

History

1995-2006

In 1995, UNOY Peacebuilders changed into a global network structure and developed a key expertise in peacebuilding, deciding to forgo its hitherto broad focus which included peace, environmental and developmental issues, street children etc. Its major objective shifted to that of linking up young peacebuilders in conflict regions around the world and providing skills training in conflict transformation and institutional capacity building. In 1993, the first internal peace conference and training seminar was organised in the Peace Palace in The Hague. Since 1993, global, continental, regional, national and local training seminars have been provided for young peacebuilders from conflict zones. In 2005 UNOY Peacebuilders was invited by the Municipality of The Hague to establish its headquarters in this city as the city seeks to strengthen its profile as the city of peace and justice.



In 2000, UNOY Peacebuilders organised various actions in support of the UN International Year for a Culture of Peace and was acknowledged by UNESCO as Messenger of the Manifesto 2000. In 2003 UNOY Peacebuilders' work in Africa was one of the 29 examples selected by the Bremen Peace Award of the Threshold Foundation for exemplary commitment to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation¹. Activities to promote a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence were pursued within the overall framework of the Peace It Together Campaign which supports the UN International

Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

In 2005, we worked closely with Fundación Cultura de Paz in coordinating and developing the World Civil Society Mid-Term Report on a Culture of Peace, coordinating in particular the participation in the Report of African Civil Society. In October 2005 we coordinated the Youth Advocacy Team to advocate the role of civil society for a Culture of Peace at the UN level. The Team contacted 69 and visited 47 permanent country missions to the United Nations and was recognised by the EU: "The European Union pays particular tribute to the United Network of Young Peacebuilders. Their work is an example to us all, and evidence of the significant role that civil society can play in advancing a Culture of Peace" rep. of UK at the UN General Assembly, 20 October 2005. This prompted us to visit the UN again in 2006. The Youth Advocacy Team managed this time to visit 67 permanent missions. Due to the work of the Youth Advocacy Team the inclusion of the Culture of Peace within the mandate of Peacebuilding Commission was included as an amendment in this year's resolution on the Culture of PeaceTeam, The number of co-sponsors to the 2006 resolution increased from 108 to 114. During 2006 UNOY Peacebuilders worked with Fundación Cultura de Paz on an international youth survey to map the work done by youth for a Culture of Peace around the world. The Global Youth Report on the Culture of Peace was included in the high-level report of the Alliance of Civilizations, and "as a decisive contribution to the Culture of Peace", the creation of a Global Youth Alliance is now one of the recommended actions of the Alliance in its activities in relation to youth. The effort of the Youth Advocacy team were recognised by the Ambassador of Bangladesh, in the General Assembly and by the Media Aleert and several official press releases of the United Nations.



From 2000, UNOY has organised the annual African Students Conferences at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, The Netherlands. These conferences have been flagship events to raise awareness and encourage research and action on peacebuilding and youth work. Twice a year, we organise a training seminar for young people based in The Netherlands.

¹ http://www.dieschwelle.de/content/englisch/peace_award/award_book_sides/seite_56-57.html

In 2006 the Board approved the restructuring of the UNOY Peacebuilders network after a one year research and consultation process which gathered information through surveys and desk research, and engaged in dialogue with all actors through interviews, meetings and an international meeting in The Netherlands. The new network structure foresees a more adequate cooperation exchange between the members of the network and the International Secretariat, increased capacity to organise more activities around the world and especially increase the sense of ownership of the youth participating in the network of their network.



The organisation has been financially sustained on a project basis with generous donations from governmental and donor organisations, foundations and private persons.