functions:

- Documenting human rights abuses in the Salfit Governorate, which are then forwarded to human rights lawyers and organisations; reports are forwarded to the press and individuals in numerous countries.
- Non-violent intervention in human rights abuses.
- Providing a protective shield for civilians who are suffering under a brutal military occupation.
- Engaging in acts of non-violent civil resistance in order to oppose human rights abuses and the confiscation and destruction of Palestinian land and property.
- Cooperation and actions/initiatives on the scene with the Israeli and Palestinian peace movement.

Within a very short time the IWPS has set up a well-functioning, non-violent peace initiative, which works in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. The IWPS has been very involved with the olive harvest in the Salfit Governorate, necessary for economic survival of Palestinian farmers. In summer 2003, it has taken part in the non-violent protest against the eight-metre high Wall, which is being built wholly on Palestinian land, destroying fertile agricultural Palestinian land, eliminating the only source of income of Palestinian farmers. This is particularly dangerous work as 100 buildings have already been demolished by Israel, with more to come, 31 sources of groundwater, fruit trees, vegetation, etc. In addition, it concerns itself with arrests of Palestinian civilians by the Army or attacks by settlers, trying to aid them to defend themselves by contacting lawyers and human rights groups in Israel.

The well-constructed website gives much needed information about the background of the conflict, the actual situation in the Occupied Territories, arrest reports, etc. and gives the reader ample opportunity to act on or protest via internet about certain situations she or he would have no idea about because these human rights abuses are not reported in mainstream media.

Jerusalem Center for Women

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The JWC is an Palestinian NGO in East-Jerusalem, which is involved for the Israeli-Palestine dialogue. Based on a joint declaration it cooperates with the Israel women center Bat Shalom in West-Jerusalem and arranges training programs for women in the field of democracy building, human rights and societal commitment. In addition it has started special therapy program for women in prisons.



Khalil El-Ghoul (from the staff of JCW) who has handed in the proposal, writes:

The Jerusalem Center for Women (JCW) is a Palestinian non-governmental Women's Center located in East Jerusalem and established on the initiative of a core group of nine Palestinian women activists in March 1994.

While standing against occupation, oppression, war, apartheid, humiliation and poverty, the Center is committed to develop and promote women's vision and politics based on human rights, mutual trust and morality. It envisions women becoming central partners in the peace process, for it believes that their active and equal participation in decision making and negotiations is crucial to the fulfilment of a just and viable peace.

A basic part of JCW's Peace Building program is the Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue. The Center carries out Palestinian-Israeli programs through the coordinating body, the Jerusalem Link, a unique joint effort with Bat Shalom, the Israeli women's center in West-Jerusalem, which was created simultaneously in 1994. An arrangement which was the first time that Palestinian and Israeli women's organizations worked so closely together for a just peace, based on equality, despite the consideration of changing political realities. The Link's basis is the recognition of the right of all peoples in the region to live in dignity and security, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, a Palestinian state based on UN resolutions, alongside Israel and the right of all peoples to choose their legitimate representatives. The center is committed to advancing joint peace work and developing relationships with other Israeli peace groups with whom it shares a vision for peace building, based on the Jerusalem Link principles.

In order to advance women's status and role in the community and empower them to become politically active, the Center has worked to implement several core programs, and provides women from the Jerusalem area with venues for training in democracy, human rights, advocacy and life skills. While foremost for empowerment, those activities are always expanded through programs, that address new challenges, women from different areas face in the changing Palestinian reality.

An example is the work with imprisoned women, JCW started during the time of the Intifada, realizing that there was a strong need for it and the 'Voice Therapy Program' which was implemented, to support and empower women who are experiencing crisis, such as the loss of family members through death or imprisonment, and to help them handle their fears and the aftermath of military brutality, they were confronted with. The target groups are from all backgrounds, from grassroots, as well as women activists, and therefore the Center locates its activities in refugee camps, the city and also in villages, so to reach women as a whole.

About the Threshold Foundation

The task of the foundation is to contribute to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation as a universal Schalom Service (Peace Service). We are a small non-profit foundation with many personal contacts. We trust in small steps, people on location, and in God accompanying us. Till today we see ourselves as part of the universal ecumenical process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation started in the mid 80ies.

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We are a small charity foundation with many personal contacts. We trust in small steps, people on location, and in God accompanying us. We try to provide help in peace work and thus to contribute to the process of peace, justice and the integrity of creation.

The Threshold was founded by Ruth-Christa and Dr. Dirk Heinrichs in 1979. It has a Board and an advisory committee. Board: Reinhard Jung (chairman), Dr. Urban Bulling, Regine Heuer, Wiebke Jung and Kristina Bulling. Staff person: Dr. Burkhard Lubert.

The Threshold is a member of the Diakonisches Werk Bremen and of "Church and Peace" Laufdorf. You can support the work we do by donating, and a certificate will be provided for the amount donated.

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Extract from the articles of the association:

The purpose of the foundation is to recognize the causes and practical assistance to solve destructive conflicts and healing of damages in the One World, especially those caused by science, technology and globalization. Thus the foundation has the purpose to contribute to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation as a universal Schalom Service. (Peace Service)

THE THRESHOLD FOUNDATION

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE WORK

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