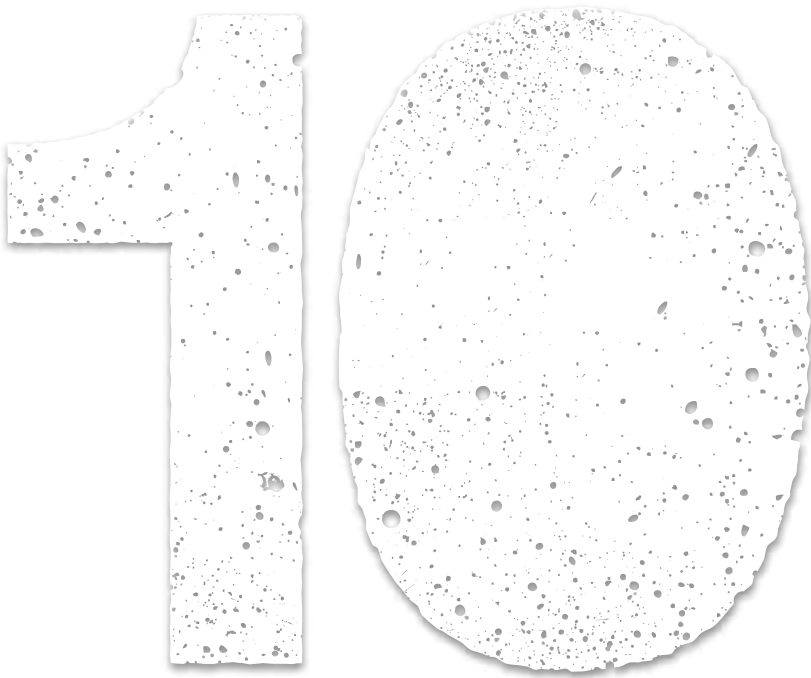


Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Mediation for peace 1999—2009



Centre for
Humanitarian
Dialogue



10 YEARS
Mediation for peace
1999—2009



Mediation for peace

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) is an independent mediation organisation dedicated to helping 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.

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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.

MARTIN GRIFFITHS

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DIALOGUE

Letter from the Director

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, now known as the HD Centre, was launched in January 1999.

The occasion was marked by a meeting in a beautiful villa kindly lent by the City of Geneva. In attendance were the leaders of humanitarian agencies, senior UN officials and the Vice-President of Colombia, representing his President who had been detained in his country by the need to respond to an earthquake. The meeting, distinguished by its participants and their speeches on the humanitarian situation in Colombia, was the HD Centre's first attempt to deliver on its original humanitarian mission: a place for discreet discussion of delicate humanitarian issues.

Only later that same year however, with the arrival of the first four full-time staff, did we clarify the HD Centre's focus and truly begin our journey. That first team (three of which are still with the organisation) occupied temporary premises in an attic loaned by one of our Board members. The team had all spent most of their professional lives in humanitarian agencies and came to the HD Centre with a passionate belief that we should do what we could to stop wars and to prevent them: not to improve humanitarian aid, but to eliminate the need for it.

In Aceh, the HD Centre found its first opportunity and its first test. In the autumn of 1999, we secured the agreement of the Indonesian President and the leadership of the armed opposition movement (GAM) to a first historic meeting in January 2000 in Bavois, Switzerland, the country seat of one of our Board members. Both sides committed themselves to dialogue as a means of reaching peace. Only five years later, and with the help of President Martti Ahtisaari, they realised that goal.

The journey, from four frustrated humanitarian workers in a loft in Geneva to an organisation that is now one of the world's principal armed conflict mediators, has not been without difficulty or mistakes. And we hope that we learn from them. Certainly, those involved in the hard efforts to make peace have no shortage of errors and failures from which to learn. I can still vividly recall the advice of one, more experienced friend who, noting my euphoria on the signing of the Aceh cessation of hostilities agreement in 2002, wryly told me to enjoy it while it lasted. He was right. Five months later, the fighting had resumed.

However, that experience taught us that the greater part of a mediator's work is in the small things that nudge a process forward towards peace. It is those little steps in the right direction that we have learned to value and to celebrate.

Our world has changed immeasurably this decade. When the HD Centre began, with great presumption, to imagine a place for itself as a mediator, the space for “private diplomacy” – for the unofficial mediator – was indeed limited. Many welcomed our arrival, but others also saw it as a threat to the established order, where mediation was the preserve of governments and official organisations. In a small way we have tried to expand the opportunities for parties to conflict to see and obtain the benefits of different kinds of mediators. We have witnessed a gradual transformation of the terrain. It is now common place for non-governmental organisations and private individuals to be a part of mediation efforts led by officialdom, and sometimes even to lead those efforts.

This “deregulation” has its advantages and its costs. The risks of unethical or unaccountable mediation have grown. Co-ordination of the humanitarian community is now an accepted fact. The same is not true of the mediation community. We have agreed, and will continue to press for more coherence, more co-operation and ultimately better performance. Our Board, a vital and unsung part of our story, is devoted to this long-term goal.

A final word on one matter that cries for our attention: peacemaking is dominated by the decisions of men, both as mediators and as those who direct conflicts. Addressing the issues of principal concern to women, and to bring about their participation in the councils of peace is a priority. It will radically improve the chances of sustainable peace. We had been as slack in this as others. As we learn about the things which, together, make for a successful peace, we know that this is about as central an issue as any other, perhaps more so.

It has been a special privilege these ten years to meet and gain the confidence of those who have known war too well and now make peace. It is in the courage and vision of these leaders, in the armed groups and governments they have opposed, that we have found hope, an aspiration for a return to lives more ordinary, where families can steadily build a better future for their children.

I am sure the next ten years will be as demanding, and as stimulating as this past decade. We all feel an extraordinary privilege to be able to do what we do, and will continue to strive to work with the humility that this deserves.



Martin Griffiths
Director

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Mediation for peace 1999—2009



A decade of growth and diversity in mediation

Over the ten years since the HD Centre's peacemaking debut in Aceh, Indonesia, recognition of the merits of mediation and demand for dialogue have greatly increased.

The frequency of peacemaking has increased, its effectiveness has improved, and there is now a wider diversity of actors. Still, global rebalancing and the changing environment of conflict have made mediation more complex. Notable recent interventions by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Kenya, and the former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), may have reinforced perceptions of conflict mediation as high-wire diplomacy performed by the eminent. But these negotiators drew on experience gained in recent years in a proliferation of efforts by less prominent individuals within the UN, regional organisations, individual states and private peacemaking organisations, such as the HD Centre.


More conflicts have been settled by negotiation during the last two decades than in the previous 200 years, partly due to the opportunities for peacemaking created by the ending of the Cold War. The early years of the 21st century witnessed a significant decline in the number and intensity of armed conflicts, particularly in Africa where many civil wars had seemed intractable, and mediation has helped end conflict in Aceh, Northern Ireland, the Ivory Coast and Kenya.

Hostilities between states, which are mainly mediated by other states, became fewer, accounting for only 3 of 34 major armed conflicts in the decade to 2007. The Georgia–Russia conflict of 2008 was the first new conflict between states since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2004.

Most violent conflicts are now waged by governments and non-state armed groups for territorial, ethnic, religious or resource interests, or a potent cocktail of some, or all of these elements. In these new battlegrounds, issues of national sovereignty tend to disadvantage state mediators and open possibilities for private mediators. Although the number of formal peace processes underway at any given moment is limited, the boundaries of mediation have become more elastic and activities exploring or preparing for mediation are much more widespread, although often confidential.

New and diverse mediators

Peace processes have improved with practice, and are now the most reliable form of ending conflict. With the rise in the number of peacemaking efforts has come increasing recognition that different conflicts and stages of conflict can best be served by different types of mediation



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and mediator. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the UN held the primary role and its critical advantages of legitimacy and breadth of operations still make it a central player. But UN involvement, often appealing to non-state armed groups seeking greater recognition, is equally resisted by governments on grounds of national sovereignty or for fear of internationalising a domestic conflict. Moreover, the UN can only be as effective as the support of Member States permits, and the work of the Department of Political Affairs has so far been severely constrained by a lack of resources and capacity.

Meanwhile, the list of official actors has lengthened. Regional organisations, particularly in Africa, and many individual states have started to take a more active part in mediating conflicts within their regions. Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Qatar and many more are developing a profile in mediation. These nations are joining established mediators such as Norway and Switzerland, which put this role at the centre of their foreign policy.

The other area of significant growth has been the number of independent mediators. Some of these are private organisations such as the HD Centre, Kreddha and Interpeace. Others

are built around prestigious individuals, including the Carter Center, established by the former US President, Jimmy Carter, the Crisis Management Initiative of the former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, The Global Leadership Forum, the Elders, or the Kofi Annan Foundation.

What does the HD Centre contribute?

Who mediates what and when is difficult to define, and is dependent on an array of different factors – from the balance of forces that are party to the conflict, to the line-up of international stakeholders – but a number of patterns have emerged. Regional organisations and states now have an advantage in mediating inter-state conflict. Private mediators, however, have a clear advantage in dealing with conflict parties that officials of other states find difficult to accept as partners.

In this context, the HD Centre has no inhibitions and is willing to talk to anyone. Its aim is only to save lives by halting armed conflict and by improving the global response to it. The HD Centre is also part of the growing trend towards ‘hybrid’ mediation that draws on the resources of a combination of actors rather than a single mediator. Just such an effort was attempted through painful

negotiations in Darfur, but came together quickly and efficiently in Kenya behind Kofi Annan who was acting as mediator on behalf of the AU Panel of Eminent Personalities. Both the UN and the HD Centre contributed materially to the success of that process.

The formula is challenging in a profession that lacks co-ordination and common standards. It is an example of how mediation has become more creative and professional in the past decade, but also more untidy. These are issues that we hope will be addressed in the near future.



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Aceh

Since 1999, the HD Centre has been involved in a number of conflicts around the world. One of the first projects was in Aceh, Indonesia where the HD Centre initiated the dialogue process laying the foundations for eventual peace.

In November 1999, in response to a request by Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid, the HD Centre initiated a dialogue between the Government and the separatist movement Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), or Free Aceh Movement, to try to end the conflict in Aceh. The talks led to a 'humanitarian pause' in 2000, and to a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in December 2002.

The HD Centre set up a Joint Security Committee of unarmed military officers from the Philippines, Thailand and Norway to monitor implementation of the agreement. This was the first time such a group had ever been led by a private organisation. However, three months later, the ceasefire collapsed and the conflict resumed.

In January 2005, after the tsunami, the two sides resumed talks, this time mediated by the former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari in Helsinki, where they signed an agreement in August 2005.





Views from Javier Solana

Javier Solana, former Foreign Minister of Spain and Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), left the European Union after ten years as the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). He joins the HD Centre as Honorary President in its tenth year and takes this opportunity to air his opinions of peacemaking.

Peace is an achievable goal. It can be reached through clear and concrete steps that have a tangible and lasting impact.

Throughout my career as a politician and diplomat, the root causes of problems and their solutions have systematically been brought to light by talking. Parties to conflict have built common ground and developed solutions only by communicating with each other. Whether conflict is fuelled by politics, economics, human rights or any other issue, its fundamental cause is normally the break down of dialogue. Even when not in fashion among the world's most influential nations or regional institutions over the past few years, dialogue has always been essential to progress. The skill of an effective mediator is in how to use this dialogue well.

Despite an increasing number of armed conflicts being fought within state borders, their effects are still felt by other states and regional players. These then become a fundamental part of the peacemaking process. Mediation requires consideration, understanding and empathy with a large number of such stakeholders. Forging an agreement with conflict parties alone may produce an agreement, but peace is unlikely to last if it runs contrary to the interests of powerful neighbours.

I argued constantly while working for the European Union that conflict resolution must be central to the foreign policy strategies of western governments. However, while the weight of the mediator can certainly contribute to pushing a process towards peace, it is quiet diplomacy that often has the greatest effect. Conflicts can provide fertile ground for the growth of extremist, terrorist and criminal organisations. Engaging with these kinds of armed groups is sometimes difficult for states but less problematic for private mediators such as the HD Centre. It is not easy, but for a small unofficial organisation, the constraints are fewer. Sometimes their work never reaches the public domain.

There are times when pressure, force, and even military action, can contribute to ending conflict but this must be balanced with sensitive mediation on every occasion. In Iran, for example, economic, political and even military pressure cannot be effective unless a way out is provided through dialogue.

Sometimes, the large and powerful institutions that I was so privileged to lead were not those best placed to conduct the discreet communications which are needed. Instead, a private mediation organisation such as the HD Centre can be more suitably designed to manage confidential processes and to build more personal relationships.

It is a privilege to be associated with such an organisation where the impact of dialogue is at the forefront of everything it does and I hope our partnership in the future will be a fruitful one.

Mediation ten years on

What does the mediation landscape look like a decade after the HD Centre opened its doors?

The HD Centre reaches its ten-year anniversary at a critical time for the practice of mediation. After a period of confrontation marked by the ‘war on terror’ and the polarisation of international relations, there is renewed demand for diplomacy and negotiation. Recognition of the benefits of dialogue and mediation, and the value of providing support to those best placed to conduct it, have never been higher. Yet in several respects the peacemaking enterprise faces crisis, and the prospects for peace appear bleak in many places.

Key trends in mediation

Despite the main trends in recent years for growth in negotiated settlements to armed conflict and the overall reduction in the number of conflicts since a peak in the early 1990s, the world is far from pacific. There is still a prevalence of sub-national violence attributable to bandits or criminal gangs and a resistance to traditional peacemaking.

Five other notable patterns have particular implications for mediation as practised today and for what might be needed to make it more effective in the future:

1. Where peace has broken out, especially in many African conflicts but also in other contexts such as Afghanistan, settlements are fragile and vulnerable to reversal. The durability of settlements is increasingly recognised as the relevant standard for judging the efficiency of conflict management.
2. A few regions remain conflict-prone, notably Central/South Asia, the Middle East, and the Horn of Africa, and are characterised by increasing regional linkages.
3. There are more conflicts driven by global or local resource and economic factors (including, for example, oil and food prices, climate change, water scarcity and population growth).
4. Political Islam and Islamic groups are significant in many conflicts either as a ‘language of opposition’ to the state, or as an instrument of state power.
5. The US-led ‘war on terror’ has encouraged a tendency to regard many non-state armed groups and conflicts primarily through the lens of terrorist threat. This has proved unhelpful in understanding individual conflicts, and creates challenges for mediation even during the present ‘era of engagement’.

The acid test of implementation

Recent experience, including in the DRC, Kenya, Sudan and Nepal, has confirmed that reaching an agreement is a considerable but not sufficient achievement in peacemaking. The real work begins as implementation is tested by the hesitation of the signatories, deficiencies in national capacities, failings of international actors, and the presence of a complex array of spoilers. The proliferation of peace agreements reached and then soon breached, neglected or distorted, fuels the perception of a crisis in implementation.

Challenges in post-conflict situations highlight vital local concerns. This is forcing today's mediators to consider ways in which agreements can be improved, and how they may work more productively with local partners to generate and sustain domestic pressure on elites. The essential task of any peace process is now recognised to be the fostering of domestic ability to lead and manage sustainable political processes after a conflict's end.

How does the HD Centre fit in?

The HD Centre's approach is to improve the response to armed conflict through direct or indirect mediation and by strengthening mediation

capacity. This translates into three main forms of engagement:

1. As a private mediation organisation, the HD Centre is well placed to explore dialogue with non-state groups that may contribute to 'ripening' a situation for mediation.
2. The HD Centre undertakes mediation between high-level representatives where it can add value to the process, either alone or in partnership.
3. It also assists mediation by other, mainly official actors by giving advice, personnel and operational support, including expert and analytical resources.

This engagement may involve sustained in-country operations, as in the Philippines, public dialogue processes, as in the Central African Republic, or supporting an individual mandated to mediate, as in Kenya in 2008. The HD Centre's Mediation Support Programme contributes to the professionalisation of mediation by working with regional organisations. In all these ways, the HD Centre draws on past mediation experience to contribute to improved peacemaking and sustainable peace in the future.



Views from Jonathan Powell

Jonathan Powell, HD Centre Senior Adviser and the former Chief of Staff to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at the time of the Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland, offers a personal view on the mediation environment.

The trend in recent years towards conflict within, rather than between states means more opportunities for private mediators. In the polarised world of the Cold War, mediation was conducted by the UN or not at all, because interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign state was almost impossible. Private mediators now provide expertise across a spectrum of activity. That includes analysis and advocacy, undertaken by organisations such as the International Crisis Group, as well as mediation by the Nobel Peace Prize winner, President Martti Ahtisaari, and by the HD Centre.

Efforts to resolve conflict and to protect civilians from it have also become more acceptable. In the Cold War environment, conflicts in Africa attracted little international attention. Foreign governments show more care now because pictures quickly appear on 24-hour television news channels, the public reacts and politicians soon feel the pressure of public opinion.

The conflict mediation environment has become more complex during the past decade. There are sometimes a number of distinct but interrelated conflicts within state borders, such as in Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. There is also wider concern because borders are becoming less relevant, as demonstrated by the spread of international terrorism and conflicts across regions. In such situations conflict resolution can be likened to a three-dimensional game of chess rather than the more conventional draughts.

The global war on terror made the environment even more complicated for conflict resolution efforts. Talking to the enemy was seen as appeasement and was often prohibited. This is now recognised as a mistake. There is no example of a conflict resolved exclusively by armed action.

President Obama's administration has changed the paradigm again, this time towards engagement and dialogue. This encourages contact and a more positive environment for mediation efforts.

Successful conflict resolution entails addressing the concerns of the community from which insurgents draw support, and those of the insurgents themselves. It is necessary for conflict parties to articulate their political demands to each other for consideration.

Private organisations cannot act as powerful states, in the way that the British Government could in Northern Ireland for example, where it was able to shape security and economic policies. However, in certain contexts it is easier for parties to accept the support of private organisations such as the HD Centre in dialogue processes, rather than a government or the UN. And the HD Centre has shown a remarkable ability to make contact with the right people in organisations that are not easily accessible.

Still, private organisations would benefit from greater co-ordination, information-sharing and strategic partnerships, harnessing different skills and resources to apply to the increasingly complex task of mediation.

Mediation in the next decade

Peacemaking still has much to prove – and the future promises an increasingly complex environment.

Mediators believe that they have contributed to this decade's decline in the number and intensity of armed conflicts. Despite the growth in scope and recognition of mediation over recent years however, there are the same major epicentres of conflict today as a decade ago – in Sudan, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan and South Asia. Prospects for peace or stability there remain bleak. The waning intensity of political violence in the early years of the new millennium seemed to begin a reversal in 2008, as conflicts escalated in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Indeed, several states – Sri Lanka, Georgia, Russia and Israel – shunned mediation or negotiation and chose military action to tackle their security concerns.

Several peacemaking initiatives, such as in the DRC and Sudan, have proved inadequate. Some peace settlements are fragile and vulnerable to reversal, calling for greater attention to implementation. Peacemakers also face new challenges as they increasingly encounter criminal as well as terrorist networks, and the global economic crisis of 2009 has reduced resources available for addressing such phenomena. The arrival of the Obama administration in the United

States has at least lifted the mood in international diplomacy. Its overtures to Iran, Syria, Cuba and Myanmar already mark significant shifts in keeping with President Obama's promise of a 'new era of engagement'. However, the US retains the heavy footprint of a global superpower, and engagement will probably come with a robust defence of its strategic interests.

In the meantime, peacemaking initiatives are being redefined by the rising assertiveness of Russia, China, India and Brazil, as well as regionally active states such as Turkey and Iran. The fluidity of their strategic interests and the jostling of regional hegemonies are potentials for new tensions and conflicts both within and between states in the decade ahead.

At the same time, mediation is facing increasing linkages between conflicts that were previously distinct. This phenomenon is not new: Nepal's Maoists took ideas from Peru's Shining Path. But the trend towards the regionalisation of conflict is becoming more pronounced, particularly where states are weak and borders permeable, encouraging the flows of people, weapons, resources and ideologies.


The challenges for mediators

The intertwining of conflicts in regions of high strategic importance creates an environment of considerable complexity, and a greater need for mediators to engage with regional networks. Such an environment may favour hybrid mediation by a combination of official actors, regional organisations, or regionally active states, and private mediators leveraging their particular advantages in reaching non-state armed groups.

Mediators will have to contend with these issues in a legal environment still complicated by the legacy of the war on terror. The Obama administration's rhetoric of engagement has not unravelled the legal constraints imposed on contacts with proscribed groups and individuals and its implications for mediators. Nor is it clear how the US – and other official actors – will approach those whom they had labelled terrorists, as illustrated by questions within the US administration on whether or not to talk to the Taliban.

At the same time, mediators are still learning the implications of developing international jurisprudence. The International Criminal Court's indictment of Sudan's President Omar Al Bashir

Peace settlements are proving fragile and vulnerable to reversal, calling for greater attention to implementation.



showed how legal initiatives can complicate the process of peacemaking. That precedent and the awareness by individuals and organisations, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, of the potential for prosecution may impose further limits on mediation.

The prevalence of international crime is a threat that is outside the scope of peacemaking and a challenge to it. Mediators engage as a matter of necessity with groups involved in politically motivated violence. However, the growing intrusion of crime into areas of conflict affects how mediators deal with armed groups that may be motivated by the perceived benefits of criminal acts. This will force mediators to carefully consider the limits to the value of dialogue.

Improving co-operation

The desire for both co-operation and co-ordination between mediators is increasing. These have proved elusive in a competitive operating environment that trades on discretion and relationships of trust. However, more could be done to explore strategies that minimise the risk of peacemakers working at cross-purposes. It is also necessary to address other weaknesses

apparent in mediation efforts: superficial understanding of conflicts, inconsistent standards, and strategies that are easily manipulated by conflict parties.

Whether or not mediators are able to co-operate, it is the sustainability of peace settlements that is the standard by which their conflict resolution interventions will increasingly be judged. This will focus attention more clearly on implementation arrangements, both in reaching an agreement and in tackling any subsequent crisis of implementation.

As the most prominent mediation actor, the United Nations is the logical leader for efforts to improve co-ordination. However, the international consensus that supported the UN's primacy after the Cold War no longer exists. This leaves the UN with reduced credibility and capacity. The global and regional politics of peacemaking are driving a shift towards regional organisations and actors, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, but there is little evidence of any other actor, official or private, being willing or able to take a lead.



The Philippines

The resolution of armed conflict requires addressing a range of concerns, including prevention and reduction of armed violence, even after agreements have been reached. Working from Manila with representatives in Sulu and Cotabato, the HD Centre supports dialogue processes to help reduce armed violence.

The HD Centre has been working in Mindanao since 2005 when it initiated informal talks between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). It set up an office in Jolo, Sulu to help prevent and resolve clashes between the army and the MNLF and, in 2009, created Tumikang Sama Sama (together we go forward), a group of eminent persons that uses local methods to prevent and resolve conflict. The HD Centre has also begun an Armed Violence Reduction Initiative, which includes a multi-stakeholder group that aims to reduce violence through research, policy work and advocacy.

Its experience in Mindanao has enabled the HD Centre to advise the Government, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Malaysian facilitator on ways to shore up their peace process following the resumption of hostilities in 2008. After bringing experts and eminent persons to speak with both sides, in 2009, the HD Centre was asked to join and serve as coordinator of an International Contact Group comprised of representatives from the Governments of Japan, Turkey, the United Kingdom and three other non-governmental organisations. The goal of the group is to advise the parties, support the formal resumption of the peace talks and work with all sides towards a negotiated settlement.





Views from Michael Vatikiotis

Michael Vatikiotis, the HD Centre's Asia Regional Director, has been a writer and journalist in Asia for twenty years having lived in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Here he describes the growth of peacemaking activity in Asia where the HD Centre has been operational since 1999.

Many Asian states are cautious about accepting external mediation, and are highly sensitive to outside interference. However, it was in Asia that the HD Centre began mediating in armed conflict. We continue to experience demand there for a range of services characterised by professionalism, expertise and impartiality in dialogue processes, whether confidential or public.

The HD Centre began mediating in Aceh in November 1999 at the request of Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid. Sensitivities over the internationalised conflict in Timor-Leste made the involvement of the UN, or any of its member states, impossible. By contrast, the HD Centre, as a small organisation based in neutral Switzerland, presented a discreet alternative. We worked without a public profile, keeping a minimal expatriate presence in Aceh and limiting our role to bringing the parties together in a dialogue process that they owned.

In 2002, that dialogue process led to the first formal ceasefire in the Aceh conflict. We set up a unique monitoring team of experts and military officers from Norway, Thailand and the Philippines to support the implementation of the agreement. Unfortunately, Indonesia's military and the Free Aceh Movement were not ready for peace. It took another three years of negotiation before a peace agreement was finally achieved.

In 2004, the HD Centre appointed a Singapore-based representative. In 2005, we started working in the southern Mindanao region of the Philippines, to sustain an existing peace agreement between the Philippine Government and the Moro National Liberation Front. We have supported a dialogue process between the Government and different parties to the conflict ever since.

Building on experience in Aceh and on its network of relationships in the region, the HD Centre has also worked with parties in conflict in Myanmar and Timor-Leste where we mediated between the Government and armed non-state groups and helped with judicial procedures to reduce instability.

In 2006, the HD Centre opened a regional office in Singapore. From here, we have broadened the scope of our activities to a number of other Asian countries and established a mediation support programme to help others build their conflict management. We have also hosted meetings of peacemakers from across Asia in Singapore and Beijing to review mediation throughout the region and to share experience.

Although we sometimes need to proceed slowly to consolidate a process that will deliver positive results, the presence of an HD Centre regional office in Asia helps us to quickly identify and respond to peacemaking opportunities and to ensure a more effective response.

The day of the diplomat

A safe channel of communication between governments and non-state armed groups is an important, if unpublicised, function of private diplomacy.

Governments have often talked to terrorists, sometimes discreetly through the HD Centre's good offices.

Dialogue is essential to warring parties' understanding of each other, and in determining whether and how they can achieve their interests by means other than violence. Without some form of communication, there is little alternative to conflict. Providing a safe channel of communication between governments and non-state armed groups is an important, if unpublicised, function of private diplomacy.

Traditional diplomacy and conventional peace-making mechanisms created in the aftermath of World War II were designed to deal with wars between states. They are increasingly at a disadvantage now the majority of conflicts are within states. In countries such as Spain, Thailand, Turkey and the Philippines, and across sub-Saharan Africa, most armed conflicts are between governments and non-state armed groups. Wars are no longer purely local, and criminal and terror networks thrive in environments of political collapse and social dislocation. In recent years, talking to conflict parties has become more difficult, particularly since the events of 11 Septem-


ber 2001, and especially if they are labelled as terrorists. Governments often no longer have the time or resources to track small wars effectively, and increasingly turn to private individuals and organisations for a range of services, including political analysis and even mediation expertise.

The case for private diplomacy

Governments and the United Nations, traditionally held the lead role in mediating conflicts, but increasing capacity is also available from other sources. More and more mediation is carried out by regional organisations such as the AU and the Arab League, private organisations and individuals. During the successful mediation in Kenya in 2008, Kofi Annan led a hybrid secretariat of both UN and HD Centre personnel who provided advice and technical support.

Private organisations and individuals are able to go to places and talk to people inaccessible to government officials – and without attracting as much attention. Lacking the official baggage of a government or the UN, they can respond more quickly and more flexibly to fast-changing events.

Mediation by private organisations entails more than just listening. It also involves identifying



Dialogue is always worthwhile if there is a chance that it will lessen the human costs of conflict.

options and shaping solutions for the conflict parties, and providing a range of other services in support of the process. These can range from marshalling expertise in elections or power-sharing arrangements to providing training in negotiating skills for non-state armed groups experienced only in warfare, and providing efficient logistical and operational back-up to a mediation process. Proactive support can raise awareness among insurgents of the possibilities for political engagement, and create its own momentum towards ending violence.

The HD Centre's private diplomacy is aggressively impartial and non-judgemental. We will talk to anyone – including al-Qaeda. We believe that dialogue is always worthwhile if there is a chance that it will lessen the human costs of conflict. For us, talking to a non-state armed group implies nothing more than recognition that it is a party to conflict and is simply part of a process to establish whether it is possible to come to an agreement.

The competitive edge of private diplomacy is perhaps clearest in intra-state conflicts of limited scale. Here, organisations like the HD Centre can be effective in a pathfinder role, particularly among groups at the hardcore-militant end of the spectrum where most others fear to tread. They are able to search for negotiating partners, and encourage talks onto a trajectory that leads to mediation in the hope of ending hostilities.

As conflict resolution becomes more crowded, pressure grows for greater professionalism and for more flexibility in matching different skills to the needs of different stages of mediation. This means that on occasion, the most effective approach requires turning to private diplomacy.

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Peacemaking in practice





Views from David Lambo

David Lambo, HD Centre Senior Adviser for Africa, served the UN in Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Geneva where he was the Director of the Africa Bureau of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In this interview he looks at some of the HD Centre's work in Africa, which includes supporting African regional organisations.

The African continent, host to some of the world's most persistent and intractable conflicts, is at the same time ahead of most other continents in developing institutional mechanisms for managing them. The African Union (AU) and several sub-regional bodies such as, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have all set up dispute-resolution mechanisms.

African nations want African solutions to their problems but, in contrast to some other regions where there may be some sensitivity to external involvement, the principle of mediation is well-established in Africa. In the event of crisis, it is generally accepted that Africa's regional bodies and their member states can play a major role in any mediation between parties to a conflict. In stark contrast to other regions, where mediation tends to be informal and less institutionalised, inter-governmental bodies in Africa tend to dominate the conflict management and resolution process.

Africa's regional institutions have not always regarded mediation as a professional discipline and have sometimes responded to conflicts with *ad hoc* measures. Mediators in Africa, after they have brokered an initial peace agreement, may not always have the opportunity or time to address the root causes of a particular conflict. Their interventions need support mechanisms and expertise in addressing issues that contribute to disputes. A major area of HD Centre activity has therefore been the provision of support to African regional bodies through its Mediation Support Programme in collaboration with its regional office, which opened in Nairobi in 2007.

In Zanzibar, in March 2009, the HD Centre's Africa Mediators' Retreat, part of the Oslo forum series of meetings, identified constraints in staffing, logistics, and funding as contributing to weaknesses in implementing mediation and conflict management initiatives. In discussions about specific conflicts, and the environment for mediation in general, it repeatedly emerged that there was a need for more co-ordination between mediating bodies, as well as between mediators and others involved in peacemaking efforts.

African organisations that are engaged in conflict management increasingly recognise the need to professionalise their mediation services. The HD Centre therefore provides technical support for developing capacity in mediation mechanisms, as well as negotiation and communication skills. The HD Centre also helps to build contacts and to share experience between regional bodies, undertaking studies of mediation processes, such as in the Comoros and Burundi, and of preventive diplomacy in West Africa. The HD Centre values the recognition of its credentials as an independent, impartial Swiss-based organisation. Only by building a reputation for professionalism will regional bodies develop the confidence to request its support.

The HD Centre has proven experience in opening dialogue with non-state armed groups that may eventually then lead to negotiations. However, part of the challenge in mediating between these groups and governments is their lack of capacity to prepare for and participate effectively in negotiations. That is another area in which the HD Centre believes it can make a contribution to peacemaking in Africa.

The value and challenges of confidential processes

Peace is not an event but a process. For mediators in that process, confidentiality is both a necessity and a curse.

Public engagement with organisations named on terrorist lists, is proscribed. In many conflicts it may sometimes take years to harmonise multiple interests in support of participation in a peace process.

As a result, peace negotiations often begin through discreet ‘back-channels’. This enables governments and non-state armed groups to explore the potential of communication with each other, either directly or through a third party. Public knowledge of such a process could cause controversy, threaten the security of those involved or put future negotiations at risk. Confidentiality is therefore often a precondition for dialogue.

As discussions proceed, negotiators can have as much to conceal from their own constituency and allies as they do from each other. Confidentiality allows them to discuss or make concessions without the knowledge of the people to whom they are accountable. Peace in Northern Ireland emerged from years of confidential contacts that publicity would have sabotaged.

Private mediators have distinct advantages as channels for discreet or even deniable dialogue

between governments and non-state armed groups that are keen to maintain contact. In such mediations, the United Nations or other official mediators are at a significant disadvantage. They may be limited in whom they can engage with and can find it difficult to maintain a low profile. Their involvement may also be resisted by states that fear perceptions this may create of their own ability to manage internal problems. For private mediators with fewer resources and a lower profile, access and managing discreet processes is less problematic.

Managing discreet processes is one of the HD Centre’s strengths and where there is a proven track record. However, this does add an extra layer of complexity to peace processes. It limits the possibilities of building wider support for a process. It can also complicate the process of implementing peace agreements, as negotiators attempt to explain the commitments they secretly made to those they represent.

Confidentiality does not guarantee a successful peace process, but it can help get a process started and keep it on track until such time as the benefits of publicity can take over.



Nepal

An unquestionable principle of the HD Centre is its commitment to discretion and confidentiality where necessary. The following takes a look at the HD Centre's six-year long confidential efforts to resolve the conflict and bring about peace in Nepal.

In August 2000, the HD Centre opened a discreet channel of communication between the Government of Nepal, and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) (CPN-M), to help them achieve a negotiated settlement to the conflict between them. Throughout 2001 and 2002, HD Centre representatives travelled regularly to Nepal to meet both sides.

After a ceasefire in January 2003, we provided technical and logistical support to four designated national facilitators of the peace process. In August 2003, following the collapse of the ceasefire, we re-engaged the Royal Palace and the senior leadership of the CPN-M in confidential dialogue. Throughout 2005 and 2006, the HD Centre identified issues and created opportunities for the parties to negotiate while building support for the process among other political stakeholders.

In November 2006, the two sides signed a peace agreement formally ending the conflict.





Sudan

The HD Centre's involvement in efforts to resolve a conflict has to be flexible to respond quickly to developing needs and a rapidly changing context. In Darfur, the HD Centre's long-standing involvement has evolved from bringing the parties together for the first time to supporting processes led by others and mediating around humanitarian issues created by the conflict.

In April 2003, the HD Centre became one of the first international organisations to bring the conflict parties in Darfur together. We then helped them to achieve the Ndjamena Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement and worked with them, the African Union (AU) and the international community to establish a Ceasefire Commission for Darfur in May 2004.

Peace negotiations in Abuja in 2005 were followed by a splintering of opposition movements. In 2007, the HD Centre received requests from the AU, donors and opposition movements to re-engage and to support the AU/UN mediation team on Darfur. In 2008 we seconded two staff members to the mediation process.

In 2008 and 2009, the HD Centre convened meetings in Geneva with the opposition movements to establish structures for participation in a political process. We also convened workshops with them and humanitarian agencies in Geneva and Nairobi to improve humanitarian access.

The dialogue process with the parties to the conflict continues in an attempt to reduce the impact of the conflict on civilians.



Sharing experiences and networking

Mediation is often conducted in a stressful, competitive and politically sensitive environment. The opportunities to reflect on experiences, to compare lessons and to improve future practice are therefore few and far between. As yet, there is little shared understanding of practice designed to avoid duplicating or undermining efforts, nor are there common criteria for the appointment or for that matter any other type of engagement of mediators.

Therefore, to encourage what the HD Centre believes to be a vital exchange of information and experience, and actively encourage coordination and cooperation, it has created the Oslo forum series of mediators' retreats in partnership with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Oslo forum is an annual gathering of senior mediation practitioners, peacemakers and high-level decision makers in Norway, complemented by regional retreats in Africa and Asia. The Oslo forum series provides opportunities for experience sharing and the transfer of knowledge and ideas. Participation is by invitation only and participants are carefully selected to include senior mediators, representatives of international and regional organisations, representatives of conflict parties and the world's leading conflict resolution analysts and thinkers.

What makes the HD Centre's approach unique is the confidential environment designed to provide participants with the opportunity to speak frankly and to assess the contributions of others across institutional and conceptual divides.

As a practitioner, the HD Centre understands the limits of traditional training and learning approaches for senior mediation practitioners. Peacemaking is not a career like any other. Effective formal training is difficult to integrate into the working day, or it is conducted in a language and style that do not take into account the attitudes and norms of interaction of experienced high level practitioners.

Through the Oslo forum, the HD Centre has created a rare opportunity to interact directly with a significant number of relevant people from a variety of backgrounds and affiliations. It offers opportunities to build networks, gather support and explore new partnerships in a time efficient manner. By providing first hand access to the most renowned actors in the field, the Oslo forum has become an increasingly valuable source of reliable information and understanding of the context and operating environment. More importantly, mediators now have an opportunity to draw on reliable and useful insights and to convert that into improving their own mediation practice.



Views from Meredith Preston-McGhie

Meredith Preston-McGhie, HD Centre Senior Programme Manager in Africa, has led several of the organisation's activities in Kenya, Sudan and Somalia. She is an expert in the Horn of Africa and has extensive experience working with the UN and NGOs in the region. Meredith leads the HD Centre's approach to gender issues and the inclusion of women in peace processes, representing the organisation in the debates around Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Here she reflects on the participation of women and inclusion of gender issues in peacemaking.

Most casualties of war are women and children. Yet women also take on many different roles in both waging and resolving conflicts, either participating as or supporting parties to conflict, and championing and pursuing efforts to end them. Reconstruction and reconciliation depend to a great extent upon the leadership and engagement of women.

Despite this, women rarely participate in formal peace negotiations. UN research shows that in the 10 main peace processes that took place during the last decade, only 6 per cent of negotiators and 3 per cent of signatories were women. Wars are fought for ideological, ethnic, and resource reasons, to resist being marginalised or simply to gain power. Such drivers of conflict and other issues agreed to in peace processes rarely take into consideration gender related experiences that may help to build sustainable peace. By ignoring this the full and equitable participation of at least half the population is undermined.

Ten years ago, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 called for a commitment to encourage a greater involvement of women in peace negotiations and an improved representation and contribution of women to peacemaking. Since then, there has been a growing appreciation that women and men experience conflict differently and that women make important contributions to peace. Although gender issues are recognised as central to lasting security, and the need to prioritise them as a basis for sustainable peace is broadly accepted, much remains to be done to bring these principles into practice.

In June 2008, building on the pioneering work of SCR 1325, UN Security Council Resolution 1820, which recognised the threat that conflict related sexual violence poses to peace and security. Despite this, sexual violence has been mentioned in only 18 of 300 peace agreements signed in the last 20 years. The HD Centre has been working with the UN to raise senior mediators' awareness and commitment around this issue and will continue to contribute to the development of mediation tools in this area.

The HD Centre has long been at the forefront of the debate on engaging women and addressing gender issues in formal peace processes through its publications and in Oslo forum sessions on gender issues. In 2009, we launched two regional initiatives, Women at the Table Africa and Asia, that bring together senior level women who have participated in formal peace processes in each region. The intention is to build powerful networks that can push for greater participation of women and the inclusion of gender issues in peacemaking and to look at the important links that can be built between formal and grassroots processes where women are already playing a leading role. This will continue to be a central focus for the HD Centre in all its activities.

Central African Republic

One of the HD Centre's attributes is that it can respond rapidly to each unique conflict situation with flexibility offering different forms of engagement. During 2007 and 2008, the HD Centre collaborated with the United Nations Peace-building Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) to prepare and support an All Inclusive Political Dialogue in the Central African Republic.



© HD Centre

At the request of President François Bozizé, the HD Centre helped organise an All Inclusive Political Dialogue (AIPD) to tackle political, economic and social conditions in the CAR. This collaborative process to end escalating conflict and to improve peace, security and humanitarian issues successfully included political and armed movements for the first time.

The HD Centre was nominated as President of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), established in November 2007 and organised the process to launch the AIPD. The PrepCom brought together 25 political representatives, including the presidential majority, the democratic opposition, civil society and armed opposition movements.

The PrepCom concluded in April 2008 with a comprehensive consensual document that provided the basis for the AIPD. Peace agreements with armed opposition movements in May and June 2008 allowed them to participate in the AIPD in December 2008. The HD Centre collaborated with the UN and OIF to support the AIPD, under the chairmanship of the former President of Burundi, Pierre Buyoya, making a significant contribution to ending the armed conflict and furthering reform.

The HD Centre continues to monitor developments during preparations for presidential and legislative elections in 2010.



The importance of supporting a peace process

What is mediation support, and how can it make a difference to the processes of resolving conflict and building peace?

Peacemaking needs several elements to be effective: good analysis, expertise, planning, logistics and communications. Competent personnel are crucial in keeping these components running smoothly. There is, of course, much more. Mediation processes are complex because they need to address a variety of interests within a country and internationally, and are shaped by the interplay of personalities, history, culture and resources.

Interaction between these different factors can be unpredictable, and when peace processes are not adequately supported, the danger of stalling, falling apart or failing to deliver a durable peace is greater. Mediation has too often been approached as an exercise in *ad hoc* diplomacy, and left to the skills of an eminent mediator. They often operate without a clear mandate, the time needed to shepherd a process to its conclusion, or the support and resources to manage it effectively. Based on this reality and on its own 10 years of experience, the HD Centre is convinced of the need to professionalise mediation and to support ongoing mediation efforts as much as possible.

The HD Centre's Mediation Support Programme has established a pool of expertise and resources

to assist mediators and their teams at all stages of a peace process. The objective of the Programme is to bring analysis, knowledge and creative thinking to mediation processes. It provides mediators with expertise, facilitates brainstorming sessions on ways to move a peace process forward, contributes to learning exercises, and prepares and disseminates practical publications on the management of peace processes. It also keeps mediators informed of developments in the field of mediation outside the immediate process they are involved in.


In the last few years, the international community has recognised the need to improve peace-making capacities globally. While efforts to build international support and coordination mechanisms for peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding started in the 1990s, the discussion on peacemaking capacities is relatively recent.

As the UN, governments and regional organisations in Africa and Asia have become more active in mediation, there has been a growing recognition of the need to enhance the relevant skills and expertise. The UN set up its own mediation support unit in 2007 to provide a rapid and comprehensive response to the increasing

demand for conflict resolution and the AU is considering establishing a similar unit in 2010. Regional organisations in Africa are starting to share their experiences in conflict resolution to identify best practices in managing mediation. The secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is also exploring ideas to develop its own potential.

These are important and positive developments. Even if shortcomings in analytical capacities, training and administrative support continue, the fact that mediation actors are investing time and resources to improve their capacities is encouraging. The HD Centre is committed to supporting these efforts based on its belief that better resourced and informed mediation actors are an asset to peace processes.

Peacemaking needs several elements to be effective: good analysis, expertise, planning, logistics and communications.





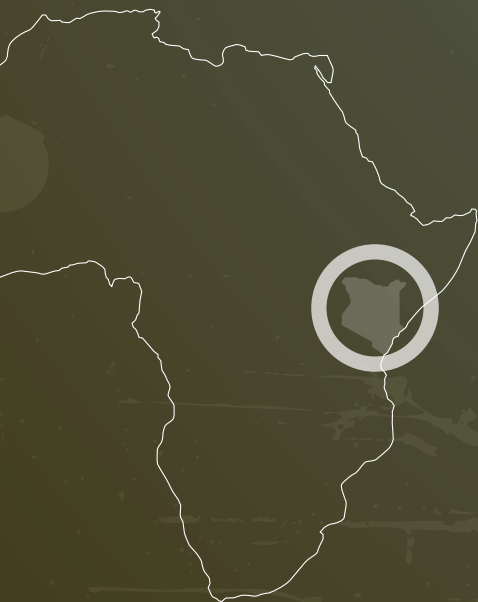
© Reuters/Antony Njuguna

Kenya

In some cases, the HD Centre supports other lead mediators to advance a peace process. In 2008, the HD Centre was able to provide such support to Kofi Annan during the Kenya post-election crisis.

Following the eruption of violence after the December 2007 elections, the chairman of the AU, Ghana's President John Kufuor, mandated the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, led by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to mediate between the President Mwai Kibaki and the leader of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Raila Odinga. In response to a request from Mr. Annan in January 2008, the HD Centre provided advice and seconded two staff members full-time to his team to provide logistical and technical support.

At the end of February 2008, President Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga signed an agreement to share power. Talks then moved to longer-term issues and led to further agreements on setting up the Commission of Inquiry into the Post Election Violence (CIPEV), the Independent Review Commission, and a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. The parties also committed to a comprehensive review of the constitution. On 30 June 2008, the parties reaffirmed their commitments in a Statement of Principles, which included a roadmap for "resolution of the six foregoing issues, which were underlying causes of the post-election national crisis".





Views from Dennis McNamara

Dennis McNamara, the HD Centre's Senior Humanitarian Adviser, has had several decades of humanitarian experience with the UN. He served as UNHCR Special Envoy to the former Yugoslavia and Iraq, Deputy SRSG in Kosovo, and UN Assistant Secretary-General in Timor-Leste. Here he outlines the HD Centre's Humanitarian Mediation Programme.

The HD Centre pursues mediation not simply as a way to end conflict but, primarily, to save lives. Within that context, our Humanitarian Mediation Programme sets out to ensure the protection of civilians before, during and after conflict. Where conflict exists, such activity clearly overlaps with, and can provide an entry point to, political negotiations and mediation.

Civilian protection in Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia is the focus of the HD Centre's work in this field. We have access to, and experience working with, governments and non-state armed groups in these areas. With the support of OCHA, the HD Centre has initiated a series of workshops providing a platform for dialogue between Darfur's opposition movements and the Government of Sudan to address immediate humanitarian needs. A further objective is to develop a dossier of humanitarian issues to be addressed in attempts to resolve any conflict.

The HD Centre staged a first workshop with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement – Unity (SLM–Unity) in Geneva in July 2008, and with the JEM and the Sudan Liberation Movement (Abdul Waheed) in Darfur in November and December 2008. These discussions continued in 2009 in workshops in Geneva in July with the SLM and with the JEM in Nairobi in September 2009.

The discussions led to the identification of focal points in the opposition movements, and the introduction of hot-lines providing a channel of communication for immediate humanitarian concerns such as abductions and attacks on humanitarian convoys delivering relief supplies. We will also be convening more meetings to address humanitarian access to civilians, the right of internally displaced people to resettle, land ownership and child soldiers.

The Government of Sudan has expressed interest, in principle, in holding a workshop for its officials on similar subjects. Discussions about arrangements for such a workshop in 2009 were held up after the indictment of President Bashir handed down by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. The HD Centre hopes to resume the discussions early in 2010.

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

HD Centre at a glance



About the HD Centre

The HD Centre's mission is to improve the global response to armed conflict by:

- Conducting and contributing to the effective mediation of armed conflict, and
- Working to strengthen global mediation capacity

Mediation in action

The HD Centre believes direct mediation is the most immediate and tangible way of contributing to its mission. This practical experience is an invaluable source of expertise that can help improve peacemaking practice.

More specifically, the HD Centre:

- Helps prepare environments for mediation and the resolution of armed conflict;
- Facilitates dialogue in support of wider mediation processes, and;
- Provides support to other mediation initiatives through advice, people and operational assistance.

Strengthening the profession

The improvement of mediation practice requires an understanding of peacemaking: how it operates, what its weaknesses are, what strategies can strengthen it, and a clear concept of how

activities will contribute to the profession over time. Sharing this with the mediation community and providing direct support to others in their mediation efforts builds and strengthens capacity, relationships, and increases impact. The HD Centre's close working relationships with the United Nations, especially the Mediation Support Unit, regional organisations, and governments are therefore essential. In particular, we make every effort to share our experience of working with the 'mediated'.

Through the Oslo forum, a collaborative project with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we also foster networking by convening conflict mediators, high-level decision makers and peace process actors to share experiences in an informal, but professional setting. This is widely acknowledged as the leading international network of conflict mediation practitioners, featuring an annual global event in Oslo, as well as regional forums in Africa and Asia.





Burundi

Humanitarian mediation to help address the immediate needs of people affected by conflict is at the heart of the HD Centre's mission. In Burundi, in 1999-2000 the HD Centre focussed its efforts on helping to ensuring safe access for humanitarian workers.

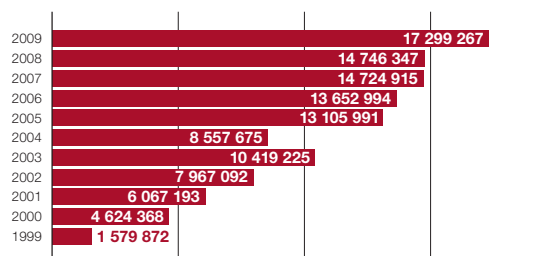
In October 1999, after two international UN workers and seven national colleagues were killed in Burundi, the UN asked the HD Centre to open contacts with armed opposition movements. The objective was to ensure humanitarian access and the safety of humanitarian personnel.

The HD Centre identified relevant field-level commanders of non-state armed groups and brought them to Geneva in February 2000 to meet with representatives of the Government of Burundi and international humanitarian agencies. At the meeting chaired by President Amadou Tounani Toure, they committed themselves to upholding humanitarian principles set out in a *Document de Travail* and to a continuation of dialogue.

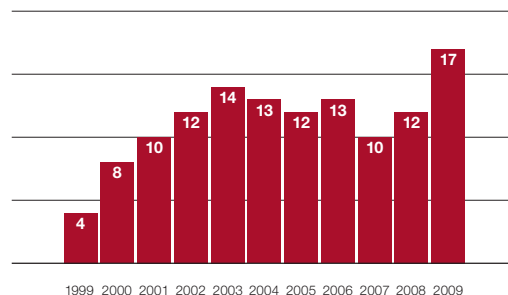


Funding peace

Level of contributions received by the HD Centre in Swiss francs over the past ten years



Number of donors over the past ten years



The HD Centre is grateful for the contributions received from an increasing number of donors since 1999. These have been in support of particular projects or given as contributions to the organisation, not tied to any particular activity. The HD Centre has been dependent on these contributions to carry out its work in conflicts and to exist as an independent and impartial mediation organisation.

In 2009, the HD Centre had its most successful fundraising year, despite a global economic crisis. The reduction in overseas aid and a significant drop in income due to exchange rate fluctuations created an uncertain funding environment. We are therefore even more grateful to donors who continue to show commitment to peacemaking and the efforts of the HD Centre in particular.

The majority of the HD Centre's finances have been contributed by the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Since 1999, the HD Centre has also received donations from the European Union, the City of Geneva, and the Geneva-based Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies as well as from international and non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Swiss Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross, the Danish Refugee Agency, and Finn Church Aid.

We have also received donations from foundations such as the Réseau universitaire international de Genève/Geneva International Academic Network (RUIG/GIAN), the Open Society Initiative, the Rockefeller Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation.



Dr. Francisco Javier Solana de Madariaga

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Honorary President

Member of the Spanish Government (1982–1995), Secretary General of NATO (1995–1999) and Secretary-General of both the Council of the European Union (EU) and the Western European Union (WEU) (1999–2009).

HD Centre Board



Karin Jestin

Chairman of the Board

Elected Chairman of the Board of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in 2008. Secretary-General of Fondation 1796, founded by the partners of Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch & Cie. Consultant in social sector strategies, organisational development and philanthropy; former Director, Foundation Strategy Group; former Senior Adviser, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.



Jenö C.A. Staehelin (Amb.)

Vice-Chairman of the Board

Head of Europe and North America Division, Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1986–1993; Ambassador to Japan, 1993–1997, and to the United Nations in New York, 1997–2004. Chairman of the Board of UNICEF, 2003; Member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, from 2006; member of the board of Schindler Holding AG, from 1980.



Bineta Diop

Board Member

Executive Director and founder of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS); contributed to the creation of the Mano River Women's Peace Network. Member of the African Union Women's Committee for Peace and Development; Vice-President of the African Union Women's Committee; and Chair of the United Nations Working Group on Peace in Geneva. Member of the Group of International Advisors to the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Jean-Marie Guéhenno

Board Member and Chairman of the Operations Committee

Arnold Saltzman Professor of Professional Practice at Columbia University and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution; Former French diplomat; United Nations' Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, 2000–2008. Member of the Cour des Comptes, Paris, 1976–2000; Chairman, Institut des hautes études de défense nationale, 1998–2000; Officer of the 'Légion d'honneur' and Commander of the 'Bundesverdienstkreuz'.



Vidar Helgesen

Board Member

Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, from 2006; Norway Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2001–2005; Special Adviser to the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva, 1998–2001. Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Young Conservatives in Norway; ran the Conservative Party's national campaign for the EU referendum in 1994.

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Thierry Lombard

Board Member & Founding Member of the HD Centre

Managing Partner, Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch & Cie; Represents the sixth generation at the head of the bank; heads the bank's investment and thematic research activities and leads the communication and philanthropic activities; Active on the board of several humanitarian organisations, businesses and foundations including the board of ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Science & Technology); Co-author of several publications on family enterprise, wealth, philanthropy and investment.



Olivier Steimer

Board Member

1983–2002, with Credit Suisse Group: domestic and international banking including Head, Geneva Region; Member, Executive Board, Private Banking and Financial Services; Chief Executive Officer, Private Banking International. Since 2002, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Banque Cantonale Vaudoise; Banque Piquet & Cie SA; Chairman of the Foundation Board of the Swiss Finance Institute; Member of the Council of Swiss National Bank; Member of the Board of Directors of Swiss Federal Railways; Ace Ltd; Renault Finance SA; economiesuisse.



Gerald Walzer

Member of the Board and Chairman of the Audit & Finance Committee

Long serving official with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: former UNHCR Representative in Pakistan and Thailand; Controller; Director of Programmes, Support, Budget and Finance; and UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, 1993–1999; Member of the Board of Trustees of the German Federal Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future", 2000–2003; Interim Executive Director of UNOPS, 2003; Chairman of UN Iraq Security Accountability Panel, 2003.

Selected publications 1999—2009

A selection of analysis, reporting, opinion and interviews
published by the HD Centre in its first decade.



The New Prevention

by Martin Griffiths

15 September 1999

'We have recently been encouraged to pay attention again to the priority that should be accorded to prevention of conflict. We have been reminded that preventing crisis, or at least preventing the abuses of war is a virtue measured in lives as well as money... Prevention in our terms, however, has been long on rhetoric and tragically short on action.' Martin Griffiths, Director of the HD Centre since it began in 1999 sets out the case for engagement in mediating conflict, arguing that it must be a 'partnership of many', from governments and opposition groups to development managers and the private sector.



Putting people first

15 July 2003

'It is clear that the rampant availability of small arms increases the lethality, intensity and duration of violent conflict,' wrote the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello in the preface to this study. *Putting People First* focuses on the human cost of the wide availability and misuse of small arms, from the perspectives of health, human rights, development and disarmament.



Why protect civilians?

Innocence, immunity and enmity in war

by Hugo Slim

1 August 2003

Western leaders made protection of civilians a central reason justifying military actions in Iraq and the Balkans, in contrast to many civil wars in which the idea of the civilian was rejected by state and non-state leaders alike. US and UK military practice shows concern for the civilian as never before. The UN has addressed itself formally to the protection of civilians to an unprecedented degree – but can it last?



The International Criminal Court and conflict mediation

by Paul Seils and Marieke Wierda

10 June 2004

The increasing focus on criminal accountability affects both perception and practice of mediation. This report provides a brief overview of the parts of the Rome Statute most relevant to conflict mediation, and analyses the potential impact of the ICC on mediation and political stability in fragile environments. It illustrates the circumstances in which the ICC can become involved or may decide to forego an investigation in the interest of peace.



Trends in conflict 2010–2030

by Paul Rogers

10 June 2004

Paul Rogers identifies and analyses key challenges to international security and main drivers of future conflicts, including the proliferation of weapons, the broadening of socio-economic divisions, and global environmental concerns. His argument challenges assumptions of a shift in the nature of conflict from interstate during the Cold War to internal in the post-Cold War environment, by illuminating what are essentially international components in both contemporary and future conflicts.



Humanitarian negotiation: A handbook for securing access, assistance and protection for civilians in armed conflict

by Deborah Mancini-Roth and André Picot

1 October 2004

The lives and security of civilians may depend on what unfolds in a negotiation between a team of humanitarian workers and parties to a conflict. This handbook aims to enhance humanitarian workers' understanding of the dynamics of negotiation, and to improve their skills by providing a framework for planning and implementing a negotiation strategy, while recognizing that there is no single approach to negotiation.



Dealing with armed groups – the practical challenges: Support in negotiation practice

by David Gorman and Andre Le Sage

27 June 2005

Not all conflict parties understand the expertise and strategies needed for successful diplomacy. Reaching a positive and sustainable mediation outcome may prove difficult if one or more parties lack the strategic vision or practical skills to represent their interests and positions in a formal negotiation process. The authors discuss why and how mediators might provide support to armed groups in negotiation practice, and the risks that may be associated with such additional engagement.



Mediation and human rights

by William O'Neill

27 June 2005

Human rights extend far beyond questions of amnesties and impunity. This paper argues that, in contrast to common assumptions, the inclusion of human rights in conflict mediation has much more to offer than judicial accountability and discrediting abuses. Rather, attention to human rights creates fresh opportunities to engage belligerents and should be recognised as a valuable and necessary strategy for sustainability.



'Terrorist' lists – A brief overview of lists and their sanctions in the US, UN, and Europe

by Kristina Thorne

15 June 2006

This paper provides a comparative analysis of different terrorist lists. It examines the designation processes, appeals and challenges to designation, effectiveness of the sanctions, and the limits of contact with and assistance to armed groups within the different mechanisms. It highlights issues which might potentially affect mediation activities.



Concepts and callings: Conflict mediation comes of age

by David Petrasek

26 June 2006

Mediation is increasingly recognised as a successful means of resolving armed conflicts, and the growing number of actors involved testifies to its emergence as a distinct field of international diplomacy. However, this success may be exaggerated as mediation remains unproven in the face of both intractable conflict and new wars. This paper explores some of the core questions to be posed, and encourages practitioners not to avoid the challenge of critically examining their practice and strategies in the face of an ever-changing environment.



The UN as conflict mediator: First among equals or last resort?

by Thant Myint-U

26 June 2006

As the world's only global organisation and with unparalleled legitimacy, the UN has great advantages in mediating conflict. However, the field is becoming increasingly crowded as official actors, whether states or regional organisations, and private groups or individuals offer comparative advantages for mediating certain types or stages of conflict. In certain situations, the UN could lead or support a combination of actors and even where it does not directly engage in mediation, it could still play a useful role in setting standards and providing a normative framework for mediation.

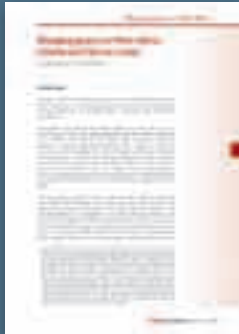


Accommodating diversity: Federalism, autonomy and other options

by Katia Papagianni

26 June 2006

This paper presents some of the options available to conflict mediators confronted with the challenges of accommodating diverse interests and identities. It concludes that there is no one model for any given situation, and that no two institutional designs are identical.



Bringing peace to West Africa: Liberia and Sierra Leone

by Lansana Gberie

23 April 2007

This paper discusses the tortured peace processes in Liberia and Sierra Leone, delineating lessons from the complicated and prolonged diplomacy and external military interventions that characterised these efforts. The author argues that, while each process was driven by its own internal dynamics, external mediators failed to understand the strong linkages between them, leading to complications in their resolution.



Negotiating with groups that use terrorism: Lessons for policy-makers

by Audrey Kurth Cronin

1 December 2007

Do negotiations help to end violent terrorist campaigns? Professor Cronin argues that idealistic platitudes can be as misguided as righteous exhortations about the evils of terrorism. Negotiations can help to manage a threat but terrorist campaigns are usually brought to an end by the internal dynamics of the terrorist group itself.



It ain't over 'til it's over: What role for mediation in the post-agreement context?

by Elizabeth Cousens

24 June 2008

International mediation has conventionally focussed on the process of securing a peace agreement and has played little role in post-conflict recovery. This paper examines these assumptions, and asks whether mediation-like efforts have a place in post-agreement dialogue processes.



Power-sharing, transitional governments and the role of mediation

by Katia Papagianni

24 June 2008

Power-sharing transitional governments are common ingredients of peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts. This paper focuses on the sharing of power in the transitional executive and legislature. It argues that the international community has an important role to play in assisting power-sharing governments to manage their country's political transition.



Negotiating Justice: Guidance for mediators

by Priscilla Hayner

25 February 2009

Questions of justice and accountability for past crimes can be a central point of contention in peace negotiations. Many mediators lack information on recent developments in law and practice, and continue to see this as one of the most difficult issues to address. This paper provides guidance and policy options for justice in peace negotiations, drawing on recent experience in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Indonesia.



The Prisoner of Peace – An interview with Kofi A. Annan

by Martin Griffiths

30 March 2009

'When I went to speak to the press, I made a point of saying, "The talks have not broken down, I'm doing this to be able to move faster, I'm going to deal directly with the leaders in order to get a deal."' H.E. Kofi Annan explains to the HD Centre's Director, Martin Griffiths, how he approached the mediation of Kenya's post-election crisis. This publication is part of a series of interviews with senior mediators in which the HD Centre aims to capture and present good mediation practice.

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Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland

114, Rue de Lausanne
CH – 1202 Geneva Switzerland
Telephone +41 (0)22 908 11 30
Fax +41 (0)22 908 11 40
Email: info@hdcentre.org

Singapore Regional Office

HD Centre Singapore
237B Cantonment Road
Singapore 089767
Singapore
Telephone +65 6224 6832

Nairobi, Kenya Regional Office

Lavington Kolloh Road,
Off James Gichuru Road,
House Number 1
P.O. Box 14702 – 00800 Nairobi,
Kenya
Telephone +254 (0)20 3861852
Fax +254 (0)20 3861856

