

**Peace It Together NEWS**  
**The Monthly Newsletter of UNOY Peacebuilders**  
**Number 47 – February 2009**



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**1. MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR**

**Dear friends,**

Welcome to the latest edition of the Peace It Together Newsletter from UNOY Peacebuilders. This month, UNOY Peacebuilders has selected a new member to our network, The Amharo Youth Club of Burundi, as member of the month. The campaign section features an update on our Child's Rights and Development campaign. In Network News, there is an article about the upcoming Summer School Program as well as another installment of "Introducing the ISG". The International Secretariat has grown this month and we are proud to introduce three new interns into the team. We are also sad to announce the departure of Michaela Almeida, our African Student's Conference Coordinator. The Theme in Focus section highlights the work of West African author Bruce Cereu and his new book "War Child". The Highlighted Resource and Opportunities and Events are of course also included. 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).

Also, please be aware that the 2008 African Student's Conference report is now available online at [www.unoy.org](http://www.unoy.org). Please visit our website for this and other exciting news from the network.

Peaceful regards,

Katherine Davison  
Editor

**2. MEMBER OF THE MONTH:**

**Amaharo Youth Club- Burundi**

**Description**

The Amahoro (means Peace in Kirundi) Youth Club is a youth-led organisation set up as a constructive reply to the lack of representation and participation of the young generations in the social and political life of the country. The Club was started by university students, particularly from Université Lumière de Bujumbura and other young people from different organisations. They wanted to devote



themselves to dialogue and educational activities in support of the peace process through a new type of nationwide organisation working in democratic, transparent, innovative and networking structure.

**Mission and goals**

The mission of the Club is to consolidate peace and enhance sustainable development through spaces of exchanges between young people living either in the countryside or abroad. Its main goals are the search for and promotion of reconciliation and peace in a broad manner, the promotion of sustainable development for all categories of Burundians, the consciousness-raising among youth to fight against discrimination and promote human rights, gender equality and democracy and the creation of a context for expression and participation for the youth of Burundi and of the diaspora to the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

**Activities**

Since November 2007, The Amahoro Youth Club has organised several capacity building training seminars and workshops in order to equip its membership. Those trainings were focused on formulating first the vision of the organisation, but the Club also treated themes like the youth mobilization and social change, peaceful resolution of conflicts, Non-violent communication, Non-violence and Organisational management.

In 2008, the Club launched the "peer-to-peer counselling", an initiative aiming at providing psychological support, mentoring and recreational activities to former street kids in order to cope with self-doubt, withdrawal and sense of hopelessness. The initiative is based on counselling sessions, group discussions, meetings and recreational activities held once a month. Positive influence is slowly being created in the lives of these adolescents through this activity.

Shortly afterwards, the Club started the "study circle", the first space of exchange created by the Amahoro Youth Club in accordance with its mission. It is an intellectual and educational discussion on different subjects that interest youth and has a link with the establishment of a more pluralist, more



democratic and more just society.

Every participant does mini-research and exposes, develops his/her point of view on the subject and can be asked to respond to the questions of other participants. Bosco Bigirimana, an AYC member who used to participate in the activity said "The sharing of experiences and knowledge demonstrated the awareness and global vision of what is going on in Burundi. In the study circle, we committed ourselves to be lighted candle and the light from the members of

*AYC has to shine in different areas handicapping the progress of our country such as corruption, environmental destruction, nepotism, ethnic division, etc.”*

The AYC intends to become as economically self-reliant and sustainable as possible through income-generating activities. In that perspective, we have adopted a funding policy document in January 2009 and we started to implement it by an innovative **printing service**. But as we are in the beginning, we still need seed money from people who find our activities worth supporting until we can generate our own funds. Beside our monthly membership fees, this can be done through donations from Burundians and people abroad, grant proposals to various institutions and a series of income-generating activities.

During this pre-electoral period, the Club is planning to launch **a large-scale programme of debates and exchanges amongst youth aiming at preventing violence in the forthcoming electoral period**. We want to achieve this initiative in partnership with other Burundian civil society organisations in order to ensure successful and peaceful elections.

### 3. CAMPAIGN NEWS

**3.1 UPDATE: Youth Participation in Child's Rights and Development** (*Angie Lai*) The United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders) advocacy team and the representative of the Child Rights Watch met together with MP Samira Bouchibti at Plein Twee to discuss child's rights and development issues on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

Although the meeting was short, MP Bouchibti and the advocates have agreed on sending out an agreement with signatories of NGOs and organizations which are in favour with widely promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to Mr. André Rouvoet, the Deputy Prime Minister of The Netherlands, and, the Minister for Youth and Families in the Dutch government, to acquire Mr. Rouvoet's signatory and subsequently put the idea into action with his assistance. In order to achieve the ideal, gaining support from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, as well as Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is thus an essential element.

UNOY Peacebuilders and Child Rights Watch are both working hard in this preparation phase and we are looking forward to witnessing the favourable outcome.

### 4. NETWORK NEWS

#### 4.1 Summer School (*Marjolein Kok*)

This year UNOY Peacebuilders will co-organize the course programme “Education for Peace and Human Rights” for the second time from the 2<sup>nd</sup> till the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2009. The course is part of the 22<sup>nd</sup> edition

of the Utrecht Summer School 2009 ([www.utrechtsummerschool.nl](http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl)) organized by the University of Utrecht. The summer school offers more than 80 strong, academic courses on a wide variety of subjects, among which conflict and peace studies. Students worldwide will attend the summer school and can earn academic credits by participating. Furthermore an extensive social and cultural program is offered.



The course “Education for Peace and Justice” explores the concept of education for peace and human rights and its potential to contribute to the culture of peace, but also demonstrates and let students experience the practical side of peace education personally during the course as these concepts is integrated into the course methodology. Besides lectures and workshops several excursions are planned as well, such as to the Anne Frank House and the Peace Palace.

The course is built on the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence initiated by the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and the concept of Peace Education. According to the UN, the concept of the Culture of Peace includes the idea that peace, human rights and justice are interrelated, which is primarily based in culture. Politics is always based in culture and political changes can hardly be realised without sufficient cultural support. In other words, politics of peace and security cannot be effective without a civic culture of peace and justice. Civic action for peace and non-violence is a necessary basis to create support for real peace. This includes knowledge and capacities to solve problems without violence.



The concept of Peace Education includes that peace, human rights and justice can be learned. Learning peace contains the content (knowledge of peace issues) and processes (strategies and underlying values and norms). In addition, it is based on broad learning concepts that enclose effective and social dimensions of learning and cognitive strategies, where the development of values, norms, and skills are significant.

As a result the “Education for Peace and Justice” course focuses its curriculum goals on knowledge (peace issues), values (basic values of human rights and justice), skills (social competences), and action opportunities for transformation in relation to personal experiences. Some skills that can be acquired are nonviolent strategies; civil peace action; school

development towards a culture of peace; conditions of learning and teaching peace; overcoming prejudices by dialogue.

The two-week course programme will comprise out of two main themes. A basic introduction on the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence will be offered in the first week. The second week will focus on how Peace Education can contribute to achieve such a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence. It will offer a mix of academic theory (knowledge and reflection) and practical applications (decision making exercises and action). Some teaching methods are lectures and discussion; self study; learning in sharing experiences. In this way students are able to develop their own body of knowledge and opinions to help them develop their own position.

By participating in the course students can earn 2 ECTS credits for participation, 1 additional ECTS credit by writing a paper and receive a certificate. Lectures and workshops will be given by several professors: Professor Dr. L.J.A. Vriens (Utrecht University); Drs. A. Kooke (International consultant and former director of NEAG); Drs. M. Ettema (UNOY PeaceBuilders); Drs. M. van Houten (UNOY PeaceBuilders/University of Amsterdam) and others. For more information and registration please visit [www.utrechtsummerschool.nl](http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl)

#### 4.2 Introducing the ISG



**Fred Domingo Barlue** was born and raised in Liberia, West Africa. In the past, he lived in Ghana, Nigeria and is now residing in Minnesota, USA, where he is reading Human Services and Liberal Arts at university. Fred has experience working with young people and their families in Liberia as well as the nearby region, and coordinating with the Liberian Tribal Leaders Reconciliation Forum in the Liberian refugee camp in Ghana.

In 2005, during Fred's stay in Ghana, he served as a member of the *Tickling Poverty Together* team, a youth-based poverty reduction initiative jointly run by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the National Council of the Swedish Youth Council Organizations. As Fred had personally experienced the Liberian war, and, through his everyday work, he founded the African Child Peace Initiative (ACPI) a youth-led peace and community development organization that works with young people in Liberia.

In September 2006, Fred received a grant from the United Nations Mission in Liberia for the construction of the Caldwell Peace and Skills - building a Centre, which provides over 3,000 war-affected youngsters and former child soldiers with skills and capacity-building trainings.

Fred represented UNOY Peacebuilders to voice out the needs of youth in post-conflict African countries at the UNFPA/UNICEF expert group meeting in New York in December 2006. He serves as a delegate to the US Congress, where he is part of their *Campaign for Global Education for All*, and he is also a member of the Youth Advisory Group of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children in New York City.

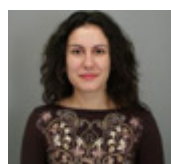
#### 4.3 Who Joined Us and Who Left



**Marjolein Kok** was born and raised in the Netherlands, born in Maastricht but raised in Soest. She studies European Studies at The Hague University, with Public Administration and Management as specialization. As part of her exchange Marjolein studied 6 months at the Universidad Tecnológico de Monterrey in Monterrey Mexico. At this moment she is finishing her last year and interning for 5 months at UNOY, working on several projects such as the Gender training, ISG and NL training.



**Kathrin Gottwald** is from Germany. She holds a B.A. Honors in International Development Studies from McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and completed her M.A. in International Peace Studies at the University for Peace in Costa Rica. She has volunteered in Kenya and interned at the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy in Washington DC as a Program Officer for Somalia and the Niger Delta. Kathrin recently joined UNOY Peacebuilders to be the Africa Desk Officer.



Prior to joining UNOY **Antoniya Stoyanova** spent seven months in a Brussels-based communications consultancy as an Account executive responsible for various EU-funded projects. Prior to this, she gained project management experience interning at the Netherlands Helsinki Committee in The Hague. Antoniya holds a Bachelor degree in European Studies and International Relations from the American University in Bulgaria, complemented by a Master's in European Politics and Policies from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium). She currently runs UNOY's European Desk.



However, the arrival of the new interns sees the sad departure of the African Students Coordinator, Michaela Almeida. Michaela was an intern with UNOY's International Secretariat for five months. We thank her for all of her hard work, especially for a big success at the African Students Conference.

## 5. THEME IN FOCUS

### 5.1 War Child (Bruce Cerew)

Our Theme in Focus section highlights the work of West African author Bruce Cerew and his book "War Child". His novel follows the experiences of his fictionalised alter ego, Ray, through a childhood in a war zone through his struggles as a refugee in the Netherlands. He tells the tale of the isolation, racism and hatred that meet him in the Western world. Bruce has chosen to share a passage from his novel with UNOY Peacebuilders and friends.



I have high blood pressure and a bad heart and I don't want to die now without seeing my mother."

"I'm so sorry, James," I apologized anew. "How long have you had a heart condition?"

"Since I received my first rejection," he said. "They told me I had twenty-four hours to

leave the country. That night I started feeling pain in my chest, but I had no idea what it might be. I was thinking a lot, you know—where to go, what to do. I have no money to go to another country. I thought I'd rather take my life than go back home without anything, hoping my old mama would start taking care of me again."

"You're still here," I puzzled. "What happened after the twenty-four hours?"

"My lawyer appealed for me, so I was allowed to stay again until the Ministry of Justice took another look at my case. I've been waiting now about three years. I've heard nothing."

"You mean you've been *three years* in this camp?"

"No, no. I spent five years in another camp. This is my third camp since I came to this country. I got here last night with other three fellows."

After hearing all this, I could only sit there on my bed staring at James. He had come into the system a young man of twenty-nine. Five years and three camps later, he was—at thirty-four—an old man with a heart condition. Would that be me in five years?

Later that night our two other roommates came back from the city and joined us for dinner. We shared stories. Mine was about Irina. I told how we met, me losing my job, the fights with the Russian gang—I even showed them pictures of me in the hospital, and of me with Irina. They were all amazed at her beauty and seemed proud that I—an African refugee—had had the guts to court such a beautiful European girl.

The next morning was taken up with registration, appointments with administrators and doctors, paperwork, and procedures. I had no chance to call Irina. It wasn't until two days later that I was able to borrow a bicycle from one of my roommates and ride to Haarlem to call Cole, hoping he could put me in touch with her.

As luck would have it, Cole answered on the first ring. We chatted for a moment or two about my new situation, then I asked to talk to Irina.

"Oh, Ray, didn't you know? I was transferred out the same day you were. But you can call my friend Tony—he's still at the camp."

I was shaking as I dialed Tony's number, hoping against hope that he hadn't been transferred too. He hadn't, and he readily agreed to run to Irina's room and take her his phone.

What he didn't tell me until sometime later was that he first changed his clothes and put on cologne, hoping he would be able to take my place in Irina's affections. This wasn't the first time he'd tried to impress her, and every effort had so far met with failure. Now he hoped an act of kindness—reuniting the two of us—might buy him what his nice clothes and sweet tongue had failed to purchase.

When I called back I got a flustered Tony. He had gone to Irina's room, he said, but when he knocked and opened the door, a strange girl was there changing her clothes. She had screamed at him and he had run away.

This was how I found out that Irina had been transferred—only a day after I had. I was devastated. I sobbed like a baby.

"What am I without you, Irina?" I cried to the one hundred-thirty tiles on my ceiling.

Unable to stand it in the tiny room, I wandered the grounds of the camp like a drunkard, looking for the lost part of me with no hope of finding it here. Irina had been transferred, but she had not been transferred to Haarlem.

## 6. HIGHLIGHTED RESOURCES

### 6.1 Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity - A survey report

Authors: Anne-Lise Arnesen, C ezar Birz ea, Bernard Dumont, Miguel, Angel Essomba, Elisabeth Furch, Angelos Vallianatos, Ferran Ferrer  
Publisher: Council of Europe  
Information: <http://book.coe.int>, [publishing@coe.int](mailto:publishing@coe.int)

## 7. OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

### 7.1 COPA: Advanced Conflict Transformation Course

Date: 4th of May to the 29th, Place: South Africa

Deadline for application: 25th of April

Details & registration: [www.copafrica.org](http://www.copafrica.org),

#### 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

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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)