


conflict
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The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) is an independent and impartial organisation, based in Geneva, Switzerland, dedicated to improving the global response to armed conflict through mediation.

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The cover visual is a graphic representation of the HD Centre's core approaches. This annual report illustrates in detail how in 2008 the HD Centre applied these different and complementary approaches.

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Chairman & Director's address

The HD Centre exists to enable and further peace processes through mediation. It is our conviction that peace is not simply waiting to be had, but that there is a need to actively bring about peace. By creating change and resolving differences through dialogue, we believe we are offering a better alternative to conflict.

Our efforts held true to this belief through 2008. Firstly, we engaged in mediation activities, our primary focus, to contribute in a direct and tangible way to the reduction of armed conflict. Secondly, these efforts provided the basis for reinforcing our credibility: this enables us to contribute more effectively to improving peacemaking across the world. Our programme of mediation support activities is quickly becoming the critical bridge between the two.

All these approaches came into play at the beginning of the year with an intense response to the high profile post-election crisis in Kenya. The HD Centre was privileged to be part of the mediation team, led by Kofi Annan with an African Union (AU) mandate and United Nations support. We were able to deploy quick and direct assistance to the core team of analysts, advisers, and implementers to help bring Kenya back from the brink of civil war. We provided advice and supported the daily mechanics of drafting documentation, while generally facilitating and monitoring the process.

The HD Centre's experience in Kenya illustrated how, with the international community taking a more active and coordinated approach to conflict

resolution, peacemakers can effectively come together to avert war. This particular model included a mosaic of different actors able to contribute their particular and complimentary strengths in a way that delivered the greatest impact.

The Kenya experience is just one example of our efforts in 2008 to reduce the level of armed conflict and its impact on civilians, who are always the innocent victims of war. In this 2008 Annual Report, we offer more detail on this as well as on our work in the Central African Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, and Timor-Leste. As always, this Annual Report includes only some of the HD Centre's work: many other projects undertaken in 2008 were done so with confidentiality, at the request of the parties involved. The HD Centre is obliged to maintain confidentiality on these activities, in support of a positive outcome. This is a key attribute of the HD Centre, and fiercely safeguarded.

We also made considerable progress in support of our mission to improve the global response to armed conflict through other means. We successfully initiated mediation support programmes to regional organisations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development



Mr. Martin Griffiths, Director and Mrs. Karin Jestin, Chairman of the Board

(IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the African Union (AU). By working closely with each organisation, helping them turn their own experiences into practical lessons, we demonstrated that an independent organisation such as the HD Centre can have real impact on multilateral organisations in their own practice of mediation.

On the more reflective side, the HD Centre aims, through continued analysis of its work and that of others, to build knowledge from practical experience to both influence policy and further improve the international community's response to conflict. This principle is embodied in the Oslo forum, a process of events-based meetings, which the HD Centre co-hosts with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting in Oslo, highlight of the year's events and the sixth in the series, proved to be the most widely attended and successful yet, confirming its status as the annual forum for actors involved in peace processes. The Asian Retreat, the third of its kind, was held in Beijing, where the Chinese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, He Yafei, talked forthrightly about his country's increasing engagement in the region.

Peacemaking is not immune to the global financial crisis. The turmoil in the financial markets has sparked recession across the world and will undoubtedly have an impact on our work in the coming years. Exaggerated differences in wealth may become an increasing conflict driver, while reduced donor budgets and fluctuating exchange rates will have an impact on funding for peacemaking efforts. We have therefore been making efforts to reduce risks to our own work by attempting to diversify sources of funding and build an increased level of predictability into our income.

Our successes in 2008 means that in going forward, we are well placed to meet new challenges in promoting dialogue as an alternative to armed conflict. Ultimately, we can have an ever greater effect on reducing the impact of armed conflict on innocent civilians, wherever war threatens.

*Mrs. Karin Jestin
Chairman of the Board*

*Mr. Martin Griffiths
Director*

HD Centre overview

Mediating for peace impartially, discreetly and in support of others

This overview provides an 'at-a-glance' look at the philosophy, facts, figures, and funding of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre).

What is the core aim of the HD Centre?

The HD Centre is an independent Swiss-based foundation dedicated to helping to improve the global response to armed conflict. It attempts to achieve this by mediating between warring parties and providing support to the broader mediation community.

What makes the HD Centre different?

The HD Centre engages in peace processes, helping to resolve conflict wherever it arises and wherever the organisation is asked to assist. The unique attributes of the HD Centre include the abilities to:

- conduct mediation at the leadership level of parties to conflict
- retain political independence and impartiality between parties
- act with total discretion, where confidentiality is an agreed attribute of a mediation process
- respond rapidly, with operational flexibility offering different modes of engagement
- support other lead mediators, where this assistance can advance a peace process
- develop high-level networks globally, on which to call for influence and leverage.

The Villa Plantamour: headquarters and centre for dialogue

The HD Centre is based in Geneva, in the Villa Plantamour, an historic building on the edge of Lake Geneva and lent for this use by the City of Geneva. The building houses the HD Centre's organisational functions, including the Director's office, centralised administration, finance, IT, fundraising and communications support. Projects are also developed out of Geneva, and the Board convenes here throughout the year.

In 2008, the HD Centre's headquarters in Geneva hosted more than 50 meetings and events from external organisations.

- These included United Nations agencies such as the UNHCR, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNOCHA, and the World Health Organization, Médecins Sans Frontières, Terre des Hommes, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, among others



The Villa Plantamour, HD Centre HQ, Geneva, Switzerland.

“...an unquestionable principle of the HD Centre is its commitment to discretion and confidentiality where necessary.”

- In total, more than 20 different organisations used the HD Centre's venue in 2008 for meetings, retreats, workshops, and seminars
- The HD Centre also organised its own events here on various issues. These included introductory sessions on the work of the HD Centre for students of related subjects, briefings to the Geneva-based diplomatic and humanitarian communities, as well as its own mediation events.

Where was the HD Centre working in 2008?

The HD Centre was involved in mediation projects in: the Central African Republic, Timor-Leste, Sudan (Darfur), Somalia, the Philippines, Kenya and Myanmar, among others. There were also a number of projects carried out in 2008 in which the HD Centre agreed with the parties to maintain discretion – an unquestionable principle of the HD Centre is its commitment to discretion and confidentiality where necessary.

The HD Centre also increasingly supports the mediation efforts of others. This is done through partnership with other mediators, and advising governments, regional organisations, NGOs and other private bodies on how best to practice the art of mediation.

How was the HD Centre funded in 2008?

The HD Centre benefits from funding from governments and private organisations. Donors in 2008 included: Canada, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office), the City of Geneva, the MacArthur Foundation, Dyncorp, TOTAL, and the Danish Refugee Agency.

For more detail on funding and financial reporting, see pages 36–39.

Board

Sir Michael Aaronson - Chairman of the Board until June 2008

Former Director-General, Save the Children UK, and previously member of UK Diplomatic Service.

Dr. Ernst A. Brugger - Board Member until November 2008

President, Brugger and Partners Ltd (BHP), Zürich; honorary member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva; Professor, University of Zürich.

Mrs. Bineta Diop - Board Member

Executive Director and founder of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS). Vice-President of the African Union Women's Committee, and Chair of the United Nations Working Group on Peace in Geneva.

Amb. Narcisa Escaler - Vice Chairman of the Board until June 2008

President, Asian Cultural Council; former Deputy Director General, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Geneva; former Ambassador of the Philippines to the United Nations, New York.

Mr. Vidar Helgesen - Board Member

Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), since 2006. Norway's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2001-2005.

Mrs. Karin Jestin - Chairman of the Board

Secretary General of Fondation 1796, founded by the partners of Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch & Cie; former Director, FSG Social Impact Advisors; former Senior Advisor for change management at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Thierry Lombard - Board Member and Member of the Audit & Finance Committee

Managing Partner, Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch & Cie; Former Chairman, Geneva Financial Centre Foundation; Chairman and member of several humanitarian, charitable and business boards and foundations.

Amb. Jenö C. A. Staehelin - Vice Chairman of the Board

Member of the Board of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Member of the Board of the Kofi Annan Foundation.

Mr. Gerald Walzer - Board Member and Chairman of the Audit and Finance Committee

Former Deputy High Commissioner, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva.

Gen. Anthony Zinni - Board Member

Retired General from the United States Marine Corps. Various academic positions at the Virginia Military Institute, the University of California-Berkeley, the Joint Forces Staff College, the College of William and Mary, the Villanova University's Center for Responsible Leadership and Governance, and the Beloit College.

Director

Martin Griffiths - Director

Martin Griffiths has worked with UNICEF in Asia, in the British Diplomatic Service, and for British NGOs, latterly as Chief Executive of ActionAid. In 1994, he rejoined the United Nations (UN) as Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (which became OCHA) in Geneva, and then from 1998 as Deputy to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator in New York.

Vision & principles

Vision

The HD Centre aspires to become the reference organisation in the field of conflict mediation. This entails being:

- the place of practical and experienced advice on conflicts;
- the trusted and discreet adviser of those who wish to manage conflicts better, or to resolve them;
- the reliable and principled managers of different forms of mediation;

Principles

The HD Centre's professional conduct is guided by the following principles:

1. the belief in the value of dialogue as an effective instrument for peace;
2. the recognition that its own role in peacemaking is supportive, the principals being the leaders in conflict;
3. the recognition that, to fulfill its own responsibilities in peacemaking, its primary task is to earn and maintain the trust and confidence of the principals;
4. the knowledge that peace is too important to be left to principals alone, and that HD owes a collateral responsibility for its acts to those who aspire to live in peace;
5. the knowledge that creativity, a light but effective and efficient organisation, the taking of calculated risks, and the determined pursuit of opportunities for dialogue are necessary attributes of its work;
6. the expectation to be trusted for its discretion;
7. the recognition that there is a need for leadership that does not exalt the individual, and that competence is guaranteed by the institution;



Photo: PANOS/Sven Torfinn

Somali shopkeepers paint murals outside their premises in an attempt to establish a rule that people have to leave their weapons outside when they want to enter the shop.



Director Martin Griffiths.



The following is an extract from a speech given by the HD Centre's Director, Martin Griffiths.

The evolution of mediation

Mediation to resolve violent inter-state or intra-state conflict has been practiced for centuries as a quintessentially political activity. Third-party mediators were typically statesmen and diplomats representing their governments, although of course we have occasional examples of other actors, like religious groups, playing the role of the trusted intermediary or mediator.

The conflict mediation record of accomplishment over the last few decades is something to reflect on. More conflicts have been resolved in the last 20 years than in the last 200.

However, without a clear victory, and most conflicts have not been won outright, where peace had been made, the settlements are frequently fragile and vulnerable to reversal. This fragility is often compounded by the fundamental processes of transition, social changes and the inability of the outside world to understand or influence these changes.

As peace has been breaking out, so to speak, we have also seen a significant decline in the number and the intensity of armed conflicts and a tremendous increase in the number, scope and type of mechanisms for third-party conflict management, and these include:

- Real advances in peacekeeping
- New capacities at the UN
- Rise of regional organisations and players
- And finally the growth in opportunities for private, or unofficial, diplomatic initiatives.

However, reality is more mixed and this has implications for the kind of peacemaking (and peacemakers) we are going to need, as well as for the challenges we face in mobilizing and supporting them in an effective way.

Kenya

Helping deliver a globally renowned power-sharing agreement

The year began with a high-profile event for the HD Centre, working with Kofi Annan on the successful brokering of a power-sharing deal in Kenya.

Background

The Kenyan Presidential Election in December 2007, and the announcement of President Mwai Kibaki's re-election, resulted in accusations of rigging by the opposition Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). This sparked a political crisis, and violence in many parts of the country.

The Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation process brought together the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and the Party of National Unity (PNU), and its coalition partners to address four key agenda items to resolve the crisis. These were: immediate action to stop violence and restore fundamental rights and liberties; immediate measures to address the humanitarian crisis and promote reconciliation; how to overcome the immediate political crisis, and; long-term issues and solutions.

The HD Centre's involvement in Kenya in 2008

In January 2008, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked the HD Centre to provide support to him and the Secretariat of the AU Panel of Eminent African Personalities for the Kenya mediation process. The HD Centre seconded two staff members full-time to the talks, and provided strategic advice through its network of senior advisers. The HD Centre's contribution included logistical and technical assistance to the Secretariat, preparation of tools to facilitate the discussions, and support to the formulation of agreements on the political issues related to the crisis.

Achieving a power-sharing agreement

The dialogue process succeeded in bringing the parties together to sign agreements on the first two agenda items on 1 and 4 February which led to a reduction in the violence during the crisis.

The dialogue on the election dispute itself resulted in the signing on 28 February 2008 of a power-sharing agreement between President Mwai Kibaki and ODM leader, Hon. Raila Odinga. The arrangement included the creation of a prime ministerial post and the entrenchment of the agreement within the Constitution.



Photo: The United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)

H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan chairs a session between the two parties, Kilaguni Lodge, Tsavo National Park.

“The HD Centre seconded two staff members full-time to the talks, and provided strategic advice through its network of senior advisers.”

“The HD Centre’s discreet support and informed advice were invaluable during the intensive mediation process I led in Kenya. Their years of experience in different mediation processes proved to be extremely useful in helping reach an agreement between the two sides.”

H.E. Mr. Kofi A. Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

Following the signing of the power-sharing agreement, talks moved on to address long-term issues and solutions, resulting in further agreements between the parties on the establishment of:

- an Independent Review Committee on the conduct and outcome of the elections, to review the election crisis and offer recommendations on electoral reform,
- a Commission of Inquiry on Post Election Violence,
- a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission,
- a Constitutional Review Process.

Providing support and sharing lessons learnt

The HD Centre continued to provide support and advice to actors in the implementation process on request.

The HD Centre works to share learning broadly within the mediation community. Therefore, to make best use of the experiences of the Kenya process, the HD Centre is currently developing an analysis of the mediation process in collaboration with the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC, for publication in 2009.

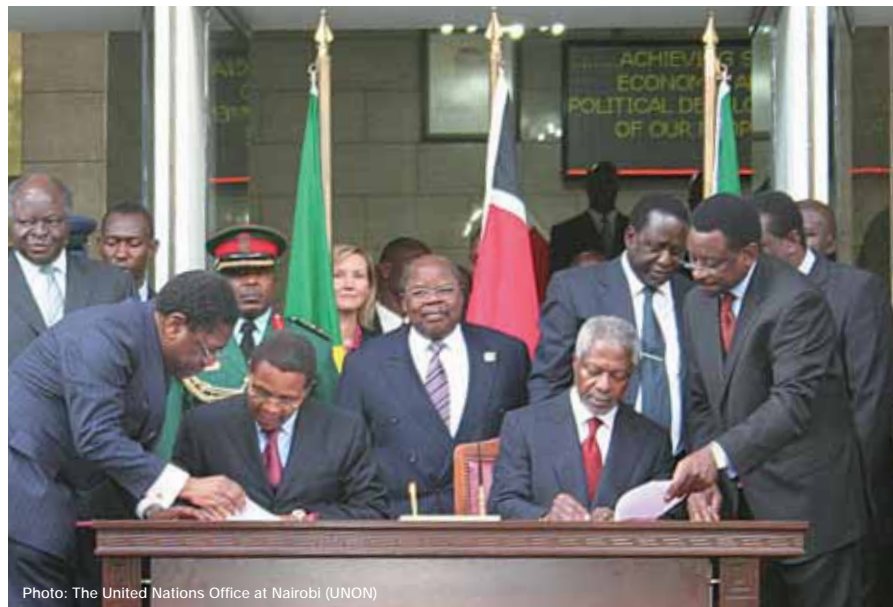


Photo: The United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)

H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan and President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania sign as witnesses to the power-sharing agreement - the National Accord and Reconciliation Act, 28 February 2008.



The HD Centre’s support to the mediation of the Kenya crisis contributed to the successful signing in February 2008 of a power-sharing agreement between the two parties.

Central African Republic (CAR)

Seeing it through: delivering the All-Inclusive Political Dialogue (AIPD)

The HD Centre's role in CAR culminated in the AIPD taking place in December 2008, laying the foundation for a peace settlement in the run-up to the 2010 elections.

Background

The HD Centre was given the mandate by Presidential Decree to chair the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) of an All-Inclusive Political Dialogue (AIPD) in the Central African Republic in November 2007. The PrepCom consisted of 25 representatives from six divergent political groups, including the presidential majority, democratic opposition, politico-military groups and civil society.

The HD Centre deployed an international team of six members from Ethiopia, Tanzania, Burundi, the USA, France and Spain. Senior staff, based at headquarters in Geneva, oversaw the process.

The HD Centre's involvement in CAR in 2008

The HD Centre chaired the PrepCom from 30 November 2007 until the end of April 2008, maintaining a liaison office in Bangui until June 2008. Chairing the PrepCom involved establishing daily agendas, planning activities for three-month periods, leading more than 30 plenary sessions, conducting debates and harmonising conflicting views, setting up and monitoring working groups, reporting and drafting consensus documents. At the end of its term, the PrepCom produced a comprehensive and consensual document as a basis for the AIPD.

The most important aspects of the HD Centre's activities in CAR in 2008 were to ensure: the participation in the dialogue process of the armed opposition; diplomatic support for the peace process and agreements; and the continuous briefing of and support to the process from regional and international actors (the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), Gabon, France, the European Union (EU), the USA and China). The successful navigation of the many political rivals in the CAR, and completion of the Preparatory Committee in good time, anchored the dialogue in an irreversible process leading to the effective holding of the AIPD in December 2008.

Soldiers of the Central African Government's Armed Forces (FACA) patrol in Markunda in the Central African Republic, 6 July 2008.



Photo: REUTERS/Staff Photographer

Securing the participation of the armed opposition

The HD Centre led a number of missions both within CAR, including to areas under the control of the armed opposition (Bozoum, Toumi, Paoua, Kaga Bandoro), and abroad (to France, Togo and Gabon) to brief and convince rebel leaders and exiled opposition political leaders to join the political process. On 23 April 2008, the HD Centre led an important mission to Libreville to start reconciliation processes among divergent armed groups and the Government.

The HD Centre completed its mandate in CAR by securing the full participation of the relevant actors, including all representatives of the armed opposition (UFDR, FDPC and APRD). When the field team left CAR, the HD Centre held a comprehensive internal debriefing in Geneva, on 6 June 2008. The HD Centre also briefed the UN Department of Political Affairs staff in a meeting organised by the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum on CAR in New York in May 2008, and maintained regular contact with the Mediation Support Unit of the UN, its stand-by unit and other actors.

In November 2008, President Bozizé announced that the AIPD conference would be held in Bangui in December. The HD Centre sent a representative to CAR to help facilitate the AIPD, alongside the United Nations and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

A roadmap in place towards the 2010 national elections

The outcome of the PrepCom was a consensual document laying out the roadmap for the AIPD, which took place in December 2008. During the PrepCom, the level of violence decreased in the north between government forces and the rebellion, permitting local people to return to their villages, and children to their schools.

The run-up to the 2010 national elections will be very challenging and will show how far the AIPD has contributed to creating a climate likely to allow fair elections and to anchor the country into a sustainable peace.

“The HD Centre completed its mandate in CAR by securing the full participation of the relevant actors, including all representatives of the armed opposition (UFDR, FDPC and APRD).”



Former Central African Republic President Félix Ange Patasse (L) and the leader of the main rebel group, the Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD), Jean-Jacques Demafouth (R) attend the closing session of the All-Inclusive Political Dialogue in December 2008 in Bangui.



The successful completion of the PrepCom led to the effective holding of the All-Inclusive Political Dialogue in December 2008.

Sudan (Darfur)

Addressing divisions within the Darfur opposition movements

As part of their joint mediation efforts, the AU and UN asked the HD Centre to work with the main opposition movements within Darfur to help resolve their differences – a major obstacle to the opposition’s participation in talks.

Background

In early 2007, the AU and the UN formed a joint mediation team to seek a negotiated settlement to the Darfur conflict. The mediation team aimed to create a comprehensive peace process. This depended on securing the participation of all of the now-splintered Darfur opposition movements – notably the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM).

Before negotiations could start, it was essential to address the divisions within the Darfur opposition movements, to enable their effective participation in the upcoming political process. The HD Centre was well placed for this task because of its long-standing relationship with the opposition movements, and detailed knowledge of the situation and players in Darfur.

The HD Centre’s involvement in Darfur in 2008

The AU/UN asked the HD Centre to second specialist staff members to the mediation team in late 2007. These secondments ended in summer 2008 when a new AU/UN Envoy was appointed.

During this time the HD Centre:

- opened channels of communication between the AU/UN mediation team and all levels of the Darfur opposition movements, increasing the movements’ ability to participate, and ensuring that current issues were communicated and dealt with,
- provided information and analysis to the AU/UN mediation team on developments within the opposition movements and on the role and position of individual opposition figures, relevant to the mediation,
- explored means of securing the future participation of non-participants, while keeping them informed about the process.

Going forward, building on 2008

The HD Centre has maintained dialogue with its contacts in the Darfur opposition movements, building on long-term cooperation and time on the ground in areas controlled by the opposition movements. This investment proved valuable to the inclusiveness of the peace process in early 2008. The HD Centre has refocussed its programme of work in Darfur to focus on the protection of civilians (see pages 26 and 27).

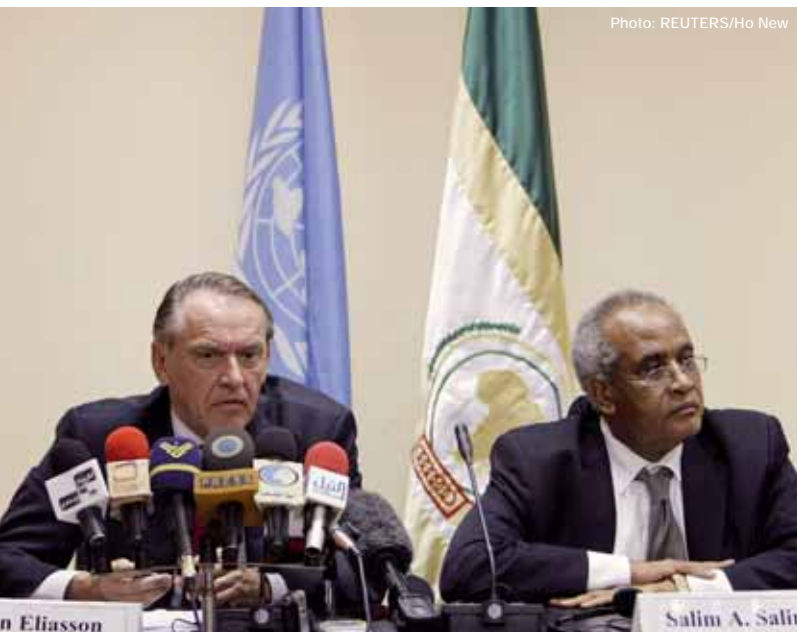


Photo: REUTERS/Ho New

Leaders of a rebel faction meet under a tree with African Union and United Nations Special Envoys for Darfur, near the village of Hosh in the northeast of Sudan’s Darfur region, January 2008.

“The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue has demonstrated that, as a non-governmental organisation, it is often in a unique position to develop links and relationships with rebel groups in order to bring them to the negotiating table.”

Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, Former Secretary General, Organisation of African Unity; Former African Union Special Envoy for Darfur

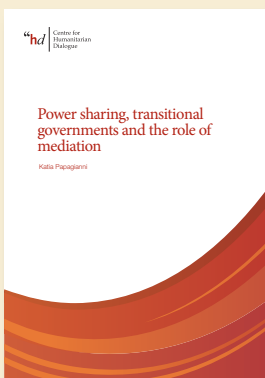


United Nations-African Union Special Envoys for Darfur, Jan Eliasson (L) and Salim Ahmed Salim, at a news conference at the UN headquarters in Khartoum, 19 April 2008.



The HD Centre has maintained long-standing contact with the Darfur opposition movements, helping to increase the inclusiveness of the peace process in 2008.

Mediation to support power sharing



‘The international community has an important role to play in assisting power-sharing governments to manage their countries’ political transition. Members of power-sharing transitional governments need to resolve major disagreements among themselves, which were not settled in peace agreements. Also, interest groups excluded from the peace talks may demand to enter the political arena before elections are held and challenge the legitimacy of transitional governments led by wartime elites. Both the sharing of power among former enemies and the demands of excluded opposition groups are difficult to manage and are potentially conflict-provoking. There is a role for external actors therefore, to assist transitional power-sharing governments in managing these various challenges.

‘The international community seems to underestimate the need for third-party political engagement during transitional periods. Greater attention is paid to talks leading to peace agreements, while the negotiations taking place during the transitional period are not always equally supported. The fact that a government of national unity is in place is often seen as the return to “normality” and as the beginning of reconstruction and other “post-conflict” activities.’

For more, read the HD Centre paper *Power sharing, transitional governments and the role of mediation*, by Katia Papagianni, 24 June 2008, at www.hdcentre.org

Myanmar

Influencing those who can make a difference

Political events were over-shadowed by a natural disaster in May 2008, but the HD Centre continued to monitor activities in Myanmar, and to encourage neighbouring countries to play an active role in promoting reform.



Photo: PANOS/Pat Brown

People receive donations of rice and cooking oil from a private international donor in Let Yet San, after Cyclone Nargis.

Background

In February 2008, the Myanmar government unexpectedly announced a referendum on the draft Constitution, catching opposition groups unprepared and without a clear strategy. However, the referendum was over-shadowed by Cyclone Nargis, striking the Irrawaddy Delta region on 2 May, which killed more than 100,000 people. Despite the scale of the humanitarian emergency, the Government went ahead with its controversial referendum in which it received 92 per cent of the vote.

The HD Centre's involvement in Myanmar in 2008

Throughout 2008, the HD Centre maintained regular contact with some of the key actors inside the country, as well as with the diaspora and the diplomatic community.

The HD Centre monitored political progress, with a view to developing new initiatives to encourage neighbouring countries to play an active role in promoting reform in Myanmar. It was encouraging to see Indonesia's willingness to take a lead in calling for faster progress towards political change in accordance with democratic norms.

Turning knowledge into critical advice

Through its interlocutors, the HD Centre was kept informed of Indonesia's initiative to form a focus group that includes Myanmar, China, India and Indonesia in New York in May, at which the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Ibrahim Gambari, was also present.

Although not directly in the forefront of the humanitarian relief operation following Cyclone Nargis, the HD Centre provided advice to diplomats, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General and the French Foreign Minister, journalists and members of the diaspora on ways to facilitate assistance to the victims of the disaster.

“The HD Centre monitored political progress, with a view to developing new initiatives to encourage neighbouring countries to play an active role in promoting reform in Myanmar.”



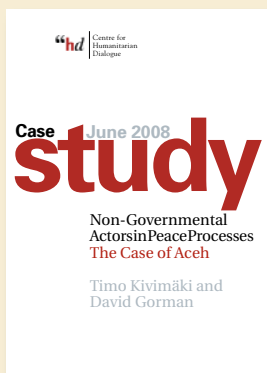
Photo: PANOS/Alayung Thaksin

The Yangon suburb of Shwe Pyi Thar, badly affected by Cyclone Nargis. Homes have largely been reconstructed but conditions are still very poor.



The HD Centre provided advice to diplomats, journalists and members of the diaspora on ways to facilitate assistance to the victims of Cyclone Nargis.

Non-government actors in the Aceh peace process



‘Southeast Asian peace and conflict scholars often assume a natural monopoly of states as agents in the security game. Regional political rhetoric reinforces the role of states as security actors. However, all the main conflicts in the ASEAN region have not been between states, but have been fought between civil society movements and states, so challenges to Southeast Asian security clearly do not come from state actors, but from non-state actors...’

‘Southeast Asian conflict resolution practice has recently been opened to a great deal of non-governmental third party involvement. This is why there is a need to reconcile the state-biased theoretical debate and the obvious empirical evidence to start systematically building understanding of peace processes where non-governmental actors have a significant role. The Aceh peace process offers an excellent case for this task, as this was where state-biased political thinking clashed so evidently with the need for flexible non-governmental involvement.’

For more, read the HD Centre paper Non-governmental actors in peace processes – the case of Aceh, by David Gorman and Timo Kivimäki, 20 June 2008, at www.hdcentre.org

Philippines

Working with many parties to maintain agreements and develop new initiatives

In 2008, the HD Centre worked with others to effectively reduce violence in the Philippines, developing several new approaches to find ways to resolve conflict and promote dialogue with three different armed groups.



Photo: JAY DIRECTO/AFP/Getty Images

Philippine protesters take part in a rally in Manila calling for an end to hostilities in the southern Philippines province of North Cotabato, 14 August 2008. The fighting erupted after the Supreme Court stopped the Government from signing a deal with the MILF.

Background

In 1996, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) signed an historic peace agreement that was intended to bring an end to the 25-year-old conflict. Unfortunately, key elements of the Peace Agreement are yet to be implemented and instability remains.

In August 2008, another key agreement, this time between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the GRP, was initiated but not signed after the Supreme Court declared it “contrary to law and the Constitution”. The peace process subsequently collapsed and 500,000 people have been displaced.

Throughout 2008, fighting also continued between the National Democratic Front/Communist Party of the Philippines (NDF/CPP) and the GRP. However, there was some progress in efforts to resume talks between the parties.

The HD Centre's involvement in the Philippines in 2008

In 2008, the HD Centre was involved on various fronts. It tried to help restart peace talks between the MILF and the GRP, and continued its efforts to help finalise the implementation of the 1996 Agreement with the MNLF, the GRP and the Organisation of The Islamic Conference (OIC). It also supported the work of the Sulu-based MNLF–GRP Peace Working Group, in preventing armed conflict between the MNLF and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

In addition, the HD Centre continued to administer the work of the NDF/GRP Joint Monitoring Committee.

“The HD Centre held the first of three workshops to help restart stalled talks between the MILF and the GRP by introducing fresh ideas into the process.”

MNLF: preventing violence and supporting the political process

In February, the HD Centre assisted the OIC in convening the second Tripartite meeting between the MNLF and the GRP. Held in Istanbul, Turkey, the talks resulted in an agreement by the GRP to review the current autonomy law on Mindanao and to continue with the work of the Joint Working Groups aimed at bridging differences between the two parties on the implementation of the 1996 Agreement. Both parties agreed to convene a third Tripartite meeting in 2009 to review progress.

The Armed Violence Reduction Initiative (AVRI), a multi-stakeholder body supported by the HD Centre, was further developed in 2008. The AVRI consists of representatives from the Provincial Government, the AFP, the Philippine National Police (PNP) and civil society groups representing women, youth, the Church and Islamic leaders in Jolo. It is responsible for helping to forge and implement twin resolutions banning the carrying of firearms and disbanding private armed groups.

The Peace Working Group and AVRI have conducted surveys, research, workshops and numerous public advocacy campaigns, including the launching of the Jolo Peace Zone in April, which was attended by the former Chairman of the HD Centre's Board, Mike Aaronson. To help with the programme, six field coordinators from throughout Sulu were hired to conduct outreach in the Province, and a Council of Elders was formed to oversee the implementation of the Peace Zone.

In Sulu, the HD Centre also continued with its efforts to curb violence. In late April, the HD Centre was directly responsible for preventing a major escalation of fighting between MNLF and AFP forces. Following a firefight between these parties in Indanan, Sulu, representatives from the HD Centre and the Peace Working Group secured an agreement between the two parties to stop fighting and return to their previous positions.



Former Chairman of the HD Centre's Board, Sir Michael Aaronson, launches the Jolo Zone of Peace with local officials, April 2008.

MILF: restarting talks

In September, the HD Centre held the first of three workshops to help restart stalled talks between the MILF and the GRP by introducing fresh ideas into the process. The workshop brought together experts on international constitutional law and representatives from the two parties to share and exchange ideas on how other countries have overcome constitutional challenges in peace talks. Future workshops will focus on the successful peace processes in Sudan and Northern Ireland.

NDF: supporting the facilitation

The HD Centre continued to administer the work of the NDF-GRP Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) in Manila, supporting its activities to promote human rights through outreach, advocacy, monitoring and reporting.

The JMC provided quarterly reports on activities and abuses of human rights in violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) signed by both parties in 1998.

On 13-15 May and 28-30 November, the GRP and the NDF/CPP held two rounds of informal peace talks in Oslo, Norway, facilitated by the Norwegian Government. Both parties conveyed a strong willingness to resume formal talks and to progress the work of the JMC. However, as neither side could agree on terms for a cease-fire, the resumption of formal talks remains to be negotiated.



In April, the HD Centre was directly responsible for preventing a major escalation of fighting between MNLF and AFP forces.

Somalia

Providing technical assistance, advice and personnel, working to reduce violence and support reconciliation and stability through political cooperation

The Djibouti Agreement and subsequent committees led to a ceasefire agreement and commitment to a shared unity government in Somalia in 2009. The HD Centre played a key role in supporting this process, providing technical assistance and advisers.

Background

The Somalia Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) were brought together in peace talks in Djibouti under the leadership of Ambassador Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN SRSG) for Somalia. The talks, beginning in June 2008, resulted in the signing of the Djibouti Agreement on 19 August 2008.

This framework agreement laid the foundations for a more comprehensive dialogue through a Joint Security Committee and a High Level Committee. The work of these two committees resulted on 26 October in a ceasefire agreement and a political statement outlining the two sides' commitment to an inclusive parliament, a government of national unity, and shared power and responsibility through political cooperation. These political agreements were elaborated on further in a statement on political cooperation on 25 November.

The HD Centre's involvement in Somalia in 2008

Ambassador Ould-Abdallah asked the HD Centre to support the ongoing mediation process resulting from the Djibouti Agreement. The HD Centre provided technical assistance on specific areas of the talks to the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) and the office of the SRSG.

The HD Centre worked closely with UNPOS on the overall structure of the dialogue in order to facilitate constructive discussions on technical issues and to provide advice on various options for political cooperation for the unity government.

Strengthening the Djibouti Peace Process

Using its technical expertise, the HD Centre assisted in strengthening the Djibouti Peace Process, particularly in the critical area of political cooperation. The main achievement of the process in 2008 was the agreement on a framework for political cooperation in the November round of talks.



Photo: PANOS/Pettrik Wiggers

A soldier loyal to the TFG guards the Benadir district (Mogadishu), much of which has been destroyed by years of civil war.

Photo: REUTERS/Antony Njuguna



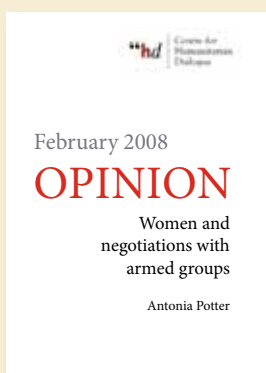
Somalia Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein speaks with the media during a news conference in Nairobi on forming a new cabinet to show quick progress on political reconciliation, 31 October 2008.

“The HD Centre provided technical assistance on specific areas of the talks to the UN Political Office for Somalia and the office of the SRSG.”



Through its technical assistance, the HD Centre assisted in strengthening the Djibouti Peace Process, particularly in the critical area of political cooperation.

Women and mediation with armed groups



‘While the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the 2005 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security are mainstays of the international discourse on peace and security, they are not fully implemented even in the most progressive democracies. Currently, for example, only one UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General and no EU Special Envoys are women. Additionally, women are not leading mediation efforts in any of the high profile or ongoing conflict resolution cases such as Darfur, Kenya, or the Middle East, though there are some eminent advisors such as Graça Machel involved in the Kenya mediation effort.’

For more, read the HD Centre Opinion *Women and negotiations with armed groups*, by Antonia Potter, February 2008, at www.hdcentre.org

Timor-Leste

Adapting to dramatic events and taking on a new role to deliver justice

In February, the HD Centre's role changed from mediator to facilitator of justice, overseeing the peaceful handover of the rebels.



Armed fugitives lay down their weapons following negotiations facilitated by the HD Centre, the Offices of the Prime Minister and President, the Church and Timorese security forces.



Timor-Leste army (F-FDTL), police (PNTL) and UN police with the fugitives Lt. Salsinha (standing, 4th from right) and Sgt. Maunana (standing, 5th from right) before their submission to justice.

Background

Following the 2006 crisis in Timor-Leste, the HD Centre began supporting negotiations between the Government and rebels led by Major Alfredo Reinado. On 11 February 2008, armed attacks on President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmao left the President seriously wounded. Major Reinado was killed during the attacks, in which Lieutenant Salsinha was also thought to have been involved.

The HD Centre's involvement in Timor-Leste in 2008

Before the attack in February, the HD Centre was supporting negotiations between the Government and Major Reinado. A meeting in mid-January between President Ramos-Horta, Major Reinado and Lt. Salsinha in the mountain town of Maubisse aimed to find a way out of deadlock. It concluded with the parties agreeing to schedule further discussions.

The impact of the attacks on the HD Centre's project in Timor-Leste was immediate. From supporting a dialogue process, the aim switched to bringing armed fugitives – Lt. Salsinha and his supporters – to justice. The Government was no longer open to dialogue, nor was public opinion in favour of Lt. Salsinha and his group.

Helping to bring fugitives to justice

The HD Centre set out to convince Lt. Salsinha and his armed supporters to lay down their weapons and submit to justice. Aware of the changed circumstances, Lt. Salsinha asked for his handover to be organised under the HD Centre's good offices. Negotiations were closely coordinated with Timor-Leste's Prosecutor General, the Offices of the President and Prime Minister, the national army (F-FDTL), national police and members of the Church. HD Centre representatives facilitated the handover of a total of seven individuals on different dates in March and early April.

The HD Centre, in coordination with the authorities, also put in place both the handover process and the complex logistical arrangements of the men's transfer from Ermera district in the centre of the country to Dili. Given the high risk of a flare-up in violence during the actual handover, HD Centre personnel provided protection to Lt. Salsinha and his men on the journey to Dili.

At the official ceremony to mark the occasion, President Ramos-Horta and the President of the Parliament thanked the HD Centre for its assistance and cooperation in enabling the handover process.

“[The Centre for] Humanitarian Dialogue have been an invaluable support to Timor-Leste in providing peaceful and impartial mediation and negotiation in response to significant national problems that arose out of the State Crisis of 2006.”

Dr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Republic of Timor-Leste

Ending the state of emergency

After the February attacks, the HD Centre's activities directly minimised instability and reduced the very serious risk of armed confrontation between the fugitives and the national and international security forces. The fugitives agreed to face justice for their actions, and their return to Dili helped to pave the way for the end of the state of emergency maintained since the attacks.

The HD Centre had been asked to look at options for setting up and then facilitating a process of national dialogue initiated by the President during the second half of the year, however, due to local sensitivities, the project was unable to begin in 2008.

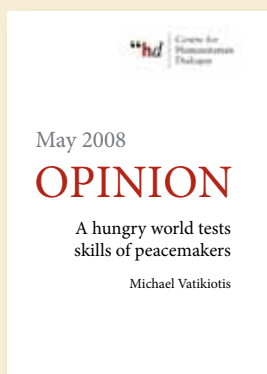


President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, Dr José Ramos-Horta and the HD Centre's Deputy Director, Mr. C. Andrew Marshall.



The HD Centre arranged and accompanied the peaceful handover of Lt Salsinha and his supporters during March and April 2008.

Conflict and food shortages



'War and hunger are inseparable: experience has shown the close relationship between economic distress and the outbreak of conflict. But the solutions the international community tends to apply are mostly political and rarely address material needs.

'So what happens when people are driven to kill one another for food? It's a critical question to ask as the world faces a sudden and unexpected food price crisis that is threatening to plunge millions back into poverty. 'The threat of conflict is real, both within and between states, as the trend towards liberalisation is suddenly reversed and replaced by subsidies, price-fixing cartels and export curbs. In Indonesia, a retired general recently warned: "If students demonstrate it's not a worry. But if hungry people take to the streets – now that's dangerous."

For more, read the HD Centre Opinion *A hungry world tests skills of peacemakers*, by Michael Vatikiotis, May 2008, at www.hdcentre.org

Mediation support programme

Helping regional organisations to improve their mediation practice

Building on its peacemaking experiences and that of other mediators, the HD Centre launched a mediation support programme in 2007, which expanded in 2008.

Background

The HD Centre's main objective through its mediation support programme is to strengthen the practice of mediation globally. It seeks in particular to assist mediation actors, such as regional organisations and governments, strengthen their mediation capacity, and to share experiences and knowledge in the mediation field by developing practical tools, training and other materials.



Mediation support programme activities in 2008

The Programme focused on four main sets of activities:

1. Strengthening the mediation capacity of the African Union (AU).
2. Strengthening the mediation capacity of The Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS).
3. Recording and analysing the HD Centre's own mediation work.
4. Beginning the development of a set of practical tools for mediators.

Collaboration with African regional organisations was prioritized because of the increasingly important role these institutions play in mediation and peacemaking without always having the necessary resources and expertise at their disposal. Strengthening their mediation capacity is therefore crucial to African peace and security. The HD Centre also emphasizes the importance of sharing experiences and knowledge within the mediation community as a means of making mediation processes more effective.

“African regional organisations play an increasingly important role in mediation and peacemaking without always having the necessary resources and expertise at their disposal.”

Photo: ECOWAS



IGAD and HD Centre representatives visit ECOWAS headquarters, September 2008.

ECOWAS Council of the Wise workshop, August 2008

The HD Centre facilitated a one-day workshop on mediation and conflict resolution, addressing the challenges facing mediation practitioners in Africa in general, and in West Africa in particular. Following this workshop, the HD Centre was invited by the ECOWAS Commission to hold a more detailed workshop in 2009, with both the Council of the Wise and ECOWAS envoys.

IGAD representatives visit the headquarters of ECOWAS, September 2008

The HD Centre arranged the visit of four representatives of the InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to the headquarters of ECOWAS in Abuja, Nigeria. The purpose of the visit was for the two organisations to begin a discussion on their peace and security architectures, and to identify common areas of interest and possibilities for collaboration. This visit was followed by the visit of six ECOWAS officials to the IGAD headquarters in Addis Ababa and Djibouti in February 2009.

Research on AU mediation work in Burundi and the Comoros, Summer 2008

Research on two case studies was carried out in order to assist the AU to build its institutional memory on its mediation work, and to discuss critically its past mediation efforts. The case studies will be completed in 2009.

Recording the HD Centre's mediation work, Summer 2008

The Mediation Support Programme began researching and recording the HD Centre's mediation work, as well as preparing a set of practical written tools for mediators.



In 2008, the HD Centre hosted a workshop for the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, arranged visits between organisations, and began research on mediation practice.

Security and violence reduction in peace processes

Generating analysis for policy and practice on security issues

Through this project, the HD Centre deepens its operational experience to promote informed decisions on weapons control and violence reduction in peace processes. In 2008, it produced and published strategic and targeted materials, including briefing papers, opinion pieces and country reviews.

Background

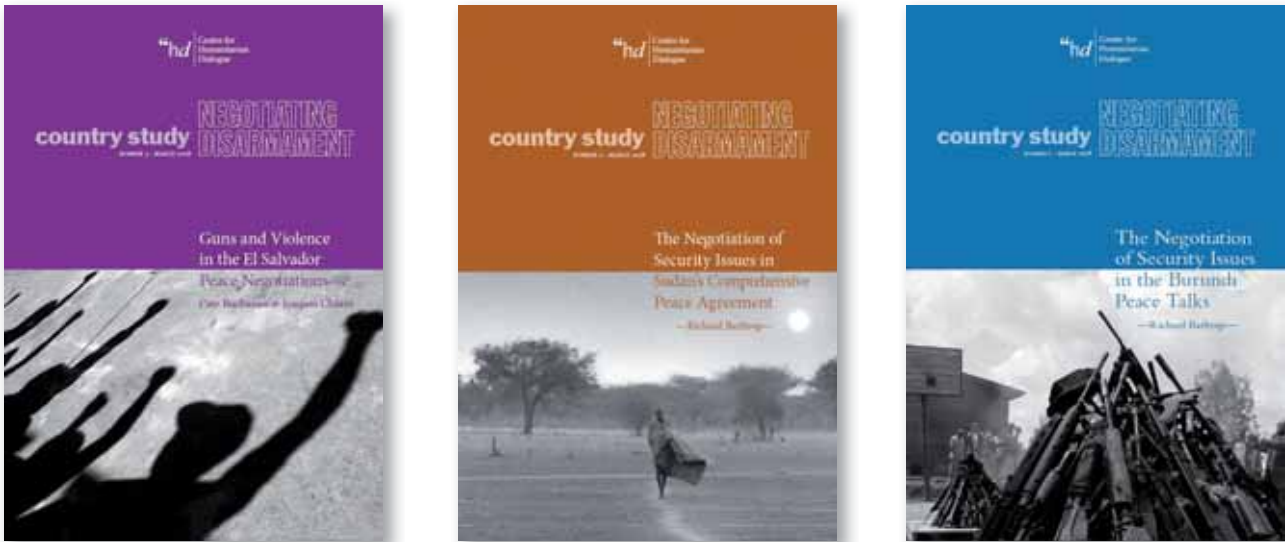
Through this project, the HD Centre makes use of its extensive network of contacts, and opportunities within its operational activities to draw greater attention to security issues. The focus on security and violence reduction in peace processes allows the HD Centre to pursue practical local action in situations where it operates, and to share knowledge through published materials.

Security and violence reduction activities in 2008

In 2008, the HD Centre produced several action-oriented publications on security and the reduction of armed violence in peace processes. Three country studies were produced, analysing the extent to which security concerns were included in the peace accords of south Sudan, Burundi and El Salvador. (For more details, please see pages 32–35 of this report.)

Two editions of *Viewpoints - Reflections on guns, fighters and armed violence in peace processes* were disseminated (in multiple languages), compiling seven opinion pieces cataloguing a range of experiences. This realised a central project objective of generating new and accessible analysis on multifaceted security dilemmas in peace processes. A briefing paper was also developed on tackling bombs, mines and explosives effectively in peace processes.

“Two editions of *Viewpoints – Reflections on guns, fighters, and armed violence in peace processes* were disseminated, compiling seven opinion pieces cataloguing a range of experiences.”



Country studies on El Salvador, Sudan and Burundi.

Sulu Armed Violence Reduction Initiative

At a local level, the Sulu Armed Violence Reduction Initiative (AVRI) was developed further in 2008 to complement the HD Centre's peace-facilitation efforts in the southern Philippines. Public forums, sporting competitions and radio plays were devised to stimulate community engagement on the extent of armed violence and the widespread carrying of weapons.

Jolo Zone of Peace

Support for the implementation of the Jolo Zone of Peace, officially launched in April, involved research and policy development. Through this project, the HD Centre also helped launch the first annual magazine, Sihmag (Tausug for 'glow'), offering a range of commentary on security concerns.



As well as working locally to develop community engagement on weapons control, the HD Centre produced a number of publications to better inform decision-making on violence reduction and security concerns by those directly involved in peace processes.

Civilian protection in Africa

Promoting understanding of the need to protect populations caught in conflict

Within its project on civilian protection in Africa, the HD Centre continued its work in Darfur and Somalia (until the middle of the year), and expanded its work to include the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo later in 2008.



HD Centre Senior Humanitarian Adviser, Dennis McNamara, arriving in Darfur, to hold humanitarian workshops with opposition movements, November 2008.

Background

The principle of civilian protection is at the heart of the HD Centre's mission and work. Its mediation activities seek to prevent or stop civilian suffering before, during and after war. The protection of civilians also often serves as a basis for common interests and as an introduction to more political mediation.

In recent years, the international community has shown an increasing commitment to the protection of civilians suffering in conflict at the hands of armed actors, including both governments and non-state actors. Yet conflict continues to cause extreme civilian suffering, especially across Africa, where in 2008 the HD Centre focused on civilian protection in Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Somalia.

Darfur: activities and outcomes in 2008

The HD Centre conducted a first humanitarian workshop with two of Darfur's main opposition movements, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement – Unity (SLM-Unity), in Geneva in July 2008. Additional humanitarian workshops with opposition movements (JEM and SLM-Abdel Waheed) took place in Darfur in November and December 2008. The workshops were aimed at raising key humanitarian issues of concern, and discussing the possibilities for future humanitarian dialogue involving the main Darfur opposition movements and the Government of Sudan, under the auspices of the UN.

Workshops held throughout 2008 facilitated direct contact between UN agencies and the opposition movements, helping to clarify the urgent need for closer cooperation. Consensus was built within the relevant UN agencies and UNAMID, the African Union/UN Hybrid operation in Darfur, as well as with NGOs, around the need for an inclusive mechanism of humanitarian dialogue. The major opposition movements agreed to cooperate on this, while others agreed in principle but also requested further discussion of details with the HD Centre and the UN.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): activities and outcomes in 2008

- In Eastern DRC, the HD Centre's aim this year was to assess possibilities for future humanitarian dialogue, including on the issue of preventing sexual violence, with the various groups and parties concerned.
- An exploratory mission was conducted in Kinshasa, followed by a mission to Eastern DRC over five days in October, and a subsequent debriefing at the HD Centre's office in Nairobi.
- Additional research and findings from the missions will provide the basis for assessing niches and possible areas of engagement in the DRC for the HD Centre in 2009.

Somalia: activities and outcomes in 2008

The HD Centre held a roundtable meeting on civilian protection in Somalia, in April 2008 in Nairobi. This resulted in a practical and strategic discussion on how to improve the protection of civilians in South/Central Somalia. The meeting highlighted the diverse perspectives of the many different actors involved, and the complexities of the humanitarian situation.

The consensus reached at the roundtable was that the humanitarian situation in Somalia was critical and worsening, and that the protection of civilians was a major concern. Participants agreed on the need for a sustained dialogue on protection of civilians with all stakeholders and that a humanitarian dialogue should be undertaken with the support of key international actors and fed back into the political dialogue process led by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG).

“The HD Centre conducted a first humanitarian workshop with two of Darfur’s main opposition movements (JEM, SLM-Unity) in Geneva in July 2008.”



HD Centre roundtable meeting on the protection of civilians in Somalia, Nairobi, April 2008.



The HD Centre has conducted humanitarian workshops and meetings, advancing the prospects of inclusive humanitarian dialogue in Darfur, and raising the profile of civilian protection in Somalia.

Strengthening the profession

Convening the world's foremost mediation practitioners to share learning and exchange ideas

The HD Centre continued the Oslo forum process in 2008, bringing together some of the world's most respected and influential mediators and other peace actors in Oslo and in Beijing.

The Oslo forum is now widely acknowledged as the leading international network of armed conflict mediation practitioners. It regularly convenes senior conflict mediators, high-level decision makers, key peace process actors, analysts, and experts from a variety of institutional backgrounds in a series of informal and discreet retreats.

Co-hosted by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the HD Centre, the Oslo forum features an annual global event in Oslo complemented by regional retreats in Africa, and Asia. Participation is by invitation-only. All discussions are confidential and take place under Chatham House Rule.

Asian mediation retreat 2008

15–17 March, Beijing, China

Co-hosted by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the China Institute of International Studies

Participants and format

The gathering in Beijing convened more than 50 mediators, experts and peace-process actors from Asia, including senior officials and envoys from China, India, Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore and the United States. Other attendees represented intergovernmental organisations including the

United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Participants from across the region used the retreat as an opportunity to discuss their own processes and learn about those of others during the official sessions and in informal bi-lateral meetings.

Highlights

- Chinese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr He Yafei, set the tone for a frank exchange of opinions by sharing his thoughts on China's growing engagement in the region, encouraging participants to learn from each other's experiences.
- A 'fireside' interview was given by one of Asia's most respected mediators, former Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, then Chief Adviser to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. With Thai journalist, Kavi Chongkittavorn, Ali Alatas discussed some of his most prominent peacemaking experiences, including those in Cambodia and in the past and current struggle for political change in Myanmar.
- Participants engaged in discussions on: the challenges of engaging extremists; mediation and security in fragile states; the link between energy and politics; and how best to identify the secrets of sustainable peace.



President Mohammad Khatami, Former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, gives the opening speech at the Oslo forum, 24 June 2008.

“The HD Centre has proved itself to be well placed for bringing together the most experienced mediators and peacemakers to share experiences from around the world. By building such networks we can improve the profession of peacemaking and the support provided to those mediators who work tirelessly to reduce the impact of violent conflicts.”

President Mohammad Khatami, Former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Oslo forum 2008

24–27 June, Oslo, Norway

Co-hosted by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Participants and format

With around 100 participants, the Oslo forum 2008 proved to be the biggest yet in the annual series. Participants included senior mediators, key actors from the UN and relevant regional organisations, representatives of national governments, special envoys and advisers charged with negotiating peace, and outstanding thinkers and analysts. The number of women participants in Oslo was the highest so far, and gender issues are gradually gaining ground in the discussions.

A large and varied cast of speakers continued the trend of confronting mediators with the perspectives of critical actors in peace processes, beyond their own peers. Combined with a strategy of designing the agenda around the expertise and interests of the participants, rather than abstract concepts, the approach proved successful and led to an exciting event. There was considerable discussion and networking activity both during and between sessions.

From left to right: HD Centre Director, Martin Griffiths, President Mohammad Khatami, Norwegian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Raymond Johansen, and HD Centre Senior Adviser Sir Kieran Prendergast.



Highlights

- The former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammad Khatami, gave the opening speech, sharing his reflections on the importance and challenges of dialogue. He openly engaged with participants in the subsequent question-and-answer session.
- A panel on the ‘prospects of mediation’, chaired by Lyse Doucet from the BBC World Service, featured the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, and the Director of the HD Centre, Martin Griffiths.
- The assembled participants were especially interested in a speech given by Lord Malloch Brown, Minister for Africa, Asia and UN, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, on the situation in Myanmar.

The two Oslo forum retreats in 2008 succeeded in attracting a larger and more varied group of relevant high-level participants. This broadening audience has helped to create networks and to facilitate crucial synergies within the wider conflict-resolution community, including mediators, international and regional decision-makers, conflict parties and donors. Participants increasingly report that they have relied on contacts made at the retreats and benefited from discussions to improve their understanding of key issues relating to their work.

“

Participants

increasingly report that they have relied on contacts made at the retreats and benefited from discussions to improve their understanding of key issues relating to their work.

Regional offices

Ensuring a flexible and constant presence in Asia and Africa

Although it has headquarters in Geneva, the HD Centre also benefits greatly from a permanent presence in both Asia and Africa.

The HD Centre, Singapore

Extending the HD Centre's reach in Asia

Over the course of 2008, the HD Centre extended its influence through the Asia regional office in Singapore by reaching out to the conflict-management community in South Asia. The successful Asian Mediation Retreat 2008, part of the Oslo forum series, held in Beijing in March, was partly organised through the Singapore office (see page 28 for details). The Asian office also helped to develop and maintain high-level relations in the region, ensuring constant interaction with government officials and eminent personalities.

Aiding operations in Timor-Leste and the Philippines

At an operational level, the Asia regional office worked closely with field offices on a number of mediation projects. Staff members based in Singapore travelled to Timor-Leste and the Philippines to support project activities, and contributed to groundwork for a number of potential new operational projects in the region. The Asia regional office was also involved in planning, researching and building networks to expand work on thematic areas such as women in peacemaking, and arms reduction.

Dialogue workshop in Manila

In July 2008, the HD Centre held a workshop in Manila, Philippines, on assessing the effects of dialogue on violent, non-state armed groups. The event was supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAP) in the Philippines. Security officials and experts attended from various countries.

Research on conflict management

Towards the end of the year, the HD Centre received a grant from the MacArthur Foundation to conduct a comparative study of conflict-management practices in India, Indonesia and the Philippines. This two-year project will be managed through the Asia office in Singapore, in close cooperation with partner organisations in the relevant countries.



The HD Centre Asia regional office in Singapore.

“The HD Centre extended its influence through the Asia regional office in Singapore by reaching out to the conflict-management community in South Asia.”

“Through its Nairobi office in 2008, the HD Centre provided support to mediators, such as in Kenya and Somalia. In other places it acted as a direct interlocutor, usually discreetly.”

The HD Centre, Nairobi, Kenya

A key role in the Kenyan election-crisis agreement

The HD Centre regarded 2007 as ‘The Year of Africa’, and the trend continued in early 2008 with the organisation’s close involvement in the mediation around the Kenyan election-crisis and power-sharing agreement brokered by Kofi Annan. The Director of the HD Centre, Martin Griffiths, acted as a Senior Adviser to Kofi Annan, and staff from the Africa regional office formed part of the core team providing both advisory and operational support. (For more details, please see pages 8 and 9.)

Somalia roundtable in Nairobi

In mid-2008, the HD Centre convened a roundtable meeting on Somalia, through the Africa regional office, and as part of its project on Civilian Protection in Africa. The meeting brought together humanitarian and other actors for a practical and strategic discussion on how to improve the protection of civilians in South/Central Somalia. (More details are given on page 27.)

Working with regional organisations

Much of the year’s work through the Africa office involved mediation support to key regional organisations, including IGAD, ECOWAS and the AU. The HD Centre continued developing a series of programmes with these organisations, with the aim of helping to improve mediation practice across Africa. (More details can be found on pages 22 and 23.)

A ‘basket of approaches’ to mediation on the continent

Through its Nairobi office in 2008, the HD Centre provided support to mediators, such as in Kenya and Somalia. In other places it acted as a direct interlocutor – usually discreetly. In yet other locations, such as Darfur, the focus was on civilian protection. The HD Centre also provided support to regional institutions and disseminated lessons learnt to support mediation efforts more widely.



The HD Centre Africa regional office in Nairobi, Kenya.



A permanent presence on both of these continents is critical to the HD Centre’s ability to stay informed, connected and to act quickly.

Publications

Through the production and targeted publishing of documents and frequent opinion pieces in newspapers, the HD Centre promotes its key messages, and maintains its visibility in policy debates on political and conflict-related issues

The complete text of all the following 2008 publications can be found on the HD Centre's website at www.hdcentre.org. Permission for their use and reprinting is given, as long as this is accompanied by full credit to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and reference to its website.

Opinions

The faltering Asean way

Michael Vatikiotis
28 October 2008

Alarming signs of democracy being derailed

Michael Vatikiotis
11 September 2008

A hungry world tests skills of peacemakers

Michael Vatikiotis
23 May 2008

There's still time for the peacemakers

Michael Vatikiotis
23 April 2008

High drama in the Himalayas

Michael Vatikiotis
2 April 2008

Women and negotiations with armed groups

Antonia Potter
February 2008

Rise and fall of an autocrat

Michael Vatikiotis
28 January 2008

Will war lead to peace in Sri Lanka?

Ram Manikkalingam
21 January 2008

Asean's charter hangs in the balance

Michael Vatikiotis
9 January 2008

Viewpoints, papers and reports

Puntos de Vista - Reflexiones sobre Armas

Combatientes y Violencia Armada en Procesos de Paz - Volumen 2

Editado por Cate Buchanan
30 November 2008

Viewpoints - Reflections on guns, fighters and armed violence in peace processes - Volume 2

Cate Buchanan (Editor)
30 November 2008

Annual report 2007

HD Centre
18 August 2008

A role for the private sector in peace processes?

Examples, and implications for third-party mediation

Salil Tripathi and Canan Gündüz
24 June 2008

Against conventional wisdom: mediating the Arab–Israeli conflict

Ezzedine Choukri-Fishere
24 June 2008

China's role in the mediation and resolution of conflict in Africa

Dan Large
24 June 2008

Power sharing, transitional governments and the role of mediation

Katia Papagianni
24 June 2008

It ain't over 'til it's over: what role for mediation in post-agreement contexts?

Elizabeth Cousens
24 June 2008

Gender sensitivity: nicety or necessity in peace process management?

Antonia Potter
24 June 2008

Non-governmental actors in peace processes. The case of Aceh

David Gorman and Timo Kivimäki
20 June 2008

Négociations de paix au Burundi – Une justice encombrante mais incontournable

Caroline Sculier
30 May 2008

Peace without justice? The Helsinki peace process in Aceh

Edward Aspinall
April 2008

The negotiation of security issues in Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement

Richard Barltrop
30 March 2008

The negotiation of security issues in the Burundi peace talks

Richard Barltrop
30 March 2008

Guns and violence in the El Salvador peace negotiations

Cate Buchanan and Joaquín Chávez
30 March 2008

The Korean Peninsula conflict: mediation in the midst of a changing regional order

Samuel S Kim
17 March 2008

Resources, rising powers and international security

C. Raja Mohan
15 March 2008

Prospects for Pakistan

Owen Bennett-Jones
15 March 2008

Viewpoints - Reflections on guns, fighters and armed violence in peace processes - Volume 1

Cate Buchanan (Editor)
1 March 2008

Puntos de Vista - Reflexiones sobre Armas, Combatientes y Violencia Armada en Procesos de Paz - Volumen 1

Editado por Cate Buchanan
March 2008

Les peces perdudes - Guia per reduir la violència armada a través de l'acció parlamentària

HD Centre i la Unió Interparlamentària
28 February 2008

Guide de la médiation

Hugo Slim
21 February 2008

Présencia proactiva - Estrategias de terreno campo para la protección de la población civil

Resumen
Liam Mahony
11 February 2008

Présence proactive - Stratégies déployées sur le terrain pour la protection des civils

Résumé
Liam Mahony
11 February 2008

Las piezas perdidas del puzzle: Una guía para reducir la violencia armada a través de la acción parlamentaria

HD Centre y la Unión Interparlamentaria
16 January 2008

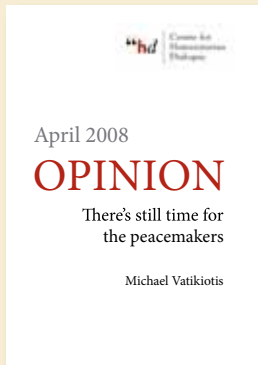
Pièces manquantes du puzzle: Guide pour faire reculer la violence armée par l'action parlementaire

HD Centre et l'Union interparlementaire
16 January 2008

Interpreting violence – Anti-civilian thinking and practice and how to argue against it more effectively

Hugo Slim and Deborah Mancini-Griffoli
16 January 2008

Opinion highlights

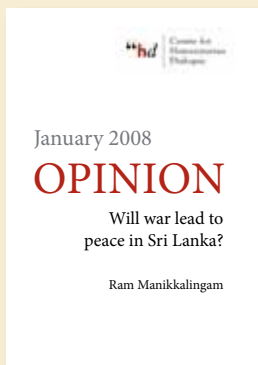


There's still time for the peacemakers

by Michael Vatikiotis

23 April 2008

Southeast Asia four years ago seemed on the brink of an era of creative regional diplomacy, but those expectations were not realised. Using the examples of Malaysia and Indonesia, Michael Vatikiotis examines the failures to transform visions into policies, and draws lessons from those failures. He argues that there is still time for the regional powers to make a contribution to peacemaking, but that this will involve changes to those powers' institutional decision-making and conduct of diplomacy.

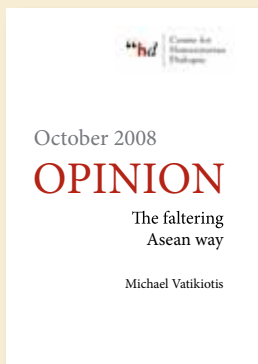


Will war lead to peace in Sri Lanka?

by Ram Manikkalingam

21 January 2008

With the abrogation of the six-year long Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers Tamil Eelam (LTTE), finally putting an end to the country's phoney peace, it seems that both parties have decided that war is inevitable but also necessary, before any fresh process can emerge. But what will war lead too? The author presents three possible scenarios, ranging from the LTTE being defeated, weakened, or emboldened from the fighting. In all cases however, Sri Lanka's friends, in the region and outside, will have the same constructive role to play to help the country move towards the more hopeful outcomes of the war. Such role will include: helping the Government fulfill its responsibilities of upholding human rights and laws of war, as well as providing humanitarian assistance; impressing on the LTTE that they must respect the laws of war and emphasize that their future role as serious political interlocutors depends on their conduct during the conflict; prodding the two parties to lay out their respective visions of a political settlement without evading it; and helping amplify those voices in Sri Lanka which support a solution respectful of all communities in an undivided country. These steps are uneasy, but not impossible. Those seeking peace must begin their plans.



The faltering Asean way

by Michael Vatikiotis

28 October 2008

Southeast Asian nations have lived in relative peace and harmony for the past half-century. But they have been reluctant to formalise the mechanism by which regional peace is maintained: the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This opinion piece explains how the region's political pluralism and nations' resistance to formalising security cooperation have made it hard for ASEAN to establish a regional consensus on dispute resolution. Collective security is still overpowered by domestic politics. The ASEAN Charter, however, lays good foundations for building a framework for dispute resolution for the region. But for the Charter to be effective, member states must agree to give up some of their sovereignty in the interest of collective security, and open the door to regional mediation.

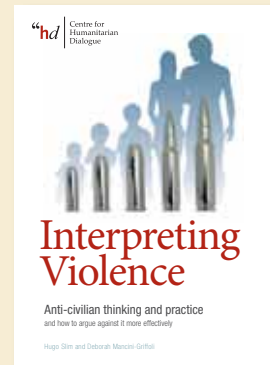
Publication highlights

Interpreting violence – Anti-civilian thinking and practice and how to argue against it more effectively

by Hugo Slim & Deborah Mancini-Griffoli

16 January 2008

More often than not, anti-civilian violence is deliberate. It is agreed, pre-planned and carried out to order. The purpose of this short guide is to help anyone concerned with the protection of civilians to think through the anti-civilian ideologies and methods being used in a war, so that they can better recognise them and negotiate against them more effectively to limit violence against civilians.



Peace without justice? The Helsinki peace process in Aceh

by Edward Aspinall

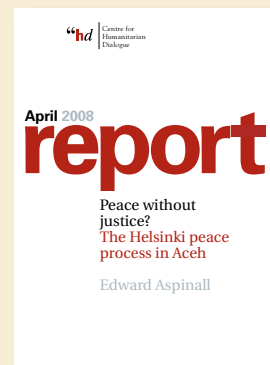
April 2008

Négociations de paix au Burundi – Une justice encombrante mais incontournable

by Caroline Sculier

30 May 2008

These two reports were developed as part of a series of publications on justice issues in peace processes. *Peace without justice?* looks at the inclusion of justice and human rights issues in the 2005 Aceh peace process, while *Négociations de paix au Burundi*, available in French only, looks at the way justice issues were approached in the Burundi peace process, in particular the debates which led to the Arusha agreement.



The negotiation of security issues in the Burundi peace talks

by Richard Barltrop

30 March 2008

The negotiation of security issues in Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement

by Richard Barltrop

30 March 2008

Guns and violence in the El Salvador peace negotiations

by Cate Buchanan & Joaquín Chávez

30 March 2008

This series of three country case studies looks at weapons and security issues in peace processes.

- The first study looks at how the key actors in the Burundi peace process tackled complicated security issues and the needs of those who survived armed violence.
- The second study, on Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which ended the second Sudanese civil war in January 2005, deals with issues of guns and violence, and outlines how the parties' lack of trust led to a deliberate avoidance of commitments related to security and weapons control.
- The third study, on El Salvador, looks at how the various negotiators of the El Salvador peace process approached the issues of: disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of rebel and government forces; security-sector reform; control of the vast quantities of weapons in circulation; and strategies for assisting those traumatised and disabled by armed violence.



HD Centre funding

Partnership with donors worldwide

Funding development

During 2008, the HD Centre explored ways both to expand the number of its donors and to strengthen relationships with current donors. A flexible strategy to build stronger relationships across the funder spectrum is now in place, and includes engagement with philanthropy and associated foundations.

The HD Centre is an independent organisation funded by a variety of sources. A number of donors provide un-earmarked financial contributions while others donate funding to specific projects. This flexible funding structure provides the resources essential for the organisation to pursue its mission while remaining independent.

Operational staff members have developed and increased their direct contacts with donor sources in countries where the HD Centre works, particularly via the regional offices in Nairobi and Singapore. These have led to funding successes for Somalia, Sudan and the Philippines.

In 2008, the HD Centre attended the Global Philanthropy Forum, the Peace and Security Funder's Group annual meeting, the Responsible Business Summit and the International Fundraisers Congress. Through these and other routes, the HD Centre has engaged in discussions with a number of non-governmental potential funders and network agents.



Photo: iStockphoto

Additional funds raised

As well as long-term donor contributions, the HD Centre also received additional funds from AusAID, the Danish Government, the MacArthur Foundation, TOTAL, Sweden, and the Dutch and British embassies in Manila. Going into 2009, further funds were received from the European Commission and the Swedish International Development Agency, plus an extension of a multi-year funding agreement with the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID).

Impacts of the global economic crisis

As financial problems in 2008 developed into a global economic crisis, exchange-rate fluctuations had a direct and unforeseen impact on budgets at the HD Centre. Securing funds largely in currencies that were reducing in value and spending in those that were increasing in value (the US dollar and Swiss franc), the HD Centre could not avoid the negative effects of a rapid and significant reduction in the value of donations.

Donors' interest in and commitment to the work of the HD Centre are however, still strong, and there are grounds for optimism that contributions will remain stable in 2009. However, the HD Centre is maintaining a highly prudent approach to current and planned work levels, as a consequence of global events.

The HD Centre took steps in the fourth quarter of 2008 to increase its ability to manage foreign-exchange positions via currency accounts at a local, state-controlled bank.

“This flexible funding structure provides the resources essential for the organisation to pursue its mission while remaining independent.”



Operational staff members have successfully developed increased contacts with local donor sources, leading to funding successes for Somalia, Sudan and the Philippines.

Personal experience of mediation to avoid violence



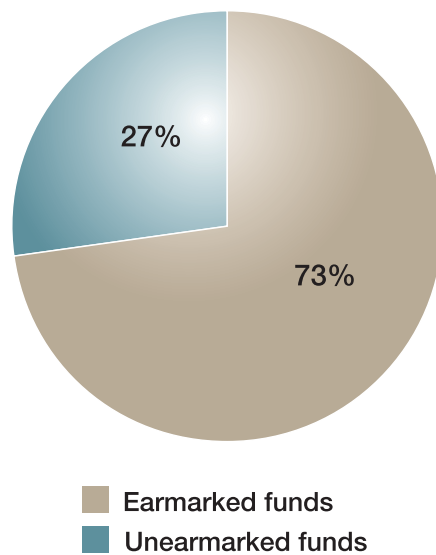
“Peace mediation was supposed to be far more glamorous: crafting deals between leaders, arguing about the best venue for talks or the shape of the negotiating table, or maybe meeting charismatic rebel leaders deep in the jungle. But crossing live minefields on foot? This had never been raised as a possible essential component of promoting a standard peace plan. Why was this necessary? And what exactly were we doing?”

“The position of mediators and advisers in peace negotiations is one that comes with no textbooks. One of the many issues that third parties need to navigate with belligerents is the reconfiguration of security.”

For more, read the HD Centre publication *Viewpoints – Reflections on guns, fighters and armed violence in peace processes - Volume 2*, edited by Cate Buchanan, November 2008, at www.hdcentre.org

Financial statement

A summary of key financial measures for 2008

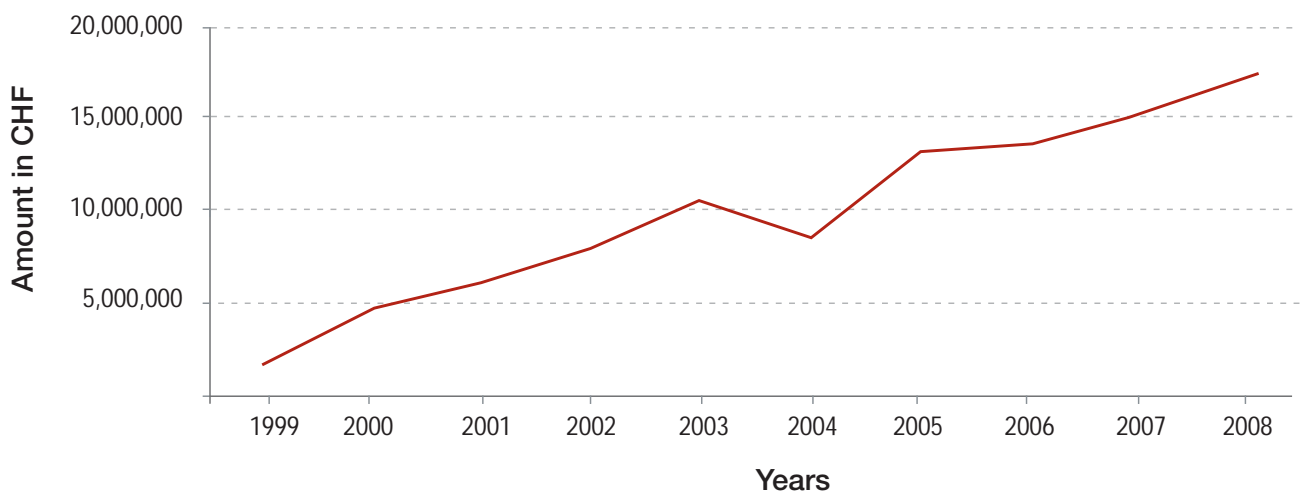


Income

In 2008, the HD Centre had an overall contribution of CHF 17,110,550 of which CHF 12,521,909 (73%) was earmarked to specific projects, and CHF 4,588,641 (27%) was un-earmarked funding.

Major donors in 2008 included Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom (DFID), Ireland and Denmark. Most funds allocated directly to projects (earmarked) were provided by Norway, Australia, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden, TOTAL, DynCorp and Canada. Un-earmarked funds were contributed mostly by Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (DFID) and Ireland.

Income for the last 10 years: 1999–2008



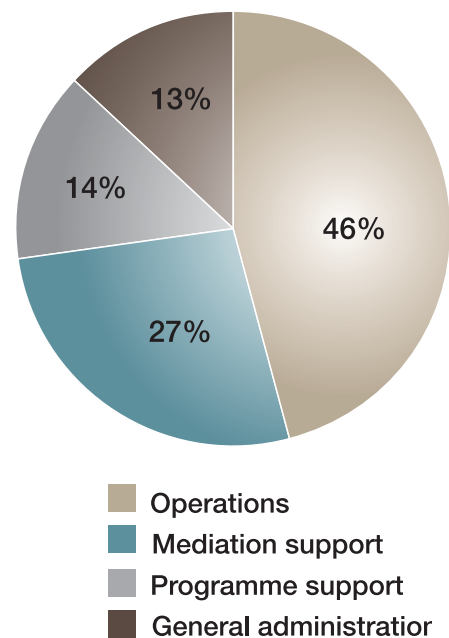
“Major donors in 2008 included Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom (DFID), Ireland and Denmark.”

Expenses

In 2008, the HD Centre's total expenses amounted to CHF 16,530,347, compared to CHF 14,717,685 in 2007. This increase of approximately 12% on the previous year was mainly in support of an HD Centre presence in New York.

Operations refer to the HD Centre's operational activities in response to a conflict, while mediation support refers to the support provided by the HD Centre to the wider mediation community, improvement of the practice of mediation and knowledge sharing within the profession generally.

Expenses appearing under the programme support category include activities undertaken in direct support of the above described activities. These expenses include external relations, fundraising, IT and the costs of maintaining a regional presence in Singapore, Nairobi and New York. General Administration refers to the costs of maintaining a headquarters in Geneva and includes human resources, administration, finance and governance expenses.



Comparison of expenses: 2008 and 2007

Amounts in CHF (in '000)

	2008	2007
Operations	7,583,551	7,480,495
Mediation support	4,551,258	3,588,234
Programme support	2,312,422	1,533,650
General administration	2,083,117	2,115,306

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on this report and on the HD Centre's work

The HD Centre is interested in what you have to say about the activities in this annual report. If you would like to comment, or to find out more about any aspect of the work covered here, please write to:

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