Building Peace from the Ground Up:

A Call to the UN for Stronger Collaboration With Civil Society

August, 2002

Conflict **Transformation** WORKING GROUP

Introduction

In 2000, a number of non-governmental organizations that work both at the UN and with partners on the ground in conflict situations formed the Conflict Transformation Working Group (CTWG). The participating groups (see back panel) are challenged to work more effectively with the UN on issues of peace-building and conflict resolution.

Building from the Ground Up: A Call to the UN for Stronger Civil Society Collaboration was motivated by a year of dialogue with UN staff from the DPKO, DPA, UNDP, and OCHA. It provides the UN community with a window on the experiences and contributions of NGOs working in the field and at U.N. Headquarters on peace-building and reconciliation. The Recommendations and brief case studies are a tool, we believe, to deepen discussion between the UN at all levels with NGOs engaged in conflict prevention, conflict transformation and peace-building; and to strengthen collaboration.

We acknowledge with enormous gratitude the work of our consultant, Elisa Levy, a talented researcher and writer, who interviewed participants in the conflict case studies, described and researched them; and patiently worked with the Working Group in formulating the recommendations contained in this report. Without her dedication to this project and her skill at capturing our deliberations, this report would not have seen the light of day. We commend it to your thoughtful reading.

<div align="right">The Conflict Transformation Working Group</div>

<div align="center">Fellowship of Reconciliation ● Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns ● Mennonite Central Committee ●
Quaker UN Office ● Saferworld ● World Conference on Religion and Peace ● World Vision International</div>

FOREWORD

Building peace is a collective effort that involves many and requires specific skills. Its successes benefit not only those directly engaged but others touched by the eventual results, including victims of violent conflicts and their families. How can and do "many" working to prevent violence and transform conflict, who are not necessarily in preeminent political positions, participate in the peace building process?

The members of the Conflict Transformation Working Group illustrate in this report the important contributions of civil society groups and individuals actively involved in peace-building. The case studies contained in the following pages offer concrete examples of ground up, rather than top down peace processes. They tell the stories of communities using their resources, commitment and creativity toward positive change for the benefit of the many affected by violent conflicts.

The UN is an organization of states and in the past has had difficulties relating to groups and agencies which were not an expression of statehood per se. However, since the early 1990's the UN system has come to recognize (and often encourage) the role of non-state actors in preventing armed violence, peacefully resolving conflicts and in post-conflict reconciliation of divided societies. While greater collaboration between state and non-state entities (where difficulties are often due to different structures, goals, and languages) still needs to be fully achieved, it is indeed evident that the UN system and the NGO world seem headed toward greater synergy.

This paper, therefore, with both its community focus and forward-looking recommendations, is a most welcome sign of this trend and points to the need for further exploration. The report is an invitation to both state and non-state actors, international organizations and NGOs to take peace-building more seriously and collaborate further toward its success.

It is not without reasons that the UN Secretary-General's Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict (June 2001), in recommendation 27, speaks of the crucial role of civil society and of NGOs. An International Civil Society Conference on Conflict Prevention is now being conceived as a way to respond to the Secretary-General's invitation to non-state actors to play a more prominent and explicit role in all aspects of peace work. Some of the organizations of the Conflict Transformation Working Group are committed to this initiative at the UN and in specific countries or regions. I am convinced that many others, and the UN system as a whole, will take the opportunity to create a collaborative framework in which peace building is not only possible, but central to the work of the international community.

Dr. Andrea Bartoli
Director, Center for International Conflict Resolution, Columbia University
UN Representative, Community of Sant'Egidio
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I.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In today's world, ravaged by a growing number of small wars, there is an ongoing need for urgent action and new ways of addressing conflict. Civilians have become the most common victims of war, and the number of intra-state conflicts far out-numbers wars between nations.

As conflict changes, so does the role that civil society can and must play in the process of peace-building. Wars fought within the confines of national boundaries leave no person untouched. Communities, families and individuals are forever changed. The process of healing and reconciliation requires collaboration between the UN, governments and civil society. Together they can address the complex array of social, political and economic factors that lead to conflict, and help rebuild the human relationships and communities on which the foundations of peace depend.

It is in this spirit of recognition for new direction and collaboration that the Conflict Transformation Working Group (CTWG) formed. The group, comprised of seven international NGOs, came together to identify ways to ensure that civil society members are actively included in the continuum of conflict from prevention to resolution.

Through this paper the CTWG aims to achieve two goals: 1) To emphasize to the UN the unique role of civil society in multi-track diplomacy; and, 2) to provide concrete recommendations for opportunities for the UN to collaborate with civil society in the process of peace-building.

The first section of the paper draws upon the experiences of civil society efforts in Sudan, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Angola, South Africa, Kenya, and Israel/Palestine. These seven case studies tell the stories of efforts on the ground that bring communties together in innovative ways to rebuild society. Though the organization's efforts were not large-scale their acheivements were anything but small. They negotiated the release of child soldiers; they met with rebel groups that refused to meet with the government; they pioneered inter-ethnic councils to work towards peace; and they were invited as key members to high-level peace negotiations. As diverse as the countries and projects are, the initiatives share one common factor: They highlight the necessary contribution of civil society actors.

The second section of the paper is divided into three areas: 1) The comparative advantage of civil society efforts through common strategies from the case studies; 2) recommendations to the UN based on the case studies; and, 3) additional recommendations from the Conflict Transformation Working Group. The highlights of the recommendations section are as follows:

I. The Comparative Advantages of Civil Society Efforts: Lessons from the Case Studies
In many of the case studies, the role of **faith-based efforts** and their inside perspective gave civil society organizations a non-partisan status, affording them **trust** among communities and enabling them to **access** people and places that the UN cannot normally reach. As locally based groups, their **longevity** at the ground level enabled civil society organizations to grow and take on new roles in the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building.

In most of the cases, civil society organizations' **low profile** enabled them to circumvent mass media attention that can thwart a fragile peace process; and their emphasis on the **voices of women** afforded them a strategic advantage, speaking to rebels as "mothers" to ensure that peace could be sustained through future generations. **International NGOs with a presence at the ground and UN levels** contributed technical support to civil society actors in order to help them achieve their goals.

II. Recommendations to the UN based on the Case Studies
1. Work with international NGOs based at UN Headquarters to facilitate the participation of civil society in open sessions of the Security Council and at other UN fora
The input of civil society at Security Council special sessions and at other UN meetings can provide delegates with a deeper understanding of the conflict and its impact on people in their daily lives. The case study from Angola illustrated the way in which the voices of civil society could breathe life into stale debates on conflict, and provide the impetus necessary to help the Council move forward.

2. Coordinate ongoing informational exchanges between civil society actors and UN missions in the field
Equally important as integrating a civil society perpsective at the UN headquarters level is the need to build and maintain opportunities for consistent and ongoing informational exchanges at the field level. In the cases of Kosovo and Sierra Leone, civil society organizations linked with international organizations such as the OSCE and the UN, creating an active working relationship.

3. Provide civil society with the opportunities they need to organize
It is necessary for civil society groups to establish autonomy and have the space and resources they need to develop relationships, and work towards peace. In the cases of Kosovo and Sierra Leone, civil society organizations were assisted by the UN through the provision of neutral space where representatives of opposing groups could meet.

III. Additional Recommendations to the United Nations from the CTWG
1. Incorporate a civil society perspective prior to and during Security Council missions to areas of conflict
Security Council mission members can call upon international NGOs as a normal part of their procedure to provide contacts and help facilitate meetings with civil society actors at UN headquarters and at the field level.

2. Conduct annual consultations between the Security Council 'Leads' and civil society
The Arria Formula meetings are often adhoc, leading to a lack of coordination between civil society and the Security Council. Ambassadors who are 'leads' specific for crisis countries could usefully organize annual consultations between the Security Council, NGOs, and civil society organizations.

3. Integrate a civil society perspective into UN agencies in the field
UN agencies at the ground level are often faced with the challenge of identifying civil society organizations as liasions while maintaining their non-partisan status. International NGOs who have partnerships with civil society organizations can facilitate ongoing meetings to coordinate informational exchanges.

4. Create an inter-agency mechanism on conflict prevention within the UN system that provides opportunities for dialogue with international NGOs
The creation of an inter-agency mechanism on conflict prevention at UN headquarters could foster better coordination and cooperation between UN agencies responding to conflict. They could work together with international NGOs to ensure that a civil society perspective is included in their collective efforts.

5. Increase resources for peace-building
The growing number of conflicts around the world calls for an increase in resources dedicated to conflict resolution and peace-building as well as the wide array of socio-economic, political and environmental factors that trigger and perpetuate war.

6. Establish a long-term presence in the proess of peace-building
The transient nature of many UN peacekeeping operations leads to an adversarial relationship between civil society and the UN. The UN could remedy this situation by mimizing staff rotation, and creating a more coherent transition between peacekeeping and peace-building efforts.

II. CASE STUDIES

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
People for Peace in Africa

> *The People for Peace in Africa facilitated and observed peace talks between two rebel groups in the south of Sudan in 1991 and in 1992. The negotiations resulted in the release of 30 prisoners and a temporary cease-fire between the two warring groups.*

The Power of Goodness

The situation seemed anything but hopeful. After months of negotiations between the two southern warring groups, the Torit faction agreed to free 30 political prisoners. The Reverend Carroll Houle, a representative of MaryKnoll Office for Global Concerns and the founder of a civil society peacekeeping effort called the People for Peace in Africa, (PPA), waited anxiously with the prisoners for their release.

As time passed the prisoners became doubtful. Even Houle, a source of support for the men, began to lose confidence. It took but a moment, however, for him to regain it. After several days, one of the prisoner's wives arrived in the region with a five-year old boy. The child's father had been imprisoned since before the boy's birth, and they met for the first time that day. Remembering the moment of the familiy's reunification, Houle writes, "The child's innocent presence reminded me that the power of goodness will eventually win out, and I had a sense of peace the rest of my time there."

It was that belief in the power of goodness that had in fact spurred the negotiations for the prisoners' release in the first place. The People for Peace in Africa, an ad-hoc, multi-religious group of six expatriates and Africans was formed in 1989 to address the common need among African countries for peace. Together with other religious leaders, the group facilitated and observed peace talks between two rebel factions in the south of Sudan in 1991 and 1992. The peace talks were held in Nairobi and sponsored by the Kenyan government. They resulted in the release of hostages and a temporary cease-fire between the two southern Sudanese factions.

A Divided South in A Divided Country
The conflict beween the north and south of Sudan began again in 1983 after the eleven year Addis Ababa accords ended. The north opposed the agreement and over time the situation escalated, leading to an attack on the south. Many southerners fled to neighboring Ethiopia where they formed a retaliatory movement, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, (SPLA). After eight years the SPLA began to fall apart. Infighting among its members lead to the group's demise, leaving two southern factions (the Torits and the Nasirs) at constant odds. Throughout the conflict, the north continued to wage war on the south, leaving two million people dead and five million displaced.

Despite the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, (IGAD), peace process comprised of Kenya, Egypt, Ethiopia and Uganda, which began in 1993, international efforts to quell the violence have not yet been successful. The United Nations has supported IGAD. While Operation Lifeline Sudan, (OLS), takes the lead in relief assistance to Sudan, providing $125.6 million in aid from eight UN agencies, it has not played a major part in the peacemaking process.

The Peace Talks in 1991 and 1992
The PPA's role in the SPLA negotiations began in 1991 at the request of Bethuel Kiplegat, the former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The diplomat was concerned that an effort on his part to reconcile rebel groups would be viewed by the Sudanese government as a threat, so he called upon

the PPA for help. In addition to their neutral role as religous leaders, the PPA members were aided by something most international organizations neither have nor desire — a low profile. "Because we were a small unknown group we would get little publicity," explains Houle, "Thus the Kenyan government, (the sponsors of the peace talks), would get little objection from the Sudanese government."

Over several months PPA members met with the factions separately to establish an agenda for the 1991 meeting. At first it seemed that the agenda was the only thing the delegations could agree upon. Through tumultuous debates riddled with threats to walk out, the 1991 negotiations proceeded and the participants endured. When the process came to a dead end, PPA members intervened, reminding the delegates of their purpose and the urgency of their situation. In the end their work paid off with a temporary cease-fire and the agreement to release hostages under Torit control. The agreements were as tenuous as the process, and the cease-fire lasted only several months.

The hostages were released just before the second negotiations in 1992. While the PPA members were hopeful for further success, the political situation had changed making the negotiations increasingly complex. By 1992 Kiplegat had left his position, and the Kenyan government seemed less eager to support the peace talks. These changes, compounded by accusations between the southern factions that each were secretly collaborating with the north, led to less fruitful results than the 1991 meeting. Nevertheless, the foundations for peace between the southern factions were laid. Even now, a decade later, the foundations remain intact. As one of the PPA members, Fredericka Jacob, reports, "The PPA is 100% African, and is still going strong."

Lessons Learned: Building Capacity

> *The PPA's low profile enabled them to facilitate negotiations quietly without media or government involvement. Their moral authority as religious leaders gave them a neutral status among warring factions.*

- **Trust Over Time:** The PPA's presence in the region since 1989 earned them credibility among the government and warring factions. Established as an African based group, they were seen as neutral, yet not as outsiders. The warring factions could trust that the PPA would provide ongoing assistance.
- **A Voice of Religious and Moral Authority:** When the voice of reason failed during heated debates in the negotiations, the PPA members relied on a different approach - reminding delegation members through impromptu prayer that they had a moral obligation to the people of Sudan to find a solution.
- **Local Action, Local Change:** Though the peace negotiations took place at the informal request of a government official, the process, right down to the agenda, was self-determined by the delegations. This approach was crucial to their success since, as Houle notes, "they are the ones who will have to do the healing of individuals and between communities, and they will be crucial to making sure there are resources for building their lives again."
- **International Pressure to Negotiate:** While a low profile was to the PPA's advantage in the peace process, there was and remains a need for the strong voice of the UN and goverments, urging the peace process forward. Crisis intervention through humanitarian aid could be never-ending in Sudan without a concerted and outspoken effort to engage in negotiations.

World Conference on Religion and Peace
Inter-religious Council of Sierra Leone

The Inter-religious Council of Sierra Leone has been a conduit in the peace process between civil society, the government and the RUF since their formation in 1997. They negotiated the release of 50 abducted children, participated in the Lome Peace Talks, and supported the advancement of a similar council in Liberia, and the development of a new council in neighboring Guinea.

A Mother's Call for Peace

As the car approached the rebel camp, Simanatu Kassim began to panic. She was the only woman in the group of religious leaders visiting the camp for the first time, and she was gripped suddenly by the reality of her own vulnerability. "I didn't want to move or get out of the car," she explained. The young rebels, with guns in hand, approached the car and took a good look inside. One of them stepped forward from the group and said, "Don't be afraid Madam. You can come out of the car. We are your children." To prove that she was safe, the boy took off his helmet and laid down his gun.

Kassim, together with her colleagues from the Inter-religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL) spent the rest of the day trying to persuade the rebels to release a group of children that had been abducted months earlier. "I asked the rebels as a mother to let those children go home," she said. The young men heard the message, and at the end of the day had but one request: "They asked us to pray for them," she said. Soon after that meeting the rebels released 50 abducted children.

The day at the camp was followed by continuous negotiations, creating a unique role for the IRCSL as a neutral group that could maneuver between government, rebels and civil society in the process towards achieving peace. The IRCSL came together in 1997 with the help of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP). Comprised of Muslim and Christian leaders in Sierra Leone the Council has become an important voice throughout the country. In 1999 they were invited to the Lome Peace Talks, and their contribution to the peace process, according to the President of Sierra Leone, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, has been "immeasurable."

A Brutal Past

The conflict in Sierra Leone began in 1991 when fighters from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched a war from the eastern region of the country, overthrowing the government. Almost five years passed before elections were held, bringing Kabbah to power. Despite a tenuous peace accord, the RUF would not relent. In 1997, together with the army, they formed a junta, sending Kabbah into exile in Guinea.

In addition to attacking the government, the junta waged war against civil society. They ravaged villages, recruited child soldiers, and mutilated or murdered all those suspected of disloyalty to the regime. In a desperate attempt to quell the violence, ECOMOG intervened in 1998, collapsing the junta and reinstating Kabbah to power. Still, the junta pressed forward, and in 1999 they invaded the country's capital, Freetown.

That same year negotiations resumed, leading to the Lome Peace Agreement. Since then, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) has increased its capacity to 17,500 military personnel – one of the largest UN peacekeeping forces in the world. In the recent election, held on May 14, 2002, Kabbah and his party won the overwhelming majority of the vote.

A Resource to All Sides of the Conflict

When the IRCSL formed, they had what seemed an impossible task at hand: To build bridges between civil society, rebels and the government. Their role as religious leaders gave them a moral authority and neutrality that the UN and other peacekeeping institutions did not possess. "The religious leaders did not take sides," explains Shellac Sonny Davies, the Assistant Project Director in Sierra Leone. "The IRCSL

could speak openly with the government and rebel leaders, and bring the voice of the people into the process."

The Council began by initiating meetings with Kabbah, and receiving his support to meet with rebel groups. They sensitized civil society members by organizing meetings with groups of journalists, NGOs and other religious leaders, explaining their goals. In the months that followed the Peace Talks, the Council's credibility was truly put to test. To persuade the rebels to adhere to the accords, IRCSL delivered food and medicine to the groups as a gesture of good will.

While the Council met with the rebels, they also worked continuously with civil society members by visiting villages and talking to people to ensure that civil society's voices were heard in the negotiations. In 2000, the IRCSL created provincial councils in the southern and eastern regions of Sierra Leone. Through these councils, and consistent contact with villages throughout the country, the IRCSL developed a strong reputation as peacekeepers in Sierra Leone. According to former U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Joseph Melrose, "the IRCSL is the best network of any group in this country."

Since 2000, the role of the IRCSL has shifted to include long-term development efforts. They have formalized the group, becoming an autonomous institution with an internal structure delineating roles and responsibilities. Their leadership has been contagious. Now, with similar IRCs in Guinea and Liberia, WCRP is in the process of establishing a sub-regional program in the Mano River Basin to join the three countries on the path to peace.

Lessons Learned: Finding Ways to Walk a Tight Rope

The IRCSL maintained a neutral status throughout the peace negotiations. They managed to establish ties with both rebel groups and civil society without becoming the adversary of either side. Their status as religious leaders gave them credibility and trust in a country deeply devoted to religion.

- **Unity between Christian and Muslim Leaders:** Crucial to the IRCSL's success was their makeup of different religious faiths. "By unifying, we could not be corrupted by the government or the rebels," explains one of the members. "When the leaders unite, the people unite behind them." Through religious unity, the IRCSL members set an example to the rebels and the government that despite different beliefs, cooperation is possible.
- **Reaching Out to the Rebels:** Arranging private meetings with rebels and providing them with food and medicine could have been dangerous for IRCSL members. These gestures, however, won them support and trust among rebel groups and enabled them to negotiate the release of child soldiers, and participate in the Lome Peace Talks.
- **A Religious Call for Peace:** In a country where religion and prayer play an important role in many people's lives, religious leaders earned the respect of rebels, civil society members and the government alike. The council members incorporated prayer into their negotiations, emphasizing the moral imperative to work towards peace.
- **A Replicable Model for the Sub-region:** Through their own achievements, the IRCSL was able to share practices and lessons learned with their colleagues in Guinea and Liberia. This positive regional cooperation led to the establishment of an Inter-religious Coordinating Committee for the Mano River Union that addresses regional human rights issues affecting Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

World Vision International
Community Council for Peace and Tolerance in Kosovo

The Community Council for Peace and Tolerance was formed to promote inter-ethnic and inter-religious peace in the region of Mitrovica. Comprised of 19 leaders from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, the council is a first-time effort to promote civil society participation in the peacemaking process.

Crossing Boundaries for Peace

Mother Makaria would be the first to admit that over the past couple of years much had changed. The city of Mitrovica remained the same – torn between Christian Serbs in the north and Muslim Albanians in the south. She, however, was different. She saw that in a neighboring Albanian village there were people lacking some of the most basic necessities; and she decided to help. Mother Markaria walked from house to house through the village with clothing and shoes for Muslim families.

In Mitrovica, her own people were in awe. As a spokeswoman for the Christian Serbs, Mother Makaria had taken the hard line for many years. Yet, through her work with the Community Council for Peace and Tolerance, (CCPT), she began to take a new approach. "I observed a transformation in her," explains Rudy Scholaert, Site Manager for World Vision International, (WVI), in Kosovo.

Mother Makaria's gesture was one of many steps towards peace. She was a member of the CCPT, formed in 2000 with the help of WVI. The Council represents six ethnic groups and three religious affiliations. Their purpose is to create a civil-society effort to promote peace. After several years of negotiations and conflict resolution training, the CCPT has emerged as a locally based think-tank working with community members and international organizations to curb the violence and create a safe space for Albanians and Serbs to live. The work is risky, but to CCPT members there is no other choice but peace. "We need to commit ourselves today for a brighter future," says one member. "Otherwise the history books will blame us for our inaction."

A Region Fractured by War
The end of the 1999 NATO bombings in Kosovo brought no recompense to the region. Kosovo remained volatile, steeped in economic and social crisis. Mitrovica, located in northern Kosovo was the epitome of the problem. Split in two by the Ibar River, Mitrovica was divided into the Serbian north and Albanian south. The tenuous division, held in place by the NATO Kosovo Force, (KFOR), has caused relentless fighting between Serbs and Albanians. The de facto border enforces ethnic and religious separation.

The international community has initiated efforts to rebuild the shattered region. In 1999, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) began the process of rebuilding peace, democracy and self-government. UNMIK brought together UNHCR, the OSCE and the EU to create a uniform strategy for peace-building. The process has been thwarted by failed attempts to negotiate, preventing more than 7,000 displaced Albanians from returning safely to their homes in the north.

In February 2000, the violence re-ignited with Albanian attacks on a Serbian bus and a café. In retaliation, Serb extremists killed eight Albanians and went door-to-door expelling the last of the Albanians still living in the north. In April 2002, a group of Serbs attacked KFOR soldiers, heightening the tensions and leaving the region with little hope for reconciliation in the near future.

The Community Council for Peace and Tolerance
After a long year of meeting separately with religious leaders in Mitrovica, WVI offered the group an opportunity to come together. Insecurity in the region made the logistics complex, but the purpose was clear. "It seemed obvious that much of the work being done to help Mitrovica was treating the symptoms," says Scholaert. "We needed to get to the roots."

On November 11, 1999, WVI hosted the first Inter-religious meeting in Mitrovica. The event was the first of its kind in the region. "They were willing to communicate with the other side when no one else would," explains Matthew Scott, Policy Advisor on Emergencies and Conflict for WVI. As a result of the meeting, the group agreed to allow visits to key religious sites that had been closed off during the conflict. WVI followed up with sub-group meetings, often held behind closed doors with the help of KFOR, the OSCE and other international organizations to protect the safety of CCPT members. In February 2001, the group of 13 met again, and officially claimed themselves the Community Council for Peace and Tolerance.

The Council members agreed to a Joint Declaration that they issued to international authorities and local administrators. At that same meeting, the members of the CCPT took ownership of their group by electing three chairpersons an Albanian, a Serb, and a Bosniac who represented other minorities. The next step was a strategic planning workshop in Caux, Switzerland, facilitated by WVI, to prepare the Council to take on a public role in 2002.

Since their formation, the CCPT has built a strong reputation in Mitrovica. Members, now totaling 19, have reached out to the community. The Council made a collective visit to a local school in Mitrovica, and organized a gift exchange between Serbian and Albanian school children. Through mutli-ethnic civic education seminars, good governance conferences, and a peace park in the making, the CCPT plans to press forward on their path to peace in Mitrovica. Other international organizations have recognized the contribution of the CCPT, acknowledging its importance throughout Mitrovica and beyond. Carolyn McCool, Director of Democratization for the OSCE, notes, "The Community Council for Peace and Tolerance program is significant not for Mitrovica alone, but for Kosovo as a whole…World Vision should be commended for its initiative and ongoing efforts."

Lessons Learned: Creating a Unified Effort

> *The CCPT's connection with international organizations provided them with the protection, support and skills necessary to come together as a group. Their role as leaders in Mitrovica has earned them the community's trust and respect.*

- **The Role of Religion:** As an organization rooted in religious convictions, WVI earned the trust of religious leaders in Mitrovica. WVI's faith-based focus provided a moral authority and neutrality that enabled them to work with a variety of ethnic and religious groups. Similarly, the religious leaders in Mitrovica used their affiliations to mobilize their own religious and ethnic groups in support of the cause.
- **No Organization is an Island:** Strong partnerships with NATO, OSCE, KFOR, and UNMIK were crucial to the success of the CCPT. Through logistical support and security international organizations gave the CCPT the space and maneuverability to meet and work together.
- **Creating a Space for Civil Society:** In a post-communist society the concept of civil society participation was new to Mitrovica. At first, civil society members expected the CCPT to take on a political role. The Council members were aware of these expectations, but convinced community members throughout the process that they held an a-political stance. Helping the CCPT establish their own understanding of this role, and creating the time and space to develop a new concept of civil society participation has been key to their success.
- **Long-Term Commitment:** WVI staff members' ongoing presence in the field gave them the trust and credibility they needed to work with the CCPT. The rebuilding of broken relationships and communities takes time, and WVI staff allowed CCPT members to progress at a pace that was comfortable for them and that enabled them to create a strong bond as a group.

Quaker International Affairs Work
Civil Society Participation in Angola

In 1998, the American Friends Service Committee appointed Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga the Quaker International Affairs Representative in Southern Africa. In the four years that followed, Ntoni-Nzinga helped organize inter-religious and civil society peacekeeping groups, and worked with the Quaker United Nations Office, (QUNO), lobbying the UN to support an end to the war in Angola.

Human Based Security
Amid the stadium filled with thousands of faces, the well-known Baptist Minister and keynote speaker, Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga felt a mix of emotions. "It was very exciting," he says. "Never before had so many people gathered in Luanda to openly promote peace." At the same time, he admits, he felt overwhelmed. "After 27 years of fighting, people of different religions were finally joining together. We all knew there was a great challenge ahead of us."

According to Ntoni-Nzinga, from the march came an important starting point for civil society in Angola's peace process. "We agreed that from now on we will begin to work on what unites us instead of what divides us," he explained. "Everyone there understood that we are all Angolans, and that although we represent different religions, we all believe in God. That was our place to begin."

The peace march was one of many initiatives in which Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga, the Quaker International Affairs Representative, (QIAR), for southern Africa, played a central role. The American Friends Service Committee, (AFSC), appointed Ntoni-Nzinga in 1998. He has since been building bridges between religious groups, civil society, political institutions, womens' groups, and international organizations to create what he calls "human-based" as opposed to a military-based security in Angola. His work led to the creation of an ecumenical group, the Inter-Ecclesiastic Committee for Peace in Angola, (COIEPA), and to the Peace Network, a group of 50 religious and civic organizations joined by their commitment to peace in Angola. He has worked actively with QUNO to bring voices of Angolan civil society to the international policy arena, especially at the UN.

Three Decades of War
Despite its role as a growing oil producer, Angola is one of the poorest countries in the world, with life expectancy among the lowest in the Africa. The economic and social crisis is the mark of almost 30 years of civil war. When Angola won its independence from Portugal in 1975, the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and the rebel group UNITA became bitter rivals.

Over the years there have been several failed attempts at peace, including the Lusaka Peace Accords in 1994. The fighting reached such a state of danger in 1999 that UN peacekeepers were forced to withdraw from the country. That same year the Security Council established a UN office in Angola, (UNOA), and imposed sanctions on UNITA. Many Angolans oppose the sanctions, as they have only been partially successful in preventing the proliferation of small arms.

In April 2002, Angola turned a corner. The death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi, was followed by a cease-fire in which both sides agreed to abide by the commitments established under the 1994 peace accord. The UN has been an observer in the cease-fire, and in the coming months will take over the chairmanship of the Joint Military Commission. Among current concerns is destabilization of peace efforts as Angola struggles to provide food and shelter to more than 350,000 UNITA rebels and internally displaced families. Despite these concerns, the peace agreement is a long-awaited sign of hope to a nation exhausted by Africa's longest civil war.

Building Bridges Between Government, Civil Society and the International Community
By the time he took on the role of QIAR in 1998, Ntoni-Nzinga knew the region, and more importantly, the region knew him. Several months after he began his work as QIAR, Ntoni-Nzinga joined with two

other ecumenical organizations to establish a coalition of churches called COIEPA. The group aimed to guide the church's contribution to the peace process in Angola, and to call government, civil society and the international community to collective action. "We engaged in a debate that brought us to where we are today," explains Ntoni-Nzinga. "All we needed was to start the connection and to enable people to come together. We needed most of all to create that space."

Early on in their work, COIEPA produced a Peace Manifesto that they submitted to the government of Angola. In the years that followed they have focused on national and international diplomacy and capacity building for local activists. The group has become an integral part of the peace process, receiving invitations on a weekly basis from national organizations and the UN to participate in high-level meetings.

In 2001, Ntoni-Nzinga and his fellow COIEPA members initiated The Peace Network, a group of 50 civic, religious, and womens' organizations. The Peace Network marked the beginning of a new phase in the development of social movements and solidarity in Angola. Members uniformly agreed to campaign for a bilateral cease-fire, and worked alongside COIEPA to achieve this goal.

Ntoni-Nzinga has not been content to work solely inside Angola. In January 2000, he was part of a delegation, facilitated by QUNO that traveled to New York, timing their trip to coincide with the Security Council's open meeting on Angola. The delegation used the opportunity to deliver a written statement to U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The delegations' words resonated with the Security Council, and reached the U.S. public after Ntoni-Nzinga was featured in an article in *The New York Times.*

The current cease-fire in Angola creates a new challenge for COIEPA and the Peace Network. Although some people feel it is daunting, Ntoni-Nzinga believes it is "a long-awaited opportunity." He says that the new path for Angola should focus on healing by joining civil society, government and the international community, and through continuous dialogue. "To begin again we now have to deal with the trauma – both of victims and of perpetrators," he says.

Lessons Learned: A Multi-Sector Effort for Peace

> *Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga and his colleagues were intent on bringing civil society, government and the international community to the peace table. Ntoni-Nzinga called upon his contacts and used strategic planning to bring all parties together.*

- **A Collective Call to Action:** Though Ntoni-Nzinga may have been a catalyst in the peace process, he did not act alone. From the outset, his priority was to bring together people from different sectors and religions, including women, in the attempt to promote a cease-fire. The power of the peace march exemplified the synergy created by joining civil society, government and international organizations.
- **Reaching Beyond National Borders for Peace:** While the Angolan delegation was not invited to the Security Council's meeting on Angola, their presence at the open session was welcomed by Council Members. Ntoni-Nzinga and his colleagues recognized the opportunity to influence high-level officials in the international community, and were tenacious about being involved. He said, "If the UN is having a debate on resolving the conflict in Angola, Angolan civil society needs to be a part of it."
- **A Long-Term, Multilateral Presence:** QUNO was in a key role to build bridges between the macro and micro levels. Established 50 years ago, QUNO has created a strong reputation in the field and at UN headquarters. As a result of their long-term presence, both civil society and the UN view them as a credible partner.
- **The Role of Women in Achieving Peace:** Women should not be left out of the peace process. They can be valuable actors who bring a strong human quality and understanding of conflict and the suffering it causes. Ntoni-Nzinga made a concerted effort to ensure that women's voices were a part of the peace march, COIEPA, the delegation to New York, and the Peace Network.

Mennonite Central Committee
Peace Committees in the Majola Region of South Africa

> *Over a four-month period the Mennonite Central Committee organized three meetings for community members in Majola. As a result, the community created 32 Peace Committees responsible for conflict prevention in the region.*

From Trauma to Peace

When the headman stood up and began his litany of accusations and complaints, the crowd of more than 40 people from different villages in the conflicted region of Majola did something they normally don't do – they listened. The gathering was one of three consecutive initiatives organized by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to bring together communities from one of South Africa's most troubled areas. The idea was to help them take the first steps in more than 30 years towards peace.

"The situation was very tense," explains Carl Stauffer, MCC Coordinator for the Southern African Region. "The fact that people even showed up for a meeting was a step forward." In addition to showing up, community members at the meeting agreed to listen to each other's stories without interruption or contradiction. The task seemed almost impossible after all the rage, theft and acts of violence that had come between them.

The headman, like all of his fellow community members, had suffered tremendous personal trauma, and finally found the chance to release it. He spoke for what seemed like hours, and stormed out in a fury, leaving even the MCC facilitators wondering whether their efforts would work. While his speech may have offended those who listened, something in his own words moved him to action. Before MCC had even returned for their third meeting in Majola in July 2001, the staff learned that the headman had created a Peace Committee in his own village. The Committee's primary role was to stop conflict before it starts.

By the third meeting MCC organized in Majola in August 2001, the Peace Committee established by the headman was one of 32 throughout the region. Each Committee is comprised of five men, women and youth elected by their fellow community members. One or two of them from each Committee has received MCC's conflict resolution training. Since their creation, the Committees have acted as a sounding board for disgruntled community members and a resource for mediation between villages.

A Region Marred by Conflict

Since South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the country has been on the path to socio-economic improvement and a political system that promotes accountability and transparency. Nevertheless, South Africa remains plagued with internal strife over resources, land rights and tribal disputes. Nowhere are the remnants of these age-old struggles more prevalent than in the Majola region.

Located in the Eastern Cape, Majola has experienced conflict as a result of cattle grazing rights established in the late 19th century. In the past several decades the violence has spun out of control, sparked by the killing of a respected chief in the 1960's. In 1998 a brutal attack left 16 dead and many more homeless. The most recent tragedy, leaving Majola community members in despair, was the random murder of two teenage girls while on their way to school one morning in January 2001.

While Majola is well known for its high rate of violent crimes, it has not received a great deal of attention from the international development community. Few multilateral organizations have intervened, leaving the region with one of the South Africa's highest poverty levels, and few prospects for immediate change.

Conflict Prevention through Peace Committees

When the team from MCC arrived in Majola they were in for a surprise. They had worked for many years in the region with the Eastern Cape Provincial Council of Churches (ECPCC), and knew the area well. The ECPCC had agreed to act as MCC's principal local partner to coordinate the project. Still, the people

of Majola were distrustful, having witnessed organizations sweep through their villages, asking questions, and never to be seen again. They had lost faith in "outsiders." Observing the sense of mistrust among the Majola community members, the MCC decided to abandon their original plans for the meeting and put the process where it belonged – in the hands of the people. "When we asked them what they needed they told us that first of all they wanted a commitment that we would come back," explained Stauffer. "We understood, and set a date for our return. The meeting proceeded from there."

During the first session, community members were encouraged to focus on healing trauma. A great deal of time was dedicated to sharing stories and feelings – a process that was both painful and cathartic. By the end of the meeting the community decided that in order to put the process towards peace to work they needed to take action. Together they devised a plan for setting up Peace Committees and elected their first group of members. MCC encouraged diverse representation on the Committees, stressing the importance of women's participation. "Majola is largely patriarchal," said Stauffer. "The women's perspectives gave the process a more openly humane element."

Approximately one month later, MCC returned to Majola to find several of the Committees up and running. The team worked with Committee members to identify their needs and priorities, and find ways to share resources. The grand finale of the meeting was an all night prayer vigil for the community. The vigil was poignant as it had been years since people felt safe to go out at night. They gathered together and prayed throughout the night, turning back to their respective homes at dawn.

The third and final meeting took place later that summer, when the Peace Committees had spread throughout almost every village in Majola. The purpose was to provide Peace Committee members with skills in four areas including: 1) conflict resolution, 2) restorative justice, 3) mediation and 4) trauma healing. The Committees returned to their villages with a mandate that they had given themselves: To stop violence from happening. They created a system through which Committee members would inform their headsman of a potential conflict with another village. The headsmen of the two villages would then meet with the Committees to devise a solution that would prevent the conflict from igniting. Since 2001 the Peace Committees have spread their wings, expanding their mission and engaging in NGO development efforts to improve economic and health conditions in Majola.

Lessons Learned: Time for Healing

> *MCC's focus on trauma gave community members an opportunity to begin the process of healing, and to form personal, individual commitments to peace.*

- **An Ongoing Presence:** MCC had ties to Majola through the ECPCC prior to their visit, and were able to commit specifically to follow up after the first meeting. This ongoing presence helped them gain credibility with the community. Their ability to commit to a particular return date ensured the community that they were planning to follow through with their promises.
- **Best Laid Plans:** MCC's greatest advantage was that their plans were flexible, and could fit the needs of the community. They were able to abandon their own agenda to best suit the needs of participants. They were also able to take the time necessary to allow for community members to speak and to be heard by others.
- **Trauma Healing:** While telling the stories took up a great deal of time and energy it was the pinnacle of the project's success. The chance for people to share their testimony gave them a sense of restitution and enabled them to buy into the process of peace. "Many big peacekeeping organizations don't deal with trauma healing," explained Stauffer. In our work we absolutely cannot leave that out."

Saferworld
An Action-Based Research Study:
Violent Conflict Among Pastoralists in the Laikipia Region in Kenya

> *Saferworld, together with The Africa Peace Forum, commissioned a study on pastoral conflict in the Laikipia Region. They used their findings to make recommendations to the European Union and to organize policy forums that call government, international organizations and civil society to action.*

An Inside Perspective

When the team of researchers entered the remote region of Laikipia in Kenya they were not worried about who would accept them or if anyone would be willing to talk. They had no translators, and they were not concerned over where they would sleep. The researchers were, in fact, from Laikipia, and knew the problems that plagued pastoralists all too well. Their challenge was to analyze the conflict and present the information in a way that would inspire people from the outside to take action.

With the help of Saferworld, a British think-tank, the Africa Peace Forum began the project, and identified a researcher from Laikipia to lead the study. In October 2000, he and his team launched a report that highlights policy recommendations at the national and international levels. Their findings can be applied to countries throughout the Horn of Africa. "We believe that research which comes from people who truly know the problem makes an impact on policy makers," explains Josephine Odera, the Deputy Executive Director of the Africa Peace Forum.

Over the past two years the impact of the research has become clear. The ICRC, the EU and USAID have contaced Odera and her colleagues to meet and discuss how they could help quell the violence in the Laikipia region. With the support of Saferworld, the Africa Peace Forum is establishing a steering committee that joins Kenyan government officials and local NGO representatives to take action in Laikipia and in other pastoral communities.

Conflict in Pastoral Communities
The Horn of Africa contains the largest grouping of pastoralists in the world. In Kenya, semi arid and arid land constitute 80 percent of the country's total area, supporting 25 percent of the country's population and half of its livestock. As a nomadic people, pastoralists are dependent on their ability to access natural resources.

The causes for violent conflict among pastoralists run the gamut – from economic to political and environmental problems. In recent years the scarcity of water has heightened the competition for resources between pastoral groups. While cattle rustling dates back for centuries, the availability of small arms makes the consequences severe, even deadly.

The Laikipia region in Kenya is a case in point. One of 17 districts in the Rift Valley, Laikipia is characterized by rapid population growth and periodic drought. Pastoralists in this multi-ethnic, tribal district share resources with ranchers, farmers and horticulturalists. Over the last 40 years, foreign settlers and local investors have moved into the area, buying tracts of land. Members of the ruling class in Kenya engage in "land grabbing" by acquiring land illegally. The problem has been further exacerbated by a dry spell, spanning over two years from 1997 to 1999. The result has been continuous, violent conflict in the region, leaving hundreds of people dead each year.

The Research on Laikipia
When the staff from Saferworld and the Africa Peace Forum began the project, one thing was clear: The work had to come from insiders. The head researcher from the Africa Peace Forum identified a team of students to assist him. Their vision entailed more than raising public awareness about the conflict. "Everyone in Kenya knows about the conflicts among pastoralists. The team's focus was to uncover the

causes that were not already clear to policy makers," explains Odera. "It was important for them to explain through their research how existing policies had failed."

The failure of existing policies, they found, was just the start. The research team concluded that traditional and formal systems of governance contradicted each other, making it difficult to judge who had rights to disputed land. Inadequate preparation and provisions during droughts heightened pastoral violence during emergencies. Adding to the problem were outdated land tenure policies, which the researchers believed had "little regard for the needs of nomadic communities." In sum, the report showed that existing policies not only neglected the needs of pastoralists, but made matters worse.

The first section of the report focuses on conflict among pastoralists in the region as awhole, and includes an anlaysis of the problem that is relevant to all pastoral communities in the Horn of Africa. The final section of the study includes specific policy and programmatic recommendations, including training for high-level policy makers, and the creation of local district Peace and Development Committees.

Saferworld and the Africa Peace Forum have moved from words to action by organizing policy forums that bring together government, international organizations and civil society. Combined with other, similar studies in the region, Saferworld is using the research to advocate for new interventions to bring peace to pastoralists throughout the Horn of Africa.

Lessons Learned: Research as a Tool for Change

> *Saferworld used their research findings to advocate for change. Their study provided new insight into the conflict among pastoralists, and had widespread applications in the region.*

- **Researchers Who Know the Region:** Saferworld and the Africa Peace Forum agreed that the research on Laikipia had to come from the region. The research team's prior understanding of the conflict and the culture enabled them to uncover new dimensions of the problem. The pastoralist community accepted the research team and agreed to meet with them on an ongoing basis.
- **Making Research Matter:** Saferworld and the Africa Peace Forum used the research as a means to an end by joining international organizations, government and civil society through policy forums. The information used in the forums was concrete and substantive, leading to succinct discussions. "Our greatest challenge is using the information effectively," says Odera. "It is important that we make the issue of conflict among pastoralists an important policy item on the national agenda."
- **Widespread Applicability:** Conflicts among pastoralists in Kenya, and throughout the Horn of Africa share similarities. As a result, the analysis and research findings are applicable to the entire region. This factor is particularly important because the Laikipia study uncovered new dimensions of the problem that had not previously been addressed by the Kenyan government.

Fellowship of Reconciliation
Interfaith Peace-Builders Program in Palestine/Israel

The Interfaith Peace-Builders Program sends interfaith peace delegations of U.S. citizens to Palestine and Israel. They travel throughout the area, engaging in dialogue with all parties in conflict. Upon their return to the U.S., the delegates educate other Americans on the conflict.

Facing a Difficult Choice
Before their trip to the West Bank in April 2002, none of them imagined they'd be asked to make a decision like the one at hand. Israeli troops had just moved into Bethlehem, surrounding the Church of the Nativity. The delegation of Americans visiting the Occupied Territories for two weeks as part of the Interfaith Peace-Builders Program (IFPB) were asked by a local organization to participate in a nonviolent demonstration, bringing food to people held under siege in the church.

Many of the members had promised their loved ones that they would take no risks, while others felt passionate about the opportunity to intervene at such a crucial moment. The group was comprised of Jews, Muslims, Quakers and Buddhists, among other religious affiliations. The members spent the entire night deciding on its appropriate role. "It was a very intense evening," explains the co-leader of the April delegation, Emily Rosenberg. "Part of the decision was about comfort level, but it was also about where our presence was most needed." In the end, they agreed to disagree. Five members participated in the peace demonstration, and the rest went to East Jerusalem to offer three families support as they were forced from their homes.

Never a Time of Peace
Since 1948, when Israel was proclaimed a state, the region has suffered through boundary and religious conflicts, economic strife and shattered attempts at peace negotiations. During the six-day war in 1967, Israel conquered the West Bank, including the Old City of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights. Through its Occupation, Israel has exercised full or partial control over 97 percent of the West Bank and 40 percent of the Gaza Strip for almost 35 years.

The small portion of land left in the hands of Palestinians has remained under Israeli supervision. With rising tensions in 1993, Israel restricted Palestinians from entering or transiting through east Jerusalem, limiting Palestinian economic activity, access to health care, schools and universities, and places of worship. In more recent years the violence between the Palestinians and Israelis has reached unprecedented levels. After Yasser Arafat refused to accept the Clinton brokered peace proposal in 2000, Palestinians began a wave of terror attacks including suicide bombings to protest the Israeli Occupation. At the same time, Israel tightened its military control over the region.

Following a suicide attack on the Jewish holiday of Passover in April 2002, the Israeli government launched a military offensive called "Operation Defensive Shield" into the Palestinian territories. During the six-week military campaign, Israeli troops attacked Jenin and Bethlehem, leaving many Palestinians dead and many more without homes or access to the most basic means of survival. In response, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1405 on April 20, intending to send a fact-finding mission to the Jenin camp. However, after some delay, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon refused to permit the UN's team into Jenin. Despite the UN's resolutions and other international diplomacy efforts, the conflict persists with no immediate end in sight.

The Interfaith Peace-Builders
The IFPB has its roots in years of work in the Middle East. During the first Intifada in the 1980s, FOR started Middle East Witness, a program that sent delegations and volunteers to Palestinian towns and villages. The organization established contacts with both Israeli and Palestinian peace/
justice groups and gained a sense of respect in the communities. In 2001, FOR continued sending delegations to the region with a new approach: IFPB delegations that represent many different religions,

and are co-lead by Jews and Muslims. "The interfaith connection is important because we can help promote the idea that indeed it is possible for Jews and Muslims to come together," explains Director of the IFPB Program, Joe Groves.

The delegation members are self-selected, and their strategy is based on several principles: 1) learning directly from people involved in conflict; 2) inter-faith cooperation; 3) commitment to non-violence and mutual respect; and 4) educating American public. Each delegation attends a two-day orientation at FOR headquarters in New York that includes a crash course in the Middle East conflict, safety issues, and non-violence/conflict resolution trainings. The groups spend two weeks in the region, with an intense agenda of meetings and activities from morning to night. They meet with Israeli and Palestinian politicians, religious leaders, refugees and members of community-based organizations. They stay with families, and live among the people to gain an understanding of their lives on a daily basis.

Upon their return to the U.S., delegation members are engaged in a FOR-sponsored e-mail discussion group to process their visit and exchange ideas for their educational and advocacy projects in the U.S. Some members use their artistic talents to create exhibitions and stage theatre performances. Others write magazine and newspaper articles and establish community-based campaigns to stop the violence. One member, Nagwa Ibrahim, made a 25-minute film entitled, "Nonviolence in Palestine." The film highlights the small, but growing nonviolent resistance movement. She shows the film to schools, Arab-American audiences, churches and synagogues in California.

Lessons Learned: Reaching Out for Peace Across Borders

As a small peace delegation from America, IFPBs were able to access people and places that might not be reachable by parties in conflict. Their inter-faith, multi-racial composition set a good example how Jews and Muslims can work and live together in peace.

- **Promoting a Three-Way Dialogue:** Due to the multi-language ability of the delegation, they could negotiate in Hebrew with Israeli border guards to pass the checkpoints, and engage in impromptu meetings with Palestinians. They exerted positive influence on both sides by engaging in a three-way dialogue and showing their support for a peaceful end to the terrible conflict.
- **Earning Trust and Respect:** Through their commitment to non-violence and face-to-face contact with people in conflict, the IFPBs have built a reputation that earned them trust and respect among Palestinians and Israelis alike. IFPBs have comforted all those in sorrow and suffering.
- **Setting an Example:** As a mixed group of different religions, races, sex, and age, the IFPBs preach and practice tolerance, non-violence and reconciliation. Their work together as a peace group set a good example for those in conflict to follow.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

> "**NGOs can contribute to the maintenance of peace and security by offering non-violent avenues for addressing the root causes of conflict at an early stage. Moreover, NGOs can be an important means of conducting track II diplomacy when governments and international organizations are unable to do so.**"
>
> — Secretary-General's *Report on Prevention of Armed Conflict*

In his Report to the Security Council on the Prevention of Armed Conflict in 2001, the Secretary-General highlighted "the important role of civil society" in the process of peace-building.[1] Through specific recommendations from the case studies, the following section of the report elucidates the unique and essential contribution that civil society actors can offer in the process of peace-building. This section also identifies specific interventions that international NGOs with a dual presence in the field and at UN headquarters can play to bridge the gap between macro and micro level efforts to prevent conflict and assist communities in the process of transformation in post-conflict situations.

I. The Call for a New Culture: Peace-Building and Conflict Transformation

The prevalence and increasingly costly phenomenon of deadly conflict presents to the United Nations an urgent, axiomatic need for continuous analysis and new direction. Nowhere is this call for change more clearly stated than in the Brahimi Report submitted to the Secretary-General in 2000, in which the authors state that in the past decade the UN has "repeatedly failed to meet the challenge; and can do no better today."[2] Geopolitical changes in the post Cold-War era altered the nature of conflict with an increase in intra-state, (as opposed to inter-state) violence, leaving the world with more internal violent conflicts today than in the past century.[3] These changes, combined with ineffective interventions have spurred the UN to move towards a different, more comprehensive approach. The Secretary General refers to this shift in focus as a change from a "culture of reaction" to a "culture of prevention."[4]

The evolution of language used by the UN to define conflict and peace reflects both the progress and shortcomings of this new, desired culture. In the past, conventional UN language typically used the term peace-building to refer to post-conflict situations. Conversely, conflict prevention denoted purely anticipatory actions to reduce the risks of violent conflict from erupting. In recent years, the definitions of these terms have changed to more accurately reflect the continuum of conflict – from prevention to post-conflict security, and the complex social, economic and political factors that play a descriptive and prescriptive role in conflict and resolution. This current definition is reflected in a UN Security Council Presidential Statement from 2001, which views peace-building as, "aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompassing a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanisms."[5]

While the newer definition captures the dynamics of the process, (rather than a mutually exclusive relationship between conflict and peace), it fails to acknowledge the metamorphosis that occurs in the lives of individuals and communities in the continuum of conflict. The definition used by the UN inadvertently epitomizes the shortfall of the organization's actions with civil society: It lacks a focus on human relationships, and on the building of social capital within and between groups that must be recreated and redefined as part of the peace process.

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[1] UN, Security Council, Prevention of Armed Conflict, 7 June 2001
[2] Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, 20 October 2000
[3] Sivaud Legar, Ruth, World Military and Social Expenditures. Washington, D.C. 1996
[4] UN, Security Council, Prevention of Armed Conflict, 7 June 2001
[5] UN, Security Council, Presidential Statement, 20 February 2001

Both the continuum of conflict and the emphasis on human relationships are present in the seven case studies described in the preceding section of this paper. They focus on transformation in individuals and in communities. They reflect a new reality, with new challenges; they take time. They extend beyond statecraft, humanitarian assistance and democracy building; and they require space for people to come together to cope with post-traumatic effects of conflict in order to work towards negotiation, mediation and reconciliation. Thus, the term referred to by the UN as peace-building might be the springboard for a more holistic epistemology that encompasses the process in its entirety – conflict transformation.

The case studies, though vastly different from one another, illustrate the indispensable role of civil society participation in multi-track diplomacy. The individuals and groups described have a first-hand understanding of the conflicts and their derivations; they obtain access to people and places that the UN cannot always reach; and they can, by their long-term presence at the ground level, contribute to the longevity supported by the UN and Member States. The case studies also illustrate the important role that international organizations with a presence at UN Headquarters and in the field can play in linking the UN and civil society.

The sections that follow focus on three areas: 1) Comparative advantages of civil society organizations in the process of conflict transformation that provide insight for international NGOs and civil society actors; 2) recommendations to the UN derived from the case studies to support increased collaboration with civil society; and, 3) additional recommendations to the UN based on the experiences of international NGOs with links to the field and the UN.

II. The Comparative Advantage of Civil Society Efforts: Lessons from the Case Studies
The projects share several similar strategies that highlight the inimitable role of civil society in peace-building and conflict transformation. They echo the point made by the Secretary-General that "without a sense of national ownership, prevention is unlikely to succeed."[6] Moreover, in all of the case studies international NGOs play a supportive role by providing resources, guidance and technical support to foster a sense of local ownership. The fact that the case studies share common strategies despite their vast differences suggests that civil society has not only a role to play, but a role that is crucial and seldom played by the UN and Member States. This section, therefore has two aims: 1) To highlight to the UN and its Member States the significant and unique contribution of civil society organizations to peace-building and conflict prevention; and, 2) to provide other international NGOs and civil society organizations with lessons learned that have the potential for replication.

Trust: Building a sense of trust among individuals, both within communities and between opposing political groups was a crucial element of success, helping resolve conflicts in many of the case studies. The inside understanding of the conflicts gave local leaders an advantage among their peers that is not easily obtained by the UN. The extent to which trust was key is evident from the local to the state levels. In the cases of Sudan and Sierra Leone the sense of trust among civil society allowed peace-building delegations to negotiate with the government and rebel factions, resulting in the release of political prisoners in both countries. Community members in both Kosovo's Community Council for Peace and Tolerance, (CCPT), and South Africa's Peace Committees accepted and supported the efforts of their local leaders because they were comprised of well-respected individuals who had earned the confidence of their peers. In Kenya, the groundbreaking information provided in the research on Laikipia was contingent on the fact that the researchers were from the region. As a result, pastoralists entrusted the researchers with insights and information that only insiders could understand.

Longevity: Because of the transient nature of many peacekeeping efforts, it is important to build deeper, longer-term relationships between the UN and civil society. Since July 2001, the United Nations has spent almost three billion dollars on peacekeeping missions around the world.[7] The missions often end prematurely, leaving behind a vulnerable population. Moreover, the individuals assigned to these

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[6] UN, Security Council, Prevention of Armed Conflict, 7 June 2001
[7] United Nations Peace Keeping Operations, Background Note, 15 April 2002

missions generally assume short-term posts, resulting in a lack of institutional knowledge. In contrast, many of the civil society councils and committees described in the case studies have persisted and continued to grow.

In the case of Israel/Palestine, the Interfaith-Peace Builders Program, (IFPB), established a long-term presence in the region in both Jewish and Muslim communities. This ongoing relationship allowed them to enter places like Jenin where the UN could not enter. Similarly, in the case of South Africa, the Peace Committees established in the Majola region were a product of an ongoing partnership between the Mennonite Central Committee and civil society organizations. In both Kosovo and Sierra Leone, the CCPT and the Inter-Religious Council, (IRCSL), have established a strong presence in the country and throughout their respective sub-regions.

Access: The combination of trust and longevity provide civil society actors with accessibility to people and places that the UN usually cannot obtain. Several of the groups described in the case studies were able to use their local connections, and informal relationships to meet with rebel groups and government members alike. In the cases of Sudan's People for Peace in Africa, (PPA), and Sierra Leone's IRCSL, the delegations were able to organize meetings with rebel groups that refused to cooperate with larger, well-known institutions.

Low Profile: While the UN generally focuses on diplomacy at the government level, the case studies show that organizations have a diplomatic agility due to their low profile, allowing them to meet with both governments and rebel groups. Large organizations with a high profile attract media attention, which can threaten an already fragile peacekeeping agreement. In the case of Sudan, a Kenyan diplomat called on the PPA to meet with the rebels precisely because the PPA was a small, unknown group. Likewise, the CCPT in Kosovo were able to avoid media attention in the initial phase. Their autonomy afforded them the time and space they needed to develop as a group before going public and receiving media attention.

Faith-Based Efforts: While religion is a source of contention in some of the conflicts described in the case studies, religious leaders had two critical advantages: 1)They were viewed as non-partisan actors and therefore gained the trust of opposing parties; and 2) they had established constituencies whom they could mobilize in peace-building efforts. The example of Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga in Angola is a case in point. He was esteemed by the Angolan people as honorable and credible, and was able to work with different religious groups and civic organizations throughout Angola. In both Sierra Leone and Sudan the rebel factions trusted the voice of moral authority, and therefore agreed to meet with the IRCSL and the PPA. In the cases of Israel/Palestine and Kosovo the multi-religious makeup of the IFPB and the CCPT committees enabled them to address controversial issues that are partially defined by religious differences.

The Voices of Women and Youth: The UN has only begun in recent years to recognize the unique contribution women's groups can have in the process of building peace. Additionally, in the past several years there is an increasing amount of attention paid to the input of youth. As mothers and well-respected community members, women's voices provided new insights and innovations to help transform communities. This point is most vivid in the case of Sierra Leone, where the only female member of the IRCSL spoke to the young rebels "as a mother" to negotiate the release of child soldiers. In the Kosovo case study Mother Makaria was elevated to a "saintly status" due to her efforts to take care of her Albanian neighbors. The Peace Committees in South Africa included women and youth on each committee to ensure that their perspectives and needs were included in all locally based peace-building efforts. Similarly, the efforts of Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga involved the inclusion of womens' groups in civil society organizations that promote peace.

The Role of International NGOs: Bridging the Micro and Macro Levels: A common factor shared by all of the cases was the critical contribution of international NGOs with partnerships in the field and a presence at UN headquarters. Their dual role enabled them to bring the voices of the people on the ground to the UN, and helped them provide resources and technical support to civil society's peace efforts.

III. Recommendations to the UN based on the Case Studies

The case studies illustrate common strategies that prove effective in a variety of situations and across national and regional borders. This section aims to identify several recommendations that provide practical, cost-effective and specific examples of how to move from a "culture of reaction to a culture of prevention." Ultimately they suggest that one way to "mobilize the collective potential of the UN system" is to tap into the people who know first-hand what it will take to move from conflict to peace, and beyond.

1. Work with international NGOs based at UN Headquarters to facilitate the participation of civil society in open sessions of the Security Council and at other UN fora

The International Peace Academy Conference Report, published in 2001, *Empowering Local Actors: The UN and Multi-Track Conflict Prevention,* highlights the difficulty the UN experiences in attempts to identify and collaborate with partisan civil society organizations.[8] The case studies show that international organizations that partner with civil society in the field and have representation at the UN Headquarters can act as a liaison to bridge the gap between the macro and micro levels.

In the case of Angola, the Quaker United Nations Office, (QUNO), worked with Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga and members of the delegation to establish a timely and important meeting during the Security Council's special session on Angola. The meeting coordinated by QUNO served both sides equally well. Ntoni-Nzinga noted that "if the UN is having a debate on resolving the conflict in Angola, Angolan civil society needs to be part of it." Equally, upon hearing of the delegation's participation one of the UN members noted. "We are thankful that the delegation from Angola will be here. We are stuck on the issue of Angola."

Inviting international NGOs to facilitate civil society participation during UN Security Council special sessions and increasing the number of Arria Formula meetings can provide a sense of reality from the ground level that those operating at UN Headquarters cannot otherwise access. Such links also serve civil society, helping leaders understand the perspective of the UN.

2. Coordinate Ongoing Informational Exchanges between Civil Society Actors and UN Missions in the Field

Because of the expedient nature of most UN emergency response missions to the field, there is not always time to relay information from a civil society perspective to mission members. In addition, UN agencies at the country level are often overwhelmed with requests from civil society actors to meet, acquire resources and gain political support for their causes. International NGOs can help identify civil society actors that have a strong leadership role and a non-partisan stance in conflicts. In the case of Kosovo, delegates from the UN and the OSCE participated as observers in the CCPT meetings. In Sierra Leone, the IRCSL was invited to participate in the Lome Peace Accords.

3. Provide Civil Society with the Opportunities They Need to Organize

Several of the case studies suggest that the ability for civil society actors to collaborate and establish a unified effort towards peace-building and conflict transformation is contingent on their autonomy as a group. The need for individuals to reach beyond religious, cultural and ethnic barriers that seperate populations and redefine themselves as a part of a group whose core is multi-ethnic and inter-religious takes both time and resources. Moreover, the process of building relationships that can withstand community opposition, media exposure, and political criticism require safe, neutral space where meetings can be held without public knowledge.

International NGOs are in a position to assist civil society in this process, by enabling individuals to come together. In Kosovo, for example, KFOR and the OSCE assisted the CCPT by accompanying members to

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[8] The International Peace Academy, Empowering Local Actors: The UN and Multi-Track Conflict Prevention, 10 December 2001

meetings and in their efforts to carry out some of their goals. KFOR staff ensured that there was a safe location for the CCPT members to meet, and more importantly, they gave the members the space they needed to organize themselves without outside intervention. Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the UN met with the IRCSL members, while allowing them the time and resources they needed to meet and develop their own mission. In the case of Angola, Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga noted that, "all we needed was to start the connection and to enable people to come together. We needed most of all to create that space."

IV. Additional Recommendations to the United Nations from the Conflict Transformation Working Group

While recommendations from the case studies provide examples of successful collaboration between civil society and the United Nations, they by no means provide an exhaustive list of the types of interventions that could build stronger bridges between macro and micro level efforts. As a result of their dual presence in the field and at the UN policy level, the NGOs that comprise the Conflict Transformation Working Group have a distinct perspective, with and ability to offer insight on improving coordination, and act as a bridge between civil society and the UN. The purpose of this section is to provide the UN and its Member States with a few suggestions to utilize the knowledge and technical support that interntional NGOs can provide.

1. Incorporate a Civil Society Perspective Prior To and During Security Council Missions to Areas of Conflict

The Security Council should continue its frequent missions to regions of conflict and increase its attention and time spent with civil society actors including women's groups, religious leaders, as well as with international NGO field representatives. International NGOs that work at the UN level can provide contacts and help facilitate such meetings at the field level with sufficient advanced notice and cooperation from the organizers of the missions' schedule. This should become a normal procedure, not an exception, integrated into the planning of Security Council missions.

2. Conduct Annual Consultations between the Security Council 'Leads' and Civil Society

Although the Arria Formula meetings are a useful means to provide a field perspective to the Security Council members, they tend to be adhoc, organized without sufficient advanced notice to international NGOs or civil society organizations. Hence, the meeting may not include the field representation that could provide the members a full depiction of the in-country situation, thereby diminishing the purpose and impact of the Arria Formula meeting. As many Security Council members have been designated as 'leads' for specific countries, it would be beneficial for them to organize annual substantive consultations with international NGO field staff and civil society representatives. These consultations should be planned sufficiently in advance.

3. Integrate a Civil Society Perspective into UN Agencies' Fact Finding Missions to the Field

The Brahimi Report emphasizes the importance and utility of UN fact finding missions to the field, and stresses the need for "more frequent use of fact finding missions to areas of tension and stresses..."[9] The urgent and chaotic nature of complex emergencies requires that such missions obtain as much accurate information about a conflict prior to and during their visits. Too often UN missions from varoius agencies attempt to organize such exchanges with little advanced notice, rendering it impossible or extremely costly for civil society actors to assist. International NGOs are in a position to facilitate informational exchanges between UN missions and civil society actors at headquarters and in the field. Requesting their assistance as liaisons in the process could save the UN the concern of having to identify and organize these important exchanges between civil society and mission members.

4. Create an Inter-agency Mechanism within the UN System that Provides Opportunities to Dialogue with International NGOs

The lack of an inter-agency mechanism among the Secretariat and UN agencies to address conflict can lead to a sporadic, adhoc process of conflict prevention and response. In some cases, collaboration

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[9] Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, 20 October 2000

between the macro, mezzo and micro levels is well-defined, whereas in others, time and resources could be better utilized. An interagency mechanism could contribute to a cost-effective, low maintenance remedy to the problem of disparate coordination. The inclusion of international NGOs in an inter-agency mechanism could help bridge the gap between the UN and civil society. One way to begin this process would be through the implementation of the Secretary-General's call for an "international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field."[10]

5. Increase Resources for Peace-Building
The increasing number of conflicts that span the globe over the past several decades illustrate a continuous and growing need for resources dedicated to peacekeeping operations and peace-building efforts. Recent UN documents, including The Brahimi Report, the Millennium Declaration and the Secretary-General's Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict all emphasize the need for increased and ongoing resources to support the continuum from conflict prevention through conflict transformation.[11]

6. Establish a Long-Term Presence in the Process of Peace-Building
As mentioned, the transient nature of the UN's presence in countries of conflict contributes to a tenuous, sometimes contentious relationship between the UN and civil society. There is an ongoing need for links to NGOs with a stable, long-term presence in countries with conflicts. The UN may want to consider reducing staff rotation and establishing closer links at the ground level with international NGOs and their partners. In this sense, international NGOs can be a resource for the UN by helping them build stronger, longer-term relationships with civil society.

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[10] Secretary-General's Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 13 January 2002
[11] Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, 20 October 2000, The Millennium Declaration, 2000, Secretary-General's Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 13 January 2002

IV. THE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) is the largest, oldest interfaith peace and justice organization in the United States. Since 1915, the U.S. FOR has been working for a just and peaceful world community with full dignity and freedom for every human being by promoting nonviolence as a transforming way of life and engaging in compassionate actions locally, nationally and globally. In addition to the Interfaith Peace-Builders Program in Israel/Palestine, FOR also has peace-building projects in Iraq and Colombia. U.S. FOR is a part of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, (IFOR), which has affiliates in over 40 countries.

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is a collaborative effort of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, the Maryknoll Sisters and the Maryknoll Association of the Faithful. Approximately 1,400 Maryknollers are working in more than 20 countries around the world to assist in carrying out Maryknoll's responsibility of promoting concern and action for peace, social justice and integrity of creation. The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns attempts to bring the voice and experience of Maryknollers and the people they work with into policy discussions in the United Nations, the United States and other governments, international financial institutions, and the corporate world.

The Mennonite Central Committee, (MCC), is the service agency of North American Mennonites and Brethen in Christ, established after World War I to work with local partners in overcoming poverty, conflict, oppression, and natural disaster. MCC strives for peace, justice dignity through some 1,400 office and field staff in 58 countries.

The Quaker United Nations Office, (QUNO), located in Geneva and New York, represents Quakers through Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), an international non-governmental organization with general consultative status at the UN. QUNO works to promote the peace and justice concerns of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) from around the world at the United Nations and other global institutions. It is supported by and works in partnership with other Quaker organizations, including the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). The AFSC focuses on economic justice, peace-building and demilitarization, social justice and youth, in the United States, and in countries around the world.

Saferworld is an independent foreign affairs think-tank, based in London UK, working to identify, develop and publicize more effective approaches to tackling and preventing armed conflict. Saferworld was founded in 1989 following the end of the Cold War and in response to the changing nature of armed conflict. Saferworld aims to provide new information and fresh analysis and act as a catalyst for change.

World Conference on Religion and Peace, (WCRP), is the largest worldwide coalition of representatives of religious communities working to take common action to solve critical problems. Since its founding in 1970, the organization has been dedicated to promoting cooperation for peace among the world's religions, while maintaining respect for religious differences. Recent projects in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea have made abundantly clear that concrete cooperation focused on common concerns and designed to produce tangible results accelerates positive relationships among religious communities.

World Vision International (WVI), is a Christian relief and development partnership which serves more than 75 million people in nearly 90 countries. World Vision seeks to follow Christ's example by working with the poor and oppressed in the pursuit of justice and human transformation. World Vision has been in consultative status with UN-ECOSOC since 1986, and carries out policy advocacy with governments and multilateral organizations through liaison offices in Brussels, Geneva, New York and Washington.

Contact Information - Conflict Transformation Working Group Members

Fellowship of Reconciliation
P.O. Box 271
Nyack, NY 10960
Tel: (845) 358-4601 Fax: (845) 358-4924
E-mail: nonviolence@forusa.org Website: www.forusa.org

MaryKnoll Office for Global Concerns
P.O. Box 305
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0305
Tel: (914) 941-7590 Fax: (914) 941-5753
E-mail: choule@mksister.org Website: www.maryknoll.org

The Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Office
866 United Nations Plaza, Room 575
New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 223-4062   Fax: (212) 750-1194
E-mail: unoffice@mcc.org Website: www.mcc.org

The Quaker United Nations Office
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 682-2745 Fax: (212) 983-0034
E-mail: qunony@afsc.org Website: www.quno.org

Saferworld
46 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0EB, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7881 9290 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7881 9291
E-mail: general@saferworld.co.uk Website: www.saferworld.co.uk

World Conference on Religion and Peace
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 687-2163 Fax: (212) 983-0566
E-mail: info@wcrp.org Website: http://www.religionsforpeace.org/

World Vision International
United Nations Office
222 East 48th Street
New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 355-1779 Fax: (212) 355-3018
E-mail: newyork@wvi.org   Website: www.justice-and-peace.org