

**Peace It Together NEWS**  
**The Monthly Newsletter of UNOY Peacebuilders**  
**Number 44 – October 2008**



**SUMMARY**

1. Message from the Editor
2. Member of the Month
3. Campaign News
4. Network News
5. Theme(s) in Focus
6. Highlighted Resources
7. Opportunities and Events

**1. MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR**

**Dear friends,**

Welcome to the latest edition of the Peace It Together Newsletter from UNOY Peacebuilders. This month, UNOY has selected The Movement for Peace and Reconciliation in Liberia (MOPAR) as its member of the month. The campaign section focuses on the 21 September International Day of Peace celebrations around the world. In the Network section there is information about upcoming UNOY events including the African Students Conference and ISG meeting in the Hague. The Themes in Focus section focuses on the TRANSCEND method of peaceful conflict transformation developed by Johan Galtung. The Highlighted Resource and Opportunities and Events are of course included also. Once again I hope that you will enjoy reading, and do not hesitate to send articles for inclusion, or any comments about the newsletter to [campaign@unoy.org](mailto:campaign@unoy.org).

Peaceful regards,

Katherine Davison

Editor

**2. MEMBER OF THE MONTH:**

**Movement for Peace and Reconciliation In Liberia**

*(by Neidoteh B.Torbor)*

MOPAR-Liberia is currently working on two community projects, "Community Rally Against Violence" and "Community Rally Against Corruption" in three communities within Greenville City. In order to uphold the spirit of community mobilization against violence, MOPAR has also organized two Women's Rights Forums.

The project Community Rally Against Violence is to attain the objectives of addressing the underlying root causes of violence against women with absolute focus on all forms of discrimination against women as enshrined in the UN Convention against discrimination.

The project Community Rally Against Corruption raises community awareness with the objective of strengthening the understanding within rural communities as to what constitutes corruption, its

effects and consequences towards national development.

The Women's Rights Forum is organized for the purpose of women to discuss issues affecting their fundamental rights and abuses being perpetrated against them by their spouse(s), police, government officials and other actors discriminating against them within their various communities.

In order to attain the desired objectives of the Community Rally, MOPAR has organized four forum meetings namely: Political Discussion and Debate Forum, District Community Women Peace Forum and Judicial Forum.

The Political Discussion and Debate Forum is a Political Forum for Civil Political discussions and debate as a means of promoting the constitutional rights of the people to discuss their common good within the confines of the laws of Liberia. The purpose of the forum is to break the ethnic loyalty amongst the conflicting tribes thus affording them the opportunity to engage their leaders devolve of ethnic sentiment and attachment.

The Women's Peace Forum is organized to bring together women of the three conflicting tribes to discuss issues relating to their co-existence, how to engage their male counterparts in the process of reconciliation and to also speak on issues of violence.

**3. CAMPAIGN NEWS**

**3.2 September 21 International Day of Peace Celebrations Across the Globe**

Members of the UNOY Peacebuilders' network celebrated Peace Day in their own unique and inspiring ways. We would like to congratulate all of our members for the events they hosted to commemorate this important day, which is not only celebrated by people active in the peacebuilding arena, but also by the wider public at large of course. Below we have described some of their activities in brief; please visit our website's News Blog (<http://www.unoy.org/news>) to read more extensively on their celebrations.

**The Philippines: Generation Peace Network/  
Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute**



Generation Peace Network celebrated the International Day of Peace on the 21st of September. This year's celebration took a different turn when GenPeace represented

the Philippines in a regional celebration of the IDP in Siam Reap, Cambodia. The celebration is part of the international youth conference on "Peace, Justice and Reconciliation." The celebration started with a Peace

March. The Philippine representatives carried the peace flag with the Filipino word for peace which is "Kapayapaan". This represents our solidarity with the rest of the world and the principle of "unity in diversity."

**Somalia: Somaliland Youth Development Association**

SOYDA organized the commemoration ceremony of the International Day of Peace, more than one hundred people participated the celebration which composed, youth groups, government ministers, MPs, Local Councilors, civil society organizations and Community in general. The Vice Minister of Justice officially opened the ceremony and emphasized the role of youth in peace building and social development as very important and that youth must acquire skills to promote peace by transforming the arising conflicts into peaceful means and friendly atmosphere.



**The National Federation of Youth Organisations in Bangladesh (NFYOB)**



NFYOB celebrated with a children's rally in which 100 children took part. There was also an art competition which gave children the opportunity to create a 'Wall

Magazine' of poems, drawings, jokes and articles. The day ended with a discussion of children's responsibilities and rights, and the role of youth in the creation of peace.

**Dinamismo Juvenil in Mexico**



Dinamismo Juvenil celebrated Peace Day with a peace and earth fair that took place in the Alameda de la Santa Maria la Ribera neighborhood in Mexico

City. The event was an opportunity to reflect and have an open dialogue about the situation in the community. The event included discussions on education, finding different ways to build a culture of peace, encouraging active citizenship, and promoting environmental awareness.

**Sierra Leone: Young Leaders Sierra Leone**

To mark this year's International Day of Peace, Young Leaders in Collaboration with Democracy Sierra

Leone, a coalition of over forty civil societies, presented a fantastic award to Former President of the Republic of Sierra Leone Alhaji Dr Ahmad Aejan Kabbah at the British Council Hall in Freetown for Promoting Peace and Democracy in post war Sierra Leone which was presented to him by the France Ambassador to Sierra Leone



**The Peace Action Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR)**



PATRIR organised several events related to the International Day of Peace in Romania. The aims of these events were to inform students from the local community about fundamental concepts, such as peace-conflict-violence, as well as about the education institutions that offer programs in this field, to launch questions with the aim of stimulating critical thinking regarding the (non)violent structures in which we develop and in which we exist and the consequences of our actions and our state's actions.

**International Day of Peace Celebrated in London**



The Founder and President of UNOY member Idea Action organised together with Youth Change the World and London College of Engineering and Management (LCOEM) an

event with different activities in South East London on 21st Sep2008. The activities included speakers, meditation and yoga for Peace, signature campaign for peace and wall painting on peace.

**4. NETWORK NEWS**

**4.1 African Students Conference**



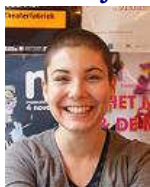
The 10<sup>th</sup> annual African Students Conference will be held in The Hague on 15 November 2008. This year's theme is 'Urbanisation and Human Security'. The

conference will deal with issues of major concern in the fields of peace, justice and democracy in Africa. It is a leading event for awareness raising and promotion of interdisciplinary and inter-cultural dialogue, research and action and stresses the role of culture, youth and civil society. For more information on this event, please visit the conference website at <http://www.unoy.org/conferences/ASC2008.html>

## 4.2 ISG Comes to The Hague

UNOY's International Steering Group (ISG) will hold their annual meeting in The Hague on 12 November until 19 November. Members of the ISG will travel to the Netherlands from Palestine, Argentina, South Africa, Armenia, Liberia and Nepal. The annual meeting will focus on evaluating the network, selecting new members, discussing existing projects and implementing a gender policy for the organization.

## 4.3 Who Joined Us and Who Left



**Alessia Tosi** grew up in a small village in Italy. The view on the lake was beautiful but she moved soon around and studied in Wales, Germany and The Netherlands before joining UNOY Peacebuilders as the

Gender Program Officer together with her Research MA in Philosophy. She has participated in several theatre and street-theatre projects focusing in particular on the social impact of performances and the role of 'making theatre against social exclusion. She worked as a volunteer Italian language educator for the integration of immigrants in Bologna, Italy.



**Avgi Kaisi** was born in Nicosia Cyprus, and graduated from the law faculty of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, September 2007. After her studies she worked for a year as a trainee lawyer at a law firm in Nicosia. She is

currently attending an LLM in Public International Law at Leiden University while volunteering for UNOY Peacebuilders.



**Katherine Davison** is from the United States. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Political Science from Eastern Michigan University and a Master's Degree in Education and International Development from the University of

Leeds. She has worked for several organisations in North America, Europe and Africa focusing on refugee, asylee and immigrant issues. She will be working as a Fundraising Officer and European Desk Officer.



**Angie Lai** comes from Hong Kong and she completed her LLB in the UK. She worked as an intern at the Asian Human Rights Commission (HK) and Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor in summer 2007 and 2008 respectively. Angie participated in a several international human rights conferences

before and she has just taken up the post of Youth Advocacy Officer at UNOY.



**Brandi Rose** is from the United States where she earned her BA in Art. She studied in The Netherlands at the

University of Leiden for one year as an exchange student during the final year of her BA education. She currently resides in the Netherlands and volunteers her time to graphic design projects at UNOY Peacebuilders.

## 5. THEMES IN FOCUS

### 5.1 The Transcend Method in Schools by Johan Galtung



Lars Thyholdt, a Norwegian teacher, has introduced in his school the TRANSCEND method of peaceful conflict transformation, developed over 50 years of research and practice. Here are two examples of how it works in a school setting:

A group of children built a snowman during the break. When it was finished, a big boy came and kicked it over. They built another snowman, and again the same boy destroyed it as soon as it was finished. The children ran crying to teacher Lars and told him what had happened. He said to the big boy, "You know what you did is unacceptable, but why did you do it?" The boy explained that the other children did not let him play with them. So the teacher asked the other children to let the big boy participate in building a snowman, and together they built an even bigger and more beautiful snowman.

This simple insight, that someone who is excluded from a process will try to sabotage it, also applies on other levels. It should surprise nobody that if Hamas and Likud are excluded from the "Oslo Peace Process", they will try to undermine the results. To achieve peace, all parties must be included, even those with whom we disagree.

Here is another example from teacher Lars' school: A fourth grade boy (the "bully") pulled the hair of a first grade girl (the "bullee"). She ran home crying, telling her mother that she would never go back to school. The traditional approach to misbehavior, like bullying, was "zero tolerance", immediate expulsion from the school, for some days or weeks, in serious cases permanently. Again, teacher Lars took a different approach. He asked the boy his standard question, "You know that what you did is unacceptable, but why did you do it?" At first, the boy showed a defiant silence, but finally he burst out, "I hate school! You only talk and talk and talk, especially you!" Teacher Lars found that the boy pulled the little girl's hair because she liked school. He preferred to work with his hands instead of sitting still and listening. Teacher Lars found a place where the boy could chop wood two days a week, and the boy enjoyed this tremendously. Without being asked, he went to the girl's family and apologized.

Violence usually results from untransformed conflicts. A conflict has three aspects, A, B and C:

[A] ATTITUDES can range from empathy and understanding to anger and hatred.

[B] BEHAVIOR can range from being kind and helpful to others, to hurting them physically or verbally. (Boys usually apply physical violence, girls gossiping and exclusion.)

[C] A CONTRADICTION between two or more incompatible goals is the underlying source of a conflict. Psychologists usually seek to improve people's attitudes and behavior, which can be helpful, but without addressing the underlying contradiction, the source of the conflict, no lasting improvement in relations will occur.

I prefer the term "conflict transformation" to "conflict resolution" because conflicts can rarely be "resolved" in the sense of making them disappear. But it is possible, and necessary, to transform conflicts, so that they are carried out nonviolently.

There are five basic possible solutions to a conflict between two actors with one contested issue, for example two children fighting over an orange: [1] One can get it, or [2] the other, or [3] they can share it equally (a compromise), [4] they can destroy it in fighting over it so that neither gets anything ("negative transcendence"), or [5] they can find creative ways that give both everything they want, for example one gets the peel because she wishes to use it in baking a cake, while the other wishes to eat the flesh ("positive transcendence").

The challenge is to find transcendent solutions to conflicts that simultaneously meet everyone's legitimate needs. The children learn this principle and become enthusiastic "fiver detectives".

Today's schools meet the needs of some children, but not of others. Some find school interesting, others boring, even oppressive. A traditional school suits the bully, who wants clear guidelines. The bully wants freedom of choice. He finds himself a simple job, joins a motorbike gang, and becomes a dropout. The tough teacher will punish the bully. A soft teacher will call a class meeting and start mediating between perpetrator and victim. But all this has one thing in common: the focus is not on the school, but on the two individuals.

Weak positive transcendence would give students a voucher which they could redeem in different schools, according to their choice, as they are moving through the school years, quickly for some, slowly for others who are only longing for the end of this publicly financed suffering. A year at a school abroad is today generally recognized. Why not a year at a different kind of school in one's own country or town?

Strong positive transcendence would build various types of schools, traditional and experimental, into the

same school building and then let them blossom together, let the students select their classroom, and decide themselves whether they want to stay or continue searching. Of course this can become restless. But the honey bee flying from flower to flower is sucking honey from a number of places, and may fertilize even more the more chaotic the itinerary. A ministry for honey bees would probably authorize only one normal itinerary for all bees. But perhaps the bee learns better by finding out for itself?

The problem today is the either-or of the debating culture, the typical two outcomes considered by lawyers, who make up most of today's legislatures: Either one wins, or the other. The possibility that two parties could both be right, or both partially right, or both wrong, is usually ignored. A more pluralistic society would use the both-and of dialogue cultures to let human diversity be mirrored in social diversity. The universities are far ahead in this regard, permitting students much freedom in planning their own studies. It is high time for schools to follow.

## 6. HIGHLIGHTED RESOURCES

**"Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work" by Johan Galtung** When it comes to conflicts, there are no "higher" or "lower" levels. All conflicts are equally important, whether it is conflicts between states or between individual people. Geopolitical conflicts do not take place on a "higher level" just because politicians and diplomats rank higher in the social hierarchy. Conflicts can be analysed and understood which is what this guide is meant for: the broader the spectrum of possible solutions, the higher the number of alternatives to violence

## 7. OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

### 7.1 African Students Conference Building Peace in Africa: Urbanisation and Human Security

Date: 15 November 2008

Details: Institute of Social Studies, Kortenaerkade 12, The Hague, The Netherlands

<http://www.unoy.org/conferences/ASC2008.html>

### 7.2 IANSA Women's Network and Friends

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

Date: 25 November 2008 – 10 December 2009

<http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/home.html>

## SUPPORT UNOY PEACEBUILDERS

UNOY Peacebuilders needs your help to develop and grow in outreach and strength, either in terms of finances, materials or work. Your donation of any size will be used to train and enhance the capacity of young people to engage effectively in building peace.

You can financially contribute by making a deposit in our bank account:

ABN-AMRO Bank; ACCOUNT: 55 40 70 294; IBAN: NL91ABNA0554070294; BIC: ABNANL2A

**TO SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE:** Send an email with "subscribe"/"unsubscribe" in the subject line to [campaign@unoy.org](mailto:campaign@unoy.org)  
Editor: Katherine Davison, United Network of Young Peacebuilders, Laan van Meerdervoort 70, 2517 AN The Hague, The Netherlands Tel: +31 70 364 7799; Fax: +31 70 362 2633; E-mail: [campaign@unoy.org](mailto:campaign@unoy.org)

