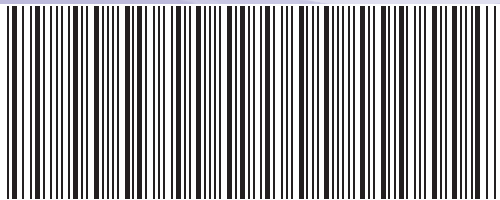


THE BOOK

GAMIP book on Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace is a quality material with contributions from leading experts and practitioners. This comprehensive book is an essential resource for:

- The evolution of Ministries of Peace and their role in promoting peace and reconciliation.
- The design and implementation of Peace Infrastructures, and connection with the United Nations.
- Case studies from around the world, highlighting successes and challenges in establishing Ministries of Peace and Peace Infrastructures.
- Practical tools and strategies for building effective Ministries of Peace and Peace Infrastructures.
- The history and role of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) in supporting peace building efforts.
- Peace professionalism.
- Policymakers and practitioners working in peace- building and conflict resolution.
- Researchers and scholars studying peace and conflict studies.
- Civil society organizations and community leaders promoting peace and reconciliation.
- Anyone interested in building a more peaceful and just world.

Join the movement towards a culture of peace. Read this book and discover how Ministries of Peace and Peace Infrastructures can transform our world.



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GAMIP, Ministries & Infrastructures For Peace



GAMIP, Ministries & Infrastructures for Peace



Edited By:
Dr. Oseremen Felix **IRENE**



GAMIP
Global Alliance for Ministries
& Infrastructures for Peace

GAMIP, MINISTRIES AND INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

Introduction

Peace Ministries will always have the aim of advancing “peace for all” in the nation. However, ministries will be of limited effectiveness without a larger surrounding peace infrastructure. It is of overriding importance for Ministries of Peace (MoP) to take UN peace resolutions to the level of practical implementation. This means extending peace outreach from governments to communities, to individuals, through the intersection and promise of various peace architectures. The “what to do” is well articulated in UN global resolutions and is very clear.

The “how” is the work in progress. The first imperative is strong Infrastructures for Peace (I4P), of which Ministries of Peace is a beneficial. Infrastructures can be centralized, distributed, self-managing, or simply organic, as is usually the case. Centralization usually consists of a strong and well-resourced ministry, with some distributed components, i.e. perhaps for public safety, women’s rights, judicial, health agencies. A country starts where it is politically and socially receptive to start. I4Ps exist in every country to some extent, some very weak and some stronger. Although only few countries currently have Ministries for Peace, all have some parts of an I4P to build upon.

The second imperative is having strong, coherent, peace architectures to define and support the specific skills, knowledge and experience that governance and society need every day. Basic needs include peace education, and the acceptance of peace as a primary organizing principle of government and society. If peace practices are approached skillfully, the outcome should be a strong culture of peace. Culture is not a matter of what we say they are, but what is actually internalized and lived. That is the desired end result. To achieve this, we need architectures that can make ministries of peace effective and enduring. The main architectures of importance can be seen as “peace practices architectures,” and “peace ethics architectures.”

The effectiveness of such architectures is in their application to peace issues, such as those relating to gender equality, youth, racism, extremism, and violence, crime, conflict, and war. This may be a question of finding suitable entry points that can achieve successes, and build on them in a step-by-step manner. The difficult or intractable is often best approached by creating conditions for progress in the meta environment. Early success, however small, is important to changing behaviours and eventually changing attitudes.

The global peace “case for action” is strong and compelling, and the time has arrived. Time for implementation action, particularly in the areas of governance, human rights and security, within coherent architectures at global, national, community, and individual levels.

The world is so interconnected that the peace, security and prosperity of any country, depends on the peace, security and prosperity of the global community. Countries cannot survive in isolation any more. Energy, food, health, security, economics, travel, financial systems are all transnational and interdependent.

First, we need to clearly face the reality of peace in the world. The times we live in can be seen to have three main interlocking crises. The suffering of a pandemic builds over months, climate

degradation over decades, war in days, and nuclear war in minutes. All is interconnected. We need global solutions and cooperation, a new consciousness. A new sense of shared living. Everyone must contribute.

These challenges can be expressed in terms of dealing with: pandemics, environmental degradation, and conflict and war. But also, in terms of building wellbeing and dignity; the conservation and protection of the natural environment; and advancing harmony and co-existence. Balancing the ethic of justice with the ethic of care.

The global UN foundation to address the positive and negative aspects of peace includes among many, building Cultures of Peace (CoP), Infrastructures for Peace (I4P), Ministries of Peace (MoP), respecting the UN Human Rights Declaration UDHR, working towards UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 16), and even the UN endorsed 2005 Global Summit Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The journey necessitates the development and implementation of robust and supporting Peace Architectures.

On the subject of human rights is the key resolution is entitled; Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 10 December 1948 (General Assembly Resolution 217 A). Relevant to peace building in this declaration are the quotes:

“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,”
Article 3 states the *“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”* Article 28 states that, *“Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized”* (United Nations 1948).

On the subject of UN Sustainable Development Goals is UN SDG 16 entitled “Peace, Justice and strong Institutions”. The Mission Statement is clear and states that nations be obligated to: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations (2019).

Also of importance are the obligations we have for others, for those more vulnerable, disadvantaged and suffering among us. This is expressed in Responsibility to Protect (R2P):

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a global political commitment which was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit in order to address its four key concerns to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The doctrine is regarded as a unanimous and well-established international norm. The principle of the Responsibility to Protect is based upon the underlying premise that sovereignty entails a responsibility to protect all populations from mass atrocity crimes and human rights violations. The principle is based on a respect for the norms and principles of international law, especially the underlying principles of law relating to sovereignty, peace and security, human rights, and armed conflict (Wikipedia (2025). The R2P has three pillars:

Pillar I: The protection responsibilities of the state – "Each individual state has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity".

Pillar II: International assistance and capacity-building – States pledge to assist each other in their protection responsibilities.

Pillar III: Timely and decisive collective response – If any state is "manifestly failing" in its protection responsibilities, then states should take collective action to protect the population."

Of highest importance to peace building is UN Resolution A/53/243, 1999. Entitled UN Resolution A/Res/53/243 "Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace," 1999. This resolution defines eight action areas: culture of peace through education; sustainable economic and social development; respect for all human rights; equality between women and men; democratic participation; understanding, tolerance and solidarity; participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge; international peace and security.

Implementing this Culture of Peace resolution is the development and maintenance of strong Infrastructures for Peace (I4P). An I4P is defined as "a network of interdependent systems, resources, values and skills held by government, civil society and community institutions that promote dialogue and consultation; prevent conflict and enable peaceful mediation when violence occurs in a society" (UN Development Program UNDP 2013).

Given the foundation and obligations of CoPs and I4Ps, the challenges of implementation arise. The challenges of creating architectures that are active, relevant to all people, enduring, effective, and achieve real outcomes. Embedded in such architectures is the consideration of establishing a Ministry for Peace (MoP).

We need I4Ps and Ministries of Peace with overriding obligations to advance both domestic and international peace and stability. In designing an effective Ministry for Peace (MoP), much flexibility exists. It must be responsive to the unique political, social, and cultural environments, and any considerations or constraints that exist. MoPs are not for every country, and less centralized solutions may be more practical or effective. What is of importance is that the functions of a Ministry for Peace are present somewhere, such as in committees, agencies, other Ministries, leadership obligations, or NGOs.

Given the political and societal will for a Minister for Peace, and the fact that "no one size fits all," we can only provide possibilities and suggestions. An example mandate of a Minister of such a ministry could consider being an organizing voice for peacebuilding, and conflict transformation by peaceful means, at home and abroad. The Minister could provide a peacebuilding voice in Cabinet and other ministries. The Ministry could develop and implement a National Action Plan for Peace and provide related peace programs and services. The Ministry could engage in peace building research and education. The Minister could serve as an advisor to government for peacebuilding and responses to conflict resolution. The Ministry could act as a monitor for early detection of serious conflict, and advisor for non-violent interventions. The Ministry could act as a focus for Implementing UN policies and legislation in the nation. The Ministry could act to contribute to international peace and stability. And lastly, to coordinate peace outreach to all levels of society.

This brings us to supporting architectures. Architectures that are primarily built on basic peace practices, ethics, and peace for all. This involves what every citizen can contribute to peace; what

Peace Practitioners can contribute to peace building in the communities; and what Peace Professionals can do for building national and governance infrastructures.

Architectures focus on providing direct knowledge, skills, capacities and experience in peace building. Architectures are linked to the Global Peace framework, and are designed to face the challenges of, building national governance, national institutional support, facing collective peace and reconciliation needs; and providing for individual needs regarding safety, inner peace and dignity.

In conclusion, in a world where conflict and violence keep hurting communities, countries, and global relationships, the search for peace has become an urgent and shared responsibility. Working for peace is not only a moral duty but also a practical need for human survival and progress. It requires a wide-ranging approach that tackles the main causes of conflict, supports long-term development, and encourages a culture of peace and nonviolence.

In this situation, the idea of Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (M4P) has appeared as a new and comprehensive way to build peace. M4P understands that peace is not just the lack of war but a positive and active condition that needs deliberate effort and investment. It supports creating special ministries and structures that can organize and carry out peace projects, promote teamwork and social unity, and deal with the complicated problems that weaken peace and security.

The GAMIP book on Ministries of Peace (MoP) is a detailed guide that provides a clear and practical way to understand and set up MoP. This handbook is made for decision-makers, peace workers, researchers, and anyone curious about how MoP can help resolve conflicts and create lasting peace.

Some countries that have tried setting up national ministries of peace include the Solomon Islands, Nepal, Costa Rica, and Ethiopia. South Sudan and Afghanistan also had MoP in the past, though they are no longer active. On October 1, 2022, a plan to create a MoP in Rajasthan, India, was approved. Additionally, Timor-Leste established a department for peacebuilding and social cohesion under the Ministry of Social Solidarity in 2010.

In this book, we look at the basic ideas, rules, real-life examples, and future steps to make MoP work better. We also talk about the problems and chances that come with using this new method. We share stories and examples from different parts of the world to show how MoP has been used in various ways and the difference it has made for people and communities.

The contributors examine the different parts of Ministries & Infrastructures for Peace, such as:

- How governments and community groups help create and support peace ministries and systems.
- The story of the top global community group – the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace – which leads efforts, campaigns, and calls for MIP worldwide.
- Basic details about the structure for peace.
- How peace systems are connected to the United Nations (UN).

- The idea of being a professional in peace work.
- Colombia's efforts to promote MoP (Ministries of Peace).
- Examples of MoP in action – from the Solomon Islands, Nepal, Costa Rica, and Ethiopia.

We hope this book will be a helpful tool for people working for peace and will encourage a new group of peacemakers to follow the ideas and goals of Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace.

This book is for everyone who has worked hard for peace and fairness, and for those who keep trying to make the world more peaceful and united. We hope this guide will be useful for you as you work towards peace.

Oseremen Felix Irene & Paul Maillet

CHAPTER TWO
HISTORY OF GAMIP GLOBAL SUMMITS
Saul Arbess, Michael Abkin & Dot Maver

Introduction

The Global Alliance for Ministry and Infrastructure for Peace (GAMIP) is a worldwide community of civil society campaigns, organizations, committed citizens, and elected and appointed government officials from different countries.

GAMIP envisions a world where all people, individually and collectively, embody, promote, and practice a culture of peace. In pursuit of this vision, GAMIP enables and facilitates the capacity of its network to share and provide one another with resources, information, encouragement, and support for existing and new national campaigns for ministries and departments of peace as well as efforts to establish peace academies and other peace infrastructure element in government and civil society. It also seeks, through its broader networks, to increase global understanding amongst civil societies and governments around the world of the need for ministry and departments of peace and civil society counterparts at all levels.

A principle activity of GAMIP is the convening of Global Summits for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace. The aims of the Global Summits are to build relationships, share experiences, learn from one another, have trainings that expand the knowledge and skills of the community and raise awareness of the movement in the eyes of government and civil society around the world.

Eight Global GAMIP Summits have been held to date:

1. London, United Kingdom – October 2005
2. Victoria, Canada – June 2006
3. Kisarazu and Tokyo, Japan – September 2007
4. San José, Costa Rica – September 2009
5. Cape Town, South Africa – October 2011
6. Geneva, Switzerland – September 2013
7. Tunja, Colombia – October 2022
8. Abuja, Nigeria – September 2024

GAMIP has also sponsored regional summits in Ghana (2008), Nigeria (2010), and Rwanda (2014).

Global Summit Highlights and Accomplishments

Global Summit Highlights and Accomplishments

London, UK, 2005. The establishment of the Global Alliance and agreement to hold the second summit in Victoria, Canada.

Victoria, Canada, 2006. Establishing a rationale for departments/ministries of peace in all nations and the beginning of a campaign for the UN to call for the establishment of ministries and departments of peace worldwide. Also, extensive participation in the World Peace Summit in Vancouver with Dennis Kucinich, a US Congressman, and principal architect of the modern movement for departments of peace, as a speaker.

Kisarazu and Tokyo, Japan, 2007. Strong support for Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, not allowing any military buildup in that country, at a critical time when support among some parties was waning; Global Alliance board members met with Japanese national political figures supporting its retention.

San José, Costa Rica, 2009. The concentrated work of GAMIP, through its Costa Rica team before and at the Summit, was a major reason for the government announcing the formation of the Minister of Peace that year.

Cape Town, South Africa, 2011. The Summit showed solidarity with its national group to further a department of peace there.

Geneva, Switzerland, 2013. GAMIP's global peacebuilding work was enhanced by collaboration with the restorative justice movement as a peacebuilding model, the economics of peace, and meetings with members of the UN Human Rights Council at the *Palais des Nations* and with members of the International Red Cross.

Tunja, Colombia, 2022. A strong movement built towards a minister of peace there with meetings with members of Congress, and the first GAMIP academic conference.

Abuja, Nigeria, 2024. The summit unpacked in three folds: pre-summit trainings, academic conference and practical summit. It became GAMIP first virtual summit with only the pre-summit training being in-person. With the theme, 'infrastructures for peace; what works?' The summit focused on result-oriented peace structures and stirred solidarity in support for a ministry of peace in Nigeria.

Summary Global Summit Reports

Summary reports of each of the global summits follow below.

**THE FIRST PEOPLE'S SUMMIT FOR DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE: LONDON,
UNITED KINGDOM, October 18-19, 2005**

The first international People's Summit for Departments of Peace took place in London, UK, preceded by a two-day training in the latest developments on the expanding frontier of knowledge and practice in peacebuilding and conflict transformation around the world.

Forty people from twelve countries took time from their busy lives and invested their energy and resources to attend. The countries represented included Australia, Canada, Israel, Italy, Japan,

Jordan, Netherlands, Palestine, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States of



London Summit Participants

America. In addition, written support was received from political leaders in Australia, Nepal, Nigeria, Japan, and Uganda, including:

- **Senator Lyn Allison**, Leader of the Australian Democrats
- **Senator Natasha Stott Despoja**, Foreign Affairs Spokesperson for the Australian Democrats
- **Hon. Dr. Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MP**, MLC State Leader of the Australian Democrats
- **Hon. Oryem Henry Okello**, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs/International Affairs of Uganda
- **Tadatoshi Akiba**, Mayor, City of Hiroshima, Japan
- **Homrajdahal**, former MP and President, Center for Conflict Resolution, Peace, and Development, Nepal

Presently, five of these countries have working groups conducting campaigns for ministries or departments of peace: Australia, Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States.



On the final day of the Summit, the participants launched an on-going partnership for global action, called the international People's Initiative for Departments of Peace. The London Summit then concluded with a public meeting in the Grand Committee Room in the Houses of Parliament, hosted by John McDonnell MP and emceed by

Diana Basterfield, co-founder of UK *ministry for peace*. The event opened with video greetings from U.S. Congressman Dennis Kucinich (author of the current legislation in Congress) and Marianne Williamson, and Dot Maver, executive director of The Peace Alliance, spoke on behalf of the U.S. campaign. Canada's representative, Saul Arbess, shared the Canadian working group's perspective. John McDonnell MP then articulated clearly the urgent need for departments and ministries of peace in order to provide a governmental infrastructure -- an institutional space -- for dialogue on peaceful resolution of conflict to take place.

Dot Maver answered some highly pointed questions from the audience about various aspects of U.S. policy by acknowledging the pain expressed and offering hope by saying that many people in the United States and around the world share that pain and sense of urgency and reframing the situation in relation to the need to create infrastructures for peace based on the peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts and resources already underway and available around the world.



Other speakers included Yumi Kikuchi from Japan, Kai Brand-Jacobsen from Transcend in Romania (who provided the training and facilitated the Summit), Paul van Tongeren from the Netherlands, and Jo Berry, who has been a spokesperson for forgiveness and reconciliation ever since her father (a former Tory MP) was killed by IRA terrorists 20 years ago.



***Dot Maver Reads the
Declaration to John
McDonnell MP***

**Right to Left: Dot Maver (US),
John McDonnell MP (UK),
Zoughbi
Zoughbi (Palestine), Shiri
Barr (Israel), Biannca Pace
(Australia), Mike Abkin
(U.S.)**

Summit participants representing each country stood in the front of the room, and Zoughbi Zoughbi from Palestine and Shiri Barr from Israel stood side by side and spoke on behalf of the international initiative, both asking us to not give up hope and expressing their gratitude and joy to be standing together calling for peace. Dot read aloud the Summit's Declaration (see below) launching the People's Initiative for Departments of Peace and presented it to John McDonnell MP, who then said he would read it into the official record of the House of Commons at the earliest opportunity.

This event marks the beginning of a new, expanding movement throughout the world for governments to organize around principles of nonviolent conflict transformation. The next Summit will be in June 2006 in Victoria, Canada, preceding the first World Peace Forum in Vancouver, where the International People's Initiative for Departments of Peace will be on the program.

DECLARATION OF THE FIRST PEOPLE'S SUMMIT FOR DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE

Today, we announce the launch of an international initiative for the creation of Departments of Peace in governments throughout the world.

Violence of all kinds is increasing.

There is an urgent need to find responsible solutions, expanding on past and present peace-building successes.

This international initiative will both provide resources and support for existing national Department of Peace campaigns and assist new ones as they appear in other countries.

While the exact role of the department will differ in each country, its basic functions will be the same:

- To foster a culture of peace;
- To research, articulate and help bring about non-violent solutions to conflicts at all levels; and
- To provide resources for training in peacebuilding and conflict transformation to people everywhere.

We, the undersigned, joyfully vow to support and encourage each other, to share information, to enrich each other's experience, to listen to one another and to celebrate our commonalities and differences in our journey together towards a culture of peace.

Signatures not shown here.

THE SECOND GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE: VICTORIA, CANADA June 19-22, 2006

The second Summit for Ministries and Departments of Peace was held in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada on June 19-22, 2006, at Royal Roads University. Following the Victoria Summit, a number of participants travelled to Vancouver, B.C., and contributed workshops and trainings at the First World Peace Forum, held at the University of British Columbia on June 23-25, 2006.

60 men and women from 18 countries representing diverse cultures, ages and languages arrived in Victoria. Summit attendees included government and civil society delegates from Canada, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Italy, Liberia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Palestine, the Philippines, Romania, the Solomon Islands, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.



Daily sessions opened with indigenous (First Nations) invocations. Voices were raised in song to begin the work in harmony and call on countries around the world to establish government structures with a goal to collaborate with civil society reflecting, building, and sustaining a culture of peace.

In plenary sessions and working groups participants established the foundation for local, national, regional and international campaigns to work towards conflict resolution and peace building. An association was formalized.

Collectively the youth at the Summit called for a global youth cooperative network of the diverse local movements towards establishing Departments and Ministries of Peace. “We are excited to offer a ‘fresh’ perspective for peace.”



“Everyone assembled here is determined to provide the energy, skills and momentum to realize our goals going forward and working in concert and in harmony with peace- workers worldwide.” Dr. Saul Arbess, Co-convenor, Victoria Summit.

Summary of World Peace Forum Participation by GAMIP

Following the Victoria Summit, summit members went by chartered bus to Vancouver to attend the forum. Our driver, claiming he didn’t know Vancouver, led Saul to stand at a critical on ramp to the Granville Street Bridge, waving frantically to the driver to make that turn. The driver never saw him and sailed right past. Saul was very relieved when he saw the bus in front of the venue, only a little late in the end.

The fledgling Global Alliance played a prominent part in the peace forum. We were able to have American Congressman, Dennis Kucinich, speak at a panel convened by



***Dennis Kucinich
and Marianne
Williamson***

a youth member of the GA and attended by other country representatives, to speak to the viability and necessity of ministries of peace. Following the panel, there was a press conference with him and the word on ministries of peace went around the world.

Marianne Williamson, then the Chair of the US Peace Alliance, convened an overflow talk on peace building in the largest venue at the forum. She spoke of the important

place of ministries in that work. Then the two were whisked away to spread the good news about building departments of peace worldwide.

THE THIRD GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE: KISARAZU, JAPAN, September 21 – October 3, 2007

GAMIP was born in October 2005 in London, at the First People’s Summit for Departments of Peace, which was attended by forty people from a dozen countries. The fledgling Global Alliance convened its Second People’s Summit eight months later in Victoria, British Columbia, with 60 people from 18 countries in attendance. The third Global Summit was held in Japan in September 2007.

The Japan Summit, hosted by Japan United for Ministry for Peace (JUMP,) took place in Kisarazu. The program consisted of country reports, trainings, organizational planning workshops, and a series of JUMP-organized press conferences, symposia,

and other outreach activities in Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Okinawa. Some 50 civil society activists and government officials from 21 countries and 6 continents – many from developing nations attending for the first time – traveled to Japan for the Summit. About half the delegates also participated in the post-Summit public outreach tour to Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Okinawa.

Summit Conference in Kisarazu, September 21-25



Speaking with one voice while representing diverse cultures, nations, ages and languages, the Summit participants called on countries around the world to establish government structures to work hand-in-hand with private organizations to prevent and reduce violence the world over. The delegates also called upon existing governments to make violence prevention and nonviolent conflict resolution

a national priority.

The Summit opened on September 21, the International Day of Peace, with a Celebration Concert that highlighted Japan's musical culture and its peace constitution. The Summit then featured inspirational speeches, reports from each country on the status of its campaign, and practical trainings in grassroots organizing, mobilizing youth, nonviolent communication, peacebuilding and Gandhian nonviolence, and the responsibilities and activities of a ministry or department of peace. And, of course, singing and dancing to open and close each day, with delegates teaching the group songs and dances from their home countries.



Taiko at Celebration Concert

Notable outcomes of the Summit included:

The evolution of the structure of the Global Alliance to an organic, emergent, self-organizing, egalitarian network of individuals and organizations who support the establishment of ministries and departments of peace in countries around the world.

- The formation and launching of the African Alliance for Peace, with a vision to support the creation of a culture of peace and nonviolence in all African countries, including calling for structures in government and civil society to support a culture of peace.
- The accelerated growth of the global youth movement for a culture of peace and ministries and departments of peace, both at the Summit in Kisarazu and in city after city during the Summit's public outreach tour.



Founders of African Alliance for Peace

L to R: Jean de Dieu Basabose (Rwanda), Hon. Otto Odonga (MP, Uganda), Karen Barendsché (South Africa), Hon. François Munyurangabo (MP, Rwanda), Peter Phillips Lukwiya (Uganda), Jacqueline Kolbe (South Africa)

Not in Photo: Amadou Coly Gomis (Senegal)

Attendees at the Third Global Summit

- The expansion of the Global Alliance network to participants from over 30 countries.
- The decision to hold the Fourth Global Summit in Australia in 2008 and the Fifth Global Summit in Costa Rica in 2009.

Post-Summit Outreach: Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Okinawa – September 26-October 3

Following the Summit, delegates attended a congressional briefing and press conference in Japan's Diet (Parliament) in **Tokyo**. Six members of both the upper and lower houses of the Diet attended along with journalists from two Japanese news organizations. More than one of the legislators present expressed support for the concept of a ministry of peace for Japan. One of them was Senator Shokichi Kina of Okinawa, who told the U.S. delegation that, "The United States gave Japan peace, economy, and politics. Japan has returned economy and politics to the U.S. but not peace yet. It is time to return peace to the U.S. now."

The visit to **Kyoto** featured a symposium about the global movement for ministries and departments of peace, including exchanges with the many youth in attendance. As was to become a “tradition” at Summit appearances along the way, the evening concluded with songs, dances, and circles of peace.



Youth at Kyoto Symposium

The first visit in **Hiroshima** was a presentation by Toshié Uné, an 89-year-old hibakusha (atomic bomb survivor). She was 27 years old when the bomb was dropped. This tiny, expressive bundle of energy told her horrific story, including samples of the sorts of grasses and weeds they had to eat in the days and weeks following the bombing, and left everyone spellbound and emotionally drained. In response to a question about how she felt speaking to Americans, she explained that she harbors no ill will or resentment toward Americans because we must have peace, and to have peace we must have reconciliation, and to have reconciliation we must have forgiveness in our hearts. Singing and dancing concluded the presentation.



The next day presented a kaleidoscope of profoundly sobering experiences, including:

- The Hall of Remembrance, where names and photographs of the 140,000 atomic bomb victims are enshrined along with a 360° panorama of the city and neighborhoods as viewed from the hypocenter of the blast
- The Peace Museum, with its memorabilia of letters and documents presaging and planning the atomic bomb drop and relics of the Hiroshima bombing itself, including the tiny, charred tricycle of a three-year-old boy caught in the blast
- The Summit Symposium, where Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba spoke and promised to consider endorsing the idea of ministries and departments of peace in national governments around the world; he is also President of Mayors for Peace, whose roster of members now stands at 1793 cities in 122 countries



In **Nagasaki**, Sakué Shimohira, now 72, moved the Summit visitors to tears with her and her sister's stories of nuclear survival as young children. Next was a tour of Nagasaki's hypocenter-located Peace Park and visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum, which opened in 1996 as a testament to the city's 74,000 atomic bomb victims and to peace.

That evening, another public Symposium with over a hundred attendees, including an Iraqi physician from Basra who was in Japan studying diagnosis and treatment of the effects of radiation – because of the epidemic of such cases in his city due to the United States' use of depleted uranium in the ordnance it was exploding in his region of Iraq.

The Symposium was followed by dinner at a traditional Japanese restaurant, where several Japanese college youth read a statement about their campaign to put a stop to the use of depleted uranium in battlefield weaponry. Hibakusha Shimohira-san also attended the dinner and joined in the Summit groups by-now renowned singing and dancing of peace.



In **Okinawa**, the seven remaining Summiteers were treated to a two-and-a-half-day peace tour of the island filled with profound experiences of body, mind, heart, and soul, including insights into the native Okinawan philosophy of life and peace. A few of the many highlights:

- Visit to a beach where bones were found suggesting this as a site of landing by the first peoples to come to the Ryukyus 18,000 years ago. Okinawans view the ocean as a connector uniting lands and people, contrary to the traditional Western view of oceans as separators and protectors from others.
- Visit to the Peace Memorial Park and its Cornerstone of Peace, commemorating the 100-day Battle of Okinawa in spring of 1945.
 - The Cornerstone of Peace contains a central fountain whose waters are envisioned as ripples of peace spilling over the sides and projecting in one direction over the cliffs and out across the sea to sites of other World War II battles and present and future conflicts.

- In the other direction (photo right), the ripples of peace flow across the plaza and over a semi-circular array of 116 granite monument walls on which are inscribed the names of all 240 thousand people of many nationalities, no matter which side of the battle they were on, who lost their lives in the Battle of Okinawa – 149 thousand Okinawan civilians, 77 thousand Japanese soldiers, and 14 thousand U.S. soldiers.



- Visit to the last subtropical rainforest on the island, near the village of Takaé and its population of 140. For months, the people of Takaé have been taking shifts on a 24-hour watch at two outposts that they have set up at gates to the U.S. Marine Corps jungle training area in the forest. Their intention was to block construction equipment from entering to build several helipads planned for that area, which could threaten the already endangered species resident in the forest.



- Drive to the Pacific coast town of Henoko and yet another encampment of local citizens on yet another ecology preservation mission next to yet another U.S. Marine Corps air station. Marines were planning to fill the bay for two new runways – right in the midst of the feeding grounds for the endangered *dugong* (manatee).

- The international Greenpeace ship Esperanza lay at anchor offshore, its crew there in support of the Greenpeace Japan activists and local citizens.
- Summiteers donned life vests and joined Greenpeace in rubber inflatable dinghies, bouncing across the bay in front of the USMC air station to a lighthouse island to view the affected area.



- A public Symposium at Ryukyu University, where three questions were addressed: What does peace mean to you? What can each of us do to help bring it about? What kinds of cooperative relationships are necessary for peace?

Looking Ahead

The Japan Summit was a turning point for the Global Alliance, as participants realized the depth and breadth of possibility of our work internally as peacebuilders and externally as "lay" ministers and secretaries of peace. Momentum was building that would lead to increased participation and visibility. Further, we could see more countries initiating ministries and departments of peace as humanity makes the shift from living in a culture of violence to living in a culture of peace.

THE FOURTH GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE: SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA September 17-21, 2009

The theme of the Summit was “Building Bridges for Peace”.



102 delegates from 22 countries attended that swelled to 200 on Learning Day with students from the UN University of Peace and United World College.

Costa Rica was the first summit to be officially sponsored by a host government. Less than a month before the summit, Costa Rica declared a

Minister of Peace by expanding the Justice ministry to become the Ministry of Justice and Peace. The CR GAMIP chapter was highly instrumental in this achievement. President Oscar Arias addressed us at the National Theatre in front of 800 people and stated: “The task is only just starting. The creation of a Minister of Peace is not a final achievement, merely the making of a road to achieve a sustainable order that would allow resolution of human conflicts without violence.”



Dot Maver, Pres. Oscar Arias, Paul van Tongeren



***David
Cooperrider,
Rita Marie
Johnson***

Prior to the Summit, delegates were led in a process called “Be Peace,” by its creator, Rita-Marie Johnson, which had been introduced into CR schools, a process of peace building for all ages.

The summit was led in a process called Appreciative Inquiry, facilitated by the creator of that process David Cooperrider, which resulted in the creation of an Interim Leadership Council, an important step in building leadership. There was a

promising, at the time, of a dialogue on Israel-Palestine with delegates from each country, showing that both parties could converse and understand each other’s point of view on the future and consider agreement.

Another event was a presentation and discussion on infrastructures for peace(I4P) and government-civil society cooperation with government representatives present. I4P, at the time, was a relatively new concept that has become central in peace building since. The talk by Paul Van Tongeren was focused on local peace committees, where people could talk peace with each other, even in the face of a dysfunctional government.



Zoughbi Zoughbi

**THE FIFTH GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR MINISTRIES AND INFRASTRUCTURES
FOR PEACE: CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA
SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 6, 2011**

The theme of the Summit was “Ubuntu in Action”. “Ubuntu” is an ancient Zulu concept that means: “I am who I am because of who you are.”



45 delegates from 19 countries representing 5 continents.

With GAMIP’s expanded focus on infrastructures for peace at all levels in a society, beyond only national ministers of peace, the name was changed to the Global Alliance on Ministers and Infrastructures for Peace.

The overall objective of the 5th Summit was to strengthen and highlight the S. African civil society initiative to create a minister of peace in that country. Although we did not have the personal visit of either former president Mandela or Bishop Tutu, both sent statements of support for a SA minister of peace and for our initiative. An award was given to Mandela, the Courage of Conscience Award, through a senior person in his employ.



Jean-Pierre Mfuni Mwanza

Congressman Dennis Kucinich of the United States, creator of the modern movement for departments of peace, sent a video message of support saying: “It is possible for people to know that war is not natural” and that peace is possible.

The GA, as a maturing organization, became formally incorporated and elected its first board of directors.

One disappointment of the summit was, due to bad weather, delegates were not able to visit Robben Island, where Mandela was incarcerated. However, delegates did tour the Mayibuye Archives, which holds the history of the rise of the African Congress leading ultimately to the end of Apartheid and the election of Mandela’s government.



Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of Gandhi, gave a keynote address about the critical work of Gandhi and how our work furthers it.

There was a valuable pre-summit story-telling workshop, enhancing the role of storytelling in social change and a Youth World Café.

The first regional body of GAMIP, the African Alliance for Peace was established and a first meeting organized.

THE SIXTH GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR MINISTRIES AND INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE: GENEVA, SWITZERLAND September 16-20, 2013

The Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) held its 6th summit in Geneva, Switzerland, from September 16-20. The theme of the gathering was *Nesting Peace: Creating Infrastructures to Sustain Diversity*.

This Summit brought together 212 participants from 54 countries across the globe representing various groups from civil society and governments, as well as United Nations institutions and agencies. The event was designed to enhance awareness and understanding of peace infrastructures and their essential role in sustainable strategies of peace promotion, utilizing the event itself as an experiment in creating one such structure.



Further, this Summit was designed to connect participants in innovative ways in order to catalyze engagement bringing together various models of infrastructures for peace to be experienced during the week. Innovative formats and spaces such as Hatching Time and Open Space Activities were used to encourage participants to elicit participant generated content, Hand Signals were utilized across the whole event to facilitate large group dialogue, and several other activities and methods were used to enhance the group's experience and learning.

The 2013 summit was thus designed as a space to dialogue about infrastructures for peace and as an infrastructure for peace itself. GAMIP describes a peace infrastructure as:

Traditional approaches to peacebuilding have tended to concentrate on one-off activities without a coordinated, systemic approach. Peacebuilding requires multi-level and long-term investments targeted at

building capacities and structures that can help prevent, transform and address the roots of violent conflict. Peace processes – dialogue, reconciliation, mediation, peace education, restorative justice, etc. – require an institutionalized framework that provides continuity, social support and opportunities for the involvement of all stakeholders. Infrastructures for peace are an emergent and effective framework focusing on the sustainability of peace by developing capacities for coordinated responses to conflict.

The 2013 summit experimented with new methods for dialogue and collaboration. Some of the unique aspects of this summit included: a local coordinating team made up of just youth; funding that was largely crowdsourced and crowdfunded, allowing for anyone to participate; and the addition of restorative practices as a method for resolving conflicts that occurred during the summit.

This Summit also included a Seminar on Infrastructures for Peace with a National Mandate, organized together with the International Civil Society Network on Infrastructures for Peace. This unprecedented collaboration of the two existing global organizations focusing specifically on infrastructures for peace created the first public, global Seminar on Infrastructures for Peace with so many high-level representatives from all over the world, including countries that have established peace infrastructures, such as Ghana, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, and Costa Rica. We thus saw the presence of several government representatives, including those from the Vice-Ministry for Peace in Costa Rica and of the Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction in Nepal, the National Peace Council in Ghana, and the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, three out of the four existing ministries for peace in the world, who shared their history, challenges, and achievements.

One example of the many impactful sessions was the experience offered by Charles Eisenstein, author of *Sacred Economics*, *The Ascent of Humanity*, and *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*. Eisenstein elicited heartfelt emotion among Summit participants by sharing inspiring examples of individuals and groups stepping into the New Story of the People, catalyzing the transition toward an economy and culture of peace. He offered insight into the disconnections between existing norms, structures, and systems that seem out of sync with what we know in our hearts as beautiful and possible. His gift for storytelling resonated with a deeper understanding of how people are bravely embodying new ways of being and relating, effectively rendering the old Story of Separation increasingly irrelevant.





The Summit was preceded by the weekend learning event “Walking Towards Conflict: An Introduction to Restorative Systems”, facilitated by Dominic Barter. This pre-Summit learning event was an introduction to Restorative Circles and restorative systems as an excellent example of an infrastructure for peace. With this exposure, participants thus learned about a specific method that has proven very effective, and also had an introduction that would support them in holding the space of the restorative system to be created during the week of the Summit. In fact, a live restorative system was then created during the Summit, supported by participants and a few more experienced facilitators, including Dominic Barter himself.

Highlights of the many outcomes that emerged from the GAMIP Geneva summit include:

1. A global citizen petition drive was launched asking the United Nations to pass a resolution supporting infrastructures for peace in countries around the world, and the text of a complete draft UN General Assembly Resolution was presented;
2. Representatives from the United Nations Development Program and Summit sponsor the City of Geneva expressed their support for infrastructures for peace in contributing to building a global culture of peace;
3. The Asia Pacific Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace was formally established, joining the African Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace as regional bodies affiliated with GAMIP to support the creation of and strengthen existing infrastructures for peace throughout their regions;
4. Civil society organizations and government representatives gave presentations and workshops sharing their work on a number of infrastructures for peace at all levels, such as: local peace committees in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Ghana; peace organizations in Sierra Leon;



Founders of the Asia Pacific Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace

peace communities in Colombia; city peace commissions; and national peace academies and Ministries for Peace with national mandates, such as those in Costa Rica, Nepal, and Papua New Guinea, all represented at the Summit;

5. Summit attendees expressed ways in which they will create and support infrastructures for peace in their work around the world, including restorative systems of justice and conflict transformation, nonviolent communication, sustainable cities' networks and practices for peace in military and security forces;

6. GAMIP Strategic Objectives were formalized to include Academic, Communication, and Practitioner Committees to grow networking capacity, strengthen organizational development, and support civil society and government campaigns working for infrastructures for peace around the world.

With an innovative concept, rich in events, and with the number and diversity of participants, this Summit created momentum for initiatives around infrastructures for peace. Also, all the innovative aspects of this event organized by youth established an important precedent for events in peace.

THE SEVENTH GAMIP SUMMIT – COLOMBIA, October 3-7, 2022

GAMIP 7th International Peace Summit was organized in Colombia in Alliance with the UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA Y TECNOLÓGICA DE TUNJA /Faculty of Law and Social Sciences / TUNJA, Boyacá - Colombia Tunja, Boyacá - October 3 to 7, with the theme: Culture of Peace in Action.

The general Objective of the VII GAMIP Summit were:

1. Raise awareness of Peace and Human Rights issues, their practices, activities and associated social movements, both at the governmental level and at the social and academic level (in relation to youth, gender, ethnic groups, civil society needs, etc.).
2. To link the construction of a Culture of Peace with the conceptual and practical scope of Participatory Democracy, Citizenship and Defense of Human Rights.
3. Establish as a permanent component of the GAMIP Summits a GAMIP Film Forum - Media + Arts meeting - awarding a scholarship to a Youth representative who has made an impact in the field of Peace.
4. To prepare a Report on the conclusions of the Conference including a collective Declaration and proposals from the attendees, as well as a concrete agenda on the next steps to be taken.

Detail information about it is available in chapter five, and that of GAMIP ALC is available in section II of the history of GAMIP in this book.

THE EIGHT GAMIP SUMMIT – NIGERIA 2024 - September 9-14, 2024

GAMIP 2024 International Summit Concludes Successfully in Nigeria – September 9-14, 2024

Theme: "Infrastructures for Peace: What Works?"

Abuja, Nigeria – The Global Alliance for Ministries & Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) is proud to announce the successful conclusion of its 2024 Summit, which took place from September 9th to 14th at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) in Abuja. The summit, themed

"Infrastructures for Peace: What Works?", brought together peacebuilding professionals, government officials, and international stakeholders to explore effective strategies for developing and sustaining peace infrastructures.



GAMIP 2024 SUMMIT: Workshops and Training “Infrastructures for Peace – What Works?”

Over the course of the summit, participants engaged in meaningful discussions on the development, roles, and application of Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) in achieving sustainable peace. With presentations by more than 60 speakers from more than 20 countries, the event provided a unique platform for sharing best practices, addressing social issues, and exploring practical tools for implementing peace initiatives at local, national, and international levels.

Amongst others, the Honorable Sandra Ramirez Lobo Silva, Senator of the Republic of Colombia, delivered a significant address on the importance of peace institutions, sharing insights from Colombia’s journey toward establishing a Ministry of Peace. Her contribution underscored the global relevance of peace ministries in fostering stability and development.

The summit featured a diverse range of sessions, workshops, and panel discussions, including contributions from peace professionals and high-ranking government officials. Participants explored pre-Summit topics such as community mediation, and facilitation, peace professionalism, followed by the main academic conference on "Infrastructures for Peace – What Works?". Key topics included youth empowerment, peace education, demilitarization, conflict resolution, and the role of teachers in peacebuilding. This led to specific sessions exploring practical applications of peace infrastructure across different regions, including Africa, Latin America, and Canada, and examining how peace structures can address global challenges like climate change, organized crime, and ethno-religious intolerance. The summit also highlighted experiences from conflict zones, including Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Colombia, and Nepal, emphasizing lessons learned in peacebuilding, as well as international collaborations on Ministries of Peace.



Practical Applications of I4P- From Theory to Practice” (September 12th – 14th, 2024)

Key Outcomes of the Summit:

- **Enhanced Global Collaboration:** The summit fostered stronger partnerships between governments, civil society, and peacebuilding organizations, with a particular focus on promoting Cultures of Peace (CoP), Ministries of Peace (MoPs), and I4P.
- **Increased Awareness and Engagement:** There was significant progress in raising awareness about the importance of I4Ps and MoPs, particularly within the host country, Nigeria. Discussions centered on the potential establishment of a Ministry of Peace in Nigeria, reflecting a growing commitment to institutionalizing peace efforts.
- **Comprehensive Summit Report:** A detailed report documenting the learning, discussions, and proceedings of the summit will be published, serving as a valuable resource for peacebuilders worldwide.
- **GAMIP Book on Peace Infrastructures:** The summit has also paved the way for the development of a GAMIP publication that will explore country-specific experiences, best practices, successes, and challenges in the implementation of MoPs and I4Ps.?

SECTION II

The History of GAMIP Latin American & the Caribbean Chapter: A Case Study

-Alicia Cabezudo & Vilma Alejandra Vega Monsalve-

Summary:

The history of GAMIP Latin America and Caribbean (GAMIP ALC) is included in this section as a case study because of its unique regional perspective, whose strength and high profile enabled GAMIP to make history in Colombia on November 9th, 2023 (GAMIP, 2023). As described in detail in Chapter Six, on that day, the National Congress of the Republic of Colombia invited GAMIP to present a feasibility proposal for a Colombian Ministry of Peace. This section briefly describes how GAMIP was conceived, its purpose and its extraordinary accomplishments in four years of existence. (GAMIP ALC July 2018-) Crucial to its success has been its:

- **Respect for the diversity of** Latin American and Caribbean territories and their unique characteristics; and
- **Integration of the contributions of All** who, often officially unacknowledged, have fostered life, hope, solidarity, and a vision for a future in deep contrast to the violence they have endured.

Administrative detail is included to demonstrate the scope of activities and, perhaps serve as examples, for other GAMIP endeavours. More specifically, material presented in terms of: (1) The Latin American and Caribbean Context; (2) GAMIP ALC Origins and Mandate; (3) GAMIP ALC Gets Organized; (4) Early GAMIP ALC Regional Initiatives; (5) GAMIP ALC Activities and Alliances (6) GAMIP ALC - The Way Forward (7) Significant Milestones in the History of GAMIP ALC; and (8) Conclusion.

1. Latin American and Caribbean Context

In Latin American history, there is a clear trajectory of systematically asserting identities linked to both the geographic place of residence and the cultural dimensions with which we identify, whether on the continent as a whole or within individual countries. Among many other characteristics, Latin America also shares a state of "permanent vindication" ever since the Spanish and Portuguese empires conquered the continent with violence, discrimination and death. This resulted in the current nation- states, whose Western-skewed histories were written in violation of indigenous people's rights and in favour of dominant outside interests and cultures.

Such a state of affairs still characterizes Latin American history today. It explains the origin of ongoing struggles and questions currently facing governments and authorities as people seek recognition of the deep, ancient, cultural developments that pre-existed the European conquest; as they call for acknowledgment of their individual and collective freedoms through participatory and sustainable democratic processes; and as they demand peace, social justice, as well as respect for inhabitants' rights.

This regional trajectory of demands, marked by progress and setbacks, also defines Colombia's national history. Given their importance, these demands should be reflected in the country's goals, content, and strategic planning for peace and comprehensive societal development. Surprisingly, they have not been Colombia's or Latin America's pedagogical-social priorities.

Instead, the educational system has often been disconnected from the country's political, social, economic, and cultural realities, as well as from the demands of various communities and civil society sectors, which are still dominated by a very rich and powerful elite owning the land, natural resources and modes of production. These education parameters were imported; the native, regional values and cultures were subjugated; and Western paradigms ultimately prevailed, - largely in line with European and United States political systems, as well as their economic and social means of organization.

In contrast, education practices and experiences, which developed in non-formal spaces and diverse sites, have addressed real problems, including the need for learning tied to historical circumstances, to economic and social demands, and to the armed violence endured over centuries throughout the continent, and particularly in Colombia.

Over this long period of time, numerous organizations, foundations, civil and professional associations, communities, grass-roots educators, interest groups, and corporations have promoted peacebuilding practices and conflict resolution tools, and have called on multiple actors to reflect on urgent issues and solve complex, real-life problems. These efforts have developed capacities, skills, and aptitudes related to conflict resolution through peaceful means, democratic principles, citizenship building, and cultures of peace building. They recognize rights and civil society participation in decision-making as well as the urgency of, and justifications for, the people's demands.

From a pedagogical perspective, such civil society processes can also be interpreted as attempts to build a less violent reality, addressing conflict resolution with innovative tools, and promoting new perspectives for developing cultures of peace.

2. GAMIP ALC Origins and Mandate

GAMIP ALC was conceived during GAMIP's General Assembly in November 2019, where the three Latin American members of GAMIP proposed establishing a Latin American and Caribbean Chapter to advance the organization's principles, vision, and mission in the region.

Between January and March 2020, an interdisciplinary group of civil society organizations comprising individuals and institutions related to issues such as Human Rights, Peace Building, Conflict Resolution, Peace Education, Citizenship, Participation and Democratic Systems was invited to a meeting aimed at encouraging collaboration and activities to strengthen and create Peace Infrastructures for achieving a more peaceful future.

The objective was for organizations, departments, offices, educational programs, university courses and institutions that promote the Culture of Peace and peaceful conflict resolution to collectively gain prominence, to counteract the scope, importance, and budgets of Ministries of Defense and War across the region. And, at the same time, to promote the creation of structures based in the concept of Culture of Peace and its principles following the UN Resolution A - 53 / 243 (UNGA, 1999)

Discussions focused on how best to advocate for the collaborative actions of governments, public policies, civil society, academia, and grassroots communities to:

- **Deconstruct the Culture of Violence** by addressing and reducing all forms of direct armed violence in domestic, interpersonal, school, community, urban, rural, institutional, and national contexts.
- **Build a Culture of Peace** by developing clear methodologies and tools, drawing on the vast experiences and traditions of civil society, as well as on the "usages and customs" present in both rural and urban communities across various regions and ethnic-cultural groups within the continent.

Committed to these goals and objectives, GAMIP ALC developed a regional action program supporting GAMIP's transformative role as a Non-Governmental Organization in the service of respect for the dignity of people and peoples, the defense of their freedoms, and building diverse and multiple cultures of peace.

GAMIP ALC planning for educational activities, courses, projects, and programs were to be centred on the premise that people are the *subjects* of law, and not political and social *objects*. They must, therefore, be integrated and involved in research, learning practices, teaching methodology, and pedagogical strategies, including at the family and community level.

Both theoretically and in practice, GAMIP ALC also advocated for: reflection and learning of conflict resolution through peaceful means; operational transformation through non-violent techniques; citizenship building via participatory teaching methods; reality analysis; critical reflection; and learning values linked to respect for human dignity, diversity, cultural respect, and social justice.

3. GAMIP ALC Gets Organized:

In April 2020, around 74 volunteers, including teachers, social leaders, lawyers, educators, researchers, political scientists, psychologists, mediators, anthropologists, graduates, and communicators, convened under the coordination of the Argentinian citizens: Dr. Alicia Cabezudo (Educator); Dr. Marta Paillet (Lawyer); and Estela Tustanovsky (Accountant).

The following structures and principles were introduced for maximum organizational collaboration, despite regional complexity. They still guide GAMIP ALC, led by the current Board with Members from Argentina, Colombia, Chile, and Mexico.

Organizational Principles: GAMIP ALC adheres to the international objectives of GAMIP, emphasizing a participatory, multidisciplinary, cooperative, horizontal, flexible, territorial, solidaristic, and democratic approach.

Dialogical Circles: The organization operates through Dialogical Circles at local, regional, national, or international levels, facilitating connections through common areas, themes, or projects known as "Rounds." These Circles align with the Culture of Peace concept as per UN Resolution A/53/243 (October 1999).

4. Early GAMP ALC Regional Initiatives: Seminars and Meetings:

- Introduction to Culture(s) of Peace Studies: Theoretical Framework and Tools - GAMIP ALC & Rotary Argentina.
- Restorative Justice and Practices: Promoted by Santa Fe Ombudsman's Office and

Latin American Congresses on Restorative Justice.

- Building Cultures of Peace: A Challenge Today - Itaca Higher Business School (Mexico), JUNPAZ México, and GAMIP ALC.
- Diploma in Justice and Restorative Practices: UCASAL & GAMIP ALC.

Agreements:

- International Organization of Ombudsmen (IOI)
- Central American Parliament (PARLACEN) – Guatemala
- Radio Program Versar y Conversar – Mexico
- Universidad Modelo (Mexico) and Universidad La Serena (Chile)
- Response for Peace Association (ARP) - Argentina

Circles and Work Rounds:

- Circle of Formal and Non-formal Education and Culture of Peace
- Radio Patria Grande Project Round
- Paradigm Change Magazine Round
- Conflict Resolution and Culture of Peace Circle
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution Course Round
- Circle of Restorative Justice and Culture of Peace
- Restorative Justice Congress Round

5. GAMIP ALC Alliances and Activities

- **Institutional Projects (involving all 14 GAMIP ALC member countries):**
 - o Coffee For Peace: Beginning in 2022.
 - o Latin American Social Protests
 - o Youth and Volunteers Program
- **GAMIP ALC Activities (2021-2022) - Involving one or more individual GAMIP ALC members and/or GAMIP ALC member countries.** (GAMIP internal documents and agreements, 2021- present)
 - o GAMIP ALC was invited to be part of regional organizations such as the Tribunal of Opinion (TRINO) with members from Argentina, Brazil, Basque Country, Guatemala, Chile, and Mexico.
 - o GAMIP ALC was invited to participate in the Alliance of Innovative Training for Citizenship and Peace (Colombia), a civil society organization that is composed of 23 major Colombian institutions in Peace, Human Rights, and Reconciliation.
 - o GAMIP ALC was selected to be a member of the Group of Allies of the Colombian Truth Commission in order to deepen and promote activities as well as disseminate information related to the Truth Commission Report delivered to the President of the Republic and the country in August 2022.
 - o Since January 2024, CEV's Information Bulletin (*Seremos*) regularly publishes GAMIP ALC activities. In addition, GAMIP ALC's Institutional Projects (Ministry of Peace for Colombia, Radio Patria Grande Project, and Coffee for Peace) are shown interactive in the map of the Commission's virtual platform. (Colombia Truth Commission, ongoing).
- **Universities Contractually linked with GAMIP ALC for Longterm Involvement and Joint Activities (2020 - 2023)**
 - o Creation of the International Diploma: *Education in Cultures of Peace, Citizenship, and*

Human Rights is organized by Universidad Modelo (Mérida, Yucatán / Mexico) and GAMIP ALC, supported by Universidad de La Serena (Chile);

- UPTC - Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia and the Master's Degree Program in Human Rights of the UPTC (Colombia) have been crucial to GAMIP ALC. UPTC hosted the GAMIP International Summit in October 2022; University of Amazonia (Colombia); University of Tolima (Colombia); University of Quilmes (Quilmes - Buenos Aires, Argentina); University Modelo (Mérida, México);

- **Other Universities Linked with GAMIP ALC**

- University of Cartagena (Cartagena de Indias , Colombia); University Autónoma del Caribe (Barranquilla, Colombia); National University of Colombia (Bogotá, Colombia); National University of Pedagogy (Bogotá, Colombia)

6. GAMIP ALC - The Way Forward

GAMIP ALC continues to innovate and add initiatives on an ongoing basis. In 2024, for example:

- **A series of 14, monthly courses** around the principles and main themes that support the complex *Culture of Peace* UN Resolution Concept (E.g. Human Rights, Restorative Justice, Peace Education, Solidarity Economy, etcetera.)

- **A GAMIP ALC Regional Congress** on *Cultures of Peace Education* in Mexico (2025).

- **GAMIP ALC is co-hosting two major events**, to act as precursors to the 2025 GAMIP ALC 2025 Regional Congress: (a) *International Congress on Words for Peace* - with the Bank of Colombia and the Ministry of Education in Colombia (Bogota, August 2024); and (b) *Regional Conference on Peace Education Practices in Action* - with the University of Amazonia (Colombia) and the National University of Mexico (Mexico DF, November 2024);

- **Agreement with International Association of Educating Cities** (based in Barcelona, Spain) to offer GAMIP courses and material to its 42 city members.

7. Significant Milestones in the History of GAMIP ALC:

- **GAMIP International Summit : October 3rd – 7th / 2022 , Tunja (Colombia):** Of great significance for GAMIP's Ministry of Peace initiative in Colombia, as GAMIP's 7th International Summit in Tunja in October 2022, co- hosted with the Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia (UPTC).

Spearheaded by GAMIP ALC, the comprehensive operational, administrative, and pedagogical planning and execution ultimately involved 1,072 participants, working in English and Spanish, including attendees, experts, coordinators, speakers, volunteers, translators, planners and support staff. Ten participatory round tables covered areas as wide-ranging as: Bioethics, Peacebuilding, Biodiversity, Land, and Environment, Communications and Culture of Peace, Justice and Sovereignty, Human Rights, Education and Culture of Peace, Social Movements, Conflict Resolution.

- **Proposal for the Ministry of Peace of Colombia (November 2022 – October 2023):**

Following the Summit, a meeting with Senator Sandra Ramírez of the Comunes Party led to the possibility of proposing the establishment of a Ministry of Peace to the Colombian Congress. Dr. Ramírez sought GAMIP's expertise, prompting the formation of an International GAMIP

Committee.

As detailed in Chapter six (Colombia - lessons learned from previous initiatives), over a year, an interdisciplinary committee of authors researched the history of Peace Ministries globally. Eight Latin American members from Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Mexico and three Canadian GAMIP Members, drafted a Feasibility Proposal for a Ministry of Peace in Colombia, including a draft bill modelled on Colombian Law (GAMIP, 2023).

On November 9, 2023, the proposed Bill was presented at a Public Hearing in the Colombian Congress, marking the first instance at a global level of GAMIP, a civil society organization, being invited formally to present a feasibility study and draft legislation for a Ministry of Peace in Colombia. Representatives from all political parties, the Executive Branch, and civil society attended. The event received extensive media coverage, including TV, radio, and numerous newspaper and magazines articles across Latin America and Europe.

The feasibility proposal has been widely disseminated through strategic meetings, congresses, panels, workshops, and government visits to consulates in Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Spain, Portugal, and Italy.

It was also presented to University Programs in Europe and Latin America as well as International Networks in related themes, including: the Latin American & Caribbean Network in Human Rights Education; the Network of Universities for Peace (Colombia); World Beyond War International; International Peace Bureau Organization; International Teachers for Peace Association; the International Association of Educating Cities; the Argentinian Association of Constitutional Law and Judges; the Mexican National Human Rights Commission (GAMIP, 2023).

8. Conclusion

GAMIP ALC's presence since 2020 signifies a path towards building cultures of peace in the region and strengthening Peace Infrastructures. It is anticipated that both will launch further regional programs aimed at improving the social, educational, and political systems at the state, regional and local level, as well as facilitating transformational strategies for the wellbeing of their people.

This pedagogical, social, and political empowerment, characterized by its diversity, will continue to take place in a historically and contextually variable time across the continent. It is not yet clear how far GAMIP ALC can go in achieving its objectives, goals, and actions. But what is clear, is their commitment to giving the best of their **members, civil society** organizations, institutions, programs, and projects to achieve the peace and general well-being desired by all. Such a desire is held in common, considered urgent and absolutely necessary, as reflected in their action plan.

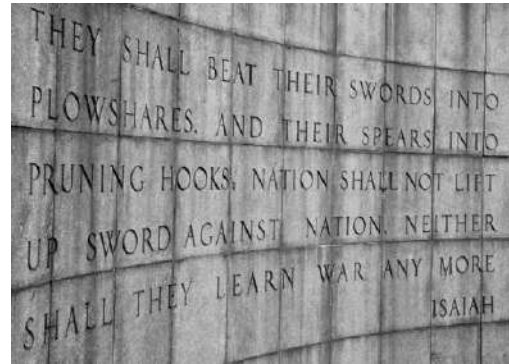
The efforts highlight above are but a fraction of the ongoing energy and initiatives of GAMIP ALC. They serve, in this book, to demonstrate a unique element of GAMIP's history, in this case born of a regional approach, with significant national results for promoting peace, education, and human rights throughout the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

CHAPTER THREE

INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE AND THE UNITED NATIONS CONNECTION

Anne Creter

~ A Vision for the Future Whose Time Has Come ~



“We cannot build a future for our grandchildren with a system built for our grandparents.”

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (17 January, 2024)

INTRODUCTION

Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) and the **Culture of Peace (CoP)** are known United Nations (UN) peacebuilding principles. **I4P** (i.e. *ministries, departments, commissions, councils* etc.) and **CoP** are complimentary, new- paradigm constructs. Working together, they can provide a viable path to make peace possible by their evidence-based focus on violence prevention and reduction. This chapter highlights their synergistic connection with milestones on how their inter-relationship evolved. Which demonstrates a model for integrating them jointly into foundational peacebuilding policies and practices. *I4P and cop should be included in the upcoming UN PACT for the Future as a viable solution to our planet’s unprecedented, ever-escalating “polycrisis” culture of violence.* As that UN reform could provide global direction and coordination to hasten a consciousness shift to a more peaceful world.

CONTEXT

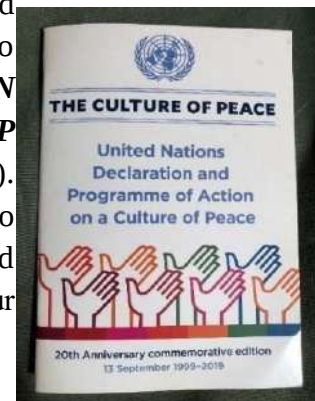


This proposed **I4P-CoP connection** powerfully addresses **UN Sustainable Development Goal #16** on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions to “*promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*” Because **I4P** are the missing link that enables the **CoP** to manifest by providing the needed building blocks designed intentionally to support nonviolent responses to conflict at all levels from local to global. The UN defines **I4P** as “*a network of interdependent systems, resources, values and skills held by government, civil society and community institutions that promote dialogue and consultation; prevent conflict and enable peaceful mediation when violence occurs in a society.*” (UNDP, 2017). And **CoP** as “*a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.*” (UN General Assembly, 1999).

Aligned with the science of nonviolence, I4P are established at all levels to maximize nonviolent resolution of conflict to actualize the Culture of Peace per the landmark **1999 UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a CoP Resolution A/Res/53-243**. (UN General Assembly, 1999). Likewise, CoP is a comprehensive principle, and also aligned with peace science which holistically prescribed specific ‘peace actions’ in eight action areas that must occur locally, nationally and globally

For the CoP to happen. The eight action areas are:

education, sustainable economic and social development, human rights, women’s equality, democratic participation, understanding, tolerance and solidarity, participatory communication and free flow of information and international peace and security. When the UN was founded in 1945, the academic discipline of Peace and Conflict Studies had not evolved yet, nor had these two innovative peacebuilding principles.



I4P and CoP are state-of-the-art propositions that together offer the UN an evidence-based, enlightened means to fulfill its 75+ year pledge to end ‘the scourge of war.’ The CoP resolution declares its UN ‘peace action’ mandate as *normative* on earth and formulates the **blueprint or**

roadmap of actions needed at all levels to effectuate it. I4P are the roadways or platforms of peace architecture that facilitate basic ‘peace actions’ such as conflict resolution through dialogue and diplomacy to happen. Together, this combined formula gives shape, form and substance to peace by operationalizing and institutionalizing peacebuilding. Both concepts emerged within separate UN bureaucracies around the year 2000 at the start of the new millennium. And in the past two+ decades they have significantly advanced in understanding *yet still with limited in-house UN application.* **Integrated within the UN PACT for the Future at the upcoming Summit of the Future, their synergistic impact would facilitate much needed UN reform and transformation.**

The 21st century began with great hope that “peace is in our hands” to use a UNESCO phrase. Secretary-General Kofi Annan rang the UN Peace Bell for the third millennium. 2000 was declared the International Year for the Culture of Peace and 2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World. (UN General Assembly, 2002) Jubilenium was a coalition of global peace initiatives (including at the UN) whose goal was to spread the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence message throughout the world. It was dedicated to ushering in the next thousand years in the spirit of creating a new epoch of peace, friendship, understanding, and tolerance among nations, religions and peoples.

To begin the Culture of Peace Year and Decade, Jubilenium promoted the Manifesto 2000 **written by the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates of that time.** It stated: Respect all Life – Reject Violence – Share with Others – Listen to Understand – Preserve the Planet – Rediscover Solidarity.

Yet now almost 25 years into the 21st century, the UN’s 75+ years-long quest “to end the scourge of war” has paradoxically devolved into an ever escalating worldwide culture of violence at this most dangerous inflection point in history.

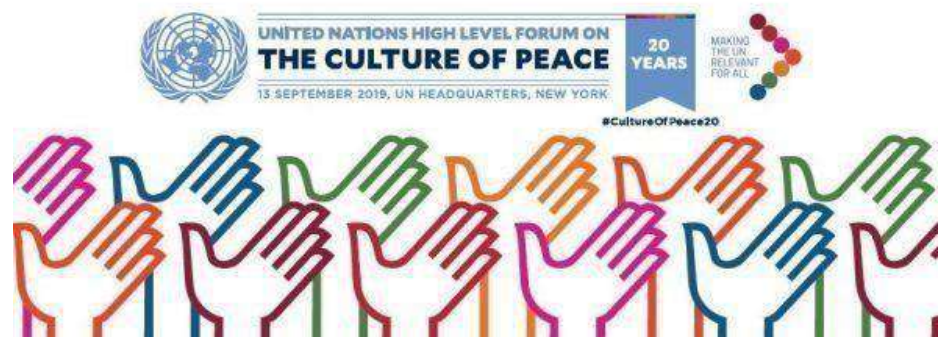
Tragically, humanity’s war methods have only become more sophisticated and uncivilized with more devastating humanitarian and earth consequences that still fail to bring peace. *This is frustrating because we know now what actions must be taken to bring peace but such preventive actions are rarely taken.* It makes us wonder whether peace is ever really possible? The old-paradigm, life-destroying untenable ‘*peace through strength*’ mindset persists, not the newly proven life-affirming one of ‘*strength through peace.*’ *Which theoretically would make peace possible if only the political will existed to implement it.* The civil society masses have long proven through global protests against wars that we want peace. But due to world politics, tis new paradigm mindset as not yet reached its tipping point in critical mass conscious enough to shift the prevailing worldview, despite the significant progress made since the professional field of peace studies began 50 years ago.

Dr. Joni Carley, Convenor of the UN NGO Major Unitive Cluster says of these times: “*While the need for concrete solutions is clear, the current requirement for deep, systemic and lasting transformation is unlikely to be met without factoring intangible elements, including mindset and*

the inherent oneness of humanity, into planning for the future. The impulse to ignore intangible factors promotes superficial, disparate responses incapable of supporting the unified, systemic changes required at this critical inflection point because focus on concrete factors alone cannot accommodate the deeper drivers of change. Mindset predetermines motivations, plans and actions as recognized by UNESCO's mission to "create peace in the minds of men and women." Emergent science is congruent with all the major religions and with indigenous wisdom in its demonstration of the fundamental unity of all beings with one another and with the earth itself. Yet, separation-based ideology is so endemic in our global mindset that it forms the basis for policies that preclude both living in accordance with the reality of our oneness and the establishment of new norms that are suited to the purpose of underpinning a peaceful world" (Carley, 2023).

We are fortunate there are five visionary UN related dignitaries who are experts on the UN I4P-COP connection. They are: 1) Paul Van Tongeren, 2) Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury 3) David Adams 4) Robert Muller and 5) Vijay Mehta.

PAUL VAN TONGEREN: Secretary-General of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), GAMIP member Paul van Tongeren stated: *"The 'Ministry of Peace' concept started to be developed in 2003, mainly in the global North, with the aim of creating a practical model to advance a culture of peace"* (van Tongeren, 2005). During the same period, several countries in the South experienced protracted conflicts, particularly in Africa, where such conflicts were likely to arise during elections. *These events gave rise to the beginnings of 'infrastructures for peace' which showed successful results of violence reduction through the establishment of peace architecture.* He has documented these successes in many articles about I4P structures in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Philippines, Costa Rica, Ethiopia and many more in Southern countries. He wrote the I4P Background Papers for the Costa Rica and Geneva GAMIP Summits. Plus, I4P publications like his 2011 Peacebuilding Journal piece on *"Potential Cornerstones of I4P: How local people committees can make a difference"*, and a Journal of Conflictology 2011 titled *"Increasing Interest in I4P"*.



AMBASSADOR ANWARUL CHOWDHURY: An I4P-UN connection began in 1999 when the landmark **Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace Resolution 53/243**

passed by the skillful efforts of former UN Under-Secretary-General, High Representative of the UN and Founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, Bangladesh **Ambassador Chowdhury**. This *permanent standard-setting* document provided pretext and impetus for Member States to establish I4P (*particularly within national governments*). Ambassador Chowdhury stated: “*As the world was coming out of the Cold War and possibilities of global tension, conflict and war were diminishing, we felt that a new mindset, a new approach, was needed to ensure a sustainable peace. I was inspired by the work done by UNESCO under the leadership of my dear friend Federico Mayor in this regard*” (Chowdhury & Ikeda, 2020).

Here are Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury’s notes on the collaborative relationship between the culture of peace and infrastructure for peace, prepared on 31 January 2022.

Nearly 20 years ago in 2001 a formal proposal was submitted to the US House of Representatives by Congressman Dennis Kucinich for a US Department of Peacebuilding. This legislation (now HR-1111) has been submitted in all Congressional sessions since 2001.

Summary of the Department of Peacebuilding Act of 2021: (US Department of Peacebuilding Bill HR 1111, 2023).

This bill establishes a Department of Peacebuilding in the executive branch, dedicated to peacebuilding, peacemaking, and the study and promotion of conditions conducive to both domestic and international peace and a culture of peace.

The mission of the department includes the cultivation of peace and peacebuilding as a strategic national policy objective and development of policies that promote national and international conflict prevention, nonviolent intervention, mediation, peaceful conflict resolution, and structured conflict mediation.

The department shall collaborate with others to promote personal and community security and peace by supporting policies to address personal and family violence, including suicide; reduce drug and alcohol abuse; and create, through local community initiatives, peace projects that facilitate conflict resolution and healing of societal wounds.

The Department of Defense and the Department of State must consult with the department concerning nonviolent means of conflict resolution when a conflict between the United States and any other government or entity is foreseeable, imminent, or occurring. (*These are just a few of bill’s many peacebuilding points ...*)

A proposed paragraph in the annual UN resolution on the culture of peace would recognize that establishing “Infrastructures for Peace” in member states is an important peacebuilding step to accelerate implementation of A/RES/53/243.

Ambassador Chowdhury addressed the Peace Alliance conference in Washington DC on 17 October 2015. He also endorsed Peace Alliance advocacy for Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) on 25 July 2018. His Remarks on 20 September 2020 at the Peace Alliance meeting follow:

“Civil society has done the most to advance the cause of peace in which the Global Movement for The Culture of Peace (GMCoP) has taken a lead in developing a coalition of civil society organizations and work with various actors promoting the culture of peace. I am proud to say the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) is one of the partner organizations. I believe the culture of peace should be the most appropriate vehicle to prepare ourselves, our world in effectively addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century.

□ Quoting US President John F. Kennedy, who said very profoundly, “Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures. And, however undramatic the pursuit of peace is, that pursuit must go on.”

Inter-connectedness of the Culture of Peace and GAMIP, and in a broader context the Peace Alliance - are all networking together for the same objective - sustainable peace.

The transformative concept of creating governmental I4P worldwide is a rapidly growing trend. Five countries currently have functioning national peace ministries: Costa Rica, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. A few (like Nepal and the Philippines) have had I4P in place at various times. Canada has a newly created Ministry of Women, Peace and Security. Kenya, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan have effective peace councils and commissions. Some countries like the US have pending bills in their governments to establish I4P.

The Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) was founded in 2005 to facilitate this movement. With members from countries all over the world, GAMIP’s objective is the establishment of concrete peace structures, large and small, in governments, at all levels (particularly national) and in civil society organizations that can help construct the Culture of Peace [US House of Representative HR 1111 text below section on the culture of peace on page 7].

The United Nations recognizes that promotion of peace is vital for the full enjoyment of all human rights and the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace mandates that preservation of the right to peace is a fundamental obligation of each country. In 1999, the United Nations adopted a Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, stating that a culture of peace is an integral approach to preventing violence and violent conflicts, an alternative to the culture of war and violence, and is based on education for peace, the promotion of sustainable economic and social development, respect for human rights, equality between women and men, democratic participation, tolerance, the free flow of information, and disarmament. The United Nations declared the years 2001 through 2010 an International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, and the United Nations supports a culture of peace. In 2015, the United Nations adopted 17 sustainable development goals, including promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies which recognize the link between justice, human rights, and government based on the rule of law and peace.

Peacebuilding is defined by the United Nations as a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding is

built upon research into the root causes of violence in the United States and the world, through promotion and promulgation of effective policies and programs that ameliorate those root causes of violence, and through providing all citizens, organizations, and governmental bodies with opportunities to learn about and practice the essential tools of nonviolent conflict resolution and peacebuilding.”

DAVID ADAMS: UNESCO was charged with writing the “Declaration and Programme of Action” led by GAMIP member David Adams, former Director, UNESCO unit for International Year for Culture of Peace. Adams (2009) posits that it is not by accident that:

The term originated at UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) 1989 meeting in Africa. For culture appears in the very name of UNESCO which was established as the UN’s cultural organization. Culture here is defined in the broad anthropological sense, not in the narrow popular one restricted to music, dance and other arts. UNESCO was not concerned with culture for its own sake, but culture for the sake of peace. It made a distinction between the old concept of peace and between sovereign states and a new concept of peace between people.

UNESCO’s constitution preamble declared: *"That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the **peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.**"* In 1989 this concept was given the name "culture of peace" in the final declaration of the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men, sponsored by UNESCO in Côte d'Ivoire. It called for the construction of *"a new vision of peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men."*

The UNESCO (1992) Action Programme for a Culture of Peace declared that; to construct peace in the minds of men, is the mandate of UNESCO. It has become clear that military force cannot solve the global problems of violence and injustice. Military force can only continue the vicious cycle. We need peace culture, not war culture.....” Each of these areas of actions have been priorities of the UN since its foundation. What is new is their linkage through the culture of peace and non-violence into a single coherent concept. This is the first time all these areas are interlinked so the sum of their complementarities and synergies can be developed.

David Adams produced the 2005 Civil Society **Mid-Decade CoP Report** and in 2010 the final Civil Society Report on the **Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World**. (see milestones below) Plus, since the beginning of the CoP Decade he has produced the informative monthly virtual **Culture of Peace News Network** highlighting current international actions in each CoP action area. His work at UNESCO was made possible by the full support of the courageous Director-General Federico Mayor. More recently he has been involved with the “Mayor’s Security Council” Declaration for the Transition to a Culture of Peace in the 21st Century (Adams, 2009).

ROBERT MULLER: The wise, beloved former UN Assistant Secretary-General Visionary, Dr. Robert Muller (known as the 20th century prophet of the UN) was the original UN advocate for

both I4P and COP when they were first conceived at the turn of the 21st century.

In his famous book “7100 Ideas and Dreams for a Better World” Dr. Muller asserts, along with his dream for the CoP, the idea of **Ministries for Peace** referenced six times. (Muller, 2000) His most powerful was Idea # 3039: “As long as there will be Ministries of War or Defense in 174 nations there will be no peace on Earth. I suggest that the President of the United States in his speech to the heads of states meeting of the UN General Assembly 2000 announce that the Pentagon be suppressed and replaced by a **United States Ministry of Peace as President Eisenhower did after World War II. Its Secretary was Harold Stassen**, the last living signer of the United Nations Charter. Now that the cold war is over the US can reestablish that ministry followed, I am sure by many other countries on Earth.”

Uncovering this long forgotten fact that the US actually briefly had a so-called ‘**Secretary for Peace**’ in its cabinet after World War II was I4P validating. Harold Stassen wrote a book in 1990 “Eisenhower: Turning the World toward Peace” whose **Secretary for Peace** Chapter 19 confirmed that special role he briefly held (Stassen & Houts, 1990).

VIJAY MEHTA: If Robert Muller was the 20th century prophet of the UN on the I4P-CoP connection, then GAMIP Board of Director member **Vijay Mehta** of the United Kingdom is the 21st century prophet for his masterpiece book titled “***How Not to Go to War: Establishing Departments for Peace and Peace Centers Worldwide.***” (Mehta 2019) In it he says “the ultimate purpose of the Department of Peace is cultural change.” **He calls for a Culture of Peace unit within Peace Departments “that pursue the Programme of Action outlined in A/RES/53/243.”** Adding they will “address divisions in society in a more direct way, promoting a culture of peace – a multi-cultural environment in which conflict can be resolved in a respectful and peaceful way”. He talks of how peace must become institutionalized via I4P in the same way war has become institutionalized. Calling for a “peace- industrial complex” sustained by the same combination of public and private enterprise that keeps the military-industrial complex going generation after generation.” Pointing out the world’s military power no longer observes UN resolutions and weapons have not made the world less violent.

SOME CHRONOLOGICAL I4P-COP MILESTONES (**only a few of the many I4P studies are mentioned here*)

In 1997, John Paul Lederach officially introduced the I4P terms in his seminal book “Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies”. It was about the need to move beyond traditional diplomacy, which emphasizes top-level leaders and short-term objectives, towards a holistic approach that stresses the multiplicity of peacemakers, long-term perspectives, and the need to create an infrastructure that empowers resources within a society (Lederach, 1997).

In 1998, world renowned visionary futurist **Barbara Marx Hubbard** advanced her idea of a global **UN Peace Room** that would track the myriad peace initiatives in every field to connect and communicate what is working to co-create a more humane world. In 2016, she conducted speaking engagements at the UN to promote this idea and supported the US Department of Peace bill (Marx Hubbard, 1998).

In 1999, the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a culture of peace Resolution A/RES/53/243 was passed by full consensus in the General Assembly after nine months of debates. It often takes several decades from the time a UN Resolution is passed before it is understood and implemented at the UN. Ten years went by before the first High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace was conducted in 2010 at the time when the term “Culture” of Peace was rarely used at the UN (UN General Assembly, 1999).

2000 was declared the **International Year for the Culture of Peace** and **2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World** on the advice of Ambassador Chowdhury (UN General Assembly, 2002).

In early 2000's, the **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)** began an I4P unit within their “Crisis Prevention and Recovery” Department which produced amazing studies documenting how I4P reduced violence in certain countries. UNDP does important work on the ground to help countries meet global challenges like poverty and violence. Their I4P program was discontinued when the Sustainable Development Goals became the UN focus. After it ended, our UN Committee connected with various prior I4P UNDP staffers about their pioneering efforts. All had positive feedback about I4P work.

In 2003 / 2004, a newly formed group of NGO's at UN headquarters began laying the groundwork for cultivating this unfamiliar, unwieldy I4P term. I4P-CoP advocates founded the **Culture of Peace Working Group within the UN NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns (CSVGC-NY) a Committee of the Conferences of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN**. “Governmental departments and ministries of peace in all countries” was on its first meeting agenda. Group focus became the long-term development of a UN I4P Resolution coordinated back and forth between New York and GAMIP Summits for cross global collaboration. The New Zealand UN NGO Peace through Unity (whose Head is a GAMIP member) coincidentally on the other side of the world had been calling for a similar I4P Resolution so our NGO efforts merged on this project.

In 2005, the first major High level UN conference ‘with an I4P workshop’ took place **within the UN “Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict” (GPPAC)**. *“From Reaction to Prevention: Civil Society Forging Partnerships to Prevent Violent Conflict and Build Peace”*. It was titled **Building National Infrastructures and Capacities for Peace** and held at UN Headquarters with UNDP and the Department of Political Affairs. The 900-person global conference was led by GAMIP member Paul van Tongeren whose goal was to begin building I4P worldwide (van Tongeren, 2005).

In 2005, GAMIP was founded in London by three organizations (US Peace Alliance, Canadian Federal Working Group for a Department of Peace and UK Ministry for Peace) who convened the first Peoples Summit for Departments of Peace. It was hosted by UK John McDonnell MP, 40 people from 12 countries met at the UK Parliament to discuss their country I4P campaigns.

Also in 2005, David Adams conducted the “**Civil Society Mid-Decade World Report on the Culture of Peace.**” It provided the first comprehensive view of the progress made by the global

movement for a culture of peace. Based on accounts of 700 organizations from all regions of the world, it concluded that the culture of peace was slowly advancing (Adams, 2005).

In 2006, inspired by the power of the **2nd GAMIP Summit in Canada**, the vision for passage of a General Assembly “**UN I4P Resolution**” enthusiastically arose with US GAMIP member Maggi Koren et al *at a workshop exercise to imagine the highest expression of our individual peace work we could achieve*. A small but mighty UN NGO group there began to develop that idea, Then brought it back to the UN for further refinement, which became the GAMIP UN Committee.



In 2007, at the **3rd GAMIP Summit in Japan**, the first UN Committee meeting took place for those countries interested in joining the **UN I4P Resolution Initiative** born at the prior Summit. A passionate group from five countries (picture) came together there to discuss it (Japan, India, U.S., Canada, and Pakistan) with a few other countries affirming interest in such a project. In 2007, the first NGO I4P Workshop was held at the 60th Annual Department of Public Information / NGO

Conference at the UN convened by Anne Creter, titled “**Solution to the Challenge of Climate Change: Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace**” on *Climate Change: How It Impacts Us All*. (UN DPI, 2007).

In 2008, US GAMIP co-leaders Dot Maver and Michael Abkin wrote a chapter titled “**From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace: The Case for Ministries and Departments of Peace**” in the book “Earthrise: The Dawning of a New Civilization in the 21st Century” by Patrick U. Peti.

In 2009, the **4th GAMIP Summit celebrated Costa Rica’s newly- formed Ministry for Justice and Peace** created by Then President Oscar Orios who hosted the AMIP summit. Pat Mice and Anne Creter Shared the UN spotlight (Pictures).

A slide show was shown of the I4P Resolution work done at the UN between summits with peace through Unity Gita’s Brooke, Kate Smith, Iris Spellings et al and Ambassador Chowdhury generous consultation through the CSVGC-NY “Culture of Peace Working Group”.



In 2009, an article by GAMIP member Simonetta Costanzo Pittaluga from Spain was **published in Conflictology**, entitled “**Civilian Movement for Ministries or Departments of Peace in the World.**” She referenced a **Ministries for Peace** article Federico Mayor had published in a mainstream Spanish newspaper where he said: “With the new millennium the force of reason is expanding in a way that seems unstoppable in these next years.

It is this new citizenship that is capable of moving, with firmness but without violence, towards culture of peace...” (Costanzo-P., 2009).

In 2010, a **Disarmament Through “Governmental Infrastructures for a Culture of Peace”**workshop took place at the **International “Disarm Now” Conference** at Riverside Church, New York (part of UN Disarmament Day) co-facilitated by Canada & US GAMIP members.

Rob Acheson and Anne Creter assisted Georgina Galanis featuring US Department of Peace Board member Marianne Perez and UN Office for Disarmament Affairs on “Weapon of Mass Destruction Branch Political Affairs” Officer Michael Spies.

In 2010, David Adams produced the “**final civil society report on the decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World.**” Including a Forward written by Ambassador Chowdhury who acknowledged the Culture of Peace Working Group as sponsors of the report in the name of all civil society organizations worldwide. Most organizations from around the world reported that the Culture of Peace was advancing (Adams, 2010).

In 2012, a major milestone was the **Journal of Peacebuilding & Development** “Special Issue on Infrastructures for Peace” publication, which included articles by many of the major academic stakeholders in this exciting new peacebuilding field (Mc Candless, 2012).

In 2013, publication of the first UNDP “Issue Brief on Infrastructure for Peace” written by its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery took place. It cited promising results from various countries where I4P were shown to be effective in preventing and reducing violence. The countries were Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kyrgyzstan, and Tunisia (UN Development Program, 2013).

In 2013, at the Geneva GAMIP Summit the UN I4P Resolution Initiative was finally conceived. What started out from previous summits as a fantastic project with just a handful of participants, had turned into an acknowledged summit outcome.



First signature I4P UN resolution petition signed by Tara Stuart Costa Rica Dulce Alvarado & Anne Creter presenting UN I4P Resolution

Also in 2013, **GAMIP partnered with Peace Now.com** to enhance awareness of I4P via virtual promotion of their jointly proposed UN Resolution called **“The Muscles of Peace Global Resolution in Support of Infrastructures for Peace in Governments Worldwide”** (Peace Now, 2013). It calls for creation of ministries and departments of peace within all governments; peace education for schools, peace economies, building a sustainable Culture of Peace, security, and well-being by preventing and resolving conflict through peaceful means, including trauma healing and peace professionalism. It is supported by a **“One Billion Signatures for Peace”** online petition at PeaceNow.com. Promoted also by the award-winning peace film, **“Admissions”** translated into multiple languages and broadcast to 80 million homes worldwide. Including an email campaign called **“The Muscles of Peace 60 Second Workout”** featuring 104 weekly installments of peace teachings, with free subscription by signing the online petition.

In 2016, the scholarly **Berghof Foundation / UNDP in-depth publication** by Hans J. Giessmann entitled **“Embedded Peace: Infrastructures for Peace: Approaches and Lessons Learned”** contained I4P case studies showing violence reduction in the following countries: **South Africa, Ghana, Nepal and Thailand** (Giessmann, 2016).

In 2017, a Joint “UNDP-Department of Political Affairs Annual Report” 2017 was published on **“Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention.”** An online “Infrastructures for Peace Portal” was to be launched in 2018 to *“support local, regional and national initiatives to establish and sustain peace infrastructures ...”* (UN Development Program, 2017).

In 2018, UN NGO GAMIP members **met with two former UNDP I4P staffers** at the UN about their prior I4P Initiative which they fondly recalled as having had much potential.

In 2020, GAMIP UN Committee collaborated briefly with For Peace who had been working with Costa Rica UN Ambassador Rodrigo A. Carazo on I4P UN Draft Resolution

In 2021, the **12th Culture of Peace High Level Forum** was on zoom due to the pandemic. This afforded UN NGO GAMIP members the opportunity to represent civil society posing brief I4P questions to the speakers. (*I4P seed planting starts with the smallest of seeds*).

In 2022, the **Colombia GAMIP Summit** hosted by the Latin America and Caribbean Chapter set a precedent working with the Colombian government to establish a Ministry of Peace to coordinate culture of peace actions in collaboration with its other Ministries. An informative document was produced called the Feasibility Proposal for the Creation of a Ministry of Peace for Colombia (Global Campaign for Peace Education, 2023).

In 2023, the UN “Our Common Agenda” Policy Brief 9, **A New Agenda for Peace Action 3 recommendation mentions I4P!** It says to “develop national prevention strategies to address the different drivers and enablers of violence and conflict in societies **and strengthen national infrastructures for peace**.” Plus, “*Member States seeking to establish or strengthen national infrastructures for peace should be able to access a tailor-made package of support and expertise*”. It is not known yet how this will be implemented (UN Political & Peacebuilding Affairs, 2023).

In 2024, the highly anticipated September UN Summit of the Future is fast approaching. The **PACT for the Future: zero draft** acknowledges CoP on page eight # 50: “... **we recognize the importance of fostering a culture of peace**, upholding the rule of law and promoting human security.”

The GAMIP UN Committee recommends that I4P be cited here too -- adding the phrase “**by establishing infrastructures for peace**” ... to read: “... **we recognize the importance of fostering a culture of peace by establishing infrastructures for peace**, upholding the rule of law and promoting human security” (UN Political & Peacebuilding Affairs, 2024).

Conclusion

Now that the UN acknowledges I4P in the New Agenda for Peace and CoP in the PACT for the Future, the GAMIP UN Committee under the wise leadership of Iman Ibrahim and John Viscount is reevaluating its focus. Which up until now has been on passage of a General Assembly I4P Resolution and the addition of an I4P statement to the annual Culture of Peace Resolution. These are still worthwhile pursuits as mandating I4P would raise the global imperative higher to establish I4P everywhere. However, adding this vital I4P-CoP connection onto the PACT for the Future would be the most efficient way now to emphasize the urgent need to establish I4P worldwide to build the CoP.

Past UNDP I4P trailblazing evidence-based studies in various countries substantiate the fact that taking prescribed, systematic peace actions at all levels from local to global can reduce violence and strengthen the Culture of Peace. **Thus, peace would become more possible if I4P are established worldwide.** Milestones in the long evolving “seasoning” of these two UN principles suggest their uniting in UN policy and practice for synergy would reduce the culture of violence. Examples of possible UN re-organization could be creation of a “**Culture of Peace Council**” on

par with the Security Council. And Member State development of “**National Culture of Peace Action Plans**” (*with UN support and expertise*) that are aligned with the eight action areas declared in the CoP Resolution.

War will be inevitable until a better system is solidly in place that enables humanity to prevent and resolve conflicts by habitually applying principles of nonviolence to tem conscious evolution is about a new way of thinking ”beyond” war. We now have a UN formulated “Action Plan” blueprint and architecture to forge pathways to peace. This new UN prescription gives hope that a better world is possible. Now is our moment of choice. We can know a world beyond war is humanity (especially in our politics) chooses this way.

2025 is supposed to be the Year of Hope. Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunbergsays “*Everybody goes looking for hope. Don’t look for hope. Look for action and hope will come.*” I4P and the CoP are all about peace action! ***Thus, our recommended action going forward is for the evolutionary terms “Infrastructures for Peace” and “Culture of Peace” to be included in the 2024 Pact for the Future together.*** We have faith in humanity that 2025 (with the UN’s help) will be the year of massive transformation that ushers the world into the Culture of Peace through creation of Infrastructures for Peace in all Member States. As mainstreaming peace actions will enable better conflict prevention and resolution.

This is a UN imperative for as President J.F. Kennedy said, the UN is “our last best hope”.

May peace prevails on earth,

Anne Creter, GAMIP UN Liaison & Advisory Board annecrets@aol.com, New Jersey, USA

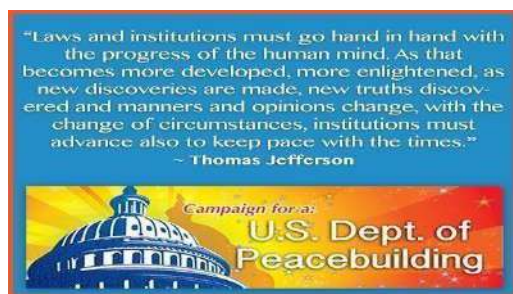
UN NGO Representative Peace through Unity www.peacethroughunity.nz.org

Global Movement for Culture of Peace Coalition

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/279917785388039>

Global Alliance Ministries & Infrastructures for Peace www.gamip.org

US Peace Alliance Department of Peacebuilding Campaign www.peacealliance.org



June 30, 2024

“You’re not talking about just adding another layer of government. You’re talking about an entire philosophical revolution! Legendary US broadcast journalist Walter Cronkite re: Dept. of Peace.

CHAPTER FOUR

PEACE PROFESSIONALISM

Evelyn Toni Voigt

Summary

In the tapestry of human existence, institutions stand as enduring threads, weaving through the annals of time. The axiom, “Institutions endure. They can outlast the people that create them,” (Mehta, 2019, p.6) reflects the inherent longevity of established structures, whether governmental, societal, or commercial. Such endurance, however, is not divorced from the individuals who breathe life into these institutions. While institutions outlast people, without people there are no institutions. People and institutions share an intricate, symbiotic relationship. Together, they shape the trajectory of societies in general and sustainable institutions in particular. How people and institutions interact is key. In the case of Ministries and Infrastructures for peace, this chapter will argue that constructive and inclusive parameters for professionalism can harness existing capacities to generate best practices for building a culture of peace to achieve sustainable development, social development, and the pursuit of human rights. More specifically, peace professionalism would significantly strengthen the contribution by staff to sustain nonviolent solutions, especially in the current context of unprecedented change and adversity.

This chapter: (1) Introduces peace professionalism; (2) Shows how it benefits, not only Ministries of Peace, but also each one of us; (3) Presents peace professionalism in action – as practitioners, activists, leaders, women, entrepreneurs, educators, youth, and community workers; (4) Discusses strengthening the peace field; and (5) Presents two initiatives paving the way for a recognized peace profession, namely: (i) The SSHRC-funded Peace Professionalism Project aiming to provide an inclusive framework, with a particular focus on values, skills, competencies, and respect for traditional practices; and (ii) The Civilian Peace Service Canada’s pilot model for evidence-based accreditation of peace professionals. Under a supportive peace profession, what a powerful movement this would be, organically rooted in each community and with the courage to wage peace!

Key Words: Accredited Peace Professional. Civilian Peace Service Canada. Core Peace Values. Culture of Peace. Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace. Infrastructure for Peace. Key Peace Competencies. Muscles of Peace. Peace Professionalism. PeaceNow.com. Peacepreneurship. Peace Entertainment. The Peace Professionalism Project.

1. Introducing Peace Professionalism

Everyone can be a Citizen of Peace (Maillet, 2022). Some will practice peace informally. The focus here is on those who choose peace as their vocation, referred to throughout the chapter as peace professionals. At issue, as in other professions, is to equip them, in a substantive manner, to build on existing strengths for effective contributions in the field. Other fields certify such readiness to practice and support their members by promoting competency, quality assurance and

ethics for those entrusted with people's well-being or *well-becoming* (Brady, 2024). Why not the peace field? And like other professions, why not formally accredit those who are performing effectively as peace professionals at all levels of society in the peace field - regardless of whether their competence was earned through education, instinct, tradition, or experience?

Understanding the effectiveness of peace professionalism extends beyond technical skills, encompassing values, competencies, and a broader perspective on peacebuilding. This paradigm shift is imperative, recognizing the pitfalls associated with a narrow focus on peace programming and technical skills, as highlighted by scholars such as Fitzduff, M. (2005), Galtung (2015) and Miller (2020). Similarly, for best results in education, Paulo Freire stresses *emotional* and *cognitive* learning (1970). For effective, participatory research, sociologist Fals Borda promotes *sentipensante* (sensing/thinking) (Rendon, 2009). Cubans, renowned for their medical practices, highlight not only technical expertise but also the crucial human interaction between doctors and patients (Franco et al, 2018). When healing conflict, the patient in peacebuilding, it is equally important to apply both values and competencies or, as pioneered by Galtung, to recognize a peace professional as someone who works both from the mind and the heart.

Peace Professionals may contribute to Ministries of Peace; advise governments and international institutions; mediate, monitor, or set up elections; manage difficult projects/situations to prevent violence from erupting; and/or reinforce societies, grass roots communities and families in their ongoing efforts toward non-violent structures and governance. They may specialize in many ways – as grass roots community builders, general practitioners, activists, advocates, mediators, facilitators, and educators - with peace professionalism ensuring a sturdy foundation.

Benefits of Peace Professionalism

Peace professionalism benefits us in many ways. Citizens already traumatized by conflict need and deserve competent peacebuilding and best practices. This is what professionalism aims to support. It does so in a way that builds consensus across contexts, is aware of patterns that should not be repeated, and sets specific standards that respect inclusion and decolonization.

Recognition for the peace professionalism of women supports the intent of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Security Council, 2000) to promote the active participation of women in the resolution of conflict. This is important given the conditions that women continue to face, compounded by the social/cultural norms inherent in their culture, whether at home or internationally. Not to mention, according to a report recently drafted by UN women for the UN Secretary General, that the number of women and girls living in conflict-affected areas in 2022 was up a staggering 50 percent since 2017, to more than 600 million (UNSC, Guterres, 2023).

Young people start thinking about 'what they want to be' at a very early age based on what they see around them. Peace educators focus on building thinking skills, communication skills, and personal skills related to non-violence and human rights, as well as ethical goals such as freedom, respect, and social justice. These values are an essential base for a culture of peace ... but they are insufficient. Peace professionalism goes further. It also calls for self-reflection on how we ourselves are applying core values such as empathy, humility, integrity to building peace in our

work and life. This self-awareness is important in the peace field, especially given the impact of servant leadership with its emphasis on service (Greenleaf 1977/91). Students of Peace and Conflict care about making a meaningful contribution after graduation. For this, they need practical experience as well as theoretical knowledge and a mechanism for evidence-based assessment of their peacebuilding proficiency toward accreditation for professionalism.

The professionalization of peace practitioners recognizes the contributions of citizens who are already building peace to strengthen their social structures, including in traditional communities. It also facilitates the management of knowledge and practices for reviewing and generating public policies to put a Global Culture of Peace into action, as called for by UN Resolution A/53/243 and the related Programme of Action (General Assembly, 1999).

Peacebuilders, whether involved locally or globally, understand the complexity and professionalism involved in transforming conflict. Yet those not in the peace field still tend to regard them as well-intentioned amateurs or not being realistic.

Accreditation as a peace professional can pre-qualify peace practitioners for work applications. It can raise their profile. Registration in personnel rosters, can link them more readily with potential employers whether in the private, government or voluntary sector who are often seeking services at short notice in times of crisis.

Although accreditation as a peace professional does not guarantee effective performance, it does show employers that the candidate applying for work has met professional benchmarks. National, regional, community and global leaders would also have the advantage of accessing rosters of accredited (read pre-qualified) peace professionals for timely peacebuilding advice in situations of crisis.

1. Peace Professionalism in Action

One does not need to be a doctor to practice first aid. The same is true in peacebuilding. Everyone can be a citizen of peace. Some will choose to practice peace informally; others will choose to make peacebuilding their vocation. This section introduces a range of people who, each in their own way, have individually demonstrated peace professionalism in action. Drawing inspiration from their various journeys, they apply the values and competencies of peace professionalism to drive change and promote peace in diverse sectors of society even in the face of overwhelming challenges. Their access to decision makers and impact would be greater if they were to be recognized and credentialled as members of a supportive peace profession.

At the grass roots level : There are countless examples of heroines and heroes bearing the daily brunt of armed conflict, often unacknowledged, yet finding the strength to be the voice of reason when violent conflict threatens. They must be recognized and included in any framework for peace professionalism.

o neighbours in a small community in Sri Lanka are increasingly at odds. One neighbour insists on dumping her kitchen waste in the other neighbour's yard. Finally, the offended neighbour decides to stop complaining. Instead, she plants a banana tree on the refuse pile. It thrives. So, she divides her first crop of bananas in two, brings half to her embarrassed neighbour and says, "Thank you. Without your garbage, I could not have grown these beautiful bananas" (Cader, 2017, pp.8-9). The offending neighbour bursts into tears. Now, they are both peace leaders - in their township, and beyond.

Luminaries in the field: At the other end of the scale there are the luminaries like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King, and the Dalai Lama. Their core values, such as empathy, humility, and integrity, immediately come to mind. Additionally, they are recognized for their remarkable abilities in peacebuilding, negotiation, and mediation - aligning with Galtung's definition of working from the head and the heart. (Galtung, 2007).

Political: Jonathan Powell calls himself an unlikely peacenik, having come from a military family and been involved in all of Tony Blair's wars. Most significantly, a regret he carries for life is that when he first met Martin McGuinness, a politician and leader in the IRA, he refused to shake his hand. All he saw in front of him was a terrorist, rather than a human being. Ultimately, they became friends. Powell has since dedicated the rest of his life to help end armed conflicts because in his words: "If you want to fight starvation, the spread of disease, and mass rape – or to help suffering children, whether child soldiers or the victims of war – then the most important thing you can do, is to help end armed conflicts" (Powell, 2014). Others would add: prevent and transform violence.

Historical: There are historical figures that have since faded from most minds. To prevent another war after the carnage of WWI, US Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg, and French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aristide Briand, signed the 1928 Pact of Paris. Sixty countries followed suit - most of the countries existing at the time. Even though they ultimately failed in preventing war, one can only imagine the unintended positive outcomes that must have flowed from the diplomatic exchanges, focused not on war, but rather on peace as they negotiated at the international level and, to sign on at the domestic level, within each signatory country. After WWII, in 1956, President Eisenhower appointed Harold Stassen as his *Secretary of Peace*. Stassen served in the Cabinet on Disarmament which focused on mitigating the effects of dropping the bomb (Tal, 2006; Muller, 2000).

International: Another interesting example of what can work at the national level is the *Ecuador Peru Peace Park* in the stunningly beautiful *Cordillera del Condor* region. For more than a century, the two countries periodically went to war in a vain attempt to decide exactly where the border ran. Now, rather than spilling blood, they have established a protected, demilitarized area on each side of the disputed border, with social development and the environment in mind.

Community Level Committees: As Dr. Giessman, author of a UNDP report on *Infrastructures for Peace* in Colombia, DRC, Kenya, and Nepal, points out, "There is no peace without local ownership" (Giessman, 2016). While security in transitions from war to peace is often applied from the top down, peacebuilding depends on fostering constructive relationships among relevant stakeholders at all levels of a transitional society" (Giessman, 2022). For example:

the summer of 1994, a man is fatally shot during a dispute with a shopkeeper over cigarette change in a shantytown. This incident occurs during a turbulent period in South Africa. The township is divided into two factions, both pledging allegiance to a dominant liberation movement but engaged in a local power struggle. The Local Peace Committee, established under the National Peace Accord (NPA) intervenes. Contrary to expectations of a blood bath at the funeral, peace and humanity prevail (Giessman, 2022).

Non-Governmental Organizations: There are of course, also countless peace NGOs working at all levels. GAMIP, for example, is currently involved in efforts towards a Ministry of Peace in Colombia, and related work with the government in The Gambia. GAMIP also focuses, at the individual level, on peace citizenship, informal community practice and peace professionalism.

Private Sector: The annual Oslo Business for Peace Award is the highest distinction given to a business leader for creating value, both for business and society. (Business for Peace Foundation, ongoing). Dr. Scilla Elworthy, three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee and the founder of *Business Plan for Peace*, shows how businesses can be proactive in preventing armed conflicts. During the Ukraine war, for example, she is working with companies to consider what they can do to support peace efforts if they have business or branches in unstable areas. Microsoft has provided advanced communication equipment to Ukraine. H&M stores in Germany routinely help Ukrainian refugees (Elworthy, 2023). In Kenya, post-election riots in 2007 left more than 1000 people dead, masses displaced, and economic turmoil. Yet, five companies decided to actively curb violence. Teaming up with local peace experts and community leaders, they developed grassroots strategies that bore fruit. By 2017, the election was determined by the European Union to have had less destruction, displacement, and expense (Elworthy 2022). PeaceNow promotes the innovative concept of “peacepreneurship” so as to “beat our swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks” (PeaceNow.com 2024 & GAMIP, 2024).

Media: In 1994, the media picked up the *Peace Dividend Paper* written by the *Northern Ireland Confederation of Business Industry*. It’s economic rationale for peace resonated with the public and influenced peace talks. (International Alert, 2006) **CPSC Accredited Peace Professionals:** Dr. Poorna Adhikary was actively involved in negotiations which ultimately, in 2007, led to the erstwhile Ministry of Peace in Nepal. Dr. Poorna’s advice for what works: “Above all”, he says, “we need to avoid oversimplifying. Peacebuilding is complex. It needs time and resources; inclusion, early warning, and intervention; transparency, and competent facilitation” (Adhikary, October 2022).

Among many achievements, from the highest level (including negotiating the first Sudan peace agreement, monitoring elections, and advising governments) to the community and individual level, Dr. Ben Hoffman negotiated the release of 100 abducted children in Uganda in 1998. There, self-proclaimed General Kony, a warlord, was terrorizing the rural population. He violently kidnapped little boys to turn them into child soldiers, and young girls to turn them into wives for the soldiers. The Ugandan army had previously tried to go after Kony, guns blazing. But the bush was too dense and too many children died. Hoffman entered the jungle unarmed. Not a shot was fired, and all the girls were released (Hoffman, 2016).

Strengthening the Peace Field

At issue is how better to equip people in the peace field in a meaningful way to take advantage of their current strengths. The current context stratifies urban/rural, academic/non-academic, formal/non formal peacebuilding in an ad hoc manner, often to the detriment of those in peril from violent conflict. Instead, the intent is to achieve evidence-based inclusion of anyone who demonstrates their proficiency for peace building and furthering human rights. As mentioned above, professionalism is benefitting other fields - why not the peace field? Accreditation as a peace professional can boost the status of self-taught but effective peacebuilders, including at the grass roots level. This in turn can raise the profile of peacebuilding within communities and nourish valuable insights to benefit the peace field at large.

It is about giving citizens at risk the best protection against conflict and violence, broadly defined. It is about ensuring that the peacebuilder is prepared ethically, knowledgably, emotionally, physically to provide the needed service in a competent manner. It is about evidence-based accreditation that would, as in other fields, form the bridge between theoretically learning about peacebuilding (whether traditionally, informally, or formally) and demonstrating proficient application in practice. It is about recognizing peace builders as the professionals that they are, based on pre-qualification for their demonstrated capabilities – not just technical, but also in terms of values. It is about raising the credibility of peace workers for participation at any level of society. It is about building upon the current credentialing of such elements as mediation, facilitation, and negotiation to form a cohesive whole. It is about providing youth with a career path within their chosen field of contribution to society. It is about making it easier for employers to access the necessary experience. It is about facilitating access by peace professionals to decision-making tables in the service of alternatives to violent solutions.

Establishing a set of generally accepted principles and standards for reinforcing rather than regulating peacebuilding would also lead to increased respect and credibility for the field and for the individuals who practice under its banner. Well-prepared and qualified peacebuilders in conflict areas could, for example, reverse common and costly problems of ill-prepared peacekeepers (Karim & Beardsley, 2016; Westendorf, 2020). Setting standards is not an exercise in dominance or segregation but a tool for continuous improvement. Again, it is an accepted practice in all other professions, why not in the peace field, ensuring of course that they are inclusive, decolonial and respectful of traditional practice.

Making the professional contribution of peacebuilders visible would render them more likely to be called to decision-making tables for critical non-violent solutions. Their elevated credibility would, in turn, strengthen Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace.

Equipping people to communicate more clearly would better harness and widely promote existing capacities to fellow peacebuilders in the field and, significantly, also beyond the peace field to acquire access to critical decision-making tables. While core peacebuilding values are core human values, and therefore universal, how they are communicated and applied varies by culture and context. Any framework for assessing peace professionalism would, as detailed below, need to ensure that those chosen as assessors fully understand the context-specific applications of peacebuilding values and competencies - and, ideally, also be from the culture and context of the candidate they are assessing.

2. Two Initiatives Paving the Way for a Recognized Peace Profession

Having described the importance, scope, benefits and challenges of peace professionalism, the following section outlines two key initiatives which are paving the way for a recognized peace profession: The **Peace Professionalism Project** and the **Civilian Peace Service Canada**.

(1) The Peace Professionalism Project, funded by a Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant

The Peace Professionalism Project has three goals: To establish a network; Undertake research; and Mobilize knowledge about peace professionalism.

Beginning with core representation from 12 organizations, it aims to create a global network of cross-sector and multi-disciplinary peace scholars, practitioners, and policy makers. Recognizing the limitations of the current emphasis on peacebuilding skills and programming (Autesserre, 2014; Brusset et al, 2016; Galtung, 2015; Millar 2020; Fridman, 2020; Mac Ginty, 2014; Neufeldt, 2016; Fontan, 2012; Isaqzadeh et al., 2020; Weerawardhana, 2018), a key question being asked in the research is how peace professionals know if they have the skills, competencies and, significantly, the values for effective peace work.

The project will perform practical and evaluative research on peace professionalism with the aim of enhancing response capabilities and strengthening curricula related to peace, conflict and security studies. Central to project objectives is how best to navigate inclusion in establishing a framework that both provides a basis for quality promotion, ethics and standards, and also ensures decolonial diversity and representation.

Finally, there is an ongoing focus on knowledge building and sharing within and beyond teaching organizations. The envisioned forum for knowledge exchange would be set up to bridge the research-practice-policy gap in peacebuilding and to strengthen the teaching-practice bridge in training (The Peace Professionalism Project web site, 2024; Lederach et al., 2016).

(2). Civilian Peace Service Canada (CPSC) - Assessing and Accrediting Peace Professionals

The Civilian Peace Service Canada (CPSC) has piloted a proforma, evidence-based methodology for assessing and accrediting peace professionals. By researching the key attributes of an effective peacebuilder put forward by peace literature, experienced researchers, and practitioners, two data sets emerged: (1) Core Values/heart related: These underlie and motivate effective peacebuilding performance, i.e., Empathy, Sincerity, Humility, Sound Judgment, Integrity, Desire for Social Justice and Peace for All, Personal Maturity, and Willingness to Learn; and (2) Key Competencies/mind related: The skills/tools that enable effective peacebuilding performance, i.e., Communications, Conflict Analysis, Conflict Transformation, Mediation, Negotiation, Facilitation, Personal Security, Strategic Thinking & Operational Planning, Teamwork and Peacebuilding. The resulting assessment process, while rigorous, is also a learning opportunity for candidates and assessors.

Central to CPSC's approach are three guiding principles, outlined in manuals for Assessors, and guidelines for candidates.

Principle (1): Core Values are human values and therefore universal. However, how they are understood, expressed, and applied varies from context to context and we need to do everything to make sure that candidates are assessed accordingly. We envisage Assessment Boards, whose members are primarily from the candidate's own cultural background.

Principle (2): The Assessment Framework must be flexible to changing conditions and emerging knowledge and understanding.

Principle (3) Assessors are not coaching for a predetermined set of right or wrong values. Instead, CPSC's assessment encourages the candidates to align with their own values and to operationalize their own value systems. What Assessors do evaluate is how aware the candidate is of their own values and biases - and how they apply them in their life and their work. This approach allows clarification about the candidate's best contribution to the field.

The methodology includes self-assessments, reference checks, interviews, and a case study. To respect cross-cultural variances, Assessment Boards are envisioned to be composed of assessors from around the world, heavily weighted in favour of individuals from the same culture as the candidate being assessed (Civilian Peace Service Canada, 2022).

3. Peace Professionalism and Ministries of Peace

Institutions today encompass not just National Ministries and Peace Councils but also Local/District Peace Committees and community peace tables. Their significance is profound. A harmonious nation requires synchronized efforts from governmental, non- governmental, and civil society entities (Mehta, 2019; Giessman, 2022; UNSC, July 23, 2023, p.19). The modern shift that Mehta describes towards establishing Ministries of Peace marks an evolution in global peace governance (Mehta, 2019).

Ministers of Peace, as detailed in other chapters, would typically establish the foundational concept of peace to cultivate values, attitudes, and actions aimed at tackling the underlying reasons for violence. Their focus lies in resolving conflicts through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups, and nations to transform international relations. Shifting from defense to conflict prevention, they would prioritize global betterment over traditional foreign policy. Partnering with peace-oriented organizations, these Ministries would mediate global issues/concerns (as well as conflicts), thereby enhancing soft power and international reputations. They would redistribute resources from military to conflict prevention, bridging domestic issues with government strategies for improved quality of life.

While Ministries of Peace hold promise, their outreach might not always be immediate or comprehensive. Giessman emphasizes that peace is unattainable without local ownership (Giessman 2022). This ownership is imperative, especially when addressing localized issues or reacting to spontaneous conflicts. Local peace entities, with their capacity for immediate intervention and dialogue, are linchpins in this evolving framework. However, their journey is not without impediments. There are no silver bullets. They cannot impose peace or address deep-seated structural issues single-handedly. Yet, their role in fostering dialogue, understanding, and tolerance remains unparalleled - how much more so, if they were staffed by people with the core values and key competencies of peace professionalism. Indeed, the Ministry of Peace in Ethiopia was criticized early on because many senior staff were political appointees rather than people knowledgeable in peace and conflict resolution (Reuters, 2018).

4. Conclusion

In a world marked by conflict, the concept of peace professionalism stands as a transformative force, urging individuals to become the architects of resolving conflict without violence and Ministries of Peace to engage effective peacebuilders. As we navigate this relatively uncharted territory, envision a future where peacebuilding is not just a vocation but a recognized profession – a world where the courage to pursue peace is met with recognition for values, skills, and competencies - a world where peace citizens, iconic figures, and dedicated professionals weave together a narrative of hope.

The Peace Professionalism Project and the initiatives of the Civilian Peace Service Canada shed light on a path toward this vision, emphasizing inclusion, decolonization, diversity, competency, and ethical practice. Each signature, each voice, and each action, whether traditional or formal, contributes to a collective effort for a global Culture of Peace.

Many intuitively embody peace in their daily lives, and their journey toward peacebuilding commences on an individual level. Consider the poignant story of Pacifique Zikomangane, a young man in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, wrongly accused and facing a mob that was threatening to kill him. His salvation came from an unexpected source—a single voice in the crowd vouched for his innocence. To this day, Zikomangane remains unaware of the identity of his savior, but the experience galvanized his commitment to peacebuilding, encapsulated in his mantra:

"Never doubt that your voice can make a difference! That YOU can make a difference" (Zikomangane 2022).

An innovative road map for making a difference is offered by the *Global Muscles of Peace Resolution* (PeaceNow.com, 2024). Accordingly, you might, amongst others:

- "... **Add** your name to the one billion signature petition at PeaceNow.com and become an official global citizen signatory to The Muscles of Peace Global Resolution.
- **Start** a Ministry or Department of Peace campaign of your own, from the local up to the national level. Join the Global Alliance for Ministries & Infrastructures for Peace and get involved with current campaigns across our world...
- **Use** your creativity and leadership, on the national and international levels, to raise support for this shift in human consciousness toward positive peace.
- **Share** the *Muscles of Peace Overview* with global citizens and enjoy planting seeds for a better tomorrow" (PeaceNow.com, 2024).

In addition, should you wish to make peacebuilding your vocation, peace professionalism is a commitment to be the positive change desired in the world.

Citizens at risk are better protected when peace workers are qualified, expert, and caring - whether through formal or traditional learning and training. Society at large would thrive. Many seemingly intractable conflicts could be prevented or solved if those with the right values, skills and competencies are called in. And those with the right values, skills, and competencies are more likely to be called in if they have a reputation for caring and professionalism.

Ministries/Departments/Infrastructures for Peace, for their part, have a key role to play in being served by, and in turn, fostering peace professionalism. While the evolution of each peace ministry or department may differ across countries, they would ideally collectively fulfill common objectives. These include catalyzing peacebuilding; incorporating citizen inclusivity and participation; implementing UN resolutions; facilitating conflict prevention and resolution; leveraging existing services and national prioritization for sustainable and Positive Peace (Galtung, 1964, p.2). This is about adding value. The combined efforts of marching in the streets and convening in meeting rooms could indeed pave the way for profound societal change.

CHAPTER FIVE

COLOMBIA - LESSONS LEARNED FROM PREVIOUS INITIATIVES

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Proposal for the feasibility of the creation of a Ministry of Peace in Colombia By (with)

Summary

On November 9, 2023, GAMIP made history by presenting to the National Congress of the Republic of Colombia a feasibility proposal for a Ministry of Peace (GAMIP, 2022). Wide press coverage followed, in Colombia and abroad; GAMIP continues to be in consultation with the Senate regarding implementation, as well as enjoying a close partnership with the powerful Truth Commission of Colombia (CEV) of national and international fame (CEV, 2022).

The GAMIP feasibility proposal for a Ministry of Peace was broadly divided into three categories **(1)** A documentary and bibliographic review of similar international experiences, highlighting the scope, limitations, and lessons learned from other countries; **(2)** Key strategic principles for consideration in the creation of a Ministry of Peace in Colombia, aiming to consolidate and strengthen the existing infrastructure(s) for peace. It referenced pertinent UN Resolutions, including on the Culture of Peace, as well as Johan Galtung's emphasis on the need to address various types of violence employing conflict resolution tools, and the Seville Manifesto's influence on expanding the concept of peace beyond the absence of war to include broader societal components - while highlighting Colombia's potential for peace despite its history of internal conflict, social inequality, and extreme poverty; And,

(3) A draft bill outlining the basic elements for establishing such a Ministry.

This chapter is divided into several Sections. **Section 1** briefly introduces the History of GAMIP's Feasibility Proposal; **Section 2** summarizes key proposals; **Section 3** provides conclusions and the way forward. **Attachment A** briefly outlines the Colombian legislative and Constitutional context; and **Attachment B** provides a complete copy of the draft legislation as a format for consideration by the Congress of the Republic of Colombia and others.

Key Words: Culture of Peace. Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace. Infrastructure for Peace. GAMIP. Muscles of Peace. GAMIP Latin America and Caribbean Chapter. GAMIP AL&C. Ministry of Peace legislation. Ministry of Peace. Culture of Peace.

1. The History of GAMIP's Feasibility Proposal for a Ministry of Peace in Colombia

GAMIP Latin America and the Caribbean (GAMIP ALC), a chapter of the Global Alliance of Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) spearheaded the production of the feasibility proposal, beginning with the hosting of GAMIP's 7th International Summit in Tunja, Colombia, in October 2022 at the Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia /Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, UPTC (GAMIP 2023).



GAMIP Summit 2022

The Summit was followed with a GAMIP meeting at the Congress of the Republic of Colombia on October 7, 2022. Senator Sandra Ramírez - Comunes Party of Colombia - subsequently raised the possibility of presenting a proposal for the viability of a Ministry of Peace to the Congress of the Republic of Colombia, with international expert advice by GAMIP.



GAMIP Summit 2022

A GAMIP advisory group was formed. It included GAMIP experts from various fields, such as Peace Education, Political Science, Human Rights and Peace Professionalism, and from GAMIP's International Board, Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Argentina. Their role was to analyze lessons learned from around the world with application to the Colombian context in order to produce a practical feasibility proposal for a Ministry of Peace in Colombia, based on international best practices supporting the UN's Declaration and Program of Action for a Culture of Peace. (GAMIP, 2023)

International legal references were drawn in particular from Nepal, the USA, Costa Rica, Canada, the UK, Japan, Papua New Guinea, and Ethiopia. Colombia's internal mandate for peace, coexistence, and security was shown to be supported by the National Constitution of 1991, as well as various international instruments ratified by Colombia, including:

- Resolution 70/262 on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (2016)
- Resolution 72/276 on Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping (2018)
- Resolution 217 (III) on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Resolution 39/11 on the Right of Peoples to Peace (1984)
- Resolution 55/2 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)
- Resolution 66/137 on Human Rights Education and Training (2011)
- Resolution A/Res/53/243 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (1999)
- Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (2001)

2. Key proposals

The GAMIP feasibility proposal stressed how these resolutions collectively underline the importance of promoting a culture of peace, which involves values, attitudes, and behaviors that support social interaction based on freedom, justice, democracy, and human rights. They also, emphasize the rejection of violence, the prevention of conflicts through dialogue and negotiation, and the active involvement of women in peace processes.

The important, interdependent role to be played by strong national and international institutions with stable peace structures in conflict prevention, resolution, and the development of a culture of peace was underscored in terms of capacities and values for peace consolidation, sustainable development, and human dignity. Tools would reference amongst others: social inclusion, participatory democracy, good governance, gender equality, and peace education. At a more detailed level, also preventive diplomacy, mediation, peaceful dispute resolution, human security, justice and reconciliation, humanitarian aid, disarmament, rule of law, community and economic rebuilding, and addressing trauma.

Key conditions for establishing a Ministry of Peace (MOP) were summarized as follows:

- **Collective Will for Peace:** A willingness among political parties, security forces, civil society, the Church, and other influential groups to prioritize peace.
- **Exhaustion from Violence:** A societal consensus on the need to move past violence, heal, and address trauma and social problems.
- **Strong Governance and Communication:** Effective communication, governance capacities, and political will to drive change.
- **Viable Solutions for Peaceful Coexistence:** Commitment to working together on solutions with a reasonable chance of success.

The Proposed Mandate and Functions of the Ministry of Peace (MoP) would include:

- **National Peace Outreach:** Implementing a National Peace Development Plan as part of Congress' National Development Plan.
- **Advisory Role:** Providing advice, monitoring, research, peace operations, education, outreach, and international coordination, especially with the UN.
- **Inter-Ministry Coordination:** Collaborating with all ministries through established peace officers, committees, and development plans.
- **Community Outreach:** Supporting regions, communities, NGOs, and citizens in establishing and formalizing peace networks.
- **Peace Programs:** Delivering programs that address government peace priorities, including education, ethics, gender equality, racism, extremism, reconciliation, human rights, and implementing Truth Commission recommendations.

Strategic Principles proposed for MoP consideration included:

- **Capacity for National Peace Issues:** Ensuring the MoP has the necessary capabilities and resources.
- **Sustainability:** Building a sustainable Ministry for future generations.
- **Peace as an Organizing Principle:** Making peace the core organizing principle of society.
- **Positive Peace Culture:** Fostering well-being, harmony, and constructive conflict resolution.
- **Strengthening Peace Infrastructure:** Focus on national peace architecture, education, and practices.

Development and Design Principles were organized in terms of:

- **Sustainability Focus:** Aligning with UN resolutions and building cultures of peace.
- **Broad Peacebuilding Mandate:** Avoiding single-issue traps to ensure long-term relevance and sustainability.
- **Inclusive and Accountable Approach:** Ensuring broad participation and reinforcing existing peace functions across society.
- **Integration with National Development Plan:** Embedding peace initiatives within the national framework for full commitment.
- **Leveraging Existing Services:** Utilizing current peace managers and promoters.
- **Peace Education:** Integrating peace education at all levels.
- **Inclusive Peace Architecture:** Engaging citizens, communities, and peace professionals.
- **Monitoring and Advisory Function:** Maintaining strong monitoring and advisory roles at the highest government levels.
- **Addressing National Needs:** Focusing on national priorities like the Peace Accord, Truth Commission, governance, human rights, violence prevention, gender equality, and land issues.
- **Relationship with Security Providers:** Collaborating with security forces for peace education and practices.

3. Conclusion - The Way Forward

As mentioned above, GAMIP'S feasibility proposal was presented in a Public Hearing in the Congress of the Republic of Colombia on November 9, 2023, exactly one year after GAMIP ALC's commitment to Dr. Ramírez. All political parties, House of Representatives and Senators were represented - as well as members of the Executive Branch of the Nation and delegations from civil society. It stressed that a Ministry of Peace would publicly and politically recognize the importance of peace, generating public policies in collaboration with other ministries and state agencies. It

would also promote dynamic citizen participation, ensuring that the government's peace efforts are validated by the public. The Ministry would improve the handling of armed violence and other types of violence, supporting the gradual construction of a Culture of Peace in Colombia.

The event was covered by TV Stations, Radio Stations and the press- not only in Colombia, but also in several Latin American countries. The proposal has been widely disseminated in strategic meetings, Congresses, Panels, Workshops and government visits to Consulates in Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Spain, Portugal and Italy.

GAMIP continues to be in consultation with the Senate regarding implementation of the Bill, as well as enjoying a close partnership with the powerful Truth Commission of Colombia (CEV) of national and international fame (CEV, 2022).

CEV supports the creation of the Ministry of Peace, envisioning it as a pivotal institution for advancing peace, reconciliation, and coexistence within Colombia. ALC will support ongoing CEV peace initiatives, ensuring their wider dissemination, and fostering deeper engagement, including related to the findings of the Truth Commission's 2022 Report and its articles aimed at building a Culture of Peace throughout Latin America. Together, these collaborative efforts between GAMIP ALC and the CEV are set to play an important role in implementing the Truth Commission's recommendations, fostering a culture of peace, and supporting the Colombian government's peace-building agenda, including towards a Ministry of Peace (GAMIP, 2023).

ATTACHMENT ONE:

Legal and Constitutional Support:

Attachment One provides a summary of the *legal and Constitutional framework for establishing the Ministry*. It is followed, in Attachment two, by the complete *Draft Legislation*, as a format for consideration.

Attachment One: Legal and Constitutional Framework of the Republic of Colombia

Political Constitution of Colombia - 1991

Preamble: The Constitution is established to promote unity, ensure rights such as life, coexistence, justice, and freedom, and foster Latin American integration.

Key Articles:

1. **Article 1:** Colombia is a social state under the rule of law, characterized by democracy, participation, and respect for human dignity.
2. **Article 2:** The State's primary purposes include serving the community, promoting prosperity, and ensuring the effectiveness of constitutional rights. Authorities are meant to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals.
3. **Article 3:** Sovereignty resides in the people, exercised directly or through representatives.

4. **Article 22:** Peace is both a right and an obligation.
5. **Article 22A:** Prohibits the creation or support of illegal armed groups to ensure state monopoly on force.
6. **Article 154:** Laws can originate from various sources, including the National Government and popular initiatives.
7. **Article 361:** General Royalties System funds are allocated for projects that promote social, economic, and environmental development.

Transitory Provisions

- **Royalties for Peace:** A portion of royalties is dedicated to peace-related projects over twenty years, focusing on areas affected by conflict and poverty.
- **Special Legislative Procedure for Peace:** A temporary procedure to expedite laws for peace implementation.
- **Investment Plan for Peace:** For twenty years, a component for peace will be included in national investment plans to address gaps in affected areas.

Legislative Acts and Decrees

- **Legislative Act 01 of 2012:** Establishes transitional justice instruments to end the armed conflict and secure peace. It emphasizes victims' rights to truth, justice, and reparation.
- **Legislative Act 01 of 2016:** Facilitates the implementation of the Final Agreement for peace, prioritizing investments in conflict-affected areas.
- **Decree Law 885 of 2017:** Creates the National Council for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence, emphasizing state collaboration and civil society involvement in peace policies.
- **Law 1957 of 2019:** Governs the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP), part of the Integral System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition. It aims to protect victims' rights and facilitate a stable peace.

Jurisdictional and Administrative Adjustments

- The SJP respects indigenous authorities' jurisdiction within their territories.
- Emphasis on restorative justice to restore societal harmony and prevent future violence.
- The creation and regulation of ministries and public administration sectors are the exclusive domain of the Executive.

This framework outlines Colombia's commitment to building a just and peaceful society through legal, social, and economic measures, with a strong focus on addressing the legacies of armed conflict.

Benefits and Impacts A Ministry of Peace in Colombia would:

1. Make peace a central societal principle.
2. Promote peaceful conflict resolution.
3. Enhance human rights and security.
4. Support disarmament and non-military peacebuilding.
5. Encourage nonviolent conflict resolution.
6. Foster local, national, and global peacebuilding participation.
7. Develop reconciliation activities.
8. Compile and share best practices and lessons learned.
9. Train personnel for post-conflict reconstruction.
10. Support peace education at all levels.
11. Promote transparency and new narratives around peace.
12. Prioritize sustainable practices and fair trade to combat climate change.

Mandate The Ministry's main goal will be to create and maintain positive peace, conflict prevention, and resolution, mediation, and reconciliation. It will lead government efforts in peace and security, ensuring coordinated work among public institutions.

Principle of the Administrative Function The administrative function will serve the general interest by integrating principles of peace, coexistence, and security through coordination and collaboration among various governmental levels.

Current Institutional Deficiencies Current ministries and agencies lack coordination in ensuring peace, coexistence, and security. A centralized body is needed to effectively implement and monitor peace policies. This Ministry will ensure structural transformations and practical applications of peace measures, strengthen advocacy, and promote decentralized work with a territorial approach.

Summary of the Proposal for Creating the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence, and Security in Colombia

Core Objective: The creation of the Ministry aims to coordinate and articulate the national policy for Peace, Coexistence, and Security with a differential approach, emphasizing vulnerable populations.

Key Benefits:

1. **Enhanced Strategies:** Design and evaluation of social policy effectiveness and impact.

2. **Institutional Capacity:** Improved coordination, leadership, and effectiveness in policies, currently dispersed across various entities.
3. **Comprehensive Vision:** Integrating human development, coexistence, peace, and security.
4. **Guaranteed Peace Rights:** Strengthening conditions to ensure the right to peace.
5. **Policy Coordination:** Aligning national, regional, and local public policies.
6. **Stakeholder Identification:** Recognizing social, public, and private actors responsible for policy implementation.
7. **Modernization:** Updating plans, strategies, and services.
8. **Peace Services Access:** Enhanced access to peace-related services.
9. **Vulnerable Population Participation:** Strengthening involvement and positioning at an international level.

Administrative and Structural Opportunities:

- **Resource Optimization:** Avoid duplication of public resource appropriation.
- **Function Clarification:** Eliminate administrative conflicts and improve efficiency.
- **Public Administration Efficiency:** Better impact on marginalized populations through structural and comprehensive approaches.
- **Rights-Based Approach:** Focus on long-term transformations and needs of marginalized groups.

Youth Participation:

- **Peacebuilding Sustainability:** Emphasizing the need for youth involvement.
- **Educational Pathways:** Introducing peace leadership concepts from kindergarten through professional accreditation.

Integration with Existing Infrastructure:

- **Building on Existing Elements:** Incorporating current peace initiatives into the Ministry's framework.
- **Non-Political Coordination:** Providing a cohesive national peace policy and monitoring its results.

Role of Other Ministries: Each ministry will integrate peace considerations into their existing work, such as:

1. **Education:** Incorporating peace education and non-violent communication.
2. **Agriculture:** Using peace-building tools for land and water disputes.
3. **Finance:** Including peace economics in budget analysis.

Staff Training:

- **Nonviolent Communication:** All Ministry staff and partners to receive training.
- **Peace Citizenship:** Training to embody peace values in practice.

Financial Considerations:

- **Efficient Resource Use:** Leveraging existing budgets and international support for sustainable peace initiatives.
- **Cost of Violence:** Addressing the high economic cost of violence to redirect savings into peacebuilding.

Multidisciplinary Approach:

- **Collaborative Efforts:** Combining social, political, and economic interventions for maximum results.
- **Global Expertise:** Utilizing global insights and case studies for effective peacebuilding.

Service to Citizens:

- **Building on Existing Systems:** Enhancing and expanding current peace services.
- **Preventing Violence:** Providing mediation, facilitation, and training services to address potential violence before it escalates.

Application at All Levels:

1. **Executive Level:** Influencing national policy and accessing budgets.
2. **Government Level:** Coordinating with other departments.
3. **Local Level:** Ensuring citizen voices are heard and needs addressed.
4. **Citizen Level:** Supporting an independent civilian peace service.

Conclusion: The Ministry of Peace, Coexistence, and Security will play a pivotal role in coordinating and enhancing Colombia's efforts in peacebuilding, ensuring inclusive and sustainable development, and fostering a culture of peace at all levels of society.

ATTACHMENT 2:

Legislating a Colombian Ministry of Peace - a Format for Consideration

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF PEACE, COEXISTENCE AND SECURITY
FOR ARTICLES

BILL N° _____ DE _____

"WHEREBY THE MINISTRY OF PEACE IS CREATED AND OTHER
PROVISIONS ARE ENACTED".

THE CONGRESS OF COLOMBIA (sic) DECREES:

TITLE I: MANDATE, AUTHORITIES AND STRUCTURE

ARTICLE 1. OBJECT OF THE LAW

The purpose of the present law is, within the framework of article 150 numeral 7 of the Political Constitution and article 50 of Law 489 of 1998, the creation of the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security and the adoption of the elements of its organizational structure.

ARTICLE 2. MINISTRY OF PEACE, COEXISTENCE AND SECURITY

The Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security is created as the main body of the central sector of the Executive Branch in the national order, governing the Peace, Coexistence and Security Sector and the advisory, coordination and articulation instances indicated by law or regulation

The Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security shall follow in order of precedence the Ministry of Equality.

Article 3. Purpose of the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security

The purpose of the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security is, within the framework of the constitutional mandates, the law and its competencies, to formulate, adopt, direct, coordinate and execute policies, plans, programs, projects and measures to promote and establish Peace, Coexistence and Security.

The Ministry shall develop this objective directly or through its attached or related entities, in coordination with other competent State entities and agencies and with the participation of citizens, civil society organizations and other public and private actors.

ARTICLE 4. FUNCTIONS

For the fulfillment of its purpose, the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security shall fulfill, in addition to those indicated in the Political Constitution and in Article 59 of Law 489 of 1998, the following functions:

- a. To formulate, adopt, direct, coordinate, execute and articulate the policies, plans, programs, strategies, projects and measures for the fulfillment of the purpose of the Ministry and its scope of

competence.

- b. To adopt and execute plans, programs, strategies, and projects to manage and focus the social order of the entities of the National Order in the territory, with criteria of efficiency and effectiveness, and prioritizing historically excluded and violated territories and populations.
- c. To impart guidelines to national, departmental, district and municipal entities for the intervention of the Ministry's target populations, within the scope of their competencies.
- d. Promote tools for citizen participation, organization and actions to strengthen the impact of population groups and subjects of special constitutional protection on public policy agendas, self-government and justice processes and the ethnic and territorial rights of ethnic peoples, in coordination with other competent entities.
- e. Promote social innovation through the identification and implementation of private and local initiatives, among others, to implement Peace, Coexistence and Security policies with an intersectional approach in state actions and promote and guard optimal physical environments for human development, and conditions of political, economic, and social equality for all vulnerable target populations.
- f. To direct and guide the planning of the Peace, Coexistence and Security Administrative Sector for the fulfillment of its functions.
- g. To manage and generate alliances with actors of the public and private sectors, civil society organizations, authorities, ethnic peoples, international agencies, and other governments that facilitate and promote policies and the achievement of the objectives of the Sector and the international commitments assumed by the State, in coordination with other competent state entities.
- h. Establish follow-up, monitoring and evaluation measures based on scientific approaches for the execution of policies, plans, projects and social offerings under the competence of the Ministry of Peace, in coordination with other state entities and be accountable to the citizenry, in accordance with the law in force.
- i. To direct, coordinate, follow up and evaluate the advisory, coordination and related systems and bodies related to its competencies that have been created or that are created by law and that so indicate.

ARTICLE 5. MANDATE

The mandate of the Ministry shall include, among others, the following functions:

- a. An advisory function to the President and Congress, and to the Special Representative for Peace to the President.
- b. An outreach function to the Ministries through the network of established peace officers and peace committees.
- c. An outreach function to the regions, communities, NGOs and citizens.
- d. An outreach function to peace operations, to support and assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth Commission and the mandate of the Ministry.

ARTICLE 6. MAINTENANCE

The President and the Congress shall be in charge of the creation and maintenance of this Ministry in Colombia. Consequently, this Ministry is enshrined in the law and in the Constitution.

Transitory Paragraph: After the approval of the present law, the executive branch, headed by the President of the Republic and his Minister of Finance, is authorized so that, in use of its legal powers, sufficient budgetary movements and allocations may be made for the creation of the Ministry of Peace in Colombia and its consequent support.

Article 7. Attributions and duties

The powers, duties and functions of the Minister extend to and include all matters over which the Congress and the President have jurisdiction - and which have not been assigned by law to other Ministries, commissions or other agencies of the Government that are assigned to it by law and which relate to the construction, establishment and maintenance of peace, and which are conducive to both internal peace and international peace.

ARTICLE 8. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

For the development of its object, the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security, throughout the national territory with emphasis on marginalized territories, shall protect the rights, and build peace with a distributed, differential and intersectional approach, of the ministries and populations in situation and condition of violation of rights, and of the right to peace and security.

The Minister will consult and work proactively and collaboratively with Congress and with each of the ministries of the federal public administration on all policy and implementation issues related to national peace;

- a. The Minister shall have direct and unrestricted access to Congress, the President, the ministries of the civil service, and the public in carrying out his or her mandate.
- b. The Minister shall act as spokesperson for the Cabinet on matters related to peace;
- c. The Ministry shall have the authority for the development, implementation, and coordination of peace activities, through a National Development Plan for Peace (hereinafter referred to as the NDPP); which shall be included as part of the National Development Plan (NDP); d. The Minister shall have the authority for the development, implementation, and coordination of peace activities, through a National Development Plan for Peace (hereinafter referred to as the NDPP); which shall be included as part of the National Development Plan (NDP)
- d. The Minister shall have the authority to develop, administer and implement an NDP in support of the NDP.
- e. The Minister shall have the authority to submit budget estimates to achieve the NDP in accordance with Government policy and procedures. The Minister shall be responsible and accountable for the legal disbursement of allocated budget funds.
- f. The Minister shall prioritize peace education on peace practices, nonviolent communication, and mental health and resilience, in schools and in government ministries and for elected members of government.

- g. The Minister shall assist in the establishment and funding of protection of natural areas and defense of territories, diffusion and dissemination of actions and strategies for peacebuilding, community-based violence mitigation and prevention programs, including restorative justice practices and violence prevention, trauma and mediation counseling.
- h. The Minister shall seek the participation of private, public and non-governmental organizations in its development of policies and programs relating to national peace.
- i. **The Minister shall** promote and support the dissemination of peaceful practices for the resolution of conflicts and violence, as well as strategies and peace actions through alliances with public, private and alternative citizen sectors.
- j. **The Minister shall** promote, encourage, organize and execute actions for the improvement of physical spaces that favor the optimal development of people, as well as for the care of territories and resources that safeguard the natural heritage for the protection and appreciation of ecosystems and living beings that inhabit them.
- k. The Minister shall monitor, investigate, analyze, and advise the Congress, the President, and the Ministries, on causes and conditions that may affect peace or create conflict; and make policy recommendations to develop and maintain responses, programs, and services, to prevent or respond to conflict by peaceful means.
- l. The Minister shall promote and develop programs and services involving citizen participation, including a Peace Colombia Service of peace managers, workers and promoters aimed at preventing crises and violence, in all elements of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacekeeping.

ARTICLE 9. STRUCTURE

The mandate shall be fulfilled through the organizational structure of a Colombian Ministry and shall be comprised of a Minister appointed by Congress, supported by a Vice-Minister and by the personnel and resources necessary to fulfill the Ministry's mandate.

ARTICLE 10. NATIONAL SECURITY

The Ministry is established as a civilian and governmental demilitarized agency. This Ministry will maintain strong collaborative and coordinating relationships with the Ministries of Police and National Defense and other security agencies with the intention of prioritizing the resolution of conflict or violence by peaceful means and developing "peace operations" capabilities. This will be achieved by incorporating peace education, practices and capabilities into the national security architecture.

ARTICLE 11. HEADQUARTERS

The Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security shall have as its headquarters the city of Bogotá, D.C., shall exercise its functions at the national level and shall have Regional Directorates through which the policies of the Sector shall be adapted and implemented in the territory, in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

ARTICLE 12. ASSETS

The patrimony of the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security shall be constituted by:

- a. The sums consigned in the National Budget.
- b. The movable and immovable property that it acquires by any title.
- c. The sums and the movable and immovable property that may be donated or ceded by public or private, national or international entities.

ARTICLE 13. INTEGRATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTOR FOR PEACE AND COEXISTENCE

The Administrative Sector for Peace, Coexistence and Security is integrated by the Ministry of Peace, Coexistence and Security and the other public or private, national or international entities and the other entities that are attached or linked to it by law, in accordance with article 42 of Law 489 of 1998.

ARTICLE 14. MANAGEMENT OF THE MINISTRY

The Ministry shall be managed by the Minister of Peace, Coexistence and Security.

ARTICLE 15. EXTRAORDINARY POWERS.

The President of the Republic is invested with the necessary extraordinary powers, for a term of six (6) months, counted from the date of publication of the present law, to issue norms with the force of law tending to integrate the Peace, Coexistence and Security Sector with the entities that he/she defines as attached or linked. The foregoing, in accordance with the provisions of Article 150 numeral 10 of the Political Constitution.

TITLE II PLANNING, EXECUTION AND OPERATIONS

ARTICLE 16. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

1. The Minister shall ensure that the Government's peace priorities are included in the National Development Plan (NDP).
2. The Ministry shall operate through a NDPP (National Development Plan/Peace Action Plan) that implements the peace priorities of the NDP and the mandate of the Ministry. The PNDD/PANP will be developed and maintained in consultation and consensus with the Ministries and Congressional committees and the President.
3. The Ministry will respond and report to the Congressional Peace Commission on implementation issues and progress.
4. The Ministry will engage and coordinate activities through a network of Ministerial Peace Officers and committees.
5. The Ministry will chair a government peace development committee comprised of Ministerial Peace Officers.
6. Each Ministry will appoint a Senior Ministerial Peace Development Officer who will chair and oversee a Ministerial Peace Development Committee and assist the senior level committee of

Ministerial Peace Officers.

7. Each Ministry will develop a subordinate Ministerial Development Plan for Peace (MDPP), contributing to, and implementing the NDPP according to the unique needs and capabilities of its Ministry.
8. The Ministry will review the Ministerial Development Plans for Peace and receive annual ministerial reports of activities.
9. The Ministry shall prepare a collated report of peace activities and those of the Ministerial Committees for Peace, and report annually to Congress and the public.

ARTICLE 17. COLLABORATION

The Ministry shall establish collaborative relationships with all other ministries in the areas of peace for which they are responsible. This will involve special emphasis with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Information and Communications Technologies and the Ministry of National Defense.

The Ministry will also collaborate with the Ministry of Equity, and with the Vice President to promote policies of inclusion, overcoming racism and correcting social imbalances.

TITLE III. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

ARTICLE 18. DIRECTIVE

The Ministry shall develop and provide peace programs, services and activities, in support of the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Development Plan for Peace (NDPP), through the following priorities.

The Ministry shall provide or ensure the development and delivery of programs and services and other related activities, and the monitoring and support of those peace programs or services and activities that would otherwise be assigned to other Ministries, as they relate to advancing and sustaining peace in Colombia.

(Temporary paragraph. This may involve human rights engagement or oversight in aspects such as, or related to, but not limited to:

- Truth Commission recommendations;
- Peace education;
- Ethics, disclosure, protection against retaliation;
- Gender equality;
- Development of youth participation;
- Racism;
- Extremism;
- Indigenous rights;
- Land claims;
- Violence Mitigation; and

- Strengthening of elections.

ARTICLE 19. OUTREACH

The Ministry shall conduct outreach activities for the "advancement of peace" to contribute risk monitoring advice and, as appropriate, programs, services or direct support, to national and international peace activity, both positive and negative....

ARTICLE 20. PEACE EDUCATION

1. Peace education shall strengthen the competencies and capacities for peace of all Colombians, at the citizen, community, regional and federal levels.
2. The Ministry shall contribute to general peace education that includes good peace practices, mental health resilience, ethics, non-violence, conflict resolution, reconciliation and social responsibility. The Ministry shall ensure peace training at the leadership and peace practitioner and professional levels.
3. The Ministry shall collaborate in the delivery of peace education in school systems. The Ministry shall ensure peace education at the political, ministerial, and civil servant levels.

ARTICLE 21. ETHICS AND VALUES

The Ministry shall ensure that all Ministries provide programs and services that include, among others, (1) ethics and values education, (2) conflict of interest prevention measures and asset declarations, (2) provision of safeguards for the disclosure of wrongdoing or misconduct, including confidential investigations, retaliation assessments, retaliation prevention measures and protection (neutral oversight if necessary) ; and (3) roles and responsibilities of all leaders and officers to act upon indicators of retaliation, or upon witnessing or being a victim of wrongdoing or misconduct.

ARTICLE 22. RISK OVERSIGHT AND COUNSELING

1. The Ministry shall provide risk monitoring, investigative, and advisory services to the Office of the President, Congress, and Government Ministries.
2. The Ministry shall provide advice on, national and international peace priorities, policy and decision making, peace operations, and peace issues such as disarmament, arms control, reconciliation, human rights, anti-corruption, and other peace priorities as they arise.

ARTICLE 23. DIALOGUE AND NEGOTIATIONS

The Ministry shall provide capacity building and services for dialogue and peace negotiations and engage in or support related peace priorities of the government. This may involve support for national, provincial, community or international dialogue or negotiations needs in the service of Congress, the President, and Civil Society.

(Transitional paragraph. This may include pending needs such as with the National Liberation Army (ELN and others).

ARTICLE 24. TOTAL PEACE INITIATIVE

The Ministry shall engage and exercise leadership and support in the implementation of the government's TOTAL PEACE initiative. The Minister shall support the government's Total Peace initiative which consists of advancing the implementation of the Special Agreement signed in 2017 with the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the implementation of the results of the Truth Commission Report 2022.

(Transitory paragraph. This Agreement creates the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Truth Clarification Commission (JEP) and the Unit for the Search for Disappeared Persons, as mechanisms of transitional justice in the framework of the search for truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition).

(Transitory Paragraph. TOTAL PEACE includes dialogue and negotiation with the National Liberation Army (guerrilla group with almost six decades of existence), dialogue with the dissidences of the former FARC (which did not enter the Santos peace process) and with the new Marquetalia (dissident group), as well as the subjugation of paramilitary armed groups and drug traffickers, such as the Gulf Clan (international criminal organization with links in Mexico).

ARTICLE 25. PEACE SERVICE

The Ministry shall engage in the operation and sustenance of a peace service of Peace Managers and Peace Promoters in support of the government's TOTAL PEACE initiative and its concept of Human Security to preserve human dignity. This will be achieved through the provision of Peace Managers or Peace Promoters, with a focus on the youth.

(Transitory paragraph: This service is created, to be drawn from former armed insurgent groups and civil society and youth who opt for peace service instead of military recruitment).

(Transitory paragraph. Initially, ten thousand young Peace Promoters shall receive a starting salary of US\$200 per month and shall be trained in human rights, peace practices, international humanitarian law, cultures of peace and conflict resolution. These Peace Promoters may be members of the Territorial Peace Councils).

(Transitory Paragraph. The Elimination of Compulsory Military Service on xxx date, was enacted to respect the sentiment of young people not to be forced to fight in armed conflicts as part of the military. Compulsory military service was eliminated in favor of a substitute social service option; allowing young people to undertake literacy work, do ecological work, work with ethnic communities in the defense of human rights, and participate in other peace-building social activities that do not lead to taking up arms).

ARTICLE 26. TRANSPARENCY

The Ministry shall submit annual public reports and to Congress or other reports requested by Congress or the President on the activities and progress related to the fulfillment of the mandate.

TITLE IV. VALIDITY AND DEROGATIONS

ARTICLE 27. VALIDITY AND REPEALS

This Law is valid from the date of its publication and repeals the provisions that are contrary to it and amends Article 17 of Law 1444 of 2011 and Article 20 of Law 2162 of 2021.

GAMIP/PEACENOW "PEACE MUSCLES GLOBAL RESOLUTION".

Please scan to download. Thank you. - The Muscles of Peace Global Resolution	- Peace Muscles Summary	- GAMIP's draft outreach letter to UN peacebuilders.
		

Chapter concern with the Proposal for the feasibility of the creation of a Ministry of Peace in Colombia was authored by Yesika Liliana Barrera G., with support from Alicia Cabezudo, Emma Avila Garavito, Guido Asencio Gallardo, Roberto Emmanuele Mercadillo Caballero, Evelyn Voigt, Breedyk Gordon, Paul Maillet, Lee Andrews

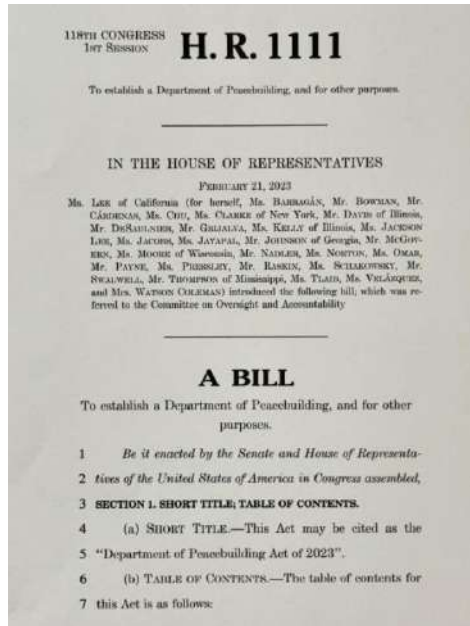
CHAPTER SIX

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF PEACEBUILDING CAMPAIGN

Anne Creter, Nancy Merrit and Kendra Mon



~ Celebrating the Peace Alliance's 20th Anniversary ~



The U.S. may not have a cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding (DoP) yet but it is the only country having a DoP bill in its Congress the last 24+ years! The heart of the U.S. Campaign for a DoP centers around reverence for this inspiring, long-evolving bill H.R. 1111. In 2001 former Rep. Dennis Kucinich (OH) presented the first DoP bill (in its current iteration) which has been re-introduced in every session since then. Rep. Barbara Lee (CA) later sponsored it. Now Rep. Ilhan Omar (MN) has just become its champion sponsor in our new Congress. The Peace Alliance National Department of Peacebuilding Committee coalesces around this transformative bill with a dedicated group of savvy volunteers who execute an on-going coordinated DoP advocacy campaign developing relationships with members of Congress, seeking cosponsors for the bill's passage. This report is our unique

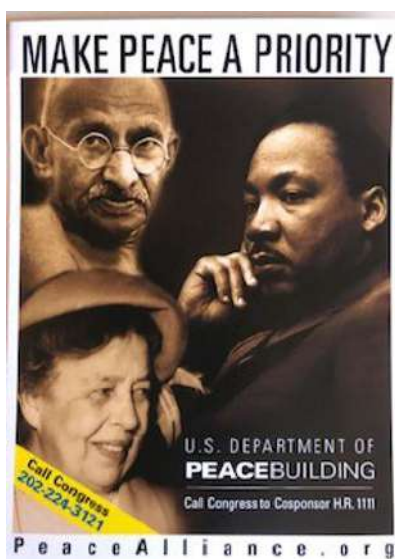
story.

There is a saying that peace takes a village. We three elders of the U.S. Peace Alliance village are proud to report on behalf of its long-enduring Department of Peacebuilding Campaign. We have been with the Peace Alliance (co-founded by new-thought author Marianne Williamson) since it began, when it was just about DoP advocacy. Our calling all this time has been to stay focused only on the DoP because we feel H.R.1111 is enlightened legislation aligned with the science of Nonviolence, the universal value of ALL pathways to peace. We also advocate with our international sister department of peace organization, the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) for the larger planetary vision in this earthly village we all share of governmental departments, ministries and other “Infrastructures for Peace” (I4P)



worldwide to build the Culture of Peace, per UN Culture of Peace Programme of Action Resolution A/RES/53/243 (UN General Assembly, 1999).

To provide background context from which the DoP Campaign and Committee developed, following are remarks of various voices who have written about the U.S. DoP bill in the last quarter century. Such references to the bill in print authenticate its importance via the power of the written word in calling attention to it. For in spite of our best efforts, even now many people in our country still have not heard of it. Granted it is starting to be taken more seriously, as clearly current systems in place designed to bring peace and nonviolence are woefully inadequate to deal with present-day realities.



Its original champion is Marianne Williamson with her book *IMAGINE: What America Could Be in the 21st Century: Visions of a Better Future from Leading American Thinkers*. It contains a chapter by then Rep. Kucinich entitled "Government" where he states: "As our fears ossify thought, so our hopes can excite new thinking toward the construction of a new social reality for the new century, to create a new architecture for human relationships and transport its structure directly to our system of government. America can in the first half of this century, create a cabinet-level Department of Peace. The mission would be to make nonviolence the central organizing principle in or society. It takes an act of Congress and an act of faith in our transformative capacities to evolve to a condition where violence and war become archaic" (Williamson, 2000, pp.367-368).

In Rep. Kucinich's *A Prayer for America* book he says: "Citizens across the United States are now uniting in a great cause to establish a Department of Peace, seeking nothing less than the transformation of our society, to make nonviolence an organizing principle, to make war archaic through creating a paradigm shift in our culture for human development, for economic and political justice and for violence control... It will envision and seek to implement plans for peace education, not simply as a course of study, but as a template for all pursuits of knowledge within formal educational settings ... Violence is not inevitable. War is not inevitable. Nonviolence and peace are inevitable. We can make of this world a gift of peace which will confirm the presence of universal spirit in our lives. We can send into the future the gift which will protect our children from fear, from harm, from destruction" (Kucinich, 2003, pp. 70-71).

David C. Korten in his epic work *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* says under the heading of *POLITICAL TURNING*: "Some of the most interesting and ambitious projects involve alliances among grassroots citizen groups, local governments, and national office holders to put forward visionary Earth Community initiatives even in the face of seemingly overwhelming resistance from the ruling imperial establishment. Two examples from the United States are the Apollo Alliance, which promotes a sustainable and clean energy economy, and the

Peace Alliance, which advocates creating a U.S. cabinet-level Department of Peace devoted to advancing peace both domestically and internationally” (Korten, 2006, p.321).

Clark University professor Dr Joseph de Rivera published an article in the *Peace and Change Journal* titled “Transforming the Empire with a Department of Peace” where he argues that “transformation of the American Empire requires changing American culture and that this can best be achieved by establishing a Department of Peace... The United States could lead the world toward peace and justice rather than attempting to consolidate its military and economic domination, and studies of public opinion suggest that a majority of the nation’s people would prefer cooperative leadership to domination” (*Peace and Change Journal*, 2007, pp.2-3).

An article in the *Friends Journal* special “Quaker Peace Testimony” issue titled *The Quaker Coalition for a Department of Peace* was written by Anne Creter. It describes the U.S. Department of Peace campaign as it existed then, which today structurally is much the same, though more coherent, advanced and unified (Quakers would say ‘seasoned’). DoP Quaker Coalition member (author of “Peace is Everybody’s Business” book) Marta Daniel in it “calls the DoP a political tsunami” saying it is “fundamentally different from any other national effort we’ve ever experienced – both in its comprehensive nature and transformational possibilities – to challenge the paradigm of pervasive and structured violence that permeates every level of our culture. It has a seductively freeing and welcoming effect on newcomers and offers a place for everyone. We have in the DoP movement a political-jaws-of-life prying open the crumbled hearts and minds of millions of people who have been in a series of terrible recurring accidents since the dawn of humankind. People are grateful to those who help pry us free from this life-threatening culture.” (Creter, 2008, p.27).

Shift Network author James O’Dea in his book *Cultivating Peace: Becoming a 21st Century Peace Ambassador* in the chapter on “Peace and Freedom from the Inside Out” states: “Studying the epidemiology of violence as a social disease and coming up with recommendations to address it are concrete examples of tending to the inner health of a democratic society so that it can authentically reflect the reality of peace. There is an international campaign to get governments of the world to do just that – to study the root causes of violence in their societies and to come up with policies and programs to mitigate it. The campaign aims to promote the establishment of national ministries and departments of peace that will take on the work of ending violence in society not by incarcerating more people but by conducting research, providing education, supporting restorative justice initiatives, and addressing the social conditions that lead to violence” (O’Dea, 2012, pp. 28-29).

Scholar William L. Benzon published a small treasure of a book titled *We Need A Department of Peace: Everybody’s Business, Nobody’s Job* with his DoP colleague Charles Keil. In their poignant Prologue: *War is Not a Natural Disaster* they cite a statement made by Mary Liebman published in the 1973 issue of *PAX*, the newsletter for the Council for a Department of Peace

(CODEP). This starts out with a history of how the human race knows a lot about how to make war. “We should: we’ve been doing it since biblical times” ... “By contrast, what do any of us know about how to make peace? Nobody has ever done it. The Bomb changed things forever. We began to realize that no nation would ever again fight through to glorious victory... we are faced with the necessity of making peace – and nobody knows how ... well, let’s start with what we know. In any public undertaking, from building a dam to putting a man on the moon, we start by hiring somebody to be in charge. We give him an office, a staff, a desk, a typewriter, a telephone. We give him a budget. We say, Begin. It may come as something of a shock to realize that in this vast proliferating federal bureaucracy, there is no one in charge of peace. There is nobody who goes to an office in Washington and works nine-to-five for peace, unhampered by any other consideration or responsibility.

War is not a natural disaster. It is a manmade disaster, directed and carried out by ordinary people, who are hired and paid by other ordinary people, to make war. It will stop when ordinary people decide that, whatever satisfaction and rewards war may have offered in the past, the risk is now too high and the return too low. If you are ready to invest in a new and exciting American enterprise, you can start by spending an hour telling your congressman why you want a Department of Peace” (Benzon, 2016, pp.1-2).

UK GAMIP member Vijay Mehta wrote a seminal DoP book *How Not To Go to War: Establishing Departments for Peace and Peace Centers Worldwide*. With its global DoP perspective, the book includes the U.S. Department of Peace campaign in several places, including prominently in the Appendices titled U.S. Department of Peace Bill – History, Support, Provisions of the Kucinich Bill, Previous Proposals.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in his endorsement of the book said: “The proposal that there should be a Ministry of Peace within governments is not merely admirable, but, if implemented, would represent serious indication of actual intent. I’m happy to give my support to such a body whose responsibility would include being a consistent voice for nonviolent means of settling disputes.” Another impressive book endorsement came from former UNESCO Culture of Peace Director General, Federico Mayor Zaragoza, who said: “Peace is both a condition and a result. It is necessary to identify the causes of conflict to be able to prevent it. Avoiding conflict is the greatest victory. It is completely inadmissible that more than four billion dollars are invested daily into armament and military expenditures while thousands of human beings die from hunger and neglect. I believe the present system is coming to an end and that, with the guidance of books such as *How Not to Go to War*, today’s peoples will be able to fulfil the immense responsibility assumed when they decided to ‘save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war.’ The historic transition from a culture of imposition, violence and war to a culture of encounter, dialogue, conciliation and peace, from force to word will initiate a new era (Mehta, 2019, pp. i,ii).

Lastly, our beloved U.S. DoP campaigner Julia Gandy Torres wrote a book entitled *A Jersey Girl Finds Peace: Finding Inner Peace After a Lifetime of Anxiety* with a forward written by former

Peace Alliance Executive Director and GAMIP co-founder Dot Maver, Ph.D. Julia offers a description of the of the U.S. DoP campaign that gets right to the heart of its unique grassroots activism in her chapter on Advocating for Peace:

“Walking the halls of Congress - It was in early 2004 when I first went to Washington, DC to advocate for the Department of Peace. Marianne Williamson was the Executive Director at the time, followed by the wonderful Dot Maver; and together they scheduled a star-studded lineup of teachers and thought leaders to help us get prepared for lobbying with our members of Congress. There were attendees from every state in those first few conferences and the energy was palpable.

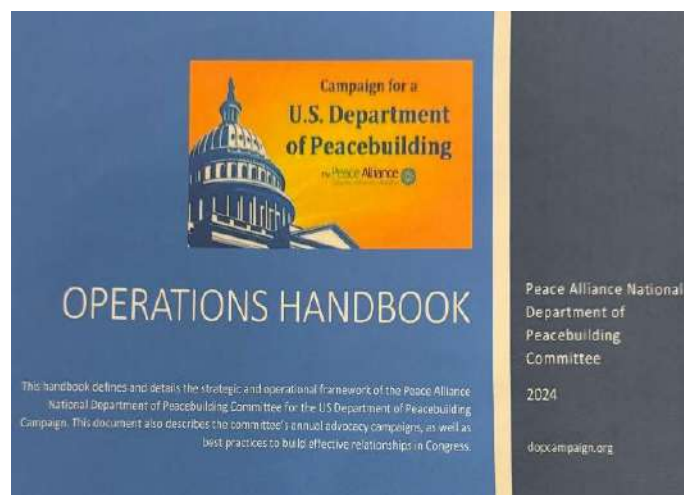
The highlight of the work with The Peace Alliance is the empowerment gained with Congressional leaders and staffers. We learned in our training that the Legislative branch of the US government is the most accessible to the people. Meeting with them as a group, we would each take a talking point or share a story that pertained to why we wanted this legislation passed. There were stories told by former military members, grandmothers, businesswomen, by parents and their kids. Most people want peace so the question is how to make to make it manifest.

As I was walking down the hallways of the congressional building, I felt the immensity of what we were doing. I felt all my grandmothers and ancestors walking behind me urging me forward. It was an awe-inspiring feeling that I would love for many more people to experience. You learn that you are part of the government, you have access to these people no matter what your income level, your age, your ethnicity. They respond to those members of their constituency who raise their voices.

Dropping the Bill - After our weekend conference and Monday Lobby Day, I stayed to watch Representative Kucinich “drop” the Bill, meaning he was introducing the bill to the Congress for the first time for that administrative cycle. There were about fifty of us who could stay and watch the events unfold. We made our way as a group through at least three levels of security dropping our bags through the scanners each time and being physically cleared by the Capital police. Marianne Williamson pulled us all together before we went into the gallery of the House floor. She told us to be respectful and quiet. If there were too many loud noises or cheering, we could get escorted out of the building.

We all filed into the gallery and took seats. The floor was sparse with only a few Congress people in attendance. When Kucinich stood at the podium to drop the bill, we did cheer a bit louder than we were supposed to, which we weren’t supposed to do at all. We got gaveled, for the first time by the House member who was presiding over the meeting. We listened to Kucinich introduce and defend the bill. And of course, when he was finished, we cheered again. We couldn’t help it. This time we got gaveled even more loudly and the presiding member verbally told us to be quiet or else we would be escorted out of the Chamber. We needed to be good representatives for peace and love after all. I went to DC a few times to advocate for the DoP over the intervening years.

Each time was just as powerful, and I love to take new people to see their same reaction” (Gandy Torres, 2022, pp. 100-101).



A major Committee accomplishment was creating its professionally written 39-page National DoP Committee Operation Handbook finalized in 2024. It outlines and details the strategic and operational framework of the DoP Committee for the U.S. DoP Campaign. And describes the Committee’s annual advocacy campaigns and best practices to build effective relationships in Congress. Plus addresses the scope of and questions asked about the bill, and benefits of this department. It even

has a visionary statement on how the committee will function in its new roll when the bill is passed. Its beauty is having in writing for posterity all the policies and procedures that the Committee has so painstakingly developed over the last 20 years (Brown, 2024).

Following are some descriptive Handbook passages about the DoP Campaign:

- The DoP Committee formed in 2011 as a separate grassroots group within the Peace Alliance.
- The purpose of the DoP Committee is to co-create the Beloved Community while advocating for cultural transformation leading to and through a cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding.
- The DoP Committee operates from a deep organizational purpose that forms the foundation for its existence. First and foremost, the committee sees its purpose as striving to embody the transformation it desires to see in the world.
- Our vision is a nation and a world in which all life is honored as sacred, all beings are respected, and all people are skilled in peacebuilding and self-governance.
- The mission of the DoP Committee is to inspire, empower, and advocate with elected officials, organizations, and individuals to, in turn, advocate for and to pass legislation that will create and sustain the intended cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding. This department will contribute toward expanding the culture of peace.

- To fulfill our function, we operate four key initiatives throughout the year. Season for Nonviolence, Mother's Day 'Peace-Wants-a Piece-of-the-Federal-Budget Pie' Advocacy Peace Days in DC, and the Year-End 'Holiday's for Peace' Outreach. For all of these initiatives, Committee members and the greater peacebuilding community advocate with Congressional offices.
- We handle communication and relationships with organizations and key people connected to the DoP legislation (including the bill's sponsor and staff office; leadership at the Peace Alliance; Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP); the United Nations; and at other key organizations that support peacebuilding and violence reduction.
- We participate on the board, summits and the UN Committee (now the Outreach Committee) to support the goals of GAMIP to inspire similar peacebuilding initiatives in all 193 UN-member countries and other nations.
- We support a United Nations Resolution for peacebuilding departments and other infrastructures for peace internationally.
- The DoP Committee's core drive is three-fold: to support passage of the U.S. Department of Peacebuilding legislation in both houses of Congress; to see the bill signed into law; and to see an ongoing Department of Peacebuilding that is a strong, vibrant, and sustainable entity dedicated to ongoing peacebuilding and nonviolent means for conflict resolution or transformation.
- The Committee operates as a self-organizing, self-adapting team that is flexible and fluid in structure. The Committee strives to be a collaborative, high-performance team that is organized around its purpose, vision, mission and values.
- Committee meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month via Zoom. Agenda, connection exercise, and closing quotes provide points of unity and continuity for each meeting. Special calls are added as needed.
- The Committee also conducts monthly DoP Campaign Calls on the 3rd Wednesday of each month for the greater community.

Successes of the DoP Campaign include literally keeping alive this historic legislation in Congress for the last quarter century. Campaign members have researched and suggested bill language to the Congressional sponsor to update the legislation every two years with each new session of Congress. We also secure-Congressional cosponsors, reach out to local governments, and obtain organization and individual endorsements:

- Since 2004, we have reached out many thousands of times to members of Congress and their aides, meeting with many and urging them to cosponsor the DoP bill and other bills that have peacebuilding components. We also educate members of Congress about effective and cost-saving peacebuilding programs around the country.
- We have attended many city and county meetings throughout the country, resulting in 47 city, county, and tribal endorsements representing nearly 17.7 million people.
- Well over 600 organizations and prominent individuals endorse the DoP.

DoP campaign successes also include increasingly mainstreaming the Culture of Peace through advocacy; connection with other organizations that promote peace, human rights, environmental and other peacebuilding causes; educating ourselves, legislators, and others about such community-building practices as restorative justice, social-emotional-ethical learning (SEE), mindfulness, mediation, reciprocity, and other nonviolence conflict resolution practices; and embodying the peace we wish to see.

The wholistic and comprehensive DoP legislation addresses the interconnection of all life and the intersectionality of peace and justice, equality, health, healing, national security, education, the economy, rule of law, democracy, planetary survival and other aspects of civil rights, civil liberties, and human rights. The DoP Campaign has worked since the Peace Alliance began in 2004 to transform the culture of endless foreign wars and violence in our country and internationally by instead cultivating personal peace, peace in our schools, peace in our communities, peace in other societal institutions, and international peace. All these practices are included in the DoP legislation.

U.S. DoP History Prior to the 21st Century: The concept of a governmental “infrastructure for peace” is deeply rooted throughout American history going back pre-republic to the Native American Great League of Peace Confederacy. Later in writing the U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence signer Dr. Benjamin Rush proposed a Peace Office to balance the War Office (one the four original U.S. departments). His colleague, African-American Almanac author Benjamin Banneker promoted Dr. Rush’s Secretary of Peace concept extensively in his publications, describing the Secretary’s powers and advocating federal support for it. His Almanacs were distributed widely throughout the 13 colonies.

Perhaps the most stunning little-known historical fact is that the U.S. briefly actually HAD a “Secretary of Peace” from 1955 to 1957 appointed by President Eisenhower after WW II whose focus was Disarmament! His name was Harold Stassen (Stassen, 1990, pp. 275-291).

The DoP’s heyday occurred from 1955 to 1968 when no less than 85 such bills were introduced in the House and Senate. And in 1984 as a concession to the many peace legislators who had been

calling for a national peace academy on par with the military academies, President Ronald Reagan created the U.S. Institute for Peace as a training and research think tank to promote international peace. The novel “1988” by then-Governor of Colorado Richard Lamm, includes a very similar proposal where the third-party presidential candidate in the novel proposes a cabinet-level Agency for U.S. Peace and Conflict Resolution with a secretary of peace who could challenge the secretary of defense when necessary.

Clearly the concept of a cabinet-level DOP is not some new age “wokeness” idea or why would it keep popping up at various junctures throughout U.S. history? Yet sadly it always fades back into oblivion, never yet to be actualized. It is shameful that in 2025, with all the knowledge that has evolved in the new discipline of peace studies in the last quarter century, that a U.S DoP has not been established. Especially since a significant advancement has been the work done by the United Nations Development Program producing evidence-based research in certain countries showing that I4P reduce violence! (UN Development Program, 2013).

Yet this life-affirming knowledge has not yet been incorporated into public policy because the science of Nonviolence has not yet reached critical mass consciousness in understanding. And the ancient military might-makes-right mind-set (which repeatedly shows it only increases violence) vehemently resists replacement with a more civilized solution. The 21st century started in 2000 with high hopes that world peace was just beyond the horizon. Sadly, the exact opposite is our current reality as the world devolves further into chronic global turbulence. For as 2025 starts out now in this new U.S. presidential administration with its radical, regressive change in direction, a new era of transformation is indeed upon the world. We do not know yet which way the transformation will go. Now at humanity’s literal moment of choice, the existential question is (as Dr Martin Luther King put it) “Will it be Nonviolence or Nonexistence”?



Positive transformation could be in the air now for as we write this, several DoP actions recently occurred that give us hope. First, the U.S. Department of Peacebuilding Act of 2025 was introduced in Congress by its enthusiastic new sponsor Rep. Omar. The Peace Alliance announced it with a patriotic U.S. graphic on its email. The years of ground work done by the DoP Committee helped facilitate this complex process. (U.S. House of Representatives, 2025)

H.R. 1111's introduction was followed by media reports including a House of Representatives press release <https://omar.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-ilhan-omar-reintroduces-department-peacebuilding-act-continuing-legacy>; and a Huff Post article with an eye-popping graphic https://www.huffpost.com/entry/house-progressives-cabinet-department-peace_n_67a561b7e4b06fc72ae2955b . The bill's reintroduction never had such fanfare before!



Also encouraging is that we started 2025 being in conversation with a Senator's office about the possibility of introducing a companion DoP bill in the Senate. Considering the known chaos on Capitol Hill right now, we are encouraged that at this tender political time, Congressional staff chose to meet with us about the Department of Peace topic so close to our hearts.

Also, Dot Maver on that same day did a press release announcing the new GLOBAL PEACE YES Campaign and App www.globalpeaceyes.org partnership that recently evolved within GAMIP's affiliated Peacenow.com UN NGO. This multidimensional "muscular new peace movement" now being born is a more sophisticated digital platform still calling for departments, ministries and infrastructures for peace.

The BILL to establish a U.S. Department of Peacebuilding in Congress opens with the following inspiring, poetic, historic words of our wise U.S. Founding Fathers:

- 1) On July 4, 1716, the Second Continental Congress unanimously declared the independence of the 13 colonies, and the achievement of peace was recognized as one of the highest duties of the new organization of free and independent States by declaring: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these rights are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

* The above underlined words from DoP bill '23 (excluded from DoP '25) are kept in here to emphasize they {and the underlined words below} articulate "peace" - hence mean that PEACE is government's primary purpose!

- 2) The Constitution of the United States, in its preamble, further sets forth the insurance of the cause of peace in stating, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

These prophetic words show their intention that peace be the very bedrock of our democracy, as they realized peace is only possible in a democratic form of government. Sadly, the U.S. government greatly struggles in providing us this fundamental right to peace. Our DoP Committee may seem naïve for our persistence working the last 20 years on a bill which has not gone very far and today may be even less likely to pass. But we are in a new, unprecedented era now of old-world structures breaking down that no longer work. Thus, ANYTHING is possible, and proven new structures must be ready to implement when the right time comes. We believe the time for breakthrough to an awakening critical mass consciousness shift from war to peace mentality seems to already be happening. Some say the 20 years of seasoning makes H.R. 1111 ripe for manifestation now at a time when there clearly are no better solutions for reducing violence. In 2025, with endless wars and failed systems incapable of de-escalating the existential crisis of deep-rooted crystalized violence, it is way past time to apply the relatively recent evidence-based science of Nonviolence to how we govern ourselves. This can be done by prioritizing construction of governmental departments, ministries and infrastructures for peace known to build the United Nations Culture of Peace.

There is an old '60's peace folksong anthem by Bob Dylan with the lyric "How many deaths will it take 'til we know that too many people have died ...the answer my friend is blowing in the wind, the answer is blowing in the wind." Today the answer is no longer blowing in the wind! Today, the answer my friend is governmental departments of peace ... the answer is departments of peace.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SOLOMON ISLANDS MINISTRY OF PEACE

Oseremen Felix Irene

Introduction

The Solomon Islands have a rich cultural diversity, with unique traditions, land and sea ownership systems, and arts and crafts that stand out as key features of the region. The country's current power structure was inherited from the time when it was under British rule. The Solomon Islands became a British Protectorate in 1893, mainly to ease concerns in Australia and New Zealand that France or Germany might take control of the islands, which could have posed a threat to the security of Australasia (Havinden & Meredith 1993).

At that time, the British protectorate included only Guadalcanal, Malaita, San Cristobal (now called Makira), and the New Georgia group. Other parts of the Solomon Islands were under German control. However, some of these islands, such as Choiseul and Santa Isabel, were handed over to the British through a treaty in 1900. The British governed the Solomon Islands until 1978 (Truth & Reconciliation Commission TRC 2012) when the country got her independence.

The main power in the country is held by the national parliament and government institutions. Many people have asked for a system where power is shared more with local areas, to make the government more accessible and responsible to all the different groups of people. However, no major steps have been taken to make this happen.

Solomon Islands Context

Many violent conflicts in the Solomon Islands are connected to the government. These problems were made worse by colonialism and the plantations set up during that time, as well as by people's dissatisfaction with the government after the country gained independence (USIP 2023). Various levels of violence affected the small, tightly-knit Solomon Islands, causing division and distrust among different communities. The country was struggling to find stability again (Lamont et al. 2018). The conflict didn't happen suddenly or without warning. Instead, it was the result of careful planning. Better police intelligence and proper political actions could have stopped much of the violence (Truth & Reconciliation Commission TRC 2012).

In 1998, the Solomon Islands faced a time of chaos and violent conflicts (Maebuta et al 2009). Hameiri (2007) explains that the country had a tough time from 1998 to 2003. Long-standing tensions finally turned into open violence between armed groups from the islands of Guadalcanal and Malaita (Maebuta et al 2009). The trouble started in mid-1998 with clashes between a local Guadalcanal group, called the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), and settlers from Malaita, who later formed the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF). This led to a long period of small-scale violence, threats, and widespread lawlessness. By the end of 1998, the situation got worse, with settlers being forced out of Western Guadalcanal.

After that, many studies have found some main reasons that led to the problem. These include the effects of colonialism, the lack of unity in the country, disputes over land, unequal development, poor management by past governments, economic problems, and the decline of traditional leadership and law enforcement. These issues eventually caused many people in Guadalcanal to feel unhappy and divided (TRC 2012). The conflict was complicated and had many different causes.

Maebuta et al. (2009) explain that the conflict happened because of many different reasons, including history, geography, society, politics, economy, and culture. It was also caused by fights over power and resources. Sometimes, people wrongly describe it as just a fight between two ethnic groups, the Guadalcanalese and the Malaitans. Supporting this, Kabutaulaka (2002) says that what people often call an "ethnic conflict" or "ethnic tensions" was actually rooted in social, economic, development, political, and land problems, not just a deep divide between the groups. The Development Bulletin (2002) also highlights the importance of land, stating that the violent conflict has its roots in the fight over land and power, which happened as people moved around the islands.

During the violent conflicts, several armed groups appeared, such as the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) and the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF). Clements et al. (2003) argued that groups like the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army and the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) used homemade guns, knives, and bows, among other weapons. These groups carried out violent acts and abused human rights, including rape, torture, and murder. They also attacked specific ethnic groups, forcing many people to leave their homes. The existence of these armed groups made the conflict more complicated and harder to solve.

The conflict had a very damaging effect. Hameiri (2007) stated that the crisis forced around 35,000 people from the Solomon Islands to leave their homes and caused the deaths of about 200 people. It also caused a lot of harm to buildings, roads, and the economy. The economy was hit hard, with the GDP dropping sharply by 14% in 2000 and 9% in 2001 (Hameiri, p.410). The conflict caused a collapse in law and order, as the police and security forces couldn't handle the situation. This gap in control was taken over by armed groups and gangs, which made the violence even worse. The conflict also hurt development, as many projects were stopped or left unfinished. Fioga (2016) mentioned that the tensions, which led to five years of violence never seen before, ruined many lives and left the economy in a very bad state.

Origin and role of the Solomon Islands Ministry of Peace

To address the growing crisis in the Solomon Islands, a peace process was started, leading to the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) in 2000 (Pacific Islands Forum 2001). The TPA also included a responsibility for a compensation program (Maebuta et al., 2009) and was finalized in 2000. After the agreement was signed, a peace monitoring council was set up to help carry out the terms of the agreement. In 2002, this council was replaced by the National Peace Council (NPC), which helped resolve local conflicts by sending out local peace monitors (Irene 2014). The

agreement laid the foundation for building peace and reconciliation in the Solomon Islands and called for the creation of the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation, and Peace (MNURP). This ministry was tasked with overseeing efforts to promote peace and reconciliation.

So, in 2002, the Office of the Prime Minister created the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation, and Peace (MNURP) (Solomon Island Government 2022). Then, in 2019, MNURP was renamed to the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace, and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA). As the new name suggests, this ministry now has a broader range of responsibilities (Irene 2024). According to MTGPEA (2022), the name change from MNURP to MTGPEA was officially approved by the cabinet on April 29, 2019. The ministry's new tasks include: managing traditional governance, supporting customs and related programs; working on peace and peacebuilding efforts; promoting national identity, unity, and awareness; handling church-related matters; and developing policies, research, and public relations programs.

The MTGPEA (2022) also mentioned that the Ministry's new responsibilities and changes in its structure led to the creation of the Traditional Governance Division (TGD) and the inclusion of church-related matters into the Peace Division, which together formed the Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs Division (PEAD). Other divisions in the Ministry include the Corporate Services Division (CSD) and the Policy, Planning, and Program Development Division (PPPDD). The Deputy Secretaries (one for technical services and one for corporate services) manage and coordinate these divisions. Specifically, the Deputy Secretary for Technical Services oversees the PPPDD, TGD, and PEAD, while the Deputy Secretary for Corporate Services oversees the CSD.

Additionally, the office of the permanent secretary (PS) is responsible for managing and running the Ministry. The PS is in charge of the Ministry's yearly budget and answers for it. The PS also gives advice to the Minister about the Ministry's programs. They are the Chairperson and leader of the Executive Management Committee.

The Ministry is motivated by the understanding that lasting peace and reconciliation need special systems and resources to work effectively. It is seen as a main organization that will coordinate efforts to promote peace, encourage conversations, solve problems, and help resolve conflicts throughout the country (Solomon Islands Government 2006). Its responsibilities also include truth and reconciliation, running programs to build peace, encouraging understanding and healing, and supporting efforts to bring people together and strengthen national unity.

The idea to create a Ministry of Peace came from different groups, such as the government of the Solomon Islands, local organizations (including religious groups), nearby countries, and international groups working on peace efforts. These groups understood that having a special ministry just for building peace and helping people reconcile was important. This would help keep the progress made from the peace agreement and stop the country from falling back into conflict.

The Ministry works closely with various groups, including non-government organizations, churches, community leaders, and individuals (Solomon Islands Government 2016). In early 2001,

the creation of a civil society network showed how widespread and deep, the dissatisfaction was. This network brought together groups that usually don't work together, such as churches, trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business groups, and women's organizations (Prasad and Snell 2004). The Ministry also works with other government agencies and international partners to gather resources, knowledge, and support for its peacebuilding efforts. According to the Solomon Islands Government (2020a), the Ministry's main partners and stakeholders include National and Provincial Governments, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Chiefs, and Traditional and Church Leaders. By working together with these partners, the Ministry has been able to reach more people, make a bigger impact, and contribute to a lasting peace in the Solomon Islands.

The Ministry of Peace follows an important principle: inclusiveness (i.e. everyone should be included). This means making sure all parts of society are represented and can share their opinions in the peacebuilding process. The Ministry works by involving different groups of people to tackle the main reasons for conflicts, support fairness, and create a peaceful culture in the Solomon Islands.

Infrastructures, resources and leadership

According to MTGPEA (2022), the Ministry worked on 8 main goals as part of its plan (CSP 2020-2023) to carry out government policies and achieve its vision and mission. These goals are:

- i. Traditional leaders are officially recognized and given more power.
- ii. Actions and laws are put in place to address post-conflict issues.
- iii. A strong sense of national identity, unity, and pride is achieved.
- iv. Peace education is taught and promoted across the country.
- v. A strong and productive partnership is built with churches.
- vi. A strong and productive partnership is formed with groups working on peacebuilding.
- vii. MTGPEA is able to do its job effectively.
- viii. Effective reporting, advocacy, and awareness efforts are carried out.

MTGPEA (2022) further posit that, the MTGPEA Head Office oversees five Provincial MTGPEA Offices or Desks in Western, Choiseul, Guadalcanal, and Malaita. These offices are managed and coordinated by Deputy Directors and their teams. The other provinces—Isabel, Central, Makira/Ulawa, Temotu, and Renbel—are also coordinated from the MTGPEA Head Office by assigned staff. The coordination of programs and activities is handled through a Focal Point, who is an officer from the Provincial Government. The Ministry's long-term goal is to establish offices in the remaining provinces, depending on land availability and financial resources. The Honiara City-Urban MTGPEA Office is managed by a staff member based at the MTGPEA Head Office. According to the Solomon Islands Government (2020), the Ministry carries out its mission by delivering services through its four Divisions, which were mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The Solomon Islands Government (2020a) stated that the main job of the Traditional Governance Division is to help facilitate the re-drafting of Bills that will give more power and support to

traditional systems. This division also organizes training for traditional leaders to help them build peace and improve their skills, and it supports their work. Meanwhile, the Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs Division works on teaching peace and works with religious groups, recognizing and supporting their roles. The Policy, Planning, Programme Development Division is in charge of researching and analyzing conflicts, creating policies and programs, and checking how well they work. They also give advice on these matters to the national government. Lastly, the Corporate Services Division handles the ministry's administration, staff, and finances.

The ministry has limited financial resources, but has access to the knowledge and skills of traditional leaders, religious leaders, and government officials. Its main partners and stakeholders include the National and Provincial Governments, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Chiefs, and Traditional and Church Leaders (Solomon Islands Government 2020a). The ministry also works with international groups like the United Nations and the Commonwealth, which offer some financial and technical help. It is part of the national government and is managed by the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. In terms of its resources, the ministry has several offices, facilities, vehicles, office equipment, and IT systems.

The ministry has a small team of full-time workers. They get help from volunteers and part-time workers. Traditional and religious leaders also support the ministry, using their own connections and resources. The ministry works with several international and local groups that offer extra help and resources. According to MTPEA (2022), as of December 31, 2022, the ministry has 50 staff members, with 45 being permanent and 5 being temporary.

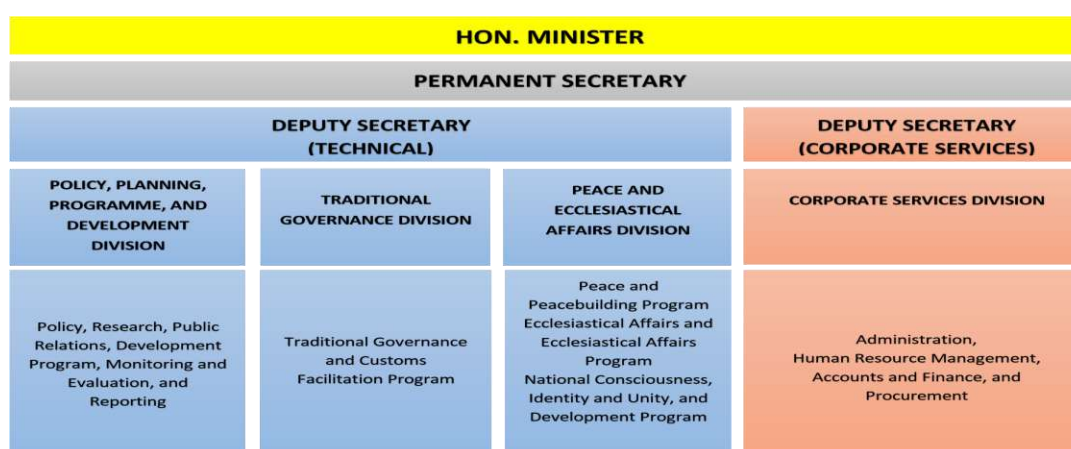
The ministry also has offices in different provinces. These include:

- The Malaita MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Malaita Province, including the Malaita Outer Islands, with 6 staff members.
- The Guadalcanal MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Guadalcanal Province, with 6 officers.
- The Western MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Western Province, with 7 officers.
- The Choiseul MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Choiseul Province, with 4 officers.
- The Honiara City-Urban MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Honiara City, the capital, with 1 officer/focal point.
- The Isabel/Central Provinces MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Central, Isabel, and Renbel Provinces, with 1 officer/focal point.
- The Makira/Ulawa/Temotu/Renbel Provinces MTGPEA Office (Desk) for Makira, Temotu, and Renbel Province, with 1 officer/focal point (MTPEA 2022).

Also, MTPEA (2022) asserts that the Ministry works to keep a good relationship with provincial governments. They do this by making the provincial deputy premier the head of the Provincial Peacebuilding Committees (PPBCs). These committees help guide the work of the MTGPEA Provincial Offices in their programs.

The Solomon Islands is a country with many different cultures and beliefs, including both traditional and religious ones. Because of this, the leaders who represent these beliefs play a key role in the country. The government works closely with these leaders to help build peace. One special thing about the Solomon Islands is how much influence churches have. Churches are very important here. The government’s work is deeply connected to Christianity, which reflects the country’s Christian history and the big role churches play in bringing peace and healing. The government partners with churches to support their efforts in creating peace. According to the Solomon Islands Government (2020b), young people, churches, communities, traditional leaders, and women leaders are all important partners for the government in its peacebuilding work.

Solomon Islands Function / Organization Chart



Source: Solomon Islands Government 2020a

The figure above shows how the Solomon Islands Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace, and Ecclesiastical Affairs is organized and what it does. The image highlights that the highest position in the ministry is the honorable minister. Below the minister is the permanent secretary, who oversees two deputy secretaries: one for technical services and one for corporate services. The image also displays the different sections within the ministry, including the policy, planning, program, and development division; the traditional governance division; the peace and ecclesiastical affairs division; and the corporate services division, as mentioned earlier.

Achievements of the Ministry

The Ministry has achieved several important successes. It played a key role in negotiating and signing the Townsville Peace Agreement in 2000, which helped stop the violent conflicts in the Solomon Islands. To carry out the peace agreements, including paying compensation and collecting weapons, the Sogavare Government set up the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation, and Peace (MNURP). Allan Kemakeza was the first Minister of this ministry (Truth & Reconciliation Commission TRC, 2012). The peace framework made this possible. The ministry has also helped create several local peace agreements, which have been useful in solving conflicts within communities.

The Ministry has achieved several important successes. It played a key role in negotiating and signing the Townsville Peace Agreement. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2012 also highlighted that the Ministry quickly started talks with various militant groups to stop the violent conflict. On August 2, 2000, a Cease Fire Agreement was signed. To carry out this agreement, the Cease Fire Monitoring Council was formed, with Sir Peter Kenilorea as the chairman and Paul Tovua as the co-chair. The Council spent time talking to militants across the country, trying to convince them to give up their weapons and make peace. The focus was on getting militants to surrender their weapons, not on paying compensation for the killings on Guadalcanal or the loss of property. This effort paved the way for the Townsville Peace Agreement, which was signed on October 15, 2000, and included provisions for compensation.

The Agreement was made between the Solomon Islands Government, the Guadalcanal and Malaita Provincial Governments, and representatives of the Malaita Eagle Force and Isatabu Freedom Movement. The Agreement stated that the Government was responsible for paying compensation. However, Fraenkel (2004) pointed out that the Government only considered compensation as money paid for damage to property or businesses during the conflict. He argued that the Agreement failed to address other serious issues, such as loss of life and harm to people's mental health. Fraenkel also said that the way the Agreement handled reparations did not fully respect human rights.

The ministry has also achieved several other important things. They created the National Peace Council, which works to bring peace and help people get along at the national level. They also developed the National Peace Framework, which is a plan that explains how to build peace in the Solomon Islands. Additionally, they started several programs to support peace, like the Solomon Islands Peace and Security Initiative, the Solomon Islands Peacebuilding Fund, and the Solomon Islands Peacebuilding Grant Scheme. They also set up training and education programs to teach people about peacebuilding. The ministry has carried out different projects, such as teaching conflict resolution, organizing community discussions, running truth and reconciliation processes, and helping people who have been affected by violence (Dinnen & Firth 2008).

The ministry also created several training programs to teach hundreds of people about peacebuilding and solving conflicts. It has supported and organized training sessions for young people, church members, community leaders, traditional leaders, and women leaders. As stated by the Solomon Islands Government (2020b), "these training programs focus not only on peacebuilding but also on building skills and improving abilities. The training is provided by the ministry's peace officers, partners, or donor organizations."

The Solomon Islands Government (2020c) explains that the ministry gets requests from families, communities, and other government offices to help solve conflicts between groups. To handle these situations, a group called the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) was created. This group includes respected church and community leaders and was formed because of past ethnic conflicts and sensitive issues. When requests come in, the EPG is quickly sent to help mediate and resolve major disputes. The ministry also has trained peace-building officers working in all its provincial offices

to assist with these efforts.

The MNURP Annual Report for 2015 underscored the organization's key accomplishments that year. These included helping to resolve conflicts within and between communities using a comprehensive peacebuilding approach. For example, MNURP supported reconciliation efforts between the Marau Islands and Guadalcanal Province, as well as among the Vavalisi Tribe, Aruligo Duidui, and former combatants in Guadalcanal. They also organized discussions on the Solovisu Integrated Peacebuilding Approach, involving communities in North West Guadalcanal (Tandai, Sahalu, and Savulei Wards) and West Guadalcanal (Tangarare Ward). Additionally, MNURP conducted a Peacebuilding Training Workshop at the Solomon Islands Transition Advisory Group (SITAG) in Honiara, along with other training programs like the Training of Trainers/Trauma Support Workers (TOT/TSW) Trauma Training Workshop and Peacebuilding and Conflict Analysis Training.

MNURP also worked with cultural and church groups, as well as other important organizations, to discuss and work together on peace and reconciliation matters that are crucial for national security. They translated the peacebuilding suggestions from the TRC after getting approval from parliament, and the Ministry helped put these ideas into action. They also held talks on key issues that are important for building peace in the country. On October 14th, they signed a partnership agreement with the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) for research studies. They approved peace education materials to support peace lessons in schools and communities. They raised awareness and encouraged people to think about national unity and togetherness. They supported events that celebrate important international, national, cultural, religious, and sports occasions to promote peace and unity. They put the National Peacebuilding Policy into practice and helped young people, women, and community leaders grow their skills and abilities (MNURP Annual Report 2015).

In 2017, MNURP organized several activities, including workshops on preventing crime, training for community leaders on restorative justice, sessions on healing from trauma, changing mindsets, and teaching tailoring and design. They also worked on resolving land disputes, helping tribal communities reconcile, and running programs to build peace and help people recover after conflicts. Additionally, they held workshops to raise awareness and empower communities (MNURP Annual Report 2017). In 2018, the ministry focused on carrying out the policies of the Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition for Change Government (SIDCCG), particularly in areas like traditional governance, unity, and peacebuilding. Their work in 2018 was guided by the goals set in their 2016-19 corporate plan, with a focus on key priority areas. One of their main tasks was to implement a post-conflict recovery program and follow the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (MNURP Annual Report 2018). In 2019, MTGPEA organized workshops to help build peace and solve conflicts, offered counseling and healing programs for people dealing with trauma, and provided training to traditional leaders to improve their skills.

According to MTGPEA (2020), the ministry organized Mindset Training in 2020 for certain SI citizens. The reparation policy was finished in 2019, and in 2020, the Ministry worked on creating the Post-Conflict Rehabilitation policy. Also, in 2019, the Ministry kept working with UNDP to

bring in Technical Assistance (TA) expert Patrick Burgess to help develop the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) policy, also known as the Post-Conflict Rehabilitation policy.

The Ministry works with several Peacebuilding Partners all year to run peacebuilding programs and activities across the country. These partners include the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute (MPI), the Solomon Islands National Council of Women (SICW), the Solomon Islands Christian Association (SICA), the Solomon Islands Full Gospel Association (SIFGA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Council of Chiefs and Houses of Chiefs (MTGPEA 2020).

MTGPEA (2020) states that the Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition for Change Government (SIDCGA) aims to acknowledge and support the roles of religious institutions. Through the Ministry, the government helps churches in their roles and functions as partners in development and provides support to strengthen their efforts in building peace. The Ministry's main partners and stakeholders in peacebuilding include all government ministries and provincial governments, which are considered internal stakeholders (MTGPEA 2020). Despite challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the implementation of programs and activities, the ministry worked hard to carry out some of its planned activities based on the 8 Strategic Goals of the Ministry Corporate Service Programme 2021-2023. However, it faced ongoing difficulties in securing funds for activities due to insufficient budget allocations by the government (MTGPEA 2021). One of the activities involves workshops to check and confirm the reintegration policy. The goal of these workshops was to get feedback and make sure the draft policy was correct, especially from former fighters (MTGPEA 2021).

The Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs, along with the Ministry of Police, Corrections and National Security and the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. Together, they created the Solomon Islands National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. This plan acts as a guide to help the country meet important national and international goals, especially in promoting gender equality and empowering women.

Overall, some of the main ways the Ministry of Peace has progressed since it was established include:

1. **Building Stronger Systems:** The Ministry of Peace has worked on improving its structure and abilities to do its job well. This involves creating plans, strategies, and guidelines to help with peacebuilding, solving conflicts, and bringing people together.

2. **Working with Communities:** The Ministry of Peace has actively involved local communities, traditional leaders, civil society groups, and other important partners to encourage conversations, mutual understanding, and teamwork. Projects at the community level have been key in addressing complaints, building trust, and promoting reconciliation among people.

3. **Programs for Building Peace:** The Ministry of Peace has started many programs and projects to

help people live together peacefully, solve conflicts, and stop violence. These programs include teaching people how to resolve conflicts, educating them about peace, helping young people feel strong and capable, and supporting groups that have been hurt by conflicts.

4. Truth and Reconciliation Efforts: The Ministry of Peace has helped with processes that focus on truth and reconciliation. These efforts aim to fix past wrongs, help people heal, and bring the country together. They give a chance for victims and those who caused harm to share their stories, ask for forgiveness, and work towards making peace with each other.

5. Working together across Agencies: The Ministry of Peace has worked closely with other government departments, non-profit groups, and international partners to combine resources, knowledge, and support for its efforts to build peace. This teamwork has made peacebuilding projects more effective and helped create a unified approach to stopping and resolving conflicts.

6. Tracking Conflicts and Early Warning Systems: The Ministry of Peace has set up systems to watch over conflicts, spot possible problems, and give early alerts about risks to peace and stability. These tools help the Ministry take action early to handle conflicts and stop them from getting worse.

7. Skill Development: The Ministry of Peace is focusing on improving the skills, knowledge, and abilities of its staff, as well as local partners and groups working on peacebuilding. This is done through training workshops, programs to develop skills, and activities that encourage sharing knowledge.

8. Equality and Inclusion: The Ministry of Peace is working to ensure that everyone, including women, young people, and marginalized or vulnerable groups, has a say in peacebuilding. They are promoting fair and inclusive approaches and helping these communities take part in making decisions.

9. Conflict Transformation: The Ministry of Peace is working to resolve conflicts by tackling the main reasons they happen, supporting fairness in society, and creating lasting peace. By focusing on the root causes and encouraging positive changes, the Ministry aims to build a more peaceful and inclusive community.

10. Evaluation and Learning: The Ministry of Peace is committed to checking how well its programs work, learning from them, and using this information to make better decisions in the future. By constantly improving and adjusting its strategies, the Ministry wants to make its peacebuilding efforts more effective.

In short, since it was established, the Ministry has made big progress in building peace, helping people reconcile, and solving conflicts. By working together with different groups, connecting with local communities, and carrying out specific projects, the Ministry keeps playing an important part in creating lasting peace and stability in the Solomon Islands.

Challenges of MNURP/MTGPEA

The ministry has also encountered several difficulties. A major issue in carrying out these changes is the ministry's limited capacity, both in terms of funds and political will. Not having enough resources, whether financial or human, to run its peacebuilding programs has been a significant problem for the ministry (MTGPEA 2020). There is also a lack of political will and dedication to peacebuilding, which makes it hard to push through long-term reforms. Furthermore, there is a need for more public understanding and backing for peacebuilding efforts, which can be tough in a country with a history of conflict.

Another challenge is the complicated and delicate nature of the issues it handles. The conflict situation in the Solomon Islands is complex and needs a long-term effort to build peace. For instance, matters involving land and resource rights can be very controversial and may lead to disputes. Also, the Ministry deals with topics related to cultural and religious identity, which can be very sensitive. Finding effective and respectful ways to address these issues can be tough.

Despite these difficulties, the ministry has played a key role in promoting peace and reconciliation in the Solomon Islands. It has built a strong network of partners, including traditional and religious leaders, government agencies, and civil society groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the establishment of the Ministry of Peace in the Solomon Islands (MTGPEA) was a significant step in building peace and creating a system for maintaining peace, often called peace infrastructure or peace architecture. This chapter has looked at the reasons behind its creation, how it works, its roles, successes, challenges, and how effective it has been. It also provides suggestions on how to improve its services. Some people believe that the peace institution has already achieved its main purpose and is no longer needed, but this view needs to be addressed. The government of the Solomon Islands and all involved parties must work together to ensure that the peace structure remains active, effective, and relevant. It should continue to be a strong and reliable peace system that the people of the Solomon Islands can be proud of and rely on to tackle the many issues of conflict and violence in the country. To make this happen, the government and the people must keep supporting and strengthening the peace structure in every way. This includes giving enough funds and engaging competent, skilled and hardworking people to manage the ministry.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NEPAL'S MINISTRY OF PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION

Poorna Kanta Adhikary & Oseremen Felix Irene

Introduction

Nepal, one of the oldest countries of Asia, is situated in the middle Himalaya Range between China and India. Several kinds of people dominate Nepal's population constituting Aryans migrating from Caucasian mountains via Iran, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Western Tibet; people of Mongol and Tibetan origin, who migrated from across the Himalayan passes; the descendants of the original Dravidians; people who fled to Nepal hills and Terai from India to escape Mughals' atrocities in India; and those who were brought in to till the land in Terai from across the border. With them also came their priests, warriors, businessmen, workers and nobilities constituting multiple casts, class and ethnicities constituting Nepal's diversity of population of 30 million, of 142 caste/ethnic groups with 125 languages/dialects spoken (Nepal Census Data, 2021). The geographical diversity is demonstrated from the low lands of subtropical Terai of 70 meters to more than 8000 meters of altitudes with eight of the nine tallest peaks of the world, all within 125 kms of aerial distance. The middle hills and river valleys in between them have the most diverse micro climatic conditions with equally diverse flora and fauna.

Until 2008, Nepal had a monarchy of Shah dynasty that traces their historical ancestry to 1479, when there were several principalities governing the area. Prithvi Narayan Shah (1723—1775), King of Gorkha who conquered other kingdoms of the Himalayan region and established unified Kingdom of Nepal in 1768 moving his capital from Gorkha to Kathmandu. His sons and their successors continued fighting and defeating other kingdoms and enlarged the kingdom of Nepal from River Tista in the East to River Sutlej in the West that included much of today's Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim, and part of the low Gangatic plains to River Ganga, which is now part of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh of India. In fact, Davis (2019) asserts that for about 237 years, "Prithvi Narayan Shah and his descendants were the reigning monarchs of a relatively united Nepal, settling, conquering, or continuing to battle independent principalities and expanding their borders beyond what is Nepal today".

However, during the 1814-1816 Anglo-Nepal War, Nepal lost one-third of its territory to British India. As argued by Gurung (2018), "after the war, Nepal was forced to sign

The Sugauli Treaty of 1815 in which it had not only lost one-third of its territory, but also had to accept the British Resident in Kathmandu and some humiliating terms". Following the Anglo-Nepal Treaty of 1816 demarcating border between Nepal and British India, the British Gurkha Regiment, as a special force of the British Army, was established with some Nepali nationals under the bilateral agreement between British and Nepali governments. This was transformed into a trilateral agreement when India became independent in 1947. Then Gurkha Battalion was divided into British Gurkha Army and Indian Gorkha Army, which have continued since then under their

respective governments. This made possible for Nepali nationals to serve themselves in the armies of Nepal, India and the United Kingdom.

It was understandable that a great deal of national wealth had to be spent on Nepal's unification drive and financing the Anglo-Nepal war then that deprived development of the people. After Anglo-Nepali treaty of 1816, the Shah Kings continued to rule as absolute monarchs until 1846. Their bad governance over the years led to the seizure of power by force by Jung Bahadur Kunwar, a courtier in 1846. He established his hereditary family rule by adopting Rana as his family name. The political order changed from absolute monarchy to constitutional one. The King was made a figure head and restricted very much within the four walls of the Royal Palace, while the people were treated as serfs. Nobody could question the authorities of the Ranas then, who invested country's wealth upon themselves and not on people and the country. They had to be tolerated even for their murderous activities.

Political Movements and Transitions

After their century old hereditary Rana family regime, a loose alliance between King Tribhuvan and the people was formed against their rule. As a peaceful approach did not work, on behalf of the people, an armed revolution was launched by Nepali Congress, demanding democracy in 1950. While the Rana regime was about to fall, Indian interference led to a compromise solution, ending it in February 1951, with the Rana-Nepali Congress coalition government giving the power back to the King and democracy to people (Kuwejima 2021).

However, the coalition did not last beyond eight months due to several sabotages from within and the government ended without having holding an election of a Constituent Assembly as promised by King Tribhuvan. While the transition was going on, he died in March 1953, opening his thrown to his son Mahendra. Only after a non-violent movement demanding election by Nepali Congress compelled the King to hold election for the Parliament in 1959, but not in the spirit of his father's promise. However, Nepali Congress came victorious in the election with more than 2/3rd majority and formed a democratically elected government under Bishweshwor Prasad Koirala commonly known as BP Koirala or BP, who had also led the 1950-1951 revolution.

While BP Koirala was marching ahead with a great deal of social transformation and nonaligned policy for international relations, Robertson (2020) noted that, King Mahendra seized power by staging a coup d'état with support from the army in December 1960. It broke the 17 months old legally elected democratic government, arresting not only the political leaders but also all democratic rights of the people. The King established a nonparty royal dictatorship called Panchayat that went for three decades putting the political leaders initially for 8 years in jail that also marked two unsuccessful armed insurrections by Nepali Congress. While King Mahendra died in January 1972, his son, King Birendra danced in the platform of the royal dictatorship, which he inherited from his father.

The repression of a nonviolent student protest in April 1979 against hanging of deposed Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in front of Pakistan Embassy in Kathmandu acted as a trigger

spreading the protest in Nepal like a forest fire. King Birendra announced a national referendum in April 1979 for people to choose between a multiparty system and reformed Panchayat, the Monarchical dictatorship that took place in May 1980.

The King's Panchayat rule was announced victorious at the referendum marked by a great deal of foul plays. While announcing the results, the King promised for a new constitutional reform, for an honorable treatment to nearly half of the population who clearly rejected his Panchayat rule, although supposed to be reformed, and chose the multiparty democracy. Since this did not materialize, the King's dictatorship continued division of his own people, those who supported him were labeled as nationalists and those opposed to his rule as antinational elements.

The communists were divided in a few dozen groups from anarchists to royalists, those who supported him were labelled as progressive nationalists. The King always treated Nepali Congress as his foe, although they believed in social democracy with constitutional monarchy in a liberal democratic set up. The King promoted communists to balance the democratic force. After the death of BP Koirala in 1982, Nepali Congress went for a non-violent movement in 1985 that had to be called off due to violent sabotage.

After the Fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the world started seeing the communist movement around the world shattering with eventual breakdown of the Soviet Empire in 1990-1991. Corroborating this, the World Economic Forum (2019) noted that, “the *fall* of the *Berlin Wall* on the night of *November 8, 1989* dramatically and suddenly accelerated the *collapse* of *communism* in Europe”. A people's movement led by Nepali Congress in February 1990, was joined by a big chunk of the communists this time, under their platform called United Left Front (ULF) supporting multiparty democracy, restored democracy forcing King Birendra surrendering the power to the people in April 1990.

An interim government led by Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, President of Nepali Congress with participation of both ULF and representatives of the Royal Palace brought a new constitution for Multiparty Democracy with Constitutional Monarchy. It was promulgated in November 1990 holding the national election in May 1991. Although Nepali Congress came victorious, its leader and Prime Minister Bhattarai was defeated in the election.

The Nepali Congress Government led by Girija Prasad Koirala, younger brother of BP Koirala, also called GP Koirala, dissolved the parliament in mid May 1994 “due to dissension within the *Nepali Congress Party*” (US Department of State 2017). He was facing obstruction from the opposing communists and having tension within the party, wished for 2/3rd majority in the parliament announcing a new election in November 1994. Due to rift within Nepali Congress, the ULF turned into Communist Party of Nepal (UML; United Marxist Leninist) emerged as the largest party reducing Nepali Congress to 1/3rd in the hung parliament inviting political instability in the country. However, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched an armed revolution in 1996 calling for a Chinese Maoist style of political system that lasted until 2006.

Royal Massacre and Tri-Polar Conflict

In the meantime, on June 1, 2001, a Massacre took place in the Royal Palace that eliminated the whole family of King Birendra including his youngest brother Dhirendra that brought the late King's middle brother Gyanendra to act as the Regent. Rose (2024) asserts that, "with Dipendra's suicide the following day, Gyanendra was unexpectedly called to ascend the throne, which he did on June 4". A superficial investigation carried out under the leadership of Tara Nath Rana Bhat, Speaker of the Parliament blamed the prince of having committed the whole crime solo including attempt of his own suicide in the pretext that he was under the influence of drug and alcohol.

The Cable News Network (CNN, 2001) reported that he wanted to marry a lady he was in love with, but was not approved by his mother Queen Aishwairya, and father King Birendra. The elimination of King Birendra's family has remained an unresolved riddle. The Maoist Supremo, Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias "Prachanda" openly expressed that he had an undeclared alliance with King Birendra, which could be nothing but doing away with the 1990 Constitution. What common factor could there be, if any, except this, between the two opposites?

While the Maoists were trying to capture the state by gun, the political party workers and elite population were pushed out of the countryside making the country ungovernable. In October 2001, King Gyanendra took control of the government labeling the Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of Nepali Congress incompetent (CNN 2001) to hold the scheduled election amid the armed violence.

This created a condition of a Tri-Polar Conflict in the country marked by violence by two armies: one from the state and the other from the rebellion. The three forces namely the Royal Palace, the Pro-parliamentary political parties and the Maoists were locked in the tri-polar conflict with mutually exclusive political ideologies, all pulling the people in their side that created incredible difficulties for ordinary citizens.

Realizing the need for professionals to contribute in transformation of the national political conflict and peacebuilding, Poorna Adhikary established Institute for Conflict Management Peace and Development (ICPD), a voluntary non-governmental organization. ICPD was managed by voluntary contribution of its members from their own earnings through their consultancies and training for national and international partner organizations and government and non-government agencies.

The argument put forward by ICPD then was that only dialogue among the parties in conflict can resolve it, not the guns. It also developed a tool called Participatory Peace- Conflict Assessment (PPCA) to enable development workers perform in an armed conflict affected conditions. The tool was successfully applied in the conditions of the Far West and Mid-West of Nepal where the development workers were entrapped between the two fighting armies. Members and staff of near fifty national and international organizations, including academics, administrators, trade union leaders, civil society members, political activists, development experts, participated in the application of this tool. It was also applied in auditing the development programs from peace-conflict lens (ENCODICE, 2007).

While rejecting guns, this lead author put up an idea for the need of a facilitated dialogue among the key stakeholders to resolve the tri-polar conflict. He suggested a home-grown method of dialogue to resolve the conflict would be better than a foreign imposed one. He went on taking this message from local communities to national and internal level, from civil societies to academic and professional organizations, and from government to non-government level.

While having a one-to-one close discussion in November 2002 with Mr. Narendra Vikram Shah, Foreign Minister of King Gyanendra's cabinet, this author was told that since the political parties were out and finished, the Royal Palace should negotiate with the Maoists with some give and take to end the violence in the country. He was then asked to provide an expert advice on what would be the give and take with the

Maoists. On which he replied “you seem to take this conflict so easy, which in my mind is very complex. The political parties are down no doubt, but not out. As it is a complex tri-polar conflict, it needs to be resolved with a great deal of creativity in managing the dialogue process among its stakeholders.”

As the Minister asked this author to provide something in writing that he could share with relevant personalities inside the Royal Palace, he wrote an article titled “Conditions of Dialogue” in both English and Nepali languages and handed them to him (Adhikary, 2002). A week later the Minister called him and told him “After reading your article, I am convinced about the tri-polar conflict. Let me tell you that those who needed to read it inside the Royal Palace have done it. What they will do with it, is beyond my capacity to say.”

However, the situation exacerbated further when King Gyanendra suspended the 1990 Constitution by dissolving the parliament, taking control of the state in February 2005 in the style of his father’s coup of December 1960. As argued by the Crisis Group (2005), the royal coup of 1 February 2005 dealt the constitution a near fatal blow. While this escalated unprecedented violence in the country, political parties were agitating peacefully in Kathmandu to restore the dissolved parliament, as the only way to bring peace in Nepal. The Maoists have been launching the armed movement in Nepal, most of their leaders securely stationed in India for more than a decade openly advocating doing away with Monarchy in Nepal. Although King Gyanendra conducted a local level election in the meantime that was pending since 1999, it ended superficially as all political parties boycotted it, and very few individuals participated in it. This transformed the tri-polar conflict into bipolar one, the King versus the people.

The Comprehensive Peace Accord

The seven pro-parliamentary political parties formed an alliance (SPA), led by GP Koirala of Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal “Prachanda” came with a 12 points agenda for a peace accord in November 2005, seemingly facilitated by India (CPA, 2006). The second people’s movement led by Nepali Congress President GP Koirala and joined by the Maoists brought an unprecedented number of people in the streets of Kathmandu in April 2006 that forced King Gyanendra to restore the dissolved parliament. This also brought a large number of the Maoists nominated to enter the parliament, which provided an interim constitution granting it to strip the power of the King one by one, and ending the decade old Maoist armed violence.

In July-September 2006, this lead author had a series of dialogue with top Maoist leaders and were convinced of holding the dialogue among the parties of Conflict, this time among the political party leaders of Nepali Congress, Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist; UML) and the Maoists. Although the latter two had already agreed for it, he was trying to reach the Prime Minister GP Koirala, President of Nepali Congress, which was not coming due to his busy schedule. Mr. Koirala had told Adhikary, P.K., in a long discussion in one morning of April 2006 during the Second People's Movement on how he got to meet the Maoist leaders in India, who had then agreed to keep a Ceremonial Monarchy in Nepal.

While a meeting with Mr. Koirala was pending, Adhikary, P.K. had to travel to Canada on a preplanned program during September-October 2006 to give a series of talks at the Canadian universities, governmental and non-governmental organizations in Montreal and Ottawa, Canada. While returning back in the first week of November, 2006 he found in New Delhi, India that Republic Nepal was already brewing up in New Delhi, before it made any smell in Kathmandu and the main dialogue process among the key political party leaders was already being managed from outside of Nepal.

The new government led by Mr. Koirala under a transitional constitution held the Constituent Assembly election in May 2008. According to the Inter-parliamentary Union (2013), the Constituent Assembly was established on 27 May 2008 with the task of adopting the country's new Constitution within two years. The election ended the five hundred years old Nepal's Monarchy in August 2008, without shedding a drop of blood. As King Gyanendra, wanted to live inside the country peacefully as an ordinary citizen, the government provided all necessary support to the former King to live with all his liberty and dignity. Adhikary, P.K, this book chapter lead author, still believes that if he was allowed to lead the home-grown dialogue process as suggested by his 2002 article, the Constitutional Monarchy of European styled one, could have been retained in Nepal, which could have saved also the country from the mockery demonstrated by some of the presidents, as the heads of state, since then.

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction

In order to secure peace and security, the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MOPR) was established in April 2007 with a mandate to implement the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA, 2006). The core functions of MOPR were: Conflict Management, Relief and Rehabilitation, Reconstruction of destroyed public infrastructures, and Cantonment Management. Additionally, it was to support the Government of Nepal in the formulation and execution of policies and strategies required for the sustenance of peace processes in Nepa (Irene 2014). Furthermore, the Ministry was mandated to accomplish all the functions assigned to the Peace

Secretariat and other additional functions relating to reconstruction of physical infrastructure damaged during the conflict, relief and rehabilitation of the conflict victims, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, High Level Monitoring Committee and Management of the Maoist combatant's cantonments (Irene 2014).

According to Mehta (2019), the creation of MOPR in 2007 by the Himalayan country of Nepal, marked the end of a decade-long civil war between the royalist army and the Maoist insurgents. In fact, by the time the decade long Maoist armed conflict ended in 2006, the country had experienced, in addition to the destruction of a number of public buildings and infrastructures, the underlisted destruction at the personal level (MOPR, 2007):

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Number</u>
Deceased (families affected)	About 16,700
Disabled	About 5,800
Orphan	Around 25,000
Internally Displaced	71200 persons/18700 families Widows Around 9,000
Disappeared	Around 1,200
Personal Property loss	About 11,000

Other sources described that more than 17,000 people (including both civilians and armed forces) were killed during the conflict, including over 4,000 citizens killed by the Maoists from 1996 to 2005, and over 8,200 ones killed by government forces during the same time. In addition, an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 people were internally displaced as a result of the conflict. Furthermore, this conflict disrupted most rural development activities, although it resulted in political, social and cultural change in Nepal. Indeed, as opined by Vijay (2019), the creation of the ministry was in response to this internal conflict.

In addition to several national and international individuals and non-governmental organizations forming a broad civil society, and a number of international partners including United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN)/United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 12 bilateral and multilateral agencies as peace partners came to assist Nepal and worked through MOPR. However, after November 2017, only European Union (EU), UNDP and USAID have stayed behind on the task.

In 10 years, between 2007 and 2017, MOPR achieved the following (MOPR, 2017):

- Nearly 150 Billion NPR (USD1.5B) was spent on peacebuilding and reconstruction of damaged public infrastructures
- USD1.2B and 7 years were spent on making the Constitution by CA (601 inclusive members)
- 70% of peacebuilding works have been claimed completed
- Completion of reconstruction of damaged public infrastructures
- Rehabilitation and Integration of Maoist Army Combatants (MAC)
- Support to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and conflict affected persons
- Establishment of Local Peace Committees (LPCs)
- Integration of Maoist soldiers in Nepal Army
- Paying those opting for voluntary retirement
- Supporting those opting for rehabilitation
- Rehabilitation and psycho-social support to disqualified Maoist child soldiers

The MOPR was closed in 2017 when Federalism was enacted as if it was established only to respond to the needs of negative peace caused by the Maoist armed conflict. The requirements of the positive peace were not considered in the fast-changing Nepali society. As the new Constitution was enacted, further achievements were reported as:

- Proportional Representation at Political Level
- Federal Forms of Government bringing governance closer to people
- Property Rights to Women
- Institutionalization of Multi-Party System of Governance
- Formation of specialized commissions to deal with social exclusion/non- inclusion
- Social and Economic Reforms (Special programs to the upliftment of disadvantaged groups including women, dalits, janajatis, muslims, Madhesis, marginalized people, ...). It has also been observed that the opportunities were hijacked by the elites within them repeatedly by same persons. It was also used as a tool to sideline certain individuals who could challenge the leaders to be replaced by their docile followers.

In 2014, Nepal government had created Commission on Investigation of Disappeared Persons (CIEDP), and Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) with an Act mandating them within two years to:

Investigate the facts about those involved in gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity during the course of the armed conflict, and to create an environment of reconciliation in the society.

Even a decade later after a series of renewal of their terms, neither commission has completed investigations into the tens of thousands of complaints filed by victims of human rights violations committed during the country's decade-long armed conflict (1996-2006). Although each renewal after successive two years has taken place in response to pressure from the international community and victims groups to keep moving the transitional justice process forward, the achievement of meaningful justice for the victims of conflict-related human rights violations faces both persistent challenges and renewed uncertainties. An even more significant challenge is the persistent culture of impunity in Nepal as powerful perpetrators of human rights violations are guaranteed immunity from prosecution as both parties have been in control of the state apparatus since 2006 (Jeffery, 2019).

As the commissions have been widely viewed as political instruments, vulnerable to manipulation, a new political appointment process is unlikely to restore faith in their independence. An even more significant challenge is the persistent culture of impunity in Nepal as if the TRC and CIEDP have been explicitly designed to ensure that powerful perpetrators of human rights violations are guaranteed immunity from prosecution. When this author was suggested to advise the transition process in 2014, he suggested that a sub-professional work with hidden political agenda may eventually take the country into international blacklisting, then he was excluded from further participation in the peace process itself.

However, there have been many challenges as:

- Although TRC and CIEDP were proposed by the CPA in November 2005 and formed in 2014 as mentioned above, not much work has progressed resulting in persistence of culture of impunity
- Many IDPs not accounted for and not properly rehabilitated
- Most of the Disqualified Armed Combatants (Maoist Child Soldiers) are not properly rehabilitated. Those who chose voluntary retirement face difficulties as well.
- Inadequate understanding and agreement on the role and functions of Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MOPR).
- Women's property rights still facing difficulty in enactment as it is not in line with traditional socio-cultural values and practice
- Continued violence against women and Dalits
- Continuing deprivation of poorer section of the population
- Failed public education and health service system with proliferation of private system creating a dual systems—private for the 'haves,' and public for the 'not-haves.'

- Increasing gaps between haves and have-nots
- Inadequate and often biased enforcement of law and order
- India's Micro-management of Nepal's Affairs
- External Factors perpetuating instability and conflict (Nepal's strategic location in changing global economic and political context)
- Too much time taken by Government and political parties in managing transition (1-7 decades), as if Nepal is continuously in a state of transition
- Complexity in state restructuring and management of federalism: the most contentious and artificially brought in issue.
- Increased rural-urban and international migration due to security risk in the countryside during the decade of armed conflict
- Due to lack of appropriate employment, and losing hope in the country international migration of youth abroad in search of employment and better education.

In the meantime, although Nepali people demonstrated their incredible power of resilience in overcoming the added pain by 2015 earthquakes and Indian border blockade, most of the structural inequalities as causes of conflict are still too far from being eliminated. However, some of the followings are very much part of the structural conditions of Nepal around which Nepalis have to learn to work through

- Diversity in religion, ethnicity, language, and geography marked by dwellers of mountains, hills, and terai
- Historical inequalities in terms of gender, ethnicity, caste, geographical, ... on socio-economic, educational, cultural/religious aspects among people

While discussing with the Prime Minister GP Koirala, the Maoist leader Prachanda was quoted first to have said that only around 3000 armed fighters needed to be managed by the state. However, the figure was inflated overnight to 32,250 who were brought to register for the verification by the UNMIN. 19,602 combatants of the original group (15,756 men and 3,846 women) were declared 'verified' by UNMIN, meaning they qualified for entitlements of Maoist ex-combatants. Over 4,000 candidates were considered 'disqualified' as they were underaged while enlisted in the Maoist army, and 8,640 ex-combatants did not return for the second-round verification interviews so were automatically discharged (Luna, 2019)

The money provided by the state to pay for many of their voluntary retirement was siphoned by the party leadership. There was also a rumour that a lot of the wealth looted by the Maoist soldiers during the decade of the war from the government coffers and individual houses ended up in the hands of their leaders. As the Maoist child soldiers were labelled as disqualified due to age bar to enter into regular army, and

their rehabilitation program was not adequately carried out, there has been strong dissatisfaction among them creating condition of insecurity of the Maoist leaders themselves.

However, the experience made by Lamjung Skill Development Foundation (LSDF) Campus, Gairi, Lamjung, established by this author as a part of ICPD's economic peacebuilding program then was extraordinarily rewarding as some Maoist Ex-Army Combatant (MAC) youth got market-oriented skills for their gainful employment. While kept in a local community during their residential training, it proved as a successful model for building up reconciliation between the former combatants and the people at large.

When this author mentioned publicly once on turning of Maoist people's war to the war for wealth for some, a former Maoist soldier came to shake his hand saying "this is exactly what has happened." The top Maoist leaders have been suspected to have taken the money to offshore investment facilities with a great deal of money laundering. They are also found engaged in some high-level corruption together with the leaders of other political parties in cases like gold smuggling, trafficking Nepali citizens for resettlement in third countries with false identification of Bhutanese refugees, selling of public land property as private through false documentation, selling away business opportunities, and political and diplomatic positions.

The legal system catches only the small fish protecting the bigger ones as political parties are intervening in putting their loyal persons in key positions in bureaucracy, constitutional bodies, police, judiciary, and academic institutions. These are areas where MOPR had no role to play, although some of its political and bureaucratic leaderships were suspected taking part in siphoning the money from the Ministry in the name of peacebuilding works through some of their loyal people labelled as professionals. My own effort to apply the core values and key competencies in peacebuilding within MOPR officials did not get a chance to get implemented due to frequent change in political and bureaucratic leaderships. The need for positive peace was simply not felt at all.

The Present State of Affairs

Due to failed leadership in almost all political parties, lacking integrity, and high level of corruption at all level, Nepal is facing the following conditions:

Unemployment at home and extreme exploitation in foreign employment (mostly at 3D; dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs) due to inadequate skill training and labor relation at home

Unplanned rural-urban migration and immigration of educated youth abroad in mass causing acute shortage of labor turning the once food surplus country into a net food deficit one with much of arable land remaining fallow.

Flight of capital, muscle and brain including some industries due to insecurity at home causing acute shortage of labor, students, and youth at home.

Collusion of the corrupt politicians, bureaucrats and business people moving the country towards a failed state, scaring youth to stay at home and opt for flight abroad.

Increased involvement of human traffickers alluring the youth for better employment abroad through illegal entry into industrialized countries including illegal enlistment in Russia-Ukraine war as mercenary soldiers.

Ever increasing gap between import and export, balancing the foreign currency reserve from the remittances from the 3D jobs abroad making the country perpetually dependent on such a human trade.

The national economy is faltering with quadruple increase of national and international debt over the last eight years now amounting to 44% of the GRP Increasing trend of internal and external debts, with 18% of the 2023 annual budget. The country's income is in bare minimum to pay for meeting the cost of the politicians and bureaucrats causing shortage of capitals for the economic development. Others include;

- ✓ Decreased capacity of the government to spend the allocated development budget
- ✓ Development projects not completed in time causing both inflation of their construction cost as well as lost opportunity from their benefits for the people.
- ✓ Decreasing faith of international investors to invest in Nepal
- ✓ Break down of law and order.
- ✓ Inefficiency in decision making at both political and bureaucratic level.
- ✓ High Inflation, bringing big burden to poorer section of the population.

Decreasing faith in political leaders is creating a climate of mass unrest with reactionary force attempting to reemerge in the country. Break down of traditional social security system and state security not sufficiently available to all, create insecurity among the vulnerable groups. Due to marginalization of rural areas with high rural-urban migration, and unplanned urbanization lacking basic services making the urban life equally difficult. Near collapse of public health and education has created a dual system private one with better standards for the haves and public one with low standards for not-haves.

Unprecedented brain drains have taken place due to marginalization of qualified persons as they do not see future at home. In the year 2022-2023 alone, more than 771,000 Nepali youths went overseas to find work. Nepalis who are enlisted in Russian military say the number is closer to 1,500, most of them transiting through the Middle-East (Anupam, 2023). It is also reported that

together with the Nepalis, there are youths from India, Pakistan and China and many other countries, who are being lured to join the Russian army. As there are Nepalis joining French and US armies as private citizen, suspicion is also there that some have joined the Ukrainian army as well that creates condition of brothers fighting face to face with arms in a foreign war.

There is an increasing trend of high school graduates going abroad to study with an intention not returning back. Of the 95, 268 outbound students from Nepal in 2022 alone, 40,752 (42.77%) students studied in Australia, 18,436 (19.35%) in Japan, 13,574 (14.24%) in India, and 12,660 (13.28%) in the USA. There are still quite many in UK, Europe, South Korea and UAE. The trend is increasing as over 100,000 left Nepal to study abroad in FY 2023/24 alone (Onlinekhabar English, 2023). This increasing trend of migration and immigration abroad is creating security risk with decreasing population trend, and many schools and colleges are finding empty class rooms.

Need of Working for Positive Peace

The above indicates that Nepal's MOPR was mandated to work through only the negative peace. A question arises now "What might have been, had MOPR a broader mandate than working for Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) only?" Such a mandate should have covered the aspects of positive peace needed for a developing society with young democracy in Nepal to flourish. One of the problems of MOPR, I had observed then was a frequent turnover of political and bureaucratic leadership, who were brought in there from a political party that happened to lead the government or get a mandate for MOPR in a coalition government, and general transfer system from within the bureaucracy. This did not necessarily look into the interest and attitude of the persons brought into MOPR to work for peace, which requires a different set of values and competencies.

One of the arguments put forward by a group of international peace workers while conceptualizing Civilian Peace Service Canada (CPSC), in Ottawa, Canada was: as security services, international diplomacy, financial managers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, ... need special knowledge, skills and attitudes to function properly, so do the peace professionals to possess a set of core values and key competencies. The way related civil or security services around the world provide special recruitment and training of their personnel, working for peace would also require certain capacity development training to their professionals. Therefore, through a broad interaction

among the peace workers around the world, CPSC was incorporated as not-for-profit organization registered in October 2023 under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. It is wholly funded through contributions and supported by volunteer services (CPSC, 2013).

While professionalizing peace work, CPSC asserts that peace cannot be left to wishful thinking. Accredited Peace Professionals are professionals with a new kind of courage – the courage to wage peace, provide proof of their professional competence before practicing. They should be held to set standards, which CPSC provides by emphasizing that:

- Peace is a discipline
- It is a professional field
- It requires extensive knowledge, expertise and experience
- It draws on decades of lessons learned through service

The governments, and school and university educators alike, could then integrate such values and competencies in the curriculum in orienting and preparing their cadets and students to work in peace. This could be used in assessment through an accreditation process of the persons during while recruitment and when developing them further to work for peace. While visiting Ottawa in July-August 2010 in giving a talk at the Centre for Conflict Resolution at University of Ottawa, Adhikary, P.K. was introduced to such a concept of a peace professionalism that CPSC was preparing for an accreditation process and Adhikary, P.K. volunteered to go through their pilot assessment process, which took place for me in 2011.

Although I was enthused to institutionalize it in MOPR then in collaboration with CPSC, due to the inherent nature of turnover of political leaders and administrators in MOPR then, it was not possible to do so. Had MOPR had a broader mandate covering the positive peace beyond CPA, Adhikary, P.K. would assume that such a work could have been possible to institutionalize such an assessment process in it.

A great deal of anomalies that are being experienced in Nepal since then, as described above, could have been minimized. This also indicates that future and present Ministries of Peace and infrastructures including universities elsewhere around the world should take this matter in consideration. A possibility for this may emerge in the proposed University of Nepal (UoN) that is looking for innovative programs to launch in Nepal. Then one could hope that the person sitting on a chair in a government bureaucracy or any other institution working on peace could speak with competence of peace professionalism rather than a robot-like person occupying a chair, which is often the case.

CHAPTER NINE

The Costa Rica Ministry of Peace

Rita Marie Johnson & Oseremen Felix Irene in collaboration with Alexandra Kissling, Vice Minister Madriz, Ana Helena Chacón, and Cristina Araya

Introduction

Costa Rica, a small Central American nation, has long been renowned for its lush rainforests, exotic wildlife, and breathtaking natural beauty. However, beyond its stunning landscapes and eco-tourism attractions, Costa Rica has made a significant impact on the global stage as a champion of peace, nonviolence, and conflict resolution. This remarkable achievement by a tiny nation, with a population of just over 5 million, has earned it a reputation as one of the most peaceful countries in the world.

At the heart of Costa Rica's peace efforts lies the Ministry of Peace, a pioneering initiative established in 2009. This innovative ministry has been instrumental in shaping Costa Rica's peace-focused policies and programs, both domestically and internationally. Through its work, the Ministry of Peace has contributed to Costa Rica's impressive peace record and inspired other nations to adopt similar approaches to peacebuilding.

In this chapter, the authors explore Costa Rica's remarkable peace journey and advocacy for a ministry of peace (MOP), then they highlight the groundbreaking programs and impact of the MOP on the country and the world. By delving into the challenges and successes of Costa Rica's peace story, they hope to inspire others to embrace peace and nonviolence as a viable alternative to conflict and violence.

Context

Costa Rica has an exceptional history of decisions that led to establishing a culture of peace. Its democratic regime was established in 1869, and the death penalty was abolished in 1871. In 1948, after a 44-day civil war, José Figueres became the provisional president and was instrumental in writing a new constitution that abolished the army (Johnson, 2022).

The new constitution established free elections, guaranteed public education, gave women the right to vote, and granted full citizenship to the Afro-Caribbean population. It provided a progressive labor code, a social security system, and social guarantees. This strong constitution provided a just foundation for society and established Costa Rica as a beacon of peace, stability, and democracy throughout the region (Costa Rica Constitution, 1949).

Costa Rica “emerged from a bloody civil war to become one of the only nations in the world to disband its military and redirect national resources toward education, health, and the environment” (Coleman & Donahue 2018). Costa Rica remains the first and only country in the world with no military and no arrangement for defense with a larger country. *The New Indian Express* (2024) asserted that this achievement “reflects their unwavering determination to foster a political environment grounded in civility and peace”. Additionally, Anderson (1998) argued that Costa Rica has demonstrated the viability of demilitarized sovereignty.

Costa Rica’s Central American neighbors have been the victims of numerous civil wars and coups. Since 1948, they have had some of the worst military regimes of the 20th century. Nearly every other Central American nation experienced civil war in the second half of the 20th century, with hundreds of thousands of deaths in Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. Costa Rica averted this fate by promoting domestic peace and abolishing the military. Also, as argued by Douma (2003), Costa Rica prioritized social spending as a portion of overall public spending, which was key to its success in avoiding violent conflict.

It is generally acknowledged that Costa Rica's relative stability has been facilitated by the combination of two complementary strategies: First, in the 1950s, Costa Rica implemented a strategy to diversify the economy, which improved worker quality; and second, the country utilized state-funded ‘cushions’ to ensure social harmony (Ordonez, 2007).

Costa Rica has also been a leader in establishing international human rights instruments, such as the American Convention of Human Rights in 1978. In addition, San Jose, Costa Rica serves as the seat of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights. Costa Rican judge, Nancy Hernández López, was elected in 2023 as President of the Court for the 2024-2025 term (Inter-American Court of Human Rights, 2024).



In the 1980s, when Nicaragua was engaged in civil war, the United States pressured Costa Rica to let Americans build military bases for the Contras, a guerilla group trained and armed by the CIA. To escape this pressure, President Luis Alberto Monge declared it was Costa Rica’s policy to remain neutral in international conflicts. This policy was formally adopted as Article 7 of the constitution in November 1983.

Oscar Arias became President of Costa Rica at a time marked by intense conflict and civil war in Central America. Under his leadership, the five Central American presidents signed the Esquipulas II Peace Agreement in 1987. This agreement provided for national reconciliation, democratization, free elections, resettlements of refugees and negotiations on arms control in all Central American countries. Arias won the Nobel Peace Prize for this achievement, which reinforced Costa Rica's reputation as a culture of peace.



Costa Rica also pioneered living in peace with nature. About a quarter of the land is designated for parks and reserves. More than 98 per cent of its energy is renewable, and after reversing decades of deforestation, the forest cover is more than 53 per cent.

In 1997, the Alternative Resolution of Conflicts and Promotion of Social Peace Law 7727 was passed. It established a legal basis for arbitration and mediation and requires peace education in every school.

In the same year, Rita Marie Johnson, an American living in Costa Rica, founded the Rasur Foundation, a nonprofit for peace education. The name of her foundation came from an epic poem written in 1946 by Costa Rican, Roberto Brenes Mesén, who had served as Ambassador to the United States. It tells the story of a mysterious teacher, Rasur, who came to the Costa Rican village of Quizur. As he taught the children inside a nearby mountain, their reality began to change. By the end of a “week of splendor”, all the people of Quizur were newly expressing their creativity and living in harmony, a true culture of peace.

Rita Marie wanted to bring this idyllic vision down to earth; the new law requiring peace education was the perfect backdrop for this work. She founded a small elementary school, the School of Rasur, as a first step. Then in 2022, Rita Marie developed BePeace, a science-based skill for transforming confusion into clarity and conflict into connection. Its easy process unites empathy and insight to meet challenges in life with peaceful confidence.

Soon Alexandra Kissling, a prominent Costa Rican, became Vice President of the Rasur Foundation and was successful in securing funding for BePeace through the Association of Businesses for Development (AED). In 2004, a pilot program was launched at the Elias Jiménez

Castro School in Desamparados.



Students modeling heart-to-heart connection in the first BePeace pilot.

The Rasur Foundation created the Academy for Peace of Costa Rica to implement BePeace in more schools. In the following years, over 1500 teachers attended a week- long BePeace Foundations Course so they could pass this skill on to the students they served. Now this skill is called the Connection Practice and has been taught globally to over 100,000 adults and children through Rasur Foundation International (The Connection Practice, 2024).



Students at the Academy for Peace in 2007, sponsored by the Rasur Foundation

In 2001, Costa Rica and the United Kingdom proposed a United Nations resolution that September 21 be celebrated annually as an *International Day of Peace*; it passed unanimously. This built on an initial proposal for that special day by Costa Rican President, Rodrigo Carazo, which had passed in 1981.

In 2006, the Rasur Foundation collaborated with the Costa Rican government to produce the first public *International Day of Peace* celebration. After that, the government continued to celebrate *Peace Day* each year. In 2013, they added a national, inter-agency songwriting contest for teens called *Song of Peace*, which has been continued each year. The winner is announced at the *Peace Day* celebration. Part of their prize is the production and recording of their song with a symphony orchestra (Ministry of Education, 2023).



President Laura Chinchilla and Rita Marie at the first *International Day of Peace* in Costa Rica.

The National Directorate for the Prevention of Violence and Crime was established in 1998, followed by the development of the National Commission of Prevention of Violence and Promotion of Social Peace (Shutts 2009). Creating interagency policies that address violence along the lines of sexual orientation, gender and age was a step in the right direction. The movement to rebrand the Office of Prevention of Violence and Crime as the Office of Peace Promotion began in the latter part of the 2000s, paving the way to introduce the concept of a MOP.

Advocacy for a Ministry of Peace in Costa Rica

In 2005, Rita Marie attended a conference in the United States. While there, she conversed with Marianne Williamson and Dot Maver, who were advocating for a Department of Peace in the United States. They shared about a growing global movement for peace infrastructure, which eventually became known as the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructure for Peace (GAMIP).



Dot Maver advocating for a US Dept. for Peace

When Rita Marie returned to Costa Rica, she began advocating for a MOP in Costa Rica. She met with Rasur Foundation board members and asked them to develop a MOP proposal. Alexandra Kissling and Maribel Muñoz, Director of the Academy for Peace, agreed to work on this proposal with Rita Marie. At this time, the Rasur Foundation became a member of GAMIP.

On May 29, 2006, Alexandra and Rita Marie presented their proposal to Rodrigo Arias, Minister of the Presidency. Their initiative would change the formal title of the Ministry of Justice and Grace, which is commonly referred to as the Ministry of Justice, to the “Ministry of Justice and Peace.” The MOP would be a vice ministry within the overall ministry. This would empower peace promotion and prevention of violence in Costa Rica. Minister Arias and President Oscar Arias embraced it and delegated the writing of the bill to the Minister of Justice, Laura Chinchilla.



Rita Marie and Alexandra’s teamwork for a MOP moved the bill forward.

Max Loria at the Ministry of Justice sent the bill to Rita Marie for review. She and Maribel requested that the MOP be mandated to collaborate with nonprofit organizations working for peace. They also designed a diagram of the Ministry’s infrastructure. Max included their mandate (#5 below) and approved their diagram. The bill evolved into a National System for the Promotion of Peace:

The General Directorate of Peace Promotion

The National Directorate for Alternative Conflict Resolution

The Directorate of Public Entertainment

The National Commission for the Prevention of Violence and the Promotion of Social Peace

It also assigned new legal functions to the Ministry:

1. Promote and coordinate targeted plans and programs for the promotion of peace at the national level
2. Support the prevention of firearms violence in the country
3. Promote alternative conflict resolution as a way to develop a culture of peace
4. Promote the best inter-institutional cooperation to fulfill the mandates of the Public

Entertainment Law 7440

5. Promote the participation of civil society through non-governmental organizations and any other type of dedicated organization to promote peace and non-violence

The bill was presented by Deputy Ana Helena Chacón and was signed by 19 of the 57 legislators on November 2, 2006. According to Chile (2009), “the former Costa Rican Minister of Justice and erstwhile presidential candidate, Laura Chinchilla, and Congresswoman Ana Helena Chacón have been proponents of the bill, which creates the first Ministry of Peace in Latin America”.

From 2006 to 2009, Alexandra, Rita Marie and Maribel made repeated efforts to ensure the bill would get passed. Maribel tracked the bill’s progress and had several meetings with legislators to explore their view of its concept. By the end of November, the bill had been referred to the Human Rights Commission for study (Johnson, 2009).



Maribel Muñoz, Director of the Academy for Peace, connected with legislators to get their feedback on the bill.

On June 17, 2009, the Ministry of Justice and the Rasur Foundation held a meeting attended by 58 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working for peace. The meeting was held at Quizur, Rasur Foundation headquarters, and was led by Vice Minister Milena Sanabria from the Ministry of Justice. She talked about the need to improve coordination between public institutions and NGOs working for peace, as they are society’s primary resource in teaching nonviolent conflict resolution (Johnson, 2022).



Vice Minister Milena Sanabria (left) and Alexandra coordinated the meeting that united the government and NGOs in their work for peace.

This gathering succeeded in uniting the NGOs with the government so they could collaborate effectively. The alliance was called RED de Paz (Network of Peace) and was coordinated later by the new MOP.

On August 19th, 2009, there was a debate on the MOP bill. Deputy Ana Helena Chacón spoke passionately in favor of the bill (Legislative Assembly Act 10, 2009):



The construction of social peace begins with the fight against inequalities. We must pride ourselves on the culture we bring. Ours is a country that, when populated by indigenous peoples, did not have pyramids because there was no pyramidal relationship in the exercise of power. Here, the indigenous people left us with beautiful spheres, which signify the totality in which we must all live together, in peace and justice, and that is in our blood.

That day, the MOP bill passed without opposition and became Law 8771.



Alexandra, Vera Lucia Salas with the Academy for Peace, and Rita Marie at the Legislative Assembly, waiting to hear the results of voting on the MOP bill.

Celebration of Costa Rica Ministry of Peace at GAMIP Summit

In 2007, Laura Chinchilla had become Vice President of Costa Rica and appointed Rita Marie to represent Costa Rica at the GAMIP Summit in Japan that year. At this Summit, GAMIP wrote a letter to Vice President Chinchilla, requesting that Costa Rica serve as the host of their 2009 Summit. Her answer was “yes”.

The Costa Rican government and the Rasur Foundation coordinated the Summit, which was held from September 17-21, 2009, and was attended by over 200 participants from 41 countries (Ruttenberg, 2009).



Report of the Fourth Summit of the
Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace:
Building Bridges of Peace



Fourth Summit of the Global Alliance
“Building Bridges of Peace”
Costa Rica
17-21 September 2009

Prior to the Summit, 38 people from 10 countries arrived to participate in a 40-hour *BePeace Foundations Course*. Participants quickly became empowered with the skills of “feeling peace” and “speaking peace”. The course was offered by Rasur Foundation International, a US nonprofit that had grown out of the Costa Rican foundation.

At the Summit’s opening ceremony, President Arias gave the keynote speech, which celebrated the MOP law and emphasized the essential role of peace infrastructure in creating a better world. He explained:

The task is only just beginning; the creation of a Ministry of Peace... is not the final achievement, merely the making of a road to achieve sustainable order that would allow resolution of human conflicts without violence (Ruttenberg, 2009).



The next morning was the beginning of four days of plenary sessions. Months earlier, Diane Brandenburg, a Rasur Foundation supporter, had notified the Dalai Lama of the Summit and the passing of the MOP bill. She read aloud a letter he had written to encourage all those working for peace infrastructure around the world.



Rita Marie and Diane Brandenburg, who presented the Dalai Lama’s letter.

The conclusion of the Fourth Summit of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace took place at San José's National Theatre and brought together 800 local and international members of civil society and government to celebrate GAMIP's work and the creation of Costa Rica's MOP.

The Ministry of Peace Law 8771 was published in La Gaceta No. 197, on October 9, and came into force in April 2010. With the creation of Costa Rica's MOP, the Peace Alliance (2020) noted that "the world can celebrate **four Ministries of Peace at this time:** Costa Rica, Nepal, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea". Additionally, they explained, "the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace (GAMIP), in partnership with I4P (Infrastructures for Peace) International Network, has played a role with members as they helped to found National Peace Academies and Peace Institutes in Canada, Costa Rica, Romania, Spain, the USA and more".

The Costa Rica Ministry of Peace Bill

Below is the MOP bill that can inspire other countries to pass their own versions.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

BILL

REFORM TO THE ORGANIC LAW OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (N° 6739) SO THAT HEREINAFTER IT WILL BE NAMED MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PEACE; AND THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND PEACEFUL CITIZEN CO-EXISTENCE

File N°16438

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

The present Organic Law appointed, since 1982, the Ministry of Justice as the entity in charge of, among other functions, crime prevention, research on criminal behavior, administration of the Penitentiary Systems, administration of the system for registration and inscription of property and corporations.

However, this law created only the following dependencies: General Directorate of Social Adaptation and General Directorate of the National Registry. The function of crime prevention is not part of the organizational structure established by the law.

The Executive Decree N° 27228-J, of 1998 attempted to modify this situation by creating the National Directorate for the Prevention of Crime (DINAPREVI) as a dependency of the Ministry of Justice, to be in charge of promoting national policies for the prevention of violence and crime.

1- Ministry of Justice and Peace.

Recently, through Executive Decree, the name of DINAPREVI was modified to: Directorate for the Promotion of Peace and Peaceful Citizen Co-existence.

Based on the same spirit, this bill aims mainly to modify the name of the Ministry of Justice so that it may be called from now on Ministry of Justice and Peace. With this change in name, the concept of Prevention of Violence has been surpassed with *Promotion of Peace*, not only to give it a positive turn but also to benefit from international experiences which demonstrate that a Culture of Peace has positive effects in the reduction of violence and crime.

Indeed, the manifestations of insecurity, violence and crime must be tackled in their everyday expressions, but also their deepest roots must be dealt with. These roots are, among others, the way people face their problems or conflicts, people's behaviors and attitudes in given situations, the levels of stress we endure; tradition and historical background.

While we talk about prevention of violence, we are experiencing its effects every day. Changing the language and speaking about "promotion of peace" lead us to the roots of the problem.

It is important to recognize that the idea of changing the name of the institution was an initiative of the RASUR Foundation, a non-governmental organization with headquarters in Costa Rica, which has no links with political parties, and whose mission is to inspire, facilitate and educate towards a culture of peace in Costa Rica. The bill also has the support of the Ministry of Justice, as an expression of its responsibility in matters of prevention of crime and promotion of social peace.

2. Creation of the National System for the Promotion of Peace.

This bill aims at providing a rank of law to the dependencies of the Ministry of Justice which are in charge of the creation or execution of policies that promote peace; these dependencies already exist and count with the human and materials resources necessary for their operation, requiring thus, no additional expenditures from the State.

A rank of law is proposed, under the form of a National System for the Promotion of Peace, to permit a coordinated and articulated work, based on the guidelines of the corresponding heads of the ministries.

Granting the Directorate for the Promotion of Peace and the Peaceful Citizen Co-existence with the rank of a law, not only shows the political priority assigned to it, but also the willingness to make it a sustainable and integral part of State Policies.

In addition to this Directorate for the Promotion of Peace and Citizen's Co-existence, the Ministry of Justice has two Directorates related to peace promotion.

a) The National Directorate of Alternative Conflict Resolution, created through the Law of Alternative Conflict Resolution and Executive Decree No. 31253 MJ of the year 2004, which is the entity in charge of enforcing the Law of Conflict Resolution and Promotion of Social Peace, in what relates to the Ministry of Justice.

b) The Directorate of Public Performance created through Executive Decree No. 26937-J of 1998, as an office attached to the Commission for the Control and Classification of Public Performance, which has been created by Law 7440, General Law on Public Performance, Audiovisuals and Printed Materials, of October 1994, which regulates in its Article I, the actions the State shall take to protect society, particularly minors and families, in what relates to public performance, and audiovisual and printed materials. It also regulates the dissemination and commercialization of such materials.

Finally, the National Commission for the Prevention of Violence and the Promotion of Social Peace, is established as advisory organ of this System. This Commission is an inter-institutional coordinating entity, created through Bill 33149-J of 2006, with the purpose of investigating, planning, coordinating and evaluating policies and actions related to the prevention of the main manifestations of violence and crime in the country.

Based on the above, I submit for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the following bill:
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA DECLARES REFORM TO THE ORGANIC LAW OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (N° 6739) SO THAT FROM NOW ON, IT WILL BE NAMED MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PEACE; AND THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND CITIZEN CO- EXISTENCE

ARTICLE 1- Reforming Law N° 6739 of April 28, 1982, in its denomination, so that it may be known hereinafter as «Organic Law of the Ministry of Justice and Peace» and so that references to «Ministry of Justice» or «Justice and Grace» be substituted with «Ministry of Justice and Peace» throughout all the articles that compose it.

ARTICLE 2- Addition of new item c) to article 3 of the Law N° 6739 of April 28 1982, displacing the following item, and which shall be read as follows:

Article 3.- The Ministry of Justice and Peace will function through the following dependencies:

a) [...].

b) [...].

c) The National System for the Promotion of Social Peace attached to the Minister's Office which will be composed by the General Directorate for the Promotion of Peace and Citizen's co-existence, the National Directorate of Alternative Conflict Resolution, the Directorate of Public Performance and the National Commission for the Prevention of Violence and the Promotion of Social Peace.

d) Any other which may be necessary to create in the future.

ARTICLE 3.- A new item i) is added to article 7 of Law 6739, changing the enumeration, and which will read as follows:

Article 7.- The Ministry of Justice and Peace will have the following functions:

.....

i) To promote and coordinate plans and programs aimed to the promotion of national peace.

j) To support the Ministry of Public Safety in matters related to fire arms in the country, from the perspective of prevention of violence, as a means to promote a Culture of Peace and non-violence.

k) To promote Alternative Conflict Resolution as a means to develop a Culture of Peace, without detriment to other functions established in the Law of Alternative Conflict Resolution, Law N° 7727.

l) To encourage the best inter-institutional articulation to comply with the Law of Public Performance, Law N° 7440.

m) To promote the participation of the civil society through Non-Governmental Organizations and any other organizations devoted to the promotion of peace and non-violence.

n) Any other as may be assigned to it by law or decree.

ARTICLE 4.- Replace the denomination «Justice and Grace» of sub-item ch) of item 1 of article 23 of the General Law of Public Administration, with the denomination «Justice and Peace».

ARTICLE 5.- In general, any norm referring to the «Ministry of Justice» or «Justice and Grace», shall be substituted with «Ministry of Justice and Peace». In force as of its publication

Major Achievement of Costa Rica Ministry of Peace: Civic Centers for Peace

Since the creation of the MOP, governments led by various presidents and political parties have implemented its programs. The most significant achievement to date was initiated during President Arias' second term, implemented when Laura Chinchilla served as President, and it has continued through subsequent administrations. This achievement was the Civic Centers for Peace program (CCP).

The MOP and President Chinchilla's administration collaborated on the establishment of peace centers in Costa Rica (Lopez, 2013). They were created with a special focus on children and adolescents, between the ages of 10 and 18, in each of the seven provinces of the nation. Peace centers provide opportunities for law-abiding entertainment and socialization for adolescents,

particularly those from low-income backgrounds. By breaking down social barriers, they address divisions among youths and provide safe spaces for nonviolent interactions that lead to connection and friendship.

The Inter-American Development Bank financed the CCP program, in collaboration with the MOP. Together, they built facilities to bring education, culture, art, recreation, sports, and technology opportunities to the Costa Rican people. The CCP are places created by and for the community. These physical spaces are an inter-institutional intervention strategy for violence prevention and the promotion of social inclusion and peaceful coexistence.



The Civic Center for Peace in Cartago



The current Vice Minister of Peace, Erika Madriz, met with Alexandra and Rita Marie in April 2024 to provide an update on the MOP. She enthusiastically described their administration's progress with the CCPs, where citizens in disadvantaged areas receive free services that enrich their lives.

In addition to children and youth programs, alternative conflict resolution centers (RAC) that already exist in many communities are moved into the CCP once they are constructed. These centers use arbitration, mediation, and restorative justice, which focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large.

Currently, seven CCPs are operational, and eight more are under construction. Moser- Puangsuwan (2015) emphasized that they are designed to promote peace among vulnerable youth and in communities threatened with violence. Lopez (2013) spelled out an example of this at the CCP in Jaco Beach. It was designed to house the following: School of the Arts, School of Music, School of Dance, Public Library with peace education books, Justice Center and Court for domestic violence, child support, and neighborly dispute cases, green areas, kindergarten, community childcare center, skateboard park, basketball half-court, and space for art exhibits.

According to Lopez (2013), the premise of the CCP is that a community involved in cultural activities, sports and even perfecting how to transition from a 50/50 ollie to a nose grind on a skateboard, will be more attuned to living in peace that day. Then they are more likely to continue doing the same thing the next day. By including a family court division that resolves minor conflicts, plaintiffs and defendants will see children playing in the forest and learning about the arts. Hopefully, this will inspire them to settle their disputes reasonably through mediation.

The CCPs help reduce crime and violence and build the skills the target audience needs to strengthen the country's social fabric. Their safe environment prevents the horrendous rates of street violence and murder that plague other Central American countries such as Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (Mehta 2019). People who engage in prostitution, theft, and drug trafficking are prevented from entering a CCP so it can be free from these detrimental and destabilizing influences.

The CCP offers an environment that is more fun than anything available on the street. This helps prevent young men from embarking on a devastating series of life choices and encourages them to make conscious choices instead. Corroborating this, the Oronos Foundation (2021) argued that the CCPs in Costa Rica are appropriate for seekers and creative individuals who want to discover their inner selves.

Peace centers complement the school system (Irene 2022). They can also partner with a variety of institutions and local government to foster civic participation (e.g., discussion, negotiation, organization, conflict mediation). Ultimately, a peace center is a training ground to develop happy, productive citizens, interlinked with family and community in harmony with nature.

A peace center can even connect peers from different nations. Telecommunications links and social media can be easily used to create virtual peace centers. Mehta (2019) explained that peace centers can connect young people via video to their peers in almost any country in the world. These connections can dispel numerous preconceptions, locally and globally.

According to the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (2024), "Peace infrastructure embodies many diverse structures across numerous contexts, including peace committees, peace museums,

peace secretariats...” Peace centers are an exemplary example of peace infrastructure that builds a strong foundation for national peace.

Given the positive impact of a CPP, Mehta (2019) stated that peace centers must be woven into the thread of everyday life. In this way, no government can simply scrap them without encountering huge public opposition. For this reason, peace center curriculums teach adolescents non-academic skills. Dance workshops, auditoriums, sports fields, and meeting rooms make up the peace centers in Costa Rica, as do activities like peace symposiums that can connect individuals across social divides. This peace infrastructure has expanded and endured, as the program has transcended four governmental administrations.

Challenges and Suggestions

In 2023, the Global Peace Index reported that the world became less peaceful for the 13th time in the last 15 years, with the average level of country peacefulness deteriorating by 0.42 percent over the past year. Where 1 is the safest country and 163 is the least safe, Costa Rica ranked 39 while Canada ranked 11, England 37 and the United States 131 (Global Peace Index 2023).

In 2024, according to the Index of Economic Freedom, Costa Rica’s score is 67.7, making its economy the 37th freest in the world. Its rating has increased by 1.2 points from last year, and Costa Rica is ranked 6th out of 32 countries in the Americas region.

These statistics show that Costa Rica continues to rise above the ordinary while struggling with the issues of our time. The MOP is facing increasing crime rates, particularly related to drug trafficking and gang violence, high rates of gender-based violence, and social and economic inequalities. This structural violence can lead to social unrest and conflict.

In addition, government ministries like the Costa Rica MOP typically have funding limitations that can hinder peacebuilding initiatives. The Costa Rica MOP has found some creative ways to overcome that challenge in the past and will need to find new ways in the future.

These challenges demonstrate the complexity of the national situation. To address the root causes of troubling issues and improve outcomes, a multifaceted approach is needed. Increased funding, evidence-based practices, and strengthening partnerships with community and nonprofit organizations are essential in this approach.

Additionally, the Costa Rican government could develop a blueprint for ensuring that appointments to the MOP are based on peace expertise rather than political influence. This would help escalate the growth of peace consciousness in government.

Conclusion

In 2009, Costa Rica took a groundbreaking step by establishing the Ministry of Peace, a pioneering initiative aimed at promoting a culture of peace, nonviolence, and conflict resolution. This innovative approach has yielded remarkable results, positioning Costa Rica as a global leader in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Through the Civic Centers for Peace, Costa Rica is empowering future generations with the knowledge and skills needed for living in peace. The community-based CCPs foster dialogue and understanding, the foundation of peaceful co-existence.

The Ministry's impact extends beyond Costa Rica's borders; it serves as a ray of hope for a world plagued by conflict and violence. The 2023 teen winner of the Song of Peace contest, Marisol Rojas Madrigal, named her song, *The Shine of Peace*, and that is what Costa Rica's model offers; a shining example of how prioritizing peace makes it possible to live in peace.

Costa Ricans want to sustain their track record of being “a model in terms of the development of a culture of peace” (Peters 2017). In a recent speech about Costa Rica, Rita Marie Johnson said:

I moved to Costa Rica in 1993 and have lived here, off and on, since then. I have had hundreds of conversations with Costa Ricans in which I have asked the question, “What matters most to you about your country?” Every one of them wanted their country to continue to stand for peace. Let us actively support Costa Rica's model of peace and continue to celebrate the beautiful soul of this amazing country.

CHAPTER TEN

THE ETHIOPIAN MINISTRY OF PEACE

Oseremen Felix Irene

Introduction

Ethiopia is a country in the Horn of Africa with a deep cultural history that goes back more than 3,000 years. Its capital is Addis Ababa, and it shares borders with Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Sudan. The main languages spoken are Amharic (the official language), Oromo, Tigrinya, and over 70 other local languages. Most people follow Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, but there are also Muslims and those who practice traditional beliefs. Ethiopia has a unique culture that mixes African, Arab, and Christian influences. The country is famous for its beautiful landscapes, rich wildlife, and welcoming people.

Ethiopia is a country where inequality is increasing, even though it has seen economic growth and efforts to reduce poverty (Lie & Mesfi 2018). In recent years, the country has faced various forms of violence. There have been attempts to resolve these conflicts and violence, such as the Multi-stakeholder Initiative for National Dialogue-Ethiopia (MIND-Ethiopia), the creation of the National Dialogue Commission on December 29, 2021 (Yared, 2022), the African Union (AU) Accord intervention, and the establishment of Ethiopia's Ministry of Peace. The Ministry of Peace plays a crucial role, especially because Ethiopia follows a system of federalism based on language and ethnicity, has a history of ethnic tensions and conflicts, and has experienced significant loss of life and displacement as a result.

The Ministry works on peacebuilding in many ways. It focuses on building positive peace, encouraging social unity and youth volunteering, improving relationships between governments in a federal system, early warning and prevention of conflicts, mediation, and recovery after conflicts. It also aims to tackle the main reasons for conflicts by supporting the rule of law, social justice, and political changes.

Context

Ethiopia has been dealing with many serious conflicts. Before 1991, Ethiopia was a single, unified country with a communist system. It was military-focused, controlled by a small group of leaders, and aimed to create a shared national identity. However, not all Ethiopians supported this effort. For example, leaders in southern Ethiopia saw this attempt to build a nation as something that was actually harming their identity, which led to movements against the government (Lie & Mesfi 2018). Ashenafi (2023) pointed out that in recent years, Ethiopia has experienced a significant increase in conflicts and violence involving both government and non-government groups. This is mainly because of long-lasting, complex conflicts, increasing tensions between different nationalist groups, competition among leaders, and weak institutions.

Ethiopia has many different ethnic groups, and there have been occasional violent clashes between them. These conflicts are often caused by old grievances, fights over resources, and political issues. Recently, armed groups like the Fano insurgency in the Amhara region and the Shana/Oromo liberation front have become serious security threats for Ethiopia (Necho & Debebe 2024). These problems add to the long-standing Ogaden conflict and the ongoing issues with Eritrea, which have been major concerns for the country for years (International Crisis Group ICG 2013). In November 2020, tensions rose again when the Tigray Regional government clashed with the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF). The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the ENDF fought a brutal two-year war over political power and control. This conflict caused a lot of violence, forced many people to leave their homes, and led to reports of human rights violations. It also created a serious humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region and nearby areas like Amhara and Afar. For many years, controlling the Ogaden region was a top security concern for the governments in Addis Ababa (International Crisis Group, 2013). Additionally, conflicts in Oromia and Amhara, as well as clashes in regions such as Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella, among others, greatly added to the country's instability.

Also, Ethiopia's role in regional conflicts, like its disagreement with Egypt and Sudan over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Nile River, and its influence in the Horn of Africa, including its ties with nearby countries such as Eritrea and Somalia, also affect its internal stability and create tensions in the area.

Moreover, the sudden increase in conflicts and violence between government groups and other armed groups since 2018 was definitely alarming. This can be linked to long-lasting and complex conflicts, rising and unchecked nationalist disputes, competition among powerful leaders, and weak systems. Fighting, people being forced to leave their homes, and natural disasters have caused serious humanitarian problems in many parts of the country, leaving millions in need of help. Getting aid to areas affected by conflict, especially in Tigray, has been a big challenge.

At that time, Ethiopia faced issues that put its peace, safety, and unity at risk. These problems made it hard for the country to stay stable, grow, and create a peaceful and fair society. The main challenges were:

- i. Ethnic conflicts: Ethiopia has many different ethnic groups, which sometimes causes disagreements and conflicts. These are made worse by past problems and competition over resources like land and water.
- ii. Unstable politics: Moving from a strict, controlling government to a more democratic one has caused confusion and fights for power. Sometimes, these struggles have turned violent.
- iii. Lack of resources: The ministry struggles to handle the many conflicts and complaints across the country because it doesn't have enough money or people to do the job well.
- iv. Old conflicts: Long-standing issues from the past, like fights over land or unfair sharing of resources, keep causing problems and creating tension between different ethnic groups.

In 2018, Abiy became the leader after three years of protests. These protests were partly against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which had controlled Ethiopia for nearly 30 years. The TPLF created a strict system that helped the country develop but also caused unhappiness among the people.

The Ministry of Peace in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Ministry of Peace was set up by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali in 2018, soon after he took office. The goal was to stop internal violence in the East African country. By doing this, Ethiopia became one of the few countries in the world to have a ministry dedicated to peace, and at that time, it was the only African country with such a ministry.

Although South Sudan was the first African country to create a ministry of peace in 2011, this structure was removed in 2015 (Irene, 2024). The ministry in South Sudan was formed after a peace agreement with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in 2011. It was called the Ministry of Peace and Comprehensive Agreement and was tasked with promoting healing, reconciliation, unity, and dialogue among the people and institutions of South Sudan (South Sudan Government, 2011). Ethiopia, however, is the second African country to establish such a peace-focused ministry.

Devtex (2023) states that the Ethiopia Ministry of Peace was created by Abiy's government on October 16, 2018, under the law number 1097/2011. This was part of Abiy's larger plan to bring reforms and reconciliation to Ethiopia. The ministry was formed to tackle the main reasons behind conflicts, encourage dialogue, promote reconciliation, support inclusive governance, and ensure respect for human rights. These steps are seen as crucial for lasting peace and prosperity in Ethiopia.

According to i-portal (2023), the Ethiopian Ministry of Peace has the following tasks and responsibilities:

1. Make sure public order is maintained.
2. Create plans and carry out activities to raise awareness and educate people about peace, security, and freedom for the country and its citizens.
3. Work with regional authorities to ensure citizens are protected no matter where they live in the country.
4. Collaborate with government offices, cultural and religious groups, and other organizations to promote peace and mutual respect among people of different religions, beliefs, and ethnic groups.
5. Help build national agreement on important issues.
6. Support cultural exchange, civic education, and art projects that strengthen national unity and understanding.
7. Develop strategies to raise awareness and encourage a culture of respect and tolerance among individuals and groups.

The Ministry also has the job of finding out what causes conflicts between communities and working to prevent them. It uses existing social traditions to strengthen and maintain

peace and to build national unity (i-portal, 2023). The main goal is to encourage peace, stability, and unity in Ethiopia, to stop and solve conflicts, and to ensure fair development across all regions, helping to build a strong and stable country. The ministry works to improve communication between the federal government and regional states, and to support the development of less developed regions (as stated in FDRE proclamation number 1097/2018). Bersunega (2019) asserts that the ministry's mission is to ensure a strong and positive relationship between the federal government and the regional states, as well as between the regions themselves. The Ministry of Peace has taken over many of the duties and powers that were previously handled by the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs.

Besides working on peace within the country, the Ministry of Peace also helps with peace and security efforts in Africa. This involves taking part in groups like the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Meles was a major leader in pushing IGAD as the main way to handle regional diplomacy and security issues (Nairobi Forum, 2013).

Developmentaid (2021) avows that the Ministry of Peace oversees several institutions, such as the Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs, the Federal Police Commission, the Information Network Security Agency (INSA), the National Disaster Risk Management Commission, and the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). Shaban and Alfa (2018) note that the Ministry of Peace is directly responsible for the Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs, the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), the Information Network Security Agency (INSA), the National Disaster Risk Management Commission, the Federal Police Commission, the Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, and the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs. As explained by Developmentaid in 2021, the ministry of peace focus include: national security, peacebuilding, solving conflicts, protecting human rights, managing disaster risks, handling immigration, addressing gender issues, promoting social development, providing training, and other related areas such as public administration, democracy, and more.

Achievements of the Ministry of Peace

According to Siyum (2021), the Ministry works with government agencies, cultural and religious groups, and others to encourage peace and respect among people of different religions, ethnicities, and nationalities in Ethiopia. It raises awareness, organizes activities, registers religious groups, and helps coordinate efforts to build national agreement on important issues. The Ministry also gives advice to the government and supports cultural exchanges that strengthen national unity and understanding (as stated in FDRE proclamation number 1097/2018). It works with federal and regional authorities to ensure the safety of citizens across the country.

In December 2020, the Ministry of Peace organized a group of people from the Benishangul-Gumuz and Amhara Regions to form a committee. This committee was meant to help solve the conflict in Metekel (Mekonnen & Fasil, 2020). Also in December 2020,

the Ministry of Peace made a deal with a German group called GIZ. The goal of this deal was to help communities affected by drought, teach young people and women about keeping peace and solving conflicts, and work together on development projects in the area between the Benishangul-Gumuz region in Ethiopia and the Blue Nile state in Sudan (Araya, 2020; Developmentaid, 2021).

The Ministry of Peace is one of the four groups working together in the Civil Peace Service (CPS) program. Their goal is to help build trust so that conflicts can be solved without violence (GIZ 2022). The other groups involved are the Oromia Bureau of Administration and Security (OBAS), the Oromia Pastoralist Association (OPA), and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). The Ministry of Peace also runs early warning and response systems. These systems give important information to help stop conflicts before they happen (The Reporter, 2021).

In an interview with Tewedaj Sintayehu, a staff member of The Reporter, Megbaru Ayalew, who was the Director-General of Conflict Early Warning and Early Response at the Ministry of Peace, explained that Ethiopia has been using IGAD's conflict early warning system to deal with issues like traditional land disputes and cattle theft along its border with Kenya. He said, "When the situation became serious, it was discussed at a higher level, and the countries involved started community-to-community talks and negotiations to resolve the problems" (The Reporter, 2021). He also mentioned that every regional administration has a peace and security office with early warning experts. These experts monitor the situation in their regions, and when conflicts arise, these offices handle a significant number of cases, often preventing them from escalating.

The Ministry of Peace, together with Wolayta Sodo University and the National Volunteer Community Service Program trainees, organized a cleaning campaign led by young volunteers. These young volunteers are offering various community services while also undergoing training. As stated by the Ministry of Peace (2023), the program aims to strengthen national unity and social connections in Ethiopia. Its goal is to create a peaceful and united Ethiopia, protected by its people, especially the youth. Additionally, the Ministry of Peace is supporting the National Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (NDRP) for former combatants. This program is being developed by the National Rehabilitation Commission (NRC), which was set up by the government in November 2022 for a two-year period to help with the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants nationwide.

The draft NDRP Agreement, created by the Commission, came after the end of fighting between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in November 2022. This National Programme aims to help up to 250,000 former fighters in Ethiopia by supporting their demobilization and reintegration into society. It has been implemented in parts of the country and is a key part of national efforts to strengthen peace and stability (Ministry of Peace Ethiopia, 2023). The Ministry is taking a leading role in organizing the National Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (NDRP) for these

former fighters, which involves up to 250,000 people (Ministry of Peace Ethiopia, 2023). This programme is a major part of the country's efforts to build peace and promote reconciliation after the devastating civil war (Irene, 2024).

The Ministry of Peace (2023) notes that the national program for recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction was carried out in a well-organized way. This was to support lasting peace and development, and to make sure that former combatants were disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated into society, which was a key part of the process. The help from partners in this DDR process was very important for stabilizing the country.

The Ministry of Peace has helped solve many conflicts between different ethnic groups. They have encouraged talks and peace-building efforts to stop these conflicts from getting worse. The Ministry promotes peacebuilding initiatives, and has created different programs and activities to help communities connect, encourage mutual understanding, and support a culture of peace, tolerance, and education about peace.

The Ministry efforts to improve institutions and governance systems have focused on solving the root causes of conflicts, like marginalization and exclusion. In 2022, the government created the Ethiopian Dialogue Commission to tackle Ethiopia's complicated problems through inclusive and participatory methods. By encouraging dialogue, reconciliation, and teamwork in solving issues, this commission could help build a more peaceful and strong society.

The Ministry of Peace, working together with the IGAD Peace and Security Division, has created a peacebuilding guide specifically designed for Ethiopia's unique peacebuilding needs. This guide builds on existing knowledge and was developed to include all aspects of the peacebuilding process in Ethiopia. By combining theoretical ideas with local knowledge, both IGAD and the Ministry of Peace have made important progress in creating a document that is closely connected to the local situation (Ministry of Peace Ethiopia, 2023). This method ensures that the guide reflects the real-life conditions, effectively tackling the challenges and opportunities in achieving lasting peace.

Failure, Challenges and Criticism of Ethiopia Ministry of Peace

The Ministry of Peace has an important role, but it faces several challenges in doing its job. These include not having enough funds, limited staff, politicization, and the difficult and sensitive nature of the conflicts and issues it deals with. Some experts have criticized the Ministry, saying it is too influenced by security agencies. However, recently, the security services became a separate office outside the Ministry. They also pointed out that the Ministry lacks strong civilian involvement and that most of its top leaders are chosen for political reasons. Despite these issues, the Ministry is playing a key role in efforts to bring peace, stability, and unity to Ethiopia, and its work has had some positive effects in the country.

However, some people have also criticized Ethiopia's Ministry of Peace, raising concerns about how well it works, its methods, and its overall impact. Ashenafi (2023) points out

that several conflicts still happened after its creation. The ministry failed or has not been very successful in stopping violent conflicts, as there have been many such conflicts in Ethiopia even after the ministry was established.

Siyum (2021) avers that, even though the Ministry of Peace has tried to promote peace by organizing workshops and peace conferences between groups like the Amhara and Tigray, the Oromo, Afar, and Somali people over two years (and even after the peace agreement supported by the African Union -AU), lasting peace is yet to be achieved across the country. Instead, security issues in Ethiopia is still a challenge, and in some cases led to ethnic conflicts and a sharp increase in the number of people forced to leave their homes. These include: the Gedeo-Guji conflict (2018/19), the 'Jawar incident' (2019), the Hachalu incident (2020), the OLA rebellion (2019 and still going), Qimant conflicts (since 2019), the Benishangul conflicts (2019–2020), and the Tigray civil war, which spread to three regions from November 2020 to September 2022. The violent conflict escalated into a full-scale war that began in November 2020, involving regional forces. The war pitted regional forces from Tigray against Ethiopia's federal army.

Addeh (2023) reports that the two-year war caused over 600,000 deaths and forced millions of people to leave their homes. Sadly, the ministry of peace was unable to fix the situation. Many Ethiopians who shared their opinions believed that the ministry might have been unable to consider non-military solutions, which are often recommended by peace experts.

The African Union (AU) stepped in and offered a peaceful way to end the violent conflict or war. Talks led by the AU started on October 25 in Johannesburg and lasted for 10 days. Nigeria's former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, represented the AU in these talks. According to Addeh (2023), the agreement requires Tigrayan forces to lay down their weapons, with both sides promising to "end the fighting for good." They also agreed to "stop all fighting and negative propaganda," urging Ethiopians both at home and abroad to support efforts for lasting peace. The Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) signed a peace agreement, marking the end of formal peace talks. With the help of the former Nigerian leader, both sides in the conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region agreed to a "permanent stop to the hostilities."

Some other specific complaints about the ministry include:

- i. Too Much Power in One Place: A major concern is that creating the Ministry of Peace under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government puts too much power in one place. Critics say that giving one ministry, controlled by the Prime Minister's office, full control over peace and security issues could weaken the system of checks and balances. This might lead to misuse of power and a lack of responsibility.
- ii. Lack of Transparency: Some people have pointed out that the Ministry of Peace does not share enough information about how it works or makes decisions. Critics say that the ministry carries out its activities, especially those involving solving conflicts and building peace, without properly involving

important groups like local communities and organizations that represent the public.

- iii. **Ethnic Bias:** Ethiopia has many different ethnic groups, and this can make things complicated. Some people have criticized the Ministry of Peace, saying it might be favoring certain ethnic groups or regions when trying to solve conflicts and build peace. They believe the ministry's actions might focus too much on ethnic issues instead of creating real unity and including everyone.
- iv. **Limited Capacity and Resources:** Critics have noted that the Ministry of Peace might not have enough staff, tools, or funding to properly handle Ethiopia's many conflict issues. These include fights within the country, threats from terrorism, and disputes over borders. There are worries that the ministry may struggle to work well with other government offices, security teams, and international partners to create and carry out long-term plans for building peace.

To address these concerns, it is crucial for the ministry to treat these complaints, and do its job well, as well as help bring lasting peace and development to Ethiopia. In spite of what critics may think about the Ministry of Peace (MoP) and its role in handling conflicts in Ethiopia, Bersunega (2019) notes that the MoP still aim to make Ethiopia a country that achieves lasting peace in the world, follows the rule of law, has balanced development, and strengthens government relations on national issues by 2028.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ethiopia's Ministry of Peace is dealing with big problems in reaching its goals. Political pushback, not enough resources, and an unstable peace make the process of building peace difficult and complicated. Still, the fact that the Ministry exists shows that the Ethiopian government is serious about tackling these problems, which could mean the country is moving toward a more peaceful and stable future. The Ministry's efforts, nevertheless, highlight the important of such peacebuilding infrastructure in today's world.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this GAMIP book about Ministries and Peace Infrastructures, we are reminded that peace is both a journey and a goal. Creating Ministries of Peace (MoP) is an important step toward building a more peaceful and united world. In this book, we have looked at the ideas, principles, and best ways to use MoP. We have also seen how MoP and I4P can be used in different ways and how they can help communities and societies.

We have seen how MoP & I4P can help solve conflicts, support sustainable development, and encourage a culture of peace and nonviolence in all its forms. We have learned from the experiences of countries that have set up MoP, and we have been inspired by the hard work and dedication of peacebuilders worldwide.

As we move ahead, we understand that the path to peace is not easy. We live in a world where conflicts, violence, and unfairness still exist, and the need for peace and healing is greater than ever. But we also know that we have the tools, knowledge, and ability to create change.

The GAMIP book on Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace is a call to take action. It asks leaders, peace workers, researchers, and anyone who cares about building peace to support the ideas and goals of Ministries of Peace (MoP). We encourage you to use this book as a guide, applying its ideas and methods to fit your local situation and needs, and to push for the creation of ministries of peace in your country and peace infrastructures in your communities.

Together, we can create a world where everyone experiences peace, fairness, and respect. A world where having Ministries of Peace is common, not rare. A world where problems are solved without violence, and where people can grow and thrive.

Let's keep learning from one another, supporting each other, and working together to make the world more peaceful and united. Building peace is a shared duty, and as peacemakers, we must join hands to spread the idea of Ministries of Peace and peace infrastructures.

May this book guide you on your path to peace. Let's keep working for a world filled with peace, love, and kindness.

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Appendix

Peace Entertainment

A Complimentary Offering for Readers:

The Award-Winning 20-Minute Film for Peace, “Admissions”

<https://www.peacenow.com/admissions/>

For complimentary Spanish, Italian, Arabic Hebrew, Farsi, and German versions:

<https://tinyurl/soaft57>

Strengthening Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace through storytelling and music.

To change the world, we must endeavor to change the way the world thinks. With this in mind, we use the unmatched power of storytelling to, promote peace, impact hearts and minds, and raise the collective vibration of humankind. This way peace emerges naturally because of what we have become.

As one example of peace entertainment, the award-winning short film for peace “Admissions,” stars Academy Award® nominee, James Cromwell, and promotes the establishment of Infrastructures for Peace in governments worldwide. Created by PeaceNow.com Co-founder John Viscount, the film features an “Admissions Room” which artistically symbolizes the purpose of Infrastructures for Peace.

James Cromwell’s character “the clerk” serves as a Minister of Peace whose contribution to the greater good is to heal conflict and help people, cultures, and countries find the common ground that is the foundation of enduring peace. The story depicts the stunning power of forgiveness to resolve our world’s most intractable conflicts by changing the way we think.

“Admissions” concise, 20-minute length makes it perfect for classroom study and viral transmission in the world at large, especially because the film is offered as a complimentary “Gift of Peace.” The film has now won over 30 international awards and the audience for “Admissions” grows year after year as it continues to screen in important venues.

The iconic film has been translated into Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew, Italian, German, and Spanish, and broadcast to 80 million homes in the Middle East. It is also used as part of the world-renowned forgiveness curriculum of The Stanford University Forgiveness Project. Viscount’s original theme song in the end credits, “The Time Is Now,” was a

finalist in the Global Peace Song Awards and like the film, promotes the global Culture of Peace.

“The Principle” is the second installment in Viscount’s “Films for Peace” series and addresses the destructive plague of the digital age, cyberbullying. This timely peace entertainment film stars 4-time Grammy nominee Mickey Guyton and premiered at The Martin Luther King Center’s “Be Love Day” celebration in Summer 2024.

For more information on how to build up the Muscles of Peace in our world, so in the tug of war for our future, peace wins:

The Muscles of Peace Overview: (<https://www.peacenow.com/muscles-of-peace-overview/> 2023)

